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(54) Title: INHIBITORS OF SERINE PROTEASES, PARTICULARLY HEPATITIS C VIRUS NS3 - NS4 PROTEASE

(57) Abstract: The present invention relates to compounds that inhibit serine protease activity, particularly the activity of hepatitis C virus NS3-NS4A protease. As such, they act by interfering with the life cycle of the hepatitis C virus and are also useful as antiviral agents. The invention further relates to compositions comprising these compounds either for *ex vivo* use or for administration to a patient suffering from HCV infection. The invention also relates to methods of treating an HCV infection in a patient by administering a composition comprising a compound of this invention. The invention further relates to processes for preparing these compounds.

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