Supporting Information

Development of A New Benzophenone-Diketopiperazine-Type Potent Anti-Microtubule Agent Possessing a 2-Pyridine Structure

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Experimental Methods

1. Chemistry

1-1. General

Reagents and solvents were obtained from Wako Pure Chemical Ind., Ltd. (Osaka, Japan), Nacalai Tesque (Kyoto, Japan), Tokyo Chemical Industry Co., Ltd. (Tokyo, Japan), Kanto Chemical Co., Inc. (Tokyo, Japan), and Aldrich Chemical Co., Inc. (Milwaukee, WI), and were used without further purification. Column chromatography was performed using silica gel 60N (Kanto Chemical Co., Inc., spherical natural, 40-50 µm). TLC was performed using Merck Silica gel 60F254 precoated plates. Melting points were measured on a Yanaco MP-500D micro melting point apparatus without correction. Analytical HPLC was performed using a C18 reverse phase column $(4.6 \times 150 \text{ mm}; \text{SunFire}^{\text{TM}} \text{ C}18.5 \text{ } \mu\text{M} \text{ } 4.6 \times 150 \text{ } \text{nm})$ and a binary solvent system that formed a linear gradient of CH₃CN in 0.1% aqueous TFA at a flow rate of 0.9 mL/min. The UV absorption was detected at 230 nm. Solvents used for HPLC were of HPLC grade. All other chemicals were of analytical grade or better. ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra were obtained using a BRUKER DPX-400 spectrometer (400 MHz) with tetramethylsilane as an internal standard. Chemical shifts are reported in parts-per-million (ppm) and are referenced relative to tetramethylsilane (0.00 ppm), the corresponding deuterated solvent (DMSO-d₆, 2.50 ppm, for the ¹H spectra; or DMSO-d₆, 39.52 ppm or CDCl₃, 77.16 ppm, for the ¹³C spectra). High-resolution mass spectra (ESI-TOF MS) were recorded using a micromass Q-Tof Ultima API mass spectrometer.

1-2. Synthesis

1-2-1. (Z)-N-acetyl-3-(3-benzoylbenzylidene)piperazine-2,5-dione (9)

To a solution of 3-benzoylbenzaldehyde 7 (10.0 g, 47.6 mmol) in DMF (420 mL) was added *N*,*N*'-diacetylpiperazine-2,5-dione **8** (11.3 g, 57.1 mmol), and the solution was repeatedly evacuated over a short period of time to remove oxygen and flush the solution with Ar. A solution of potassium *tert*-butoxide (5.60 g, 50.0 mmol) in DMF (50.0 mL) and *tert*-butanol (50.0 mL) was then added dropwise under an Ar atmosphere at –15 °C. The resultant mixture was stirred at –15 °C. After 2.5 h stirring, the mixture was added to 10% citric acid (120 mL) and stirred for an additional 30 min. The solvent was removed by evaporation, and the residue was dissolved in CHCl₃, washed with 10% citric acid and brine, dried over Na₂SO₄, and concentrated *in vacuo*. The resulting residue was purified by column chromatography on silica-gel using CHCl₃-MeOH (200:1 to 30:1) as an eluent. The product was recrystallized from EtOAc-Et₂O to give a white solid of the desired compound **9** (10.7 g, 64%); mp 182–184 °C; IR (KBr, cm⁻¹) 3206, 3060, 2937, 1696, 1678, 1648,

1637, 1597; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.53 (s, 1H), 7.84 (s, 1H), 7.81–7.72 (m, 3H), 7.65–7.53 (m, 3H), 7.49 (t, J= 7.7 Hz, 2H), 7.20 (s, 1H), 4.44 (s, 2H), 2.65 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 195.9, 172.5, 163.3, 160.0, 138.8, 137.0, 133.08, 133.06, 132.4, 130.7, 130.2, 130.1, 129.5, 128.6, 126.8, 118.9, 46.2, 27.4; HRMS (ESI): m/z 349.1180 [M+H]⁺ (Calcd for C₂₀H₁₇N₂O₄: 349.1188).

Scheme S1. Reagents and conditions: *t*-BuOK, *t*-BuOH, DMF, –15 °C, 2.5 h.

