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(54) Title: ASSAY FOR IDENTIFICATION OF COMPOUNDS THAT PROMOTE MELANIN PRODUCTION AND RETINOID–LIKE COMPOUNDS IDENTIFIED BY SAID ASSAY

(57) Abstract

An *in vitro* assay for selecting compounds that alter pigmentation of skin is provided. Also, a novel class of pro–pigmentatory compounds is provided which comprise substituted aromatic or heterocyclic carboxylic acids, or derivatives thereof, or pharmaceutically acceptable salts, which do not contain a pheno, naphthol, thiophenol, or a thionaphthol function in free or protected form. In a preferred embodiment, thess compounds will display activity for RXRs. These compounds may be used for altering pigmentation of human skin and/or hair in cosmetic or dermatological compositions, and for the treatment of disorders and disease conditions that affect skin or hair pigmentation.