Cathepsin B Inhibitory Tetraene Lactones from the Fungus Talaromyces wortmannii

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Wortmannilactones $E-H (1-4)$, four new cathepsin B inhibitors, were produced and isolated from the culture of the soil filamentous fungus Talaromyces wortmannii. Their structures and relative configurations were elucidated on the basis of 1D- and 2D-NMR techniques, three of them (1, 2, and 4) posses an oxabicyclo[2.2.1]heptane moiety. Compounds 1 – 4 showed inhibitory activities against cathepsin B with IC_{50} values of 4.3, 6.5, 13.0, and 6.0 μ M, respectively.

Introduction. – Cathepsins, known as a class of lysosomal protein-degrading enzymes, play significant roles in specific physiological activities [1]. Among them, cathepsin B has been documented to be important in many metastatic tumors and the inhibition of its activity resulted in a decreased invasiveness of tumor cells [2]. Therefore, cathepsin B is a possible therapeutic target for the control of tumor progression. In anticipation of the usefulness of cathepsin B inhibitors, we screened against the enzyme new compounds isolated from filamentous fungi, which have been proved to be important sources of significant biological activities [3] [4]. As a result, a fungus Talaromyces wortmannii from the soil of Chuxiong, in China's Yunnan Province, showed potent activity. Bioassay-guided fractionation afforded four novel tetraene lactones (wortmannilactones; $1-4$), three of them $(1, 2,$ and $4)$ posses an oxabicyclo[2.2.1]heptane moiety in their structures. Recently, several oxabicyclo[2.2.1]heptane compounds with inducing neuritogenesis against neuroblastoma and anticoccidial activities have been reported $[5-8]$.

A few previous chemical investigations of Talaromyces wortmannii and its asexual stage Penicillium wortmannii have been described. These studies resulted in the isolation of some quinones $[9-11]$, wortmannolone $[12]$, wortmannin, which showed phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase inhibition activities [13], and wortmannilactones A – D with *in vitro* antitumor activities [14]. In this work, we report the details of the isolation, structure elucidation, and preliminary biological evaluation of compounds $1 - 4$ for cathepsin B.

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Results and Discussion. – T. wortmannii was cultured in solid-state medium for 14 days. The cultures were extracted with AcOEt, and the extract was separated by sequential chromatography on silica gel and reverse phase HPLC to afford compounds $1 - 4.$

The molecular formula of wortmannilactone E (1) was determined as $C_{26}H_{34}O_5$ by high-resolution FAB-MS, requiring 10 degrees of unsaturation. The UV spectrum of 1 in MeOH exhibited absorption bands at 297, 312 and 326 nm, indicating the presence of a conjugated tetraene moiety [15]. ¹³C-NMR (CD₃OD) and DEPT spectra confirmed the presence of 26 C-atoms, including a keto CO group, an ester CO group, ten olefinic CH groups, four quaternary C-atoms, three $sp³$ CH groups, and seven Me groups. $H-NMR$ (CD₃OD) and HMQC spectra of 1 displayed resonances for 33 H-atoms, including six singlet Me groups and one doublet Me group, four CH groups, and eight olefinic H-atoms. The H-atoms of 1 were assigned unambiguously to their respective Catoms via the HMQC spectrum.

The constitutional formula of 1 was established by straightforward analysis of 1 Hand ¹³C-NMR, COSY, HMQC, and HMBC spectra (*Table 1*). Analyses of the ¹H- and 13C-NMR spectra revealed a partial structure, which contained an oxabicyclo[2.2.1] heptane substructure [7]. The ¹H-NMR, COSY, and HMBC data led to the identification of a conjugated tetraene substructure $(C(8)$ to $C(15)^1$) which was substituted by a Me group at $C(15)$. The 1 H- and 13 C-NMR data, together with the HMBC observed between $\text{H}-\text{C}(16)/\text{C}(18)$ and $\text{C}(20)$, $\text{H}-\text{C}(18)/\text{C}(16)$ and $\text{C}(20)$, and H-C(20)/C(16) showed the presence of a dihydropyrane ring which was the same as that of prugosene A1. Connection of the three fragments was established through HMBC correlations from $H-C(6)/C(8)$, $H-C(9)/C(7)$, and $H-C(16)/C(14)$, respectively.

