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(54) Titre : COMPOSITIONS PHARMACEUTIQUES CONTENANT DES LIGANDS DE RECEPTEURS  
SECRETAGOGUES D'HORMONE DE CROISSANCE  
(54) Title: PHARMACEUTICAL COMPOSITIONS OF GROWTH HORMONE SECRETAGOGUE RECEPTOR LIGANDS

(57) **Abrégé/Abstract:**

The present invention relates to improvements in compositions containing peptides that are ligands of the GHS receptor, or pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof, methods for preparing such compositions, and methods of using such compositions to treat mammals. In particular, the present invention relates to a pharmaceutical composition comprising a pamoate salt of H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>, which is a ligand of the GHS receptor and in which, after subcutaneous or intramuscular administration to a subject, the peptide forms an in situ depot at physiological pH that is slowly dissolved and released into the body fluid and bloodstream. The present invention may further comprise an organic component such as dimethylacetamide (DMA) or polyethylene glycol with an average molecular weight of lower than 1000.



## ABSTRACT

The present invention relates to improvements in compositions containing peptides that are ligands of the GHS receptor, or pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof, methods for preparing such compositions, and methods of using such compositions to treat mammals. In particular, the present invention relates to a pharmaceutical composition comprising a pamoate salt of H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>, which is a ligand of the GHS receptor and in which, after subcutaneous or intramuscular administration to a subject, the peptide forms an in situ depot at physiological pH that is slowly dissolved and released into the body fluid and bloodstream. The present invention may further comprise an organic component such as dimethylacetamide (DMA) or polyethylene glycol with an average molecular weight of lower than 1000.

**PHARMACEUTICAL COMPOSITIONS OF GROWTH HORMONE SECRETAGOGUE  
RECEPTOR LIGANDS**

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

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The present invention relates to improvements in compositions containing peptides that are ligands of the growth hormone secretagogue (GHS) receptor, or pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof, methods for preparing such compositions, and methods of using such compositions to treat mammals. In particular, the present invention relates to a

10 pharmaceutical composition comprising a pamoate salt of H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>, which is a ligand of the GHS receptor, and in which, after subcutaneous or intramuscular administration to a subject, the peptide forms an *in situ* depot at physiological pH that is slowly dissolved and released into the body fluid and bloodstream. The present invention may further comprise an organic component such as dimethylacetamide (DMA) or

15 polyethylene glycol with an average molecular weight of lower than 1000.

The pulsatile release of growth hormone from the pituitary somatotrops is regulated by two hypothalamic neuropeptides: growth hormone-releasing hormone and somatostatin. Growth hormone-releasing hormone stimulates release of growth hormone, whereas, somatostatin inhibits secretion of growth hormone. (Frohman *et al.*, *Endocr. Rev.* 1986, 7, 223-253, and Strobi *et al.*, *Pharmacol. Rev.* 1994, 46, 1-34.)

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Release of growth hormone from the pituitary somatotrops can also be controlled by growth hormone-releasing peptides (GHRP's). A hexapeptide, His-D-Trp-Ala-Trp-D-Phe-Lys-amide (GHRP-6), was found to release growth hormone from somatotrops in a dose-dependent manner in several species including man. (Bowers *et al.*, *Endocrinology* 1984, 114, 1537-1545.) Subsequent chemical studies on GHRP-6 led to the identification of other potent growth hormone secretagogues such as GHRP-I, GHRP-2 and hexarelin (Cheng *et al.*, *Endocrinology* 1989, 124, 2791-2798, Bowers, C. Y. Novel GH-Releasing Peptides. In: *Molecular and Clinical Advances in Pituitary Disorders*. Ed: Melmed, S.; Endocrine Research and Education, Inc., Los Angeles, CA, USA 1993, 153-157, and Deghenghi *et al.*

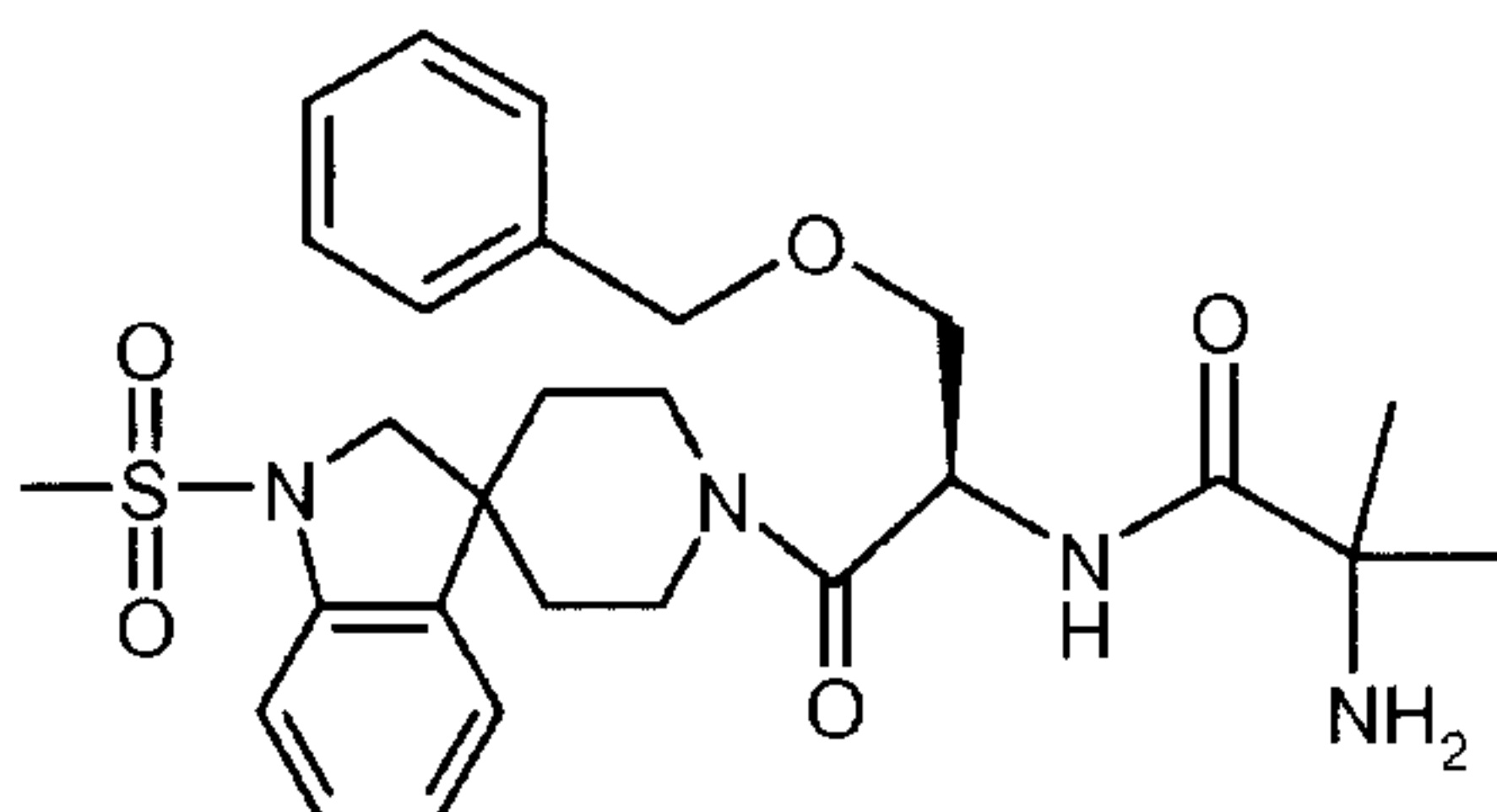
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30 *Life Sci.* 1994, 54, 1321-1328):

GHRP-I	Ala-His-D-(2')-Nal-Ala-Trp-D-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub> ;
GHRP-2	D-Ala-D-(2')-Nal-Ala-Trp-D-Nal-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub> ;
Hexarelin	His-D-2-MeTrp-Ala-Trp-D-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub> .

GHRP-I, GHRP-2, GHRP-6, and hexarelin are synthetic growth hormone secretagogues (GHS's). GHS's stimulate secretion of growth hormone by a mechanism different from that of growth hormone-releasing hormone. (Bowers *et al.*, *Endocrinology* 1984, 114, 1537-1545, Cheng *et al.*, *Endocrinology* 1989, 124, 2791-2798, Bowers, C. Y. Novel GH-Releasing Peptides. In: *Molecular and Clinical Advances in Pituitary Disorders*. Ed: Melmed, S.; Endocrine Research and Education, Inc., Los Angeles, CA, USA 1993, 153-157, and Deghenghi *et al.*, *Life Sci.* 1994, 54, 1321-1328.)

The low oral bioavailability (<1%) of the peptidyl growth hormone secretagogues stimulated search for non-peptide compounds mimicking action of GHRP-6 in the pituitary. Several benzolactams and spiroindanes have been reported to stimulate growth hormone release in various animal species and in man. (Smith *et al.*, *Science* 1993, 260, 1640-1643, Patchett *et al.*, *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA.* 1995, 92, 7001-7005, and Chen *et al.*, *Bioorg. Mod. Chem. Lett.* 1996, 6, 2163-2169.) A specific example of a small spiroindane is MK-0677 (Patchett *et al.*, *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA.* 1995, 92, 7001-7005):



The actions of the above-mentioned GHS's (both peptide and non-peptide) appear to be mediated by a specific growth hormone secretagogue receptor (GHS receptor). (Howard *et al.*, *Science* 1996, 273, 974-977, and Pong *et al.*, *Molecular Endocrinology* 1996, 10, 57-61.) This receptor is present in the pituitary and hypothalamus of various mammalian species (GHSR1a) and is distinct from the growth hormone-releasing hormone (GHRH) receptor. The GHS receptor was also detected in the other areas of the central nervous system and in peripheral tissues, for instance adrenal and thyroid glands, heart, lung, kidney and skeletal muscles. (Chen *et al.*, *Bioorg. Mod. Chem. Lett.* 1996, 6, 2163-2169, Howard *et al.*, *Science* 1996, 273, 974-977, Pong *et al.*, *Molecular Endocrinology* 1996, 10, 57-61, Guan *et al.*, *Mol. Brain Res.* 1997, 48, 23-29, and McKee *et al.*, *Genomics* 1997, 46, 426-434.) A truncated version of GHSR1a has been reported. (Howard *et al.*, *Science* 1996, 273, 974-977.)

