

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

FOR

Asymmetric imidazole-4,5-dicarboxamides derivatives as SARS-CoV-2 main protease inhibitors: Design, Synthesis and Biological Evaluation

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1. Chemical synthesis

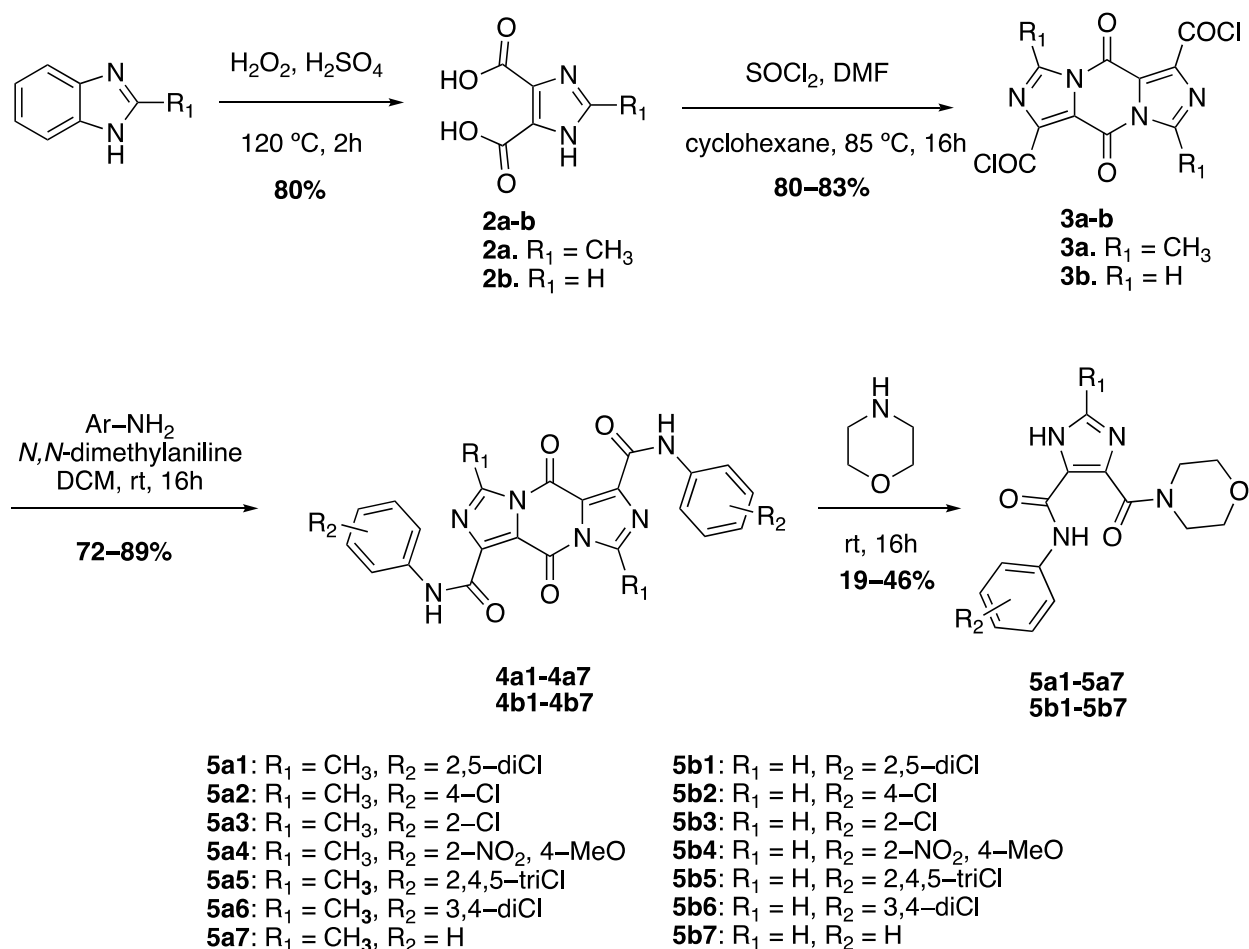
General chemistry information. Room temperature is considered 27–30 °C. Reaction conditions are described in detail in the sections below. All commercial reagents and solvents from suppliers were used without further purification.

TLC and column chromatography: Thin-layer chromatography (TLC) was performed using TLC Silica gel 60 GF₂₅₄ precoated aluminium plates and the developed plates were visualized using Vilber Lourmat UV lamp. Normal phase flash column chromatography was run using silica gel 40 – 63 microns. The desired fractions from column chromatography (confirmed by TLC) were collected and concentrated under vacuum to afford the product.

NMR: All NMR data were collected at ambient temperature. All NMR solvents were purchased from Cambridge Isotoped. NMR spectra were processed with MestReNova software. ¹H-NMR spectra were obtained on Bruker 400, 500 or 600 MHz spectrometers. Proton chemical shifts were reported in ppm. Proton data were reported as chemical shifts, multiplicity (singlet (s), triplet (t), multiplet (m), ...), coupling constants [Hz] and integration. ¹³C-NMR spectra were obtained on Bruker 100, 125, 150 MHz spectrometer. Carbon chemical shifts were reported in ppm.

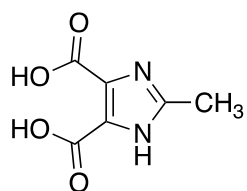
Infrared Spectroscopy: Infrared spectra were recorded on FTIR 8201 PC Shimadzu spectrometer, and select ν_{\max} were reported in cm⁻¹.

Mass Spectrometry: Mass spectrometry was conducted by Shimadzu LCMS 8040, using ESI. The HRMS was conducted by Water Xevo G2-XS Qtof.



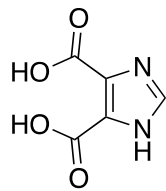
Scheme S1. Synthesis of asymmetric imidazole-4,5-dicarboxamide derivatives

Analytical Characterization Data

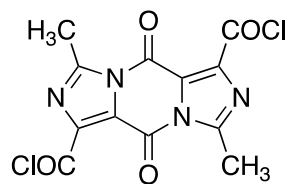


2-Methyl-imidazole-4,5-dicarboxylic acid (2a). Obtained as pale yellow solid; **Yield** 6.76 g, 80%; **M.p.** 255-256 °C; **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3531, 1379; **¹H-NMR** (400 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 2.49 (s, 3H); **¹³C-NMR** (100 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 159.80, 146.28, 128.34, 11.68, **MS-ESI:** C₆H₆N₂O₄ *m/z* [M-H]⁻ 169.02 (Calcd.), 168.75 (found). This compound has been reported.¹

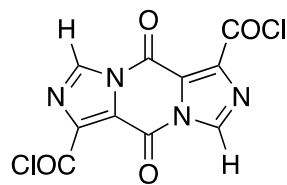
¹ M. A. Brusina, D. N. Nikolaev, S. M. Ramsh and L. B. Piotrovskii, *Russian Journal of Organic Chemistry*, 2016, **52**(10), 1528–1530.



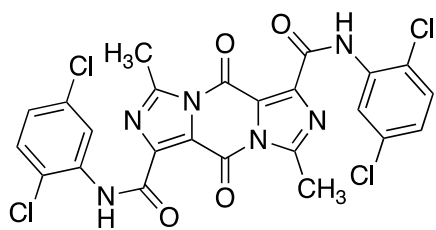
Imidazole-4,5-dicarboxylic acid (2b): Obtained as pale yellow solid; **Yield** 6.25 g, 80%; **M.p.** 264-266 °C; **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3172, 1382; **¹H-NMR** (600 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 9.11 (s, 1H, H2); **¹³C-NMR** (150 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 159.26, 135.47, 128.63; **MS-ESI:** C₅H₄N₂O₄ *m/z* [M-H]⁻ 155.01 (Calcd.), 155.16 (found). This compound has been reported.¹



3,8-Dimethyl-5,10-dioxo-5H,10H-diimidazo[1,5-*a*:1',5'-*d*]pyrazine-1,6-dicarbonyl dichloride (3a). Obtained as pale brown solid; **Yield** 1.82 g, 83%; **M.p.** > 300 °C; **IR** (cm⁻¹): 1757, 1344, 758. This compound has been reported.²



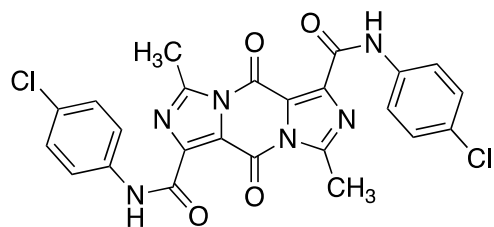
5,10-dioxo-5H,10H-diimidazo[1,5-*a*:1',5'-*d*]pyrazine-1,6-dicarbonyl dichloride (3b) Obtained as pale brown solid; **Yield** 1.62 g, 80%; **IR** (cm⁻¹): 1597, 1381, 759. This compound has been reported.³



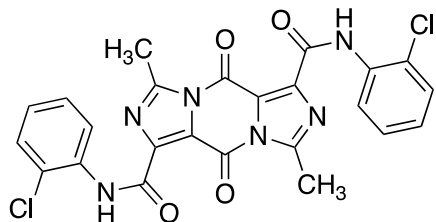
***N*¹,*N*⁶-bis(2,5-dichlorophenyl)-3,8-dimethyl-5,10-dioxo-5H,10H-diimidazo[1,5-*a*:1',5'-*d*]pyrazine-1,6-dicarboxamide (4a1)** Obtained as yellow solid; **Yield** 0.95 g, 80%; **M.p.** 254-256 °C (decomposed); **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3080, 1674, 1236.

² T.-V. Phan, P. N. H. Huynh, T.-P. Nguyen, T.-T. Vu, M.-T. Le, B. G. D. Nguyen, P. Truong and K.-M. Thai, *New Journal of Chemistry*, 2023, **47**, 20718-20722.

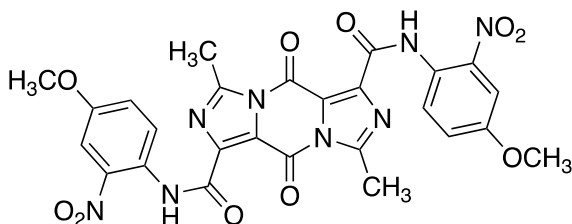
³ A. V. Wiznycia, P. W Baures, *Journal of Organic Chemistry*, 2002, **67**(20), 7151-7154.



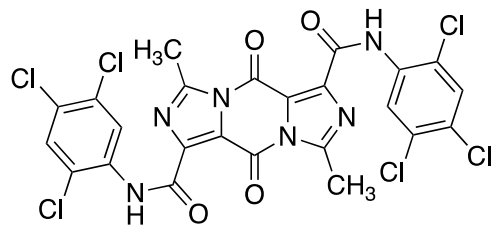
***N*¹,*N*⁶-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-3,8-dimethyl-5,10-dioxo-5*H*,10*H*-diimidazo[1,5-*a*:1',5'-*d*]pyrazine-1,6-dicarboxamide (4a2)** Obtained as yellow solid; **Yield** 0.78 g, 75%; **M.p.** 251-253 °C (decomposed); **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3262, 1674, 1298.



