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Nucleosides, Nucleotides and Nucleic Acids

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

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Synthesis and Hybridization Properties of Oligonucleotides Containing (2*S*,3*R*)-9-(2,3,4-Trihydroxybutyl)Adenine

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To cite this Article Ueno, Yoshihito, Ishihara, Shinji, Ito, Yasutomo and Kitade, Yukio (2006) 'Synthesis and Hybridization Properties of Oligonucleotides Containing (2*S*,3*R*)-9-(2,3,4-Trihydroxybutyl)Adenine', *Nucleosides, Nucleotides and Nucleic Acids*, 25: 4, 475 – 487

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/15257770600684175

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15257770600684175>

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SYNTHESIS AND HYBRIDIZATION PROPERTIES OF OLIGONUCLEOTIDES CONTAINING (2S,3R)-9-(2,3,4-TRIHYDROXYBUTYL)ADENINE

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□ *The synthesis and properties of oligonucleotides (ONs) containing 9-(2,3,4-trihydroxybutyl)adenine, A^{C2} and A^{C3} , are described. The ON containing A^{C2} involves the $3' \rightarrow 4'$ and $3' \rightarrow 5'$ phosphodiester linkages in the strand, whereas that containing A^{C3} possesses the $3' \rightarrow 4'$ and $2' \rightarrow 5'$ phosphodiester linkages. It was found that incorporation of the analogs, A^{C2} or A^{C3} , into ONs significantly reduces the thermal and thermodynamic stabilities of the ON/DNA duplexes, but does not largely decrease the thermal and thermodynamic stabilities of the ON/RNA duplexes as compared with the case of the ON/DNA duplexes. It was revealed that the base recognition ability of A^{C2} is greater than that of A^{C3} in the ON/RNA duplexes.*

Keywords Acyclonucleoside; Oligonucleotides; Thermal stability; Thermodynamic stability

INTRODUCTION

Oligonucleotides (ONs) that are capable of inhibiting cellular processes at the translational level by base-pairing with mRNA are known as antisense ONs.^[1] For ONs to be effective as antisense molecules, they need to form stable Watson-Crick hybrids with complementary RNAs and be sufficiently resistant to degradation by ubiquitous nucleases.^[2,3] A large number

Received 28 December 2005; accepted 24 January 2006.

This research was supported in part by a Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (C) (KAKENHI 16590082) from Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS).

This article is dedicated to Professor Eiko Ohtsuka on the occasion of her 70th birthday.

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of chemically modified ONs have been synthesized and investigated to improve the binding affinity to complementary RNAs and the stability to nucleases. For instance, it was reported that 2'-*O*,4'-*C*-methylenetriphosphonate (2'-*O*,4'-*C*-methylene bridged nucleic acid; 2',4'-BNA), which is a conformationally restricted ON analog consisting of 2'-*O*,4'-*C*-methylene ribonucleosides, forms a thermally and thermodynamically stable duplex with a complementary RNA and is resistant to nucleases.^[3] On the other hand, it was also reported that ON analogs containing acyclonucleosides generally destabilize duplexes with complementary DNAs,^[4] although thermal and thermodynamic stabilities of duplexes with complementary RNAs have not been examined in detail.

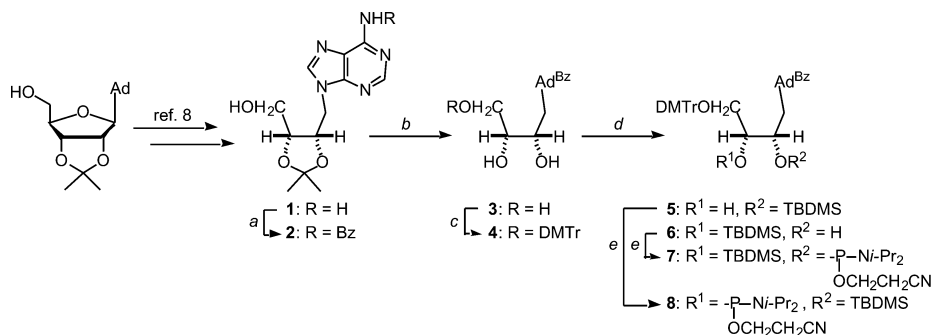
Recently, Zhang et al. showed that an ON composed of a glycerol-phosphate backbone instead of a D-ribose-phosphate backbone, which is an ON analog consisting of acyclonucleosides, forms a thermally stable duplex with a complementary RNA.^[5] Furthermore, it was reported that 5'-nor-2'-deoxyoligonucleotide^[6] and α -threofuranosyl-(3'→2')-oligonucleotide,^[7] which are ON analogs consisting of two carbons between the phosphates, efficiently cross-pair with complementary RNAs.

