

## 10-Iodo-11*H*-indolo[3,2-*c*]quinoline-6-carboxylic Acids Are Selective Inhibitors of DYRK1A

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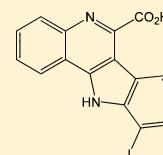
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### S Supporting Information

**ABSTRACT:** The protein kinase DYRK1A has been suggested to act as one of the intracellular regulators contributing to neurological alterations found in individuals with Down syndrome. For an assessment of the role of DYRK1A, selective synthetic inhibitors are valuable pharmacological tools. However, the DYRK1A inhibitors described in the literature so far either are not sufficiently selective or have not been tested against closely related kinases from the DYRK and the CLK protein kinase families. The aim of this study was the identification of DYRK1A inhibitors exhibiting selectivity versus the structurally and functionally closely related DYRK and CLK isoforms. Structure modification of the screening hit 11*H*-indolo[3,2-*c*]quinoline-6-carboxylic acid revealed structure–activity relationships for kinase inhibition and enabled the design of 10-iodo-substituted derivatives as very potent DYRK1A inhibitors with considerable selectivity against CLKs. X-ray structure determination of three 11*H*-indolo[3,2-*c*]quinoline-6-carboxylic acids cocrystallized with DYRK1A confirmed the predicted binding mode within the ATP binding site.



5j (IC <sub>50</sub> )
DYRK1A: 6 nM
DYRK1B: 600 nM
DYRK2: > 10000 nM
CLK1: 500 nM

### INTRODUCTION

Down syndrome (DS) is one of the most frequent congenital disorders in humans. Individuals with DS exhibit a complex phenotype of structural alterations and intellectual disability. Many of them develop symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease (AD) at a relatively young age, and a high proportion of DS individuals develop dementia at a later stage. DS is caused by a trisomy of chromosome 21 as a consequence of nondisjunction during meiotic cell division.<sup>1,2</sup> Although the mechanisms leading from trisomy 21 to the clinical disease pattern are not yet understood, the 30 genes located in the so-called Down syndrome critical region (DSCR; 21q22.1–22.3) of chromosome 21 are highly likely to be associated with the disease.<sup>3–5</sup> There is mounting evidence that overexpression of DYRK1A (dual-specificity tyrosine phosphorylation-regulated kinase 1A), a protein kinase encoded by a gene located within DSCR, contributes to mental retardation in DS. Since DYRK1A is also connected to neurological disorders such as AD,<sup>6,7</sup> the early onset of AD in DS individuals has been related to DYRK1A overexpression.<sup>8</sup> Two histopathological features are found in the brains of AD patients: extracellular  $\beta$ -amyloid plaques and

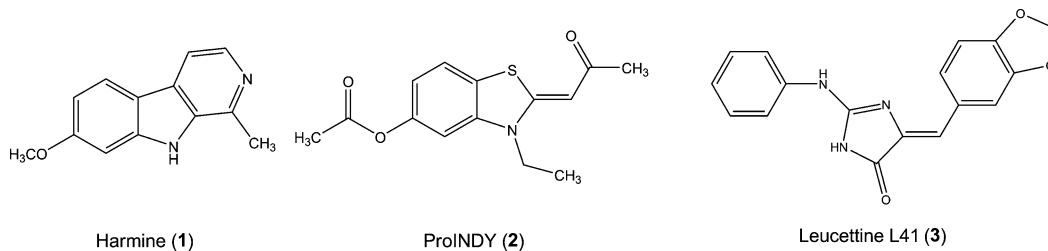
intracellular tangles consisting of hyperphosphorylated tau protein.<sup>9</sup> DYRK1A appears to connect these biochemical aberrations.<sup>10</sup> Hyperphosphorylation of tau by DYRK1A diminishes its microtubule-stabilizing effects and increases aggregation.<sup>11</sup> The neurological impairment of mice with modified DYRK1A expression has also been attributed to deregulated splicing, leading to an imbalance of 3R-tau and 4R-tau isoforms.<sup>12,13</sup> The increased 3R-tau concentration (by a factor of up to 4) observed in DS has been associated with changes of the neuronal cytoskeleton and neurofibrillary degeneration.<sup>12</sup> DYRK1A-overexpressing mice also exhibit increased production of  $\text{A}\beta$  peptide, which has been attributed to phosphorylation of the amyloid precursor protein (APP) and presenilin 1 by DYRK1A.<sup>14,15</sup>

DYRK1A is a member of the DYRK protein kinases (DYRK1A, DYRK1B, DYRK2, DYRK3, DYRK4), which are part of the CMGC superfamily and share structural similarity of the catalytic domain and a small sequence nearby, the so-called

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Chart 1. Three Reported DYRK1A Inhibitors



DYRK homology box (DH-box).<sup>16</sup> Although DYRKs are serine/threonine kinases, autophosphorylation occurs at a conserved tyrosine residue of the activation loop. This autophosphorylation is constitutive and seems to be not related to regulation.<sup>17,18</sup> In the light of its involvement in DS and other neurodegenerative disorders, the inhibition of DYRK1A with small chemical inhibitors has been suggested as a therapeutic strategy.<sup>19,20</sup> Selective DYRK1A inhibitors would also be valuable tools for the investigation of the role of DYRK1A in physiological and pathobiochemical processes. To date, most protein kinase inhibitors exert their activity by competing with ATP in the binding pocket of the kinase. Since ATP binding sites of protein kinases share a common structure with subtle differences, selectivity with regard to closely related kinases is not easily achieved.<sup>21,22</sup> When selective DYRK1A inhibitors are to be developed, special attention should therefore be devoted to other members of the CMGC superfamily, consisting of CDKs, MAPkinases (such as ERKs), GSK-3, and CDC-like kinases.<sup>23</sup>

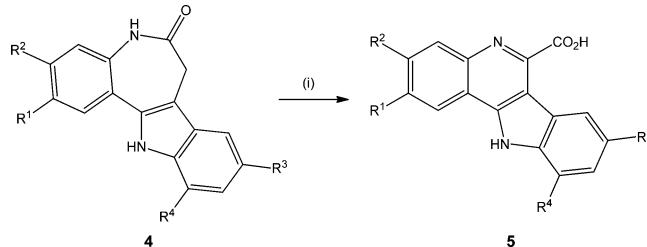
The structures and properties of DYRK1A inhibitors have been summarized in recent reviews.<sup>19,24</sup> A well established DYRK1A inhibitor is the  $\beta$ -carboline alkaloid harmine (1, Chart 1), which however also shows high affinity for serotonin and tryptamine receptor binding sites,<sup>25</sup> acts as monoamine oxidase A (MAO A) inhibitor,<sup>26</sup> and also inhibits CLKs<sup>27</sup> and therefore is inappropriate for use as a cellular chemical probe. Epigallocatechin 3-gallate (EGCG) is a polyphenolic constituent of green tea reported to inhibit DYRK1A in a non-ATP-competitive manner,<sup>28,29</sup> but it is chemically reactive and also interacts with numerous intracellular signaling pathways by other mechanisms.<sup>30</sup> The benzothiazole derivative INDY showed potent inhibition of DYRK1A and related kinases (DYRK1B, DYRK2, DYRK3, CLK1, CLK4, CK1, and PIM1). A prodrug of this compound, proINDY (2), has been shown to protect *Xenopus* tadpoles that overexpress DYRK1A against head malformation during development.<sup>27</sup> Leucettine L41 (3), derived from the marine natural product leucettamine B, is an ATP-competitive inhibitor of DYRKs and CLKs that also interacts with GSK-3 and CK2 to a lower extent. It modulates pre-mRNA splicing, protects HT22 hippocampal cells from glutamate-induced cell death, induces autophagy, and inhibits phosphorylation of tau on Thr212.<sup>31–33</sup> Similar to the agents mentioned before, the recently reported chemical DYRK1A inhibitors comprising meridianines,<sup>34</sup> indirubin 5'-carboxylates,<sup>35</sup> thiazolo[5,4-f]quinazolines,<sup>36</sup> pyrido[2,3-d]-pyrimidines,<sup>37</sup> 3,5-diaryl-7-azaindoles (DANDYS),<sup>38</sup> KH-CB19,<sup>39</sup> 2,4-bisubstituted thiophenes,<sup>40</sup> and hydroxybenzothiophenes<sup>41</sup> either show limited selectivity against structurally closely related DYRK and CLK kinase isoforms or were not tested on these enzymes. In this regard, a DYRK1A inhibitor with high selectivity over other CMGC kinases would be useful for biochemical and cellular studies and as lead motif for the

development of new pharmaceuticals targeting neurodegenerative diseases. To identify novel hit matter, we tested a small diverse in-house compound library against DYRK1A and the following CMGC protein kinases: CDK1/cyclin B, CDK2/cyclin A, CDK5/p25, CK1, GSK-3, and ERK2. The only compound showing a moderate selective DYRK1A inhibition ( $IC_{50} = 2.6 \mu\text{M}$ ) was the 11H-indolo[3,2-c]quinoline-6-carboxylic acid 5a (Table 1).