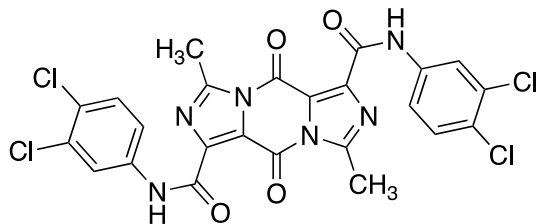
***N*¹,*N*⁶-bis(2-chlorophenyl)-3,8-dimethyl-5,10-dioxo-5*H*,10*H*-diimidazo[1,5-*a*:1',5'-*d*]pyrazine-1,6-dicarboxamide (4a3)** Obtained as yellow solid; **Yield** 0.91 g, 87%; **M.p.** 244-246 °C (decomposed), **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3334, 1693, 1276. This compound has been reported.²



***N*¹,*N*⁶-bis(4-methoxy-2-nitrophenyl)-3,8-dimethyl-5,10-dioxo-5*H*,10*H*-diimidazo[1,5-*a*:1',5'-*d*]pyrazine-1,6-dicarboxamide (4a4)** Obtained as yellow solid; **Yield** 1.08 g, 89%; **M.p.** 255-256 °C (decomposed); **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3279, 1694, 1261.



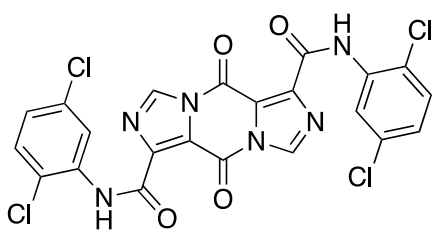
***N*¹,*N*⁶-bis(2,4,5-trichlorophenyl)-3,8-dimethyl-5,10-dioxo-5*H*,10*H*-diimidazo[1,5-*a*:1',5'-*d*]pyrazine-1,6-dicarboxamide (4a5)**. Obtained as yellow solid; **Yield** 0.96 g, 73%; **M.p.** 255-256 °C; **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3265, 1687, 1250. This compound has been reported.²



*N*¹,*N*⁶-bis(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-3,8-dimethyl-

5,10-dioxo-5*H*,10*H*-diimidazo[1,5-*a*:1',5'-*d*]pyrazine-1,6-dicarboxamide (4a6).

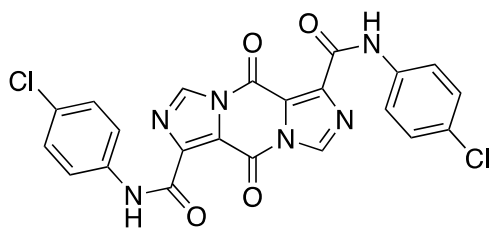
Obtained as yellow solid; **Yield** 1.03 g, 87%; **M.p.** 244-245 °C, **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3251, 1674, 1286. This compound has been reported.²



*N*¹,*N*⁶-bis(2,5-dichlorophenyl)-5,10-dioxo-5*H*,10*H*-

diimidazo[1,5-*a*:1',5'-*d*]pyrazine-1,6-dicarboxamide (4b1) Obtained as yellow solid, **Yield** 0.95

g, 84%; **M.p.** 258-260 °C; **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3323, 1693, 1240.

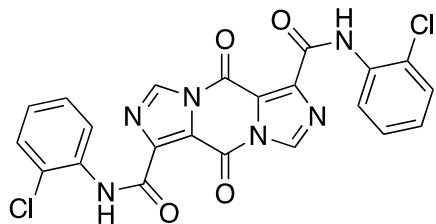


*N*¹,*N*⁶-bis(4-chlorophenyl)-5,10-dioxo-5*H*,10*H*-

diimidazo[1,5-*a*:1',5'-*d*]pyrazine-1,6-dicarboxamide (4b2) Obtained as red solid; **Yield** 0.83 g,

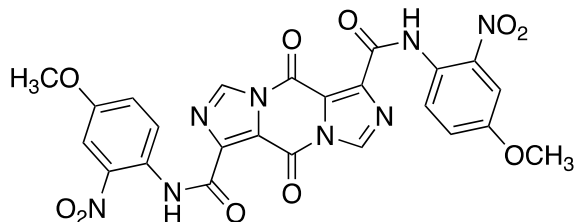
84%; **M.p.** 251-253 °C (decomposed); **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3256, 1678, 1253. This compound has been reported.⁴

⁴ E. M. Perchellet, J.-P. Perchellet and P. W. Baures, *Journal of medicinal chemistry*, 2005, **48**, 5955-5965.



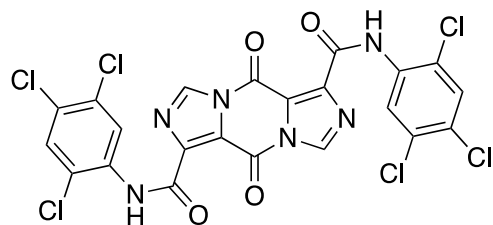
*N*¹,*N*⁶-bis(2-chlorophenyl)-5,10-dioxo-5*H*,10*H*-

diimidazo[1,5-*a*:1',5'-*d*]pyrazine-1,6-dicarboxamide (**4b3**) Obtained as yellow solid; Yield 0.72 g, 73%; **M.p.** 259-257 °C (decomposed); **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3343, 1693, 1240.



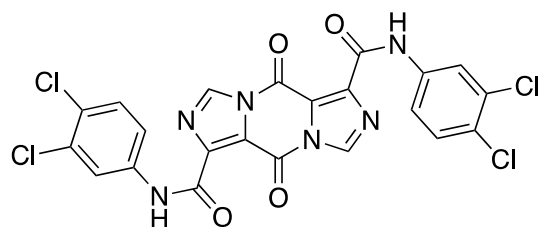
*N*¹,*N*⁶-bis(4-methoxy-2-nitrophenyl)-5,10-dioxo-

5*H*,10*H*-diimidazo[1,5-*a*:1',5'-*d*]pyrazine-1,6-dicarboxamide (**4b4**) Obtained as yellow solid; Yield 0.83 g, 72%; **M.p.** 255-256 °C (decomposed); **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3265, 1688, 1252.



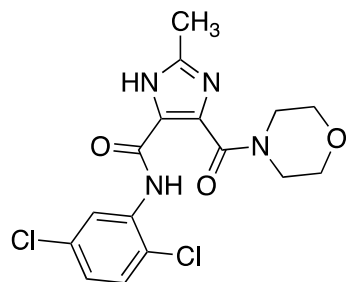
*N*¹,*N*⁶-bis(2,4,5-trichlorophenyl)-5,10-dioxo-5*H*,10*H*-

diimidazo[1,5-*a*:1',5'-*d*]pyrazine-1,6-dicarboxamide (**4b5**) Obtained as yellow solid; Yield 0.95 g, 75%; **M.p.** 255-257 °C (decomposed); **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3219, 1674, 1242.

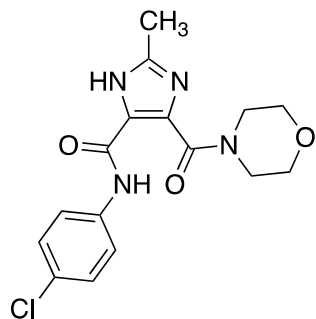


*N*¹,*N*⁶-bis(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-5,10-dioxo-5*H*,10*H*-

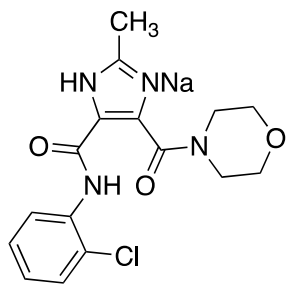
diimidazo[1,5-*a*:1',5'-*d*]pyrazine-1,6-dicarboxamide (**4b6**) Obtained as orange solid; Yield 0.95 g, 84%; **M.p.** 256-257 °C (decomposed); **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3302, 1686, 1254. This compound has been reported.⁴



***N*-(2,5-dichlorophenyl)-2-methyl-4-(morpholine-4-carbonyl)-1*H*-imidazole-5-carboxamide (5a1)** Obtained as white solid; **Yield** 0.35 g, 46%; **M.p.** 227-229 °C; **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3238, 1653, 1288; **¹H-NMR** (500 MHz, CDCl₃ with 0.05% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 12.48 (s, 1H), 11.48 (s, 1H), 8.28 (d, 1H, ⁴*J* = 2.5 Hz), 7.35 (d, 1H, *J* = 9.0 Hz), 7.09 (dd, 1H, ³*J* = 9.0 Hz, ⁴*J* = 2.5 Hz), 4.28 (t, *J* = 5.0 Hz), 3.84-3.78 (m, 4H), 3.76 (t, *J* = 5.0 Hz), 2.44 (s, 3H); **¹³C-NMR** (125 MHz, CDCl₃ with 0.05% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 163.84, 158.07, 145.40, 135.99, 134.87, 132.57, 130.44, 129.38, 125.52, 124.12, 124.03, 67.29, 66.93, 48.34, 43.57, 14.06. NMR data matched with the literature.²

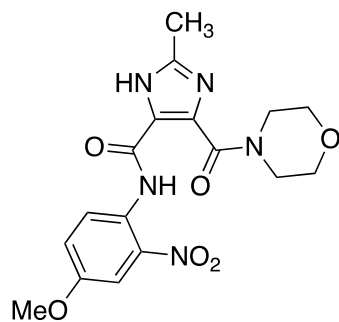


***N*-(4-chlorophenyl)-2-methyl-4-(morpholine-4-carbonyl)-1*H*-imidazole-5-carboxamide (5a2)** Obtained as white solid; **Yield** 0.19 g, 27%; **M.p.** 279-281 °C ; **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3203, 1654, 1263; **¹H-NMR** (500 MHz, CDCl₃ with 0.05% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 12.79 (s, 1H), 11.38 (s, 1H), 7.70 (d, 1H, *J* = 9 Hz), 7.31 (d, 1H, *J* = 9.0 Hz), 4.32 (t, 2H, *J* = 5.0 Hz, CH₂-N), 3.84-3.80 (m, 4H, CH₂-O), 3.76 (t, 2H, *J* = 5.0 Hz, CH₂-N), 2.43 (s, 3H, CH₃); **¹³C-NMR** (125 MHz, CDCl₃ with 0.05% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 164.36, 157.30, 144.65, 136.80, 133.81, 130.55, 129.37, 128.96, 121.60, 67.27, 66.87, 48.54, 43.72, 14.11; **HRMS-ESI**: C₁₅H₁₅ClN₄O₃ *m/z* [M+H]⁺ 349.1067 (Calcd.), 349.1082 (found).