Wortmannilactone $F(2)$ was shown to have the same molecular formula as that of 1 provided by HR-FAB-MS. Closer inspection of the ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR spectra of 2 and comparison with those of 1 revealed a number of similarities. In particular signals for the oxabicyclo[2.2.1]heptane and tetraene moieties were identical to 1. The COSY,

¹⁾ Arbitrary numbering. For systematic names, see Exper. Part.

	1				$\mathbf{2}$		
	$\delta(H)$	$\delta(C)$	HMBC $(H \rightarrow C)$ NOESY		$\delta(H)$	$\delta(C)$	NOESY
$\sqrt{2}$		173.4(s)				173.4(s)	
3		70.8(s)				70.8(s)	
$\overline{4}$		209.5(s)				209.5(s)	
5	2.81 $(qd, J=7, 2)$	44.4 (d) 4, 5-Me		$6, 5-Me,$ $7-Me$	2.82 $(qd, J=7, 2)$		44.4 (d) 6, 5-Me, 7-Me
6	4.95 $(d, J=2.5)$		$86.3(d)$ 2, 3, 4, 5, 8	5, 5-Me	4.97 $(d, J=2.5)$	86.3 (d) 5, 9,	5-Me
7		59.5 (s)				59.5 (s)	
8	5.71 $(d, J=15)$		131.3 (d) 3, 6, 7, 10, $7-Me$	9, 3-Me, $7-Me$	5.71 $(d, J=15)$	131.2 (d) 9	
9	6.38 $(dd,$ $J = 15, 11$	$135.5(d)$ 7, 11		6, 7-Me	6.40 (dd, $J=15, 11$	135.6 (d) 6	
10	6.23 $(dd,$ $J = 15, 11$	$133.5(d)$ 8, 10			6.26 (dd, $J=15, 11$	133.4 (d)	
11	6.36 (dd, $J = 15, 11$	134.9 (d) 12, 13			6.38 (dd, $J=15, 11$	134.9 (d)	
12	6.23 (dd,		$134.8(d)$ 10, 11, 14		6.23 (dd,	134.8 (d)	
13	$J = 15, 11$ 6.50 (dd, $J = 15, 11$	130.4 (d)			$J=15, 11$ 6.52 (dd, $J = 15, 11$	130.7 (d) 15-Me	
14 15	5.84 $(d, J = 11)$	136.0(s)	130.4 (d) 12, 16, 15-Me	16	5.97 $(d, J = 11)$	136.4 (s)	130.5 (d) 16,17-Me
16	4.26 (s)		$81.5(d)$ 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 15-Me, $17-Me$	14, 15-Me, $4.22(s)$ 17-Me, $20-Me$			81.8 (d) 14, 20-Me, 15-Me, $17-Me$
17		135.6(s)				134.3 (s)	
18	5.53 $(d, J=1.5)$		$130.9(d)$ 16, 19, 20, 17-Me, 19-Me	17-Me, 19-Me	5.52 $(d, J=1.5)$	132.4 (d) 17-Me,	$19-Me$
19		68.1 (s)				69.8 (s)	
20	3.47 $(q, J=6.5)$		73.1 (d) 16, 19, 19-Me, $20-Me$	$19-Me$, $20-Me$	3.58 $(q, J=6.5)$	72.5 (d) 19-OH,	$20-Me$
$3-Me$	1.01(s)		$5.0(q)$ 2, 3, 4, 7	8	1.01(s)	5.0 (q) 8	
5-Me	1.12 $(d, J = 7)$	11.7 (<i>q</i>) 4, 5, 6		5,6	1.13 $(d, J=7)$	11.7 (q) 5	
$7-Me$	1.09(s)	$16.9(q)$ 3, 6, 7		5, 8, 9	1.10(s)	16.9 (q) 5, 9	
$15-Me$	1.80 (br. s)		$15.7(q)$ 14, 15, 16	16, 20	1.82 (br. s)	$15.8(q)$ 13, 16	
$17-Me$	1.55 (br. s)		20.1 (q) 16, 17, 18	14, 16, 18	1.52 (br. s)		19.8 (q) 14, 16, 18
19-Me	1.07(s)		$25.6(q)$ 18, 19, 20	20	1.05(s)	22.0 (q) 18	
$19-OHa$)					3.16(s)		20
$20-Me$	1.09 $(d, J = 5.5)$	14.4 (<i>q</i>) 19, 20		16, 20	1.03 $(d, J=6)$	14.7 (q) 16, 20	

Table 1. ${}^{I}H\text{-}NMR$ (500 Hz) and ${}^{I3}C\text{-}NMR$ (125 Hz) Data of Wortmannilactone E (1) and Wortmannilactone $F(2)$ (in CD₃OD). δ in ppm, J in Hz.

