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Exploration of Neutral Endopeptidase Active Site by a Series of New Thiol-Containing Inhibitors

Isabel Gomez-Monterrey,[†] Serge Turcaud, Evelynne Lucas, Luce Bruetschy, Bernard P. Roques,* and Marie-Claude Fournié-Zaluski

Unité de Pharmacochimie Moléculaire et Structurale, U266 INSERM - URA D 1500 CNRS, Université René Descartes, UFR des Sciences Pharmaceutiques et Biologiques, 4, avenue de l'Observatoire, 75270 Paris Cedex 06, France

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With the aim of characterizing the active site of the neutral endopeptidase [EC 3.4.24.11 (NEP)] and especially its putative S₁ subsite, two series of new thiol inhibitors designed to interact with the S₁, S'₁, and S'₂ subsites of the enzyme have been synthesized. These molecules correspond to the general formula HSCH(R₁)CH(R₂)CONHCH(R₃)COOH (series I) and HSCH(R₁)CH(R₂)CONHCH(R₃)CONHCH(R₄)COOH (series II). Due to the synthetic pathway used, these inhibitors were obtained as mixtures of four stereoisomers. HPLC separation of the stereoisomers of 17 HSCH[CH₂CH(CH₃)₂]CH(CH₂Ph)CONHCH(CH₃)COOH allowed the stereochemical dependence of the inhibitory potency to be determined. The most active isomer 17b (IC₅₀ = 3.6 nM) is assumed to have the S,S,S stereochemistry as deduced from both NMR and HPLC data. Although none of the inhibitors obtained were significantly more active than thiorphan, HSCH₂CH(CH₂Ph)CONHCH₂COOH (IC₅₀ = 4 nM), which interacts only with the S'₁ and S'₂ subsites of NEP, their enhanced hydrophobicity is expected to improve their pharmacokinetic properties. All these compounds displayed low affinities for ACE (IC₅₀s > 1 μM). The determination of the IC₅₀s of two inhibitors of series II for NEP and for a mutated enzyme in which Arg¹⁰² was replaced by Glu¹⁰² allowed their mode of binding to the active site of NEP to be characterized. The R₂ and R₃ chains fit the S'₁-S'₂ subsites, while the R₄ group is probably located outside the active site. Taken together these results indicate that the R₁ chain of these inhibitors creates no additional stabilizing interactions with the active site of NEP. Two hypotheses may account for this: there is no hydrophobic S₁ subsite in NEP or the inhibitors have structures which are too constrained for optimized interactions with the active site.

Introduction

A physiological role for neutral endopeptidase [EC 3.4.24.11 (NEP)] in the central nervous system, where it inactivates the endogenous opioid peptides enkephalins¹ and in the periphery, where it metabolizes the atrial natriuretic peptide mainly in the kidney² and in the endothelium of the vasculature,³ was demonstrated by the antinociceptive responses or the diuresis and natriuresis effects resulting from its inhibition. Owing to the clinical interest of these findings a large number of inhibitors of this enzyme have been synthesized as new analgesics or antihypertensive agents, several of them being now in clinical trials.⁴⁻⁶

Given the zinc metallopeptidase nature of NEP, four families of efficient inhibitors have been designed: three

of them correspond to dipeptides or pseudodipeptides interacting with the S'₁-S'₂ subsites of the enzyme and bearing thiol,⁷ hydroxamate,⁸ or phosphorus containing groups⁹ as zinc-chelating moieties. Inhibitory potencies in the nanomolar range have been obtained with these molecules. The fourth series of inhibitors contains a

* To whom correspondence should be addressed. Tel: (33) 43-25-50-45. FAX: (33) 43-26-69-18.

[†] Present address: Instituto de Quimica Medica, Juan de la Cierva, 3 Madrid, Spain.

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carboxylate group as zinc chelator initially introduced, as in the preceding series, on dipeptides interacting with the S'₁-S'₂ subsites of the enzyme. These compounds have relatively low NEP affinities with IC₅₀s in the 10⁻⁶-10⁻⁷ range.¹⁰

In the case of carboxyl inhibitors of angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE), the presence in enalapril [*N*-(1-carboxy-3-phenylpropyl)-L-alanyl-L-proline] of the 1-carboxy-3-phenylpropyl chain increased the inhibitory potency (*K*_i = 3.9 × 10⁻⁹ M) by 3 orders of magnitude as compared to the carboxymethyl analog (*K*_i = 2.4 × 10⁻⁶ M).¹¹ This large increase in affinity was initially attributed both to the interaction of the hydrophobic 3-phenylpropyl chain with the ACE S₁ subsite (or the enzyme surface) and to the "transition state" nature of this new *N*-carboxyalkyl dipeptide.¹² The complexation mode of the Zn²⁺ cation by the carboxylate was also proposed to account for this improved affinity. Indeed, the X-ray analysis of the enalapril analog, *N*-(1-carboxy-3-phenylpropyl)-L-leucyl-L-tryptophan¹³ cocrystallized with thermolysin (TLN), a bacterial enzyme classically used as a model for mechanistic studies on Zn²⁺ metalloproteases,^{1,5} has shown that the carboxylate of the phenylpropyl chain acts as a bidentate chelator for Zn²⁺, while other carboxylate-containing inhibitors such as, carbobenzoxyphenylalanine¹⁴ or L-benzylsuccinic acid¹⁵ interact as monodentates. This change in the complexation mode may be responsible, in part, for their differences in inhibitory potency towards TLN: 10⁻³ M for the monodentates and 5 × 10⁻⁸ M for the bidentate inhibitor.

The same arguments were used to explain the increased affinity of (carboxyalkyl)dipeptide inhibitors of NEP as compared to (carboxymethyl)dipeptides¹⁶⁻¹⁹ although the improvement in inhibitory potencies was not as impressive

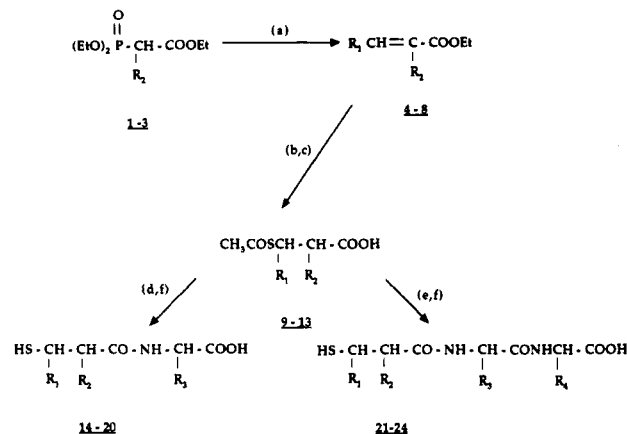
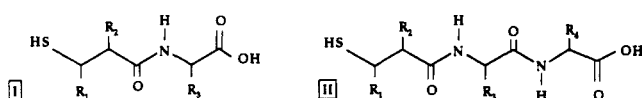


Figure 1. Scheme for the synthesis of inhibitors 14-24. (a) NaH, 1,2-dimethoxyethane, R₁CHO at reflux temperature; (b) 1 M NaOH/EtOH, then 1 M HCl; (c) CH₃COSH at reflux temperature; (d) H₂NCH(R₃)COOCH₃, DCC, HOBT; (e) H₂NCH(R₄)CONHCH(R₄)COOCH₃, DCC, HOBT; (f) 1 M NaOH/MeOH, HCl. The different R₁, R₂, R₃, and R₄ groups are reported in Tables I and II.

