Discovery of a Potent and Novel Motilin Agonist

James J. Li,*,[†] Hann-Guang Chao,[†] Haixia Wang,[†] Joseph A. Tino,[†] R. Michael Lawrence,[†] William R. Ewing,[†] Zhengping Ma,[‡] Mujing Yan,[‡] Dorothy Slusarchyk,[‡] Ramakrishna Seethala,[‡] Huabin Sun,[‡] Danshi Li,[‡] Neil T. Burford,^{||} Robert H. Stoffel,^{||} Mary Ellen Salyan,[§] Cindy Y. Li,[§] Michael Witkus,[§] Ning Zhao,[§] Adam Rich,*,[‡] and David A. Gordon*,[‡]

Discovery Chemistry, Metabolic Disease Research, and Discovery Analytical Science, Bristol-Myers Squibb Pharmaceutical Research Institute, P.O. Box 5400, Princeton, New Jersey 08643-5400, and Lead Discovery, Bristol-Myers Squibb Pharmaceutical Research Institute, 5 Research Parkway, Wallingford, Connecticut 06492

Received October 1, 2003

A novel series of dihydro- and tetrahydrotriazolopyridazine-1,3-dione-based amino acid derivatives were identified as very potent motilin receptor agonists. Incorporating one additional phenylethyl glycinamide subunit to 1 ($EC_{50} = 660$ nM) was found to improve in vitro potency approximately 3000-fold, resulting in compound 10 (EC₅₀ = 0.22 nM). The more potent enantiomer **11A** has an EC₅₀ of 0.047 nM in the motilin receptor functional assay and a K_i of 0.7 nM in the binding assay. In addition, compound **11A** was shown to have a significantly reduced tendency to cause receptor desensitization as compared with the motilin receptor agonist ABT-229.

Introduction

The motilin receptor is a G-protein-coupled receptor (GPCR) expressed on smooth muscle and enteric neurons in the gastrointestinal (GI) tract.¹ The endogenous ligand, motilin, is a 22 amino acid peptide that is secreted by enterochromaffin cells in the small intestine and is involved in the normal regulation of coordinated motility of the GI tract.² It has been shown that intravenous infusion of motilin peptide stimulates contractile activity of GI smooth muscle and accelerates gastric emptying.^{3–6} Therefore, a motilin agonist could be utilized therapeutically for the treatment of GI hypomotility disorders such as diabetic gastroparesis and constipation type irritable bowel syndrome.^{7–8}

Although erythromycin is primarily used as an antibiotic, it can also be used clinically to stimulate GI motility.9 The prokinetic effects of erythromycin are believed to be mediated by stimulation of the motilin receptor.¹⁰ Long-term use of erythromycin, however, is limited due to its antibiotic activity. Efforts to find erythromycin analogues with functional activity at the motilin receptor and without antibiotic activity have led to the discovery of ABT-229.^{11,12} ABT-229, however, failed in several clinical trials due to lack of long-term efficacy.^{13,14} Clinical failure might be attributed to tachyphylaxis,¹⁵ i.e., a diminished response upon repeated treatment. Preliminary studies in our laboratory using cellular expression of the cloned human motilin receptor revealed that ABT-229 caused a profound tachyphylaxis after the first treatment, and a long washout period was needed for the receptor to recover. The motilin peptide desensitized the receptor to a much



Figure 1. Motilin agonist ABT-229 and HTS lead 1.

lesser extent, and receptor recovery was faster than that observed for ABT-229. We hypothesize that compounds with a similar agonism profile to that of the natural ligand motilin would be less likely to induce tachyphylaxis and thus offer a more desirable profile as a motilin agonist.

Lead Identification and Chemistry. A number of potent motilin agonists reported in the literature are erythromycin derivatives¹⁶ as exemplified by ABT-229 $(EC_{50} = 4.2 \text{ nM}; K_i = 3.4 \text{ nM}).^{17}$ Because of the tachyphylaxis displayed by ABT-229 and the potential for other potent erythromycin analogues to share this property, we decided to search for a nonmacrolide lead that might offer a different profile with respect to motilin receptor desensitization. A high throughput screen (HTS) of the BMS compound collection identified a novel (L)-phenylethyl glycinamide derivative 1 (Figure 1) as a modest motilin receptor agonist with an EC_{50} of 660 nM.

