In the search for new nonsedating antihistamines, scientists at Ube synthesized a novel series of piperidine and piperazine derivatives and selected one compound, TAU-284 (betotastine besilate), for further evaluation.

Pharmacological Actions

The antiallergic activity of betotastine besilate was evaluated in comparison to that of other compounds in various rat models of allergy. Betotastine besilate inhibited histamine release from rat peritoneal mast cells and inhibited LTB₄ and 5-HETE production in peritoneal cells at high concentrations (1 mM). Following oral administration at doses ranging from 0.1-30 mg/kg p.o., betotastine inhibited the homologous passive cutaneous anaphylaxis (PCA) reaction in a dose-dependent fashion (ID₃₀ = 0.38 mg/kg p.o.), an effect which lasted for more than 8 h. This effect was significant at a dose of 1 mg/kg, and was superior to that of ketotifen, terfenadine, cetirizine and epinastine. No tolerance developed following administration to rats for 8 days (2).

The compound also dose-dependently inhibited histamine-induced allergic skin reactions in rats (ID₃₀ = 0.10 mg/kg), with the effect lasting for more than 4 h postdosing. This effect was significant at doses of 0.1 and 1.0 mg/kg, and was again superior to that of the above reference compounds. Oral betotastine (30 mg/kg) suppressed to decrease in histamine content in pleural cells in a rat model of concanavalin A-induced pleurisy. Taken together, these results indicate that betotastine besilate is a potent and long-acting antiallergic agent whose activity is due to histamine antagonism (2).

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The antiallergic activity of betotastine was also evaluated in several guinea pig models of bronchoconstriction (2-4). Like the reference compounds ketotifen, terfenadine and cetirizine, betotastine besilate dose-dependently prevented severe asthmatic reactions induced in guinea pigs by histamine inhalation or antigen exposure (ED₅₀ = 0.01 and 0.3 mg/kg p.o., respectively). The compound also inhibited antigen-induced airway hyperresponsiveness in acutely sensitized guinea pigs at doses of 1 mg/kg p.o. or higher (3).

A. Graul, J. Castañer. Prous Science, P.O. Box 540, 08080 Barcelona, Spain.
Anaphylactic bronchoconstriction induced by anti-benzylpenicilloyl bovine gamma-globulin (BPO.BGG) serum or by histamine was inhibited in a dose-dependent fashion following oral administration of the title compound (ID$_{50}$ = 0.21 and 0.11 mg/kg, respectively). It also inhibited PAF-induced bronchoconstriction at doses above 0.1 mg/kg p.o. (ID$_{50}$ = 1.5 mg/kg p.o.), indicating that in addition to its antihistaminic activity, betotastine also acts as a PAF antagonist (4).

In a similar set of experiments in guinea pigs, title compound was also found to inhibit leukotriene D$_4$ (LTD$_4$), blocking LTD$_4$-induced contractions in tracheal smooth muscle and ileum at doses above 30 and 3 µM, respectively. Oral betotastine also dose-dependently inhibited BPO.BGG serum-induced anaphylactic shock (ID$_{55}$ = 0.2 mg/kg p.o.) and histamine-induced systemic shock (ID$_{50}$ = 0.06 mg/kg p.o.); in the latter case, shock was inhibited for 0.5-12 h following oral administration at doses of 0.3 or 1.0 mg/kg p.o. At oral doses above 0.01 mg/kg, betotastine inhibited histamine-induced cutaneous vascular permeability enhancement in a dose-dependent manner (ID$_{40}$ = 0.04 mg/kg) (5).

The antiallergic activity of betotastine besilate was further demonstrated in anesthetized dogs. Title compound inhibited histamine-induced bronchoconstriction in a dose-dependent manner (ED$_{50}$ = 3.2 µg/kg i.v.), with much more potent activity than terfenadine (ED$_{50}$ = 46.0 µg/kg) in this model. Intravenous administration of betotastine inhibited bronchoconstriction by approximately 70% and 90% at the respective doses of 10 and 30 µg/kg, with effects lasting 4-5 h after dosing (6).

Betotastine besilate inhibited antigen-induced eosinophil infiltration, a characteristic of allergic inflammatory diseases, in the airway and peripheral blood in ovalbumin-sensitized mice. On the third day after ovalbumin challenge, betotastine (10 mg/kg p.o., b.i.d.) inhibited the increase in eosinophil numbers in bronchoalveolar lavage fluid; it inhibited this increase in peripheral blood on days 1-3 after challenge (7).

The efficacy of betotastine besilate was further established in other animal models of allergic rhinitis. Oral compound (1, 3 or 10 mg/kg) inhibited increase in dye leakage during and after nasal antigen challenge in actively sensitized rats, and inhibited the increase in intranasal pressure resulting from the topical application of histamine in nonsensitized guinea pigs. In actively sensitized guinea pigs, the compound significantly inhibited both phases of the biphasic increase in nasal airway resistance (at 0.5 and 4 h after challenge) (8).