1-2-2. (Z)-3-(3-benzoylbenzylidene)piperazine-2,5-dione (10)

To a solution of (*Z*)-*N*-acetyl-3-(3-benzoylbenzylidene)piperazine-2,5-dione **9** (13 mg, 0.0373 mmol) in DMF (2 mL) was added 28% NH₄OH (0.26 mL, 4.29 mmol). The mixture was then stirred for 2 h at room temperature. After the solvent had been removed by evaporation, the residue was dissolved in AcOEt, washed with 10% NaHCO₃ and brine, and dried over Na₂SO₄. Concentration *in vacuo* gave a white solid of the desired compound **10** (6.0 mg, 53%); mp 205–207 °C; IR (KBr, cm⁻¹) 3198, 3058, 1682, 1661, 1632, 1594, 1448, 1277; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 8.12 (br s, 1H), 7.83–7.74 (m, 4H), 7.65–7.47 (m, 5H), 7.01 (s, 1H), 6.64 (s, 1H), 4.24 (d, J = 1.6 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, CDCl₃) δ 196.0, 162.9, 159.5, 138.9, 137.2, 133.2, 133.0, 132.1, 130.3, 130.2, 130.0, 129.6, 128.7, 126.2, 115.4, 45.6; HRMS (ESI): m/z 329.0896 [M+Na]⁺ (Calcd for C₁₈H₁₄N₂O₃Na: 329.0902).

Scheme S2. Reagents and conditions: aqueous 28% NH₄OH, DMF, rt, 1 h.

1-2-3. (3Z,6Z)-3-(3-benzoylbenzylidene)-6-((5-methyl-1H-imidazol-4-yl)methylene)piperazine-2,5-dione (5)

To a solution of (*Z*)-*N*-acetyl-3-(3-benzoylbenzylidene)piperazine-2,5-dione **9** (50 mg, 0.144 mmol) in DMF (2.0 mL) was added 4-methyl-5-imidazolecarboxaldehyde **11** (19.0 mg, 0.173 mmol). The solution was repeatedly evacuated over a short period of time to remove oxygen. The solution was then flushed with Ar. Cs_2CO_3 was then added (70.4 mg, 0.216 mmol) and the evacuation–flushing process was repeated again. The resultant mixture was stirred at 110 °C for 2 h, and the progression of the reaction was monitored by TLC. After the reaction had finished, the solvent was removed by evaporation and the residue was dissolved in CHCl₃, washed with 10% NaHCO₃ and brine, dried over Na₂SO₄, and concentrated *in vacuo*. The product was purified by column chromatography using CHCl₃-MeOH as an eluent to give a yellow solid **5** (24.7 mg, 43%); mp 191–194 °C; IR (KBr, cm⁻¹) 3196, 3062, 1684, 1661, 1635, 1596, 1419; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 12.52 (br s, 1H), 11.99 (s, 1H), 10.31 (br s, 1H), 7.87 (s, 1H), 7.85–7.79 (m, 3H), 7.78–7.74 (m, 1H), 7.74–7.67 (m, 1H), 7.66–7.62 (m, 1H), 7.61–7.56 (m, 3H), 6.80 (s, 1H), 6.59 (s, 1H), 2.32 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 195.6, 157.6, 156.1, 137.4, 136.9, 135.1, 133.6, 133.3, 132.8, 132.5, 130.2, 129.82, 129.79, 129.2, 128.8, 128.6, 127.8, 123.5, 112.6, 104.2, 9.1; HRMS (ESI): *m/z* 399.1453 [M+H]⁺ (Calcd for $C_{23}H_{19}N_4O_3$: 399.1457).

Scheme S3. Reagents and conditions: Cs₂CO₃, degassed DMF, 110 °C.

Compounds **6a-d** were prepared from compound **9** and corresponding aldehydes **12a-d** according to the procedure described for the synthesis of **5**.

1-2-4. (3Z,6Z)-3-(3-benzoylbenzylidene)-6-benzylidenepiperazine-2,5-dione (6a)

Yield of 58% from **9** and benzaldehyde **12a**; mp 247–249 °C; IR (KBr, cm⁻¹) 3212, 3060, 1686, 1655, 1630, 1597, 1412; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 10.54 (br s, 1H), 10.30 (br s, 1H), 7.88–7.80 (m, 3H), 7.80–7.75 (m, 1H), 7.74–7.64 (m, 2H), 7.63–7.51 (m, 5H), 7.48–7.37 (m, 2H), 7.37–7.29 (m, 1H), 6.84 (s, 1H), 6.78 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 195.5, 158.1, 157.7, 137.4, 136.8, 133.42, 133.37, 133.1, 132.8, 130.2, 129.8, 129.3, 129.0, 128.8, 128.7, 128.6, 128.2, 127.5, 126.3, 115.1, 113.8; HRMS (ESI): m/z 417.1209 [M+Na]⁺ (Calcd for C₂₅H₁₈N₂O₃Na: 417.1215).