The lead compound 1 was originally prepared in a chemical library and was obtained as a mixture of two diastereomers with 90% purity.¹⁸ As part of our HTS validation process, compound 1 was resynthesized as shown in Scheme 1. (L)-Phenylethyl glycinamide 3 was prepared by converting N-Boc-(L)-phenylethylglycine 2 to corresponding *N*-Boc-(L)-phenylethylglycine carboxamide, followed by removal of the Boc group with hydrogen chloride in a mixture of dioxane and methanol.

^{*} Corresponding authors: (James Li) tel 609-818-7124, fax 609-818-6810, e-mail james.li@bms.com; (David Gordon) tel 609-818-4882, fax 609-818-7877, e-mail david.gordon@bms.com; (Adam Rich) tel 585-395-5740, e-mail: Arich@brockport.edu, current address: Department of Biological Sciences, SUNY at Brockport, Brockport, NY 14420.

[†] Discovery Chemistry. [‡] Metabolic Disease Research.

[§] Discovery Analytical Science.

[&]quot; Lead Discovery.

Scheme 1^a



*isomers were separated.

^{*a*} Reagents and conditions: (a) EDAC, HOAT, NH₄OH; (b) \sim 3 N HCl in dioxane/methanol; (c) saturated HCl in methanol; (d) EDAC, HOAT, **3**; (e) \sim 15% TFA in CH₂Cl₂; (f) PhI(CO₂CF₃)₂; (g) 1 N NaOH; (h) EDAC, HOAT, **3** and/or **4**; (i) EDAC, HOAT, **5**; (j) H₂/Pd-C; (k) TMSiCHN₂; (l) chiral separation.



Figure 2. LC/MS/MS fragment pattern for 10.

Two key intermediates **6** and **7** were prepared according to a modification of literature procedures.^{19,20} The spiro bicyclic dihydrotriazolopyridazine-1,3-dione scaffold was then constructed via a [4 + 2] cycloaddition reaction between **6** and **7** followed by basic hydrolysis of the ester to provide the late-stage intermediate acid **8**.^{21,22} Amino acid coupling between acid **8** and amine **3**, followed by Boc deprotection, gave compound **1** as a mixture of two diastereomers. The two isomers were subsequently separated to **1A** and **1B**.²³ Motilin activity resulted primarily from the second eluting isomer **1B** (Table 1).

Because methanol was used as a cosolvent in the Boc removal reaction during the preparation of glycinamide **3** (step b in Scheme 1), a small amount ($\sim 8\%$ by HPLC) of phenylethylglycine methyl ester **4** was formed. The mixtures of amide **3** and methyl ester **4** were subse-

quently used to react with carboxylic acid 8, resulting in the formation of the corresponding amides 1A and 1B, along with methyl esters 9A and 9B as side products (\sim 7% yield). Interestingly, the second eluting methyl ester **9B** was found to be a potent, functionally active motilin receptor agonist, with an EC₅₀ of 7 nM. Additional amounts of compound 9B was therefore needed for further evaluation. Pure amino methyl ester **4** was prepared directly from *N*-Boc-phenethylglycine 2 by treatment with a saturated solution of hydrogen chloride in methanol. Subsequent amide formation from amine 4 and acid 8, followed by Boc deprotection and separation, provided compound **9B**. To our surprise, the second batch of **9B** was inactive in our in vitro motilin assay when tested at concentrations up to 10 μ M. A detailed structural analyses between the two batches of 9B was carried out to determine if there were any differences. Comparison of ¹H, ¹³C and various 2D NMR spectra (COSY, HMQC, and HMBC) as well as HPLC coinjections confirmed that these two lots had the same major component, compound **9B**, in approximately 95% purity. Chiral HPLC also showed that both batches of **9B** were the same enantiomer. Further HPLC analysis revealed that even though both lots had a similar impurity profile, the first lot of methyl ester 9B contained a small impurity (0.2% by HPLC) that was not observed in the second inactive lot. Extensive LC/MS/ MS analysis indicated that the fragmentation pattern