The GHS receptor is a G-protein coupled-receptor. Effects of GHS receptor activation includes depolarization and inhibition of potassium channels, an increase in intercellular concentrations of inositol triphosphate (IP3), and a transient increase in the concentrations of

intracellular calcium. (Pong *et al.*, *Molecular Endocrinology* 1996, 10, 57-61, Guan *et al.*, *Mol. Brain Res.* 1997, 48, 23-29, and McKee *et al.*, *Genomics* 1997, 46,426-434.)

Ghrelin is a naturally occurring peptide which is believed to be an endogenous ligand for the GHS receptor. (Kojima *et al.*, *Nature* 1999, 402, 656-660.) The native structures of  
5 ghrelins from several mammalian and non-mammalian species of animals are known. (Kaiya *et al.*, *J. Biol. Chem.* 2001, 276, 40441-40448; International Patent Application PCT/JP00/04907 (WO 01/07475).) A core region present in ghrelin was found to provide for activity at the GHS receptor. The core region comprises the four N-terminal amino acids, where the serine at position 3 is normally modified with n-octanoic acid. In addition to  
10 acylation by n-octanoic acid native ghrelin also has been observed to be acylated with n-decanoic acid. (Kaiya *et al.*, *J. Biol. Chem.* 2001, 276, 40441-40448.) Ghrelin analogs have a variety of different therapeutic uses as well as uses as research tools.

#### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

15 The present invention provides a formulation of a pharmaceutical composition comprising a pamoate salt of a peptide that acts as a ligand of the GHS receptor. Particularly preferred is the following peptide which is referred to hereinafter as "Example 1": H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>, which is a ligand of the GHS receptor, wherein, after subcutaneous or intramuscular administration to a subject, the peptide forms a precipitate at physiological  
20 pH that is slowly dissolved and released into the body fluid and bloodstream, thereby resulting in attenuated side effects and improved efficacy.

The invention may be summarized in the following paragraphs below, as well as in the claims.

- 25 (1) In one aspect, the present invention is directed to a pharmaceutical composition of a clear solution, a gel or a semi-solid, or a suspension, comprising a peptide that acts as a ligand of the GHS receptor, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, in which the peptide forms a precipitate after subcutaneous or intramuscular administration to a subject.
- 30 (2) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 1, wherein said peptide in said clear solution precipitates *in vivo* to form an *in situ* depot that is slowly dissolved and released into the body fluid and bloodstream, and wherein said clear

solution is a purely aqueous solution, a purely organic solution, or an aqueous solution having an organic component.

- (3) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 1 or paragraph 2, wherein said peptide is Example 1, *i.e.*, H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>.
- 5 (4) The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding paragraphs, wherein said peptide is in a pamoate salt form.
- (5) The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding paragraphs, further comprising an organic component which increases the solubility of said peptide in an aqueous solution or decreases the viscosity of a gel  
10 or a semi-solid.
- (6) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 5, wherein said organic component is an organic polymer, an alcohol, DMSO, DMF, or DMA.
- (7) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 6, wherein said organic polymer is PEG.
- 15 (8) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 7, wherein said PEG has an average molecular weight of from about 200 to about 10,000.
- (9) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 8, wherein said peptide is dissolved in a PEG200 or PEG400 aqueous solution, in which the volume-to-volume ratio of PEG to water is from about 1:99 to about 99:1.
- 20 (10) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 9, wherein said peptide is dissolved in a PEG200 or PEG400 aqueous solution, in which the volume-to-volume ratio of PEG to water is from about 1:9 to about 1:1.
- (11) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 6, wherein said alcohol is ethanol or isopropyl alcohol.
- 25 (12) The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding paragraphs, wherein the weight-to-volume concentration of said peptide is between about 0.1 mg/mL and about 600 mg/mL.
- (13) The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding paragraphs, wherein the pH of said composition is between about 3.0 and about  
30 8.0.

- 5 (14) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 13, wherein said pamoate salt of H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub> is dissolved in a PEG400/aqueous solution, in which the volume-to-volume ratio of PEG400 to water is about 1:1, and in which the weight-to-volume concentration of the peptide is about 200 mg/mL.
- 10 (15) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 13, wherein said pamoate salt of H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub> is dissolved in a PEG200/aqueous solution, in which the volume-to-volume ratio of PEG200 to water is about 1:1, and in which the weight-to-volume concentration of the peptide is about 200 mg/mL.
- (16) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 13, wherein said pamoate salt of H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub> is dissolved in a PEG400/PBS solution, in which the volume-to-volume ratio of PEG400 to PBS is about 1:1, and in which the weight-to-volume concentration of the peptide is about 300 mg/mL.
- 15 (17) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 13, wherein said pamoate salt of H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub> is dissolved in a PEG400/saline solution, in which the volume-to-volume ratio of PEG400 to saline solution is about 1:1, and in which the weight-to-volume concentration of the peptide is about 300 mg/mL.
- 20 (18) The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding paragraphs, further comprising a preservative.
- (19) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 18, wherein said preservative is selected from the group consisting of m-cresol, phenol, benzyl alcohol, and methyl paraben.
- 25 (20) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 19, wherein said preservative is present in a concentration from about 0.01 mg/mL to about 100 mg/mL.
- (21) The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding paragraphs, further comprising an isotonic agent.
- 30 (22) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 21, wherein said isotonic agent is present in a concentration from about 0.01 mg/mL to about 100 mg/mL.

- (23) The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding paragraphs, further comprising a stabilizer.
- (24) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 23, wherein said stabilizer is selected from the group consisting of imidazole, arginine and histidine.
- (25) The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding paragraphs, further comprising a surfactant.
- (26) The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding paragraphs, further comprising a chelating agent.
- (27) The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding paragraphs, further comprising a buffer.
- (28) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 27, wherein said buffer is selected from the group consisting of Tris, ammonium acetate, sodium acetate, glycine, aspartic acid, and Bis-Tris.
- (29) The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding paragraphs, further comprising a divalent metal.
- (30) The pharmaceutical composition according to paragraph 29, wherein said divalent metal is zinc.

Although the preferred embodiment of the present invention is directed to Example 1, *i.e.*, H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>, which is a ligand of the GHS receptor, the present invention is in no way limited to Example 1. The peptides of the present invention include, for example, all those peptides that act as ligands for the GHS receptor, as disclosed in the applicant's own prior international publication number published as WO 2004/014415, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

The following compounds from these publications may also be advantageously employed to constitute the pharmaceutical compositions of the present invention:

- Example 2: H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 Example 3: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-4Pal-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 Example 4: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Orn-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 Example 5: H-Inp-D-Bip-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;



- Example 6: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Thr(Bzl)-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 7: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Pff-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 8: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 9: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- 5 Example 10: H-Inp-D-Dip-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 11: H-Inp-D-Bpa-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 12: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Bpa-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 13: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 14: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-4Pal-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- 10 Example 15: H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 16: H-Inp-D-Bip-D-Trp-Phe-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 17: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Thr(Bzl)-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 18: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Pff-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 19: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- 15 Example 20: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Taz-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 21: H-Inp-D-Dip-D-Trp-Phe-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 22: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Dip-Phe-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 23: H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 24: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Bal-Phe-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- 20 Example 25: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 26: H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 27: H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 28: H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 29: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- 25 Example 30: H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 31: H-Apc-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 32: H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 33: H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 34: H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- 30 Example 35: H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 36: H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;

- Example 37: H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 38: H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 39: H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 40: H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- 5 Example 41: H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 42: H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 43: H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 44: H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 45: H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- 10 Example 46: H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 47: H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 48: H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-1Nal-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 49: H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-2Nal-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 50: H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-1Nal-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- 15 Example 51: H-Apc-D-Bal-D-1Nal-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 52: H-Apc-D-Bal-D-2Nal-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 53: H-Apc-D-Bal-D-1Nal-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 54: H-Apc-D-Bal-D-2Nal-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 55: H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- 20 Example 56: H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 57: H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 58: H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 59: H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 60: H-Apc-D-2Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- 25 Example 61: H-Apc-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Taz-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 62: H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 63: H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 64: H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- Example 65: H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
- 30 Example 66: H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp(Ψ)-Pim;
- Example 67: H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp(Ψ)-Pim;

Example 68: H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp( $\Psi$ )-Pim;

Example 69: H-Aib-D-Ser(Bzl)-D-Trp( $\Psi$ )-Pim; and

Example 70: H-Inp-D-Trp-D-2Nal( $\Psi$ )-Pim.

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### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1A and FIG. 1B show full time course plots of the pharmacokinetic profiles (median values) obtained after a single subcutaneous administration to Sprague-Dawley rats dosed at 2.5 mg/kg body weight, of a formulation comprising 200 mg/mL (20% w/v) of a pamoate salt of Example 1 dissolved in a 50% PEG200 and 50% water (v/v) solvent, on a normal scale and on a logarithmic scale, respectively.

