

# Topical penetration of clobetasol-17-propionate into psoriatic lesional and non-lesional skin illustrated with time and space resolution by dermal open flow microperfusion

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## Background & Aim

In psoriasis the hyperkeratosed stratum corneum has been reported to act as a trap compartment for topical drugs.

We aimed to investigate the role of the stratum corneum for topical penetration by continuous in vivo monitoring of the intradermal concentrations of clobetasol-17-propionate (CP-17) in psoriatic lesions and in non-lesional skin following single and repeated topical dosing of 0.05% CP-17 cream.

## Methods

- 12 subjects with plaque type psoriasis
- 4 subjects in the pilot study (optimization only)
- 8 subjects in the main study (results shown):

### Day 1:

- Lesional test site + 3 dOFM probes + topical Dermoval<sup>®</sup> cream (0.05% CP-17)
- Non-lesional test site + 3 dOFM probes + topical Dermoval<sup>®</sup> cream (0.05% CP-17)
- Continuous dOFM to sample dermal interstitial fluid at 1 µL/min until 24 h post-dose
- 50 MHz ultrasound to measure the depth of each dOFM probe in the dermis
- LC-MS/MS to quantify CP-17 in dOFM samples

**Days 2–13:** once daily dosing of Dermoval<sup>®</sup> cream to test sites

**Day 14:** protocol identical to Day 1

- Bioanalysis: LC-MS/MS (LOQ 0.35 ng/ml)
- Statistics: descriptive, AUC 0–24 h, and mixed-effects modelling to test which variables (e.g. skin site, time, depth) influence the AUCs in the dermis.

## Results

dOFM sampling successfully provided intradermal CP-17 concentration profiles for 24 h (Fig. 3)

**3 variables** were identified to influence CP-17 levels (AUC 0–24 h mixed effects modelling):

- skin site (lesional/non-lesional) i.e. lower AUCs in lesional skin
- the time (day 1/day 14) i.e. higher AUCs at day 14
- probe depth i.e. the deeper in dermis the lower the AUCs

Consequently, these **4 equations** including depth were best to describe the data (Fig. 4):