Previously, we have reported a facile, synthetic method for the preparation of acyclonucleosides, (2*S*,3*R*)-9-(2,3,4-trihydroxybutyl)purines, via the reductive cleavage of the ribofuranosyl ring of purine nucleosides with diisobutylaluminum hydride (DIBAL-H).^[8] Thus, these results and the background information motivated us to investigate the synthesis and properties of ONs containing (2*S*,3*R*)-9-(2,3,4-trihydroxybutyl)adenine (Figure 1).

In this article, we wish to report the synthesis of the ON analogs containing 9-(2,3,4-trihydroxybutyl)adenine. The ON containing A^{C2} (which is a nucleoside analog consisting of two carbons between the phosphates) involves the 3'→4' and 3'→5' phosphodiester linkages, whereas that containing A^{C3} (which is a nucleoside analog consisting of three carbons between the phosphates) possesses the 3'→4' and 2'→5' phosphodiester linkages in the strand. Thermal and thermodynamic stabilities of duplexes with complementary DNAs and RNAs and stabilities of the duplexes containing mismatch base-pairs were examined in detail.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to synthesize the ONs by the phosphoramidite method, appropriately protected phosphoramidites of A^{C2} and A^{C3} were synthesized. First, 9-[(2'*S*,3'*R*)-4'-hydroxy-2',3'-isopropylidenedioxybutyl]adenine (**1**), which was prepared by the reported method,^[8] was treated with TMSCl in pyridine and then reacted with benzoyl chloride (BzCl) to produce the *N*⁶-Bz derivative **2** (Scheme 1). Treatment of **2** with 80% CH₃CO₂H afforded the triol **3** in 44% yield from **1**. The primary hydroxyl group of **3** was protected with a



SCHEME 1 Structures of the oligonucleotides containing nucleoside analogs.

4,4'-dimethoxytrityl (DMTr) group to give **4** in 94% yield. *O*-DMTr derivative **4** was treated with *tert*-butyldimethylsilyl chloride (TBDMSCl) to afford 2'-*O*-TBDMS and 3'-*O*-TBDMS derivatives, **5** and **6**, in 7 and 35% yields with the recovery of **4** in 20% yield, respectively. The TBDMS derivatives, **5** and **6**, were phosphitylated by a standard procedure^[9] to give the corresponding phosphoramidites, **8** and **7**, in 64 and 65% yields, respectively.

ONs containing A^{C2} or A^{C3} were synthesized using the phosphoramidites, **8** and **7**, with a DNA/RNA synthesizer.^[10] The sequences of the ONs used in this study are shown in Figure 2. The fully protected ONs (1 μmol each) linked to the solid support were treated with concentrated NH₄OH:EtOH

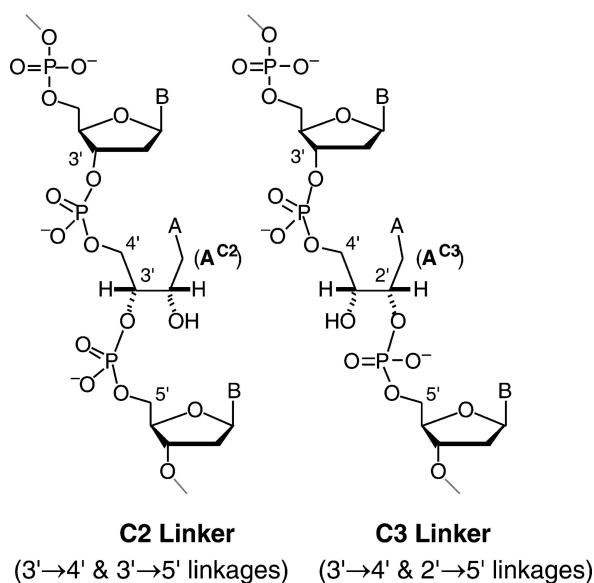


FIGURE 1 Conditions: (a) (1) TMSCl, pyridine, rt; (2) BzCl, pyridine, rt; (b) 80% CH₃CO₂H, 60°C, 44% from **1**; (c) DMTrCl, pyridine, rt, 94%; (d) TBDMSCl, imidazole, DMF, rt, 7% (**5**), 35% (**6**), 20% (**4**); (e) 2-cyanoethyl *N,N*-diisopropylchlorophosphoramidite, *N,N*-diisopropylethylamine, THF, rt, 65% (**7**), 64% (**8**).