Scheme I



as with ACE inhibitors. Furthermore, the IC₅₀ values of these compounds were shown to be weakly dependent on the nature and the size of the alkyl chain¹⁷ suggesting the lack of a strong interaction of this additional group with the putative S₁ subsite of NEP.

In order to clarify this point, we have extended this approach for the first time to the series of mercapto-containing inhibitors. Thus, various compounds containing a thiol group as a zinc ligand and lateral chains expected to interact with the S₁, S'₁, and S'₂ subsites of NEP and corresponding to the two general formulas I and II, were synthesized (Scheme I).

R₂, R₃ in compounds of series I and R₃, R₄ in compounds of series II were chosen among the residues generally well accepted by the S'₁ and S'₂ subsites of NEP.^{7d,10a} Various chains were introduced in position R₁ in series I and R₁ and R₂ in series II, in order to tentatively fit the S₁ subsite of NEP.

As the S₁ subsite of ACE has been relatively well characterized,⁵ the compounds synthesized were tested on both NEP and ACE to compare their active sites.

Results

1. Synthesis. The synthesis of inhibitors 14-19 and 20-23 was carried out by coupling the 3-(acetylthio)-alkanoic acids 9-13 with the appropriate α-amino esters or dipeptide esters using the DCC/HOBT method, followed by alkaline deprotection of the mercapto and carboxyl group (Figure 1). The various 3-(acetylthio)alkanoic acids

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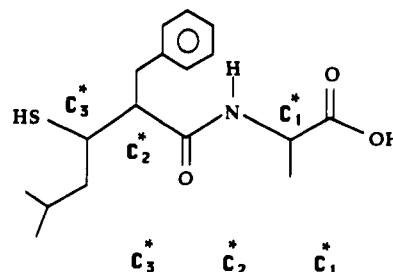
9–13 were prepared using triethyl phosphonoacetate as starting material. The α -alkyl (or aryl) triethyl phosphonoacetates 2 and 3 were obtained by reaction of alkyl (or aryl) halides with triethyl phosphonoacetates (1) ($R_2 = H$) in presence of NaH. The condensation of these phosphonates with various aldehydes according to the Wittig–Horner reaction provided the α,β -unsaturated ethyl esters 4–8 as a (50/50) mixture of *Z* and *E* isomers. After saponification of the ethyl esters, the Michael addition of thiolacetic acid to the α,β -unsaturated acids gave the desired 3-(acetylthio)alkanoic acids 9–13 as a mixture of stereoisomers which were not separated for the following step of the synthesis.

2. HPLC Separation of the Stereoisomers. The synthetic pathways used for the preparation of the inhibitors led to a racemization of the asymmetric carbons of the various 3-(acetylthio)alkanoic acids 9–13. Consequently the inhibitors obtained at the end of the synthesis were a mixture of four stereoisomers, except 23 which contained only two stereoisomers. In order to verify the importance of the stereochemistry of each asymmetric carbon on the activity of these molecules, an HPLC separation was performed on compound 17. Using a semipreparative C_8 nucleosil column and a mixture of CH_3CN/TFA 0.05% in H_2O as eluent, optically pure forms were obtained. The four stereoisomers were designated 17a \rightarrow 17d following their elution order. In the mixture CH_3CN/TFA 0.05% in H_2O = 35/65 under analytical conditions, the retention time were as follows: 17a, 28.3; 17b, 30.1; 17c, 31.6 and 17d, 33.5 min, respectively.

3. Determination of the Absolute Configuration of the Stereoisomers. The determination of the stereochemistry of each isomer of compound 17 was tentatively carried out using HPLC and NMR data. Firstly, assuming an identical absorption at 210 nm for all the stereoisomers, the areas of the HPLC peaks reflects the proportion of each isomer: these proportions were around 39, 38, 12, and 11% for 17a–d, respectively. This indicated that one set of enantiomers of the precursor 11 ($CH_3COSC^*H(CH_2CH(CH_3)_2)C^*H(CH_2Ph)COOH$), resulting from addition of thiolacetic acid on $(CH_3)_2CHCH_2CH=CH(CH_2Ph)COOH$, was obtained in a greater proportion than the other one. From this, it can be concluded that isomers 17a and 17b issued from the major set of enantiomers and have inverted absolute configuration for the two asymmetric carbons C^*_2 and C^*_3 of the 3-mercaptohexanoyl moiety. Conversely 17c and 17d were formed from the minor set of enantiomers of 11 (see Figure 2).

Secondly, the 1H NMR spectra of the separate isomers allows the determination of the relative configuration of the benzyl moiety borne by the C^*_2 asymmetric carbon related to the alanine residue. Indeed as previously demonstrated²⁰ the chemical shift of the methyl of L-alanine is more shielded in the dipeptide D-Phe-L-Ala than in the L-Phe-L-Ala analog. The chemical shifts for the methyl of Ala were 0.92, 1.12, 1.01, and 1.17 ppm for 17a–d, respectively. This allows the configurations of the C^*_2 asymmetric carbon of the four stereoisomers to be proposed as summarized in Figure 2.

The configuration of the thiol-bearing asymmetric carbon (C^*_3) was not determined. However, we have



	C^*_3	C^*_2	C^*_1
17a	R (or S)	R	S
17b	S (or R)	S	S
17c	S (or R)	R	S
17d	R (or S)	S	S

Figure 2. Assignment of the absolute configuration of the asymmetric carbons of the four stereoisomers of 17 based on 1H NMR chemical shifts and elution order on HPLC.

previously shown that a phenylalanine-containing dipeptide of L,L (or D,D) configuration is more rapidly eluted than the L,D (or D,L) analog. In the case of isomer 17a, the relative absolute configuration of C^*_2 and C^*_1 which are separated by a peptide bond, are inverted, indicating that the proposed rule was not valid. However it may be assumed that owing to the size and the hydrophobic character of the chains borne by C^*_2 and C^*_3 the most important parameter for the retention time was the relative configuration of carbon C^*_3 and C^*_2 rather than that of C^*_2 and C^*_1 . If this assumption is correct, C^*_3 and C^*_2 have an identical absolute configuration in 17a (*R,R* configuration) and 17b (*S,S* configuration) and an opposite configuration in 17c (*S,R* configuration) and 17d (*R,S* configuration). This led to the assignments proposed in Figure 2. If this assumption is not correct, the inversed configuration for C^*_3 , shown in brackets in Figure 2, has to be considered.