***N*-(2-chlorophenyl)-2-methyl-4-(morpholine-4-carbonyl)-1*H*-**

imidazole-5-carboxamide (5a3). Obtained as white solid; **Yield** 0.17 g, 24%; **M.p.** 223-225 °C, **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3242, 1653, 1285; **¹H-NMR** (500 MHz, CDCl₃ with 0.05% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 12.26 (s, 1H), 11.50 (s, 1H), 8.12 (dd, 1H, ³*J* = 8.0 Hz, ⁴*J* = 1.5 Hz), 7.44 (dd, 1H, ³*J* = 8.0 Hz, ⁴*J* = 1.5 Hz), 7.27 (td, 1H, ³*J* = 7.5 Hz, ⁴*J* = 1.5 Hz), 7.12 (td, ³*J* = 7.5 Hz, ⁴*J* = 1.5 Hz), 4.26 (t, 2H, *J* = 5.0 Hz), 3.84-3.78 (m, 4H), 3.75 (t, 2H, *J* = 5.0 Hz), 2.36 (s, 3H); **¹³C-NMR** (125 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 163.69, 160.32, 159.50, 157.10, 145.52, 144.96, 134.91, 134.60, 133.95, 130.83, 129.58, 129.27, 128.78, 127.87, 127.49, 127.03, 125.63, 124.81, 124.31, 124.04, 122.82, 122.43, 66.48, 66.16, 66.07, 65.82, 47.80, 46.90, 42.96, 41.93, 13.50. NMR data matched with the literature.²

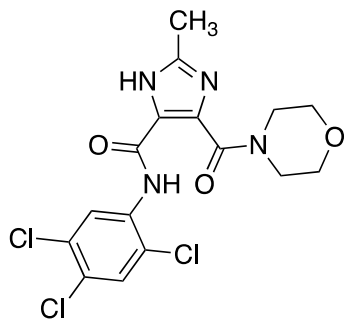


***N*-(4-methoxy-2-nitrophenyl)-2-methyl-4-(morpholine-4-**

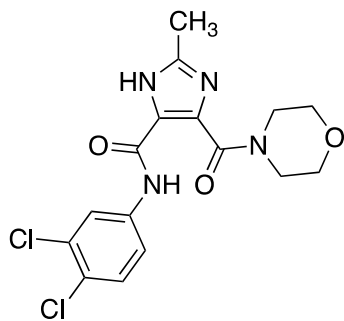
carbonyl)-1*H*-imidazole-5-carboxamide (5a4) Obtained as yellow solid; **Yield** 0.15 g, 19%; **M.p.** 282-284 °C; **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3219, 1664, 1255; **¹H-NMR** (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 13.13 (s, 0.4H), 12.96 (s, 0.6H), 12.31 (s, 0.4H), 11.12 (s, 0.6H), 8.42 (d, 0.6H, *J* = 9.0 Hz), 7.65 (d, 0.4H, *J* = 9.0 Hz), 7.63 (d, 0.6H, *J* = 3.0 Hz), 7.54 (d, 0.4H, *J* = 3.0 Hz), 7.41 (dd, 0.6H, ³*J* = 9.0 Hz, ⁴*J* = 5.0 Hz), 7.35 (dd, 0.4H, ³*J* = 9.0 Hz, ⁴*J* = 5.0 Hz), 4.15 (t, 0.7H, *J* = 5.0 Hz), 4.04 (m, 0.8H), 3.86 (m, 3H), 3.70 (s, 1.3H), 3.67-3.64 (m, 3.2H), 3.54 (t, 1.2H, *J* = 5.0 Hz), 3.31 (s, 0.8H), 2.37-2.33 (m, 3H); **¹³C-NMR** (150 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 160.56, 160.30, 159.94, 159.72, 156.33, 154.70, 145.50, 144.84, 138.80, 138.48, 134.16, 130.80, 128.27, 127.58, 127.35, 126.82, 124.29, 123.21, 122.21, 120.28, 109.10, 108.83, 66.43, 66.06, 66.01, 65.77, 59.67, 55.90, 47.85,

46.80, 43.04, 41.86, 13.5; **HRMS-ESI:** C₁₇H₁₉N₅O₆ *m/z* [M+H]⁺ 390.1335 (Calcd.), 390.1388 (found).

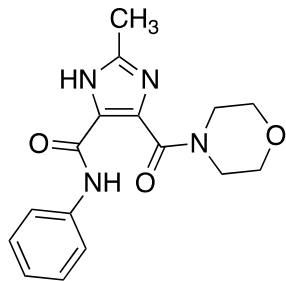
There were two conformers of this compound: intrahydrogen bonding conformer and non-intrahydrogen bonding conformer.⁴



***N*-(2,4,5-trichlorophenyl)-2-methyl-4-(morpholine-4-carbonyl)-1*H*-imidazole-5-carboxamide (5a5).** Obtained as white solid; **Yield** 0.32 g, 38%; **M.p.** 261-263 °C, **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3342, 1645, 1288; **¹H-NMR** (500 MHz, CDCl₃ with 0.05% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 12.61 (s, 1H), 11.12 (s, 1H), 8.50 (s, 1H), 7.55 (s, 1H), 4.33 (t, 2H, *J* = 5.0 Hz), 3.84 (m, 4H), 3.79 (t, 2H, *J* = 5.0 Hz), 2.48 (s, 3H); **¹³C-NMR** (150 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 163.42, 157.26, 145.87, 135.24, 134.32, 130.54, 129.83, 128.45, 126.24, 123.67, 123.89, 66.40, 66.10, 47.75, 42.99, 13.51. NMR data matched with the literature.²

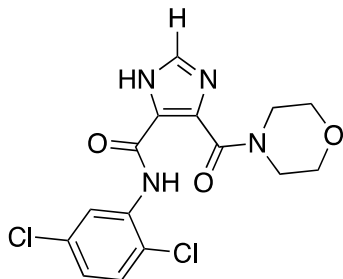


***N*-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-2-methyl-4-(morpholine-4-carbonyl)-1*H*-imidazole-5-carboxamide (5a6).** Obtained as white solid; **Yield** 0.24 g, 31%; **M.p.** 261-263 °C, **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3257, 1678, 1269; **¹H-NMR** (600 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 13.09 (s, 1H), 12.85 (s, 0.7H), 10.26 (s, 0.3H), 8.07 (s, 1H), 7.61-7.50 (m, 2H), 4.18-3.63 (m, 8H), 2.35 (s, 3H); **¹³C-NMR** (150 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) 164.03, 160.61, 160.54, 156.83, 145.50, 144.64, 139.05, 138.47, 133.65, 131.33, 131.27, 131.02, 130.72, 130.34, 129.30, 127.42, 125.19, 124.64, 121.22, 120.39, 120.05, 119.39, 66.40, 66.10, 65.96, 65.93, 48.05, 42.26, 13.54, 13.45. NMR data matched with the literature.²



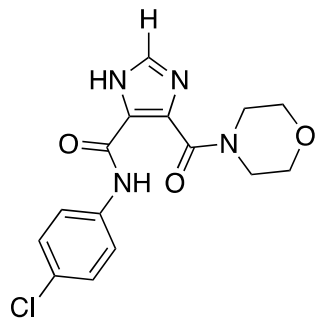
***N*-(phenyl)-2-methyl-4-(morpholine-4-carbonyl)-1*H*-imidazole-5-carboxamide (5a7).** Obtained as white solid; **Yield** 0.12 g, 19%; **M.p.** 265-267 °C, **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3260, 1665, 1296; **¹H-NMR** (600 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 13.07 (s, 0.8H), 12.82 (s, 0.2H), 12.47 (s, 0.8H), 9.81 (s, 0.2H), 7.79 (s, 0.4H), 7.63 (d, 7.61-7.50 (m, 2H), 4.18-3.63 (m, 8H), 2.35 (s, 3H); **¹³C-NMR** (600 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS) 164.03, 160.61, 160.54, 156.83, 145.50, 144.64, 139.05, 138.47, 133.65, 131.33, 131.27, 131.02, 130.72, 130.34, 129.30, 127.42, 125.19, 124.64, 121.22, 120.39, 120.05, 119.39, 66.40, 66.10, 65.96, 65.93, 48.05, 42.26, 13.54, 13.45; **HRMS-ESI:** C₁₆H₁₈N₄O₃ *m/z* [M+H]⁺ 315.1452 (Calcd.), 315.1460 (found).

There were two conformers of this compound: intrahydrogen bonding conformer and non-intrahydrogen bonding conformer.⁴



***N*-(2,5-dichlorophenyl)-4-(morpholine-4-carbonyl)-1*H*-imidazole-5-carboxamide (5b1)** Obtained as white solid; **Yield** 0.15 g, 20%; **M.p.** 223-225 °C; **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3177, 1670, 1282; **¹H-NMR** (600 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 13.48 (s, 1H), 12.28 (s, 0.6H), 9.78 (s, 0.4H), 8.36 (s, 1H), 7.95 (s, 1H), 7.57 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.4 Hz), 7.24 (dd, ³*J* = 8.4 Hz, ⁴*J* = 2.4 Hz), 4.11-3.67 (m, 8H); **¹³C-NMR** (125 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 162.42, 156.95, 149.97, 141.41, 136.95, 136.47, 135.90, 131.80, 130.76, 124.78, 121.98, 66.25, 65.96, 47.38, 42.49; **HRMS-ESI:** C₁₅H₁₄Cl₂N₄O₃ *m/z* [M+H]⁺ 369.0521 (Calcd.), 369.0560 (found).

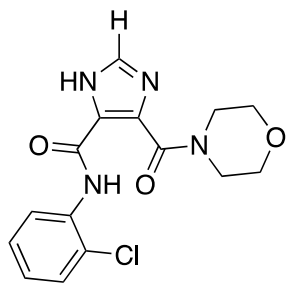
There were two conformers of this compound: intrahydrogen bonding conformer and non-intrahydrogen bonding conformer.⁴



***N*-(4-chlorophenyl)-4-(morpholine-4-carbonyl)-1*H*-imidazole-5-**

carboxamide (5b2) Obtained as white solid; **Yield** 0.28 g, 42%; **M.p.** 251-253 °C; **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3177, 1668, 1283; **¹H-NMR** (600 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 13.49 (s, 0.7H), 13.20 (s, 0.3H), 12.62 (s, 0.7H), 10.13 (s, 0.3H), 7.92 (s, 1H), 7.68 (s, 1H), 7.43 (s, 1H), 4.15-3.65 (m, 8H); **¹³C-NMR** (125 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 164.05, 160.62, 160.26, 156.50, 137.23, 136.12, 133.67, 132.03, 129.67, 128.98, 128.57, 128.41, 127.38, 121.41, 120.83, 66.33, 66.04, 48.03, 43.19; **HRMS-ESI**: C₁₅H₁₅ClN₄O₃ *m/z* [M+H]⁺ 335.0910 (Calcd.), 335.0937 (found).