Table 1. Summary of in Vitro Potency



^{*a*} Compounds **1**, **10**, and **11** are diastereomeric mixtures; all others are single enantiomers.

for the impurity was consistent with the dipeptide derivative **10**, with a molecular weight of 721 and a loss of 44 mass units for the terminal carboxamide group and 177 for the phenylethylglycinamide moiety (Figure 2). The proposed dipeptide analogue **10** was then synthesized by coupling acid **8** with the dipeptidyl carboxamide **5**, followed by removal of the Boc group (Scheme 1). Compound **10** was subsequently confirmed as a very potent motilin agonist with an EC₅₀ of 0.22 nM. It is evident from the result that a small amount of dipeptide **10** present in the first batch of **9B** was responsible for the motilin activity observed.

Reduction of the double bond in **10** provided tetrahydrotriazolopyridazine-1,3-dione analogue **11**. Unfortunately neither **10** nor **11**, both as diastereomeric mixtures, could be separated under a variety of conditions attempted. The problem was circumvented by repeating the last amide formation with enantiomeric pure acid **12A** and **12B**. Reduction of **8** proceeded smoothly. The resultant acid was subsequently converted to methyl ester for ease of prep-scale chiral separation.²⁴ After both enantiomerically pure methyl esters were obtained,



First Dose

Figure 3. Measurement of receptor desensitization in FLIPR Assay.

they were hydrolyzed to corresponding acids **12A** and **12B** and coupled with carboxamide **5** to yield the dipeptide analogues **11A** and **11B**, both as single isomers (Scheme 1).

Results and Discussion

In Vitro SAR Studies. Initial SAR studies were directed toward simple amino acid analogues of HTS lead **1** (Table 1). To probe the preferred stereochemistry with respect to the amino acid side chain, the corresponding (D)-phenylethyl analogues were prepared and separated as 13A and 13B, but both isomers led to a substantial loss of functional activity. Two amino acid derivatives with smaller side chains, (L)-phenylalanine in **14** and (L)-alanine in **15**, were also prepared to probe the optimal size. Similarly this modification resulted in a loss of motilin activity. To our surprise, approximately 3000-fold improvement of in vitro potency (10 vs 1) was obtained by adding one additional phenylethyl glycinamide moiety to **1**. The corresponding reduced analogue of dipeptide 10, tetrahydrotriazolopyridazine-1,3-dione 11, was also evaluated and showed a comparable in vitro potency (EC₅₀ of 0.35 vs 0.22 nM). The more potent isomer 11A gave an EC₅₀ of 0.047 nM in the motilin functional assay and was 3- and 80-fold more potent than natural ligand motilin and macrolide analogue ABT-229 (Table 1). To the best of our knowledge, **11A** is the most potent motilin agonist reported in the literature.

Tachyphylaxis. Tachyphylaxis, or receptor desensitization, is a common phenomenon with G-proteincoupled receptors when treated with an agonist.²⁵ We suspect the lack of long-term efficacy observed for ABT-229 in humans may be due to motilin receptor desensitization after multiple treatments. Therefore, finding a compound with a lower tendency to cause tachyphylaxis was identified as a key issue. Toward that end, a functional-based fluorescence imaging plate reader (FLIPR) assay was developed to measure the receptor desensitization in a HeLa cell line stably expressing the human motilin receptor. In this assay, the receptor cells were first treated with compounds at a concentration of 1- to 50-fold of their EC₅₀, followed by a washout and recovery period. The maximum functional response for these treated cells was then measured after a challenge using a high dose (i.e., 100-fold EC_{50}) of the testing compound. Treatment with the motilin peptide or erythromycin even at a relatively high concentration (50-fold EC_{50}) showed a complete recovery of receptor to the second stimulation as shown in Figure 3. ABT-

Potent and Novel Motilin Agonist

229, on the other hand, gave 73% of recovery when the cells were first treated at a concentration at its EC_{50} . The recovery was reduced to 33-36% when the first dose was at a higher concentration of 5 or 10-fold EC₅₀. It desensitized the receptor further with only 17% recovery after an initial concentration of 50-fold EC_{50} , essentially resulting in a profound down-regulation for the motilin receptor. When 11A was tested at concentrations of 1- to 10-fold EC_{50} , the receptor showed a complete recovery after 5 h. Desensitization (67% recovery) occurred only at the highest concentration tested (50-fold EC₅₀). These results suggested that ABT-229 would cause a more profound tachyphylaxis whereas compound 11A will act more like the endogenous ligand motilin, therefore offering a more desirable profile as a motilin agonist.