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FIG. 2 shows a comparison plot of different formulations of Example 1 dosed by subcutaneous injections.

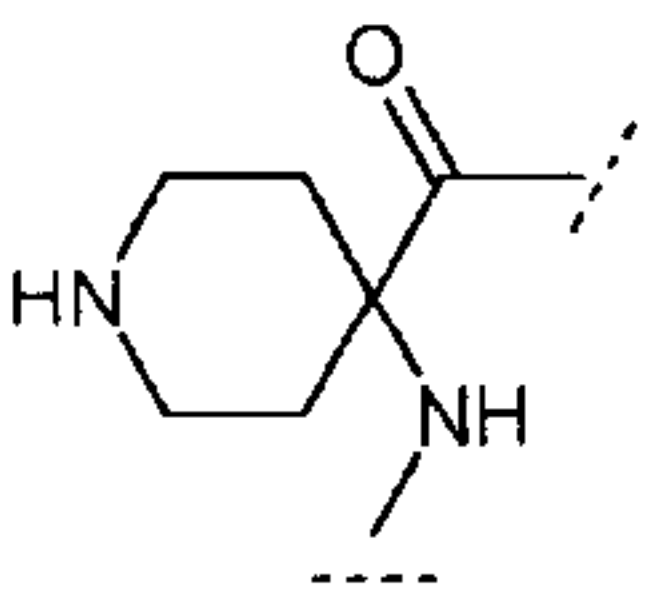
### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

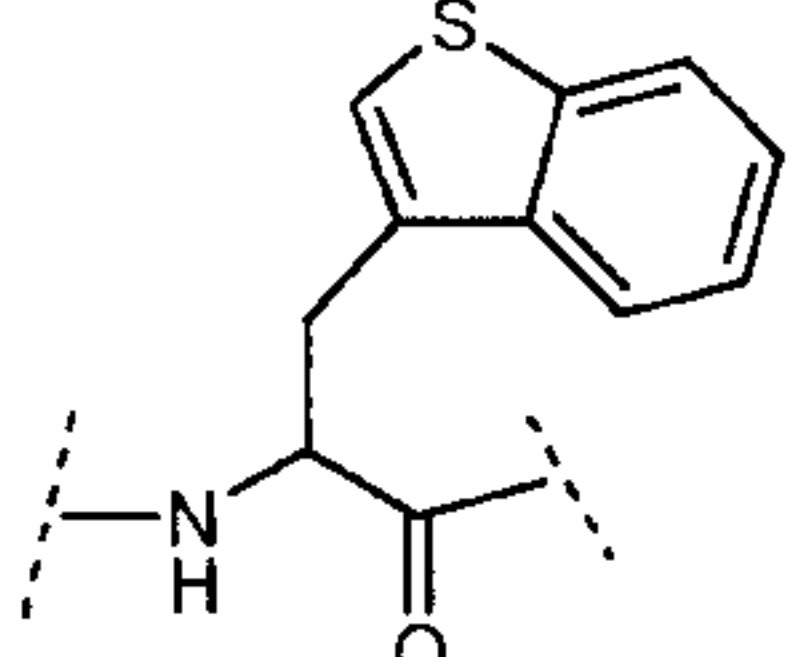
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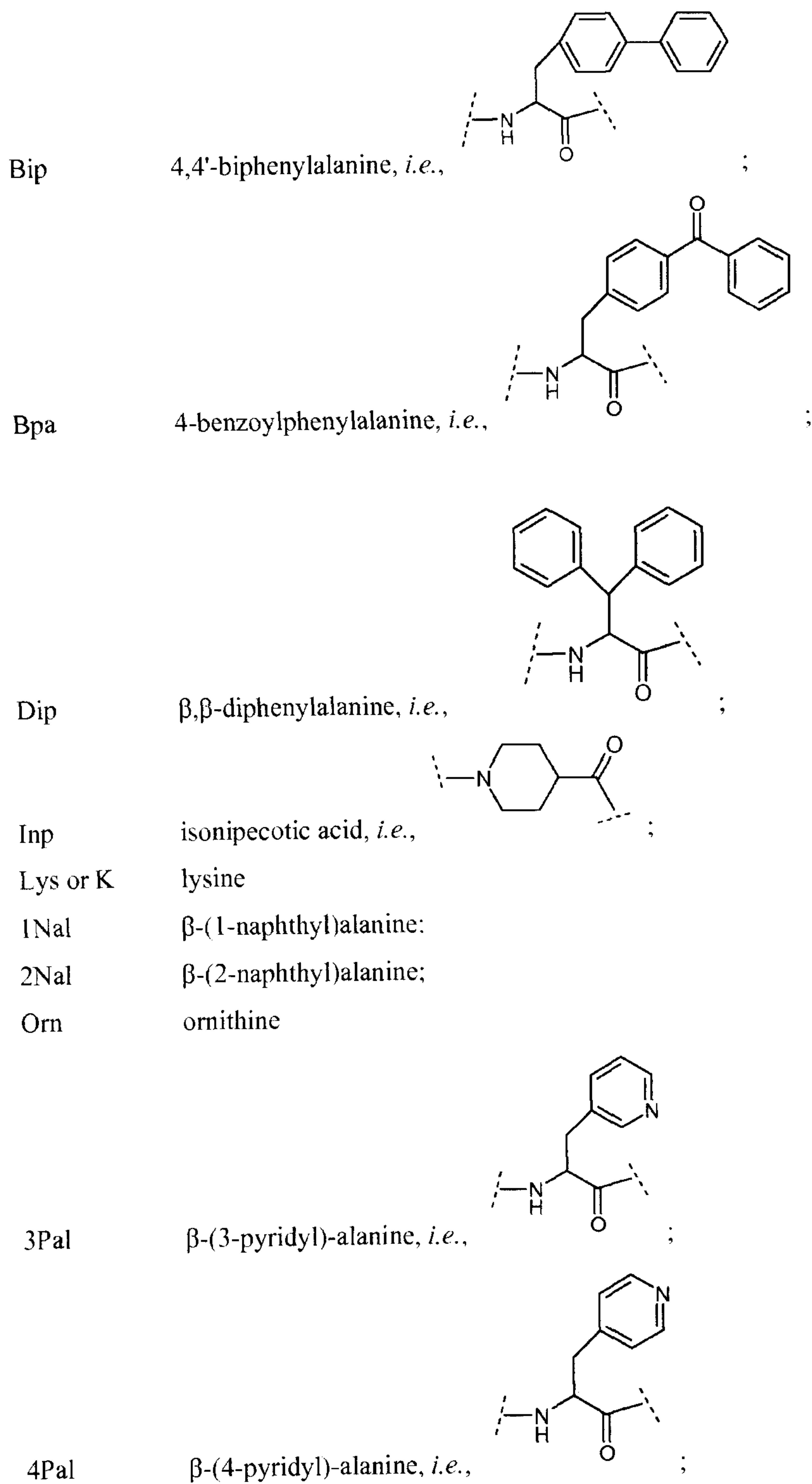
The nomenclature used to define the peptides herein is that typically used in the art wherein the amino group at the N-terminus appears to the left and the carboxyl group at the C-terminus appears to the right. Where the amino acid has isomeric forms, it is the L form of the amino acid that is represented unless otherwise explicitly indicated. Unless defined otherwise, all technical and scientific terms used herein have the same meaning as commonly understood by one of ordinary skill in the art to which this invention belongs.