1-2-5. (3Z,6Z)-3-(3-benzoylbenzylidene)-6-(2-pyridylmethylene)piperazine-2,5-dione (6b)

Yield of 31% from **9** and 2-pyridinecarboxaldehyde **12b**; mp 263–266 °C; IR (KBr, cm⁻¹) 3073, 3053, 1692, 1653, 1643, 1587, 1355; 1 H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 12.60 (s, 1H), 10.64 (s, 1H), 8.73 (d, J =4.8 Hz, 1H), 7.95–7.76 (m, 5H), 7.74–7.64 (m, 3H), 7.64–7.56 (m, 3H), 7.41–7.35 (m, 1H), 6.91 (s, 1H), 6.73 (s, 1H); 13 C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 195.5, 156.9, 156.6, 154.6, 148.5, 137.8, 137.4, 136.8, 133.5, 133.2, 132.8, 131.0, 130.3, 129.8, 129.1, 128.8, 128.6, 127.1, 126.5, 122.5, 114.4, 107.7; HRMS (ESI): m/z 418.1171 [M+Na]⁺ (Calcd for C₂₄H₁₇N₃O₃Na: 418.1168).

1-2-6. (3Z,6Z)-3-(3-benzovlbenzylidene)-6-(3-pyridylmethylene)piperazine-2,5-dione (6c)

Yield of 86% from **9** and 3-pyridinecarboxaldehyde **12c**; mp 258–260 °C; IR (KBr, cm⁻¹) 3204, 3055, 3036, 1686, 1654, 1630, 1595, 1413; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 10.64 (s, 2H), 8.69 (d, J = 2.1 Hz, 1H), 8.48 (dd, J = 4.8, 1.5 Hz, 1H), 7.93 (dt, J = 8.1, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 7.88–7.74 (m, 4H), 7.73–7.64 (m, 2H), 7.63–7.55 (m, 3H), 7.42 (dd, J = 7.9, 4.9 Hz, 1H), 6.85 (s, 1H), 6.76 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 195.5, 157.9, 157.8, 150.2, 148.4, 137.4, 136.8, 136.2, 133.4, 132.8, 131.9, 130.2, 129.8, 129.4, 129.0, 128.9, 128.6, 128.2, 127.5, 123.5, 114.0, 111.4; HRMS (ESI): m/z 396.1351 [M+H]⁺ (Calcd for C₂₄H₁₈N₃O₃: 396.1348)

1-2-7. (3Z,6Z)-3-(3-benzoylbenzylidene)-6-(4-pyridylmethylene)piperazine-2,5-dione (6d)

Yield of 14% from **9** and 4-pyridinecarboxaldehyde **12d**; mp 258–260 °C; IR (KBr, cm⁻¹) 3215, 3056, 1692, 1657, 1633, 1593, 1415; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 10.63 (br s, 2H), 8.57 (d, J = 6.0 Hz, 2H), 7.88–7.74 (m, 4H), 7.73–7.64 (m, 2H), 7.63–7.55 (m, 3H), 7.50–7.44 (m, 2H), 6.87 (s, 1H), 6.69 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 195.5, 157.9, 157.6, 149.8, 140.6, 137.4, 136.8, 133.4, 133.3, 132.9, 130.3, 129.8, 129.6, 129.1, 128.9, 128.6, 127.4, 123.6, 114.4, 111.5; HRMS (ESI): m/z 396.1341 [M+H]⁺ (Calcd for C₂₄H₁₈N₃O₃: 396.1348).

1-2-8. (3Z,6Z)-3-(3-benzoylbenzylidene)-6-(2-pyrimidylmethylene)piperazine-2,5- dione (6e)