There were two conformers of this compound: intrahydrogen bonding conformer and non-intrahydrogen bonding conformer.⁴



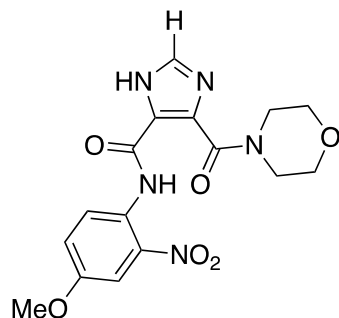
***N*-(2-chlorophenyl)-4-(morpholine-4-carbonyl)-1*H*-imidazole-5-**

carboxamide (5b3) Obtained as white solid; **Yield** 0.16 g, 24%; **M.p.** 187-189 °C; **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3236, 1653, 1288; **¹H-NMR** (600 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 13.45 (s, 1H), 12.06 (s, 0.6H), 9.74 (s, 0.4H), 8.18 (s, 1H), 7.93 (s, 1H), 7.53 (dd, 1H, ³*J* = 7.8 Hz, ⁴*J* = 1.2 Hz), 7.35 (td, 1H, ³*J* = 7.8 Hz, ⁴*J* = 1.2 Hz), 7.18 (t, 1H, ³*J* = 7.8 Hz, ⁴*J* = 1.2 Hz), 4.10-3.62 (m, 8H); **¹H-NMR** (500 MHz, CDCl₃ with 0.05% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 12.35 (s, 0.9H), 11.97 (s, 0.1H), 11.58 (s, 0.9H), 9.80 (s, 0.1H), 8.55 (d, 0.1H, *J* = 8.0 Hz), 8.19 (dd, 0.9H, ³*J* = 8.0 Hz, ⁴*J* = 1.5 Hz), 7.68 (s, 0.9H), 7.61 (s, 0.1H), 7.47 (dd, 0.9H, ³*J* = 8.0 Hz, ⁴*J* = 1.5 Hz), 7.43 (d, 0.1H, ³*J* = 8.0 Hz), 7.32 (td, 1H, ³*J* = 8.0 Hz, ⁴*J* = 1.5 Hz), 7.15 (td, 0.9H, ³*J* = 8.0 Hz, ⁴*J* = 1.5 Hz), 7.01 (t, 0.1H, ³*J* = 8.0 Hz), 4.30 (t, 1.8H, *J* = 5.0 Hz), 3.89-3.82 (m, 4H), 3.80 (t, 1.8H, *J* = 5.0 Hz), 3.76 (s, 0.2H), 3.63 (s, 0.2H); **¹³C-NMR** (125 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 163.59, 160.22, 159.37, 157.00, 136.37,

136.12, 134.75, 134.51, 134.22, 131.29, 129.54, 129.25, 128.96, 127.88, 127.45, 127.28, 125.72, 124.81, 124.35, 124.07, 122.76, 121.31, 66.44, 66.12, 65.98, 65.74, 47.81, 46.81, 42.98, 41.90;

HRMS-ESI: C₁₅H₁₅ClN₄O₃ *m/z* [M+H]⁺ 335.0910 (Calcd.), 335.0898 (found).

There were two conformers of this compound: intrahydrogen bonding conformer and non-intrahydrogen bonding conformer.⁴



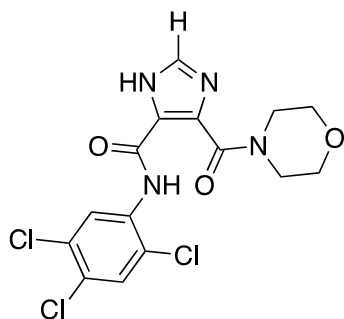
***N*-(4-methoxy-2-nitrophenyl)-4-(morpholine-4-carbonyl)-1*H*-**

imidazole-5-carboxamide (5b4) Obtained as yellow solid; **Yield** 0.29 g, 39%; **M.p.** 211-212 °C;

IR (cm⁻¹): 3348, 1680, 1260; **¹H-NMR** (600 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 13.31 (s, 1H), 12.24 (s, 0.3H), 11.24 (s, 0.7H), 8.45 (s, 1H), 7.93 (s, 1H), 7.62 (s, 1H), 7.40 (d, 1H, *J* = 9.0 Hz), 4.10-3.56 (m, 11H); **¹³C-NMR** (125 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 160.26, 159.90, 154.70, 138.59, 136.15, 131.32, 127.68, 126.91, 124.09, 122.36, 108.89, 65.97, 65.74, 55.92, 46.77, 41.88;

HRMS-ESI: C₁₆H₁₇N₅O₆ [M+H]⁺ 376.1257 (Calcd.), 376.1276 (found).

There were two conformers of this compound: intrahydrogen bonding conformer and non-intrahydrogen bonding conformer.⁴



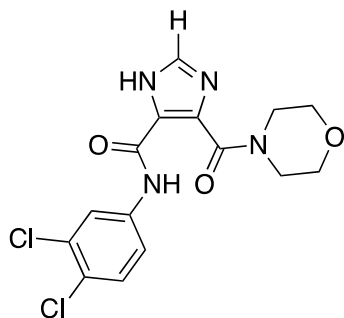
***N*-(2,4,5-trichlorophenyl)-4-(morpholine-4-carbonyl)-1*H*-**

imidazole-5-carboxamide (5b5) Obtained as white solid; **Yield** 0.32 g, 43%; **M.p.** 224-227 °C;

IR (cm⁻¹): 3234, 1556, 1265; **¹H-NMR** (600 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 13.55 (s, 0.6H), 12.37 (s, 0.4H), 12.43 (s, 0.6H), 9.79 (s, 0.4H), 8.55 (s, 1H), 7.97-7.94 (m, 2H), 4.14-3.54 (m, 8H); **¹³C-NMR** (125 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 163.34, 157.31,

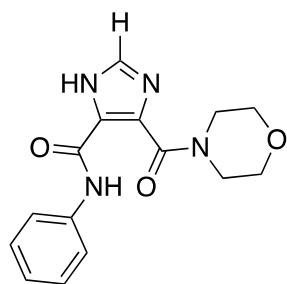
136.63, 134.91, 134.57, 130.46, 130.04, 128.65, 126.36, 123.79, 123.11, 66.27, 65.99, 47.59, 43.02; **HRMS-ESI**: C₁₅H₁₃Cl₃N₄O₃ *m/z* [M-H]⁻ 400.9975 (Calcd.), 400.9936 (found).

There were two conformers of this compound: intrahydrogen bonding conformer and non-intrahydrogen bonding conformer.⁴



***N*-(3,4-dichlorophenyl)-4-(morpholine-4-carbonyl)-1*H*-imidazole-5-carboxamide (5b6)** Obtained as white solid, **Yield** 0.33 g, 45%; **M.p.** 258-261 °C; **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3219, 1654, 1290; **¹H-NMR** (600 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 13.46 (s, 1H), 12.78 (s, 0.54H), 10.33 (s, 0.45H), 8.10-7.59 (m, 4H), 4.14-3.62 (m, 8H); **¹³C-NMR** (125 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS) δ (ppm): 163.99, 156.83, 138.33, 136.24, 133.98, 130.87, 129.38, 127.95, 125.19, 120.53, 119.51, 66.23, 65.97, 47.99, 43.25; **HRMS-ESI**: C₁₅H₁₄Cl₂N₄O₃ *m/z* [M-H]⁻ 367.0365 (Calcd.), 367.0350 (found).

There were two conformers of this compound: intrahydrogen bonding conformer and non-intrahydrogen bonding conformer.⁴



***N*-phenyl-4-(morpholine-4-carbonyl)-1*H*-imidazole-5-carboxamide (5b7)** Obtained as white solid, **Yield** 0.24 g, 40%; **M.p.** 235-237 °C; **IR** (cm⁻¹): 3172, 1629, 1286; **¹H-NMR** (600 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 13.46 (s, 0.75H), 13.15 (s, 0.25H), 12.45 (s, 0.75H), 9.91 (s, 0.25H), 7.92 (s, 0.75H), 7.89 (s, 0.25H), 7.81 (d, 0.5H, *J* = 7.8 Hz), 7.65 (d, 0.5H, *J* = 7.8 Hz), 7.39 (t, 1.5H, *J* = 15.6 Hz, *J* = 7.8 Hz), 7.32 (t, 0.5H, *J* = 15.6 Hz, *J* = 7.8 Hz), 7.13 (t, 0.75H, *J* = 15.6 Hz, *J* = 7.8 Hz), 7.07 (t, 0.25H, *J* = 15.6 Hz, *J* = 7.8 Hz), 4.14-3.66 (m, 8H); **¹³C-NMR** (125 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ (ppm): 164.14, 160.71, 160.10, 156.47, 138.64, 138.29, 136.03, 135.65,

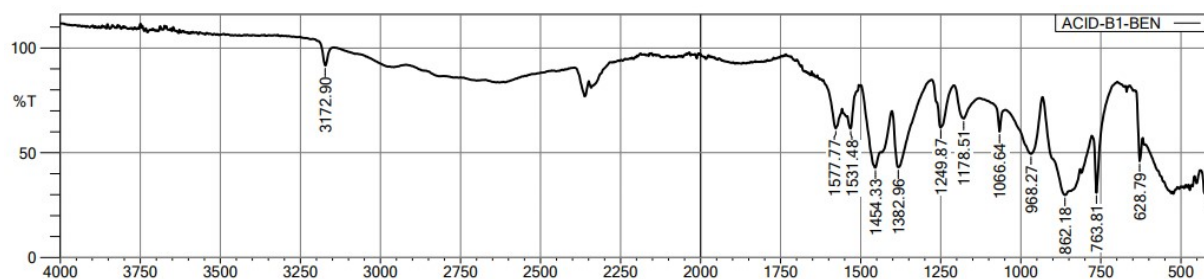
133.52, 132.26, 129.89, 129.10, 128.54, 127.08, 123.88, 123.33, 119.92, 119.30, 66.42, 66.11, 48.04, 43.19; **HRMS-ESI:** C₁₅H₁₆N₄O₃ *m/z* [M+H]⁺ 301.1295 (Calcd.), 301.1275 (found).

There were two conformers of this compound: intrahydrogen bonding conformer and non-intrahydrogen bonding conformer.⁴

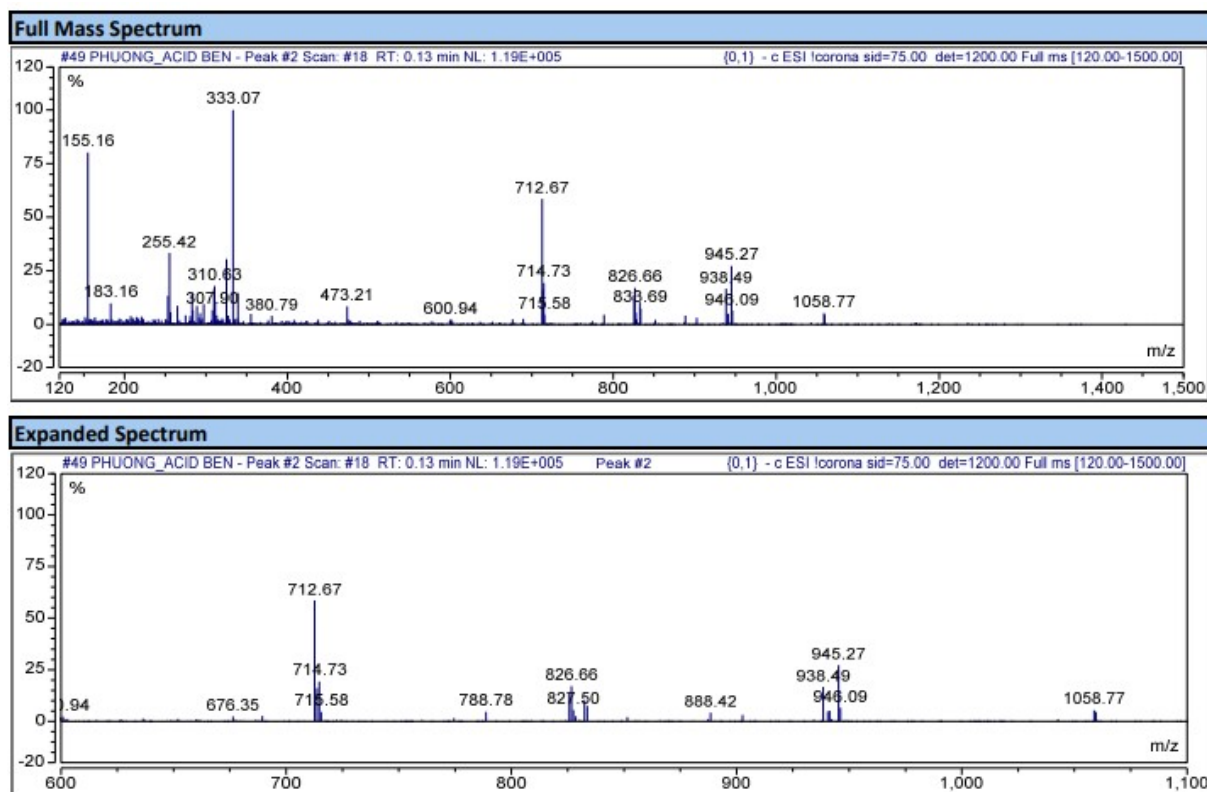
¹H-NMR, ¹³C-NMR and HRMS spectra of synthesized compounds