Conclusion

We have discovered a novel series of dihydro- and tetrahydrotriazolopyridazine-1,3-dione-based amino acid derivatives as potent motilin agonists. Addition of one phenylethyl glycinamide moiety to **1** was found to markedly improve the in vitro potency 3000-fold (i.e., **10** vs **1**). The most potent motilin agonist **11A** has an EC₅₀ of 0.047 nM in the functional assay and a K_i of 0.7 nM in the binding assay. In addition, **11A** was shown to have a lower tendency to cause tachyphylaxis of the motilin receptor as compared with ABT-229, thus exhibiting a potentially more desirable profile as a motilin receptor agonist. Motilin agonists with a profile similar to that of **11A** may be able to maintain long-term efficacy for the treatment of GI hypomotility disorders.

Experimental Section

Motilin Receptor Functional Assay (EC₅₀). HeLa-MR9 cell line stably expressing the human motilin receptor was used. The cells were grown in T-150 flask in Dulbecco's modified eagle medium (Gibco, #12320-032) containing 10% fetal bovine serum (Gibco, #16140-071), 1X MEM nonessential amino acids (Gibco, #11140-050), and 3 mg/mL G418 (Gibco, #10131-035). Hela-MR9 cells were plated into a black/clear flat bottom 96-well plate (BD Falcon #353948) at a density of 20 000 per well, and cultured for 20-24 h at 37 °C with 5% CO_2 to make them about 90% to 95% confluent. Compounds were diluted to $5 \times$ of final concentration with assay buffer (Hanks balanced salt solution without Ca²⁺ and Mg²⁺, 10 mM HEPES, pH 7.5, 0.1% BSA), and the final DMSO concentration was kept below 0.5%. When cells were confluent, the medium was aspirated from the cells. To each well was added 100 μL of dye solution made in the assay buffer, consisting of 5 μ g/ mL fluo-3 (Molecular Probes, #F-1242), 2.5 mM probenecid (Sigma, #P-8761), and 0.5% pluronic acid (Molecular Probe #P-3000) and incubated at 37 °C. After incubation for 60 min, the dye solution was aspirated, and 120 μ L of assay buffer was added to each well. The cell and compound plates were loaded in a fluorescence imaging plate reader (FLIPR), and 30 μL of compound was added to the cell plate. The intracellular Ca2+ signal was measured at a 1 s interval for first 90 s and 3 s interval for the next 3 min in the FLIPR.

Measurement of Tachyphylaxis for Motilin Receptor. Effect of compounds on HeLa-MR9 cell FLIPR functional response was used to measure the receptor desensitization (tachyphylaxis). The HeLa-MR9 cells were first treated with compounds at a concentration of 1- to 50-fold of their EC_{50} followed by a 5-h washout and recovery period. The cells were stimulated with second addition of the compound at maximum effective dose ($100 \times EC_{50}$) and Ca^{2+} signal was then measured in FLIPR.

Motilin Binding Assay (Ki). A homogeneous scintillation proximity assay (SPA) in HeLa-MR9 cell line was used to measure the motilin receptor binding constant. To a 96-well OptiPlate (Packard) were added 40 μ L of 2X SPA binding buffer (1X: 50 mM Tris-HCl, 5 mM MgCl₂, 50 mM NaCl, 5 mM KCl, 1 mM PMSF, 2 mM CHAPS, and 0.1% BSA, pH 7.6), 10 μ L of 1 mg/mL cell membranes (10 μ g), 15 μ L of 2 nM [¹²⁵I]-motilin (NEN NEX 378, 2200 Ci/mmol; or Amersham Pharmacia IM337, 2000 Ci/mmol), 15 μ L of 10X compound or unlabeled 2 μ M motilin, and 0.5 mg of PVT-WGA SPA beads in 70 μ L of 1X SPA binding buffer. Contents in 150 μ L of total volume were incubated at room temperature for 2 h. The plate was counted in a TopCount (Packard) for 1 min/well to determine radioactive ligand bound to the receptor.