## ■ SYNTHESIS AND EVALUATION OF ANALOGUES

In order to generate congeners of 5a with increased potency, we synthesized a number of analogues 5b–h, starting from the readily available 7,12-dihydroindolo[3,2-d][1]benzazepin-6(SH)-ones 4 (paullones), a class of dual GSK-3/CDK inhibitors<sup>42–53</sup> that undergo a radical-induced rearrangement when stirred with Co(II) acetate and N-hydroxyphthalimide (NHPI) in the presence of oxygen<sup>54</sup> (Scheme 1).

Scheme 1. Synthesis of 11H-Indolo[3,2-c]quinoline-6-carboxylic Acids 5 by Rearrangement of Paullones 4<sup>a</sup>



<sup>a</sup>Reagents and conditions:<sup>54</sup> Co(II) acetate, NHPI, air or O<sub>2</sub>, DMF, room temperature to 70 °C (13–88%).

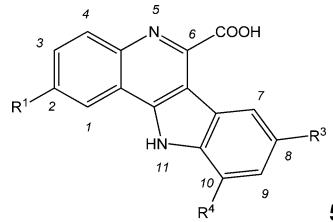
Evaluation of these derivatives in the kinase panel revealed that substituents located in 8-position of the heterocyclic scaffold eliminated the DYRK1A inhibitory activity, suggesting steric exclusion from the ATP-binding pocket, the most likely binding site of the inhibitors. Compounds with polar H-bond acceptor substituents in 8-position were moderate and selective GSK-3 inhibitors but also were inactive on DYRK1A. Strikingly, the 10-chloro derivative 5h showed that DYRK1A inhibitory potency increased by 2 orders of magnitude ( $IC_{50} = 31 \text{ nM}$ ) compared to 5a without inhibiting other kinases of the panel displayed in Table 1.

In light of the results shown in Table 1, we hypothesized that substituents in 10-position of the parent scaffold induce a strong and selective inhibitory activity of DYRK1A.

## ■ CHEMISTRY

To expand the panel of potential selective DYRK1A inhibitors and to gain insight into SAR, a series of 10-substituted 11H-indolo[3,2-c]quinoline-6-carboxylic acids 5h–w and the hetero-

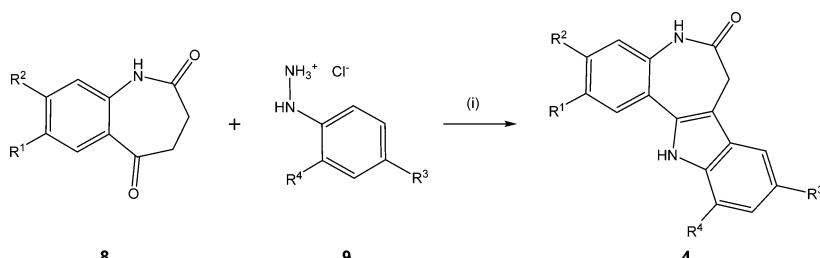
**Table 1.** Kinase Inhibitory Activity ( $IC_{50}$ ,  $\mu\text{M}$ ) of 11H-Indolo[3,2-*c*]quinoline-6-carboxylic Acids **5a–h** on a Panel of Selected CMGC Protein Kinases<sup>a</sup>



compd	R <sup>1</sup>	R <sup>3</sup>	R <sup>4</sup>	IC <sub>50</sub> , $\mu\text{M}$						
				CDK1	CDK2	CDK5	CK1	DYRK1A	GSK-3	ERK2
<b>5a</b>	H	H	H	>10	>10	>10	>10	2.6	>10	>10
<b>5b</b>	H	C(CH <sub>3</sub> ) <sub>3</sub>	H	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10
<b>5c</b>	H	CF <sub>3</sub>	H	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10
<b>5d</b>	H	NO <sub>2</sub>	H	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	0.82	>10
<b>5e</b>	H	CH <sub>3</sub>	H	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10
<b>5f</b>	H	COOH	H	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	0.35	>10
<b>5g</b>	I	Cl	H	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10
<b>5h</b>	H	H	Cl	>10	>10	>10	>10	0.031	>10	>10

<sup>a</sup>All data points for construction of dose-response curves were recorded in triplicate. Typically, the standard deviation of single data points was below 10%. For test conditions refer to the section Experimental Procedures.

**Scheme 2. Synthesis of Paullones 4<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup>Reagents and conditions: (i) (1) AcOH, NaOAc, 70 °C, (2) AcOH, H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, 70 °C. For residues R<sup>1</sup>–R<sup>4</sup> refer to Tables 1 and 2.

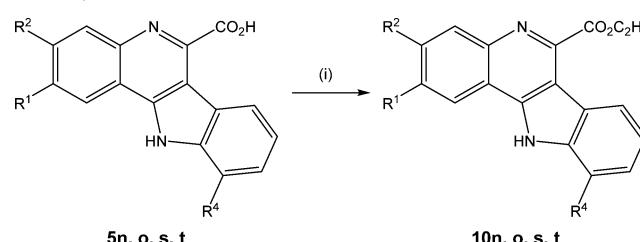
cyclic congeners **6** and **7** were synthesized from paullones **4** (or appropriate heterocyclic paullone analogues), applying a method analogous to Scheme 1. All paullones **4** used in this paper as starting materials were prepared from suitable 3,4-dihydro-1*H*-1-benzazepine-2,5-diones **8** and phenylhydrazines **9** by standard Fischer indole synthesis procedures described earlier (e.g., Scheme 2).<sup>43–45,51,54–56</sup>

The esters **10n,o,s,t** were synthesized by treatment of the appropriate carboxylic acids **5n,o,s,t** with ethanolic hydrogen chloride at room temperature (Scheme 3). An X-ray structure analysis of the ester **10o** unambiguously confirmed the structure which was present as its monohydrate in the isolated crystals (Figure 1).

## BIOLOGICAL EVALUATION AND DISCUSSION

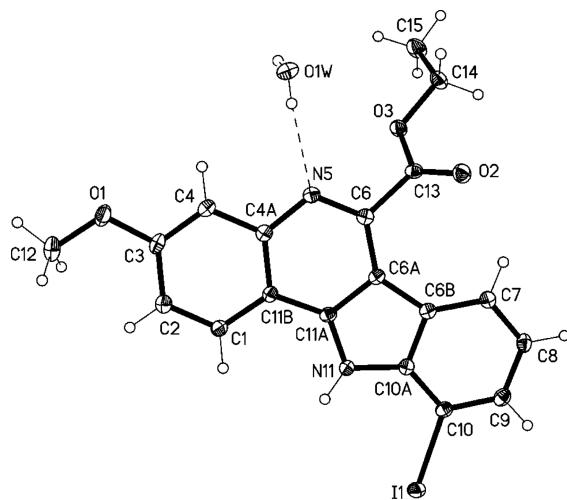
The new derivatives **5h–w** and heterocyclic analogues **6** and **7** were tested on an extended panel of CMGC kinases comprising several DYRK and CLK isoforms (Table 2). Evaluation of the results yielded a consistent activity/selectivity pattern depending on the substituent in position 10. All compounds with a 10-chloro substitution (**5h,m,p,q,s,u–w**, **6**) exhibited DYRK1A inhibitory activity with  $IC_{50}$  values in double digit nanomolar to single digit micromolar concentrations. However, similar to other DYRK1A inhibitors, the selectivity of these compounds was low and other DYRKs (DYRK1B, DYRK2), CLKs (CLK1, -2, -4), and CDK9 were also inhibited at comparable

**Scheme 3. Synthesis of Ethyl 11H-Indolo[3,2-*c*]quinoline-6-carboxylates **10**<sup>a</sup>**



<sup>a</sup>For substitution pattern, refer to Table 2. Reagents and conditions: (i) EtOH, HCl (g), room temperature, 30 min (27–75%).

concentrations. The lack of DYRK1A/CLK1 selectivity also applied to the heterocyclic analogues **6** and **7**. All tested derivatives showed selectivity versus CDKs 1, 2, 5 and CLK3. Within series **5**, substitution of the 10-chloro substituent by fluorine led to weaker activity (cf. **5l**) or complete loss (cf. **5r**) of kinase inhibitory activity. Derivatives in which the 10-chloro substituents were replaced by bromine (e.g., **5i**, **5n**, **5t**) showed a slightly improved DYRK1A inhibition but with diminished selectivity versus DYRK2. It is noteworthy that the 10-bromo substituted 1-aza analogue **7** did not inhibit DYRK2 but did inhibit CLKs 1, 2, and 4, which are frequently affected by DYRK1A inhibitors. The introduction of a 10-iodo substituent



**Figure 1.** Crystal structure of the ethyl ester **10o** as its monohydrate.

(compounds **5j** and **5o**) eventually led to the desired properties. These compounds showed strong potency (DYRK1A IC<sub>50</sub> of 6 and 22 nM, respectively) and good selectivity, as all tested competing kinases were inhibited by **5j** and **5o** in concentrations higher by at least 2 orders of magnitude. The selectivity for DYRK1A over DYRK1B is particularly striking, since the catalytic domains of these kinases are very closely related on the level of the amino acid sequence (85% sequence identity). Upon replacement of the 10-halogen by a methoxy group the DYRK1A inhibitor **5k** was produced, which also inhibited CDK9, and therefore 10-methoxy-substituted derivatives were not further pursued. The finding that the carboxylic acid esters **10n,o,s,t** failed to inhibit any of the tested kinases underlines the importance of the free carboxylic acid moiety at the 6-position of the molecule.