Pharmacokinetics and Metabolism

The pharmacokinetic profile of betotastine besilate was studied in rats and dogs following administration of single oral doses of the $^{14}$C-labeled compound. Blood levels of radioactivity in male rats increased within 30 min of drug administration to reach a C$_{max}$ of 0.2 µg eq./ml, and decreased thereafter with a t$_{1/2(1-8)}$ of 3 h. Maximum levels of radioactivity in tissues were reached by 30 min after oral dosing, with highest levels in liver, followed by kidney, small intestine, stomach, gallbladder, pancreas and adrenal gland. The major component identified in urine
### Table I: Nonsedating antihistamines launched (year) and in clinical trials.

#### Launched
1. Ebastine
   *Ebasteil*
   Almirall; Rhône-Poulenc Rorer (1990)
2. Emedastine fumarate
   *Daren, Remicut*
   Kanebo; Kowa (1993)
3. Epinastine HCl
   *Alesion*
   Boehringer Ingelheim; Sankyo (1994)
4. Fexofenadine HCl
   *Allegra*
   Sepracor; Hoechst Marion Roussel (1996)
5. Levocabastine HCl
   *Livostin*
   Janssen (1991)
6. Mizolastine²
   *Mizollen*
   Synthelabo (1998)

#### Clinical Trials
7. Betotastine besilate
   Tanabe Seiyaku; Ube
8. Decarboethoxyloratadine
   Sepracor; Schering-Plough
9. DF-1111301¹
   Dompe
10. Efletirizine
    *UCB*
11. HSR-609
    *Hokuriku Seiyaku*
12. Norastemizole
    *Sepracor*
13. Rupatadine fumarate¹
    *Uriach*

(Continued)
General pharmacology studies of betotastine besilate indicated that the compound had a low potential to induce arrhythmogenicity. In the isolated and perfused guinea pig heart, betotastine decreased contractility by about 30% at a dose of 1000 µg/heart. It was also found to have a low potential to cause adverse effects in the gastrointestinal, renal and respiratory systems following oral or intraduodenal administration in rats, with adverse effects observed only at very high doses (10).

Oral toxicity studies were performed in rats administered the compound at doses ranging from 30-1000 mg/kg/day for 4 weeks and from 20-600 mg/kg/day for 26 weeks. The non-toxic dose level was estimated to be 100 mg/kg/day in the former and 20 mg/kg/day in the latter study. Drug-related toxicities at higher doses included inhibition of body weight gain, mydriasis, decrease in food intake, lower urinary pH, increase in hepatic drug-metabolizing enzyme activity, increase in liver weight, hypertrophy of centrilobular hepatic cells and hyperplasia of urinary epithelium; all these signs decreased or disappeared completely during the recovery period, and there were no treatment-related deaths (13).

Multiple-dose pharmacokinetic studies were also performed in rats and dogs. Steady state was reached on day 16 in male rats administered 14C-labeled betotastine besilate orally for 21 days. Levels of radioactivity in blood decreased more slowly than in the single-dose study. Radioactivity levels were highest in liver and kidney following the 21-day dosing period, and were low in cerebrum, eyeballs, fat, seminal vesicles and testis; levels were moderate in other tissues. Tissue levels of radioactivity increased after each dose. Drug transfer to blood cells also increased with repeat dosing, and the majority of the radioactivity in blood was associated with a globulin fraction. Total fecal and urinary excretion of radioactivity during each 24-h period after drug administration was nearly constant. In pregnant female rats administered betotastine besilate on day 18 of pregnancy, levels of radioactivity in the fetal liver 30 min after dosing were nearly equivalent to those in maternal plasma, whereas levels in fetal tissue were 1/3-1/10 those in maternal plasma. Radioactivity in the milk and lactating female rats peaked (0.40 µg eq./ml) at 1 h postdosing; at 48 h after drug administration, radioactivity had dropped below the limits of detection. However, at each determination point, levels in milk were higher than those in plasma (12).

Table I: Continued.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>(9) Also PAF antagonist.</td>
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<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>(10) Also PAF antagonist and leukotriene antagonist. Source: Prous Science Ensemble database.</td>
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<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
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<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Image" /></td>
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Toxicity

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Four- and 26-week toxicity studies were also performed in dogs. In this species, the no-toxic effect levels were estimated to be 60 mg/kg/day x 4 weeks or 30 mg/kg/day x 26 weeks. Adverse effects observed at higher doses included vomiting and salivation, which resolved during the recovery period (14).

Based on the results of reproductive toxicity studies in rats and rabbits, the nontoxic dose level was determined
to be 100 mg/kg p.o. in dams for general toxicity and for reproductive function and in offspring (15).

Clinical Studies

Tanabe Seiyaku and Ube have filed for approval to market betotastine besilate in Japan for the treatment of allergic rhinitis and urticaria (16, 17).

Manufacturers

Tanabe Seiyaku Co., Ltd. (JP) and Ube Industries, Ltd. (JP).

References


