Semi-synthesis of secologanin analogues

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Abstract—Secologanin, a complex iridoid terpene natural product, was derivatized at the vinyl and ester functional groups using cross-metathesis and transesterification methodology, respectively.

Terpene indole alkaloids are derived from the terpene iridoid glycoside secologanin (1) (Fig. 1). Secologanin is a densely functionalized molecule containing one free and two masked aldehyde groups, along with a vinyl and ester moiety and a glycosidic linkage.1 In the first step of terpene indole alkaloid biosynthesis, strictosidine synthase catalyzes a Pictet–Spengler condensation between secologanin and tryptamine.2,3 The glucose is next hydrolyzed, and the resulting hemiacetal, previously masked by the glycosidic linkage, triggers the rearrangement of the molecule.4,5 Secologanin therefore plays a key role in generating the complex structure of terpene indole alkaloids and it has been previously used as an enantiomeric template to chemically synthesize alkaloid natural products.6,7

Here we report in detail the semi-synthesis of a series of secologanin analogues, in which two of the key functional groups of secologanin have been modified (Fig. 1). These analogues will be used to evaluate the substrate requirements of the terpene indole alkaloid biosynthetic pathway, and potentially, will be used in the enzymatic synthesis of terpene indole alkaloid derivatives. Secologanin was obtained by an optimized multi-gram-scale isolation protocol from a local source of Lonicera tatarica.8

Olefin cross metathesis (CM) was used to introduce a variety of alkyl groups at the vinyl position of secologanin (i.e., compounds 6a–d, Scheme 1). Although we hoped to use unprotected secologanin directly, attempts to incorporate alkyl groups onto the vinyl functionality of the unprotected molecule failed, most likely due to the insolubility of secologanin in solvents used for olefin CM. Following reported procedures, the glycan was per-acetylated and the aldehyde protected as an acetal to provide the ‘protected’ secologanin, compound 3.9

Reactions of 3 with Grubbs catalyst second generation (5 mol %) in the presence of a range of alkenes of different lengths (a–d) afforded compounds 4a–d in good yield (4a 90%, 4b 92%, 4c 97%, and 4d 90%; Scheme 1).10 In every case, we observed (>95%) the E stereoisomer. After derivatization at the vinyl position, the products were deprotected in a two-step procedure: the acetal was first hydrolyzed by treatment with 0.2 M hydrochloric acid in THF, and the acetates were subsequently removed under mild basic conditions to afford compounds 6a–d in yields of approximately 50% (two steps). Alternatively, compound 4b was subjected to catalytic hydrogenation to reduce the alkene (7b), and was then deprotected to yield a reduced secologanin derivative 8b.12

A series of ester derivatives were obtained by transesterification13 of secologanin (compounds 9a–f, Scheme 2). Derivatization of the ester moiety of secologanin is

Figure 1. Derivatization of secologanin 1.

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complicated by the fact that after hydrolysis of the ester, a cyclic hemiacetal can form (Scheme 2).\textsuperscript{14}

Secologanin was dissolved in a variety of alcohols in the presence of NaHCO\textsubscript{3}, and kept at 90 °C for 3 h (Scheme 2). Under these mild conditions, the ethyl (9a, 65%), allyl (9b, 57%), propargyl (9c, 84%), butyl (9d, 93%), and isopropyl (9e, 45%) ester derivatives of unprotected secologanin were obtained. In the same manner, a tert-butyl N-(3-hydroxypropyl)carbamate linker was introduced (9f, 62%). This general trans-esterification method will be used to introduce a variety of functional groups or chemical tags on secologanin.\textsuperscript{15}

Qualitative studies evaluated the enzymatic activity of a few of these unnatural secologanin derivatives with strictosidine synthase and strictosidine glucosidase.\textsuperscript{8} Briefly, while bulkier groups at the vinyl position completely prevented turnover (compounds 6b,d), transesterification at the methyl ester with larger alkyl groups (compounds 9a,b) yielded substrates that were turned over by the enzyme to yield the corresponding strictosidine analogues, suggesting that this is a promising position for derivatization for enzymatic biosynthesis studies.