HMQC, and HMBC data led to the unambiguous assignments of the ${}^{1}H$ and ${}^{13}C$ signals, which revealed the constitution of 2 to be the same as that of 1. Thus 2 was considered to be a stereoisomer of 1.

The assignment of the relative configuration in 1 and 2 arose from the NOESY spectral data. The relative NOESY correlations of $H - C(5)/Me - C(7)^1$, $H - C(8)/$ $Me- C(3)$, and H-C(5)/H-C(6) revealed that the relative configuration of the oxabicyclo[2.2.1] heptane moiety is $(35*, 5R*, 6S*, 7R*)$ which is consistent with that of prugosene $A(1-3)$ with the exception of the C(7) position [8]. The four C=C bonds in the two compounds were all assigned the (E) geometry on the basis of the wellresolved H-atom coupling constants $(J = 15.0 \text{ Hz})$. The difference of 1D-NMR chemical shift between 1 and prugosene A1 in the dihydropyran moiety suggests that they have a different relative configuration at $C(19)$. $H-C(16)$ showed a NOESY correlation with $H - C(14)$ and $Me - C(20)$, whereas $Me - C(15)$ in the *trans* position of the H – C(14) exhibited a NOESY correlation with H – C(20), indicating that H – C(16) and $Me-C(20)$ should be *cis* disposed (*Fig. 1*). The presence of NOESY relationships between $H-C(20)$ and $Me-C(19)$ in 1 and $H-C(20)$ and $HO-C(19)$ in 2 (in (D_6) DMSO) indicated that the $Me-C(19)$ and $Me-C(20)$ were trans in 1 and cis in 2. Therefore, the relative configuration at the three stereogenic centers of the dihydropyran moiety of 1 and 2 was identified as $(16S*, 19S*, 20S*)$ and $(16S*, 19R*, 20S*)$, respectively.

Fig. 1. Key NOE correlations of compounds 1 (top) and 3 (bottom)

The molecular formula of wortmannilactone G (3) was established as $C_{27}H_{38}O_6$ on the basis of HR-FAB-MS data. The UV spectrum and NMR data showed the presence of a tetraene group, the (E) configurations of the C=C bonds were deduced from their large coupling constant $(J=15 \text{ Hz})$ with the exception that the signals of $H - C(11)^1$ and H-C(12) were overlapped. The NMR data, together with HMBC correlations of $H-C(3)$ to C(2), C(8), and $Me-C(4)$, $H-C(5)$ to C(8), $H-C(16)$ to C(18), C(20), $Me - C(15)$, and $Me - C(17)$, and $Me - C(17)$ to $C(16)$ and $C(18)$ showed the presence of a 2,3-dimethylated γ -lactone substituted with a 1-carboxyethyl group in γ -position (at $C(5)$) and of a dihydropyran moiety, which was the same as in prugosene B2 (Table 2). In the NOESY experiment, the $Me-C(4)$ showed correlations with $H-C(6)$ and $H-C(9)$, whereas $H-C(8)$ exhibited a correlation with $H-C(3)$ and $H-C(5)$.