Compound 2b

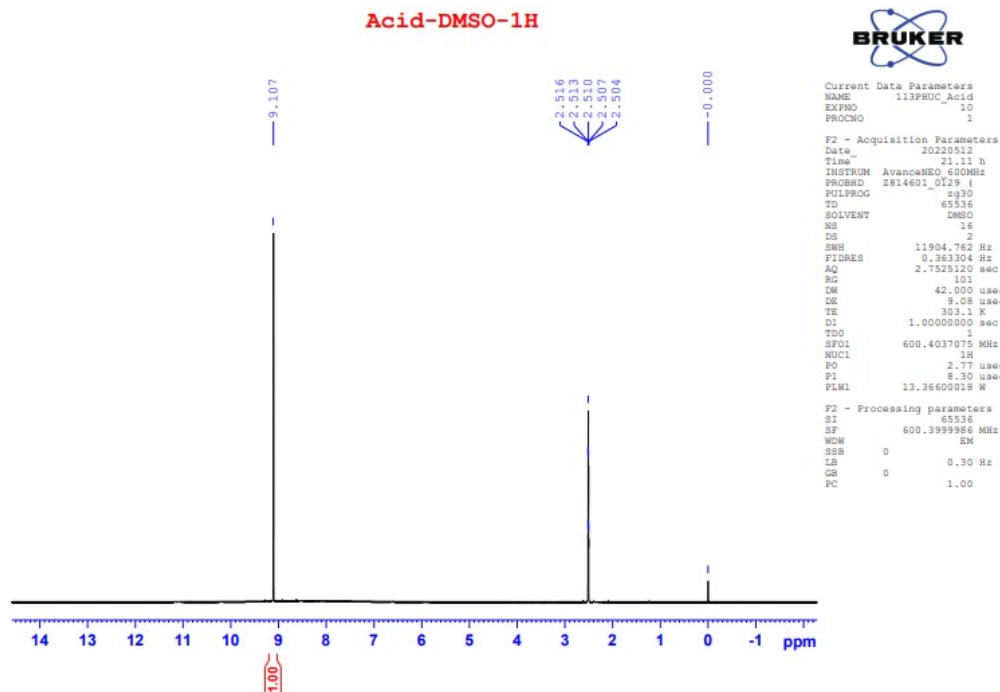
IR spectrum



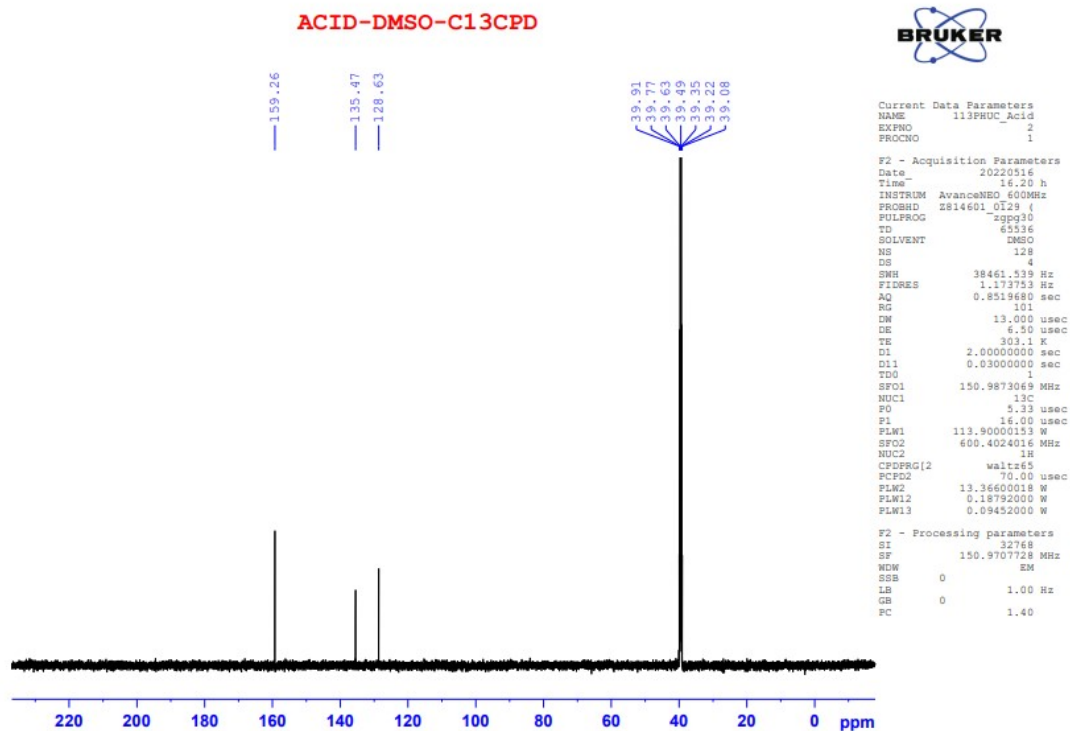
MS spectrum



¹H-NMR spectrum

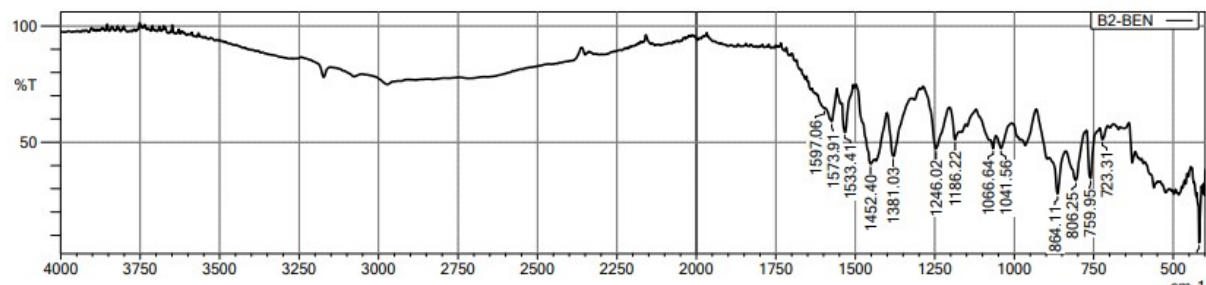


¹³C-NMR spectrum



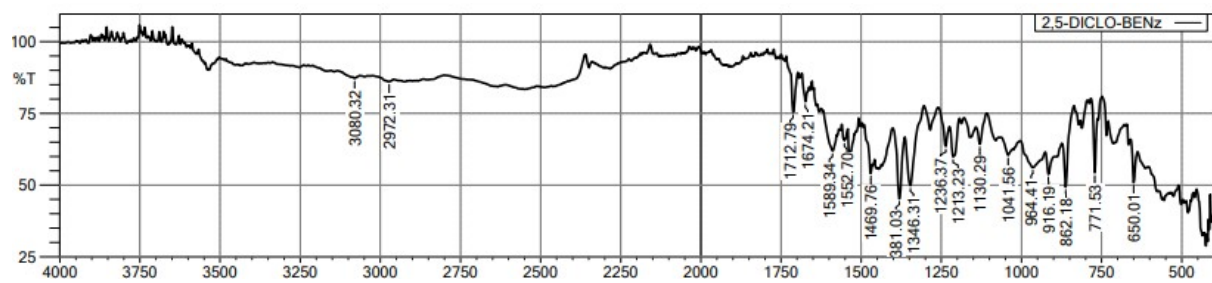
Compound **3b**

IR spectrum



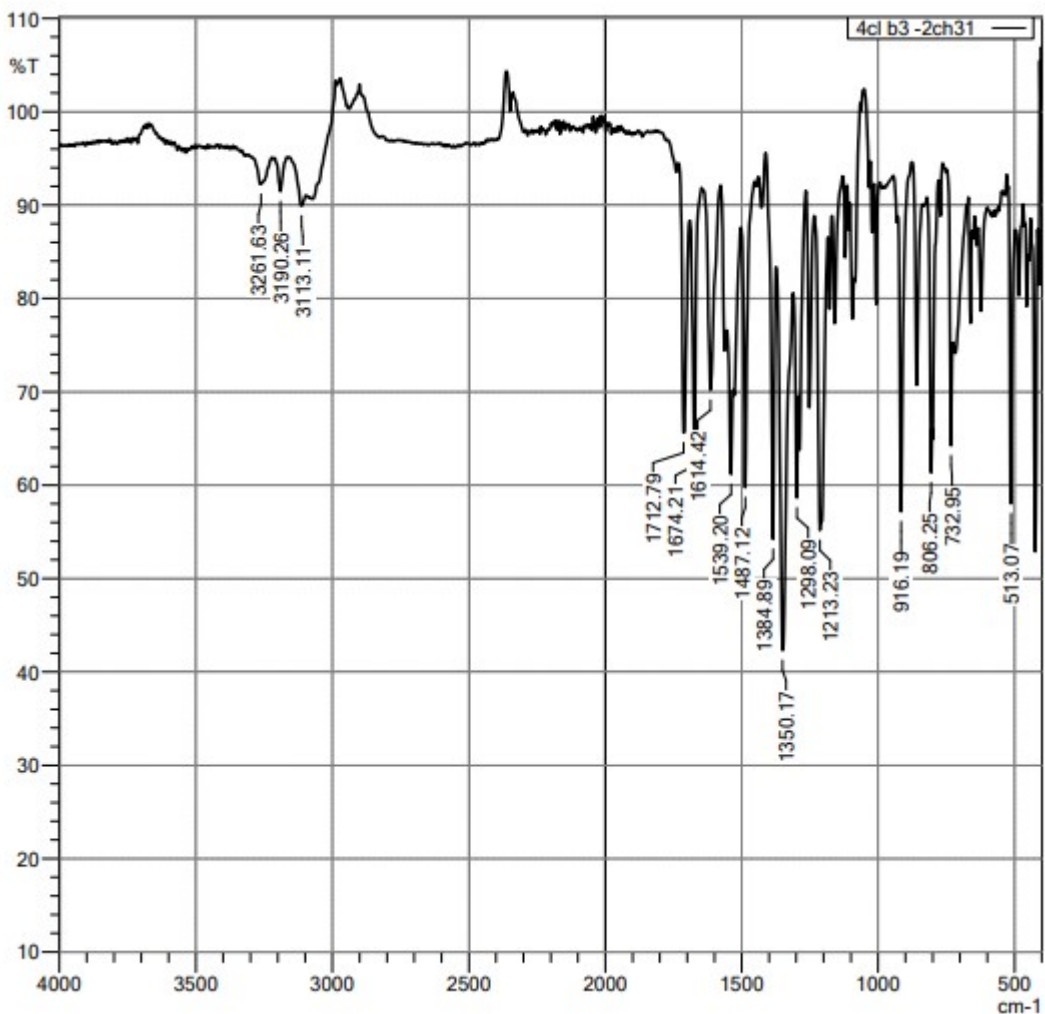
Compound 4a1

IR spectrum



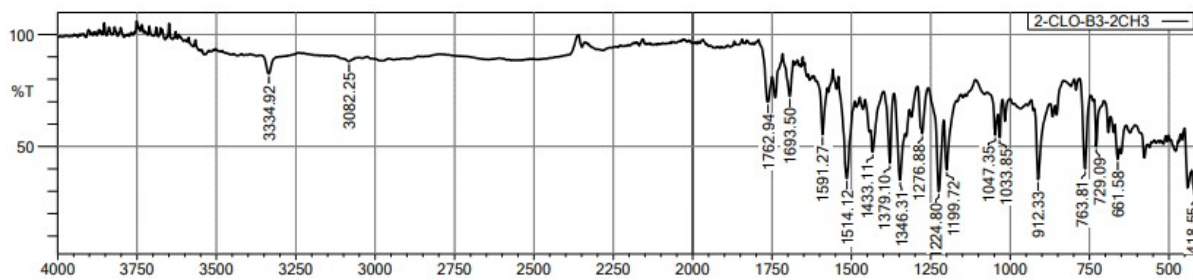
Compound 4a2

IR spectrum



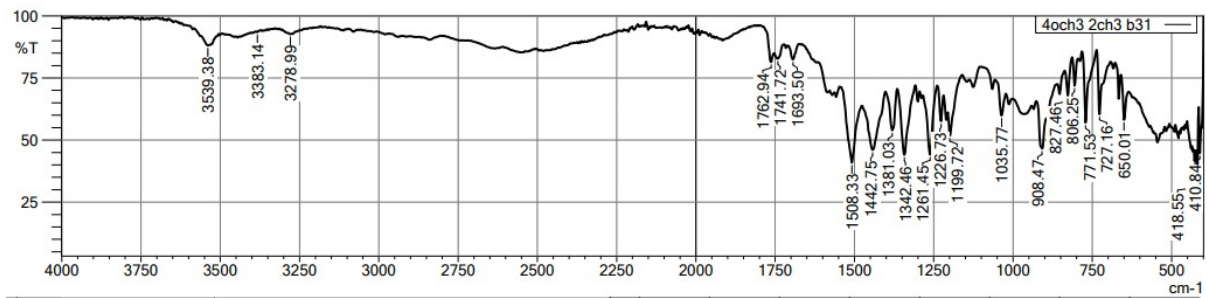
