

Benzo[e]pyridoindoles, novel inhibitors of the aurora kinases

Hoang T.M.-N., Favier B., Valette A., Barette C., Chi H.N., Lafanechere L., Grierson D.S., Dimitrov S., Molla A.

INSERM: U823 Institut Albert Bonniot, Université Joseph Fourier, La Tronche, France; GREPI/TIMC-IMAG CNRS: UMR 5525 - Université Joseph Fourier, Grenoble, France; CNRS: 5088 Université Paul Sabatier, Toulouse, France; CEA, DSV, Centre de Criblage Pour Molécules Bio-Actives, Grenoble, France; UMR 176 CNRS-Institut Curie, Institut Curie, Orsay, France; Faculty of Biology, Hanoi University of Sciences, VNU, Viet Nam; UJF Site Santé- La Tronche, Institut Albert Bonniot, INSERM U823 Eq 4, BP170, 38 042 Grenoble, Cedex 9, France

Abstract: Aurora kinases are serine/threonine protein kinases that are involved in cancer development and are important targets for cancer therapy. By high throughput screening of a chemical library we found that benzo[e]pyridoindole derivatives inhibited Aurora kinases. The most potent compound (compound 1) was found to be an ATP competitive inhibitor, which inhibited *in vitro* Aurora kinases at the nanomolar range. It prevented, *ex vivo*, the phosphorylation of Histone H3, induced mitosis exit without chromosome segregation, known phenomena observed upon Aurora B inactivation. This compound was also shown to affect the localization of Aurora B, since in the presence of the inhibitor the enzyme was delocalized on the whole chromosomes and remained associated with the chromatin of newly formed nuclei. In addition, compound 1 inhibited the growth of different cell lines derived from different carcinoma. Its IC₅₀ for H358 NSCLC (Non-Small Cancer Lung Cells), the most sensitive cell line, was 145 nM. Furthermore compound 1 was found to be efficient towards multicellular tumor spheroid growth. It exhibited minimal toxicity in mice while it had some potency towards aggressive NSCLC tumors. Benzo[e]pyridoindoles represent thus a potential new lead for the development of Aurora kinase inhibitors. ©2009 Landes Bioscience.

Author Keywords: Aurora kinase; Chromosomal passenger complex; Mitosis; Mitotic slippage; Pyridoindoles; Small-molecule inhibitors

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Correspondence Address: Molla, A.; UJF Site Santé- La Tronche, Institut Albert Bonniot, INSERM U823 Eq 4, BP170, 38 042 Grenoble, Cedex 9, France; email: annie.molla@ujf-grenoble

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Authors with affiliations:

- Hoang, T.M.-N., INSERM: U823 Institut Albert Bonniot, Université Joseph Fourier, La Tronche, France, Faculty of Biology, Hanoi University of Sciences, VNU, Viet Nam
- Favier, B., GREPI/TIMC-IMAG CNRS: UMR 5525 - Université Joseph Fourier, Grenoble, France
- Valette, A., CNRS: 5088 Université Paul Sabatier, Toulouse, France
- Barette, C., CEA, DSV, Centre de Criblage Pour Molécules Bio-Actives, Grenoble, France
- Chi, H.N., UMR 176 CNRS-Institut Curie, Institut Curie, Orsay, France
- Lafanechère, L., CEA, DSV, Centre de Criblage Pour Molécules Bio-Actives, Grenoble, France
- Grierson, D.S., UMR 176 CNRS-Institut Curie, Institut Curie, Orsay, France
- Dimitrov, S., INSERM: U823 Institut Albert Bonniot, Université Joseph Fourier, La Tronche, France
- Molla, A., INSERM: U823 Institut Albert Bonniot, Université Joseph Fourier, La Tronche, France, UJF Site Santé- La Tronche, Institut Albert Bonniot, INSERM U823 Eq 4, BP170, 38 042 Grenoble, Cedex 9, France

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