4. Inhibitory Potencies. The inhibitory potencies of the two series of compounds 14–20 (Table I) and 21–24 (Table II) were measured in both NEP and ACE. As shown in Tables I and II, the IC_{50} s for ACE were in the micromolar range (from 0.3 to 12 μM) indicating a poor recognition of the enzyme's active site by such types of compounds. Conversely, relatively good inhibition was obtained on NEP with a significant modulation of the activity as a function of the chemical structures of the thiol inhibitors.

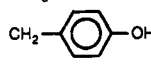
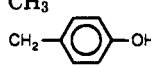
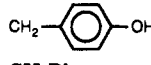
Five compounds (Table I) were found to exhibit inhibitory potencies towards NEP in the 10^{-8} M range (compounds 14, 15, 17–19), the most efficient being compound 17 with an IC_{50} of 14 nM. This compound was also the most selective since its inhibitory potency on ACE was around 12 μM . The replacement of the C-terminal alanine by a tyrosine in 18 led to a small increase in the IC_{50} for NEP, but a significant decrease in the IC_{50} for ACE (0.7 μM). In contrast, compound 16 which was less potent on NEP (180 nM) was one of the best of this series for ACE (1.6 μM). The four stereoisomers of 17 were tested separately on both enzymes. On NEP the isomer 17b was the most efficient with a IC_{50} of 3.6 nM, the three others being not significantly different from each other with IC_{50} s from 20 to 40 nM. On ACE, 17a and 17d were slightly more active (IC_{50} s of 5 and 4 μM) than 17b and 17c (IC_{50} s 16 and 10 μM).

The inhibitors reported in Table II, which correspond to modified tripeptides, were found to be less potent, especially two of them (22 and 23) which had IC_{50} s of 380

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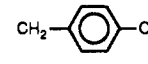
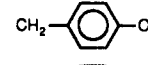
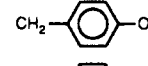
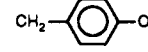
Table I

The chemical structure shows a thiorphan derivative. It consists of a thiol group (HS-) attached to a chiral center (CH) with substituent R₁. This is followed by another chiral center (CH) with substituent R₂, which is part of an amide linkage (-C(=O)-NH-). The nitrogen is attached to a third chiral center (CH) with substituent R₃, which is part of a carboxylic acid group (-C(=O)OH).

compounds	no. of stereoisomers	R ₁	R ₂	R ₃	IC ₅₀ (μM) ^a	
					NEP ^b	ACE ^c
thiorphan	2	H	CH ₂ Ph	H	0.004 ± 0.001	0.14 ± 0.02
14	4	CH ₃	CH ₂ Ph	H	0.050 ± 0.010	11.0 ± 2.0
15	4	(CH ₂) ₂ Ph	CH ₂ Ph	CH ₃	0.044 ± 0.012	4.0 ± 0.5
16	4	(CH ₂) ₂ Ph	CH ₂ Ph	CH ₂ - 	0.180 ± 0.005	1.6 ± 0.6
17	4	CH ₂ CH(CH ₃) ₂	CH ₂ Ph	CH ₃	0.014 ± 0.002	12.0 ± 2.1
17a	1 (<i>RRS</i>)	CH ₂ CH(CH ₃) ₂	CH ₂ Ph	CH ₃	0.020 ± 0.005	5.0 ± 1.2
17b	1 (<i>SSS</i>)	CH ₂ CH(CH ₃) ₂	CH ₂ Ph	CH ₃	0.0036 ± 0.005	16.1 ± 2.5
17c	1 (<i>SRS</i>)	CH ₂ CH(CH ₃) ₂	CH ₂ Ph	CH ₃	0.035 ± 0.005	10.0 ± 3.2
17d	1 (<i>RSS</i>)	CH ₂ CH(CH ₃) ₂	CH ₂ Ph	CH ₃	0.040 ± 0.006	4.0 ± 0.8
18	4	CH ₂ CH(CH ₃) ₂	CH ₂ Ph	CH ₂ - 	0.026 ± 0.013	0.71 ± 0.10
19	4	(CH ₂) ₂ Ph	CH(CH ₃) ₂	CH ₂ - 	0.053 ± 0.012	4.5 ± 0.5
20	2	CH ₂ CH(CH ₃) ₂	H	CH ₂ Ph	0.037 ± 0.006	10.0 ± 2.2

^a Values are the mean ± SEM from three independent experiments computed by log probit of five inhibitor concentrations. ^b Concentration inhibiting 50% of NEP activity using 20 nM [³H]-D-Ala²-Leu-enkephalin as substrate. ^c Concentration inhibiting 50% of ACE activity with 50 μM N-Cbz-Phe-His-Leu as substrate.

Table II

compounds	no. of stereoisomers	R ₁	R ₂	R ₃	R ₄	IC ₅₀ (μM) ^a	
						NEP ^b	ACE ^c
21	4	CH ₃	CH ₂ Ph	(CH ₂) ₃ CH ₃	CH ₂ - 	0.050 ± 0.01	6.1 ± 0.5
22	4	CH ₃	CH ₂ Ph	CH(CH ₃)CH ₂ CH ₃	CH ₂ - 	0.380 ± 0.02	0.3 ± 0.1
23	4	CH ₃	CH ₂ Ph	CH(CH ₃) ₂	CH ₂ - 	0.320 ± 0.08	1.3 ± 0.6
24	2	CH ₂ CH(CH ₃) ₂	H	CH ₂ Ph	CH ₂ - 	0.050 ± 0.01	2.8 ± 0.8

^a Values are the mean ± SEM from three independent experiments computed by log probit of five inhibitor concentrations. ^b Concentration inhibiting 50% of NEP activity using 20 nM [³H]-D-Ala²-Leu-enkephalin as substrate. ^c Concentration inhibiting 50% of ACE activity with 50 μM N-Cbz-Phe-His-Leu as substrate.

and 320 nM, respectively. Nevertheless compounds 21 and 24 displayed inhibitory potencies around 50 nM. On ACE, these compounds were weakly active, but as previously underlined, the most efficient ACE inhibitor of this series, 22 (0.3 μM), was also the least active on NEP (380 nm) emphasizing the already reported structural differences in the active sites of both enzymes.^{7b,d,10a}

Discussion

The compounds described in this paper were synthesized with the aim of obtaining thiol inhibitors able to interact with the S₁, S'₁, and S'₂ subsites of neutral endopeptidase. The first series of compounds (Table I) was designed by using the structure of thiorphan, HSCH₂CH(CH₂Ph)-CONHCH₂COOH,^{7a} as template and by assuming that the same type of stabilizing interactions would be preserved after substitution of the thiol-bearing methylene group by various R₁ chains. Indeed, on the basis of the

crystallographic data of thiorphan in thermolysin²¹ and on the analogies between the active site of thermolysin and NEP, evidenced by several methods²²⁻²⁴ including site-directed mutagenesis,^{25,26} compounds 14-19 were expected to interact with the active site of NEP as depicted in Figure

