

Optically Active Antifungal Azoles. VII.¹⁾

Synthesis and Antifungal Activity of Stereoisomers of 2-[(1*R*,2*R*)-2-(2,4-Difluorophenyl)-2-hydroxy-1-methyl-3-(1*H*-1,2,4-triazol-1-yl)propyl]-4-[4-(2,2,3,3-tetrafluoropropoxy)phenyl]-3(2*H*,4*H*)-1,2,4-triazolone (TAK-187)

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2-[(1*R*,2*R*)-2-(2,4-Difluorophenyl)-2-hydroxy-1-methyl-3-(1*H*-1,2,4-triazol-1-yl)propyl]-4-[4-(2,2,3,3-tetrafluoropropoxy)phenyl]-3(2*H*,4*H*)-1,2,4-triazolone [(1*R*,2*R*)-1: TAK-187] is a new antifungal agent selected as a candidate for clinical trials. The three stereoisomers [(1*S*,2*S*)-, (1*R*,2*S*)- and (1*S*,2*R*)-1] of this compound were prepared to clarify the relationship between the stereochemistry and the biological activities. *In vitro* and *in vivo* assays of antifungal activity revealed that TAK-187 [(1*R*,2*R*)-1] is the most potent among the four stereoisomers. Furthermore, TAK-187 was found to exert a strong and selective inhibitory effect on the sterol synthesis in *Candida albicans* as compared with that in rat liver.

Key words optically active antifungal azole; 1,2,4-triazolone; stereoisomer; stereocontrolled synthesis; antifungal activity; TAK-187

In the course of our search for new antifungal azoles, we designed optically active azolone derivatives depicted by the general formula I. In a previous report, we described the stereocontrolled synthesis of triazolone (Ia,b) and tetrazolone (Ic) derivatives, as well as their potent antifungal activity against *Candida albicans* (*C. albicans*) *in vitro* and *in vivo*.¹⁾ Among these azolones, 2-[(1*R*,2*R*)-2-(2,4-difluorophenyl)-2-hydroxy-1-methyl-3-(1*H*-1,2,4-triazol-1-yl)propyl]-4-[4-(2,2,3,3-tetrafluoropropoxy)phenyl]-3(2*H*,4*H*)-1,2,4-triazolone [(1*R*,2*R*)-1: TAK-187] was selected as a candidate for clinical trials.

In a previous study of optically active 2,3-disubstituted-1-triazolyl-2-butanol antifungals with the general formula II (Chart 1), we clarified the relationship between

stereochemistry and the antifungal activity against *C. albicans*, and reported that the target enzyme, cytochrome P450_{14DM}, recognized the configuration of the chiral centers: (2*R*,3*R*)-enantiomers showed the most potent activity.^{2a,b)} Thus, we prepared the three stereoisomers of TAK-187 [(1*S*,2*S*)-, (1*R*,2*S*)- and (1*S*,2*R*)-1; Chart 2] to examine differences in activity among the stereoisomers. In this paper, we describe the stereocontrolled synthesis of these isomers and the comparison of their *in vitro* and *in vivo* antifungal activities against *C. albicans* with those of TAK-187. In addition, the sterol biosynthesis-inhibitory activities in *C. albicans* and rat liver were measured to determine the degree of selectivity for fungal and mammalian P450. Furthermore, the four isomers [(1*R*,2*R*)-,

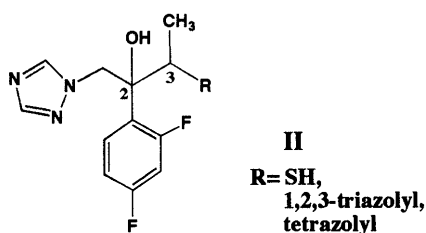
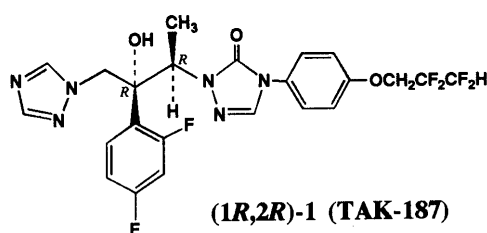
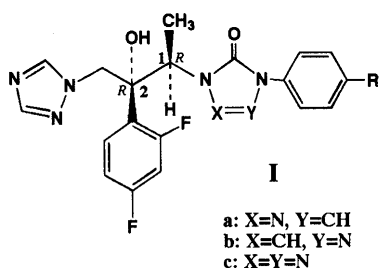


Chart 1

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(1*S*,2*S*)-, (1*R*,2*S*)- and (1*S*,2*R*)-1] were assessed for growth-inhibitory activity *in vitro* using a variety of fungal species and strains to investigate the antifungal spectrum.