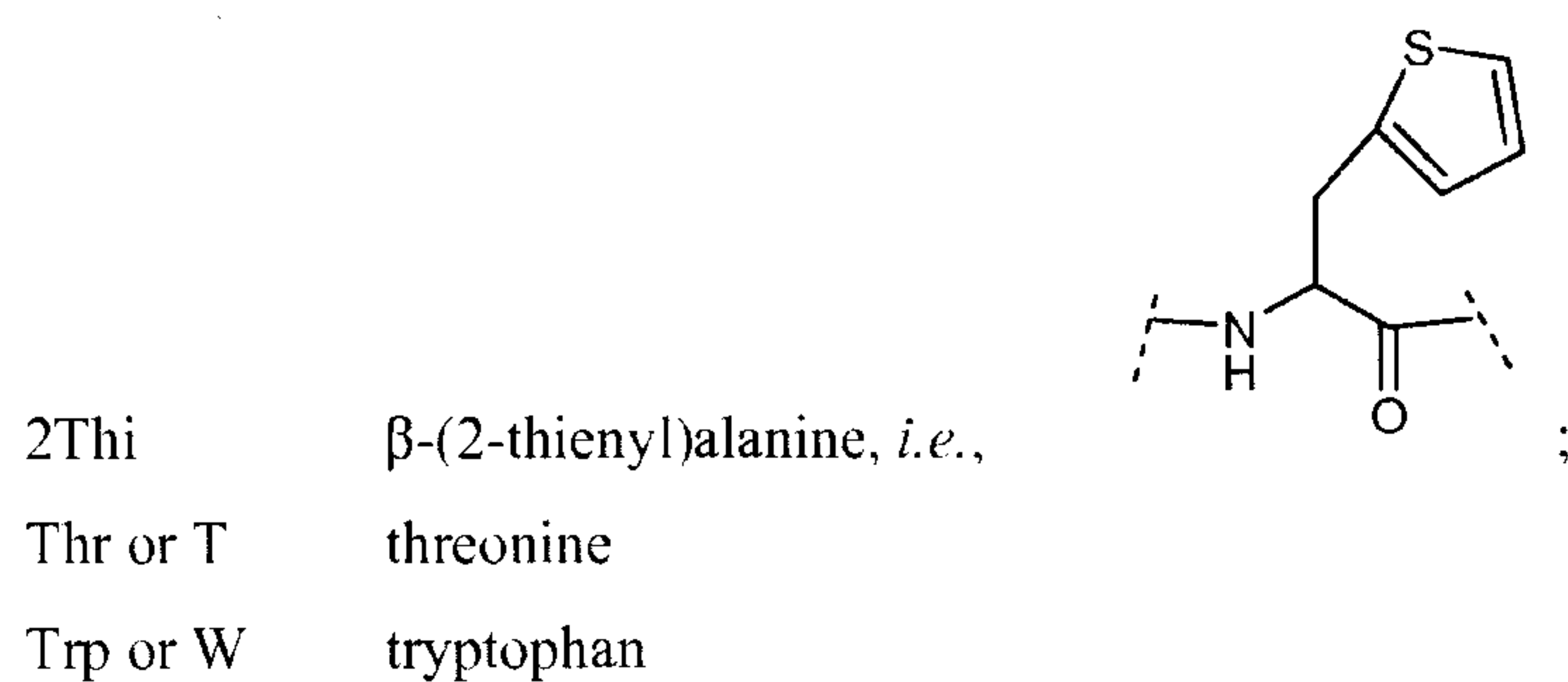
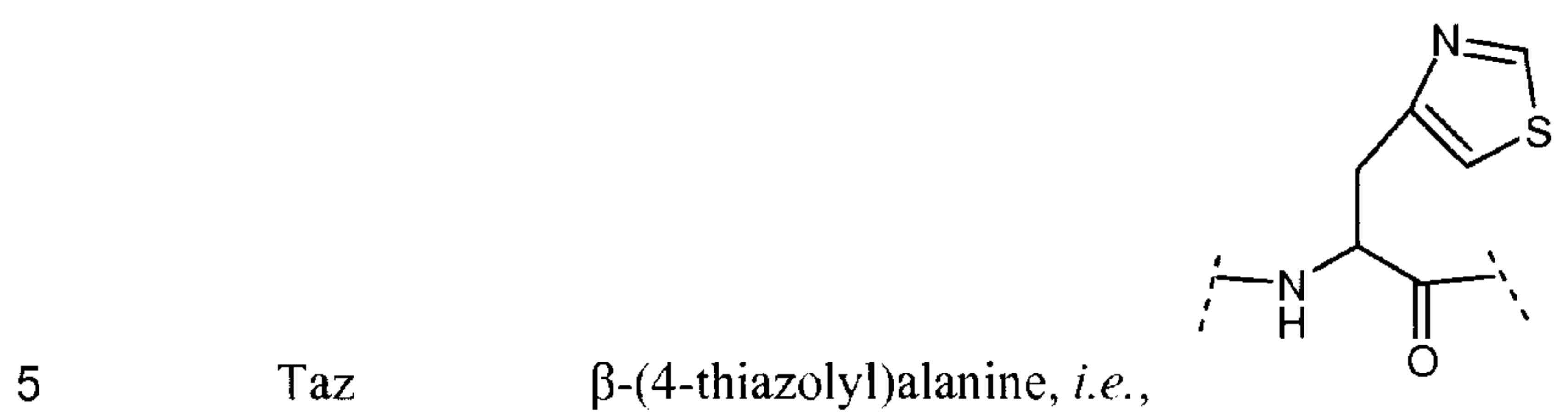
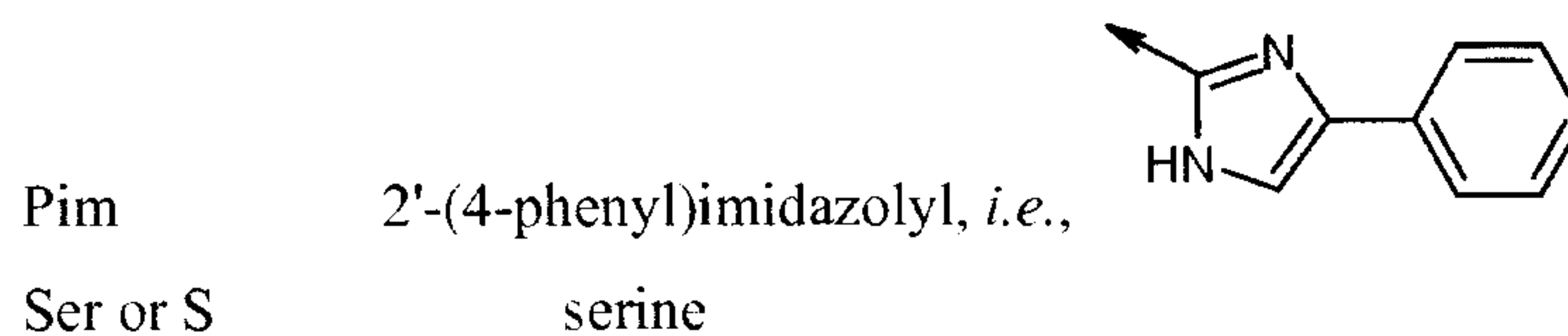
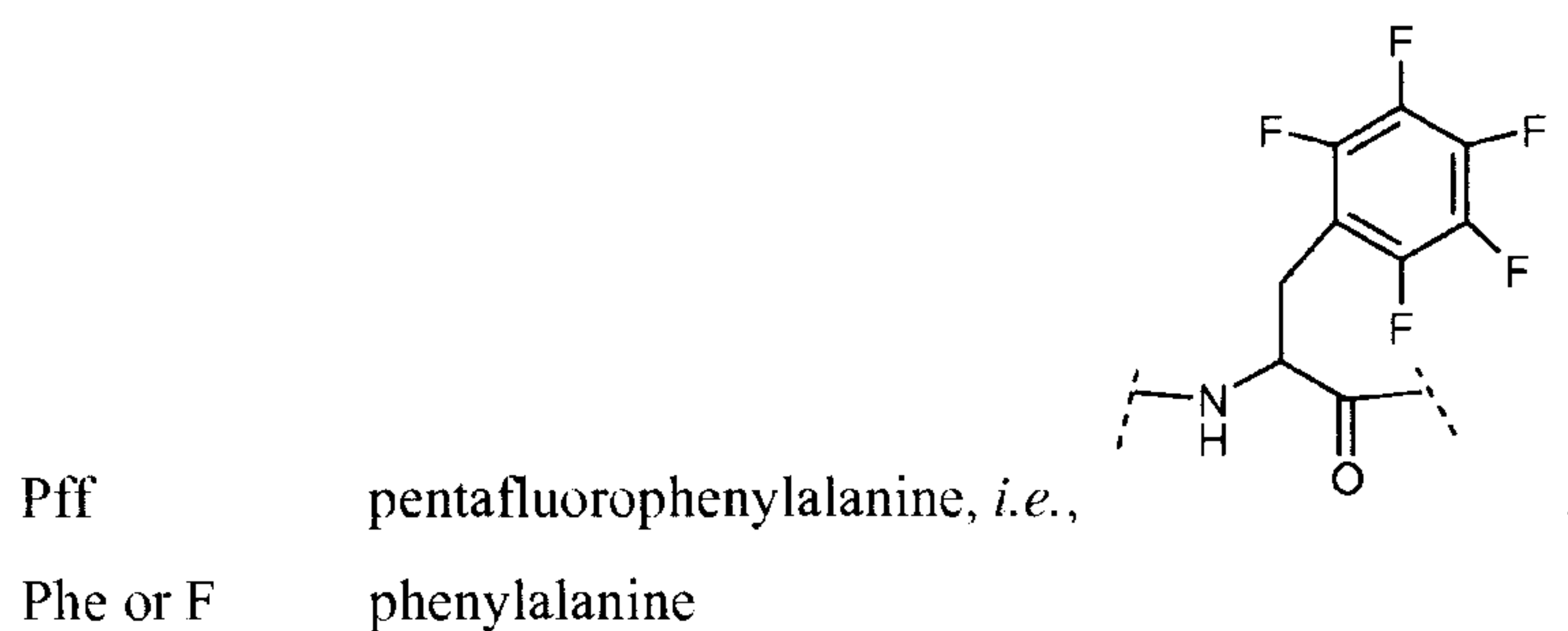
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Abbreviations used herein are defined as follows:

Apc amino piperidinylcarboxylic acid, *i.e.*,  ;

Bal 3-benzothiencylalanine, *i.e.*,  ;