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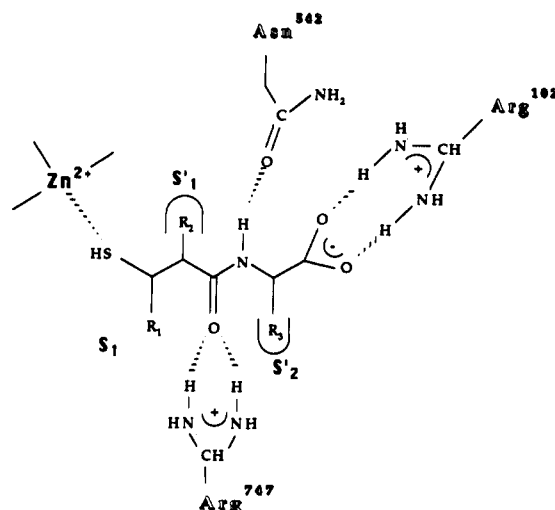


Figure 3. Schematic representation of compounds 14–20 in the active site of NEP, showing the various stabilizing interactions between the inhibitors and the enzyme.

3. The question was therefore to determine if the R_1 chain was able to improve the affinity for the enzyme through efficient interaction with the putative S_1 subsite.

Due to the synthetic pathway used for the preparation of these inhibitors i.e. a Michael addition of thiolacetic on an α,β -unsaturated acid, the final compounds were obtained as mixtures of stereoisomers. These compounds were first studied under their racemic forms to determine the influence of the nature of the R_1 , R_2 side chains and that of the coupled amino acid on their inhibitory potencies toward NEP and ACE (Table I). The results reported in Table I show that this influence is relatively weak. It seems that an aliphatic chain in position R_1 , a benzyl group in position R_2 , and a small hydrophobic residue for the C-terminal amino acid are respectively preferred. Thus, the most efficient compound of this series is 17 (IC_{50} : 14 nM), which has only one aromatic residue in position R_2 , while the less efficient 16 (IC_{50} : 180 nM) contains three aromatic chains. The decreased affinity of 16 could be due to the accumulation of aromatic residues inducing, by steric hindrance, a conformation unfavorable for enzyme recognition.

The role of the stereochemistry of each asymmetric carbon of 17 was studied after separation of the four stereoisomers. As shown in Table I, the most active isomer was 17b with an IC_{50} of 3.6 nM, the other three being in the 10^{-8} M range. These results agree with the proposed stereochemistry of compound 17b, since for carboxyl inhibitors of NEP with pseudotriptide structures, the S,S,S configuration has been found to be the most active.¹⁷ These findings also confirm that the stereochemical preference of NEP is not stringent,^{7b} since the three other stereoisomers were relatively efficient with IC_{50} s of 20–40 nM.

However, the comparison of the inhibitory potency of 17b (3.6 nM) with that of thiorphan (4 nM) shows that there is no additional stabilizing factors in NEP active

site recognition resulting from introduction of a lipophilic R_1 alkyl chain. Three hypotheses may account for this result: (i) there is no important thermodynamically favorable interaction for the lipophilic chain at the level of the putative NEP S_1 subsite; (ii) the various R_1 hydrophobic chains are not well positioned in the inhibitor backbone for an optimized interaction with the hydrophobic S_1 subsite; (iii) the interaction of the R_1 chain in the hydrophobic S_1 subsite decreases the complexation of Zn^{2+} by the thiol group. These two latter complementary hypotheses seem to be the most convincing, at least when the synthesized compounds were studied as ACE inhibitors. Indeed it has been clearly established that a hydrophobic chain, able to interact with the S_1 subsite, increases the affinity of carboxyalkyl dipeptides for ACE by 3 orders of magnitude.¹¹ However, in the present series, all the compounds tested had a lower affinity (from 0.7 to 16 μ M) for ACE than thiorphan (IC_{50} : 0.14 μ M) in spite of their additional hydrophobic chains. Likewise none of the four stereoisomers of 17 were more active on thermolysin (IC_{50} s for 17a–d: $6.7 \pm 0.5 \times 10^{-6}$ M, $4.0 \pm 0.2 \times 10^{-6}$ M, $6.0 \pm 0.3 \times 10^{-6}$ M, and $5.4 \pm 0.5 \times 10^{-6}$ M) than thiorphan ($2.0 \pm 0.8 \times 10^{-6}$ M).²³ Although the new mercapto inhibitors contain an additional R_1 group, their affinity for the zinc metalloproteases was not improved possibly due to a conformationally induced weakening of the thiol coordination. This is now being investigated in the laboratory by molecular modeling of 17 in the active site of thermolysin.

The second series of compounds (Table II) were pseudopeptides resembling the ACE thiol inhibitors described by Weller et al.²⁷ to characterize the S_1 subsite of this enzyme. These authors showed that the trans isomer of N-(2-mercapto-1-cyclohexanoyl)-L-Ala-L-Pro is a potent ACE inhibitor (IC_{50} : 3 nM). Starting from this model, the N-(3-mercaptoalkanoyl) dipeptides 21–24 were synthesized, assuming that their R_3 and R_4 side chains interact with the S'_1 and S'_2 subsites of the enzyme, respectively (Figure 4). Under these conditions, the R_1 or R_2 groups were expected to fit the S_1 subsite and to induce a constraint of the backbone favoring the chelation of the Zn^{2+} ion by the thiol group as shown in Figure 4A.

In so far as the C-terminal dipeptide sequences of compounds 21 to 24 were almost identical with a hydrophobic residue (aliphatic or aromatic) as R_3 component and a tyrosine as R_4 moiety, the differences in the potencies between compounds 21 and 24 (IC_{50} s: 50 nM) and compounds 22 and 23 (IC_{50} s: 380 and 320 nM) seem to be due to steric parameters. Indeed the β -branched chains of Ile and Val probably hardly interact with the enzyme subsite when they are wedged between the R_2 and R_4 aromatic moieties. Although unlikely, another possibility is that these compounds interact with different subsites of the active site of NEP. To choose between these two assumptions the NEP subsites occupied by these molecules were experimentally determined using compounds 21 and 22.