To evaluate the most potent and rather selective DYRK1A inhibitor **5j** in a cellular assay, we analyzed its effect on the phosphorylation of Thr434 in splicing factor 3B1 (SF3B1) in HeLa cells. Phosphorylation of this site depends on DYRK1A and serves as a useful indicator of the activity of the cellular endogenous DYRK1A.<sup>57,58</sup> In this assay **5j** dose-dependently reduced the phosphorylation of Thr434 in SF3B1, showing its DYRK1A-inhibitory effect in living cells (Figure 2A). Next we analyzed the effect of **5j** on tau protein as a potentially relevant target in AD. Overexpression of DYRK1A in HEK293 cells caused an increased phosphorylation of tau at Thr212, which was inhibited by **5j** with an IC<sub>50</sub> of 2.1 μM (Figure 2B). The high concentration margin between in vitro and cellular DYRK1A inhibition by **5j** is probably the result of poor cellular uptake. Nevertheless, the potency of **5j** as an inhibitor of tau phosphorylation is in the same range as or better than those of other DYRK1A inhibitors that were tested in this assay.<sup>27,59</sup>

The relationship between molecular structure and DYRK1A inhibition indicated a high significance of the halogen substitution in position 10 of the title compounds. The fact that on the one hand in the series **5h–j** the iodo substituted derivative **5j** exhibited the highest potency and on the other hand iodine shows the highest tendency to form halogen bonds with carbonyl oxygen atoms hints to halogen bond involvement in this area. However, the data collected with the derivatives described in this report are not sufficient to substantiate such a hypothesis. For example, in the 3-methoxy substituted series

**5m–o** the DYRK1A inhibition is independent of halogen nature. Further evidence against the necessity of a halogen bond in this position is the 10-methoxy derivative **5k**, which despite lacking a halogen retains DYRK1A inhibitory activity. For a better understanding of the ligand–target interaction mode, docking studies and X-ray structure analyses were performed with representative congeners.

## ■ DOCKING STUDIES

Because the majority of protein kinase inhibitors act by competition with ATP at its binding site, we assumed this binding mode also for inhibitors of series **5**. For the construction of a detailed model of the inhibitor–protein interaction, representatives of series **5** were docked into a published DYRK1A structure (PDB code 2WO6), the ATP pocket of which is occupied by the ligand DJM2005.<sup>60</sup> As a control, redocking DJM2005 into chain B of the protein reproduced the original pose of the inhibitor, albeit not as the highest ranked pose. Docking of **5i** into the ATP binding pocket produced four different poses as the highest ranked results (Figure 3). Although lacking the classical acceptor–donor–acceptor hydrogen bond pattern between the hinge region of the kinase and the inhibitor, the pose in Figure 3b was assessed as the most plausible, since it not only comprises a salt bridge between the carboxylate and the protonated ε-amino group of the conserved lysine but, compared to the orientation in Figure 3a, accommodates a larger part of the molecule in the binding pocket. Another convincing argument in favor of orientation in Figure 3b was its high similarity to the orientation of the inhibitor IRB in DYRK2 (PDB code 3KVV, not depicted here). Although the program used for docking (GOLD, versions 4.0 and 5.1, respectively) was not taking halogen bonding into account, the contact between the bromo substituent in 10-position and the carbonyl oxygen of Leu241 as shown in Figure 3b resembled an atom alignment found with halogen bonds. It had been reported before that halogen bonds may replace the canonical hinge–inhibitor hydrogen-bond interaction.<sup>39,61–64</sup> However, given the uncertainty encountered with docking experiments, in this case the resulting pose was not adequate to prove the de facto existence of a halogen bond.

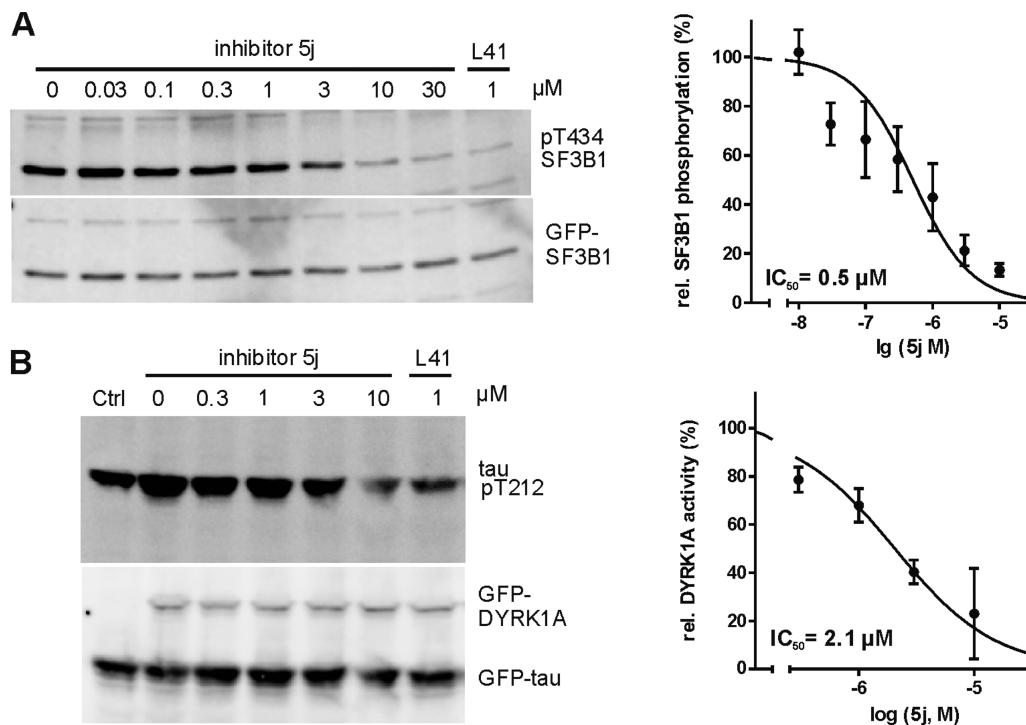
## ■ CRYSTAL STRUCTURE ANALYSIS

In order to validate our docking hypothesis experimentally, we cocrystallized DYRK1A with the compounds **5s**, **5t**, and **5j** as examples of chloro, bromo, and iodo substituted congeners (Table 3, Figure 4). In all cases the orientation in Figure 3B generated by the docking experiment was confirmed. Figure 4A–C illustrates the binding modes of these three inhibitors in the ATP binding site. In **5s** and **5t**-DYRK1A complexes, the iodide groups at the position 2 (R<sup>1</sup>) were observed to partially or completely fall off from the main inhibitor scaffold with the free radicals still located adjacent to its original position. Overall, the crystal structure revealed that the inhibitor was kept in position by a salt bridge between the carboxylate and the conserved lysine 188. As expected, the binding mode was highly conserved in all three inhibitor complexes. A water-mediated network of hydrogen bonds involving Ser242 and Asp307 probably contributed to the binding affinity of the ligands. The P-loop residue Phe170 flipped into the ATP binding site potentially forming aromatic end-on stacking interactions with the inhibitor.