Chemistry

The synthetic route to TAK-187 [(1*R*,2*R*)-1] and its stereoisomers [(1*S*,2*R*)-, (1*S*,2*S*)- and (1*R*,2*S*)-1] is illustrated in Chart 2. The starting material is the oxiranyl-(1*R*)-ethanol **2**, which is a diastereomeric mixture in the ratio of *ca.* 4:1.^{2a)} As reported previously,¹⁾ TAK-187 [(1*R*,2*R*)-1] was prepared using the major component in **2** *via* a stereocontrolled route as follows: **2** → (1*R*,2'*R*)-**3** → (1*R*,2'*R*)-**4b** → (1*S*,2'*R*)-**4a** → (1*S*,2'*R*)-**4b**

→ (1*S*,2'*R*)-**4c** → (1*R*,2*S*)-**5** → (1*R*,2*R*)-**1**. We exploited this methodology of stereocontrolled synthesis in order to obtain the three stereoisomers. First, we undertook the synthesis of (1*S*,2*R*)-**1** by utilizing the (1*R*,2'*R*)-oxiranyl-ethanol (1*R*,2'*R*)-**4b**, which is an intermediate in the synthesis of TAK-187. This alcohol was converted to the triflate (1*R*,2'*R*)-**4c** by treatment with trifluoromethanesulfonic anhydride (Tf₂O). *S*N2 displacement with 4-[4-(2,2,3,3-tetrafluoropropoxy)phenyl]-3(2*H*,4*H*)-1,2,4-triazolone (H-TAZ) in the presence of sodium hydride (NaH) gave (1*S*,2*S*)-**5**, and subsequent oxirane ring-opening with the anion of 1*H*-1,2,4-triazole afforded the desired product (1*S*,2*R*)-**1**.

The synthesis of the isomers (1*S*,2*S*)- and (1*R*,2*S*)-1

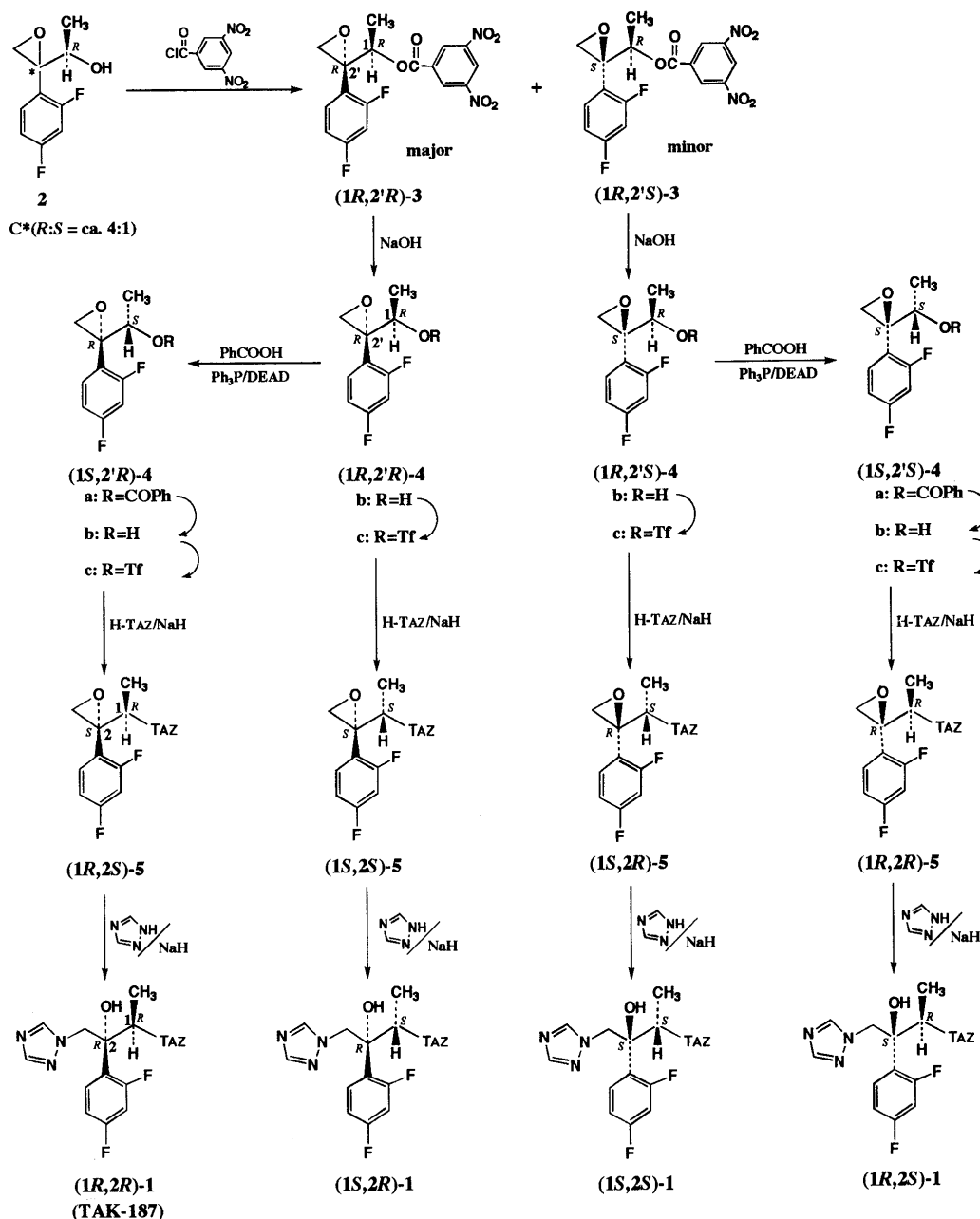


Chart 2

Table 1. 2-[2-(2,4-Difluorophenyl)-2-hydroxy-1-methyl-3-(1*H*-1,2,4-triazol-1-yl)propyl]-4-[4-(2,2,3,3-tetrafluoropropoxy)phenyl]-3(2*H*,4*H*)-1,2,4-triazolones (**1**)