No. of ON	Sequence
ON1	5'-d(AAGGAAAAGAGGAAAGA)-3'
ON2	5'-d(AAGGAAAA ^{C2} GAGGAAAGA)-3'
ON3	5'-d(AAGGAAAA ^{C3} GAGGAAAGA)-3'
ON4	5'-d(A ^{C2} AGGAAAAGAGGAAAGA)-3'
ON5	5'-d(A ^{C3} AGGAAAAGAGGAAAGA)-3'
ON6	3'-d(TTCCTTTTCTCCTTTCT)-5'
ON7	3'-d(TTCCTTTT <u>A</u> CTCCTTTCT)-5'
ON8	3'-d(TTCCTTTGCTCCTTTCT)-5'
ON9	3'-d(TTCCTTT <u>C</u> CTCCTTTCT)-5'
ON10	3'-r(UUCCUUUUCUCCUUUCU)-5'
ON11	3'-r(UUCCUUU <u>A</u> CUCCUUUCU)-5'
ON12	3'-r(UUCCUUUGCUCCUUUCU)-5'
ON13	3'-r(UUCCUUU <u>C</u> CUCCUUUCU)-5'

FIGURE 2 Sequences of oligonucleotides used in this study. Underlined letters indicate the mismatch bases against ONs 1, 2, and 3.

(3:1, v/v) at 55°C for 12 h and then 1 M TBAF/THF at room temperature for 12 h. The released ONs were purified by denaturing 20% polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis to afford deprotected ONs. These ONs were analyzed by MALDI-TOF/MS and the observed molecular weights supported their structures.

The stability of the duplexes formed by these ONs and a complementary DNA (ON6) or RNA (ON10) was studied by thermal denaturation (Figure 3). Melting temperature (T_m s) and ΔT_m s (T_m of duplex containing the analog – T_m of the unmodified duplex) are listed in Table 1. Thermodynamic parameters of these duplexes on duplex formation were determined by calculations based on the slope of a $1/T_m$ versus $\ln(C_T/4)$ plot, where C_T is the total concentration of single strands (Figure 3).^[11] The parameters are also summarized in Table 1.

When the DNA (ON6) was used as a complementary strand, it was revealed that ON2 and ON3 containing A^{C2} and A^{C3} in their centers markedly destabilize the duplexes (ΔT_m s = –5.5 and –5.4°C, respectively), whereas ON4 and ON5 containing the analogs at their 5'-ends did not largely reduce the thermal stabilities of the duplexes (ΔT_m s = –0.5 and –0.5°C, respectively). The $-\Delta G_{37}^\circ$ values of the duplexes, ON1:ON6, ON2:ON6 containing A^{C2}, and ON3:ON6 containing A^{C3}, were 14.0, 13.2, and 12.2 kcal/mol, respectively. Thus, it was found that incorporation of A^{C2} or A^{C3} into the centers of ONs thermodynamically also destabilizes the duplexes with the complementary DNAs. Intriguingly, both the $-\Delta H^\circ$ and $-\Delta S^\circ$ values of

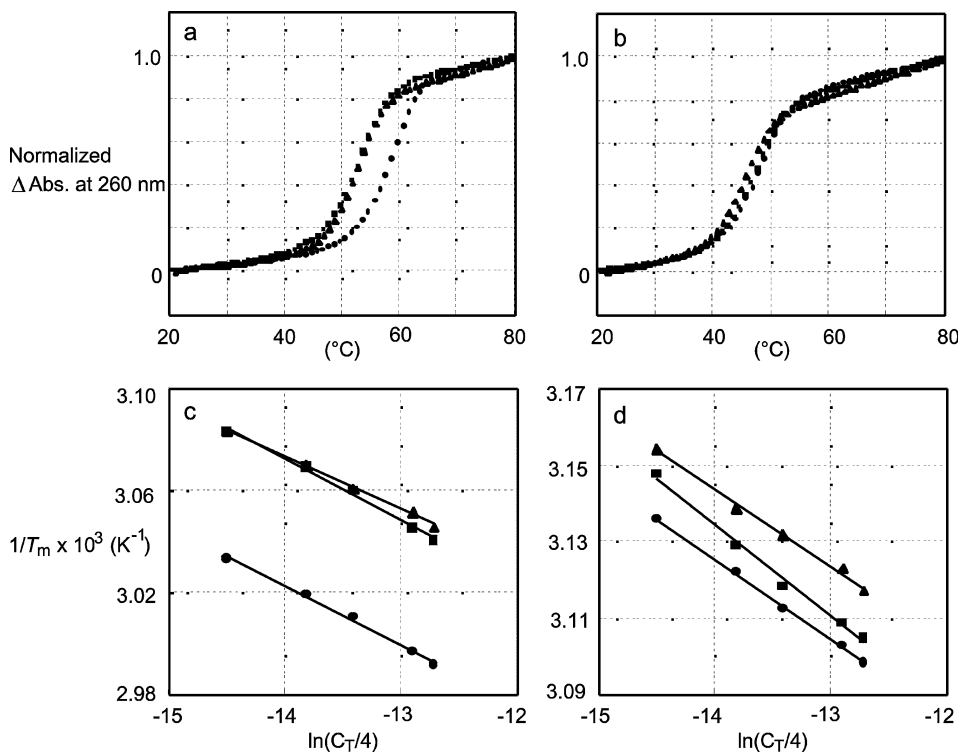


FIGURE 3 Normalized melting curves of ON/DNA duplexes (a) and ON/RNA duplexes (b) at $3 \mu\text{M}$ duplex concentrations and T_m^{-1} versus $\ln(C_T)$ plots of ON/DNA duplexes (c) and ON/RNA duplexes (d). \bullet : ON1/ON6 or ON1/ON10 duplex. \blacktriangle : ON2/ON6 or ON2/ON10 duplex. \blacksquare : ON3/ON6 or ON3/ON10 duplex.

