(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau

(43) International Publication Date
10 February 2005 (10.02.2005)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2005/012327 A2

(51) International Patent Classification[7]: C07H 19/10, A61K 31/7068, 31/7072, A61P 35/00

(21) International Application Number: PCT/GB2004/003148

(22) International Filing Date: 20 July 2004 (20.07.2004)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
0317009.9 21 July 2003 (21.07.2003) GB

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(81) Designated States *(unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available)*: AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NA, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States *(unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available)*: ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

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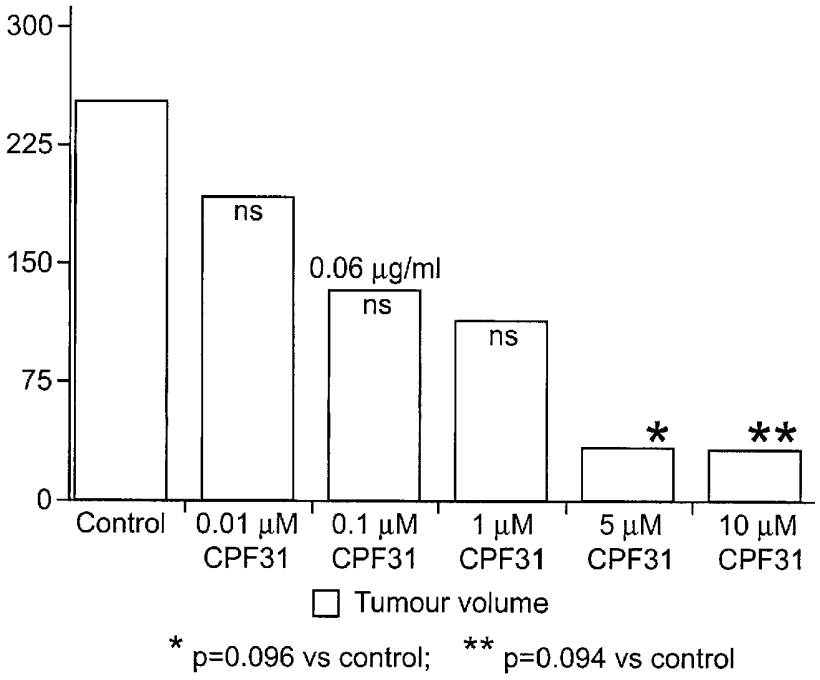
(54) Title: CHEMICAL COMPOUNDS



(57) Abstract: Phosphoramidate derivatives of nucleotides and their use in the treatment of cancer are described. The base moieties of, for example, each of deoxyuridine, cytarabine, gemcitabine and citidine may be substituted at the 5-position. The phosphoramidate moiety has attached to the P atom an aryl-O moiety and an α-amino acid moiety. The α-amino acid moiety may correspond to or be derived from either a naturally occurring or a non-naturally occurring amino acid.

WO 2005/012327 A2

Published:
— *without international search report and to be republished upon receipt of that report*

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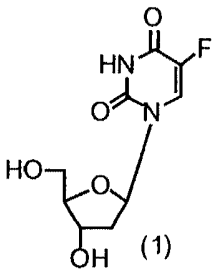
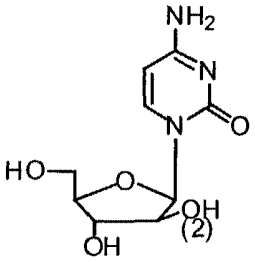
Chemical Compounds

The present invention relates to nucleotide derivatives and their use in the treatment of cancer.

Nucleoside analogues such as fluorodeoxyuridine (1), cytarabine (2) and gemcitabine (3) are well established as anticancer agents. They function as inhibitors of DNA synthesis after activation to their 5'-phosphate form.



(1)



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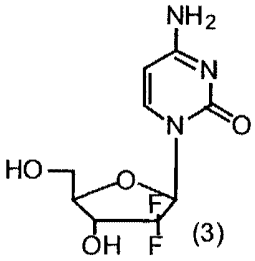


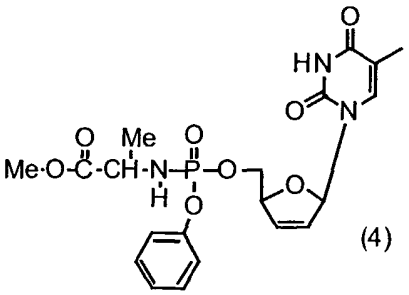
(3)

The free bioactive phosphate forms do not in general represent useful drugs due to their poor membrane permeation. In an effort to circumvent this a number of phosphate pro-drug approaches have been reported [Rosowsky et al, J. Med. Chem., 1982, 25, 171-8; Hong et al, J. Med. Chem., 1985, 28, 171-8; Kodama et al, Jpn. J. Cancer Res., 1989, 80, 679-85; Hong et al, 1979, 22, 1428-32; Ji et al, J. Med. Chem., 1990, 33, 2264-70; Jones et al, Nucleic Acids Res., 1989, 17, 7195-7201; Hunston et al, J. Med. Chem., 1984, 27, 440-4; Lorey et al, Nucleosides Nucleotides, 1997, 16, 1307-10; Farquhar et al, J. Med. Chem., 1983, 26, 1153-8; Shuto et al, Nucleosides Nucleotides, 1992, 11, 437-46; Le Bec et al, Tet. Letts., 1991, 32, 6553-6; Phelps et al, J. Med. Chem., 1980, 23, 1229-32].