- Group 'LESIONAL', 'Day 1':  
 $AUC = \exp(1.37 - 1.737 * \text{depth})$

- Group 'NON-LESIONAL', 'Day 1':  
 $AUC = \exp(1.725 - 1.737 * \text{depth})$

- Group 'LESIONAL', 'Day 14':  
 $AUC = \exp(2.199 - 1.737 * \text{depth})$

- Group 'NON-LESIONAL', 'Day 14':  
 $AUC = \exp(2.554 - 1.737 * \text{depth})$

## Summary and Conclusions

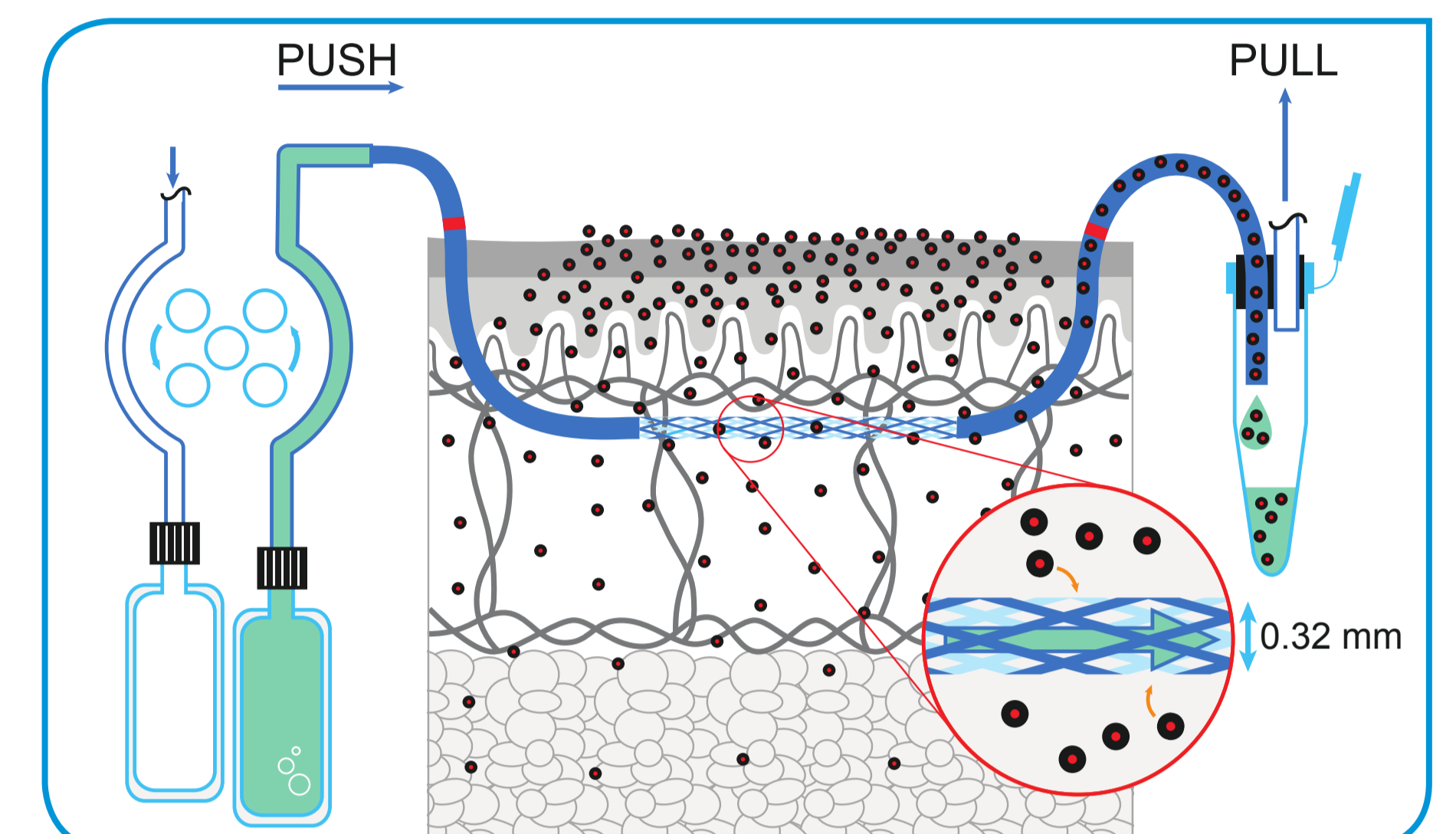
### The hyperkeratosed, thickened stratum corneum in psoriasis

- acts as a trap compartment for lipophilic topical drugs,
- thus slowing penetration of lipophilic drugs into psoriatic skin plaques.

