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THE ANTIINFLUENZA ACTIVITY OF PYRROLO[2,3-d]PYRIMIDINES

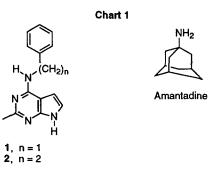
Marcos L. Sznaidman,[†] Eric A. Meade,[†] Lilia M. Beauchamp,^{†*} Stuart Russell,[¶] and Margaret Tisdale[¶]

[†]Division of Organic Chemistry, Burroughs Wellcome Co., RTP, NC 27709.

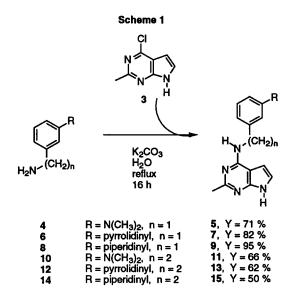
[¶]Division of Molecular Sciences, Wellcome Research Laboratories, Beckenham, Kent, U.K.

Abstract. From a group of pyrrolo[2,3-d]pyrimidine compounds that have been screened against influenza virus, one derivative, 4-(3-piperidinyl benzylamino)-2-methyl-7H-pyrrolo[2,3-d]pyrimidine (9), has shown promising activity against both the A and B strains. The compound had activity comparable to amantadine, but was inactive when given orally. 4-(Substitutedphenyl ethylamino)-2-methyl-7H-pyrrolo[2,3-d]pyrimidines showed no improved activity.

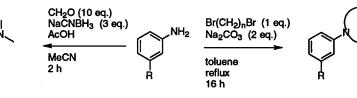
Introduction. Random antiviral screening of varied chemical classes in the Burroughs Wellcome registry has uncovered interesting activity against influenza virus in the 2-methyl-4-substituted pyrrolo[2,3d]pyrimidine series, which prompted us to synthesize a variety of these compounds.



Chemistry. The substituted 4-benzylamino-2-methylpyrrolo[2,3-d]pyrimidines¹ were prepared by displacement of the chloro group of 4-chloro-2-methyl-7*H*-pyrrolo[2,3-d]pyrimidine² (3) in refluxing water with the requisite benzylamine in the presence of K₂CO₃ (Scheme 1). The benzylamines were obtained in multistep syntheses, as illustrated in Scheme 2. The (3-dimethylamino) benzylamine 4 was obtained in two steps from 3-amino benzonitrile (16) by treating this material with CH₂O and NaCNBH₃ in MeCN³ followed by reduction of the resulting nitrile under hydrogenation conditions. The 2-(3-dimethylaminophenyl)ethylamino compound 10 was obtained in a similar way from 17. The pyrrolidine and piperidine derivatives 6, 8, 12, and 14 were obtained from the corresponding nitriles (16 or 17). Treatment of either 16 or 17 with 1,4-dibromobutane or 1,5-dibromopentane in the presence of base afforded the corresponding pyrrolidine and piperidine nitrile derivatives (6a, 8a, 12a, and 14a). Hydrogenation of these intermediates afforded the desired amines in reasonable yields.





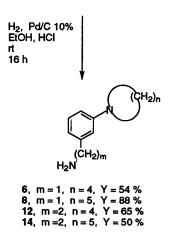


 $\begin{array}{l} \textbf{4a, } R = CN, \ Y = 94 \ \% \\ \textbf{10a, } R = CH_2CN, \ Y = 99 \ \% \end{array}$



6a, R = CN, n = 4, Y = 66 % 8a, R = CN, n = 5, Y = 60 % 12a, R = CH₂CN, n = 4, Y = 60 % 14a, R = CH₂CN, n = 5, Y = 70 %

(CH2)n



H₂, Pd/C 10% EtOH, HCl rt 16 h



4, n = 1, Y = 57 % 10, n = 2, Y = 60 %

Results and Discussion. Of the compounds screened to date in vitro⁴ against influenza, the most active compound was 9 (Table 1), which showed inhibition of both the A and B viral strains. This compound had comparable activity to amantadine,⁵ the drug currently used for influenza A infections. However, administered by the oral route to mice,⁶ 9 had no antiviral effect. Since one of the reasons for this difference may have been extensive metabolism by the oral route, we examined the effect of incubation of 9 with S9 rat liver extracts for four hours at 37 °C.⁷ The HPLC pattern of the supernatant indicated several metabolites were formed. Possible structural assignments, as determined by GC/MS analyses, include hydroxylation of the piperidino group in one or more sites and oxidative cleavage of the piperidino ring. LD₅₀ determinations (mice) of 9 gave values of >500 mg/kg by both oral and ip routes.

From the results in Table 1 it can be seen that compound 2, with an extended carbon chain, had better activity than 1. Also, all the meta substituted analogues of 1 (5, 7, and 9) showed much improved antiviral activity. To determine whether the combination of an extended carbon chain with a properly substituted aromatic ring would further increase anti-influenza activity, we prepared analogues of 2 with the corresponding meta-substituted aromatic ring: 11, 13, and 15. Although these compounds showed some activity, the improvement was not as dramatic as in the case of the benzyl analogues of 1.

#	IC ₅₀ (μM)	
	A	В
Amantadine	1.25	
1	>100	
5	18	<100
7	4.8	6.4
9	2.3	5.1
2	38.4	
11	55.0	
13	23.9	
15	28.6	

Table 1. Influenza A/B in vitro testing results.

Conclusions. Compound 9 is the most active anti-influenza derivative of this limited series, having activity against both A and B strains in vitro. Activity in vivo was not confirmed in a murine species, possibly due to extensive first pass metabolism. Since a suspension of 9 in aqueous methyl cellulose (0.25%) was used in the animal testing, alternate formulations of 9 in solution may improve absorption and efficacy.

Acknowledgments. The authors wish to thank the NMR and MS staff of the Bioanalytical Sciences Division for obtaining spectra and interpretation and to P. Chandrasurin and J. Cichetti for S9 metabolism and LC/MS studies.

References and Notes.

1. Compounds 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15 were fully characterized by CHN analysis, ¹H-NMR and mass spectra. Melting points are: 5: 192-196 °C, 7: 218-221 °C, 9: 193-195 °C, 11: 160-162 °C, 13: 170-173 °C, 15: 180-182 °C.

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6. Compound 9 was administered by oral gavage to a group of 5 male 20 g Balb/c mice in three doses of 50 mg/Kg. Animals were dosed 4 h before aerosol challenge with A/Sweden/50 and 4 and 20 h after challenge. A positive control group were given 50 mg/Kg of Amantadine, and a negative control group were untreated. All animals were killed at 24 h and the lunge removed for virus titration. Compound 9 had no antiviral effect.

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