	$\mathbf{3}$		4			
	$\delta(H)$	$\delta(C)$	HMBC $(H \rightarrow C)$	NOESY	$\delta(H)$	$\delta(C)$
$\sqrt{2}$		179.1 (s)				173.4(s)
3	2.75 $(q, J=7)$	47.9 (d)	$2, 4, 8, 3$ -Me, 4-Me	5, 8, 3-Me		70.8(s)
4		49.5 (s)				209.5(s)
5	4.36 $(d, J = 11)$	87.2(d)	$6, 7, 8, 4$ -Me	$3, 8, 6$ -Me	2.82 (qd, $J=7, 2)$	44.4 (d)
6	2.71 (dd, $J = 11, 7$	42.4 (d)	5, 7, 6-Me	4 -Me, 6 -Me	4.96 $(d,$ $J = 2.5$	86.3(d)
7		175.9(s)				59.5 (s)
8	5.72 $(d, J=15)$	136.7 (d)	9	$3, 5, 6$ -Me	5.68 $(d,$ $J = 15$	130.5(d)
9	6.19 $(dd,$ $J=15, 11$	132.6 (d)	10	4-Me	6.39 (dd, $J = 15, 11$	136.0 (d)
10	6.33 (dd, $J=15, 11$	135.1 (d)	9, 11		6.22 (dd, $J=15, 11$	133.2 (d)
11	$6.20 - 6.25$ $(m)^a$	132.6 (d)	10		6.39 (dd, $J = 15,11$	135.0 (d)
12	$6.20 - 6.25$ $(m)^a$	133.3 (d)	14		6.22 (dd, $J=15, 11$	132.5 (d)
13	6.53 (dd, $J=15, 11$	130.7 (d)	15		6.55 (dd, $J=15, 11$	131.0 (d)
14	6.12 $(d, J = 11)$	128.0 (d)	12, 16, 15-Me	16	6.13(d, $J = 11$	127.9(d)
15		137.8 (s)				138.0 (s)
16	3.98(s)	78.8 (d)	14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 15-Me, $17-Me$	14, 15-Me, $20-Me$	3.96(s)	78.8 (d)
17		71.2(s)				71.1(s)
18	5.29 $(dd, J=2)$	130.8(d)	16, 20, 19-Me	17-Me, 19-Me 5.29 (d,	$J = 1.5$)	130.7 (d)
19		137.3(s)				137.3(s)
20	4.12 $(q, J=7)$	74.0 (d)	16, 18, 19, 20-Me	19-Me, 20-Me $4.12 (q, J=7)$		74.0 (d)
$3-Me$	$0.90 (d, J = 7)$	7.6 (q)	2, 4	3	1.01(s)	5.0 (d)
4-Me	0.98(s)	11.9 (q)	4, 5, 8	6, 9	1.12 $(d, J=7)$	11.7 (q)
$(5-Me$ in 4)						
6 -Me $(7-Me$ in 4)	1.02 $(d, J=7)$	14.3 (q)	5, 6, 7	5, 6, 8	1.10(s)	16.9 (q)
7-Me	3.64 (s)	52.5 (q)	7			
$15-Me$	1.83(s)	16.1 (q)	14, 15, 16	13, 16, 17-Me	1.83 (br. s)	16.0 (q)
$17-Me$	0.96(s)	22.8 (q)	16, 17, 18	18, 15-Me	0.96 (br. s)	22.7 (q)
19-Me	1.58(s)	19.3 (q)	18, 19, 20	18, 20	1.52(s)	19.2 (q)
$20-Me$	1.24 $(d, J=6.5)$	17.5 (q)	19, 20	16, 20	1.24 $(d, J=6)$	17.4 (q)

Table 2. ${}^{1}H\text{-}NMR$ (500 Hz) and ${}^{13}C\text{-}NMR$ (125 Hz) Data of Wortmannilactone G (3) and Wortmanni*lactone H* (4) (in CD_3OD). δ in ppm, *J* in Hz.

a) Overlapping signals.

This, together with the large coupling constant $(J=11 \text{ Hz})$ between $H-C(5)$ and $H-C(6)$, suggesting that $H-C(3)/Me-C(4)$, $Me-C(4)/H-C(5)$, and $H-C(5)/H$ $H - C(6)$ were *trans*, respectively. In addition, NOESY correlations from $H - C(16)$ to $H - C(14)$, $Me - C(20)$ as well as from $Me - C(15)$ to $Me - C(17)$ provided evidence that $H - C(16)/Me - C(17)$ and $H - C(16)/H - C(20)$ were *trans* disposed (*Fig. 1*). Thus, the structure of G was assigned as 3, having $(3R^*4R^*5S^*6S^*16S^*17R^*20S^*)$ relative configuration.