the duplex between ON6 and ON2 containing $\text{A}^{\text{C}2}$ ($-\Delta H^{\circ} = 96.0 \text{ kcal/mol}$ and $-\Delta S^{\circ} = 267 \text{ cal/K} \cdot \text{mol}$) were greater than those of the unmodified duplex between ON6 and ON1 ($-\Delta H^{\circ} = 85.3 \text{ kcal/mol}$ and $-\Delta S^{\circ} = 230 \text{ cal/K} \cdot \text{mol}$), while those of the duplex between ON6 and ON3 containing $\text{A}^{\text{C}3}$ ($-\Delta H^{\circ} = 81.8 \text{ kcal/mol}$ and $-\Delta S^{\circ} = 223 \text{ cal/K} \cdot \text{mol}$) were smaller than those of the unmodified duplex. These results indicate that the duplex formation between ON6 and ON2 containing $\text{A}^{\text{C}2}$ is less favorable in entropy but more favorable in enthalpy than that between ON6 and ON1 consisting of the natural nucleosides, whereas that between ON6 and ON3 containing $\text{A}^{\text{C}3}$ is more favorable in entropy but less favorable in enthalpy than that between ON6 and ON1.

On the other hand, when the RNA (ON10) was used as a complementary strand, incorporation of the analogs $\text{A}^{\text{C}2}$ and $\text{A}^{\text{C}3}$ into ONs did not largely influence the thermal stabilities of the duplexes even when the analogs were introduced into the centers of the strands ($\Delta T_m\text{s} = -1.7$ and -0.7°C , respectively). The $-\Delta\Delta G^{\circ}_{37}$ values between the duplexes ON10:ON1 and ON10:ON2 containing $\text{A}^{\text{C}2}$, and ON10:ON1 and ON10:ON3 containing

TABLE 1 T_m s and Thermodynamic Parameters^a

Duplex (base pair)	T_m^b (°C)	ΔT_m (°C)	$-\Delta H^\circ$ (kcal/mol)	$-\Delta S^\circ$ (cal/K·mol)	$-\Delta G_{37}^\circ$ (kcal/mol)
ON1:ON6 (dA:dT)	58.2	—	85.3	230	14.0
ON2:ON6 (A ^{C2} :dT)	52.7	−5.5	96.0	267	13.2
ON3:ON6 (A ^{C3} :dT)	52.8	−5.4	81.8	223	12.2
ON4:ON6 (A ^{C2} :dT)	57.7	−0.5	87.1	236	14.0
ON5:ON6 (A ^{C3} :dT)	57.7	−0.5	86.0	233	13.9
ON1:ON10 (dA:rU)	47.3	—	94.6	268	11.6
ON2:ON10 (A ^{C2} :rU)	45.6	−1.7	98.9	283	11.1
ON3:ON10 (A ^{C3} :rU)	46.6	−0.7	83.1	233	11.0
ON4:ON10 (A ^{C2} :rU)	47.1	−0.2	93.3	264	11.5
ON5:ON10 (A ^{C3} :rU)	46.7	−0.6	92.0	260	11.3

^aExperimental conditions are described in the Experimental section.^b T_m values at 2 μ M duplex concentrations.

A^{C3} were 0.5 and 0.6 kcal/mol, respectively. Those values are smaller than those between the corresponding ON/DNA duplexes. Thus, it was found that incorporation of A^{C2} and A^{C3} into ONs does not largely reduce the thermal and thermodynamic stabilities of the ON/RNA duplexes as compared with those of the ON/DNA duplexes. Like the case of the ON/DNA duplexes, both the $-\Delta H^\circ$ and $-\Delta S^\circ$ values of the duplex containing A^{C2} in its center ($-\Delta H^\circ = 98.9$ kcal/mol and $-\Delta S^\circ = 283$ cal/K·mol) were greater than those of the unmodified duplex ($-\Delta H^\circ = 94.6$ kcal/mol and $-\Delta S^\circ = 268$ cal/K·mol), while those of the duplex containing A^{C3} in its center ($-\Delta H^\circ = 83.1$ kcal/mol and $-\Delta S^\circ = 233$ cal/K·mol) were smaller than those of the unmodified duplex. These results also imply that the duplex formation between ON10 and ON2 containing A^{C2} is less favorable in entropy but more favorable in enthalpy than that between ON10 and ON1, whereas that between ON10 and ON3 containing A^{C3} is more favorable in entropy but less favorable in enthalpy than that between ON10 and ON1.