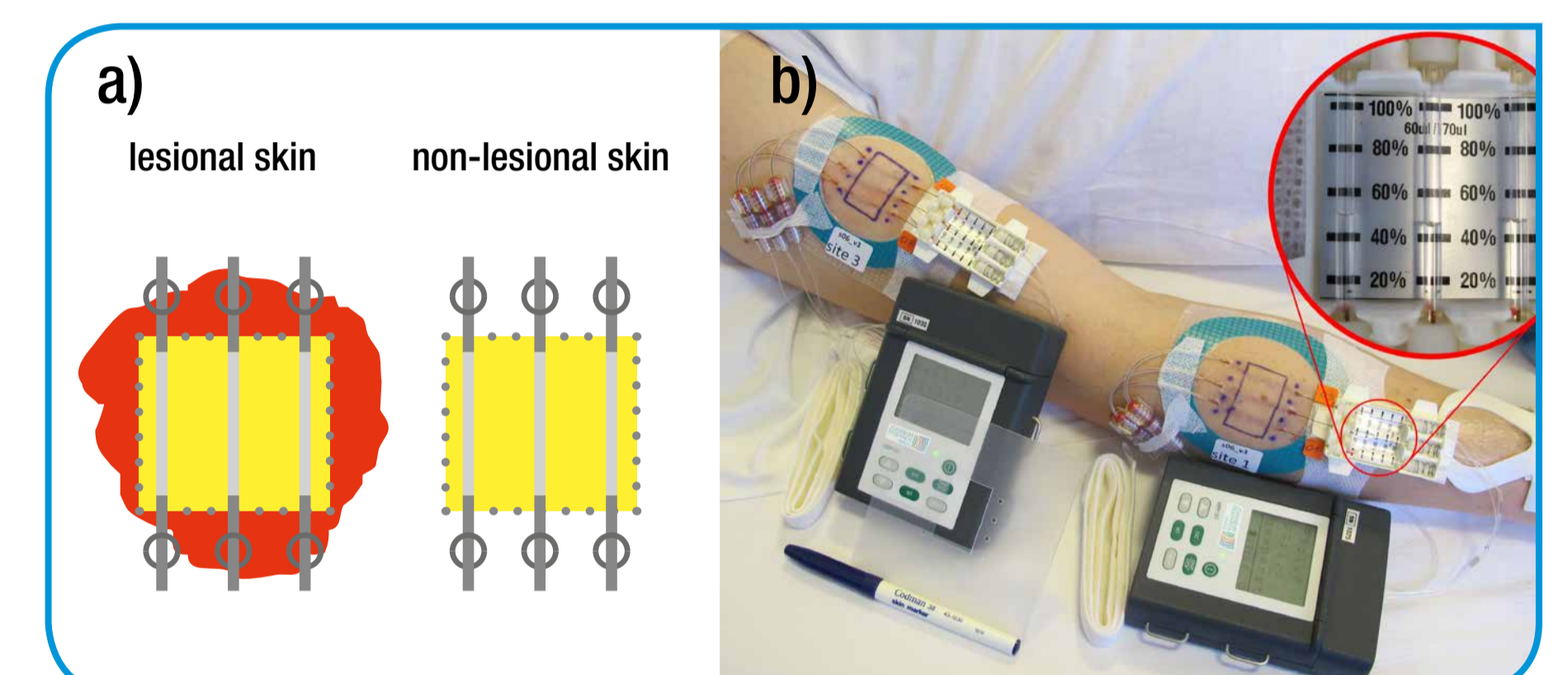
**Dermal open flow microperfusion** is known to provide PK profiles in the human dermis in vivo. This study demonstrates that dOFM provides PK data also

- for rather lipophilic topical entities
- for topical formulations with low strength (e.g. 0.05%)
- including drug concentration vs. depth