Table 2. Inhibition of CMGC Protein Kinases ( $IC_{50}$ ,  $\mu\text{M}$ ) by 11*H*-Indolo[3,2-*c*]quinoline-6-carboxylic Acids 5h-w and by Heterocyclic Analogs 6 and 7<sup>a</sup>

compd	R <sup>1</sup>	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>4</sup>	$IC_{50}$ , $\mu\text{M}$												
				CDK1	CDK2	CDK5	CDK9	CK1	GSK-3	CLK1	CLK2	CLK3	CLK4	DYRK1A	DYRK1B	DYRK2
5h	H	H	Cl	>10	>100	0.150	>100	>100	0.130	0.061	>100	0.045	0.031	0.210	0.040	>100
5i	H	H	Br	>100	>100	0.160	>100	>100	0.032	0.055	>100	0.035	0.020	0.080	0.016	>100
5j	H	H	I	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	0.50	5.5	>10	0.21	0.006	0.600	>10	>10
5k	H	H	OMe	>10	>10	0.120	>10	>10	1.1			0.032				
5l	H	OMe	F	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	0.33	0.18	>10	0.21	0.32	3.0	8.00	2.3
5m	H	OMe	Cl	>10	>10	1.000	>100	>100	0.025	0.390	>10	0.068	0.023	1.000	0.0330	>10
5n	H	OMe	Br	>10	>10	1.500	>10	3.300	0.0210	0.1100	>10	0.042	0.018	0.230	0.023	1.4
5o	H	OMe	I	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	2.0	>10	>10	2.3	0.022	>10	>10	
5p	H	Cl	Cl	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	0.94				2.3			
5q	H	OEt	Cl	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	2.2	0.24	>10	0.35	2.0	>10	>10	
5r	I	H	F	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	
5s	I	H	Cl	>10	>10	2.2	>10	>10	3.4	1.3	>10	3.6	0.18	4.9	0.22	>10
5t	I	H	Br	>10	>10	1.5	>10	8.8	1.2	0.61	>10	1.1	0.12	1.4	0.13	>10
5u	OCH <sub>3</sub>	H	Cl	>10	>10	0.21		2.3	3.0	0.10			0.039			
5v	3-MeOPh	H	Cl	>10	>10	3.1	>10	0.22	0.51	>10	>10	0.041	1.9	0.079	0.3	
5w	4-MeOPh	H	Cl	>10	>10	>10	>10	>10	0.30			0.056				
6	na	na	na	>10	>10	0.350	>10	4.300	0.053			0.17				
7	na	na	na	>10	>10	2.0	>10	0.28	1.1	>10	0.37	0.13	1.300	>10	>10	

<sup>a</sup>All data points for construction of dose-response curves were recorded in triplicate. Typically, the standard deviation of single data points was below 10%. A space indicates that the compound was not tested on the indicated kinase. For test conditions refer to the section Experimental Procedures. na = not applicable.



**Figure 2.** Efficacy of compound **5j** in cell-based assays. (A) HeLa cells expressing GFP-SF3B1 were treated with compound **5j** or the reference inhibitor leucettine 41 (L41) as indicated. Phosphorylation of SF3B1 was determined by immunoblotting with a pThr434 antibody, and expression levels of GFP-SF3B1 were assessed with GFP antibody. The left panel shows Western blots of a representative experiment, and the graph presents the quantitative evaluation of three experiments as the mean values of normalized pThr434 immunoreactivity relative to that in untreated cells  $\pm$  SEM. (B) Stably transfected HEK293-tau-DYRK1A cells<sup>59</sup> were treated with doxycyclin (except lane 1, Ctrl) to induce the expression of GFP-DYRK1A and compound **5j** or the reference inhibitor leucettine 41 (L41). Phosphorylation of tau on Thr212 (pT212) was detected by immunoblotting with a phosphospecific antibody, and expression levels of the recombinant proteins were determined with a GFP antibody. To correct for basal tau phosphorylation not caused by DYRK1A, the pT212 immunoreactivity in L41 treated cells was subtracted as background. The graph presents the results of three experiments as the mean values of pThr212 immunoreactivity relative to that in untreated cells  $\pm$  SEM. Curve fitting yielded  $IC_{50} = 0.5 \mu M$  (95% confidence interval 0.3–0.8  $\mu M$ ) for the inhibition of SF3B1 phosphorylation and  $IC_{50} = 2.1 \mu M$  (95% confidence interval 1.2–3.6  $\mu M$ ) for the inhibition of tau phosphorylation.

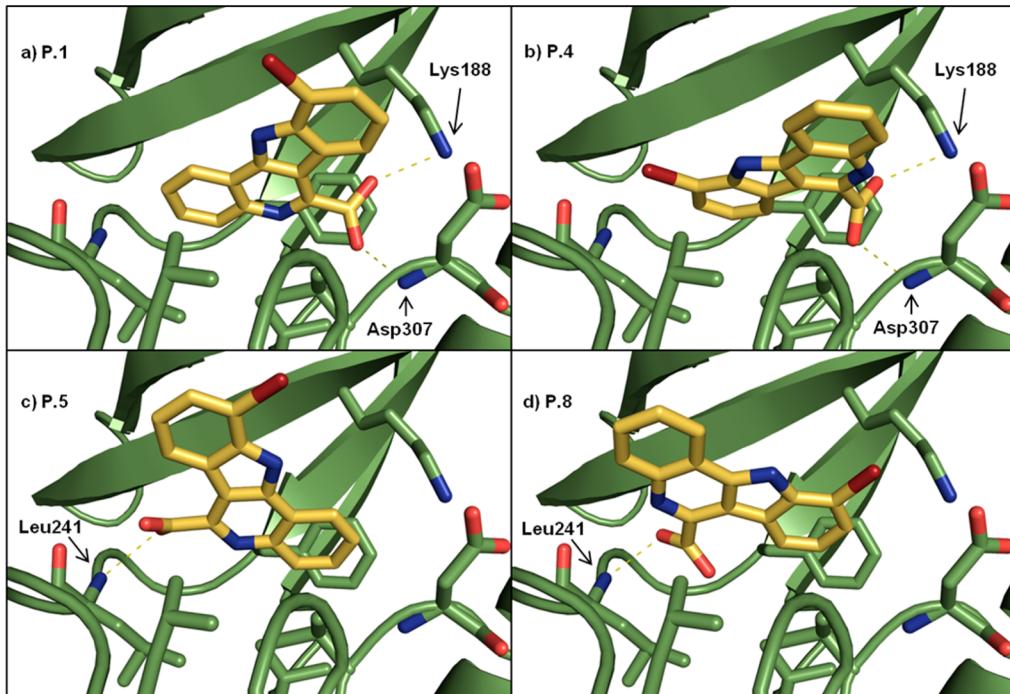
In all three inhibitor complexes the halogen in position 10 was located at a distance between 3.3 and 3.7 Å from the backbone carbonyl oxygen of the gatekeeper + 3 (*gk* + 3) Leu241 (Figure 4d). While these distances would be compatible with the formation of halogen bonds, the C–X...O angles ( $\sigma$ -hole angles) of  $\sim 135^\circ$  are far from the optimum  $\sigma$ -hole angle which is  $180^\circ$ . For the experimental model of halogen substituted benzenes and *N*-methylacetamide, Wilcken and Boeckler et al. have demonstrated that a deviation of more than  $40^\circ$  from the optimal  $\sigma$ -hole angle leads to virtually complete loss of the complex formation energy.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, in **5s**, **5t**, and **5j** the distance between the halogen atoms and the carbonyl oxygen of Leu241 is increasing in the order Cl < Br < I. This is contrary to an expected decrease of the distance, which should follow the expected strength of putative halogen bonds. In conclusion, we believe that halogen bond contribution to inhibitor binding is in these cases either nonexistent or very weak. However, the negative belt of a halogen atom, polarized by even very weak halogen bonding, may play a role as hydrogen acceptor motif toward the *gk* + 3 Leu241 backbone nitrogen. This kind of dual halogen-bond/hydrogen-bond interaction, emanating from a single halogen atom and forming two contacts with the hinge region, was suggested by Wilcken and Boeckler et al.<sup>61</sup> for the inhibitor KH-CB19 with CLK3.<sup>39</sup> Along these lines, the inhibitory activity of the 10-methoxy substituted derivative **5k**, which is equipotent to its chloro analogue **5h**, can also be explained. The

methoxy oxygen of **5k** can mimic the hydrogen bond acceptor role of the halogen of **5h**, forming an analogous hydrogen bond to the Leu241 nitrogen.

With double digit nanomolar  $IC_{50}$  values measured for DYRK1A, the inhibitors reported here showed comparable potency to other DYRK inhibitors reported in the literature. However, both 10-iodo derivatives **5j** and **5o** showed superior selectivity toward closely related kinases. Because of the potential antagonistic functions of DYRK1 family members, the compounds constitute important chemical tools for further biochemical studies. Comparison of our screening data identified the 10-iodo substituent as the relevant group for the observed selectivity. Although a plausible explanation at a molecular level is not yet available, it is tempting to speculate that only DYRK1A, but not the related protein kinases, is able to accommodate the large 10-iodo substituent of the selective derivatives in the ATP binding pocket.

## CONCLUSION

Experimental DYRK1A inhibitors described so far have suffered from poor selectivity toward other closely related protein kinases, namely, other DYRKs and members of the CLK family. We have developed two 10-iodo-11*H*-indolo[3,2-*c*]quinoline-6-carboxylic acids **5j** and **5o** as the first selective inhibitors of DYRK1A. Compound **5j** proved also to inhibit the enzyme in cellular assays. Docking studies and X-ray structure analyses



**Figure 3.** Representative orientations of the 10 highest-ranked docking poses of **5i** in the ATP binding site of DYRK1A (template for docking, 2WO6): (a) ranks in the scoring list, 1–3; (b) ranks in the scoring list, 4 and 7; (c) ranks in the scoring list, 5, 6, 10; (d) ranks in the scoring list, 8, 9. P.1 refers to the pose ranked no. 1.