In order to evaluate base recognition abilities of the analogs, we next examined thermal stabilities of the duplexes containing mismatch base-pairs. The T_m and ΔT_m (T_m of duplex containing mismatch base-pair– T_m of a duplex composed of a match base-pair) values are summarized in Table 2. The ΔT_m s of the duplexes containing A^{C2} or A^{C3} were smaller than those of the corresponding duplexes containing dA in both the ON/DNA and ON/RNA duplexes. This implies that the base recognition ability of the

TABLE 2 T_m Values^a

Duplex (base pair)	T_m^b (°C)	ΔT_m (°C)	Duplex (base pair)	T_m^b (°C)	ΔT_m (°C)
ON1:ON6 (dA:dT)	58.7	—	ON1:ON10 (dA:rU)	47.3	—
ON1:ON7 (dA:dA)	49.3	−9.4	ON1:ON11 (dA:rA)	38.6	−8.7
ON1:ON8 (dA:dG)	48.3	−10.4	ON1:ON12 (dA:rG)	41.1	−6.2
ON1:ON9 (dA:dC)	47.8	−10.9	ON1:ON13 (dA:rC)	38.4	−8.9
ON2:ON6 (A ^{C2} :dT)	52.7	—	ON2:ON10 (A ^{C2} :rU)	45.6	—
ON2:ON7 (A ^{C2} :dA)	49.9	−2.8	ON2:ON11 (A ^{C2} :rA)	40.4	−5.2
ON2:ON8 (A ^{C2} :dG)	51.8	−0.9	ON2:ON12 (A ^{C2} :rG)	41.8	−3.8
ON2:ON9 (A ^{C2} :dC)	48.8	−3.9	ON2:ON13 (A ^{C2} :rC)	42.9	−2.7
ON3:ON6 (A ^{C3} :dT)	52.8	—	ON3:ON10 (A ^{C3} :rU)	46.6	—
ON3:ON7 (A ^{C3} :dA)	49.8	−3.0	ON3:ON11 (A ^{C3} :rA)	44.6	−2.0
ON3:ON8 (A ^{C3} :dG)	48.8	−4.0	ON3:ON12 (A ^{C3} :rG)	45.1	−1.5
ON3:ON9 (A ^{C3} :dC)	48.3	−4.5	ON3:ON13 (A ^{C3} :rC)	44.6	−2.0

^aExperimental conditions are described in the Experimental Section.^b T_m values at 2 μ M duplex concentrations.

analogs is less than that of dA. However, when the ΔT_m values of the duplexes containing A^{C2} and A^{C3} were compared, the ΔT_m s of the duplexes containing A^{C2} were slightly greater than those of the corresponding duplexes containing A^{C3} in the ON/DNA duplexes, whereas the ΔT_m s of the duplexes containing A^{C2} were smaller than those of the corresponding duplexes containing A^{C3} in the ON/RNA duplexes. These results indicate that the base recognition ability of the analog A^{C2} is slightly less than that of A^{C3} in the ON/DNA duplex, but greater than that of A^{C3} in the ON/RNA duplex.

To study the global conformation of the duplexes containing A^{C2} and A^{C3}, we measured the CD spectra of the duplexes. The spectrum of the control duplex between ON6 and ON1 showed a positive CD band at 279 nm and a negative band at 245 nm, which were attributable to the B-form duplex (Figure 4). When A^{C3} was introduced into the duplex, intensity of the positive CD band slightly increased and that of the negative CD band slightly decreased as compared to that of the control duplex. When the analog A^{C2} was incorporated into the duplex, intensity of the shoulder band around 265 nm slightly increased. This suggests that the conformation of the duplexes is slightly disordered by introducing the analogs, although the global conformation of the duplexes retains the B-like conformation.