No.	Yield (%)	mp (°C) (Solv.) ^{a)}	Formula	Analysis (%)			¹ H-NMR (in CDCl ₃) δ	IR (KBr) cm ⁻¹	[α] _D {°C} MeOH (c)	de ^{b)} (%)	ee ^{c)} (%)
				Calcd	(Found)						
				C	H	N					
(1 <i>R</i> ,2 <i>R</i>)- 1 ^{d)}	67	154—155 (EA-IPE) 150—151 (IPE)	C ₂₃ H ₂₀ F ₆ N ₆ O ₃	50.93 (50.91)	3.72 3.84	15.49 15.47	1.30 (3H, d, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 4.37 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 15 Hz), 4.40 (2H, tt, <i>J</i> = 11.8, 1.4 Hz), 5.02 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 15 Hz), 5.09 (1H, q, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 5.47 (1H, s), 6.07 (1H, tt, <i>J</i> = 53, 4.8 Hz), 6.75—6.88 (2H, m), 7.07 (2H, dt, <i>J</i> = 9, 2.2 Hz), 7.53 (2H, dt, <i>J</i> = 9, 2.2 Hz), 7.50—7.64 (1H, m), 7.69 (1H, s), 7.75 (1H, s), 7.95 (1H, s)	1716, 1697, 1618, 1558, 1517, 1506	−22.0° {20} (1.0)	>99.9	>99.9
(1 <i>S</i> ,2 <i>S</i>)- 1	63	153—154 (EA-IPE)	C ₂₃ H ₂₀ F ₆ N ₆ O ₃	50.93 (51.04)	3.72 3.72	15.49 15.49	1.30 (3H, d, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 4.37 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 15 Hz), 4.40 (2H, tt, <i>J</i> = 11.8, 1.4 Hz), 5.02 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 15 Hz), 5.09 (1H, q, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 5.47 (1H, s), 6.07 (1H, tt, <i>J</i> = 53, 4.8 Hz), 6.75—6.88 (2H, m), 7.07 (2H, dt, <i>J</i> = 9, 2.2 Hz), 7.53 (2H, dt, <i>J</i> = 9, 2.2 Hz), 7.50—7.64 (1H, m), 7.69 (1H, s), 7.75 (1H, s), 7.95 (1H, s)	1716, 1695, 1619, 1558, 1517, 1502	+21.8° {20} (1.0)	99.5	99.9
(1 <i>R</i> ,2 <i>S</i>)- 1	87	Oil	C ₂₃ H ₂₀ F ₆ N ₆ O ₃	50.93 (50.63)	3.72 3.80	15.49 15.30	1.62 (3H, d, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 4.36 (2H, tt, <i>J</i> = 11.8, 1.4 Hz), 4.61 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 14 Hz), 4.92 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 14 Hz), 5.08 (1H, q, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 5.91 (1H, s), 6.03 (1H, tt, <i>J</i> = 53.2, 4.6 Hz), 6.62—6.80 (2H, m), 6.98 (2H, dt, <i>J</i> = 9, 2.2 Hz), 7.24 (2H, dt, <i>J</i> = 9, 2.2 Hz), 7.25—7.41 (1H, m), 7.40 (1H, s), 7.70 (1H, s), 8.09 (1H, s)	1708, 1681, 1616, 1558, 1516	+56.5° {20} (1.0)	99.9	99.7
(1 <i>S</i> ,2 <i>R</i>)- 1	75	Oil	C ₂₃ H ₂₀ F ₆ N ₆ O ₃	50.93 (50.51)	3.72 3.86	15.49 15.34	1.62 (3H, d, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 4.35 (2H, tt, <i>J</i> = 11.8, 1.4 Hz), 4.61 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 14 Hz), 4.91 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 14 Hz), 5.07 (1H, q, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 5.90 (1H, s), 6.03 (1H, tt, <i>J</i> = 53.2, 4.6 Hz), 6.60—6.80 (2H, m), 6.98 (2H, dt, <i>J</i> = 9, 2.2 Hz), 7.24 (2H, dt, <i>J</i> = 9, 2.2 Hz), 7.25—7.42 (1H, m), 7.43 (1H, s), 7.69 (1H, s), 8.08 (1H, s)	1708, 1681, 1616, 1558, 1517	−57.0° {20} (1.0)	99.7	99.8

a) Recrystallization solvent: EA, ethyl acetate; IPE, diisopropyl ether. b) Determined by the HPLC method using an ODS column (YMC, A-303). c) Determined by the HPLC method using Chiralpak AD. d) Reported in reference 1.

was then carried out using the minor component in **2**, which was isolated in the form of the 3,5-dinitrobenzoate (1*R*,2'*S*)-**3** with high purity by silica gel chromatography followed by recrystallization. This dinitrobenzoate was hydrolyzed with an aqueous solution of sodium hydroxide to give the (1*R*,2'*S*)-oxiranylethanol (1*R*,2'*S*)-**4b**. The enantiomer of TAK-187, (1*S*,2'*S*)-**1**, was synthesized from this oxiranylethanol *via* a route similar to that described above, *i.e.*, (1*R*,2*S*)-**4b**→(1*R*,2'*S*)-**4c**→(1*S*,2*R*)-**5**→(1*S*,2*S*)-**1**. Isomer (1*R*,2*S*)-**1** was prepared from (1*R*,2'*S*)-**4b** *via* substantially the same reactions as reported for TAK-187: (1*R*,2'*S*)-**4b**→(1*S*,2'*S*)-**4a**→(1*S*,2'*S*)-**4b**→(1*S*,2'*S*)-**4c**→(1*R*,2*R*)-**5**→(1*R*,2*S*)-**1**. The analytical results for the three stereoisomers are shown in Table 1 together with those for TAK-187.