To a solution of 2-cyanopyrimidine 13 (208 mg, 2.0 mmol) in anhydrous THF (20 mL) was added dropwise DIBAL-H (a 1.0 M solution in toluene 2.4 mL, 2.4 mmol) at -78 °C under an Ar atmosphere. The cooling bath was then removed and the reaction mixture was stirred for 2 h at 0 °C. The reaction mixture was quenched by the addition of MeOH-AcOH (2:1), and a saturated solution of Rochelle salt was added. The mixture was then stirred for an additional 30 min at room temperature, extracted with CHCl₃, and washed with 10% NaHCO₃ and brine. The organic layer was then dried over Na₂SO₄ and concentrated in vacuo. The resultant aldehyde was difficult to purify; therefore, the residue was used directly without further purification. The residue was dissolved in DMF (0.5 mL), and (Z)-N-acetyl-3-(3-benzoylbenzylidene)piperazine-2,5-dione 9 (30 mg, 0.086 mmol) was added to the solution. The mixture was repeatedly evacuated over a short period of time to remove the oxygen, and the flask was flushed with Ar. Cs₂CO₃ was then added (53.3 mg, 0.16 mmol) and the evacuation-flushing process was repeated again. The resultant mixture was stirred at 110 °C for 2 h, and the progression of the reaction was monitored using TLC. After the reaction had finished, the solvent was removed by evaporation, and the residue was dissolved in CHCl₃, washed with 10% NaHCO₃ and brine, dried over Na₂SO₄, and concentrated in vacuo. The resulting residue was purified by column chromatography using CHCl₃-MeOH as an eluent to give a yellow solid **6e** (7.6 mg, 2%); mp 256–259 °C; IR (KBr, cm⁻¹) 3204, 3064, 1697,

1678, 1645, 1568, 1556, 1403; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 12.02 (s, 1H), 10.81 (br s, 1H), 8.95 (d, J = 4.9 Hz, 2H), 7.89 (s, 1H), 7.87–7.79 (m, 3H), 7.73–7.65 (m, 2H), 7.65–7.56 (m, 3H), 7.42 (t, J = 5.0 Hz, 1H), 6.94 (s, 1H), 6.59 (s, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 195.5, 163.5, 157.4, 156.9, 156.5, 137.4, 136.8, 134.9, 133.6, 132.9, 130.4, 129.8, 129.2, 128.8, 128.6, 118.7, 115.2, 107.1; HRMS (ESI): m/z 419.1117 [M+Na]⁺ (Calcd for C₂₃H₁₆N₄O₃Na: 419.1120).

1-3. Crystal data

The crystal data of **6b** was shown in below. CCDC 998560 contains these supplementary crystallographic data and these data can be obtain free of charge from the Cambridge Crystallographic Data Sentre via www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data request/cif.

| Identification code | KPU-300 |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Chemical formula | $C_{24}H_{17}N_3O_3$ |
| Formula weight | 395.41 |
| Temperature | 90 K |
| Wavelength | 0.71073 Å |
| Crystal system | monoclinic |
| Space group | C 1 2/c 1 |

Unit cell dimensions $a = 35.615(11) \text{ Å} \quad \alpha = 90^{\circ}$

b = 7.070(2) Å $\beta = 112.863(4)^{\circ}$

c = 15.551(5) Å $\gamma = 90^{\circ}$

Volume 3608.1(19) Å³

Z 8

Density (calculated) 1.456 g/cm³
Absorption coefficient 0.098 mm⁻¹

F(000) 1648

Crystal size $0.020 \times 0.100 \times 0.170 \text{ mm}$

Theta range for data collection 2.48 to 25.03°

Index ranges -42 <= h <= 42, -5 <= k <= 8, -18 <= 18

Reflections collected 8160

Independent reflections 3189 [R(int) = 0.0329]

Coverage of independent reflections 99.7%

Absorption correction multi-scan

Max. and min. transmission 0.9980 and 0.9835

Refinement method Full-matrix least-squares on F2

Data / restraints / parameters 3189 / 0 / 277

Goodness-of-fit on F2 1.040

Final R indices 2430 data; $I > 2\sigma(I)$ R1 = 0.0396, wR2 = 0.0927

all data R1 = 0.0580, wR2 = 0.1002

Largest diff. peak and hole 0.213 and -0.237 eÅ⁻³

2. Biological evaluation

2-1. HT-29 cell culture conditions

HT-29 cells were purchased from ATCC and maintained in McCoy's 5A medium containing 10% fetal bovine serum supplemented with 1% penicillin/streptomycin at 37 °C in a humidified 5% CO₂ atmosphere.

2-2. XTT/PMS-based cytotoxicity assay

The XTT/PMS assay was performed as described previously. Briefly, HT-29 cells were plated in 96-well plates at 2500 cells/well the day before the test compound addition step. Stock solutions of the compounds were prepared in DMSO. Serially diluted compounds were added to the cells, resulting in a final concentration that ranged from 0.1 to 100 nM for **6b**, 1 to 1000 nM for **5** and **6a**, **6c–e**, or 0.002 to 20000 nM for **9** and **10**. Forty-eight hours later, a 0.1 mg/mL XTT solution in PBS buffer containing 25 µM phenazine methosulfate was added to each well, and the cells were incubated for an additional 2 h. The absorbance of the formazan product was measured at 492 nm using a plate reader (TECAN SAFIRE). To compensate for the non-specific absorption, the absorbance at 690 nm was also measured.

