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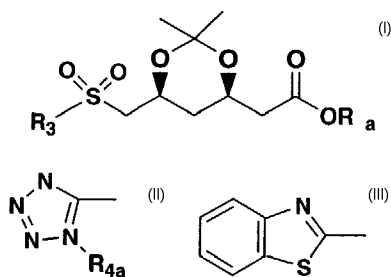
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(54) Title: PROCESS FOR PREPARING CHIRAL DIOL SULFONES AND DIHYDROXY ACID HMG COA REDUCTASE INHIBITORS



(57) Abstract: A process is provided for preparing chiral diol sulfones of the structure (I) where R₃ is preferably (II) or (III) where R_{4a} is preferably aryl such as phenyl, and R_{1a} is preferably alkyl such as t-butyl, which are intermediates used in preparing HMG CoA reductase inhibitors.