To compare accurately the biological activities of the stereoisomers, it was considered essential that each isomer had to be of the highest possible diastereomeric (% de) and enantiomeric (% ee) purity. The % de and % ee were determined by HPLC on an octadecyl silica (ODS) column and a chiral stationary column, respectively. As shown in Table 1, the four stereoisomers each showed high diastereomeric and enantiomeric purity.

Antifungal Activity

In vitro and *in vivo* antifungal activities of TAK-187 [(1*R*,2*R*)-**1**] and its three stereoisomers [(1*S*,2*S*)-

(1*R*,2*S*)- and (1*S*,2*R*)-**1**] against two strains of *C. albicans*, IFO 0583 and TA, are shown in Table 2. The *in vitro* assay using *C. albicans* was carried out by a paper disc method (Disc) using yeast nitrogen base (YNB) medium and by an agar-dilution method using YNB and RPMI 1640³⁾ media. In the case of the agar-dilution method using RPMI 1640 medium, the agar plates were incubated under an atmosphere containing 20% CO₂.⁴⁾ The activities are expressed as the diameter (mm) of the growth inhibition zone around a paper disc soaked in a 1 mg/ml solution of the test compound and as the minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC, μg/ml). The ability to inhibit the hyphal outgrowth of *C. albicans* IFO 0583 in serum was measured *in vitro* and is expressed in terms of MICH (μg/ml). *C. albicans* TA-infected mice were used for the *in vivo* assay, and the activity is expressed in terms of ED₅₀ (mg/kg, the dose of the test compound which allows 50% of infected mice to survive after a single oral dose). In addition, the ability of these four stereoisomers to inhibit sterol 14α-demethylase of *C. albicans* TA (cell lysate) and rat liver (cell lysate) was examined *in vitro*. The results (IC₅₀, μg/ml) of this assay are also shown in Table 2.

All the stereoisomers prepared inhibited the growth of *C. albicans* IFO 0583 and TA in the paper disc assay. The observed MIC values for *C. albicans* IFO 0583 and TA on YNB medium were 50—100 μg/ml. No clear differences

Table 2. Biological Activities of Stereoisomers

Compound	Antifungal activity against <i>C. albicans</i>								Sterol biosynthesis-inhibitory activity (Cell lysate)	
	<i>In vitro</i>						<i>In vivo</i>			
	Disc (mm)		MIC (μg/ml)				MICH (μg/ml)	ED ₅₀	IC ₅₀ (μg/ml)	
	IFO 0583 YNB	TA YNB	IFO 0583 YNB	TA YNB	IFO 0583 RPMI 1640 ^{a)}	TA RPMI 1640 ^{a)}	IFO 0583	TA <i>p.o.</i> (mg/kg) ^{b)}	<i>C. albicans</i> TA	Rat liver
(1 <i>R</i> ,2 <i>R</i>)- 1	41	42 ^{c)}	50	50 ^{c)}	0.004	0.008	<0.05 ^{c)}	0.32 ^{c)}	0.0020	6.60
(1 <i>S</i> ,2 <i>S</i>)- 1	26	25	50	50	2	2	5	> 16	0.036	31.0
(1 <i>R</i> ,2 <i>S</i>)- 1	20	20	100	50	8	8	20	> 16	0.97	207
(1 <i>S</i> ,2 <i>R</i>)- 1	30	28	100	100	1	0.5	1.25	10.4	0.0049	38.4

a) Determined under 20% CO₂. b) Administered in the form of 0.2% carboxymethylcellulose (CMC) suspension. c) Reported in reference 1.

Table 3. *In Vitro* Antifungal Activity of Stereoisomers

Species and strain		MIC ($\mu\text{g/ml}$, RPMI 1640 agar) ^{a)}			
		Compound 1			
		(1 <i>R</i> ,2 <i>R</i>)	(1 <i>S</i> ,2 <i>S</i>)	(1 <i>R</i> ,2 <i>S</i>)	(1 <i>S</i> ,2 <i>R</i>)
<i>C. albicans</i>	TIMM 1756	0.016	4	16	2
<i>C. albicans</i>	TIMM 1850	0.008	2	16	2
<i>C. albicans</i>	TIMM 0239	0.016	4	32	2
<i>C. albicans</i>	CA 382	0.25	32	>64	32
<i>C. albicans</i>	CA 383	4	>64	>64	>64
<i>Candida tropicalis</i>	IFO 0587	0.25	>64	>64	32
<i>Candida tropicalis</i>	IFO 10241	0.25	>64	>64	32
<i>Candida glabrata</i>	IFO 0622	2	16	>64	8
<i>Candida krusei</i>	IFO 0584	1	>64	>64	64
<i>Candida krusei</i>	IFO 1162	4	>64	>64	>64
<i>Candida utilis</i>	IFO 0619	0.25	8	>64	1
<i>Cryptococcus neoformans</i>	TIMM 1740	0.13	32	64	32
<i>Cryptococcus neoformans</i>	TIMM 1855	0.25	64	>64	32
<i>Saccharomyces cerevisiae</i>	IFO 0209	0.5	32	>64	16
<i>Aspergillus fumigatus</i>	437 ^{b)}	2	>64	>64	>64
<i>Aspergillus fumigatus</i>	TIMM 1728 ^{b)}	2	>64	>64	>64
<i>Aspergillus fumigatus</i>	IFO 6344 ^{b)}	2	>64	>64	>64
<i>Aspergillus niger</i>	IFO 4414 ^{b)}	2	>64	>64	>64

a) Determined under 20% CO₂. b) Determined under air.

in activity were seen among the stereoisomers in these *in vitro* assays, although (1*R*,2*R*)-**1** seemed somewhat more potent than the others in the paper disc assay.