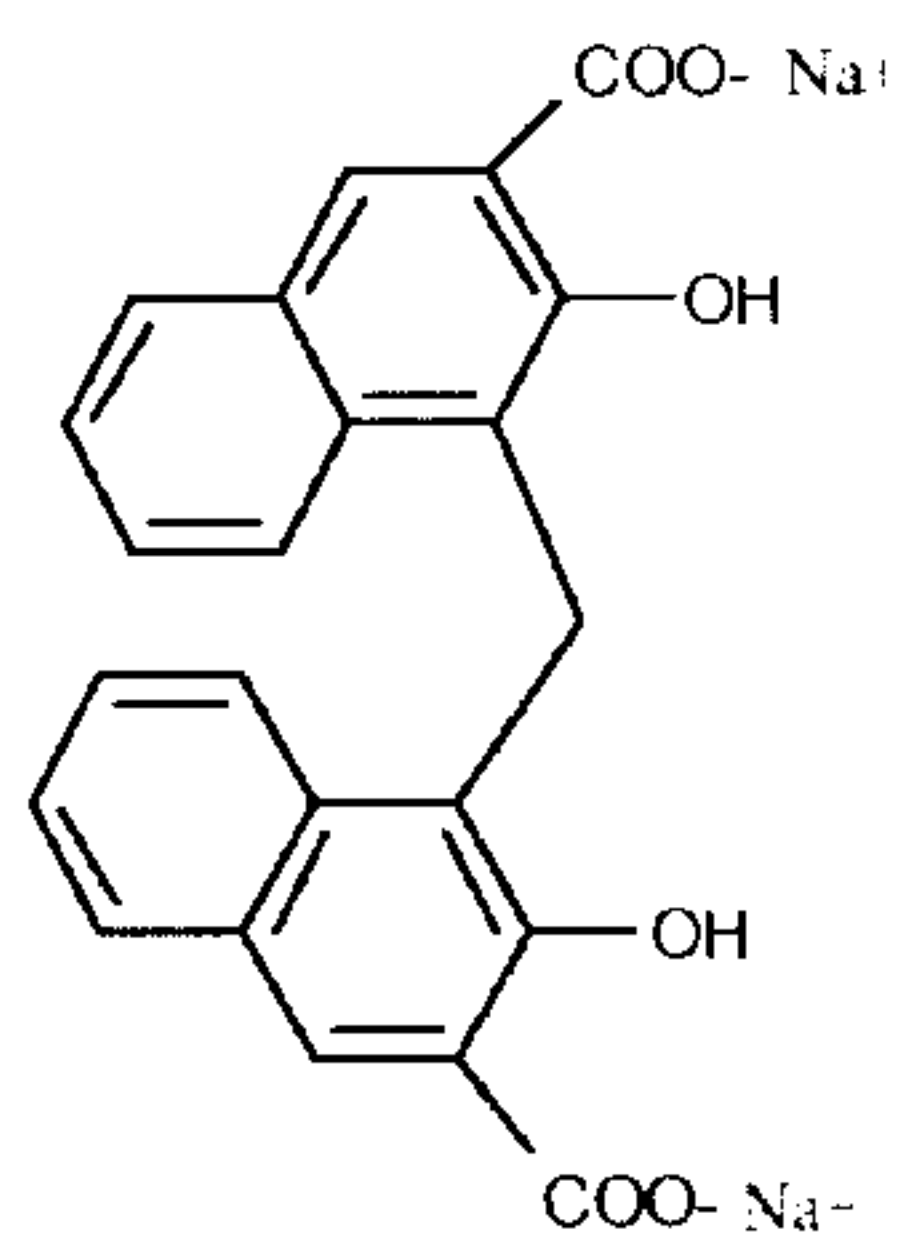
Certain other abbreviations used herein are defined as follows:

10            BSA:            bovine serum albumin

DMF:            dimethylformamide

HPLC:            high performance liquid chromatography

Sodium pamoate:    pamoic acid disodium salt having the structure of

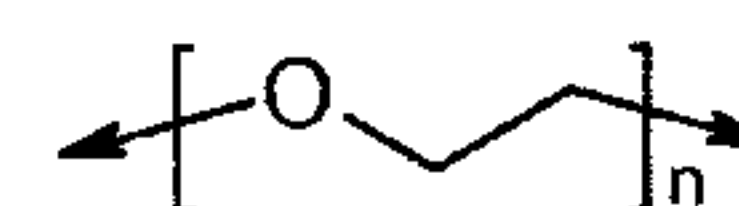


LC-MS: liquid chromatography mass spectrometry

LOQ: limit of quantification

MRM: multiple reaction monitoring

PEG: poly(ethylene glycol), which has the structure of  
 5 wherein n an integer between 1 and 2,000



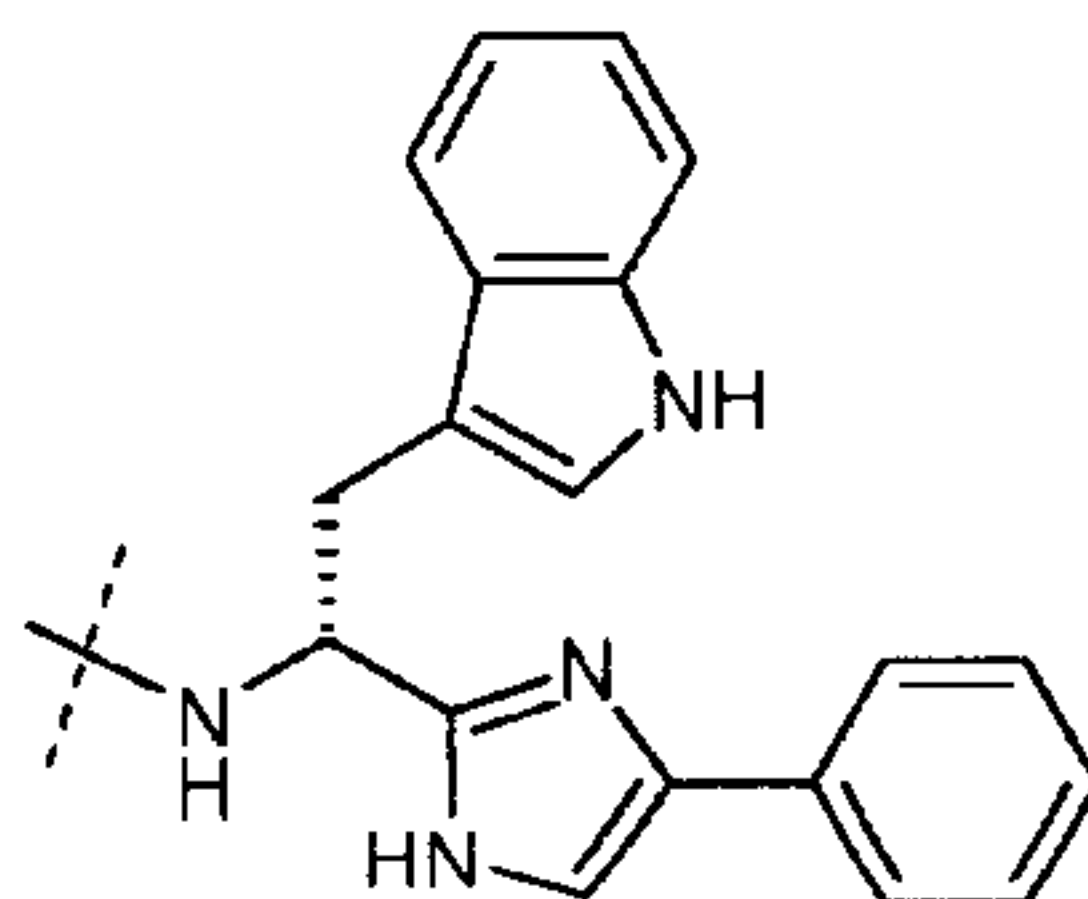
PEG200: poly(ethylene glycol) with an average molecular weight of about 200 Da

PEG400: poly(ethylene glycol) with an average molecular weight of about 400 Da

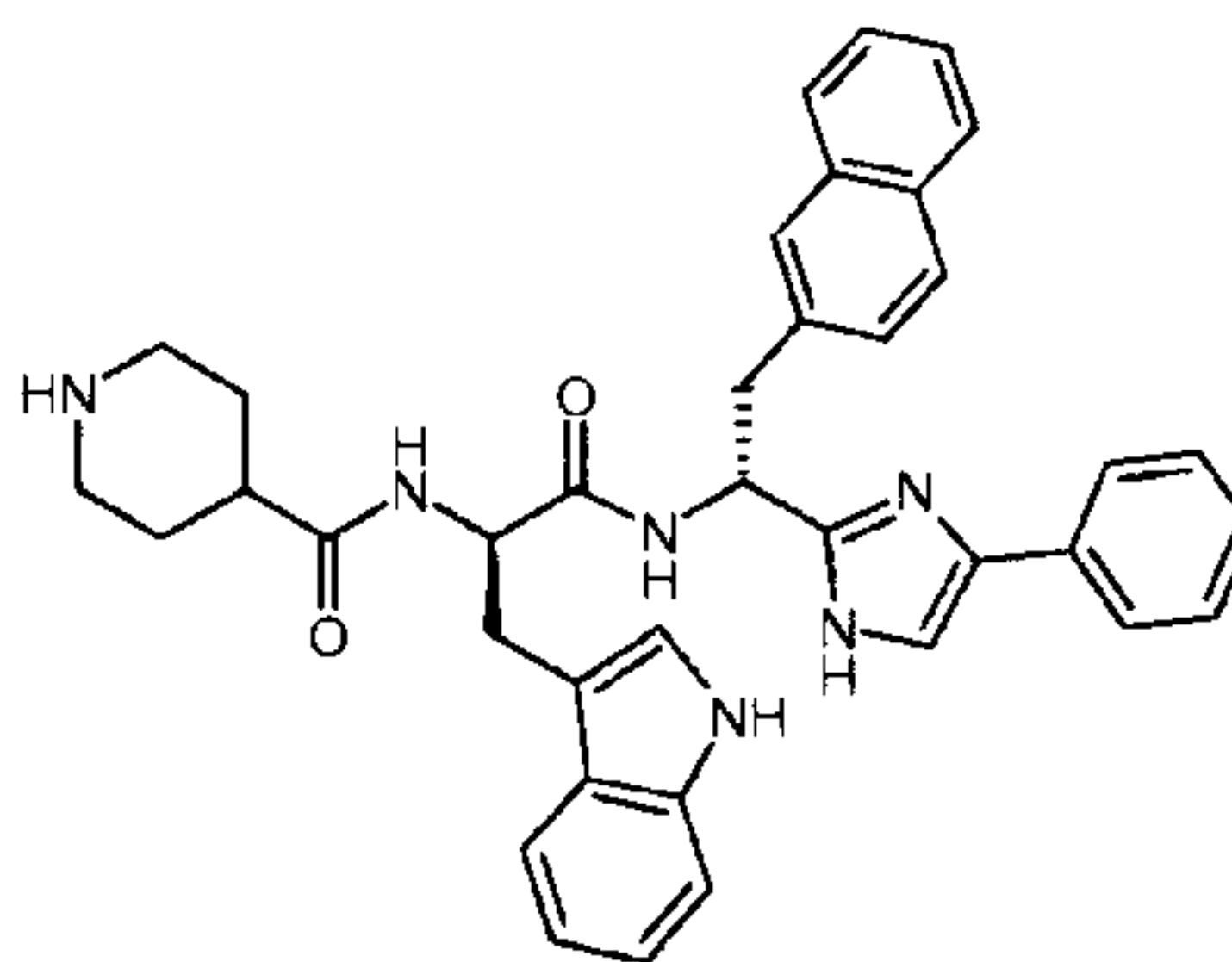
Tris-HCl: tris(hydroxymethyl)aminomethane hydrochloride

10 Unless otherwise apparent, abbreviations (e.g. Ala) of amino acids in this disclosure stand for the structure of  $-NH-C(R)(R')-CO-$ , wherein R and R' each is, independently, hydrogen or the side chain of an amino acid (e.g., R =  $CH_3$  and R' = H for Ala), or R and R' may be joined to form a ring system.