2-3. Tubulin binding assay

Fluorescence spectra were measured at 37 °C as described previously. Porcine tubulin (0.5 μ M) in MES buffer (0.1 M MES, 0.5 mM MgCl₂, 1 mM EGTA, 1 mM GTP, pH 6.8) was incubated with different concentrations of the test compounds (0–20 μ M, 1% DMSO) at 37 °C for 1 h. After incubation, the fluorescence of each solution was measured (excitation at 295 nm, emission at 300–450 nm) using an FP-6200 Spectrofluorometer (JASCO, JAPAN).

2-4. In vitro tubulin polymerization assay

Tubulin was purified from porcine brain using high-molarity buffer.⁴ Turbidity assays were performed by incubating 1 mg/mL tubulin in RB buffer (100 mM MES, 1 mM EGTA, 0.5 mM MgCl₂, pH 6.8) with 1 mM GTP and 1 M glutamate. The absorbance at 350 nm was monitored at 37 °C using a thermostatic spectrophotometer (Beckman Coulter Inc., Brea, CA)

2-5. HeLa and A549 cell culture conditions and WST-8-based cytotoxicity assay

The human cervix epidermoid carcinoma cell line, HeLa, and the human lung carcinoma cell line, A549, were cultured in Dulbecco's modified Eagle's medium (DMEM) containing 10% heat-inactivated fetal calf serum (Nichirei Bioscience Inc., Tokyo, Japan). Cells were grown at 37 °C in a 5% CO₂ atmosphere. The IC₅₀ values were calculated based on the measurements obtained before and after treating the cells (3×10^4 cells/mL) with various concentrations of each compound for 48 h. Cell growth was measured using the WST-8 cell counting kit.

2-6. NHSF46 cell culture conditions and XTT/PMS-based cytotoxicity assay

The human diploid fibroblasts cells, NHSF46, were purchased from Riken BioResource Center (Ibaraki, JAPAN) and cultured in MEM Alpha medium containing 10% fetal bovine serum supplemented with 100 units/mL penicillin and 100 μg/mL streptomycin at 37 °C under a humidified 5% CO₂ atmosphere. The XTT/TMS assay was performed by the same procedure as that used for HT-29 cells with a final concentration ranging from 1 to 100 nM of derivative **6b**. The absorbance of the formazan product was measured at 490 nm on a Model 680 microplate reader (Bio-Rad Laboratories, Inc., Hercules, USA). The IC₅₀ value was obtained as an average from two independent dose response curves.

2-7. HMNC cell culture conditions and WST-1-based cytotoxicity assay

The human peripheral blood mononuclear cells (HMNC) were purchased from Cell Applications, Inc. (San Diego, USA) and cultured in blood cell culture medium at 37 °C under a humidified 5% CO_2 atmosphere. For calculation of IC_{50} values, cells were plated in 96-well plates at 2.5×10^4 cells/well. Derivative **6b** was added to the cells, resulting in a final concentration ranging from 2 to 2000 nM. 48 h later, 10 μ L of WST-1 reagent (Roche Diagnostics GmbH, Germany) was added to each well and the cells were incubated for an additional 2 h. The absorbance of the formazan product was measured at 450 nm on Multiskan FC (Thermo Fisher Scientific, K.K., USA). To compensate for the non-specific absorption, the absorbance at 620 nm was also measured. The IC_{50} value was calculated as the mean \pm SD from three independent dose response curves.

2-8. Immunofluorescence

HeLa cells (3×10^4 cells /mL) were placed on sterile coverslips and were treated with a given concentration of each compound for 6 h. Coverslips were fixed using -20 °C MeOH for 5 min and were washed in PBS-B (PBS containing 0.5% w/v BSA). Next, the coverslips were coated with an anti- α -tubulin antibody (sc-32293, Santa Cruz Biotechnology Inc., Santa Cruz, CA) in PBS-B, and placed in a humidified container at 37 °C for 1 h. The coverslips were then washed twice with PBS-B, coated with a solution of Alexa Fluor 488 – conjugated anti-mouse IgG antibody (Invitrogen) in PBS-B, and incubated for 30 min. Finally, coverslips were washed with PBS and mounted using 0.1 μ g/mL DAPI solution (Dojindo, Kumamoto, Japan). The morphologies of the chromosomes and microtubules were observed under a Leica LAS AF 6000 fluorescent microscope (Leica Microsystems GmbH, Wetzlar, Germany).

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3. ¹H and ¹³C NMR spectra

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