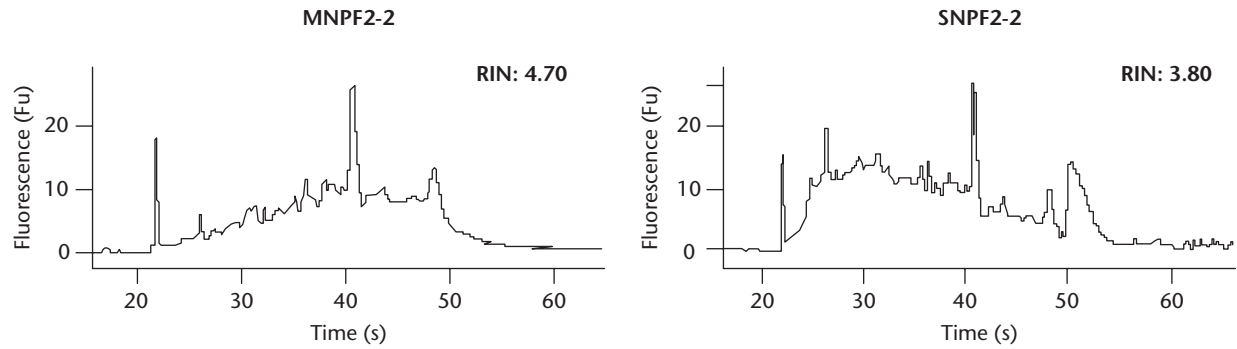


Supplementary material**Fig. a**

Shown are the electropherograms of RNA isolated from the nucleus pulposus (NP) and analysed with the Agilent 2100 Bioanalyzer. The NP is used as an example as this is the most difficult of the four cartilaginous tissues to isolate RNA from. RNA was isolated with RNeasy Fibrous kit (F) for both samples of the same NP (#2-2). On the lefthand graph it is shown that NP tissue homogenised with the MagNA Lyser (M) whereas for the right graph the Freezer Mill was used (RIN, RNA integrity number; MNPF2-2; Magnalyser, Nucleus Pulposus tissue, RNeasy Fibrous kit, sample #2-2. SNPF2-2; Freezer Mill, Nucleus Pulposus tissue, RNeasy Fibrous kit, sample #2-2).