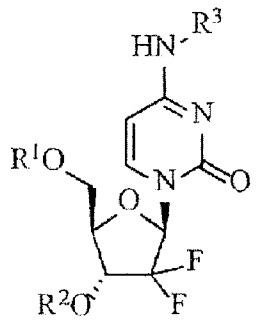
substituted cycloheteroalkyl, heteroalkyl and substituted heteroalkyl.

The disclosure also provides pharmaceutical compositions containing a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and one or more compounds according to formula I as described above, prodrugs thereof, or pharmaceutically acceptable salts of the compounds and prodrugs.

In another aspect, there is provided a pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound of formula I:



(I),

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof; wherein R^1 and R^2 are independently selected from the group consisting of H, -C(=O)-$(CH_2)_2$-Ar and at least one of R^1 and R^2 is other than H, and Ar is 3-pyridyl; R^3 is selected from the group consisting of H and –C(=O)-O-R^4; R^4 is selected from the group consisting of alkyl, substituted alkyl, alkenyl, substituted alkenyl, alkynyl, substituted alkynyl, arylalkyl, substituted arylalkyl, cycloheteroalkyl, substituted cycloheteroalkyl, heteroalkyl and substituted heteroalkyl; and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

The disclosure also provides methods for inhibiting the growth of cancer cells. The methods include contacting the cells with an effective amount of a compound of the disclosure.

In another aspect, there is provided a compound as defined herein for use in inhibiting the growth of cancer cells.

In a further aspect, there is provided a compound defined herein and an anti-cancer agent for use in inhibiting the growth of cancer cells.

The disclosure also provides methods for treating cancer. The methods include administering to the subject an effective amount of a pharmaceutical composition of the disclosure.

20. A compound according to ~~claim 19, further comprising use of~~ any of claims **1-9** and an anti-cancer agent for use in inhibiting the growth of cancer cells.

21. A compound and anti-cancer agent according to claim **20**, wherein the anti-cancer agent is selected from the group consisting of a conventional chemotherapeutic agent, a targeted therapeutic agent, a radiotherapeutic agent, and a mixture thereof.

22. A compound and anti-cancer agent according to claim **20**, wherein the anti-cancer agent is selected from the group consisting of cisplatin, oxaliplatin, carboplatin, erlotinib, gefitinib, lapatinib, cetuximab, zalutumumab, minotuzumab, and matuzumab.

23. A compound according to claim **19**, wherein the cancer cells are selected from the group consisting of pancreatic cancer cells, non-small cell lung cancer cells, breast cancer cells, ovarian cancer cells, and bladder cancer cells.

24. A pharmaceutical composition according to any of claims **10-18** for use in the treatment of cancer.