Wortmannilactone H (4) was assigned the molecular formula as $C_{26}H_{34}O_5$ on the basis of HR-FAB-MS. The IR, ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR spectral data of 4 were closely related to those of 1 in the bicyclic ketolactone moiety and 3 in the dihydropyran ring moiety. The remaining signals also showed the presence of a tetraene, which was consistent with those of 1, 2, and 3, respectively. The (E) geometry was assigned for the C=C bonds on the basis of the large coupling constant $(J = 15 \text{ Hz})$. On the basis of these data, the structure 4 is proposed for wortmannilactone H (Table 2).

Biosynthetic studies showed that the 2,3-dimethylated γ -lactone moiety of prugosene B2 could be the product of hydrolytic opening of the lactone ring in the oxabicyclo[2.2.1] heptane substructure [8]. The *cis* disposed $Me - C(3)/Me - C(4)$ suggested that 3 should not be the product of cleaving the $C(3)/C(4)$ bond in 4, the biosynthetic pathway of 3 may be different from that of prugosene B2.

As the initial step of evaluating the biological properties of the compounds isolated in this study, compounds 1 – 4 were screened for cathepsin B inhibitory activity. The IC_{50} values of compounds 1-4 against cathepsin B were 4.3, 6.5, 13.0, and 6.0 μ M, respectively. Leupeptin, the positive control substance, had an IC_{50} value of 7.5 μ M (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2. Inhibitory activities of compounds $1-4$ against cathepsin B (leupeptin as positive control)

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Experimental Part

General. HPLC: Waters HPLC system equipped with a photo-diode array (PDA) detector. Optical rotations: Perkin-Elmer 241 polarimeter at the sodium D line (589 nm). IR Spectra: Nicolet Magna-IR 550 instrument. UV Spectra: Pharmacia Ultrospec 2100 Pro instrument. 1D- and 2D-NMR spectra: Varian Inova-500 spectrometer using standard VARIAN pulse sequences. Mass Spectra: Waters LC-MS ZQ 2000 (ESI mode) or Bruker Daltonics Apex II mass spectrometer (FAB mode).

Fungal Material. The fungus was isolated from a soil sample collected in Chuxiong of Yunnan Province, China (May, 2001). The strain was identified as *Talaromyces wortmannii* according to Pitt's description [16]. The strain was deposited with the North China Pharmaceutical Group Ltd. New Drug R&D Center with accession number F01Z0195.

Fermentation and Isolation of Wortmannilactones. T. wortmannii was fermented and the four new tetraene lactones were isolated using a procedure similar to previous work [14]. Briefly, after two stage solid-state fermentation, the solid culture (4 kg) was extracted with AcOEt (4.0 l) . The AcOEt layer was evaporated under reduced pressure to yield a residue (20.5 g). The tetraene macrolides were isolated by initial column chromatography on silica gel using CHCl₃ with increasing proportions of MeOH, followed by prep. RP-HPLC, using 80% MeCN/H2O at a flow rate of 6 ml/min and UV detection at 312 nm to afford $1(12.8 \text{ mg})$, $2(8.2 \text{ mg})$, $3(5.4 \text{ mg})$, and $4(4.8 \text{ mg})$.

Bioassay. The cathepsin B assays were carried out in triplicate according to a published method [17] with modification: 50μ of reaction buffer (100 mm AcONa, 1 mm EDTA, 4 mm dithiothreitol, pH 5.5) containing 0.0025 units of cathepsin B and 2 μ of compounds dissolved in DMSO were added to each well of a 96 well plate. After pre-incubation for 15 min at r.t., 50 μ of reaction buffer (100 μ m Z-Arg-Arg-7-amido-4-methylcoumarin) was added and incubated for 30 min at r.t. Fluorescence was measured using a microplate reader (*Wallac 1420 Victor², Perkin-Elmer Ex 355*, Em 460 nm). The IC_{50} value was defined as the concentration of sample necessary to inhibit the cathepsin B activity to 50% of the control. Leupeptin was used as a positive control substance.