General Chemistry Methods. Proton NMR spectra were recorded on a JEOL 400 or 500 MHz instrument. Analytical HPLC was performed on a Shimadzu instrument using YMC C18 5 micron 4.6 \times 50 mm column with a 4-min gradient of 0-100% solvent A (90%MeOH/10%H₂O/0.2% H₃PO₄) and 100-0% solvent B (10%MeOH/90%H₂O/0.2% H₃PO₄) with a 1-min hold. LC-MS spectra were obtained on a Shimadzu HPLC and Micromass Platform using electrospray ionization. HRMS were obtained on a Micromass LCT in lockspray with electrospray ionization. The preparative HPLC was performed on an automated Shimadzu system using the YMC ODS C18 5 μ m preparative columns with mixtures of solvent C (10% MeOH/90%H2O/0.2% TFA) and solvent D (90% MeOH/10% H₂O/ 0.2% TFA) or mixtures of solvent E (10% CH₃CN/ 90%H₂O/0.2% TFA) and solvent F (90% CH₃CN/10% H₂O/ 0.2% TFA). Preparation of intermediate compounds 3-8 and 12A are described in the Supporting Information. All other reagents and solvent were obtained from commercial sources and were used without further purification.

Compounds 1A, 1B, 9A, and 9B. To a stirred solution of compound **8** (140 mg, 0.28 mmol) in 2 mL of dichloromethane were added EDAC (107 mg, 0.56 mmol), HOAT (76 mg, 0.56 mmol), Et₃N (78 μ L, 0.56 mmol), and mixtures of **3** and **4** (120 mg), and the reaction was stirred at RT overnight. The mixtures were diluted with EtOAc, washed with water (2×), 1 N NaOH (2×), and brine, dried over Na₂SO₄, and concentrated. The Boc-intermediate was deprotected with 3 mL of 15% TFA/CH₂Cl₂ solution at RT for 3 h. The final compounds were separated on an automated Shimadzu HPLC system to give compounds **1A, 1B, 9A**, and **9B**, all as TFA salts. The first eluting isomer was assigned as **A**, and the second eluting isomer was assigned as **B**.

Compound **1A** (38 mg), HPLC: 98% purity; LCMS *m*/*z* 561 (M + H); HRMS calcd for (M + H) 561.2462, found 561.2466; ¹H NMR (MeOH-*d*₄) δ 1.87–2.04 (m, 3H), 2.09–2.19 (m, 1H), 2.49 (dt, *J* = 5, 14 Hz, 1H), 2.55–2.71 (m, 2H), 3.21 (dt, *J* = 3, 14 Hz, 1H), 3.29–3.52 (m, 4H), 4.26–4.33 (m, 1H), 4.61 (dd, *J* = 15, 39 Hz, 2H), 5.12 (dd, *J* = 2, 5 Hz, 1H), 5.90 (s, 2H), 6.24 (dd, *J* = 5, 11 Hz, 1H), 6.61 (dd, *J* = 2, 10 Hz, 1H), 6.73 (d, *J* = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.84 (dd, *J* = 2, 8 Hz, 1H), 6.88 (d, *J* = 1 Hz, 1H), 7.12–7.27 (m, 5H), 8.58 (d, *J* = 8 Hz, 1H).

Compound **1B** (34 mg), HPLC: 98% purity; LCMS m/z 561 (M + H); HRMS calcd for (M + H) 561.2462, found 561.2465; ¹H NMR (MeOH- d_4) δ 1.90–2.12 (m, 4H), 2.47 (dt, J = 5, 14 Hz, 1H), 2.58–2.77 (m, 2H), 3.16–3.52 (m, 5H), 4.32–4.39 (m, 1H), 4.63 (dd, J = 15, 39 Hz, 2H), 5.13 (dd, J = 2, 5 Hz, 1H), 5.90 (s, 2H), 6.25 (dd, J = 5, 11 Hz, 1H), 6.57 (dd, J = 2, 10 Hz, 1H), 6.71 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.85 (dd, J = 2, 8 Hz, 1H), 6.89 (d, J = 1 Hz, 1H), 7.12–7.26 (m, 5H), 8.56 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H).