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References and notes

8. McCoy, E.; Galan, M. C.; O’Connor, S. E. submitted for publication.
10. Based on recovered starting material. Typical yields of recovered starting material for these reactions was 50%.
11. Characterization of compounds 6a-d (hydrated aldehyde observed in 1D NMR spectra): Compound 6a: H NMR (CD\textsubscript{3}OD, 500 MHz): 7.43 (d, 1H, J = 2 Hz), 5.77–5.66 (m, 1H), 5.49–5.42 (m, 1H), 5.29 (dd, 1H, J = 9.5, 15.3 Hz), 4.93 (m, 1H), 4.67 (dd, 1H, J = < 1, 8.0 Hz), 4.51 (dd, 1H, J = 4.3, 7.3 Hz), 3.98–3.86 (m, 2H), 3.84–3.78 (m, 1H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 3.74–3.64 (m, 1H), 3.61 (m, 1H), 3.20 (t, 1H, J = 7.9 Hz), 3.04–2.85 (m, 1H), 2.76–2.61 (m, 1H), 2.20–2.03 (m, 2H), 1.80–1.74 (m, 1H), 1.64–1.56 (m, 1H), 1.46–1.24 (m, 8H), 0.97–0.84 (m, 3H).

ESI (C\textsubscript{23}H\textsubscript{36}NaO\textsubscript{10}): m/z 495.4 [M+Na]\textsuperscript{+}. Compound 6b: \textsuperscript{1}H NMR (CD\textsubscript{3}OD, 500 MHz): 7.43 (d, 1H, J = 2 Hz), 5.77–5.65 (m, 1H), 5.50–5.43 (m, 1H), 5.30 (dd, 1H, J = 9.2, 15.3 Hz), 4.95 (m, 1H), 4.67 (dd, 1H, J = < 1, 8.0 Hz), 4.51 (dd, 1H, J = 4.3, 7.3 Hz), 3.98–3.86 (m, 2H), 3.85–3.78 (m, 1H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 3.74–3.64 (m, 1H), 3.20 (t, 1H, J = 8.0 Hz),...
13. For a review on transesterification see: Otera, J.