Compound **4a3**

IR spectrum



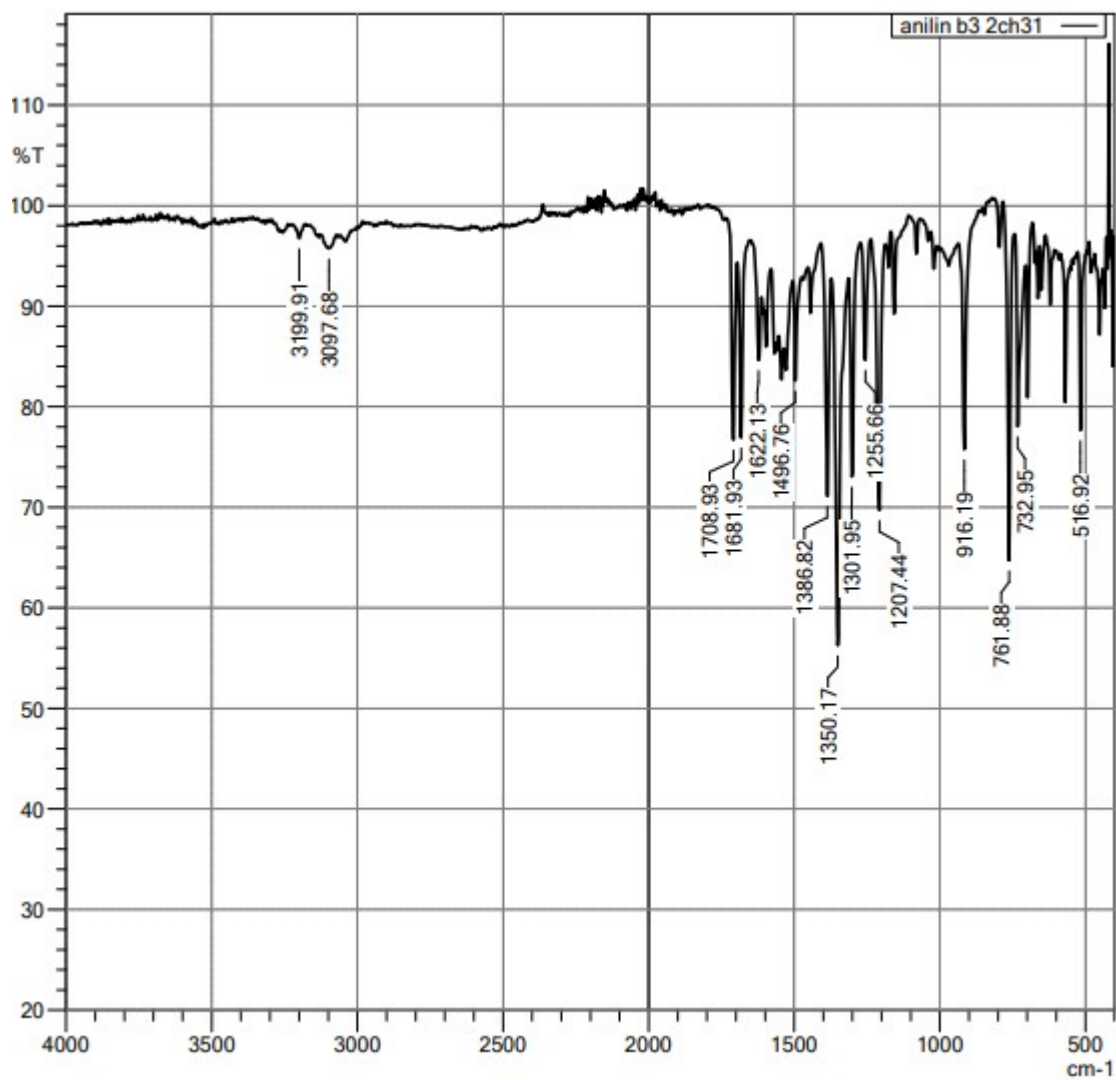
Compound **4a4**

IR spectrum



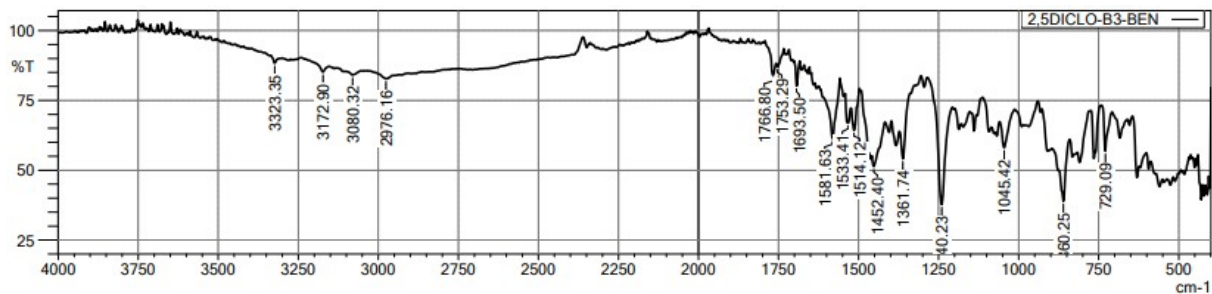
Compound 4a7

IR spectrum



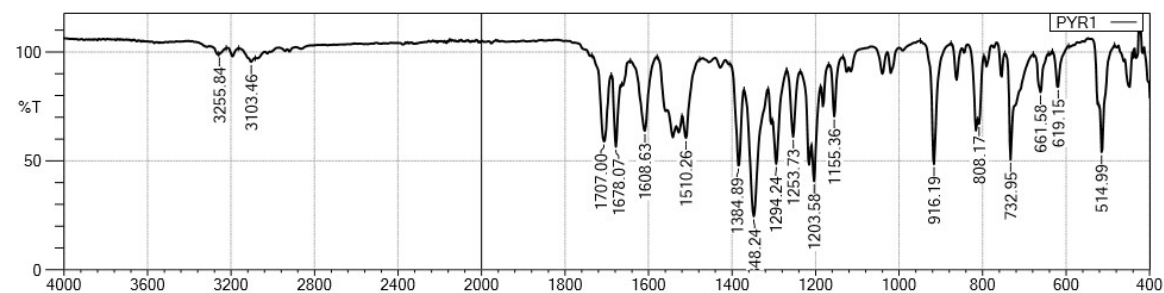
Compound 4b1

IR spectrum



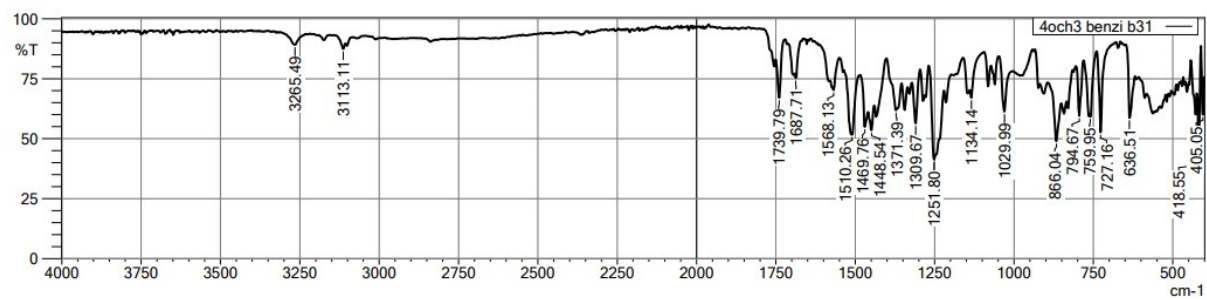
Compound 4b2

IR spectrum



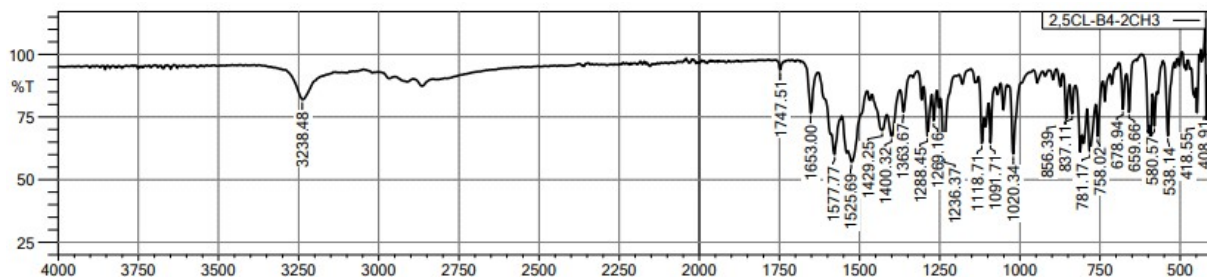
Compound 4b4

IR spectrum



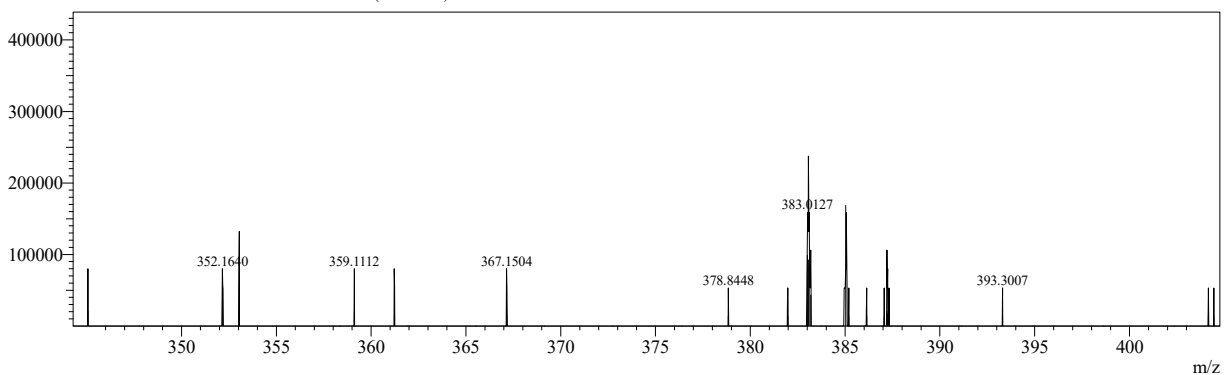
Compound 5a1

IR spectrum