Compound **9A** (15 mg), HPLC: 95% purity; LCMS m/z 576 (M + H); HRMS calcd for (M + H) 576.2458, found 576.2460; ¹H NMR (MeOH- d_4) δ 1.90–2. 05 (m, 3H), 2.06–2.18 (m, 1H), 2.42 (dt, J = 5, 14 Hz, 1H), 2.54–2.72 (m, 2H), 3.20 (dt, J = 3, 14 Hz, 1H), 3.33–3.52 (m, 4H), 3.68 (s, 3H), 4.28–4.36 (m, 1H), 4.61 (dd, J = 15, 42 Hz, 2H), 5.12 (dd, J = 2, 5 Hz, 1H), 5.90 (s, 2H), 6.25 (dd, J = 5, 11 Hz, 1H), 6.60 (dd, J = 2, 11 Hz, 1H), 6.73 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.85 (dd, J = 1, 8 Hz, 1H), 6.88 (d, J = 1 Hz, 1H), 7.13–7.27 (m, 6H), 8.66 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H).

Compound **9B** (15 mg), HPLC: 95% purity; LCMS m/z 576 (M + H); HRMS calcd for (M + H) 576.2458, found 576.2482; ¹H NMR (MeOH- d_4) δ 1.90–2.20 (m, 4H), 2.44 (dt, J = 5, 14

Hz, 1H), 2.58–2.76 (m, 2H), 3.21 (dt, J = 3, 14 Hz, 1H), 3.34–3.52 (m, 4H), 3.67 (s, 3H), 4.33–4.40 (m, 1H), 4.63 (dd, J = 15, 42 Hz, 2H), 5.13 (dd, J = 2, 5 Hz, 1H), 5.90 (s, 2H), 6.25 (dd, J = 5, 11 Hz, 1H), 6.60 (dd, J = 2, 11 Hz, 1H), 6.72 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.85 (dd, J = 1, 8 Hz, 1H), 6.88 (d, J = 1 Hz, 1H), 7.12–7.28 (m, 6H), 8.80 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H).

Compound 10. To a stirred solution of compound 8 (50 mg, 0.1 mmol) in 0.8 mL of DMF were added EDAC (19.2 mg, 0.1 mmol), HOAT (14 mg, 0.1 mmol), DIEA (18 µL, 0.1 mmol), and 5 (34 mg, 0.09 mmol), and the mixtures were stirred at RT overnight. The reaction was diluted with EtOAc, washed with water $(2 \times)$, 1 N NaOH $(2 \times)$, and brine, dried over Na₂SO₄ and concentrated. The intermediate was purified on HPLC, and then the Boc group was deprotected with 1 mL of 50% TFA/CH₂Cl₂ solution at RT for 30 min. It was concentrated to give 31 mg (40%) of compound 10 as foam solid. HPLC: 97% purity; LCMS m/z 722 (M + H); HRMS calcd for (M + H) 722.3302, found 722.3328; ¹H NMR (MeOH- d_4) δ 1.85–2.20 (m, 6H), 2.37-2.80 (m, 5H), 3.15-3.50 (m, 5H), 4.25-4.70 (m, 4H), 5.10-5.16 (m, 1H), 5.83 and 5.85 (s, total 2H), 6.20-6.28 (m, 1H), 6.48-6.90 (m, 4H), 7.10-7.26 (m, 10H), 8.12 and 8.23 (d, J = 7 Hz, total 1H), 8.67 and 8.81 (d, J = 7 Hz, total 1H).

