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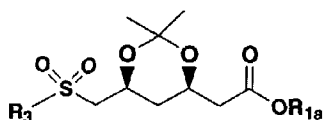
(43) International Publication Date
12 December 2002 (12.12.2002)

PCT

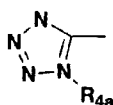
(10) International Publication Number
WO 02/098854 A3

- (51) International Patent Classification⁷: **C07D 221/06**, 313/10, 337/10, 409/02, 487/04, 491/044, 495/04
- (74) Agents: **RODNEY, Burton** et al.; Bristol-Myers Squibb Company, P.O. Box 4000, Princeton, NJ 08543-4000 (US).
- (21) International Application Number: PCT/US02/17269
- (81) Designated States (*national*): AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.
- (22) International Filing Date: 30 May 2002 (30.05.2002)
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English
- (30) Priority Data:
60/296,403 6 June 2001 (06.06.2001) US
- (84) Designated States (*regional*): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).
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- Published:
— with international search report
- (88) Date of publication of the international search report:
27 March 2003
- For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.*

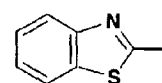
(54) Title: PROCESS FOR PREPARING CHIRAL DIOL SULFONES AND DIHYDROXY ACID HMG COA REDUCTASE INHIBITORS



(I)



(II)



(III)

(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.