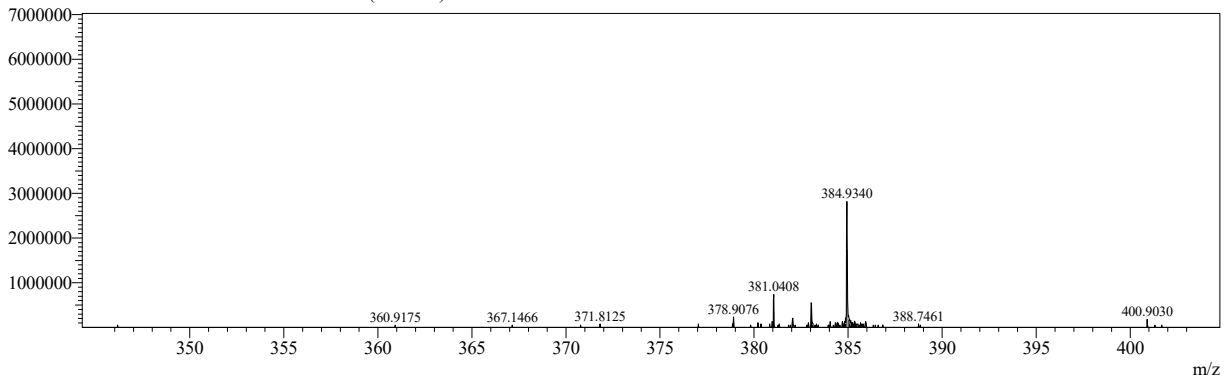


MS spectrum

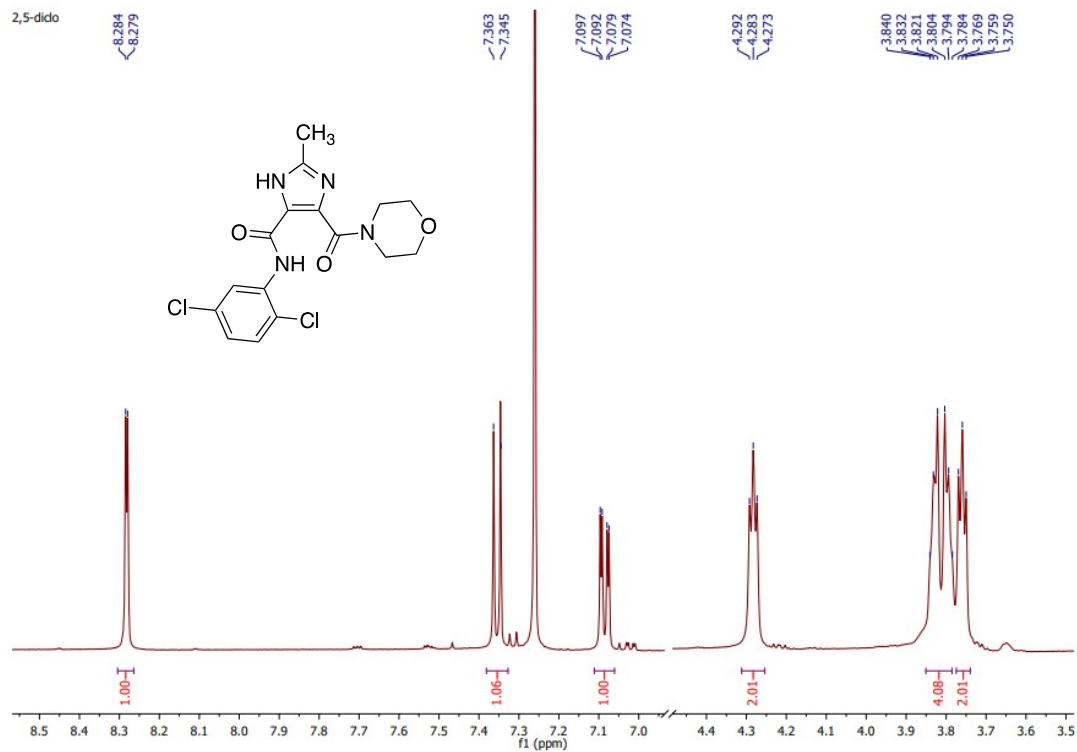
MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /+ Base Peak 483.06(2516862)

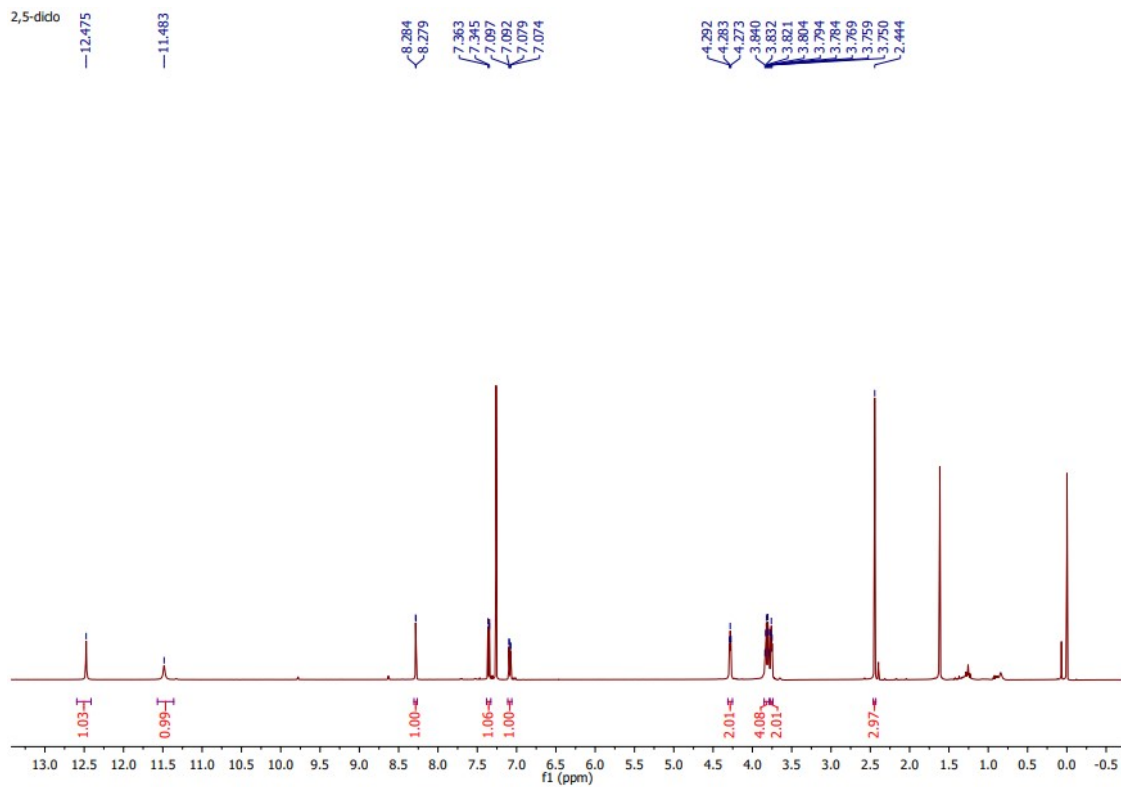


MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /- Base Peak 495.04(1813182)

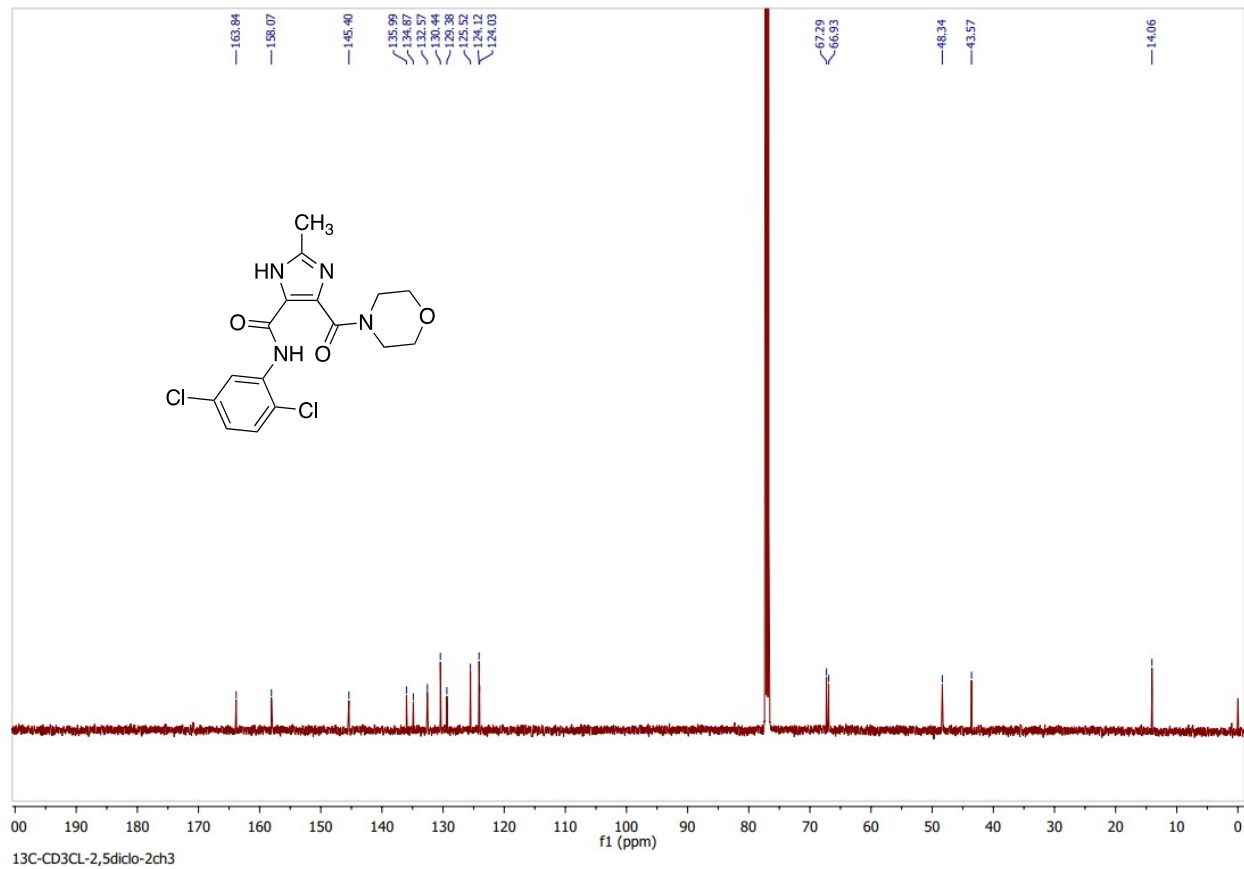


¹H-NMR spectrum, 500 MHz, CDCl₃ with 0.05% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)