Arg¹⁰² of NEP is located at the edge of the active site of the enzyme and interacts by a salt bridge with the free carboxylate of potent inhibitors such as thiorphan.²⁶ When site-directed mutagenesis was used to replace Arg¹⁰² by Glu, the K_i of thiorphan for the mutated enzyme increased

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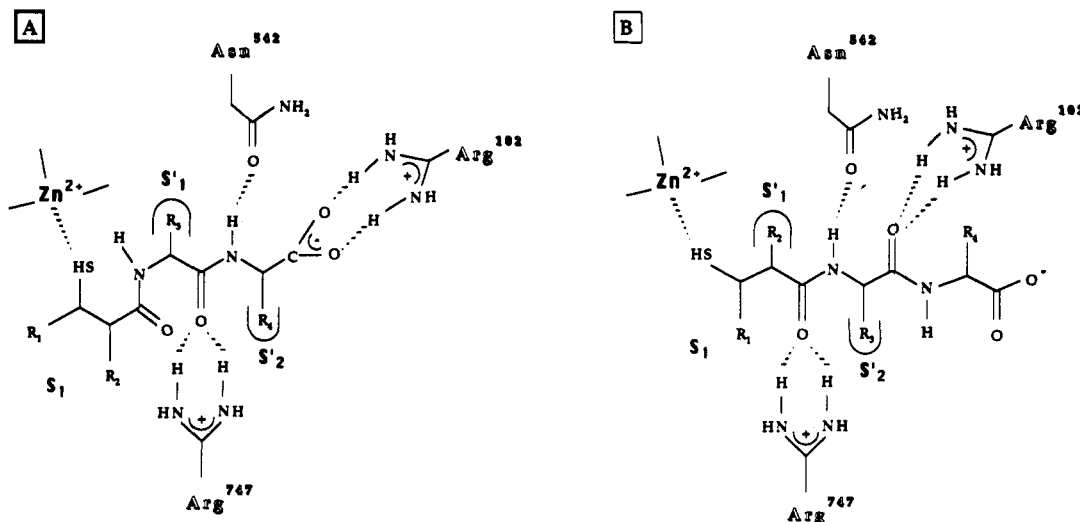


Figure 4. Schematic representation of the two possible models of interaction between compounds 21–24 and the active site of NEP. (A) First hypothesis: the chains R_3 and R_4 interact with the subsites S'_1 and S'_2 , respectively, while R_1 or R_2 is able to fit the S_1 subsite. (B) Second hypothesis: Only R_1 is able to fit the S_1 subsite, while R_2 and R_3 interact with the S'_1 and S'_2 subsites, respectively, as proposed in Figure 3. In this case, the C-terminal amino acid $\text{NHCH}(R_4)\text{COOH}$ is outside the active site.

by over 2 orders of magnitudes.²⁵ Under the same conditions, the K_i of thiorphan amide which has no free carboxylate was increased only by a factor of 6. Consequently, this mutated enzyme may be an index of inhibitor positioning in the active site of NEP. The IC_{50} s of 21 and 22 on the mutated enzyme were respectively 5×10^{-7} M and 5.6×10^{-7} M, a loss when compared to the natural NEP of only 10-fold for 21 and 2-fold for 22. Taken together these results indicate that inhibitors 21–24 occupy the active site of NEP in the same manner as inhibitors 14–20, with R_2 in the S'_1 subsite, R_3 in the S'_2 subsite, and the tyrosine outside the active site (Figure 4B). The differences in potency between compounds of 22 and 23 vs 21 and 24 is therefore very likely due to steric factors as previously discussed. It is interesting to observe that this is not the case for ACE since the best inhibitor for this peptidase, compound 22, is the weakest for NEP. On the other hand, the loss of an ionic interaction between Arg¹⁰² of NEP and the free carboxyl group of the compounds 21–24 bound in the active site as proposed in Figure 4B is probably responsible for their lower affinities for NEP as compared to inhibitors such as 17 which interact with the enzyme as shown in Figure 3.

In conclusion, in the series reported in Table I and Table II the R_1 group which was assumed to interact with the S_1 site does not increase the inhibitory potency, showing that no stabilizing interaction has been created. As discussed, this may be interpreted by the absence of a definite hydrophobic subsite in this position or by a constraint of the inhibitor backbone which precludes the interaction of the R_1 chain with the S_1 subsite. Although the inhibitory potencies of the synthesized compounds are not higher than that of thiorphan, these new thiol inhibitors could have improved bioavailability and pharmacological properties thanks to their enhanced lipophilicity (to be published).

Experimental Section

Biological Test. [³H]Tyr-D-Ala²-Leu-enkephalin (32 Ci/mmol) was obtained from Dositek (CEA, France). N-Cbz-Phe-His-Leu was from Bachem (Bubendorf, Switzerland). Recombinant human angiotensin converting enzyme obtained as

described²⁸ was a generous gift of Pr. Corvol (Collège de France, Paris, France).

Assay for Neutral Endopeptidase. Neutral endopeptidase was purified to homogeneity from rabbit kidney as previously described.²⁹ IC_{50} values were determined as previously described in detail.³⁰ NEP (final concentration 1 pmol/100 μL , specific activity on [³H]-D-Ala²-Leu-enkephalin 0.3 nmol/mg per min) was preincubated for 15 min at 25 °C with or without increasing concentrations of inhibitor in a total volume of 100 μL of 50 mM Tris-HCl buffer pH = 7.4. [³H]-D-Ala²-Leu-enkephalin (K_m = 30 mM) was added to a final concentration of 20 nM, and the reaction was stopped after 30 min by adding 10 μL of 0.5 M HCl. The tritiated metabolites formed were separated on polystyrene beads. The mutated enzyme Glu¹⁰²-NEP was obtained as previously described.²⁵ The inhibitory potency of the tested inhibitors was determined by the method described for NEP.

Assay for ACE Activity. Enzymatic studies on ACE were performed using N-Cbz-Phe-His-Leu³¹ as substrate (K_m = 50 mM) as described.³² ACE (final concentration of 0.02 pmol/100 mL; specific activity on Cbz-Phe-His-Leu: 13 mmol/mg per min) was preincubated for 15 min at 37 °C with various concentrations of the inhibitors in 50 mM Tris-HCl buffer (pH = 7.4), and N-Cbz-Phe-His-Leu was added to a final concentration of 0.05 mM. The reaction was stopped after 15 min by adding 400 μL of 2 M NaOH. After dilution with 3 mL of water, the concentration of His-Leu was determined following the fluorimetric assay described by Cheung et al.³¹ with a MPF 44A Perkin-Elmer spectrofluorimeter (excitation 365 nm, emission 495 nm). The calibration curve for His-Leu was obtained by addition of increasing concentrations of His-Leu into 0.1 mL of 0.1 M Tris-HCl buffer pH = 7.4 containing the denatured enzyme.

Synthesis. The protected amino acids were from Bachem (Bubendorf, Switzerland). Benzyl bromide, 2-iodobutane,

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isovaleraldehyde, hydrocinnamaldehyde, benzaldehyde, and thioacetic acid were from Aldrich (France). Dicyclohexylcarbodiimide was from Merck (U.S.A.). 1-Hydroxybenzotriazole was from Janssen-Chimica (Belgium) and was used in its hydrated form. The solvents (Normapur label) were from SDS (Peypin, France).

