

**S3 Figure.** Specificity of Simoa assay for miR-122. The chart shows AEB values of the miR-122 specific beads for: 15 nM of miR-122 calibrator (1st bar); 15 nM of miR-122 calibrator with a single base mismatch (2<sup>nd</sup> bar); 15 nM of miR-39 (3<sup>rd</sup> bar); no nucleic acid (4<sup>th</sup> bar); no nucleic acid and no nucleobase label (5<sup>th</sup> bar); no nucleic acid and no reductant (6<sup>th</sup> bar); and, no nucleic acid, no nucleobase, and no reductant (7<sup>th</sup> bar). The last 4 bars in the chart are reagent drop-out experiments that indicate the sources of background in the assay. These data indicate the non-specific binding of the nucleobase label to the beads dominates the background of the Simoa assay. Error bars are s.d. values from 2 replicates. Each bar is labelled with its AEB value.