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Synthesis, conformational study and antiviral activity of L-like neplanocin derivatives

Qi Chen *, Amber Davidson

Department of Chemistry, Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, PA 16057, United States

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ABSTRACT

The L-like enantiomer of 9-(trans-2′, trans-3′-dihydroxycyclopent-4′-enyl)-3-deazaadenine (DHCDA) (**1**), its 3-deaza-3-bromo derivative (**3**), and the conformational restricted methanocarba (MC) nucleoside analogues (**2** and **4**) were synthesized. X-ray crystal structures showed the L isomer MC analogue **4** adopts a similar North-like locked conformation as conventional D-MC nucleosides, while the DHCDA analogue **3** preferred south-like conformer. Compounds **1** and **4** showed potent antiviral activity against norovirus, while compound **2** and **3** were less potent or inactive. The conformational behavior of "sugar" puckering (north/south) and nucleobase orientation (syn /anti) may contribute to the antiviral activity differences. For compound **3**, antiviral activity was also found against Ebola virus.

Introduction

Nucleoside analogues play a vital role in chemotherapy of viral infectious diseases.[1] D-like carbocyclic[2] nucleosides, such as abacavir[3] and entecavir[4] (Fig. 1) with the similar configuration as naturally occurring nucleosides, effectively interact with target enzymes and, thus, possess interesting biological activities.[3,4] Despite acting as conventional polymerase inhibitors, the antiviral properties of adenine-derived carbocyclic nucleosides can act by the inhibition of S-adenosylhomocysteine (AdoHcy) hydrolase, a cellular enzyme involved in controlling viral transcription by regulating the mRNA cap structures.[2,5] However, the development of such carbocyclic nucleosides as therapeutics is limited by cytotoxicity that commonly arises from its C-5′ phosphate metabolites arising from various cellular enzymes.[5] In order to seek ways to circumvent this metabolic pathway, and, hence decrease unwanted toxicity, the uncommon L-like carbocyclic enantiomeric nucleosides arose.[6]

Recently, we reported the D-like (**5**) and L-like (**6**) enantiomers of 3-deaza- and 3-deaza-3-bomo-1′, 6′-isoneplanocin (Fig. 2), which have been found to possess potent and broad spectrum antiviral activities. Interestingly, the L-isomers (**6**) were equally or more potent than the D-isomers against human cytomegalovirus, hepatitis B virus (HBV), norovirus, measles and Ebola virus.[7,8]

To further investigate L-like carbocyclic nucleosides, based on compound **6**, we sought the analogues of DHCDA (that is **1** and **3**).[9] DHCDA is a neplanocin derivative whose broad spectrum antiviral activities were attributed to the inhibition of AdoHcy hydrolase, and reduced cytotoxicity due to lacking the 5′ hydroxyl group necessary for the 5′-phosphorylation and circumventing antiviral activity through polymerase inhibition.

It has been well recognized that the conformational behavior of ribonucleosides and modified nucleosides, including those in the category carbocyclic, owe their biological properties to sugar puckering and the orientation of the heterocyclic base. Among these properties are their metabolic pathways, enzyme binding affinity, and therapeutic effects and toxicity.[10] The sugar puckering of ribofuranosyl nucleosides is known to exist in dynamic equilibrium between north (3′-endo) and south (2′-endo) conformations. In most the cases, binding affinity to a pharmacological target favors one conformer over the other. Furthermore, nucleosides adopt either an anti or a syn nucleobase orientation. It has been reported[11] that nucleoside analogues with a syn orientation

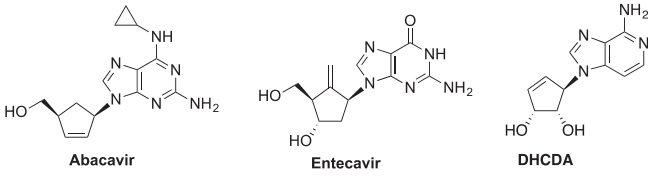

Fig. 1. Examples for carbocyclic nucleosides.

* Corresponding author.
E-mail address: qi.chen@sru.edu (Q. Chen).

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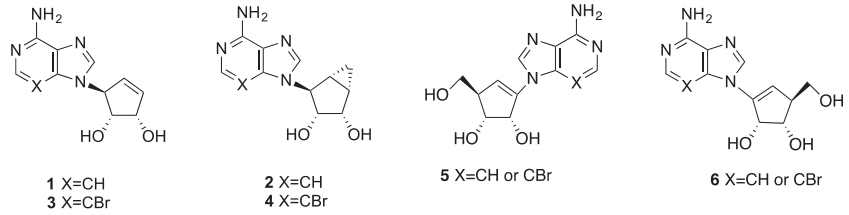
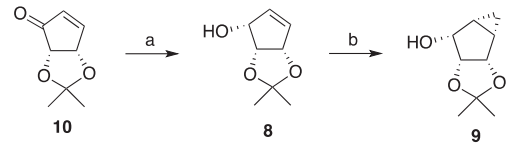


