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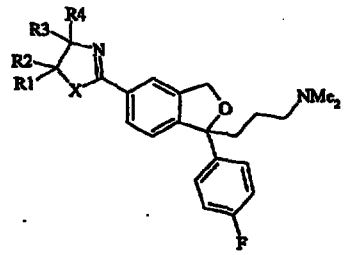
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(54) Title: METHOD FOR THE PREPARATION OF CITALOPRAM



(IV)

(57) Abstract

The present invention relates to a method for the preparation of citalopram or any of its enantiomers and acid addition salts thereof comprising treatment of a compound of formula (IV), wherein X is O or S; R^1 – R^2 are each independently selected from hydrogen and C_{1-6} alkyl, or R^1 and R^2 together form a C_{2-5} alkylene chain thereby forming a spiro–ring; R^3 is selected from hydrogen and C_{1-6} alkyl, R^4 is selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6} alkyl, a carboxy group or a precursor group therefore, or R^3 and R^4 together form a C_{2-5} alkylene chain thereby forming a spiro–ring, with a dehydration agent or alternatively where X is S, thermally cleavage of the thiazoline ring, or treatment in presence of a radical initiator, to form citalopram. The invention also relates to intermediates used in the new process for the preparation of citalopram, as well as citalopram prepared according to the new process.