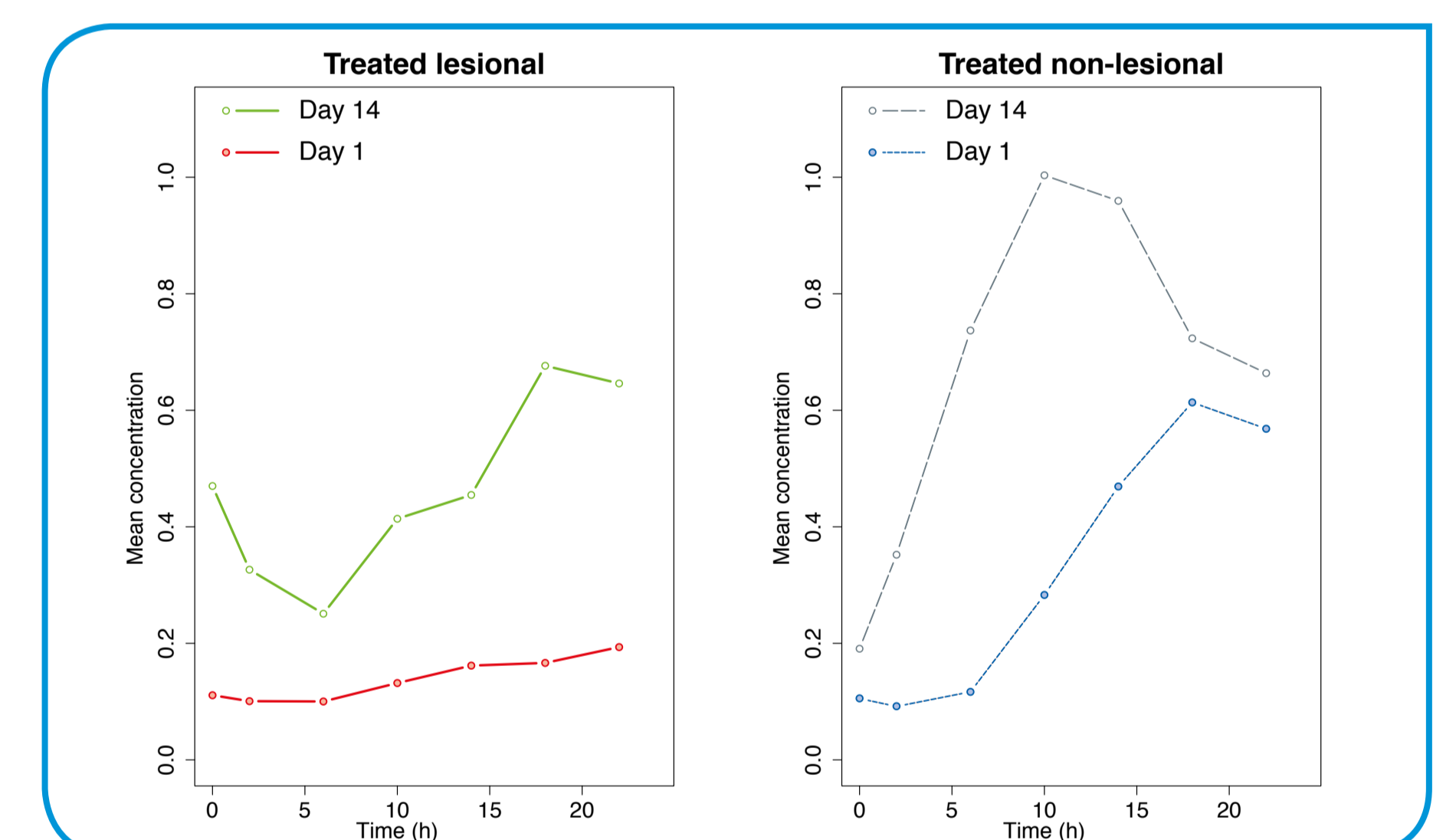
Dermal open flow microperfusion is a powerful tool in clinical research which provides intradermal PK with time as well as space resolution. Because dOFM is sensitive and tissue specific, the probe depth should be considered whenever dOFM is used in studies of topical bioequivalence.