On the other hand, the MIC values determined on RPMI 1640-agar medium under 20% CO₂ and the MICH values measured in serum were clearly dependent on the configuration. The (1*R*,2*R*)-isomer (TAK-187) showed the lowest MIC (0.004–0.008 $\mu\text{g/ml}$) on RPMI 1640 and the strongest inhibitory activity (MICH, <0.05 $\mu\text{g/ml}$) against hyphal outgrowth. The order of potency was (1*R*,2*R*) >> (1*S*,2*R*) > (1*S*,2*S*) > (1*R*,2*S*).

In the *in vivo* assay, activity was also found to be dependent on the configuration. The potency substantially paralleled the MIC (RPMI 1640) and MICH values, and the order was (1*R*,2*R*) >> (1*S*,2*R*) > (1*S*,2*S*), (1*R*,2*S*).

A definite difference among the stereoisomers was observed in the inhibition of sterol biosynthesis in *C. albicans* TA. The order of the inhibitory potency was (1*R*,2*R*) >> (1*S*,2*R*) > (1*S*,2*S*) > (1*R*,2*S*), which parallels the antifungal activities described above. The (1*R*,2*R*)-isomer caused the most potent inhibition (IC₅₀, 0.002 $\mu\text{g/ml}$). On

the other hand, the effects of the four isomers on the sterol synthesis in rat liver were weak (IC₅₀, 6.6→207 $\mu\text{g/ml}$) compared with those in *C. albicans*. Thus, the (1*R*,2*R*)-isomer (TAK-187) provides the most potent and selective inhibition of fungal cytochrome P450_{14DM}.

The antifungal spectra of the stereoisomers are shown in Table 3. The MIC values for yeast type fungi such as *Candida*, *Cryptococcus* and *Saccharomyces* species were determined by an agar dilution method using RPMI 1640 medium under 20% CO₂, and MIC values for *Aspergillus* species were measured using the same medium under ordinary air. As can be seen in Table 3, the (1*R*,2*R*)-isomer (TAK-187) has the most potent antifungal activity against various fungi. These results indicate that the (1*R*,2*R*)-configuration provides the best fit for the binding site of the target enzyme P450 in a broad range of fungi.

In conclusion, we confirmed that the (1*R*,2*R*)-configuration of TAK-187 is a key factor for potent antifungal activity as well as for a broad antifungal spectrum. Further data on the biological activities of this new antifungal agent will be reported in a separate paper.⁵⁾

Experimental

Melting points were determined using a Yanagimoto melting point apparatus and are uncorrected. IR spectra were measured with a JASCO IR-810 spectrometer. ¹H-NMR spectra were taken on a Varian Gemini-200 spectrometer with tetramethylsilane as an internal standard. The following abbreviations are used: s=singlet, d=doublet, t=triplet, m=multiplet, br=broad. The secondary ion mass spectra (SIMS) were measured with a Hitachi M-80A mass spectrometer. The optical rotations were recorded with a JASCO DIP-181 or DIP-370 digital polarimeter.

Reactions were run at room temperature unless otherwise noted and followed by TLC on Silica gel 60 F₂₅₄ precoated TLC plates (E. Merck) or by HPLC using an ODS column (A-303, 4.6 mm i.d. × 250 mm, Yamamura Chemical Laboratories Co.). Standard work-up procedures were as follows. The reaction mixture was partitioned between the indicated solvent and water. Organic extracts were combined and washed in the indicated order using the following aqueous solutions; water, 5% aqueous sodium bicarbonate solution (aqueous NaHCO₃) and saturated NaCl solution (brine). Extracts were dried over MgSO₄, filtered and evaporated *in vacuo*.

Chromatographic separations were carried out on Silica gel 60 (0.063–0.200 mm, E. Merck) using the indicated eluents.

The % de of the four stereoisomers was determined by HPLC using an ODS column under the following conditions: mobile phase, methanol (MeOH)–H₂O–acetic acid, 7:3:0.02, v/v; flow rate, 0.8 ml/min; detection, UV at 262 nm.

The % ee of the four stereoisomers was determined by HPLC using a chiral stationary phase column (Chiralpak AD 4.6 mm i.d. × 250 mm, Daicel Chemical Industries, Tokyo, Japan) under the following conditions: mobile phase, hexane–isopropyl alcohol, 1:1, v/v; flow rate, 1.0 ml/min; detection, UV at 262 nm.

The *in vitro* antifungal activity (Disc on YNB,^{2a} MIC on YNB^{2c}) and MIC assay^{2b}), *in vivo* antifungal activity against candidiasis^{2a}) and sterol biosynthesis-inhibitory activity for cell lysate^{2b}) were measured by the methods described in our preceding reports.