The purity of the synthesized compounds was checked by thin-layer chromatography on silica gel plates (Merck 60F 254) in the following solvent systems (v/v): A, EtOAc-hexane-AcOH (5/5/0.1); B, EtOAc-hexane (1/4); C, EtOAc-hexane (3/2); D, EtOAc-hexane (1/1); E, CH₂Cl₂-MeOH-AcOH (9/1/0.1) and by HPLC on a reverse-phase Nucleosil C₈ column 250 × 5 mm (SFCC) with CH₃CN/TFA 0.05% in H₂O as mobile phase. The eluted peaks were monitored at 210 nm. The ¹H NMR spectra were taken with a Bruker AC (270 MHz) in ²H₂-DMSO using HMDS as internal reference. Melting points of the crystallized products were determined on an Electrothermal apparatus and are reported uncorrected.

The following abbreviations were used: EtOAc, ethyl acetate; AcOH, acetic acid; MeOH, methanol; EtOH, ethanol; DMF, dimethylformamide; THF, tetrahydrofuran; DMSO, dimethyl sulfoxide; HMDS, hexamethyldisiloxane.

General Procedures. Preparation of Triethyl 2-Alkyl(aryl)phosphonoacetates. To a solution of the triethyl phosphonoacetate (1) in dry DMF was added at 0 °C 1 equiv of NaH, and the mixture was stirred at the same temperature for 15 min. After addition of a solution of the alkyl (aryl) halide (1 equiv) in DMF, stirring was continued at room temperature for 24 h. Solvent was removed under reduced pressure. The residue was diluted with EtOAc, washed with H₂O and brine, dried (Na₂SO₄), concentrated in vacuo, and purified by chromatography.

Triethyl 2-Benzylphosphonoacetate (2). Chromatography in EtOAc-hexane, 1/1 colorless oil (70%): ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.9 (3 H, CH₃(CH₂)), 1.12–1.18 (6 H, 2 × CH₃(CH₂)), 3.00–3.10 (2 H, CH₂Ph), 3.80–3.40 (1 H, CHP), 3.95–4.08 (6 H, 3 × CH₂O), 7.18 (5 H, Ph); R_f(A) 0.40.

Triethyl 2-Isopropylphosphonoacetate (3). Chromatography in EtOAc-hexane 1:1 colorless oil (65%): ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.88 and 1.00 ((CH₃)₂CH), 1.12–1.20 (9 H, 3 × CH₃(CH₂)), 2.15 (1 H, CH(CH₂)), 2.7 (1 H, CHP), 3.95–4.05 (6 H, 3 × OCH₂); R_f(A) 0.44.

Preparation of α,β-Unsaturated Ethyl Esters. To a solution of the triethyl 2-alkyl(aryl)phosphonoacetate in dry 1,2-dimethoxyethane [or dioxane-H₂O (2/1)] was added, at 0 °C, 1 equiv of NaH (or 2.5 equiv of K₂CO₃). After stirring for 15 min, 3 equiv of the carbonyl derivative was added, and the mixture was stirred at reflux temperature for 3 h. Removal of the solvent gave a residue which was dissolved in hexane, washed with H₂O and brine, dried (Na₂SO₄), and evaporated. The oily residue was purified by flash chromatography in EtOAc-hexane 1:1.

Ethyl 2-Benzyl-2-butenate (4). Colorless oil (70%): ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 1.1 (3 H, CH₃(CH₂)), 1.80–1.88 (CH₃(CH=)), 3.52 (CH₂(Ph)), 4.02 (OCH₂), 6.1 and 6.9 (CH=), 7.09–7.22 (Ph); R_f(B) 0.77. Anal. (C₁₃H₁₆O₂) C, H.

Ethyl 2-Benzyl-5-phenyl-2-pentenoate (5). Colorless oil (68%): ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 1.08 (CH₃(CH₂)), 2.55–2.60 (CH₂CH₂), 3.52 (CH₂Ph), 4.00 (OCH₂), 6.00 and 6.80 (CH=), 7.08–7.20 (Ph); R_f(B) 0.7. Anal. (C₂₀H₂₂O₂) C, H.

Ethyl 2-Benzyl-5-methyl-2-hexenoate (6). Colorless oil (68%): ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.80 ((CH₃)₂CH), 1.08 (CH₃(CH₂)), 1.54 (CH(CH₃)), 2.10 and 2.28 (2 H, CH₂CH=), 3.52 (CH₂Ph), 4.00 (OCH₂), 6.00 and 6.8 (CH=), 7.10–7.20 (Ph); R_f(B) 0.8. Anal. (C₁₆H₂₀O₂) C, H.

Ethyl 2-Isopropyl-5-phenyl-2-pentenoate (7). Colorless oil (86%): ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.90 ((CH₃)₂CH), 1.12 (CH₃(CH₂)), 2.50 (CH(CH₃)), 2.62 (CH₂CH₂(Ph)), 4.08 (OCH₂), 5.70 and 6.48 (CH=), 7.10–7.20 (Ph); R_f(B) 0.76. Anal. (C₁₆H₂₀O₂) C, H.

Ethyl 5-Methyl-2-hexenoate (8). Colorless oil (86%): ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.80 ((CH₃)₂CH), 1.15 (CH₃(CH₂)), 1.65 (CH(CH₃)), 2.04 (CH₂(CH=)), 4.02 (OCH₂), 5.8 and 6.8 (CH=); R_f(B) 0.65. Anal. (C₈H₁₆O₂) C, H.

Preparation of Substituted 3-(Acetylthio)alkanoic Acids 9–13. A solution of the α,β-unsaturated ethyl ester in EtOH was treated with 2 equiv of 1 N NaOH, and the mixture was stirred at room (or reflux) temperature for 3–24 h. After evaporation of ethanol, the remaining aqueous mixture was diluted with H₂O,

acidified with 1 N HCl to pH 3, and extracted with EtOAc. The extract was dried (Na₂SO₄) and evaporated to dryness. The α,β-unsaturated acid obtained was dissolved in 10–12 equiv of thioacetic acid. The reaction mixture was stirred for 24–48 h at reflux temperature and evaporated, and the residue was purified by flash chromatography (EtOAc-hexane 1:1).

3-(Acetylthio)-2-benzylbutanoic Acid (9). Colorless oil (42%): ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 1.28 (CH₃(CH)), 2.30 (CH₂CO), 2.75 (CH₂Ph), 2.90 (CH(COOH)), 3.65 (CHS), 7.08–7.20 (Ph), 12.30 (COOH); R_f(C) 0.36. Anal. (C₁₃H₁₆O₃S) C, H.

3-(Acetylthio)-2-benzyl-5-phenylpentanoic Acid (10). Colorless oil (50%): ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 1.80 and 1.95 (CH₂(CH₂Ph)), 2.45 (CH₃CO), 2.52–2.70 (CH₂Ph), 2.80–2.92 (CHCH₂Ph), 3.69 (CHS), 7.09–7.19 (Ph), 12.42 (COOH); R_f(C) 0.4. Anal. (C₂₀H₂₂O₃S) C, H.