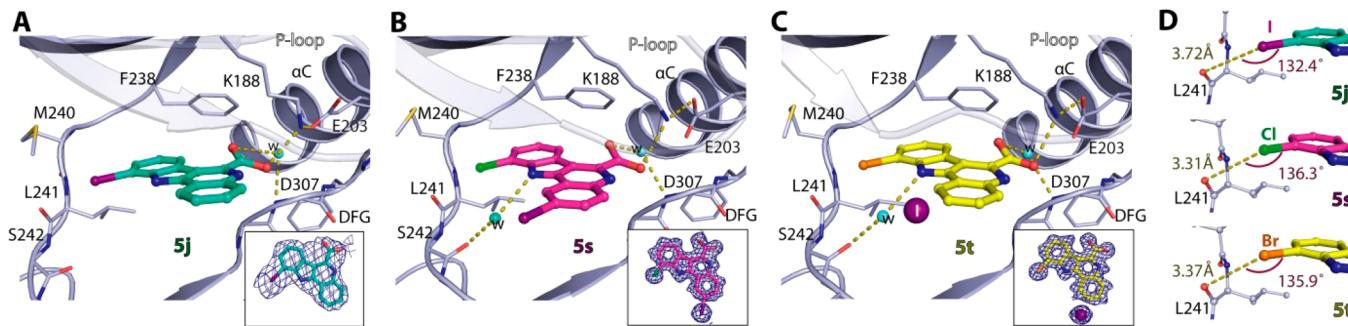
**Table 3. Data Collection and Refinement Statistics of Inhibitor–DYRK1A complexes**

complex (pdb id)	DYRK1A-5j (4YLJ)	DYRK1A-5s (4YLK)	DYRK1A-5t (4YLL)
Data Collection			
beamline	Diamond, beamline I04-1	Diamond, beamline I04-1	Diamond, beamline I04-1
wavelength (Å)	0.9200	0.9200	0.9200
resolution <sup>a</sup> (Å)	48.41–2.58 (2.72–2.58)	30.28–1.40 (1.48–1.40)	28.21–1.40 (1.48–1.40)
space group	C 2	C 2	C 2
cell dimensions			
$a$ (Å)	265.5	100.0	100.0
$b$ (Å)	65.5	69.9	69.9
$c$ (Å)	139.4	67.9	67.9
$\alpha$ (deg)	90.0	90.0	90.0
$\beta$ (deg)	114.6	117.7	117.7
$\gamma$ (deg)	90.0	90.0	90.0
no. unique reflections <sup>a</sup>	68 848 (10 018)	78 842 (11 510)	77 083 (11 265)
completeness <sup>a</sup> (%)	99.6 (99.9)	97.1 (97.3)	95.0 (95.4)
$I/\sigma I^a$	16.6 (2.2)	10.7 (3.5)	12.4 (4.4)
$R_{\text{merge}}^a$	0.066 (0.884)	0.077 (0.386)	0.059 (0.268)
redundancy <sup>a</sup>	6.5 (6.6)	4.4 (4.3)	3.3 (3.3)
Refinement			
no. atoms in refinement (P/L/O) <sup>b</sup>	11 439/164/385	2880/45/647	2849/22/642
$R_{\text{fact}}$ (%)	19.2	15.5	15.1
$R_{\text{free}}$ (%)	22.2	17.7	17.2
$B_f$ (P/L/O) <sup>b</sup> (Å <sup>2</sup> )	79/73/73	13/11/24	13/9/ 23
rmsd bond <sup>c</sup> (Å)	0.011	0.016	0.015
rmsd deviation angle <sup>c</sup> (deg)	1.4	1.8	1.7
Molprobity			
Ramachandran favored	96.8	96.3	96.3
Ramachandran allowed	100.0	100.0	100.0

<sup>a</sup>Values in brackets show the statistics for the highest resolution shells. <sup>b</sup>P/L/O indicate protein, ligand molecule, and other (water and solvent molecules), respectively. <sup>c</sup>rmsd indicates root-mean-square deviation.

revealed a nonclassical binding mode in which inhibitors were oriented via the 10-halogen substituent toward the hinge region

of the kinase. Although the 10-substituent obviously was of central importance for the hinge–inhibitor attraction, the



**Figure 4.** Crystal structure analyses of the binding modes of halogen-substituted DYRK1A inhibitors. Accommodations of three halogen derivatives comprising iodo (**5j**, A), chloro (**5s**, B), and bromo (**5t**, C) substitutions at the position 10 within the ATP pocket share common features of hydrogen bond network interactions (yellow dashed lines) with the kinase. Insets show electron density maps for the bound inhibitors, and water molecules are shown in cyan spheres. (D) Detailed distances and C–X···O angles (putative  $\sigma$ -hole angles) between the halogen groups of the inhibitors and the carbonyl atom of gk + 3 Leu241.

nature of this interaction is not yet clear. The title compounds demonstrate that within the CMGC family of protein kinases selective inhibition of DYRK1A is possible. With the aim of developing compounds that are better suited for cellular assays or animal disease models, further studies in this compound class will be directed to increase solubility and cell permeability.

## EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES

**Synthetic Chemistry.** Starting materials were purchased from Acros Organics (Geel, Belgium) or Sigma-Aldrich (Steinheim, Germany). Solvents were used as commercially available grades for synthesis, with the exceptions of toluene, THF,  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ , and diethyl ether, which were dried and purified by published methods.<sup>65</sup> **5b**, **5c**, and **5f** were prepared as reported previously.<sup>54</sup> Synthetic procedures and structure characterization data for the following compounds are available in the Supporting Information: **5a**, **5d–e**, **5g–i**, **5k–n**, **5p–w**, **6**, **7**, **10n,s,t**.

Melting points (mp) were determined on an electric variable heater (Electrothermal IA 9100, Barnstedt International, Southend-on-Sea, U.K.) in open glass capillaries. IR spectra were recorded as KBr discs on a Thermo Nicolet FT-IR 200.  $^1\text{H}$  NMR spectra and  $^{13}\text{C}$  NMR spectra were recorded on the following instruments: Bruker Avance DRX-400, Bruker Avance III-400, and Bruker Avance II-600 (Bruker, Billerica, MA, USA); internal standard tetramethylsilane; signals in ppm ( $\delta$  scale). Signals in  $^{13}\text{C}$  spectra were assigned based on the results of  $^{13}\text{C}$  DEPT135 experiments (NMR Laboratories of the Chemical Institutes of the Technische Universität Braunschweig). Elemental analyses were determined on a CE Instruments FlashEA 1112 elemental analyzer (Thermo Quest). Mass spectra were recorded on a Finnigan-MAT 95 (Thermo Finnigan MAT, Bremen, Germany). Accurate measurements were conducted according to the peak match method using perfluorokerosene (PFK) as an internal mass reference. (EI) MS: ionization energy 70 eV (Department of Mass Spectrometry of the Chemical Institutes of the Technische Universität Braunschweig). TLC: Polygram Sil G/UV<sub>254</sub>, Macherey-Nagel, 40 mm × 80 mm, visualization by UV illumination (254 and 366 nm). Purity was determined by HPLC using the following devices and settings. Isocratic elution: Elite LaChrom (Merck/Hitachi), pump L-2130, autosampler L-2200, diode array detector L-2450, organizer box L-2000; column, Merck LiChroCART 1254, LiChrosphere 100, RP 18, 5  $\mu\text{m}$ ; flow rate 1.000 mL/min; volume of injection, 10  $\mu\text{L}$ ; detection (DAD) at 254 and 280 nm; AUC, % method; time of detection 15 min, net retention time ( $t_{\text{N}}$ ), dead time ( $t_{\text{m}}$ ) related to DMSO. Gradient elution: Elite LaChrom (Merck/Hitachi), pump L-2130, autosampler L-2200, UV detector L-2400, organizer box L-2000; column, Merck LiChroCART 125-4, LiChrosphere 100, RP 18, 5  $\mu\text{m}$ ; flow rate 1.000 mL/min; volume of injection, 10  $\mu\text{L}$ ; detection at 254 nm; AUC, % method; net retention time ( $t_{\text{N}}$ ), dead time ( $t_{\text{m}}$ ) related to DMSO. For all gradient runs, mixtures of ACN and water or aqueous formic or trifluoroacetic acid were used as specified for

particular compounds. Preparation of  $\text{H}_2\text{O} + (\text{Et}_3\text{NH})_2\text{SO}_4$  buffer (pH 2.6) for isocratic HPLC: triethylamine (20.0 mL) and sodium hydroxide (242 mg) are dissolved in water to 1 L. The solution is adjusted to pH 2.6 by addition of sulfuric acid. All compounds that were biologically tested were of >95% purity with the exception of **5h** (HPLC, 93.6% at 254 nm and 94.8% at 280 nm detection wavelength) and **5w** (HPLC, 95.1% at 254 nm and 94.2% at 280 nm detection wavelength). Absorption maxima ( $\lambda_{\text{max}}$ ) were extracted from the spectra recorded by the DAD in the HPLC peak maxima in isocratic runs (software, EZ Chrom Elite Client/server, version 3.1.3.).

