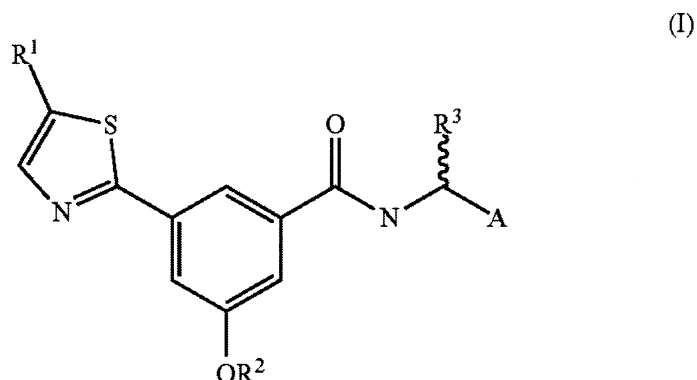


CLAIMS

1. A compound of formula (I):



wherein:

R^1 is C_1 - C_4 -alkyl optionally substituted with 1-5 halogen atoms which are the same or different;

R^2 is $-C_2$ - C_6 -alkynyl, $-C_2$ - C_6 -alkyl- OR^4 , $-(CH_2)_q-$ (C_3 - C_7 -cycloalkyl), $-(CH_2)_q$ -(6- to 12-membered heterobicycloalkyl) containing one, two or three heteroatoms or heteroatom containing groups independently selected from the group consisting of O, S, $S(=O)$, $S(=O)_2$, and N, $-(CH_2)_q$ -(4- to 7-membered heterocycloalkyl) containing one or two heteroatoms or heteroatom-containing groups independently selected from the group consisting of O, S, $S(=O)$, $S(=O)_2$, and N, or $-(CH_2)_q$ -(5- to 10-membered heteroaryl) containing one, two or three heteroatoms or heteroatom-containing groups independently selected from the group consisting of O, S, and N,

wherein said $-(CH_2)_q$ -(C_3 - C_7 -cycloalkyl), $-(CH_2)_q$ -(6- to 12-membered heterobicycloalkyl) and $-(CH_2)_q$ -(4- to 7-membered heterocycloalkyl) are optionally substituted with one or more substituents which are the same or different, at any ring carbon atom and selected from the group consisting of C_1 - C_4 alkyl optionally substituted with 1-5 halogen atoms which are the same or different, a halogen atom, $-NR^aR^b$, $COOR^5$, and oxo ($=O$),

wherein any ring nitrogen atom, if present in said $-(CH_2)_q$ -(6- to 12-membered heterobicycloalkyl) and $-(CH_2)_q$ -(4- to 7-membered heterocycloalkyl), is independently substituted with R^c ,

wherein said $-(CH_2)_q-$ (6- to 12-membered heterobicycloalkyl) and said $-(CH_2)_q-$ (4- to 7-membered heterocycloalkyl) are attached to the rest of the molecule via any one of the carbon atoms or, if present, a nitrogen atom, and

wherein said $-(CH_2)_q-$ (5- to 10-membered heteroaryl) is optionally substituted with one or more substituents which are the same or different, and selected from the group consisting of C_1 - C_4 -alkyl optionally substituted with 1-5 halogen atoms which are the same or different, a halogen atom, $-NR^aR^b$, and $-COOR^5$;

R^3 is hydrogen or C_1 - C_4 -alkyl optionally substituted with 1-5 halogen atoms which are the same or different;

R^4 and R^5 are independently hydrogen or C_1 - C_4 -alkyl;

R^a and R^b are independently hydrogen or C_1 - C_4 -alkyl;

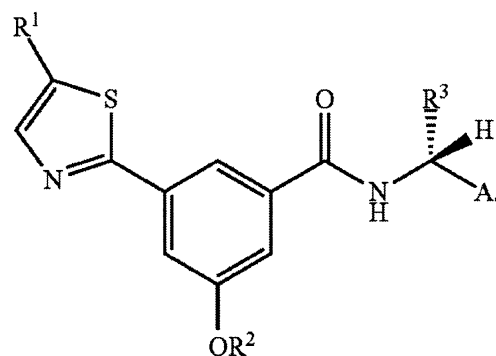
R^c is hydrogen, C_1 - C_4 -alkyl optionally substituted with 1-5 halogen atoms which are the same or different, $-C(O)O-C_1$ - C_4 -alkyl, or $-C(O)-C_1$ - C_4 -alkyl;

A is a 6-membered heteroaryl having one or two nitrogen atom(s) and is optionally substituted with one or two substituents which are the same or different, and

selected from the group consisting of a fluorine atom, a chlorine atom, C_1 - C_2 -alkyl optionally substituted with 1-5 fluorine atoms, and C_1 - C_2 -alkoxy optionally substituted with 1-5 fluorine atoms; and

q is the integer 0.