Fig. 2. D and L-like 1′, 6′-isoneplanocin derivatives and designed targer compounds.

exhibited much lower binding affinities to adenosine based receptors. Incorporating these parameters in our study, the 3-bromo substitution in **2** is envisioned to increase the stereo hindrance significantly and force the nucleobase to adopt an anti conformation (Fig. 3). In that direction, methanocarba (MC) nucleoside analogues (**2** and **4**, Fig. 2) were also included as target compounds in this study. The bicyclic[3.1.0]hexane ring in **2** and **4** was expected to constrain the pseudo sugar component and result in locked north-like conformers,[12] which are expected to show the different antiviral profile comparing with conformers **1** and **3**. Further Structure-Activity Relationship (SAR) study can be expected to provide valuable information for exploring the mechanism of carbocyclic nucleosides as antiviral agents.

We envisioned a versatile retrosynthetic plan (Scheme 1) to the proposed targets. The plan involved a coupling reaction between two main components: a cyclopentenol pseudo-sugar potion and a modified purine base. In the latter regard, synthesis of the 3-deazapurine base **7** was accomplished by adapting known procedures using 2-chloro-3,4-diaminopyridine (**11**) as the starting material (Scheme 2).[13,14] Construction of the carbocyclic coupling



Scheme 3. Synthesis of cyclopentenol derivatives. Reaction and conditions: a. $LiAlH_4$, $CeCl_3$, THF, 95%; b. Diethylzinc, CH_2I_2, DCM, 70%.

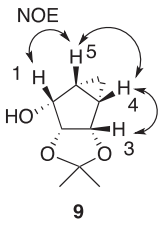


Fig. 4. Stereochemistry of bicycle[3.1.0]hexanol **9**.

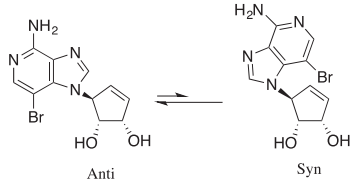
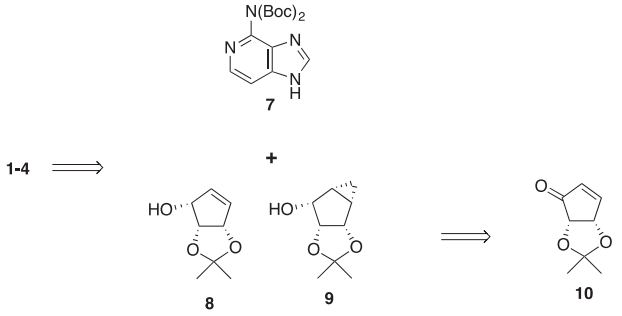


Fig. 3. Syn and Anti conformers of compound **3**.



Scheme 1. Retrosynthesis design for trager compounds.

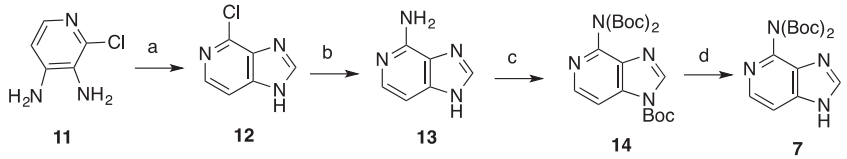
precursors **8** and **9** was achieved from L-cyclopentenone **10**[15] via a Luche condition reduction (for **8**), and a Simmons Smith reaction (for **9**) (Scheme 3).[16,17] The stereo chemistry of compound **9**[18] was confirmed by ROSEY (Fig. 4[18]) and X-ray crystallography of compound **4**.

Mitsunobu coupling reaction was preformed between **7** and L-form cyclopentenol **8** (Scheme 4) or **9** (Scheme 5) to provide coupled products **15** and **16**, which, upon deprotection, gave **1**[19] and **2**.[20] 3-Bromo functionalized targets **3**[21] and **4**[22] were accessible from **1** and **2** via suitable bromination conditions.

In addition to NMR data, X-ray crystallography structures[23] of **3** and **4** further confirmed the regiospecific bromination at the C-3 position of **1** and **2**.

Crystal structures also showed **3** adopting a south (3′-exo) conformation when posed with similar orientation with D-nucleosides, while more structural rigid bicyclo[3.1.0] hexane locked **4** into an north (2′-exo) conformation in the solid state (Fig. 5). As expected, the bromo group at the C-3 position forced both **3** and **4** to adopt the less congested anti conformation.

Compounds **1**–**4** were assayed for their antiviral potential.[24,25] Compounds **1** and **4** displayed activity against norovirus. Com-



Scheme 2. [13,14]Synthesis of 3-deazapurine base. Reaction and conditions: a. $CH(OMe)_3$, 85%; b. i)NH_2NH_2 ii) Raney Ni, H_2O, 70%; c. $(Boc)_2O$, THF, 90%; d. TBAF, THF, 88%.