Compound 11A. To a stirred solution of 12A (80 mg, 0.2 mmol) in 2 mL of DMF were added PyAOP (115 mg, 0.22 mmol), 5 (97 mg, 0.22 mmol), and DIEA (80 µL, 0.44 mmol) at RT, and the reaction was stirred at RT overnight. The reaction was diluted with EtOAc, washed with water $(2 \times)$, dried over Na₂SO₄, and concentrated. The Boc intermediate was deprotected with 1 mL of 30% TFA in dichloromethane (v/v) at RT for 2 h. It was purified on HPLC to give a TFA salt which was washed with NaHCO3 solution to give 87 mg (60%) of compound 11A as a white powder. HPLC: 95% purity; LCMS m/z 724 (M + H); HRMS calcd for (M + H) 724.3459, found 724.3466; ¹H NMR (MeOH-d₄) δ 1.75-2.33 (m, 12H), 2.55-2.80 (m, 4H), 3.00-3.24 (m, 3H), 3.26-3.30 (m, 1H), 4.31-4.40 (m, 2H), 4.57 (dd, J = 15, 49 Hz, 2H), 4.75 (t, J =6 Hz, 1H), 5.85 and 5.86 (s, total 2H), 6.70 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.84 (d, J = 8 Hz, 1H), 6.88 (s, 1H), 7.10–7.30 (m, 10H), 8.27 (d, J = 7 Hz, 1H), 8.43 (d, J = 7 Hz, 1H). Anal. (C₃₉H₄₅N₇O₇·0.39H₂O) C, H, N.

Acknowledgment. The authors would like to thank Abbott Laboratories for a research sample of ABT-229.

Supporting Information Available: Preparation of intermediate compounds **3–8** and **12A** as well as detailed biological assays. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at http://pubs.acs.org.

References

- (1) Feighner, S. D.; Tan, C. P.; McKee, K. K.; Palyha, O. C.; Hreniuk, D. L.; Pong, S.-S.; Austin, C. P.; Figueroa, D.; MacNeil, D.; Cascieri, M. A.; Nargund, R.; Bakshi, R.; Abramovitz, M.; Stocco, R.; Kargman, S.; O'Neil, G.; Van Der Ploeg, L. H. T.; Evans, J.; Patchett, A. A.; Smith, R. G.; Howard, A. D. Receptor for Motilin Identified in the Human Gastrointestinal System. *Science* **1999**, *284*, 2184–2188.
- (2) Brown, J. C.; Cook, M. A.; Dryburgh, J. R. Motilin, a Gastric Motor Activity Stimulating Polypeptide: The Complete Amino Acid Sequence. *Can. J. Biochem.* **1973**, *51*, 533–537.
- (3) Vantrappen, G.; Janssens, J.; Peeters, T. L.; et al. Motilin and the Interdigestive Migrating Motor Complex in Man. *Dig. Dis. Science* 1979, *24*, 497–500.
- (4) Christofides, N. D.; Long, R. G.; Fitzpatrick, M. L.; McGregor, G. P.; Bloom, S. R. Effect of Motilin on the Gastric Emptying of Glucose and Fat in Humans. *Gastroenterology* **1981**, *80*, 456–460.