**General Procedure A for the Fischer Indole Synthesis of Paullones 4 Used as Starting Materials for Subsequent Syntheses.** An appropriate substituted 3,4-dihydro-1*H*-1-benzazepine-2,5-dione (1 equiv) and an appropriately substituted phenylhydrazine hydrochloride (1.2–1.5 equiv) and sodium acetate (1.2–1.5 equiv) are stirred in acetic acid (10 mL) at 70 °C for the indicated time. Sulfuric acid (0.1 mL) is added, and stirring at 70 °C is continued for the indicated time. After cooling to room temperature, the mixture is poured into 5% aqueous sodium acetate solution (20 mL) and kept at 8 °C for 2 h. A precipitate is formed, which is filtered off with suction, washed with water and petrol ether. Purification is accomplished by column chromatography or crystallization.

**General Procedure B1 for Oxidative Ring Contraction of Paullones 4 To Yield 11*H*-Indolo[3,2-*c*]quinoline-6-carboxylic Acids **5j** and **5o**.** The appropriate paullone **4** (1 equiv), NHPI (2 equiv), and cobalt(II) acetate tetrahydrate (0.25 equiv) are dissolved in the given volume of DMF. Oxygen is bubbled through the stirred mixture for the given time at the indicated temperature. The reaction is monitored by TLC. The precipitate is filtered off and washed with water. If no precipitate appears, water (5 mL) is added and the resulting precipitate is separated and purified by centrifugation, decanting, and washing with water. The resulting solid is washed with a small amount of acetone. The predried product is finally dried at 130 °C in vacuo.

**General Procedure C for the Syntheses of Ethyl 11*H*-Indolo[3,2-*c*]quinoline-6-carboxylates **10n,o,s,t** by Esterification.** Ethanol (100 mL) is added to a solution of an appropriate 11*H*-indolo[3,2-*c*]quinoline-6-carboxylic acid **5** in DMSO (5 mL). Hydrogen chloride gas is bubbled through the solution for 30 min at room temperature. After removal of the ethanol by evaporation, water (100 mL) is added and the mixture is kept at 8 °C for 1 h. The resulting precipitate is filtered off, washed with water, and dissolved in acetone (5 mL). After addition of silica gel (2 g), the mixture is evaporated. The product is subsequently eluted from the silica gel by flash chromatography using the indicated eluent. Finally the product is dried at 100 °C in vacuo.

**11-Iodo-7,12-dihydroindolo[3,2-*d*][1]benzazepin-6(*5H*)-one (**4j**).** Synthesis was according to general procedure A from 3,4-dihydro-1*H*-1-benzazepine-2,5-dione<sup>66</sup> (88 mg, 0.50 mmol), 2-iodophenylhydrazine hydrochloride<sup>56</sup> (203 mg, 0.750 mmol), and sodium acetate (62 mg, 0.75 mmol). Reaction times were 1 h before and 4 h after

addition of sulfuric acid, respectively. Purification by column chromatography (toluene–ethyl acetate–formic acid 5:5:1) yielded a dark yellow powder (51 mg, 28%); mp (dec) starting at 288 °C. IR (KBr): 3194 cm<sup>-1</sup> (NH), 1666 cm<sup>-1</sup> (C=O). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub>, 400.4 MHz): δ (ppm) = 3.47 (s, 2H), 6.90 (t, 1H, *J* = 7.6 Hz), 7.22–7.31 (m, 2H), 7.40 (ddd, 1H, *J* = 7.9/7.4/1.6 Hz), 7.59 (dd, 1H, *J* = 7.5/0.9 Hz), 7.71 (d, 1H, *J* = 7.9 Hz), 7.91 (dd, 1H, *J* = 7.8/1.5 Hz), 10.11 (s, 1H, lactam NH), 11.29 (s, 1H, indole NH). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub>, 100.7 MHz): δ (ppm) = 31.6 (CH<sub>2</sub>); 118.0, 121.1, 122.1, 123.3, 128.3, 128.5, 131.5 (CH); 76.7, 109.4, 122.4, 127.1, 133.6, 135.6, 139.4 (C); 171.7 (C=O). C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>11</sub>IN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> (374.18). MS (EI): *m/z* (%) = 374 [M]<sup>+</sup> (100), 373 [M – H]<sup>+</sup> (35), 345 [M – CHO]<sup>+</sup> (49). HRMS (EI): *m/z* [M]<sup>+</sup> calcd 373.991 06, found 373.990 84. HPLC (isocr): 96.1% at 254 nm and 92.9% at 280 nm, *t*<sub>N</sub> = 4.7 min, *t*<sub>M</sub> = 1.0 min (ACN/H<sub>2</sub>O 50:50); *λ*<sub>max</sub>: 230 and 313 nm.

**11-Iodo-3-methoxy-7,12-dihydroindolo[3,2-*d*][1]benzepin-6(5H)-one (4o).** Synthesis was according to general procedure A from 8-methoxy-3,4-dihydro-1H-1-benzepine-2,5-dione<sup>52,67</sup> (500 mg, 2.44 mmol), 2-iodophenylhydrazine hydrochloride<sup>56</sup> (993 mg, 3.67 mmol), and sodium acetate (301 mg, 3.67 mmol). Reaction times were 3 h before and 16 h after addition of sulfuric acid, respectively. Purification by column chromatography (toluene–ethyl acetate–formic acid 5:5:1) yielded a dark yellow powder (340 mg, 34%); mp (dec) starting at 290 °C. IR (KBr): 3205 cm<sup>-1</sup> (NH), 1680 cm<sup>-1</sup> (C=O). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub>, 600.1 MHz): δ (ppm) = 3.47 (s, 2H), 3.81 (s, 3H), 6.82 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.6 Hz), 6.88 (t, 1H, *J* = 7.7 Hz), 6.91 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.7/2.6 Hz), 7.55 (dd, 1H, *J* = 7.5/0.9 Hz), 7.67 (d, 1H, *J* = 7.8 Hz), 7.85 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.7 Hz), 10.04 (s, 1H, lactam NH), 11.19 (s, 1H, indole NH). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub>, 150.9 MHz): δ (ppm) = 55.2 (CH<sub>3</sub>), 31.6 (CH<sub>2</sub>), 106.6, 109.9, 117.6, 121.0, 129.6, 130.9 (CH), 76.5 (C(11)), 107.6, 115.3, 127.1, 133.8, 136.9, 139.0, 159.2 (C). 171.3 (C=O). C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>13</sub>IN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> (404.20); calcd C 50.51, H 3.24, N 6.93, found C 50.38, H 3.29, N 6.72. MS (EI): *m/z* (%) = 404 [M]<sup>+</sup> (100), 403 [M – H]<sup>+</sup> (36), 375 [M – CHO]<sup>+</sup> (42). HRMS (EI): *m/z* [M]<sup>+</sup> calcd 404.001 62, found 404.001 61. HPLC (isocr): 96.0% at 254 nm and 95.2% at 280 nm, *t*<sub>N</sub> = 5.2 min, *t*<sub>M</sub> = 1.0 min (ACN/H<sub>2</sub>O 50:50). *λ*<sub>max</sub>: 234 and 313 nm.