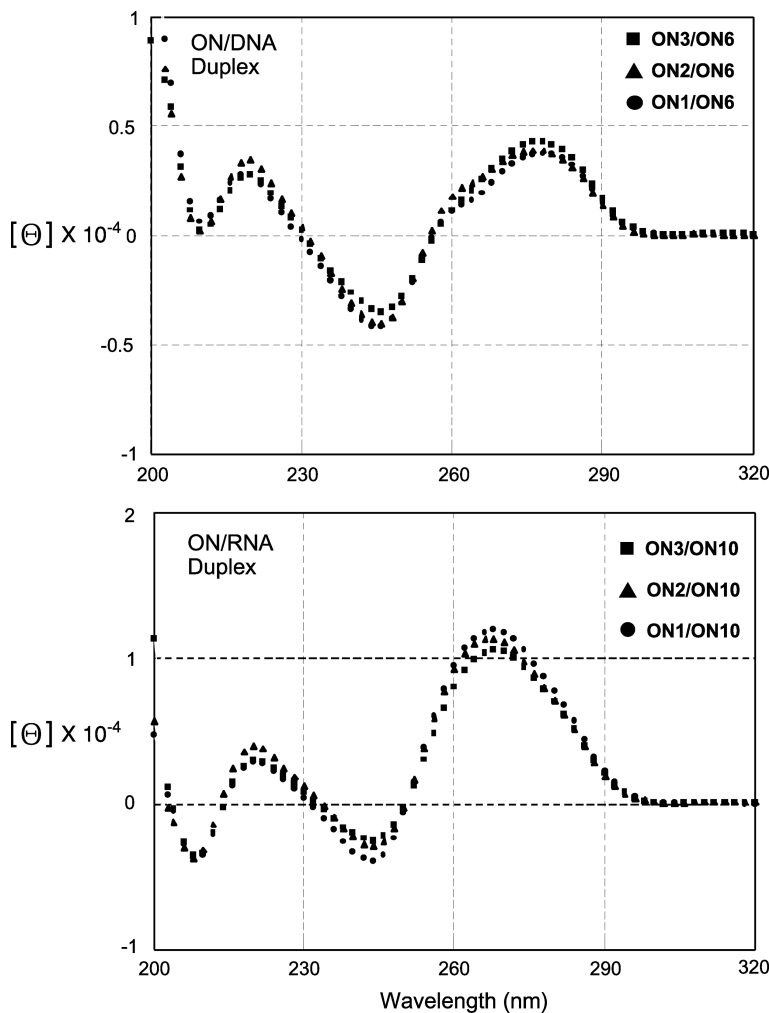


FIGURE 4 CD spectra of unmodified and modified duplexes.

On the other hand, the spectrum of the control duplex between ON10 and ON1 revealed a positive CD band at 268 nm and a negative band at 208 nm, which were attributable to the A-form duplex. Although the intensities of the positive CD bands of the duplexes between ON10 and ON2 containing A^{C2} and ON10 and ON3 containing A^{C3} were slightly less than that of the control duplex, those duplexes were found to retain the A-like conformation.

CONCLUSION

In this article, we have demonstrated the synthesis of the ON analogs containing 9-(2,3,4-trihydroxybutyl)adenine. Thermal and thermodynamic

stabilities of duplexes with complementary DNAs and RNAs and stabilities of the duplexes containing mismatch base-pairs were examined in detail. It was found that incorporation of the analogs, $\mathbf{A}^{\text{C}2}$ and $\mathbf{A}^{\text{C}3}$, into ONs does not largely reduce the thermal and thermodynamic stabilities of the ON/RNA duplexes as compared with those of the ON/DNA duplexes. Furthermore, it turned out that the base recognition ability of the analog $\mathbf{A}^{\text{C}2}$ is greater than that of $\mathbf{A}^{\text{C}3}$ in the ON/RNA duplex.

EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

General Remarks

NMR spectra were recorded at 400 MHz (^1H), at 100 MHz (^{13}C), and at 162 MHz (^{31}P) and are reported in ppm downfield from TMS or 85% H_3PO_4 . J values are given in hertz. Mass spectra were obtained by electron ionization (EI) or fast atom bombardment (FAB) method.

*N*⁶-Benzoyl-9-[(2'*S*,3'*R*)-2',3',4'-trihydroxybut-1'-yl]adenine (**3**). A mixture of **1** (**8**) (701 mg, 2.50 mmol) and TMSCl (1.00 ml, 7.50 mmol) in pyridine (12 ml) was stirred at room temperature. After 2 h, BzCl (0.320 ml, 2.80 mmol) was added to the mixture, and the whole was stirred at room temperature. After 3 h, the mixture was partitioned between EtOAc and aqueous NaHCO_3 (saturated). The organic layer was washed with brine, dried (Na_2SO_4), and concentrated. The residue was dissolved in 80% $\text{CH}_3\text{CO}_2\text{H}$ (10 ml), and the mixture was stirred at 60°C. After 23 h, the solvent was evaporated in vacuo, and the resulting residue was purified by column chromatograph (SiO_2 , 3–7% MeOH in CHCl_3) to give **3** (376 mg, 44% as a white solid): ^1H NMR ($\text{DMSO}-d_6$) δ 11.10 (1H, s), 8.71 (1H, s), 8.35 (1H, s), 8.04–7.54 (5H, m), 5.11 (1H, d, $J=6.4$), 4.94 (1H, d, $J=4.8$), 4.53 (2H, m), 4.16 (1H, m), 3.78 (1H, m), 3.59 (1H, m), 3.38 (2H, m); ^{13}C NMR ($\text{DMSO}-d_6$) δ 165.4, 152.7, 151.1, 149.8, 145.6, 133.5, 132.3, 128.4, 128.4, 125.4, 73.5, 69.5, 63.0, 46.8; FAB-HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{16}\text{H}_{18}\text{N}_5\text{O}_4$ (MH^+), 344.1359; found, 344.1372.