In general the phosphate prodrugs have biological properties and therapeutic activities that are similar to, or somewhat lower than, the parent nucleoside analogue.

We have carried out extensive work in this area from an antiviral perspective, largely on dideoxy nucleosides, and have reported a phosphoramidate approach which has been widely adopted for the delivery of bio-active phosphates of antiviral nucleosides.

An example is the phosphoramidate (4) derived from anti-HIV d4T (5).



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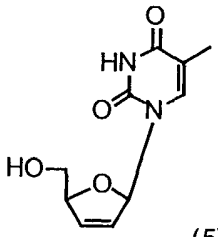
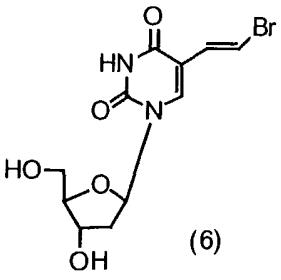


(5)

We observed the effect of variations in the ester [McGuigan et al, AVCC, 1998, 9, 473-9], amino acid [McGuigan et al, Antiviral Res., 1997, 35, 195-204; AVCC, 2000, 11, 111-6], and aryl [Siddiqui et al, J. Med. Chem., 1999, 42, 393-9] regions of the phosphoramidate, as well as the effect of amino acid stereochemistry [McGuigan et al, AVCC, 1996, 7, 184-8], phosphate stereochemistry [Allender et al, Analytica Chim. Acta, 2001, 435, 107-13] and nucleoside [Balzarini et al, BBRC, 1996, 225, 363-9; McGuigan et al, BioOrg. Med, Chem. Lett., 1996, 6, 2369-62; McGuigan et al, Bioorg. Med. Chem. Lett., 2000, 10, 645-7].

This work has lead to the optimal description of phenyl methoxyalaninyl phosphoramidate as the prototype pro-moiety for the intracellular delivery of bioactive nucleotides [Balzarini et al, PNAS, 1996, 93, 7295-9; McGuigan et al, J. Med. Chem., 1996, 39, 1748-53].

Lackey et al [Biochem Pharmacol., 2001, 61, 179-89] have reported the application of our phosphoramidate pro-drug method for antiviral nucleosides to the anti-herpetic agent bromovinyl-2'-deoxyuridine (BVDU) (6). In particular, they have found that the phenyl methoxyalaninyl phosphoramidate (7) has significant anti-cancer activity. This is in marked contrast to the parent (antiviral) nucleoside (6).



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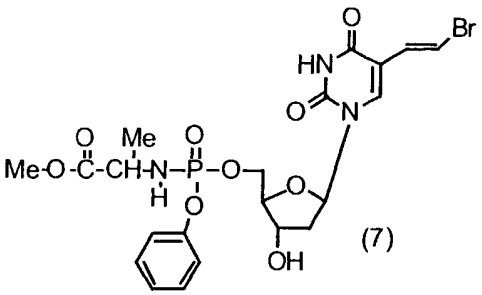
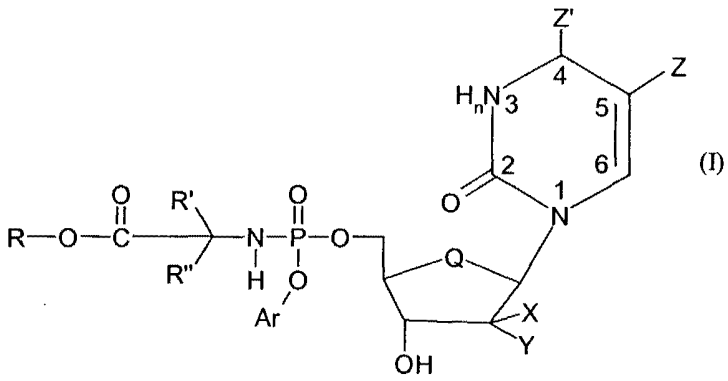


(7)

Limited SAR has been presented by this group, although in their patent applications [WO0239952, EP1200455, CA2317505, US6339151, EP116797, AU2451601] they claim a series of general variations in the base, and phosphate regions. However, based on our prior art, the phenyl methoxyalaninyl phosphoramidate (7) would be anticipated to be amongst the most optimal of structures.

Surprisingly, it has now been found that other derivatives of oxyamino acid-phosphoramidate nucleoside analogues are significantly more potent in the treatment of cancer than the phenyl methoxyalaninyl phosphoramidate (7).

According to a first aspect of the present invention there is provided a compound of formula I:



wherein:

R is selected from the group comprising alkyl, aryl and alkylaryl;

R' and R" are, independently, selected from the group comprising H, alkyl and alkylaryl, or R' and R" together form an alkylene chain so as to provide, together with the C atom to which they are attached, a cyclic system;

Q is selected from the group comprising –O- and $-CH_2-$;

X and Y are independently selected from the group comprising H, F, Cl, Br, I, OH and methyl ($-CH_3$);

Ar is a monocyclic aromatic ring moiety or a fused bicyclic aromatic ring moiety, either of which ring moieties is carbocyclic or heterocyclic and is optionally substituted;

Z is selected from the group comprising H, alkyl and halogen; and

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