Wortmannilactone $E = (4S, 7R) - 7 - (1E, 3E, 5E, 7E) - 8 - (2S, 5S, 6S) - 5, 6-Dihydro-5-hydroxy-3, 5, 6-tri-7)$ methyl-2H-pyran-2-yl]nona-1,3,5,7-tetraen-1-yl}-4,6,7-trimethyl-2-oxabicyclo[2.2.1]heptane-3,5-dione; **1**). Amorphous powder. $\left[\alpha\right]_D^{25} = -38.0$ ($c = 0.125$, MeOH). UV (MeOH): 297 (4.12), 312 (4.35), 326 (4.08) . IR (KBr): 3300, 1800 (C=O), 1754 (C=O), 1390, 970. ¹H-NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) and ¹³C-NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD): *Table 1*. ESI-MS (pos.): 449 ($[M + Na]$ ⁺). ESI-MS (neg.): 425 ($[M -$ H]⁻). HR-FAB-MS (pos.): 449.2298 ([M+Na]⁺, C₂₆H₃₄NaO $_5^+$; calc. 449.2304).

Wortmannilactone $F = (4S, 7R) -7 - {(\text{IE}, 3E, 5E, 7E) -8 - (\text{2S}, 5R, 6S) -5, 6-Dih \sqrt{\text{div} -3 - \text{div} -3, 5, 6 - \text{tr} -1}}$ methyl-2H-pyran-2-yl]nona-1,3,5,7-tetraen-1-yl}-4,6,7-trimethyl-2-oxabicyclo[2.2.1]heptane-3,5-dione; **2**). Amorphous powder. $\left[\alpha\right]_D^{25} = -65.0$ ($c = 0.178$, MeOH). UV (MeOH): 297 (4.12), 312 (4.36), 326 (4.08) . IR (KBr): 3300, 1800 (C=O), 1755 (C=O), 1390, 970. ¹H-NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) and ¹³C-NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD): *Table 1*. ESI-MS (pos.): 449 ($[M + Na]$ ⁺). ESI-MS (neg.): 425 ($[M -$ H]⁻). HR-FAB-MS (pos.): 449.2292 ($[M + Na]$ ⁺, C₂₆H₃₄NaO₅⁺; calc. 449.2304).

Wortmannilactone G $=$ Methyl $(2R)$ -2-[(3R,4R)-3-[(1E,3E,5E,7E)-8-[(2S,3R,6S)-3,6-Dihydro-3hydroxy-3,5,6-trimethyl-2H-pyran-2-yl]nona-1,3,5,7-tetraen-1-yl}-3,4-dimethyl-5-oxotetrahydrofuran-2 yl]propanoate; 3). Amorphous powder. $\lbrack a \rbrack_0^2 = -26.0$ (c = 0.159, MeOH). UV (MeOH): 297 (4.08), 312 $(4.32), 326 (4.18)$. IR (KBr): 3300, 2920, 1680 (C=O), 1390, 970. ¹H-NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) and ¹³C-NMR (125 MHz, CD₃OD): *Table 2*. ESI-MS (pos.): 459 ([$M + H$]⁺). ESI-MS (neg.): 457 ([$M -$ H]⁻). HR-FAB-MS (pos.): 459.2758 ([M+H]⁺, C₂₇H₃₉O₆⁺; calc. 459.2747).

Wortmannilactone $H = (4S, 7R) - 7 - { (1E, 3E, 5E, 7E) - 8 - } (2S, 3R, 6S) - 3, 6-Dihydro-3-hydroxy-3, 6-di$ methyl-2H-pyran-2-yl]nona-1,3,5,7-tetraen-1-yl}-4,6,7-trimethyl-2-oxabicyclo[2.2.1]heptane-3,5-dione; 4). Amorphous powder. $\left[\alpha\right]_D^{25} = -46.0$ ($c = 0.198$, MeOH). UV (MeOH): 297 (4.11), 312 (4.36), 326 (4.09) . IR (KBr): 3300, 1801 (C=O), 1754 (C=O). ¹H-NMR (500 MHz, CD₃OD) and ¹³C-NMR $(125 \text{ MHz}, \text{CD}_3 \text{OD})$: Table 2. ESI-MS (pos.): 449 $([M + \text{Na}]^+)$. ESI-MS (neg.): 425 $([M - H]^-)$. HR-FAB-MS (pos.): 449.2289 ($[M + Na]^+$, $C_{26}H_{34}NaO_5^+$; calc. 449.2304).

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