3-(Acetylthio)-2-benzyl-5-methylhexanoic Acid (11). Colorless oil (32%): ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.78–0.85 (CH₃)₂CH, 1.69 (CH(CH₃)), 1.90 (CH₂CH), 2.28–2.35 (CHCH₂Ph), 2.50 (CH₃CO), 3.70 (CHS), 7.10–7.20 (Ph), 12.41 (COOH); R_f(C) 0.32. Anal. (C₁₆H₂₂O₃S) C, H.

3-(Acetylthio)-2-isopropyl-5-phenylpentanoic Acid (12). Colorless oil (32%): ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.78–0.89 ((CH₃)₂CH), 1.70 (CH(CH₃)), 1.90 (CH₂CH), 2.30 (CHCOOH), 2.40 (CH₃CO), 2.6 (CH₂Ph), 3.70 (CHS), 7.10–7.20 (Ph), 12.40 (COOH); R_f(C) 0.32. Anal. (C₁₆H₂₂O₃S) C, H.

3-(Acetylthio)-5-methylhexanoic Acid (13). Colorless oil (40%): ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.80 ((CH₃)₂CH), 1.40 (CH₂(CH)), 1.58 ((CH₃)₂COH), 2.29 (CH₂CO), 2.80–3.15 (CH₂COOH), 3.80 (CHS), 12.27 (COOH); R_f(D) 0.22. Anal. (C₉H₁₆O₃S) C, H.

General Procedure for the Coupling Step. Procedure IV. To a solution of 3-(acetylthio)propanoic acid derivative in dry THF cooled at 0 °C was added successively 1 equiv of 1-hydroxybenzotriazole, 1.1 equiv of dicyclohexylcarbodiimide, 1 equiv of the corresponding α-amino acid or dipeptide methyl ester hydrochloride, and 1 equiv of triethylamine. After 30 min at 0 °C, the mixture was stirred at room temperature overnight. After filtration of dicyclohexylurea and evaporation of the solvent, the residue was dissolved in EtOAc and washed with H₂O, 10% citric acid, H₂O, 10% NaHCO₃, H₂O, and brine, successively. The organic layer was dried (Na₂SO₄) and evaporated. The residue was purified by chromatography.

General Procedure for the Basic Hydrolysis of Esters. Procedure V. To a solution of the protected compound in degassed MeOH at 0 °C under argon was added 3 equiv of 1 N NaOH. After stirring 15 min at 0 °C and 3–9 h at room temperature, the solvent was evaporated and the residue dissolved in H₂O and washed with EtOAc. The aqueous layer was acidified with 1 N HCl to pH 3 and extracted with EtOAc. The organic layer was washed with H₂O and brine, dried over Na₂SO₄, and evaporated.

N-(2-Benzyl-3-mercapto-1-oxobutyl)glycine (14). Colorless oil [63% (ester 78%)]: ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 1.20 (CH₃(CH)), 2.58 (HS), 2.66–3.00 (CHCH₂Ph), 3.38–3.75 (CHCH₂CH₂COOH), 7.09 (Ph), 8.11 (NH), 12.31 (COOH). Anal. (C₁₃H₁₇NO₃S) C, H, N.

N-(2-Benzyl-3-mercapto-5-phenyl-1-oxopentyl)-L-alanine (15). Colorless solid [51% (ester 87%)]: mp 72 °C; ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.90–1.12 (CH₃(CH)), 1.60 and 2.02 (CH₂CHS), 2.52–2.60 (CH₂Ph + HS), 2.70–2.85 (CHCH₂Ph), 3.12 (CHS), 4.04 (CH(CH₃)), 7.10–7.25 (Ph), 8.02–8.18 (NH), 12.43 (COOH); R_f(E) 0.62; HPLC t_R = 7.3, 7.5, and 7.8 (CH₃CN-TFA 0.05% = 50/50). Anal. (C₂₁H₂₅NO₃S) C, H, N.

N-(2-Benzyl-3-mercapto-5-phenyl-1-oxopentyl)-L-tyrosine (16). Colorless solid [57.7% (ester 78%)]: mp 69 °C; ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 1.60–1.70 (CH₂CHS), 2.35 (HS) centered on 2.75 (CH₂Ph, CHCH₂Ph, CH₂β-Tyr), 3.01 (CHS), 4.26 (CHCOOH), 6.55–7.10 (arom), 8.05–8.12 (NH), 9.10 (OH), 12.45 (COOH); R_f(E) 0.71; HPLC t_R = 17.5, 18.7, and 19.8 min (CH₃CN-TFA 0.05% = 50/50). Anal. (C₂₇H₂₈NO₄S) C, H, N.

N-(2-Benzyl-3-mercapto-5-methyl-1-oxohexyl)-L-alanine (17). Colorless solid [46% (ester 98%)]: mp 85 °C; ¹H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.72–0.82 ((CH₃)₂CH), 0.95–1.15 (CH₃(CH)), 1.28–1.48 (CH₂(CH)), 1.80 (CH(CH₂)), 2.38 (HS), 2.70 (CH(CH₂Ph)), 2.88 (CH₂(Ph)), 3.05 (CHS), 4.08 (CH(CH₃)), 7.10–7.20 (Ph), 8.00–8.12 (NH), 12.38 (COOH); R_f(E) 0.48; HPLC t_R = 10.1 min (CH₃CN-TFA 0.05 = 50/50). Anal. (C₁₇H₂₆NO₃S) C, H, N.

N-(2-Benzyl-3-mercapto-5-methyl-1-oxohexyl)-L-tyrosine (18). Colorless solid [50% (ester 52%)]: mp 73 °C; ^1H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.60–0.80 ($(\text{CH}_3)_2\text{CH}$), 1.25 (CH_2CH), 1.75 (CHCH_2), 2.31 (SH), 2.56–2.95 ($\text{CHCH}_2\text{Ph} + \text{CH}_2\beta\text{-Tyr}$), 3.20 (CHS), 4.25 ($\text{CH } \alpha\text{-Tyr}$), 6.55–7.10 (arom), 7.99–8.10 (NH), 9.11 (OH), 12.49 (COOH); $R_f(\text{E})$ 0.41; HPLC t_R = 12.6, 13.7, 15.0, 16.0 min ($\text{CH}_3\text{CN-TFA}$ 0.05% = 50/50). Anal. ($\text{C}_{23}\text{H}_{29}\text{NO}_4\text{S}$) C, H, N.