2. The compound according to claim 1, which is of formula (Ia):



(Ia)

3. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R^1 is methyl or ethyl.
4. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R^3 is C_1 - C_4 -alkyl.
5. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R^3 is methyl.
6. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R^2 is $-C_2$ - C_3 -alkyl- OR^4 , $-C_3$ - C_4 -cycloalkyl, $-(CH_2)_q$ -(4- to 6-membered heterocycloalkyl), or $-C_2$ - C_4 -alkynyl,
wherein said $-C_3$ - C_4 -cycloalkyl and said $-(CH_2)_q$ -(4- to 6-membered heterocycloalkyl) are optionally substituted with one or more substituents which are the same or different, at any ring carbon atom, and wherein any ring nitrogen atom, if present in said $-(CH_2)_q$ -(4- to 6-membered heterocycloalkyl), is independently substituted with R^c ; and q is the integer 0.
7. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R^2 is $-C_2$ - C_3 -alkyl- OR^4 , unsubstituted $-C_3$ - C_4 -cycloalkyl, unsubstituted $-(CH_2)_q$ -(4- to 6-membered heterocycloalkyl), or $-C_2$ - C_4 -alkynyl; and q is the integer 0.
8. The compound according to claim 1, wherein A is optionally substituted pyrimidinyl, pyridazinyl, pyridinyl, or pyrazinyl.
9. The compound according to claim 8, wherein A is optionally substituted pyrimidinyl or pyridazinyl.
10. The compound according to claim 9, wherein A is CF_3 -pyrimidinyl or 2- CF_3 -pyrimidin-5-yl.
11. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R^2 is tetrahydrofuran-3-yl, prop-2-yn-1-yl, but-2-yn-1-yl, oxetan-3-yl, tetrahydropyran-4-yl, pyridin-4-yl, pyridin-3-yl, 1,3,4-thiadiazol-2-yl, 1,3-thiazol-2-yl, 2,2-dimethyl-2-methoxyethyl, methoxyethyl, piperidin-4-yl, pyrrolidin-3-yl or azetidin-3-yl, each of which is optionally substituted.
12. The compound according to claim 11, wherein R^2 is unsubstituted tetrahydrofuran-3-yl or unsubstituted oxetan-3-yl.
13. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R^2 is 3-hydroxybutan-2-yl, (2R,3R)-3-hydroxybutan-2-yl, (2S,3S)-3-hydroxybutan-2-yl, (2S,3R)-3-hydroxybutan-2-yl, or (2R,3S)-3-hydroxybutan-2-yl.

- 14.** The compound according to claim 1, which is
 3-(5-Methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-5-[(3R)-tetrahydrofuran-3-yloxy]-N-[(1R)-1-[2-(trifluoromethyl)pyrimidin-5-yl]ethyl]benzamide;
 3-(5-Methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-5-[(3S)-tetrahydrofuran-3-yloxy]-N-[(1R)-1-[2-(trifluoromethyl)pyrimidin-5-yl]ethyl]benzamide;
 3-(5-Methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-5-(oxetan-3-yloxy)-N-[(1R)-1-[2-(trifluoromethyl)pyrimidin-5-yl]ethyl]benzamide;
 3-(5-Ethyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-5-[(3R)-tetrahydrofuran-3-yloxy]-N-[(1R)-1-[2-(trifluoromethyl)pyrimidin-5-yl]ethyl]benzamide;
 3-(5-Ethyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-5-[(3S)-tetrahydrofuran-3-yloxy]-N-[(1R)-1-[2-(trifluoromethyl)pyrimidin-5-yl]ethyl]benzamide;
 3-(5-Ethyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-5-(oxetan-3-yloxy)-N-[(1R)-1-[2-(trifluoromethyl)pyrimidin-5-yl]ethyl]benzamide;
 3-(5-Methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-5-[(3R)-tetrahydrofuran-3-yloxy]-N-[(1R)-1-[6-(trifluoromethyl)pyridazin-3-yl]ethyl]benzamide; or
 3-(5-Methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-5-[(3S)-tetrahydrofuran-3-yloxy]-N-[(1R)-1-[6-(trifluoromethyl)pyridazin-3-yl]ethyl]benzamide.
- 15.** The compound according to claim 1, which is
 3-(5-methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-5-[(3R)-tetrahydrofuran-3-yloxy]-N-[(1R)-1-[2-(trifluoromethyl)pyrimidin-5-yl]ethyl]benzamide, or
 3-(5-methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-5-[(3S)-tetrahydrofuran-3-yloxy]-N-[(1R)-1-[2-(trifluoromethyl)pyrimidin-5-yl]ethyl]benzamide.
- 16.** The compound according to claim 15, which is
 3-(5-methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-5-[(3R)-tetrahydrofuran-3-yloxy]-N-[(1R)-1-[2-(trifluoromethyl)pyrimidin-5-yl]ethyl]benzamide.

17. The compound according to claim 1, which is
Trans Isomer 2: 3-{[3-hydroxybutan-2-yl]oxy}-5-(5-methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-N-[(1R)-1-[2-(trifluoromethyl)pyrimidin-5-yl]ethyl]benzamide;

Trans Isomer 1: 3-{[3-hydroxybutan-2-yl]oxy}-5-(5-methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-N-[(1R)-1-[6-(trifluoromethyl)pyridazin-3-yl]ethyl]benzamide;

Cis Isomer 1: 3-[(3-hydroxybutan-2-yl)oxy]-5-(5-methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-N-[(1R)-1-[6-(trifluoromethyl)pyridazin-3-yl]ethyl]benzamide;

Cis Isomer 2: 3-[(3-hydroxybutan-2-yl)oxy]-5-(5-methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-N-[(1R)-1-[6-(trifluoromethyl)pyridazin-3-yl]ethyl]benzamide;

Cis Isomer 1: 3-[(3-hydroxybutan-2-yl)oxy]-5-(5-methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-N-[(1R)-1-[2-(trifluoromethyl)pyrimidin-5-yl]ethyl]benzamide; or

Cis Isomer 2: 3-[(3-hydroxybutan-2-yl)oxy]-5-(5-methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-N-[(1R)-1-[2-(trifluoromethyl)pyrimidin-5-yl]ethyl]benzamide.

18. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the compound according to claim 1, and a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or carrier.