*N*⁶-Benzoyl-9-[(2'*S*,3'*R*)-2',3'-dihydroxy-4'-(4,4'-dimethoxytrityloxy)-but-1'-yl]adenine (**4**). A mixture of **3** (888 mg, 2.60 mmol) and DMTrCl (985 mg, 2.90 mmol) in pyridine (13 ml) was stirred at room temperature. After 18 h, DMTrCl (442 mg, 1.30 mmol) was further added to the mixture. After 5 h, the mixture was partitioned between EtOAc and aqueous NaHCO_3 (saturated). The organic layer was washed with brine, dried (Na_2SO_4), and concentrated. The residue was purified by column chromatograph (SiO_2 , 1–2% MeOH in CHCl_3) to give **4** (1.58 g, 94%): ^1H NMR (CDCl_3) δ 9.19 (1H, s), 8.72 (1H, s), 8.01 (1H, s), 8.04–6.75 (18H, m), 4.57 (1H, dd, $J=14.6$ and 3.4), 4.50 (1H, s), 4.35 (1H, dd, $J=14.6$ and 2.4), 4.29 (1H, s), 3.96 (1H, m), 3.76 (6H, s), 3.51–3.39 (2H, m), 3.04 (1H, m); FAB-HRMS calcd for $\text{C}_{37}\text{H}_{36}\text{N}_5\text{O}_6$ (MH^+), 646.2666; found, 646.2653.

*N*⁶-Benzoyl-9-[(2'*S*,3'*R*)-2'-tert-butyltrimethylsilyloxy-4'-(4,4'-dimethoxytrityloxy)-3'-hydroxybut-1'-yl]adenine (**5**) and *N*⁶-Benzoyl-9-[(2'*S*,3'*R*)-3'-tert-butyltrimethylsilyloxy-4'-(4,4'-dimethoxytrityloxy)-2'-hydroxybut-1'-yl]adenine (**6**). A mixture of **4** (1.57 g, 2.40 mmol), TBDMSCl (400 mg, 2.60 mmol), and imidazole (372 mg, 5.30 mmol) in DMF (12 ml) was stirred at room temperature. After 9 h, TBDMSCl (224 mg, 2.40 mmol) and imidazole (360 mg, 4.80 mmol) were further added to the mixture. After 14 h, EtOH (2 ml) was added to the mixture, and the whole was stirred at room temperature for 10 min. The mixture was partitioned between EtOAc and H₂O. The organic layer was washed with aqueous NaHCO₃ (saturated) and brine, dried (Na₂SO₄) and concentrated. The residue was purified by column chromatograph (SiO₂, 50–70% EtOAc in hexane) to give **5** (131 mg, 7% as a white solid), **6** (641 mg, 35% as a white solid), and **4** (313 mg, 20%): Physical data of **5**: ¹H NMR (DMSO-*d*₆) δ 11.13 (1H, s, 6-NH), 8.70 (1H, s, 8- or 2-H), 8.33 (1H, s, 2- or 8-H), 8.06–6.86 (18H, m, Bz, and DMTr), 5.44 (1H, d, *J* = 5.2, 3'-OH), 4.37 (2H, m, 1'-H), 4.21 (1H, m, 2'-H), 3.75–3.69 (7H, m, 3'-H and OMe × 2), 3.10 (1H, dd, *J* = 11.3 and 5.0, 4'-H), 3.03 (1H, dd, *J* = 11.3 and 6.4, 4'-H), 0.57 (9H, s, *Si*-Bu), −0.30 and −0.54 (each 3H, s, *Si*Me), the assignments were in agreement with COSY spectrum; FABHRMS calcd for C₄₃H₅₀N₅O₆Si (MH⁺), 760.3530; found, 760.3535. Physical data of **6**: ¹H NMR (DMSO-*d*₆) δ 11.12 (1H, s, 6-NH), 8.70 (1H, s, 8- or 2-H), 8.31 (1H, s, 2- or 8-H), 8.05–6.86 (18H, m, Bz and DMTr), 5.21 (1H, d, *J* = 5.2, 2'-OH), 4.48 (1H, d, *J* = 10.0, m, 1'-H), 4.09–4.05 (2H, m, 1'-H and 2'-H), 3.82 (1H, m, 3'-H), 3.72 (6H, s, OMe × 2), 3.19 (1H, dd, *J* = 9.9 and 5.2, 4'-H), 3.05 (1H, dd, *J* = 9.9 and 5.4, 4'-H), 0.85 (9H, s, *Si*-Bu), 0.08 and −0.06 (each 3H, s, *Si*Me), the assignments were in agreement with COSY spectrum; FAB-HRMS calcd for C₄₃H₅₀N₅O₆Si (MH⁺), 760.3530; found, 760.3539.

