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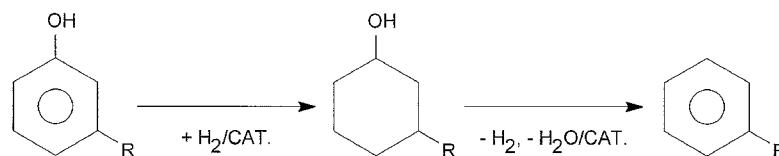


FIG. 1

(57) Abstract: A process for the conversion of lignin to chemical precursors is presented. The process comprises treating the lignin to form less acidic compounds. The process includes reacting lignin with a hydrogenation catalyst under a hydrogen atmosphere to convert acidic oxygenate compounds to less acidic oxygenates or hydrocarbons. The oxygenate compounds are reacted in a dehydrogenation and deoxygenation process to remove the oxygen and to convert the cyclic hydrocarbons back to aromatic compounds.