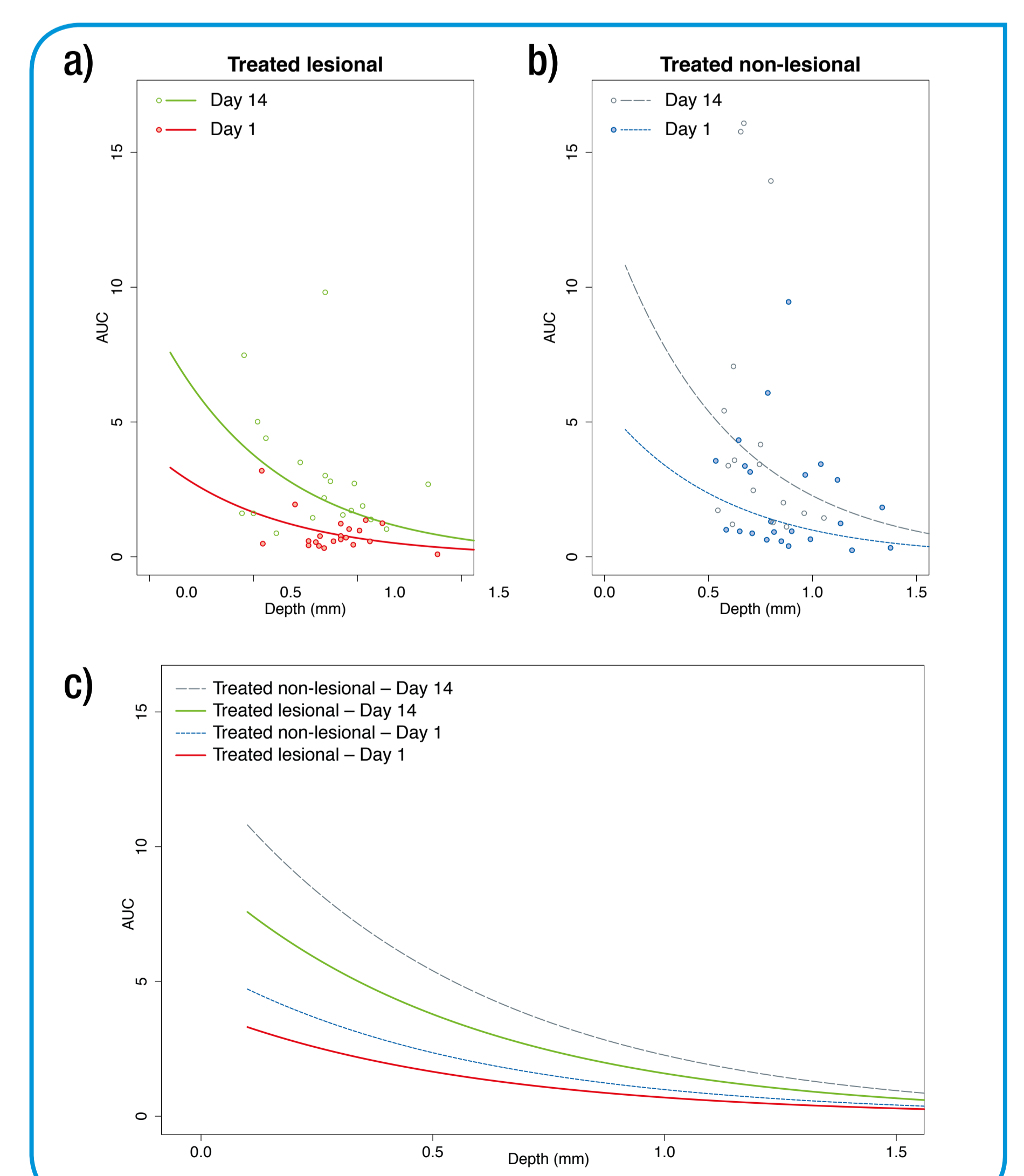
**Figure 1.** principle of PK-PD sample collection by dermal dOFM. The membrane-free dOFM probe within the dermis is continuously perfused and delivers interstitial fluid for PK-PD analyses.



**Figure 2.** a) Clobetasol was applied once daily to a lesional and a non-lesional skin minizone for 14 days. On day 1 and on day 14 CP-17 penetration was profiled by 6 dOFM probes. b) Typical dOFM test setting. Wearable dOFM pumps and sample collection units enable mobility of volunteers and >24 h uninterrupted sampling.



**Figure 3.** CP-17 in dOFM samples (in ng/mL) from baseline to 24 h post dose.



**Figure 4.** AUC 0–24 h (ng·ml<sup>-1</sup>·h) for CP-17 in dOFM samples for lesional skin and non-lesional skin on day 1 and day 14 as a function of depth. a) AUCs of lesional skin on day 1 and 14 including individual AUC data points. b) AUCs of non-lesional skin on day 1 and 14 including individual AUC data points. c) AUCs regression lines of both lesional and non-lesional skin.