[(1*R*)-1-[(2*R*)-2-(2,4-Difluorophenyl)-2-oxiranyl]ethyl] 3,5-Dinitrobenzoate [(1*R*,2'*R*)-3] and [(1*R*)-1-[(2*S*)-2-(2,4-Difluorophenyl)-2-oxiranyl]ethyl] 3,5-Dinitrobenzoate [(1*R*,2'*S*)-3] (1*R*)-1-[(2,4-Difluorophenyl)-2-oxiranyl]ethanol¹⁾ (2, 18.5 g) and 3,5-dinitrobenzoyl chloride (24.5 g) were dissolved in CH₂Cl₂ (300 ml). Triethylamine (Et₃N, 10.7 g) was added dropwise to this solution at 0°C over a period of 10 min. After having been stirred for 1 h, the mixture was washed (water, brine), concentrated *in vacuo* and diluted with a mixture of CH₂Cl₂ and diisopropyl ether (isoPr₂O). The precipitated crystals were collected by filtration and purified by silica gel column chromatography (CH₂Cl₂) followed by recrystallization from CH₂Cl₂–isoPr₂O to give (1*R*,2'*R*)-3¹⁾ (14.48 g, 40%) as colorless needles. The mother liquor obtained upon filtration was evaporated *in vacuo* and submitted to chromatography on silica gel (hexane–isoPr₂O, 1:2, v/v). The fractions containing (1*R*,2'*S*)-3 were combined and concentrated *in vacuo*. The residue was recrystallized from CH₂Cl₂–isoPr₂O to give (1*R*,2'*S*)-3 (2.7 g, 7.4%) as pale yellow plates. From the second eluate, an additional amount of (1*R*,2'*R*)-3 (6.59 g, 18%) was obtained.

(1*R*,2'*S*)-3: mp 91°C. ¹H-NMR (CDCl₃) δ: 1.46 (3H, d, *J*=6.4 Hz), 2.95 (1H, d, *J*=5 Hz), 3.28 (1H, d, *J*=5 Hz), 5.41 (1H, q, *J*=6.4 Hz),

6.78–7.00 (2H, m), 7.51 (1H, dt, *J*=6.4, 8.4 Hz), 9.08 (2H, d, *J*=2.2 Hz), 9.23 (1H, t, *J*=2.2 Hz). *Anal.* Calcd for C₁₇H₁₂F₂N₂O₇: C, 51.79; H, 3.10; N, 7.10. Found: C, 51.71; H, 3.12; N, 7.04. IR (KBr): 1715, 1625, 1612, 1540, 1502, 1340 cm⁻¹. [α]_D²⁰ +14.4° (*c*=1.0, CHCl₃).

[(1*R*)-1-[(2*S*)-2-(2,4-Difluorophenyl)-2-oxiranyl]ethyl] 4b, Table 4] A 1*N* aqueous NaOH solution (30.4 ml) was added dropwise to a solution of (1*R*,2'*S*)-3 (6 g) in MeOH (120 ml). The mixture was stirred for 40 min, then 1*N* HCl (15.2 ml) was added. The whole was concentrated *in vacuo* and worked up (AcOEt; brine) to afford a residue, which was purified by silica gel column chromatography [hexane–ethyl acetate (AcOEt), 2:1, v/v] to give (1*R*,2'*S*)-4b (3.04 g, quantitative) as a pale yellow oil.

[(1*S*)-1-[(2*S*)-2-(2,4-Difluorophenyl)-2-oxiranyl]ethyl] Benzoate [(1*S*,2'*S*)-4a] Triphenylphosphine (Ph₃P, 6.55 g), benzoic acid (Ph-COOH, 3.05 g) and diethyl azodicarboxylate (DEAD, 4.35 g) were added to an ice-cooled solution of (1*R*,2'*S*)-4b (2.0 g) in tetrahydrofuran (THF, 50 ml). The mixture was stirred for 16 h, then worked up (AcOEt; water), and the residue was chromatographed on silica gel (hexane–AcOEt, 30:1→10:1, v/v) to give (1*S*,2'*S*)-4a (2.91 g, 96%) as a colorless oil. ¹H-NMR (CDCl₃) δ: 1.38 (3H, dd, *J*=6.6, 1.4 Hz), 2.90 (1H, d, *J*=5 Hz), 3.24 (1H, d, *J*=5 Hz), 5.40 (1H, q, *J*=6.6 Hz), 6.80–7.00 (2H, m), 7.40–7.65 (4H, m), 8.00–8.08 (2H, m). IR (neat): 1720, 1616, 1600, 1508, 1270 cm⁻¹. [α]_D²⁴ +48.7° (*c*=2.0, MeOH).

[(1*S*)-1-[(2*S*)-2-(2,4-Difluorophenyl)-2-oxiranyl]ethyl] 4b, Table 4] A 28% sodium methoxide (NaOMe)–MeOH (1.84 g) solution was added to an ice-cooled solution of (1*S*,2'*S*)-4a (2.9 g) in MeOH (50 ml). The mixture was stirred for 4 h, then 1*N* HCl (9.5 ml) was added. The whole was concentrated *in vacuo* and worked up (AcOEt; water, brine) to afford a residue, which was submitted to silica gel column chromatography (hexane–AcOEt, 2:1, v/v) to give (1*S*,2'*S*)-4b (1.83 g, 96%) as a colorless oil.