- (5) Peeters, T. L.; Muls, E.; Janssens, J.; Urbain, J. L.; Bex, M.; Van Cutsem, E.; Depoortere, I.; DeRoo, M.; Vantrappen, G.; Bouillon, R. Effect of Motilin on Gastric Emptying in Patients with Diabetic Gastroparesis. *Gastroenterology* **1992**, *102*, 97–101.
- (6) Schmid, R.; Schusdziarra, V.; Allescher, H. D.; Bofilias, I.; Buttermann, G.; Classen, M. Effect of Motilin on Gastric Emptying in Patients with Diabetic Gastroparesis. *Diabetes Care* **1991**, *14*, 65–68.
- (7) Haramura, M.; Tsuzuki, K.; Okamachi, A. Yogo, K. Ikuta, M.; Kozono, T.; Takanashi, H.; Murayama, E. Design and Synthesis of Novel Tetra-Peptide Motilin Agonists *Bioorg. Med. Chem. Lett.* 2002, 10, 1805–1811.
- (8) Itoh, Z. Motilin and Clinical Application. *Peptides* 1997, 18, 593-608.
- (9) Janssens, J.; Peeters, T. L.; Vantrappen, G.; Tack, J.; Urbain, J. L.; DeRoo, M.; Muls, E.; Bouillon, R. Improvement of Gastric Emptying in Diabetic Gastroparesis by Erythromycin. *N. Engl. J. Med.* **1990**, *322*, 1028–1031.
- (10) Peeters, T.; Matthijs, G.; Depoortere, I.; Cachet, T.; Hoogmartens, J.; Vantrappen, G. Erythromycin is A Motilin Agonist. Am. J. Physiol. Gastrointest Liver Physiol. **1989**, 257, G470–G474.
- (11) Lartey, P. A.; Nellans, H. N.; Faghih, R.; et al. Synthesis of 4'-Deoxy Motilides: Identification of a Potent and Orally Active Prokinetic Drug Candidate. *J. Med. Chem.* **1995**, *38*, 1793–1798.
- (12) Faghih, R.; Nellans, H. N.; Plattner, J. J. Motilides and Motilactides: Design and Development of Motilin Receptor Agonists As A New Class of Gastrointestinal Prokinetic Drugs. *Drugs Future* **1998**, *23*, 861–872.
- (13) Talley, N. J.; Verlinden, M.; Snape, W.; Beker, J. A.; Ducrotte, P.; Dettmer, A.; Brinkhoff, H.; Eaker, E.; Ohning, G.; Miner, P. B.; Mathias, J. R.; Fumagalli, I.; Staessen, D.; Mack, R. J. Failure of a Motilin Receptor Agonist (ABT-229) To Relieve the Symptoms of Functional Dyspepsia in Patients With and Without Delayed Gastric Emptying: A Randomized Double-blind Placebocontrolled Trial. *Aliment. Pharmacol. Ther.* **2000**, *14*, 1653–1661.
- (14) Netzer, P.; Schmitt, B.; Inauen, W. Effects of ABT-229, A Motilin Agonist, on Acid Reflux, Oesophageal Motility and Gastric Emptying in Patients with Gastro-oesophageal Reflux Disease. *Aliment. Pharmacol. Ther.* 2002, *16*, 1481–1490.
- (15) Tack, J.; Peeters, T. What Comes After Macrolides and Other Motilin Stimulants? *Gut* 2001, 49, 317–318.
- (16) Koga, H.; Takanashi, H.; Itoh, Z.; Omura, S. Design, SAR and Pharmacology of GM-611, the First Acid-stable Nonpeptide Motilin Receptor Agonist. *Drugs Future* **2002**, *27*, 255–272.
- (17) A research sample of ABT-229 was obtained from Abbott Laboratories, so the in vitro data reported herein were obtained in our laboratory. For detailed protocol of biological assays, see Experimental Section and Supporting Information.
- (18) Compound 1 was obtained from Molecumetics Ltd.
- (19) Cookson, R. C.; Gupte, S. S.; Stevens, I. D. R.; Watts, C. T. Organic Syntheses; Wiley: New York, 1988; Collect. Vol. VI, p pp 936–939.
- (20) Takacs, J. M.; Jaber, M. R.; Clement, F.; Walters, C. J. Org. Chem. 1998, 63, 6757–6760.
- (21) Boldi, A. M.; Johnson, C. R.; Eissa, H. O. Solid-Phase Library Synthesis of Triazolopyridazine via [4+2] Cycloadditions. *Tet*rahedron Lett. **1999**, 40, 619–622.
- (22) Hansen, S. U.; Bols, M. Synthesis of Labeled 1-Azafagomine J. Chem. Soc., Perkin Trans. 1 1999, 3323–3325.
- (23) The first eluting isomer was assigned as **A**, and the second eluting isomer was assigned as **B**.
- (24) The racemic methyl ester was separated on a ChiralPak AS column (5 \times 50 cm) using 10% ethanol/90% hexanes as the solvents. The first eluting enantiomer was assigned as **A**, and the second eluting enantiomer was assigned as **B**.
- (25) Ferguson, S. S. Evolving Concepts in G Protein-Coupled Receptor Endocytosis: The Role in Receptor Desensitization and Signaling. *Pharmacol. Rev.* 2001, *53*, 1–24.

JM0304865