

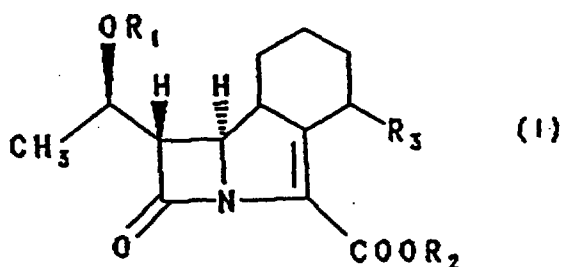


154-667C.520

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ABSTRACT

The invention concerns compounds of general formula (I)



in which:-

R_1 represents a hydrogen atom or a hydroxyl protecting group;

R_2 represents a hydrogen atom or a carboxyl protecting group; and

R_3 represents a hydrogen atom, a hydroxyl group, a hydroxymethyl group, a C_{1-3} alkyl group or a group XR_4 in which X represents an oxygen atom or the group $S(O)_n$ in which n is zero or the integer 1 or 2 and R_4 represents a C_{1-5} alkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl or phenyl group, or when X is an oxygen or sulphur atom then R_4 may also represent the group $AlkNR_5R_6$ in which Alk represents a C_{2-6} straight or branched alkylene chain, and R_5 and R_6 each independently represent a hydrogen atom or a C_{1-4} alkyl group or R_5 represents a formyl, acetyl or iminomethyl group and R_6

represents a hydrogen atom or R_5 and R_6 together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached form a pyrrolidino or piperidino ring, or R_3 represents a group $(CH_2)_mNR_7R_8$ in which m is zero or one and R_7 and R_8 independently each represent a hydrogen atom or a C_{1-4} alkyl group or R_7 represents a formyl, acetyl or iminomethyl group and R_8 represents a hydrogen atom, or R_3 and the carbon atom to which it is attached represent a keto group or a ketal derivative thereof;

and salts (including internal salts where appropriate), metabolically labile esters and solvates thereof and a process for their production.

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