2-[(1*S*,2*R*)-2-(2,4-Difluorophenyl)-2,3-epoxy-1-methylpropyl]-4-[4-(2,2,3,3-tetrafluoropropoxy)phenyl]-3(2*H*,4*H*)-1,2,4-triazolone [(1*S*,2*R*)-5: Table 5] Tf₂O (0.93 ml) was added dropwise to a stirred solution of (1*R*,2'*S*)-4b (1.0 g) and diisopropylethylamine (isoPr₂NEt, 0.96 ml) in CH₂Cl₂ (20 ml) over a period of 3 min at –78°C under a nitrogen atmosphere. The resulting mixture was stirred for 20 min at –60°C and then for 20 min at –20°C. It was diluted with hexane (20 ml) and submitted to flash chromatography on silica gel (CH₂Cl₂–hexane, 1:1, v/v). The eluates containing the triflate [(1*R*,2'*S*)-4c] were combined and concentrated to about 7 ml.⁷⁾ This solution was added to a stirred mixture of H-TAZ (1.16 g), NaH (60% in oil, 150 mg) and *N,N*-dimethylformamide (DMF, 30 ml) at –15°C. The resulting mixture was stirred at –15°C for 20 min and then at 0°C for 20 min. The mixture was worked up (AcOEt; water, brine). The residue was purified by column chromatography on silica gel (hexane–AcOEt, 2:1, v/v) to give (1*S*,2*R*)-5 (0.94 g, 40%) as a colorless oil.

The oxiranylethanol (1*R*,2'*R*)-4b¹⁾ and (1*S*,2'*S*)-4b were converted to the corresponding triflates, (1*R*,2'*R*)-4c and (1*S*,2'*S*)-4c, which were allowed to react with H-TAZ in a manner similar to that described above to give (1*S*,2*S*)-5 and (1*R*,2*R*)-5 (Table 5), respectively.

2-[(1*S*,2*S*)-2-(2,4-Difluorophenyl)-2-hydroxy-1-methyl-3-(1*H*-1,2,4-triazol-1-yl)propyl]-4-[4-(2,2,3,3-tetrafluoropropoxy)phenyl]-3(2*H*,4*H*)-1,2,4-triazolone [(1*S*,2*S*)-1: Table 1] A solution of (1*S*,2*R*)-5 (0.93 g)

Table 4. 1-[(2,4-Difluorophenyl)-2-oxiranyl]ethanols (4b)

No.	Yield (%)	Appearance	¹ H-NMR (in CDCl ₃) δ	IR neat (cm ⁻¹)	[α] _D (CHCl ₃ , <i>c</i>) {°C}
(1 <i>S</i> ,2' <i>R</i>)-4b ^{a)}	92	Oil	1.20 (3H, dd, <i>J</i> =6.4, 1 Hz), 2.24 (1H, d, <i>J</i> =2 Hz), 2.92 (1H, d, <i>J</i> =5 Hz), 3.28 (1H, d, <i>J</i> =5 Hz), 4.12 (1H, dq, <i>J</i> =6.4, 2 Hz), 6.77–6.95 (2H, m), 7.32–7.44 (1H, m)	3420, 2980, 1615, 1600, 1500, 1425	–33.3° (2.4) ^{b)} {24}
(1 <i>R</i> ,2' <i>S</i>)-4b	100	Oil	1.20 (3H, dd, <i>J</i> =6.2, 1 Hz), 2.22 (1H, d, <i>J</i> =2 Hz), 2.92 (1H, d, <i>J</i> =5 Hz), 3.28 (1H, d, <i>J</i> =5 Hz), 4.12 (1H, dq, <i>J</i> =6.2, 2 Hz), 6.77–6.95 (2H, m), 7.32–7.43 (1H, m)	3420, 2980, 1619, 1508, 1427	+30.2° (2.1) {22}
(1 <i>S</i> ,2' <i>S</i>)-4b	96	Oil	1.16 (3H, dd, <i>J</i> =6.6, 1.2 Hz), 1.85 (1H, d, <i>J</i> =8 Hz), 2.80 (1H, d, <i>J</i> =5 Hz), 3.30 (1H, d, <i>J</i> =5 Hz), 4.00–4.20 (1H, m), 6.74–6.94 (2H, m), 7.35–7.47 (1H, m)	3440, 1636, 1618, 1604, 1508, 1425	+52.7° (2.2) {25}
(1 <i>R</i> ,2' <i>R</i>)-4b	100	Oil	1.17 (3H, dd, <i>J</i> =6.6, 1.2 Hz), 1.83 (1H, d, <i>J</i> =8 Hz), 2.80 (1H, d, <i>J</i> =5.2 Hz), 3.30 (1H, d, <i>J</i> =5.2 Hz), 4.01–4.17 (1H, m), 6.75–6.93 (2H, m), 7.36–7.48 (1H, m)	3420, 1615, 1600, 1505, 1425	–52.3° (2.6) ^{c)} {25}

a) Reported in reference 1. b) –26.4° (Reported in reference 6). c) –54.9° (Reported in reference 6).

