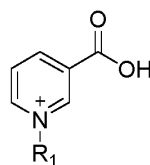


Claims

1. A compound of formula (III)



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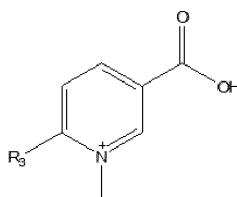
(III)

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof; wherein R₁ is selected from the group consisting of: oxocyclohexanyl, oxocyclopentanyl and oxocyclobutanyl.

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2. The compound according to claim 1, wherein R₁ is oxocyclohexanyl.

3. A compound of the formula (I) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof



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(I)

wherein R₃ is a lower alkyl or aryl.

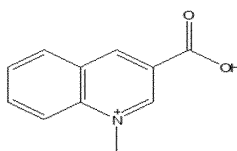
4. The compound according to claim 3 wherein said lower alkyl is methyl or ethyl.

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5. The compound according to claim 3 wherein R₃ is methyl.

6. The compound according to claim 3 wherein said R₃ is phenyl.

7. A compound of the formula (II) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof

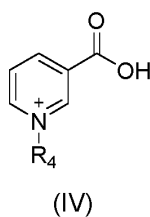


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(II)

8. The compound according to any of the preceding claims for use as a medicament.
- 5 9. The compound according to any of the preceding claims for use in promoting follicle maturation
- 10 10. The compound according to any of the preceding claims for use in the treatment of an ovulation disorder.
11. The compound according to claim 10, wherein said ovulation disorder is selected from the group consisting of premature ovarian insufficiency (POI) and premature menopause.
- 15 12. A method of treating a medical condition comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of the compound according to claims 1-7 or pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof to a human or animal in need thereof.
- 20 13. The method according to claim 12, wherein said medical condition is an ovulation disorder.
- 25 14. The method according to claim 13, wherein said ovulation disorder is selected from the group consisting of premature ovarian insufficiency (POI) and premature menopause.
- 30 15. The use of the compound according to claims 1-7 for the manufacture of a medicament.
16. The use of the compound according to claim 1-7 for the manufacture of a medicament for use in the treatment of an ovulation disorder.
- 35 17. The use of the compound according to claim 16, wherein said ovulation disorder is selected from the group consisting of premature ovarian insufficiency (POI) and premature menopause.
18. A compound of the formula (IV) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof

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wherein R₄ is a lower alkyl, an amide, a phenyl or a benzyl for use in the treatment of an ovulation disorder.

19. The compound according to claim 18 wherein said lower alkyl is ethyl, propyl or isopropyl.

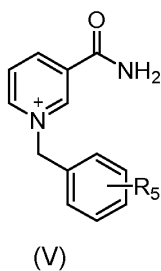
20. The compound according to claim 18 and 19 wherein R₄ is isopropyl.

21. The compound according to claim 18 wherein R₄ is ethanamide.

22. The compound according to claim 18 wherein R₄ is phenyl.

23. The compound according to claim 18 wherein R₄ is benzyl.

24. A compound of formula (V) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof



wherein R₅ is H, F, Cl or a methoxy group for use in the treatment of an ovulation disorder.

25. The compound according to claim 24 wherein R₅ is H.

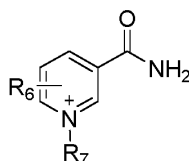
26. The compound according to claim 24 wherein R₅ is F in the ortho position.

27. The compound according to claim 24 wherein R₅ is Cl in the meta or para position.

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28. The compound according to claim 24 wherein R₅ is a methoxy group in the meta position.

29. A compound of formula (VI) or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof



(VI)

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wherein R₇ is a lower alkyl and R₆ is H or methyl for use in the treatment of an ovulation disorder.

30. The compound according to claim 29 wherein R₇ is methyl, ethyl, propyl or isopropyl.

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31. The compound according to claim 29 wherein R₇ is isopropyl.

32. The compound according to claim 29 wherein R₇ is methyl and R₆ is H.

33. The compound according to claim 29 wherein R₇ is ethyl and R₆ is H.

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34. The compound according to claim 29 wherein R₇ is methyl and R₆ is methyl in the ortho position.

35. The compound according to claim 29 wherein R₇ is methyl and R₆ is methyl in the para position.

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36. The compound cyclopamine for use in the treatment of an ovulation disorder.

37. The compound according to claims 18-36 for use in promoting follicle maturation.

38. The compound according to claims 18-36, wherein said ovulation disorder is selected from the group consisting of premature ovarian insufficiency (POI) and premature menopause.
- 5 39. A method of treating an ovulation disorder comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of the compound according to claims 18-36 or pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof to a human or animal in need thereof.
- 10 40. The method according to claim 39, wherein said ovulation disorder is selected from the group consisting of premature ovarian insufficiency (POI) and premature menopause.
- 15 41. The use of the compound according to claims 18-36 for the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment of an ovulation disorder.
- 20 42. The use of the compound according to claim 41, wherein said ovulation disorder is selected from the group consisting of premature ovarian insufficiency (POI) and premature menopause.
- 25 43. A pharmaceutical composition comprising the compound according to any of the preceding claims for use in the treatment of an ovulation disorder in a female individual.
44. The pharmaceutical composition according to claim 43, further comprising at least one pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.
45. The pharmaceutical composition according to claims 43 and 44, further comprising an additional active agent.