N-(2-Isopropyl-3-mercapto-5-phenyl-1-oxopentyl)-L-tyrosine (19). Colorless solid [58% (ester 85%)]: mp 81 °C; ^1H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.50–0.71 ($(\text{CH}_3)_2\text{CH}$), 1.60 ($\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)_2$), 1.91–2.05 ($\text{CHCO} + \text{CH}_2\text{-CH}_2\text{Ph}$), 2.45 (SH), 2.50–2.70 ($\text{CH}_2\text{Ph} + \text{CH}_2\text{-Tyr}$), 2.90 (CHS), 4.48 ($\text{CH } \alpha\text{-Tyr}$), 6.59 and 7.00 (arom Tyr), 7.12–7.20 (Phe), 8.12 (NH), 9.10 (OH), 12.52 (COOH); $R_f(\text{E})$ 0.31; HPLC t_R = 13.8, 14.3 and 14.8 min ($\text{CH}_3\text{CN-TFA}$ 0.05% = 50/50). Anal. ($\text{C}_{23}\text{H}_{29}\text{NO}_4\text{S}$) C, H, N.

N-(3-Mercapto-5-methyl-1-oxohexyl)-L-phenylalanine (20). Colorless solid [64% (ester 82%)]: mp 145 °C; ^1H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.70 ($(\text{CH}_3)_2\text{CH}$), 1.20 (CH_2), 1.7 ($\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)_2$), 2.05–2.20 (SH), 2.28 (CH_2CO), 2.75 (CHS), 3.00 (CH_2Phe), 4.40 ($\text{CH } \alpha\text{Phe}$), 7.21 (Phe), 8.2 (NH), 12.7 (COOH); $R_f(\text{E})$ 0.59; HPLC t_R = 6.8 min ($\text{CH}_3\text{CN-TFA}$ 0.05% = 53/47). Anal. ($\text{C}_{16}\text{H}_{23}\text{NO}_3\text{S}$) C, H, N.

N-(2-Benzyl-3-mercapto-1-oxobutyl)-L-norleucyl-L-tyrosine (21). Colorless solid [51% (ester 96%)]: mp 132 °C; ^1H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.68–0.78 (CH_3Nle), 1.00–1.42 ($(\text{CH}_2)_3\text{Nle}$), 2.48 (CHCO), 2.52 (SH), 2.71–3.00 ($\text{CHS} + \text{CH}_2\text{Ph} + \text{CH}_2\beta\text{-Tyr}$), 4.02 ($\text{CH } \alpha\text{Nle}$), 4.24 ($\text{CH } \alpha\text{Tyr}$), 6.59 and 6.90 (arom Tyr), 7.02–7.15 (Ph), 7.70–7.90 (NH), 9.12 (OH), 12.50 (COOH); $R_f(\text{E})$ 0.32; HPLC t_R = 9.3, 9.7 min ($\text{CH}_3\text{CN-TFA}$ 0.05% = 50/50). Anal. ($\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{34}\text{N}_2\text{O}_5\text{S}$) C, H, N.

N-(2-Benzyl-3-mercapto-1-oxobutyl)-L-isoleucyl-L-tyrosine (22). Colorless solid [44% (ester 80%)]: mp 128 °C; ^1H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.50–0.72 ($2\text{CH}_3\text{-Ile}$), 1.15–1.25 ($\text{CH}_3(\text{CH})$), 1.38 and 1.60 ($\text{CH}_2\text{-CH}(\text{Ile})$), 2.40 (SH), 2.60–3.00 ($\text{CHCH}_2\text{Ph} + \text{CH}_2\beta\text{Tyr} + \text{CHS}$), 3.98 ($\text{CH } \alpha\text{Ile}$), 4.2 ($\text{CH } \alpha\text{Tyr}$), 6.58 (Tyr), 6.90–7.10 (Ph + Tyr), 7.60–7.72 (NH), 7.98 (NH), 9.12 (OH), 12.4 (COOH); $R_f(\text{E})$ 0.63; HPLC t_R = 8.9 min ($\text{CH}_3\text{CN-TFA}$ 0.05% = 50/50). Anal. ($\text{C}_{26}\text{H}_{34}\text{N}_2\text{O}_5\text{S}$) C, H, N.

N-(2-Benzyl-3-mercapto-1-oxobutyl)-L-valinyl-L-tyrosine (23). Colorless solid [44% (ester 86%)]: mp 120 °C; ^1H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.38–0.49 ($(\text{CH}_3)_2\text{CH}$), 0.72–0.81 (CH_3CH), 1.12–1.22 ($(\text{CH}_2)_2\text{CH}$), 1.60 ($\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)_2$), 2.40 (SH), 2.60 (CHCO), 2.72–2.90 ($\text{CH}_2\beta\text{Ph} + \text{CH}_2\beta\text{Tyr}$), 3.05 (CHS), 3.98 ($\text{CH } \alpha\text{Val}$), 4.15–4.28 ($\text{CH } \alpha\text{Tyr}$), 6.60 (Tyr), 6.95–7.10 (Tyr + Phe), 7.60–7.70 (NH), 7.95 (NH), 9.15 (COOH); 12.45 (1 H, acid); $R_f(\text{E})$ 0.51; HPLC t_R = 6.97 min ($\text{CH}_3\text{CN-TFA}$ 0.05% = 50/50). Anal. ($\text{C}_{25}\text{H}_{32}\text{N}_2\text{O}_5\text{S}$) C, H, N.

N-(3-Mercapto-5-methyl-1-oxohexyl)-L-phenylalanyl-L-tyrosine (24). Colorless solid [42% (ester 85%)]: mp 110 °C; ^1H NMR (DMSO) δ 0.65–0.75 ($(\text{CH}_3)_2\text{CH}$), 1.05 and 1.20 ($\text{CH}_2\text{-CHS}$), 1.62 ($\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)_2$), 1.85 (HS), 2.10–2.40 (CH_2CO), 2.60–3.00 ($\text{CHS} + \text{CH}_2\beta\text{Phe} + \text{CH}_2\beta\text{Tyr}$), 4.30 ($\text{CH } \alpha\text{Phe}$), 4.55 ($\text{CH } \alpha\text{Tyr}$), 6.60 and 6.95 (arom Tyr), 7.10–7.22 (Phe), 8.08–8.18 (2 NH), 9.18 (OH), 12.33 (COOH); $R_f(\text{E})$ 0.52; HPLC t_R = 9.17 min ($\text{CH}_3\text{CN-TFA}$ 0.05% = 50/50). Anal. ($\text{C}_{25}\text{H}_{32}\text{N}_2\text{O}_5\text{S}$) C, H, N.

HPLC Separation of the Stereoisomers. The separation of the stereoisomers of 17 was performed using a semipreparative C8 nucleosil column (300 \times 7.5 mm) (SFCC) with a Shimadzu LC-9A HPLC apparatus connected to a SPD-6AV UV detector (210 nm). For compound 17, the separation was performed in $\text{CH}_3\text{CN-TFA}$ 0.005% in H_2O = 30/70. The retention times were 76.9, 81.9, 86.9, and 91.9 min, respectively. The purity was verified in analytical conditions with a C8 nucleosil column (250 \times 5 mm) using $\text{CH}_3\text{CN-TFA}$ 0.05% in H_2O = 35/65. The retention times in these latter conditions were 28.2, 30.1, 31.6, and 33.5 min.

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