15 When a non-amino acid imidazole moiety, (e.g., Pim, defined above), is present at the C-terminus of a compound of the invention it is understood that the imidazole moiety is attached to the adjacent amino acid via a pseudo-peptide bond, wherein a bond is formed between the position 2 carbon of the imidazole ring and the alpha carbon of the amino acid. For example, in the case where the adjacent amino acid is D-tryptophan (D-Trp) and the imidazole moiety is Pim, the C-terminus of the peptide would appear as follows:



20 For clarity, in the written formula for such a compound the presence of this bond is indicated by the Greek letter " $\Psi$ " alone in parentheses. For example, the written formula H-Inp-D-Trp-D-2Nal( $\Psi$ )-Pim denotes the structure:



Synthesis

The peptides of this invention can be prepared using the techniques disclosed in WO 2004/014415, at pages 34-42, the content of which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety. In addition, examples of techniques for biochemical synthesis involving the  
 5 introduction of a nucleic acid into a cell and expression of nucleic acids are provided in Ausubel, *Current Protocols in Molecular Biology*, John Wiley, 1987-1998, and Sambrook *et al.*, in *Molecular Cloning, A Laboratory Manual*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press, 1989. Techniques for chemical synthesis of polypeptides are also well known in the art. (See *e.g.*, Vincent in *Peptide and Protein Drug Delivery*; New York, N.Y., Dekker,  
 10 1990.) For example, the peptides of this invention can be prepared by standard solid phase peptide synthesis. (See, *e.g.*, Stewart, J.M., et al., *Solid Phase Synthesis* (Pierce Chemical Co., 2d ed. 1984)) Physical data for the exemplified peptides are given in Table 1.

TABLE 1

	Ex. No.	Sequence	Mol.Wt. (Calc.)	Mol.Wt. (MS-ES)	Purity (%)
15	1	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	790.99	790.4	97
	2	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	787.96	787.4	96
	3	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-4Pal-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	787.96	787.4	99
	4	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Orn-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	753.94	753.4	98
20	5	H-Inp-D-Bip-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	813.01	812.4	99
	6	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Thr(Bzl)-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	831.03	830.4	98
	7	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Pff-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	876.92	876.3	98
	8	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Thi-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	793.00	792.4	98
	9	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	793.99	793.4	97
25	10	H-Inp-D-Dip-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	813.01	812.4	98
	11	H-Inp-D-Bpa-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	841.02	840.4	95
	12	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Bpa-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	852.04	851.3	99
	13	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-NH <sub>2</sub>	659.79	659.3	99
	14	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-4Pal-NH <sub>2</sub>	659.79	659.3	98
30	15	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-NH <sub>2</sub>	659.79	659.3	98
	16	H-Inp-D-Bip-D-Trp-Phe-NH <sub>2</sub>	684.84	684.3	99
	17	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Thr(Bzl)-NH <sub>2</sub>	702.85	702.3	99
	18	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Pff-NH <sub>2</sub>	748.75	748.2	99
	19	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH <sub>2</sub>	664.83	664.2	99

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	20	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Taz-NH <sub>2</sub>	665.82	665.3	98
	21	H-Inp-D-Dip-D-Trp-Phe-NH <sub>2</sub>	684.84	684.3	98
	22	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Dip-Phe-NH <sub>2</sub>	695.86	695.3	99
	23	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-NH <sub>2</sub>	664.83	664.3	97
5	24	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Bal-Phe-NH <sub>2</sub>	675.85	675.2	99
	25	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	787.96	787.5	97
	26	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	799.03	798.4	99
	27	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	793.00	792.4	99
	28	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	793.00	792.4	99
10	29	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	784.96	784.4	98
	30	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	784.96	784.4	98
	31	H-Apc-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	801.99	801.4	98
	32	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	808.02	807.4	99
	33	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH <sub>2</sub>	664.83	664.2	98
15	34	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-NH <sub>2</sub>	673.81	673.3	99
	35	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	793.99	793.5	99
	36	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	800.02	799.4	99
	37	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	809.00	808.5	99
	38	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	815.03	814.4	99
20	39	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	814.04	813.4	98
	40	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	790.99	790.5	97
	41	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	797.01	796.4	97
	42	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	806.00	805.5	97
	43	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	812.03	811.4	98
25	44	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	801.99	801.5	98
	45	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	808.02	807.5	99
	46	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	799.97	799.5	98
	47	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	806.00	805.5	98
	48	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-1Nal-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	811.00	810.5	95
30	49	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-2Nal-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	811.00	810.5	96
	50	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-1Nal-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	813.01	812.5	99
	51	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-1Nal-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	817.02	816.5	96
	52	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-2Nal-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	817.02	816.5	94



	53	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-1Nal-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	819.04	818.5	99
	54	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-2Nal-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	819.04	818.5	98
	55	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH <sub>2</sub>	679.84	679.2	98
	56	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-NH <sub>2</sub>	679.84	679.3	99
5	57	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-NH <sub>2</sub>	680.83	680.3	99
	58	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH <sub>2</sub>	685.87	685.2	97
	59	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-NH <sub>2</sub>	686.86	686.2	99
	60	H-Apc-D-2Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH <sub>2</sub>	679.84	679.2	95
	61	H-Apc-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Taz-NH <sub>2</sub>	680.83	680.2	97
10	62	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	791.97	791.5	98
	63	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	798.00	797.4	99
	64	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	806.99	806.5	99
	65	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	813.02	812.4	98
	66	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp(Ψ)-Pim	610.77	611.4	99
15	67	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp(Ψ)-Pim	610.77	611.3	99
	68	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp(Ψ)-Pim	616.79	617.3	99
	69	H-Aib-D-Ser(Bzl)-D-Trp(Ψ)-Pim	564.69	565.3	99
	70	H-Inp-D-Trp-D-2Nal(Ψ)-Pim	610.77	611.4	99

20 • Preparation of Pamoate Salt of Example 1

The acetate salt of Example 1 (200 mg, 0.22 mmole) was dissolved in 10 mL of water. Sodium pamoate (190 mg, 0.44 mmole) was dissolved in 10 mL of water. The two solutions were combined and mixed well. The precipitates were collected by centrifugation at 3000 rpm for 20 minutes, washed for three times with water, and dried by lyophilization.

25 In Vitro Studies

Compounds of the present invention can be and were tested for activity as ligands of the GHS receptor according to the following procedures. One skilled in the art would know that procedures similar to those described herein may be used to assay the binding activities of the compounds of the invention to melanocortin receptor molecules.

30 • Radioligand Binding Assays

Cellular membranes used for the *in vitro* receptor binding assay were obtained from transgenic CHO-K1 cells stably expressing the human recombinant GHS receptor. CHO-K1

cells stably expressing the hGHS receptor were homogenized in 20 ml of ice-cold 50 mM Tris-HCl with a Brinkman Polytron (Westbury, NY, USA) (setting 6, 15 sec). The homogenates were washed twice by centrifugation (39,000 g / 10 min), and the final pellets were resuspended in 50 mM Tris-HCl, containing 2.5 mM MgCl<sub>2</sub>, and 0.1% BSA. For assay, aliquots (0.4 ml) were incubated with 0.05 nM (<sup>125</sup>I)ghrelin (~2000 Ci/mmol, Perkin Elmer Life Sciences, Boston, MA, USA), with and without 0.05 ml of unlabeled competing test compounds of the invention. After a 60 min incubation (4°C), the bound (<sup>125</sup>I)ghrelin was separated from the free by rapid filtration through GF/C filters (Brandel, Gaithersburg, MD, USA), which had been previously soaked in 0.5% polyethyleneimine/0.1% BSA. The filters were then washed three times with 5-ml aliquots of ice-cold 50 mM Tris-HCl and 0.1% bovine serum albumin, and the bound radioactivity trapped on the filters was counted by gamma spectrometry (Wallac LKB, Gaithersburg, MD, USA). Specific binding was defined as the total (<sup>125</sup>I)ghrelin bound minus that bound in the presence of 1000 nM ghrelin (Bachem, Torrance, CA, USA). Specific binding data for the exemplified peptides are given in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Ex. No.	Sequence	hGHS Ki (nM)
1	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.42
2	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	1.05
3	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-4Pal-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	7.35
4	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Orn-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	243.00
5	H-Inp-D-Bip-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	1.35
6	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Thr(Bzl)-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	1.55
7	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Pff-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	25.43
8	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.45
9	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.80
10	H-Inp-D-Dip-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	46.78
11	H-Inp-D-Bpa-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	93.75
12	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Bpa-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	419.00
13	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-NH <sub>2</sub>	11.35
14	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-4Pal-NH <sub>2</sub>	113.50
15	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-NH <sub>2</sub>	16.10
16	H-Inp-D-Bip-D-Trp-Phe-NH <sub>2</sub>	20.00
17	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Thr(Bzl)-NH <sub>2</sub>	4.46
18	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Pff-NH <sub>2</sub>	36.31

