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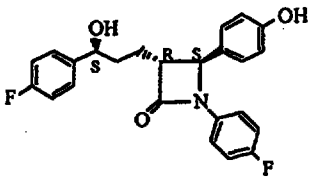
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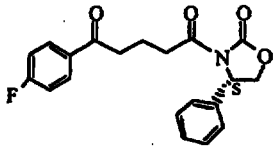
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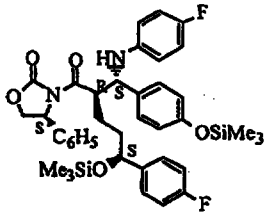
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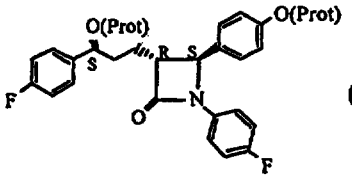
(I)



(IV)



(VII)



(VIII)

(57) Abstract

This invention provides a process for preparing the hypocholesterolemic compound (I) comprising: (a) reacting p–fluorobenzoylbutyric acid with pivaloyl chloride and acylating the product with a chiral auxiliary to obtain a ketone of formula (IV); (b) reducing the ketone of formula (IV) in the presence of a chiral catalyst to an alcohol; (c) reacting the chiral alcohol of step (b), an imine and a silyl protecting agent, then condensing the protected compounds to obtain a β–(substituted–amino)amide of formula (VII); (d) cyclizing the β–(substituted–amino)amide of formula (VII) with a silylating agent and a fluoride ion catalyst to obtain a protected lactam of formula (VIII); and removing the protecting groups. The intermediates of formulas (VII and VIII) are also claimed.