Table 5. 2-[2-(2,4-Difluorophenyl)-2,3-epoxy-1-methylpropyl]-4-[4-(2,2,3,3-tetrafluoropropoxy)phenyl]-3(2*H*,4*H*)-1,2,4-triazolones (**5**)

No.	Yield ^{a)} (%)	Appearance	Formula	Analysis (%)			¹ H-NMR (in CDCl ₃) δ	IR neat (cm ⁻¹)	[α] _D {°C} MeOH (c)
				Calcd	(Found)				
				C	H	N			
(1 <i>R</i> ,2 <i>S</i>)- 5 ^{b)}	57	Oil	C ₂₁ H ₁₇ F ₆ N ₃ O ₃	53.28 (52.88)	3.62 3.68	8.88 8.65)	1.47 (3H, d, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 2.88 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 4.8 Hz), 3.16 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 4.8 Hz), 4.38 (2H, t, <i>J</i> = 11.8 Hz), 4.94 (1H, q, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 6.07 (1H, tt, <i>J</i> = 53, 4.8 Hz), 6.75–6.90 (2H, m), 6.95–7.12 (2H, m), 7.28–7.55 (3H, m), 7.63 (1H, s)	1716, 1705, 1616, 1558, 1516, 1257	+14.6° {20} (1.0)
			[SIMS 474 (MH ⁺)]						
(1 <i>S</i> ,2 <i>R</i>)- 5	40	Oil	C ₂₁ H ₁₇ F ₆ N ₃ O ₃	53.28 (53.31)	3.62 3.57	8.88 9.15)	1.46 (3H, d, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 2.88 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 4.8 Hz), 3.16 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 4.8 Hz), 4.37 (2H, tt, <i>J</i> = 11.8, 1.4 Hz), 4.94 (1H, q, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 6.05 (1H, tt, <i>J</i> = 53, 4.8 Hz), 6.74–6.90 (2H, m), 6.95–7.05 (2H, m), 7.28–7.48 (3H, m), 7.61 (1H, s)	1714, 1704, 1618, 1558, 1517, 1400	–15.6° {22} (1.1)
(1 <i>R</i> ,2 <i>R</i>)- 5	25	Oil	C ₂₁ H ₁₇ F ₆ N ₃ O ₃	53.28 (52.85)	3.62 3.36	8.88 9.04)	1.51 (3H, d, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 2.85 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 4.8 Hz), 3.34 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 4.8 Hz), 4.37 (2H, t, <i>J</i> = 11.8 Hz), 4.69 (1H, q, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 6.06 (1H, tt, <i>J</i> = 53, 4.6 Hz), 6.70–6.89 (2H, m), 6.95–7.10 (2H, m), 7.30–7.50 (3H, m), 7.55 (1H, s)	1714, 1706, 1700, 1616, 1558, 1519	+87.8° {23} (1.7)
(1 <i>S</i> ,2 <i>S</i>)- 5	38	Oil	C ₂₁ H ₁₇ F ₆ N ₃ O ₃	53.28 (53.14)	3.62 3.67	8.88 8.99)	1.51 (3H, d, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 2.85 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 4.8 Hz), 3.33 (1H, d, <i>J</i> = 4.8 Hz), 4.37 (2H, tt, <i>J</i> = 11.8, 1.4 Hz), 4.68 (1H, q, <i>J</i> = 7 Hz), 6.06 (1H, tt, <i>J</i> = 53, 4.6 Hz), 6.70–6.90 (2H, m), 6.95–7.05 (2H, m), 7.32–7.46 (3H, m), 7.55 (1H, s)	1712, 1706, 1700, 1618, 1556, 1515	–89.0° {22} (1.6)

a) Based on **4b**. b) Reported in reference 1.

in DMF (5 ml) was added to a stirred mixture of 1*H*-1,2,4-triazole (0.34 g), NaH (60% in oil, 0.16 g) and DMF (5 ml). The resulting mixture was stirred for 8 h at 50 °C and worked up (AcOEt; water, brine) to afford a residue, which was purified by silica gel column chromatography (hexane–AcOEt, 1:1→1:4, v/v) followed by recrystallization from AcOEt–isoPr₂O to give (1*S*,2*S*)-**1** (0.673 g, 63%) as colorless crystals.

The reaction of (1*S*,2*S*)-**5** and (1*R*,2*R*)-**5** with 1*H*-1,2,4-triazole was carried out in a manner similar to that described above to give (1*S*,2*R*)-**1** and (1*R*,2*S*)-**1** (Table 1), respectively.

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References and Notes

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- 3) RPMI 1640 was purchased from Gibco BRL.
- 4) The agar dilution method for *in vitro* susceptibility testing of antifungal azoles under 20% CO₂ was developed in our laboratories. This susceptibility test gave *MIC* values nearly equal to those determined by the broth dilution method proposed by the National Committee for Clinical Laboratory Standards (NCCLS protocol, NCCLS Document M27-P, Vol. 12, No. 25). Details of the experimental procedure will be described in a separate paper; Yoshida T., Jono K., Okonogi K., *Antimicrob. Agents Chemother.*, submitted.
- 5) Okonogi K., Hayashi R., Obita J., Tsuchimori N., Tasaka A., Kitazaki T., Itoh K., *Antimicrob. Agents Chemother.*, in preparation.
- 6) An alternative method for the synthesis of the (1*S*,2'*R*)- and (1*R*,2'*R*)- oxiranylethanols has already been reported: a) Konosu T., Miyaoka T., Tajima Y., Oida S., *Chem. Pharm. Bull.*, **39**, 2241–2246 (1991); b) Sankyo Co., European Patent 0332387A1 (1989) [*Chem. Abstr.*, **113**, 231379y (1990)]; c) Sankyo Co., Japan. Patent, laid open to the public, 3-128338 (1991) [*Chem. Abstr.*, **115**, 231852p (1991)].
- 7) Considerable decomposition was observed during attempted isolation of the triflate. Therefore, the concentrated eluate containing the triflate was used directly in the subsequent nucleophilic displacement reaction.