19	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH <sub>2</sub>	4.11
20	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Taz-NH <sub>2</sub>	6.17
21	H-Inp-D-Dip-D-Trp-Phe-NH <sub>2</sub>	104.83
22	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Dip-Phe-NH <sub>2</sub>	104.80
23	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-NH <sub>2</sub>	2.30
24	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Bal-Phe-NH <sub>2</sub>	27.40
25	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	1.58
26	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.42
27	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.33
28	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.31
29	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.64
30	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.36
31	H-Apc-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.42
32	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.29
33	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.87
34	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.70
35	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	1.11
36	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.52
37	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.45
38	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.50
39	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.36
40	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.53
41	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.40
42	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.46
43	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.51
44	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.42
45	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.32
46	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.46
47	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.71
48	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-1Nal-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	1.99
49	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-2Nal-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	1.71
50	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-1Nal-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	1.32
51	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-1Nal-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	3.48
52	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-2Nal-Phe-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	1.49
53	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-1Nal-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	1.46
54	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-2Nal-Phe-Lys-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.68
55	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.73

56	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.89
57	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-NH <sub>2</sub>	1.41
58	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.98
59	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-NH <sub>2</sub>	1.62
60	H-Apc-D-2Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.95
61	H-Apc-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Taz-NH <sub>2</sub>	2.11
62	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	1.19
63	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.83
64	H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	0.98
65	H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH <sub>2</sub>	1.13
66	H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp(Ψ)-Pim	116.68
67	H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp(Ψ)-Pim	50.55
68	H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp(Ψ)-Pim	48.73
69	H-Aib-D-Scr(Bzl)-D-Trp(Ψ)-Pim	753.33
70	H-Inp-D-Trp-D-2Nal(Ψ)-Pim	182.00

- Solubility Study

Pamoate salt of Example 1 (50 mg) was weighted into a microcentrifuge tube, and 125 μL of PEG200 and 125 μL of water were added thereafter. The mixture was sonicated to facilitate dissolution. A clear solution was obtained.

The solubility of pamoate salt of Example 1 was determined by mixing the peptide in water or PBS, followed by HPLC determination of the concentration in the supernatant, and the results are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3

Solubility of	Water, pH 7.0	PBS, pH 7.4
Pamoate salt of Example 1	0.06 mg/mL	0.07 mg/mL
Pamoate salt of Example 1 with Zn	0.14 mg/mL	0.08 mg/mL

- Pharmacokinetic Studies of Formulations of Example 1

“Formulation 1” of Example 1 was prepared by dissolving a pamoate salt of Example 1 in a 50% PEG200 and 50% water (v/v) solution, at a concentration of 200 mg/mL (20% w/v).

“Formulation 2” of Example 1 was prepared by dissolving an acetate salt of Example 1 in a saline/2% heat inactivated mouse serum/5% DMA/2% tween-80 solution.

- Dosing

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For Formulation 1, Sprague-Dawley rats were dosed via subcutaneous injection at a fixed amount of either 5  $\mu$ L/rat or 1.0 mg/rat, or a variable amount of roughly 2.5 mg/kg body weight.

For Formulation 2, Sprague-Dawley rats were dosed via subcutaneous injection at a variable amount of 2.1 mg/kg body weight.

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- Sample Preparation

For Formulations 1 and 2, 50  $\mu$ L of plasma was acidified with 2.5  $\mu$ L of formic acid and precipitated with 150  $\mu$ L of acetonitrile. The supernatant was collected by centrifugation.

50  $\mu$ L of the preparation was injected for LC-MS/MS analysis.

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- LC-MS/MS Analysis

For Formulations 1 and 2, LC-MS/MS analysis was performed with an API4000 mass spectrometer system equipped with a Turbo IonSpray probe. The MRM mode of molecular ion detection with an ion pair of 396.5 / 112.3 was used. HPLC separation was performed with a Luna C8(2) 2x30 mm 3 $\mu$  column run from 0% B to 80% B in 10 minutes at a flow rate of 0.3 mL/minute. Buffer A is 1% formic acid in water and buffer B is 1% formic acid in acetonitrile. LOQ was 5 ng/mL.

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- Results and Summary

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The plasma concentrations of Example 1, dosed with Formulation 1, were calculated with its standard calibration plot and the results are shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4

Time	Plasma concentration (ng/mL) of Example 1, dosed with Formulation 1	Plasma concentration (ng/mL) of Example 1, dosed with Formulation 2
5 minutes	47.0	520
10 minutes	62.4	N/A
15 minutes	85.4	860
30 minutes	162.5	990

1 hour	312.5	820
2 hours	485.0	560
3 hours	N/A	480
4 hours	509.5	330
6 hours	N/A	130
8 hours	396.0	0
12 hours	334.0	0
16 hours	132.7	0
20 hours	121.0	0
24 hours	84.0	0

Full time course plots of the pharmacokinetic profiles of Formulation 1 are shown on a normal scale in FIG. 1A, and on a logarithmic scale in FIG. 1B.

Some pharmacokinetic parameters of Example 1, dosed with Formulation 1, are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5

	Example 1 dosed with Formulation 1	Example 1 dosed with Formulation 2
$T_{max}$ (hours)	4	0.5
$C_{max}$ (ng/mL)	543	990
AUC (ng-hr/mL)	7493	3239
CL (ml/hour)	333	725
$T_{1/2}$ (hours)	6.7	1.8

The results indicate that the formulations of Example 1 according to the present invention as described herein provide for acceptable sustained release formulations with improved pharmacokinetic parameters and flatter release profiles which may result in attenuated side effects and improved efficacy. For instance, Formulation 1 is shown to have a release profile of greater than 24 hours after a single subcutaneous injection, with significantly low  $C_{max}$  and significantly long  $T_{max}$ . Moreover, the pamoate salt formulation of Example 1, *i.e.*, Formulation 1, is shown to have significantly increased  $T_{1/2}$  compared to the

acetate salt formulation of Example 1, *i.e.*, Formulation 2.

Additional embodiments of the present invention will be apparent from the foregoing disclosure and are intended to be encompassed by the invention as described fully herein and defined in the following claims.

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CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A pharmaceutical composition of a clear solution, a gel or a semi-solid, or a suspension, comprising a peptide that acts as a ligand of the GHS receptor, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, in which the peptide forms an *in situ* depot after subcutaneous or intramuscular administration to a subject.
2. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1, wherein said *in situ* depot is slowly dissolved and released into the body fluid and bloodstream, and wherein said clear solution is an aqueous solution, an organic solution, or an aqueous solution having an organic component.
3. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 2, wherein said peptide is:
  - H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-4Pal-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Orn-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-Bip-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Thr(Bzl)-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Pff-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-Dip-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-Bpa-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Bpa-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-4Pal-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-Bip-D-Trp-Phe-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Thr(Bzl)-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Pff-NH<sub>2</sub>;
  - H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH<sub>2</sub>;



- H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Taz-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Inp-D-Dip-D-Trp-Phe-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Dip-Phe-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
5 H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Bal-Phe-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-3Pal-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
10 H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Apc-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
15 H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
20 H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
25 H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-1Nal-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
30 H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-2Nal-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-1Nal-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;

- H-Apc-D-Bal-D-1Nal-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 H-Apc-D-Bal-D-2Nal-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 H-Apc-D-Bal-D-1Nal-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 H-Apc-D-Bal-D-2Nal-Phe-Lys-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 5 H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 10 H-Apc-D-2Nal-D-Trp-2Thi-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 H-Apc-D-2Nal-D-Trp-Taz-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 H-Apc-D-1Nal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 15 H-Apc-D-Bal-D-Trp-Taz-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>;  
 H-Inp-D-2Nal-D-Trp(Ψ)-Pim;  
 H-Inp-D-1Nal-D-Trp(Ψ)-Pim;  
 H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp(Ψ)-Pim;  
 H-Aib-D-Ser(Bzl)-D-Trp(Ψ)-Pim; or  
 20 H-Inp-D-Trp-D-2Nal(Ψ)-Pim;  
 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

4. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 3, wherein said peptide is H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub>.

25 5. The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein said peptide is in a pamoate salt form.

30 6. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 5, further comprising an organic component.

7. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 6, wherein said organic component is an organic polymer, an alcohol, DMSO, DMF, or DMA.

8. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 7, wherein said organic polymer is PEG.

5 9. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 8, wherein said PEG has an average molecular weight of from about 200 to about 10,000.

10 10. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 9, wherein said peptide is dissolved in a PEG200 or PEG400 aqueous solution, in which the volume-to-volume ratio of PEG to water is from about 1:99 to about 99:1.

15 11. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 10, wherein said peptide is dissolved in a PEG200 or PEG400 aqueous solution, in which the volume-to-volume ratio of PEG to water is from about 1:9 to about 1:1.

12. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 7, wherein said alcohol is ethanol or isopropyl alcohol.

20 13. The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the weight-to-volume concentration of said peptide is between about 0.1 mg/mL and about 2000 mg/mL.

14. The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the pH of said composition is between about 3.0 and about 8.0.

