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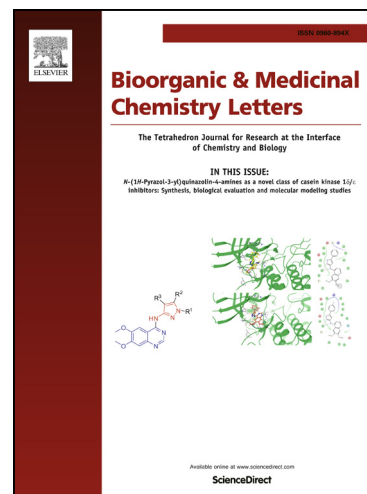
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Lead Selection of Antiparasitic compounds from a focused library of benzenesulfonyl derivatives of heterocycles

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Abstract

A library of 89 synthetic benzenesulfonyl derivatives of heterocycles with drug-like properties was assayed for *in vitro* antiparasitic activity and the results were added to our previously reported derivatives for a comprehensive SAR evaluation. Four compounds showed an IC₅₀ between 0.25-3 μM against *Leishmania donovani* and low cytotoxicity. Compound **G{16}** (1-(2,3,5,6-tetramethylphenylsulfonyl)-2-methylindoline), was particularly interesting with an IC₅₀ similar to the reference drug miltefosine. Seven compounds showed an IC₅₀ below 6 μM against *Trypanosoma cruzi*, and three of them (**E{3}**, **E{9}** and **G{3}**) were identified as lead scaffolds for further optimization based on their activity-toxicity profile. Two promising structures (**B{15}** and **G{15}**) showed moderate inhibitory activity against *Plasmodium falciparum*. In general, the presence of a benzenesulfonyl moiety improves the antiparasitic activity of the heterocycles included in this study (with the exception of *Trypanosoma brucei rhodesiense*), validating the criteria used in the selection of the privileged structures and diversification used to generate this library. SAR analysis showed that the presence of lipophilic and electron withdrawing groups were favorable for the antiparasitic activity.

Keywords: antiparasitic activity, benzenesulfonyl, heterocycles, SAR, library compounds.

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