**10-Iodo-11H-indolo[3,2-*c*]quinoline-6-carboxylic Acid (5j).** Synthesis was according to general procedure B1 from 11-iodo-7,12-dihydroindolo[3,2-*d*][1]benzepin-6(5H)-one (4j, 43 mg, 0.11 mmol), NHPI (36 mg, 0.22 mmol), and cobalt(II) acetate tetrahydrate (7 mg, 0.03 mmol) in DMF (2 mL). Oxygen was bubbled through the reaction mixture at room temperature for 4 h. A yellow powder was formed, which was purified by washing with acetone (34 mg, 82%); mp (dec) 358–359 °C. IR (KBr): 3224 cm<sup>-1</sup> (NH), 1659 cm<sup>-1</sup> (C=O). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub>, 400.4 MHz): δ (ppm) = 7.10 (t, 1H, *J* = 7.7 Hz), 7.35–7.42 (m, 1H), 7.56–7.62 (m, 2H), 7.82 (dd, 1H, *J* = 7.7/1.0 Hz), 8.30 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.0/1.0 Hz), 8.38 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.0 Hz), 11.54 (s, 1H, NH), 11.95 (s, 1H, COOH). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub>, 100.7 MHz): δ (ppm) = 121.2 (2C), 123.4, 124.4, 129.2, 131.1, 134.8 (CH); 76.7 (C(10)), 115.5, 117.2, 127.3, 135.2, 139.3, 142.5, 161.8 (C); 176.3 (C=O). C<sub>16</sub>H<sub>9</sub>IN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> (388.16). MS (EI): *m/z* (%) = 388 [M]<sup>+</sup> (37), 360 [M – CO]<sup>+</sup> (100). HRMS (EI): *m/z* [M]<sup>+</sup> calcd 387.970 32, found 387.968 99. HPLC (isocr): 96.7% at 254 nm and 98.6% at 280 nm, *t*<sub>N</sub> = 2.8 min, *t*<sub>M</sub> = 1.0 min (ACN/H<sub>2</sub>O + (Et<sub>3</sub>N)<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> 50:50). *λ*<sub>max</sub>: 238, 280, and 307 nm. HPLC (grad): 97.4% at 254 nm, *t*<sub>N</sub> = 10.0 min, *t*<sub>M</sub> = 1.1 min (ACN/H<sub>2</sub>O; 0 min, 10/90 → 13 min, 90/10 (linear); 20 min, 90/10).

**10-Iodo-3-methoxy-11H-indolo[3,2-*c*]quinoline-6-carboxylic Acid (5o).** Synthesis was according to general procedure B1 from 11-iodo-3-methoxy-7,12-dihydroindolo[3,2-*d*][1]benzepin-6(5H)-one (4o, 40 mg, 0.10 mmol), NHPI (33 mg, 0.20 mmol), and cobalt(II) acetate tetrahydrate (7 mg, 0.03 mmol) in DMF (2 mL). Oxygen was bubbled through the reaction mixture for 1 h. For the purification by column chromatography, impurities were removed initially by elution with toluene–ethyl acetate–diethylamine (1:1:1) prior to elution by toluene–ethyl acetate–formic acid 2:2:1. Yellow powder (20 mg, 48%); mp (dec) 346–348 °C. IR (KBr): 3200 cm<sup>-1</sup> (NH), 1669 cm<sup>-1</sup> (C=O). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub>, 600.1 MHz): δ (ppm) = 3.86 (s, 3H), 7.01 (dd, 1H, *J* = 9.0/2.6 Hz), 7.07 (t, 1H, *J* = 7.7 Hz), 7.17 (d, 1H, *J* =

2.5 Hz), 7.78 (dd, 1H, *J* = 7.5/0.9 Hz), 8.31 (dd, 1H, *J* = 7.9/0.7 Hz), 8.36 (d, 1H, *J* = 9.0 Hz), 11.44 (s, 1H, NH), 11.76 (s, 1H, COOH). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub>, 150.9 MHz): δ (ppm) = 55.5 (CH<sub>3</sub>); 104.9, 110.6, 121.1, 124.2, 130.8, 134.4 (CH<sub>2</sub>); 76.3, 110.3, 114.2, 127.5, 137.0, 139.1, 143.0, 161.1, 161.5 (C); 175.5 (C=O). C<sub>17</sub>H<sub>11</sub>IN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> (418.19). MS (EI): *m/z* (%) = 418 [M]<sup>+</sup> (47), 390 [M – CO]<sup>+</sup> (100), 375 [M – 43]<sup>+</sup> (24), 347 [M – 71]<sup>+</sup> (22). HRMS (EI): *m/z* [M]<sup>+</sup> calcd 417.980 89, found 417.981 26. HPLC (isocr): 96.3% at 254 nm and 97.7% at 280 nm, *t*<sub>N</sub> = 3.2 min, *t*<sub>M</sub> = 1.0 min (ACN/H<sub>2</sub>O + (Et<sub>3</sub>N)<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> 50:50). *λ*<sub>max</sub>: 247, 306, and 375 nm. HPLC (grad): 99.4% at 254 nm, *t*<sub>N</sub> = 10.8 min, *t*<sub>M</sub> = 1.2 min (gradient, ACN/H<sub>2</sub>O; 0 min, 10/90 → 13 min, 90/10 (linear); 20 min, 90/10).

**Ethyl 10-ido-3-methoxy-11H-indolo[3,2-*c*]quinoline-6-carboxylate (10o).** Synthesis was according to general procedure C from 10-iodo-3-methoxy-11H-indolo[3,2-*c*]quinoline-6-carboxylic acid (5o, 120 mg, 0.300 mmol). Purification by column chromatography (toluene–ethyl acetate–diethylamine 2:2:1) yielded pale yellow crystals (100 mg, 75%); mp 214–217 °C. IR (KBr): 3384 (NH), 1726 cm<sup>-1</sup> (C=O). <sup>1</sup>H NMR (DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub>, 400.4 MHz): δ (ppm) = 1.45 (t, 3H, *J* = 7.1 Hz), 3.99 (s, 3H), 4.59 (q, 2H, *J* = 7.1 Hz), 7.14 (t, 1H, *J* = 7.8 Hz), 7.46 (dd, 1H, *J* = 9.1/2.6 Hz), 7.63 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.6 Hz), 7.93 (dd, 1H, *J* = 7.6/1.0 Hz), 8.33 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.1/0.9 Hz), 9.05 (d, 1H, *J* = 9.1 Hz), 12.34 (s, 1H, NH). <sup>13</sup>C NMR (DMSO-*d*<sub>6</sub>, 100.7 MHz): δ (ppm) = 14.2 (CH<sub>2</sub>–CH<sub>3</sub>); 55.5 (OCH<sub>3</sub>); 61.7 (CH<sub>2</sub>); 108.7, 119.1, 122.0, 122.5, 124.7, 135.1 (CH); 76.8, 111.2, 111.8, 121.4, 141.1, 142.0, 145.1, 146.0, 160.1 (C); 166.7 (C=O). C<sub>19</sub>H<sub>15</sub>IN<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> (446.24); calcd C 51.14, H 3.39, N 6.28, found C 51.21, H 3.41, N 6.01. MS (EI): *m/z* (%) = 446 [M]<sup>+</sup> (22), 374 [M – C<sub>3</sub>H<sub>4</sub>O<sub>2</sub>]<sup>+</sup> (100). HPLC (isocr): 99.7% at 254 nm and 99.8% at 280 nm, *t*<sub>N</sub> = 7.6 min, *t*<sub>M</sub> = 1.0 min (ACN/H<sub>2</sub>O 80:20). *λ*<sub>max</sub>: 243 and 286 nm. HPLC (grad): 99.7% at 254 nm, *t*<sub>N</sub> = 14.1 min, *t*<sub>M</sub> = 1.1 min (gradient, ACN/H<sub>2</sub>O; 0 min, 10/90 → 13 min, 90/10 (linear); 20 min, 90/10). Crystals for X-ray structure analysis were prepared by crystallization from ethanol (96%).

**X-ray Crystal Structure Analysis of 10o.** Crystal data for 10o·H<sub>2</sub>O at 100 K: orthorhombic, P<sub>2</sub>1<sub>2</sub>1<sub>2</sub>1, *a* = 6.36362(12), *b* = 15.0401(3), *c* = 18.3209(4) Å, *V* = 1753.48 Å<sup>3</sup>, *Z* = 4. A yellow irregular crystal 0.3 mm × 0.2 mm × 0.15 mm was used to record 76097 intensities, 5096 independent (*R*<sub>int</sub> = 0.036) on an Oxford Diffraction Xcalibur E diffractometer using Mo Kα radiation (*λ* = 0.710 73 Å, 2θ<sub>max</sub> = 60°). The structure was refined anisotropically on *F*<sup>2</sup> using the program SHELXL-97 to wR2 = 0.049, R1 = 0.020 for 249 parameters; *S* = 1.12, max. Δρ = 1.4 e Å<sup>-3</sup>. Crystallographic data have been deposited with the Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre as supplementary publication no. CCDC-1036693. Copies of the data can be obtained free of charge from www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data\_request/cif.

**Kinase Expression and Activity Assays. Protein Kinase Assays.** Buffer A consisted of 10 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 1 mM EGTA, 1 mM DTT, 25 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.5, 50 μg heparin/mL. Buffer C consisted of 60 mM β-glycerophosphate, 15 mM *p*-nitrophenylphosphate, 25 mM MOPS (pH 7.2), 15 mM EGTA, 15 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 1 mM DTT, 1 mM sodium vanadate, 1 mM phenylphosphate.

Kinase activities were assayed in buffer A or C at 30 °C at a final ATP concentration of 15 μmol/L. Blank values were subtracted, and activities were expressed in percent of the maximal activity, i.e., in the absence of inhibitors. Controls were performed with appropriate dilutions of DMSO. The GS-1, CKS, CDK7/9 tide, and RS peptide substrates were obtained from Proteogenix (Oberhausbergen, France).