25 15. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 14, wherein said pamoate salt of H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub> is dissolved in a PEG400/aqueous solution, in which the volume-to-volume ratio of PEG400 to water is about 1:1, and in which the weight-to-volume concentration of the peptide is about 200 mg/mL.

30 16. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 14, wherein said pamoate salt of H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub> is dissolved in a PEG200/aqueous solution, in which the volume-to-volume ratio of PEG200 to water is about 1:1, and in which the weight-to-volume concentration of the peptide is about 200 mg/mL.

35 17. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 14, wherein said pamoate salt of H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub> is dissolved in a PEG400/PBS solution, in which

the volume-to-volume ratio of PEG400 to PBS is about 1:1, and in which the weight-to-volume concentration of the peptide is about 300 mg/mL.

18. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 14, wherein said pamoate  
5 salt of H-Inp-D-Bal-D-Trp-Phe-Apc-NH<sub>2</sub> is dissolved in a PEG400 saline solution, in which  
the volume-to-volume ratio of PEG400 to saline solution is about 1:1, and in which the  
weight-to-volume concentration of the peptide is about 300 mg/mL.

19. The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding claims  
10 further comprising a preservative.

20. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 19, wherein said  
preservative is selected from the group consisting of m-cresol, phenol, benzyl alcohol, and  
methyl paraben.

15 21. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 20, wherein said  
preservative is present in a concentration from about 0.01 mg/mL to about 100 mg/mL.

22. The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding claims  
20 further comprising an isotonic agent.

23. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 22, wherein said isotonic  
agent is present in a concentration from about 0.01 mg/mL to about 100 mg/mL.

25 24. The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding claims  
further comprising a stabilizer.

25. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 24, wherein said stabilizer  
is selected from the group consisting of imidazole, arginine and histidine.

30 26. The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding claims  
further comprising a surfactant.

27. The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding claims  
35 further comprising a chelating agent.

28. The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding claims further comprising a buffer.

29. The pharmaceutical composition according claim 28, wherein said buffer is  
5 selected from the group consisting of Tris, ammonium acetate, sodium acetate, glycine, aspartic acid, and Bis-Tris.

30. The pharmaceutical composition according to any one of the preceding claims further comprising a divalent metal.

10

31. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 30, wherein said divalent metal is zinc.

15

FIG. 1A

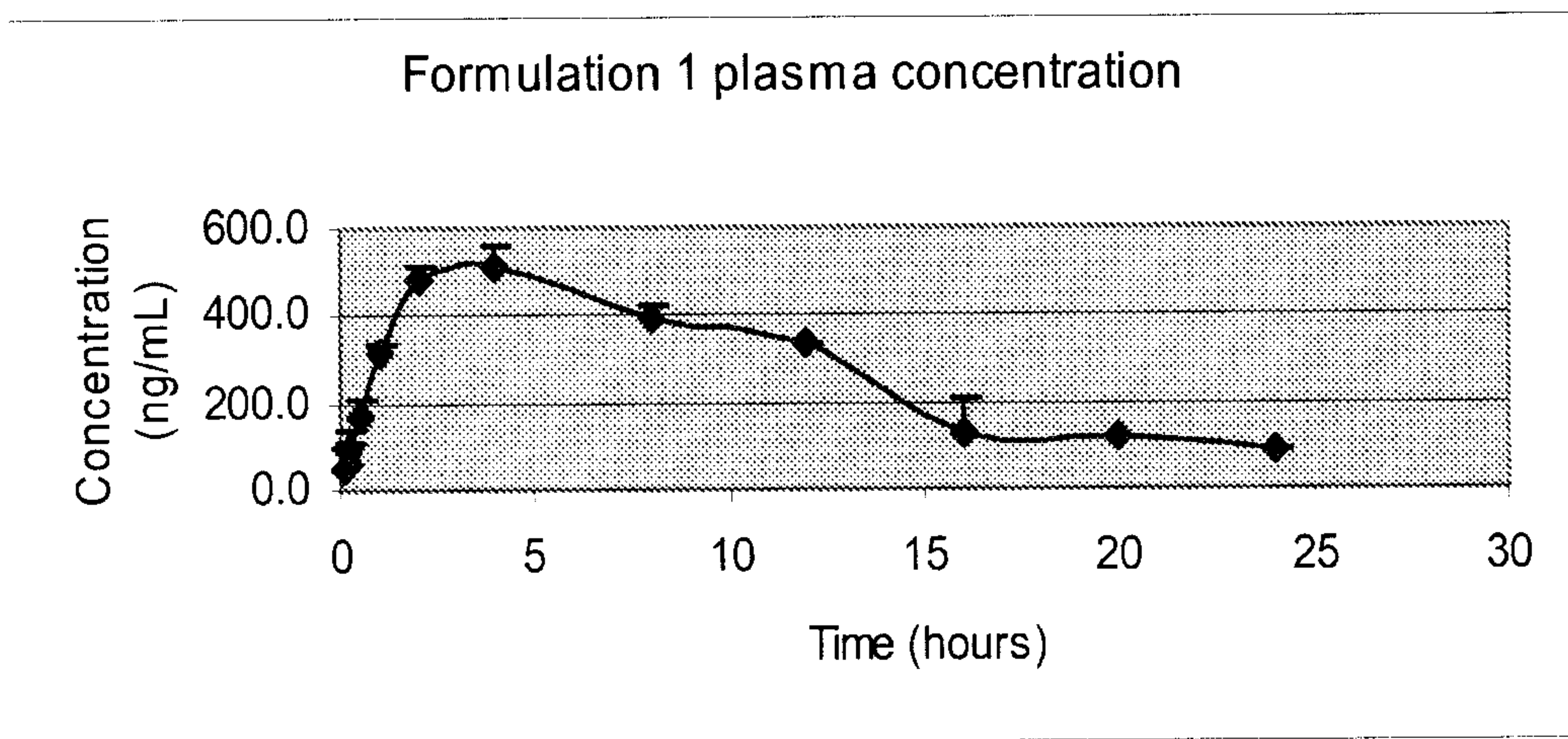


FIG. 1B

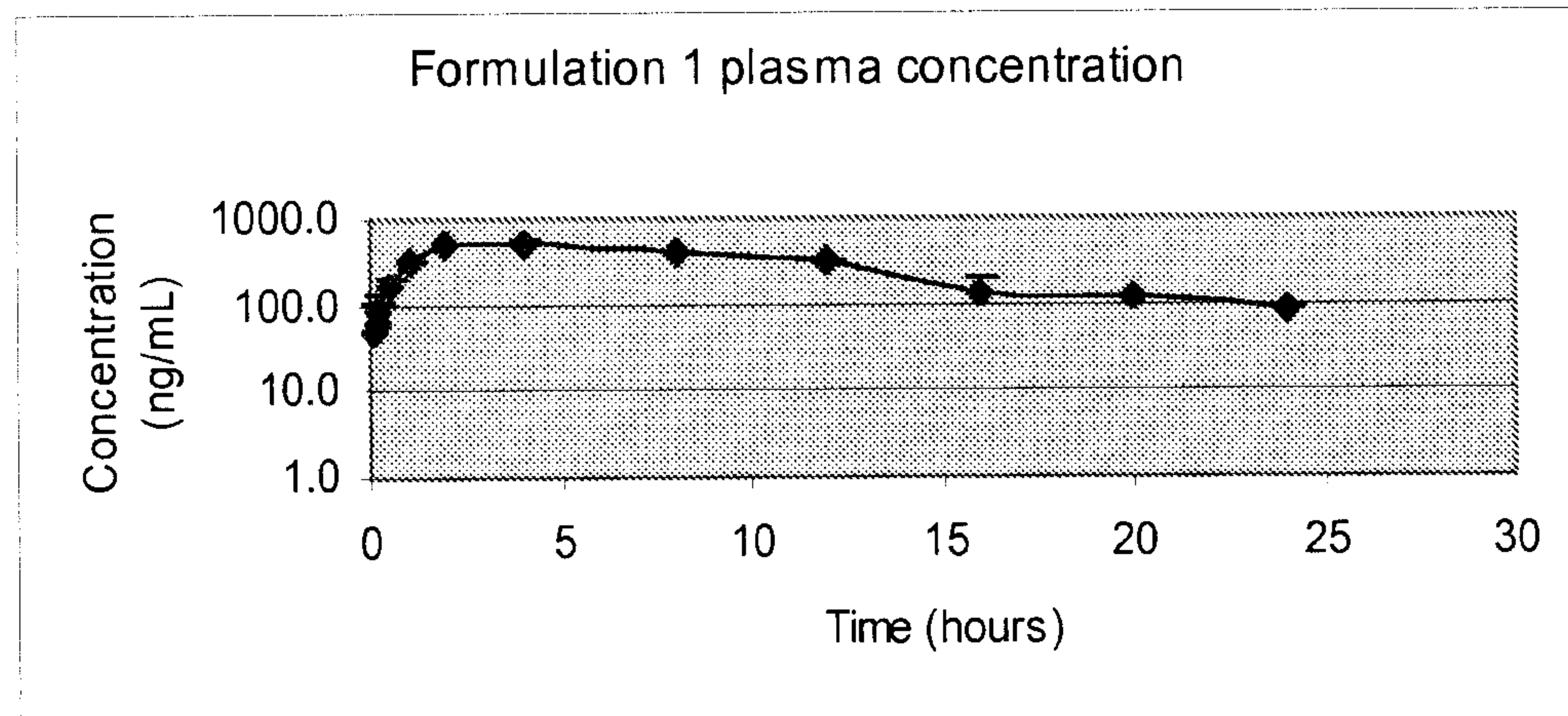


FIG. 2