15. Characterization of Compounds

12. Characterization of compound


Characterization of Compounds 9a-f: Compound 9a: 1H NMR (CD3OD, 500 MHz): 9.74 (s, 1H), 7.43 (s, 1H), 5.79–5.70 (m, 1H), 5.60–5.48 (m, 1H), 5.44 (dd, 1H, J = 2.5, 9.8 Hz), 5.36–5.22 (m, 1H), 4.68 (d, 1H, J = 7.9 Hz), 4.68–4.58 (m, 1H), 4.20–4.12 (m, 1H), 4.06–3.98 (m, 1H), 3.92–3.86 (m, 2H), 3.74–3.63 (m, 1H), 3.40–3.10 (m, 1H), 2.74–2.64 (m, 1H), 2.10 (dd, 1H, J = 6.7, 2.8 Hz), 1.98 (dd, 1H, J = 4.0, 2.5 Hz), 1.50 (dd, 2H, J = 9.8, 13.4 Hz), 1.34–1.20 (m, 3H), 3.91 (s, 1H), 5.83 (d, 1H, J = 7.6 Hz), 5.78–5.70 (m, 1H), 5.63–5.44 (m, 2H), 5.38–5.14 (m, 3H), 4.67 (d, 1H, J = 7.8 Hz), 4.74–4.53 (m, 2H), 4.39–4.28 (m, 1H), 4.24–4.13 (m, 2H), 3.89 (d, 1H, J = 9.9 Hz), 3.71–3.61 (m, 1H), 3.20–3.10 (m, 2H), 2.76–2.60 (m, 1H), 1.98–1.83 (m, 1H), 1.80–1.65 (m, 1H). ESI (C21H25NaO10): m/z 425.5 [M+Na]+. Compound 9b: 1H NMR (CD3OD, 500 MHz): 9.66 (s, 1H), 7.46 (s, 1H), 6.01–5.80 (m, 1H), 5.78–5.67 (m, 1H), 5.63–5.44 (m, 2H), 5.38–5.14 (m, 3H), 4.67 (d, 1H, J = 7.8 Hz), 4.74–4.53 (m, 2H), 4.39–4.28 (m, 1H), 4.24–4.13 (m, 2H), 3.89 (d, 1H, J = 9.9 Hz), 3.71–3.61 (m, 1H), 3.20–3.10 (m, 2H), 2.76–2.60 (m, 1H), 1.98–1.83 (m, 1H), 1.80–1.65 (m, 1H). ESI (C21H25NaO10): m/z 437.1 [M+Na]+. Compound 9c: 1H NMR (CD3OD, 500 MHz): 9.60 (s, 1H), 7.62 (s, 1H), 5.70–5.62 (m, 1H), 5.61–5.48 (m, 1H), 5.38–5.27 (m, 1H), 4.69 (t, 2H, J = 7.9 Hz), 4.47 (t, 1H, J = 2.44 Hz), 4.40 (d, 1H, J = 2 Hz), 3.91 (dd, 1H, J =c < 2, 11.9 Hz), 3.71–3.63 (m, 1H), 3.44–3.24 (m, 2H), 3.24–3.16 (m, 1H), 2.98–2.94 (m, 1H), 2.68 (dd, 1H, J = 5.8, 9.8 Hz), 2.06–1.98 (m, 1H), 1.93–1.85 (m, 1H), 1.83–1.74 (m, 1H), 1.58–1.46 (ddd, 1H, J = 10.1, 9.8, 13.4 Hz). ESI (C21H25NaO10): m/z 435.1 [M+Na]+. Compound 9d: 1H NMR (CD3OD, 500 MHz): 9.59 (s, 1H), 7.60 (s, 1H), 5.80–5.70 (m, 1H), 5.61–5.48 (m, 1H), 5.37–5.22 (m, 1H), 4.69 (t, 2H, J = 7.9 Hz), 4.67–4.58 (m, 1H), 4.16–4.08 (m, 1H), 4.01–3.94 (m, 1H), 3.91 (dd, 1H, J =< 2, 11.9 Hz), 3.71–3.64 (m, 1H), 3.64–3.58 (m, 1H), 3.45–3.24 (m, 2H), 3.24–3.15 (m, 1H), 3.02–2.94 (m, 1H), 2.68 (m, 1H), 2.10–1.92 (m, 1H), 1.78–1.56 (2H), 1.52–1.38 (m, 2H), 1.02–0.90 (m, 3H). ESI (C21H25NaO10): m/z 453.1 [M+Na]+. Compound 9e: 1H NMR (CD3OD, 500 MHz): 9.67 (s, 1H), 7.43 (s, 1H), 5.80–5.68 (m, 1H), 5.63–5.46 (m, 1H), 5.38–5.20 (m, 3H), 4.66 (dd, 1H, J = 2.3, 7.9 Hz), 4.74–4.58 (m, 1H), 3.90 (d, 1H, J = 11.9 Hz), 3.71–3.61 (m, 2H), 3.24–3.10 (m, 3H), 2.76–2.60 (m, 1H), 2.20–1.85 (m, 1H), 1.78–1.58 (m, 1H), 1.29 (s, 6H). ESI (C21H25NaO10): m/z 439.2 [M+Na]+. Compound 9f: 1H NMR (CD3OD, 500 MHz): 9.72 (s, 1H), 7.64 (s, 1H), 5.80–5.70 (m, 1H), 5.69–5.48 (m, 1H), 5.42 (dd, 1H, J = 2.1, 9.8 Hz), 5.38–5.12 (m, 3H), 4.72–4.60 (m, 1H), 4.68 (d, 1H, J = 7.6 Hz), 4.13 (m, 1H), 4.15 (m, 1H), 3.91 (d, 1H, J = 11.9 Hz), 3.72–3.60 (m, 1H), 3.24 (m, 2H), 3.41–3.26 (m, 1H), 2.71 (m, 2H), 2.02 (d, 1H, J = 12.5 Hz), 0.99 (t, 9H, J = 6.7 Hz). ESI (C21H25NaO10): m/z 554.2 [M+Na]+.