CDK1/cyclin B (M phase starfish oocytes, native), CDK2/cyclin A, and CDK5/p25 (human, recombinant) were prepared as previously described.<sup>68</sup> Their kinase activity was assayed in buffer A, with 1 mg of histone H1/mL, in the presence of 15 μmol/L [<sup>γ</sup>-33P] ATP (3000 Ci/mmol; 10 mCi/mL) in a final volume of 30 μL. After a 30 min incubation at 30 °C, the reaction was stopped by harvesting onto P81 phosphocellulose supernatant (Whatman) using a FilterMate harvester (Packard) and washing in 1% phosphoric acid. Scintillation fluid was added and the radioactivity measured in a Packard counter.

CDK9/cyclin T (human, recombinant, expressed in insect cells) was assayed as described for CDK1/cyclin B but using CDK7/9 tide (YSPTSPSYSPSPTSPSYSPSPKKKK) (8.1 µg/assay) as a substrate.

GSK-3 (porcine brain, native, affinity purified on axin1-Sepharose beads) was assayed, as described for CDK1, with 0.5 mg of BSA/mL + 1 mM DTT and using a GSK-3 specific substrate (GS-1, YRRAAVPPSPSLRHSSPHQSpEDEEE) (pS stands for phosphorylated serine).<sup>69</sup>

CK1δ/ε (porcine brain, native, affinity purified on axin2-Sepharose beads) was assayed as described for CDK1 but in buffer C and using 25 µM CKS peptide (RRKHAAGpSAYSITA), a CK1-specific substrate.<sup>70</sup>

CLK1, -2, -3, and -4 (mouse, recombinant, expressed in *E. coli* as GST fusion proteins) were assayed as described for CDK1/cyclin B with 0.5 mg BSA/mL + 1 mM DTT and RS peptide (GRSRS-RSRSRSR) (1 µg/assay) as a substrate.

DYRK1A, -1B, -2, -3 (human, recombinant, expressed in *E. coli* as GST fusion proteins) and CLK1, -2, -3, and -4 (mouse, recombinant, expressed in *E. coli* as GST fusion proteins) were assayed in buffer A (supplemented extemporaneously with 0.15 mg of BSA/mL + 1 mM DTT) with 1 µg of RS peptide (GRSRSRSRSRSR) as a substrate.

All data points for construction of dose–response curves were recorded in triplicate. Typically, the standard deviation of single data points was below 10%.

**Inhibition of Cellular DYRK1A Activity.** The assay for inhibition of SF3B1 phosphorylation was performed as described previously.<sup>58</sup> For the assay of tau phosphorylation, we used a HEK293 subclone with regulatable expression of GFP-DYRK1A and constitutive expression of GFP-tau (HEK293-tau-DYRK1A) that was kindly provided by Dr. Matthias Engel (Department of Pharmaceutical and Medicinal Chemistry, Saarland University, Saarbrücken, Germany).<sup>59</sup> Cells were grown overnight in six-well plates before expression of GFP-DYRK1A was induced with 2 µg/mL doxycyclin. The inhibitors were then added from stock solutions in DMSO to the desired final concentration and cells were further incubated for 20 h. Cells were lysed in SDS lysis buffer (20 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.4, 1% SDS). Samples were sonicated and cleared by centrifugation before SDS-PAGE and immunoblotting with a goat antibody for GFP (no. 600-101-215, Rockland Immunochemicals, Gilbertsville, PA, USA) and a phosphorylation state specific antibody directed against pThr212 in the tau protein (no. 44740G, Invitrogen, Camarillo, CA, USA). Immunoreactivities were detected by enhanced chemiluminescence using HRP-coupled secondary antibodies and quantified using the AIDA Image Analyzer 5.0 program (Raytest, Straubenhhardt, Germany). Relative tau phosphorylation was calculated by normalization to total tau expression, as determined from GFP immunoreactivity. To calculate relative DYRK1A activity, the basal pT212 signal in control cells not treated with doxycyclin was subtracted from all values, and the phosphorylation in DYRK1A expressing cells not treated with inhibitors was set to 100%. Curve fitting for IC<sub>50</sub> determination was done with the help of the GraphPad Prism 5.0 program (GraphPad Software, La Jolla, CA, USA).

**Crystallography and Molecular Modeling. Protein Production, Crystallization of DYRK1A–Inhibitor Complexes, Data Collection, and Structure Determination.** Recombinant DYRK1A was purified as previously described<sup>60</sup> and was treated with TEV protease to remove the N-terminal His<sub>6</sub> tag. The kinase at ~13–15 mg/mL in 50 mM HEPES, pH 7.5, 500 mM NaCl and 5 mM DTT was incubated with the inhibitors at 1 mM prior to crystallization. Crystals were obtained using the sitting drop vapor diffusion method at 4 °C using either 2 M ammonium sulfate, 0.2 M Na/K tartrate, 0.1 M citrate, pH 5.6 (for **5s** and **5t**), or 37% PEG 400, 0.2 M lithium sulfate, 0.1 M Tris, pH 8.8 (for **5j**), as the reservoir solutions. Diffraction data collected at Diamond Light Source, beamline I04-1, were processed with XDS<sup>71</sup> or mosflm<sup>72</sup> and subsequently scaled with Scala from CCP4 suite.<sup>73</sup> Structures were determined by molecular replacement method using Phaser<sup>74</sup> and the coordinates of DYRK1A structure<sup>60</sup> as a search model. Iterative cycles of manual model building in COOT<sup>75</sup> alternated with refinement using Refmac,<sup>76</sup> and a TLS model calculated from TLSMD server<sup>77</sup> was performed. The

geometric correctness of the final model was verified with MolProbity.<sup>78</sup> Data collection and refinement statistics are summarized in Table 3. DYRK1A-ligand complexes (pdb id): DYRK1A-**5j** (4YLJ); DYRK1A-**5s** (4YLK); DYRK1A-**5t** (4YLL).

**Docking.** Molecular docking was performed using GOLD,<sup>79</sup> version 4.0, running under Linux Ubuntu Dapper Drake. The poses obtained with GOLD 4.0 were later reproduced using GOLD, version 5.1. The PDB file 2WO6 was downloaded from the Protein Data Bank. Only the B chain present in the structure was used for docking. The wizard integrated in GOLD was used for loading the structure into the user interface HERMES. Hydrogen atoms were added, and the protonation/tautomerization status of amino acid side chains within the ATP binding site was checked and adjusted manually, if necessary. Ligand and water molecules were deleted from the structure. A zone of 10 Å around the original ligand was defined as relevant for binding. The options “flip side chains of Asn/Gln” and “alter tautomers of His” were switched off. Ligands were constructed with MOE,<sup>80</sup> energy minimized, and saved as mol2 files. The option “save lone pairs” was switched off and “search efficiency” was set to 200%. Ten GA runs were performed without constraints and “allow early termination” option switched off. Scoring of resulting poses was performed applying the integrated chemscore.kinase template. Redocking of the originally bound ligand DJM2005 into chain B of the protein reproduced the original pose of the inhibitor, albeit not as highest ranked pose.

## ■ ASSOCIATED CONTENT

### S Supporting Information

Details for the crystal structure analysis of compound **10o** as well as synthesis and spectroscopic data of compounds **5a,b,d,e,g-i,k-n,p-w**, **6**, **7**, and **10n,s,t** and HPLC purity data of all compounds employed in biological tests. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at <http://pubs.acs.org>.

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### Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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## ■ ABBREVIATIONS USED

ACN, acetonitrile; AD, Alzheimer's disease; CDK, cyclin-dependent protein kinase; CK, casein kinase; CLK, cdc2-like kinase; DAD, diode array detector; DANDY, 3,5-diaryl-7-azaindole; dec, decomposition; DH, DYRK homology; DTT, dithiothreitol; DMF, *N,N*-dimethylformamide; DSCR, Down syndrome critical region; DYRK1A, dual-specificity tyrosine phosphorylation-regulated kinase 1A; EGCG, epigallocatechin 3-gallate; EGTA, ethylene glycol tetraacetic acid; ERK, extracellular-signal regulated kinase; GA, genetic algorithm; GFP, green fluorescent protein; gk, gatekeeper; grad, gradient; GSK-3, glycogen synthase kinase 3; GST, glutathione S-transferase; HEPES, N-2-hydroxyethylpiperazine-*N'*-2-ethanesulfonic acid; isocr, isocratic; LB, Luria-Bertani; MAO A, monoamine oxidase A; MAP, mitogen-activated protein; MES, 2-(*N*-morpholino)ethanesulfonic acid; MOPS, 3-(*N*-morpholino)propanesulfonic acid; NHPI, *N*-hydroxyphthalimide; PIM1, protein kinase encoded by the proto-oncogene PIM1; PFK, perfluorokerosene; TEV, tobacco etch virus; TLC, thin layer chromatography

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