*N*⁶-Benzoyl-9-[(2'*S*,3'*R*)-3'-tert-butyltrimethylsilyloxy-4'-(4,4'-dimethoxytrityloxy)-but-1'-yl]adenine, 2'-O-[(2-cyanoethyl)-(N,N-diisopropyl)]-phosphoramidite (**7**). Compound **6** (282 mg, 0.37 mmol) was dissolved in THF (2.0 ml) containing N,N-diisopropylethylamine (0.38 ml, 2.20 mmol). Chloro(2-cyanoethoxy)(N,N-diisopropylamino)phosphine (0.16 ml, 0.70 mmol) was added to the solution, and the mixture was stirred at room temperature. After 4 h, N,N-diisopropylethylamine (0.19 ml, 1.10 mmol) and chloro(2-cyanoethoxy)(N,N-diisopropylamino)phosphine (0.08 ml, 0.35 mmol) were further added to the mixture. After 1 h, aqueous NaHCO₃ (saturated) and CHCl₃ were added to the mixture, and the separated organic layer was washed with aqueous NaHCO₃ (saturated) and brine, dried (Na₂SO₄), and concentrated. The residue was purified by column chromatograph (a neutralized SiO₂, EtOAc) to give **7** (234 mg, 65% as a white foam): ³¹P NMR (CDCl₃) δ 152.7, 151.5; FAB-HRMS calcd for ₅₂H₆₇N₇O₇PSi (MH⁺), 960.4609; found, 960.4619.

*N*⁶-Benzoyl-9-[(2'*S*,3'*R*)-2'-tert-butyltrimethylsilyloxy-4'-(4,4'-dimethoxytrityloxy)but-1'-yl]adenine, 3'-O-[(2-cyanoethyl)-(N, N-diisopropyl)]-phosphoramidite (**8**). Compound **5** (127 mg, 0.17 mmol) was phosphitylated as described in the preparation of **7** to give **8** (105 mg, 64% as a white foam): ³¹P NMR (CDCl₃) δ 149.8, 146.8; FAB-HRMS calcd for C₅₂H₆₇N₇O₇PSi (MH⁺), 960.4609; found, 960.4612.

Oligonucleotide Synthesis

The synthesis was carried out with an Applied Biosystems DNA/RNA synthesizer (Model Expedite) by the phosphoroamidite method. Deprotection of the bases was performed in concentrated NH₄OH:EtOH (3:1, v/v) at 55°C for 12 h. The 2'-TBDMS groups were removed by 1 M tetrabutylammonium fluoride (TBAF, Aldrich) in THF at room temperature for 12 h. The reaction was quenched with 0.1 M TEAA buffer (pH 7.0) and desalted on a Sep-Pak C18 cartridge. The deprotected ONs were purified by 20% PAGE containing 7 M urea to give the highly purified ONs **2** (11), **3** (12), **4** (5), **5** (11). The yields are indicated in parentheses as OD units at 260 nm starting from 1.0 μmol scale.

MALDI-TOF/MS Analyses of Oligonucleotides

Spectra were obtained with an Applied Biosystems Voyager DE time-of-flight mass spectrometer. ON**2**: calculated mass, 5346.5; observed mass, 5348.8. ON**3**: calculated mass, 5346.5; observed mass, 5346.2. ON**4**: calculated mass, 5346.5; observed mass, 5347.3. ON**5**: calculated mass, 5346.5; observed mass, 5348.9.

Thermal Denaturation Study and CD Spectroscopy

A solution containing the ONs in a buffer composed of 10 mM PIPES (pH 7.0), 100 mM NaCl and 10 mM MgCl₂ was heated at 95°C for 3 min, cooled gradually to an appropriate temperature, and then used for the thermal denaturation study. The thermal-induced transition of each mixture was monitored at 260 nm with a Beckman DU 650 spectrophotometer. The sample temperature was increased by 0.5°C/min. CD spectra were measured by a spectropolarimeter. Samples for CD spectroscopy were prepared by the same procedure used in the thermal denaturation study, and spectra were measured at 15°C. The molar ellipticity was calculated from the equation $[\theta] = \theta / cL$, where θ is the relative intensity, c the sample concentration, and L the cell path length in centimeters. The extinction coefficients of the ONs were calculated from those of mononucleotides and dinucleotides according to the nearest-neighbor approximation method.^[12]

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