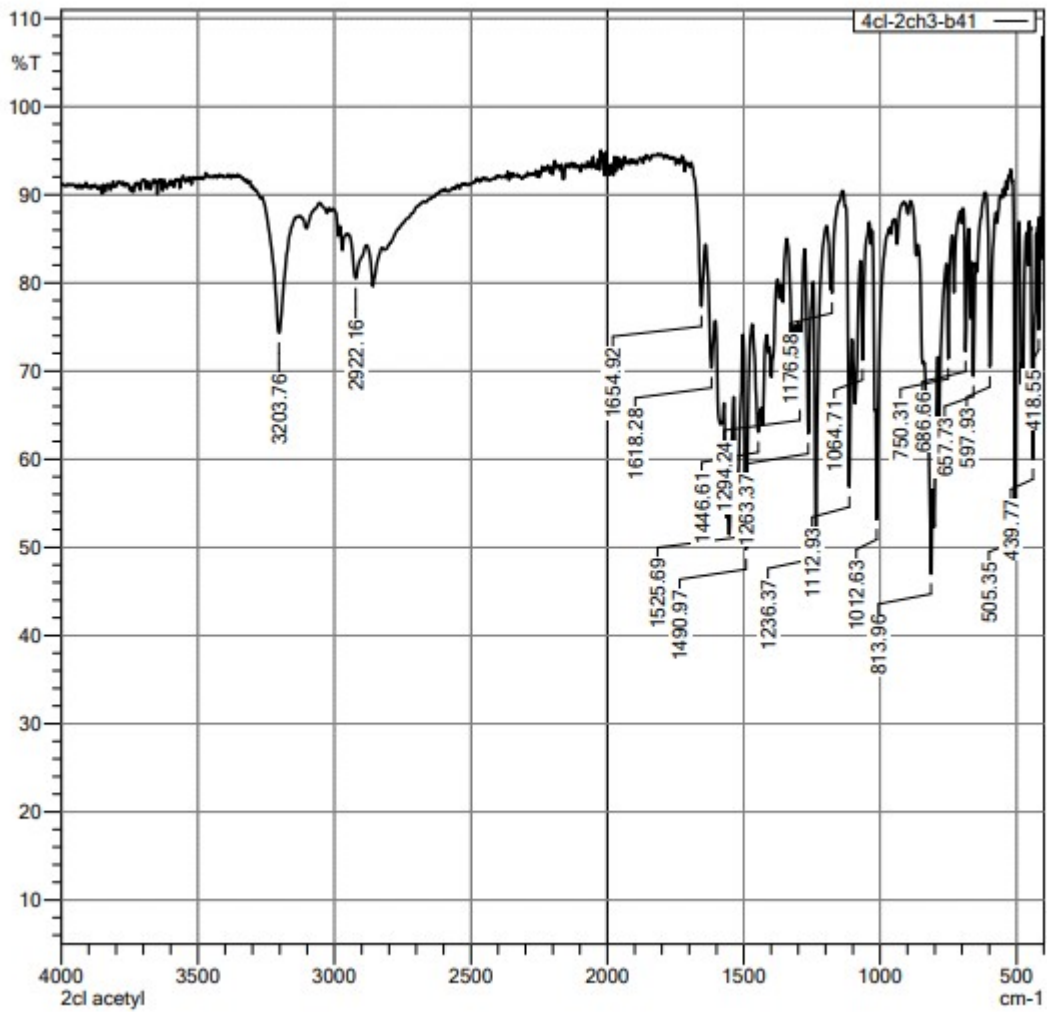


^{13}C -NMR spectrum, 125 MHz, CDCl_3 with 0.05% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)



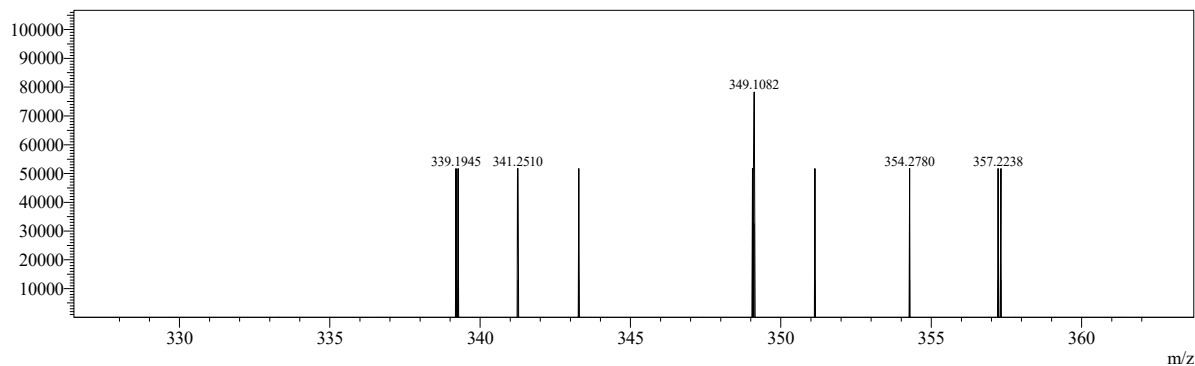
Compound 5a2

IR spectrum

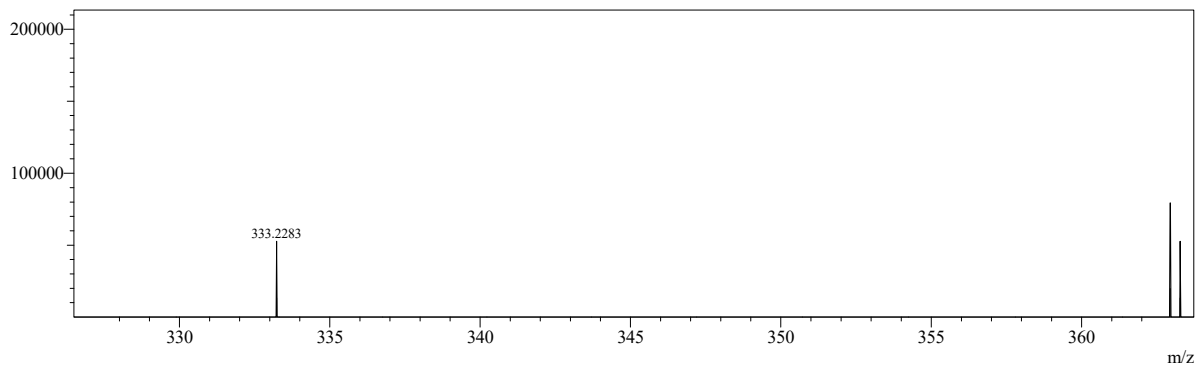


MS spectrum

MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /+ Base Peak 179.03(274254)

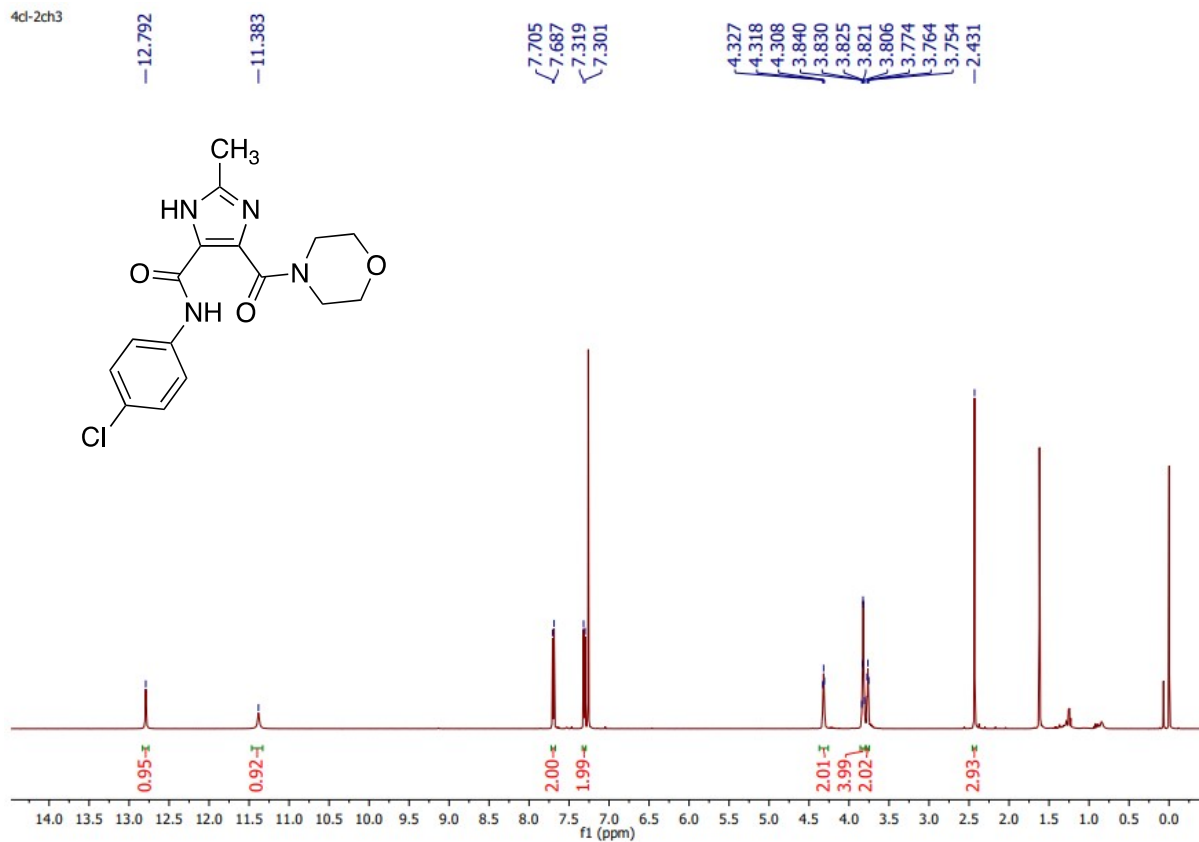


MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /- Base Peak 226.97(997268)

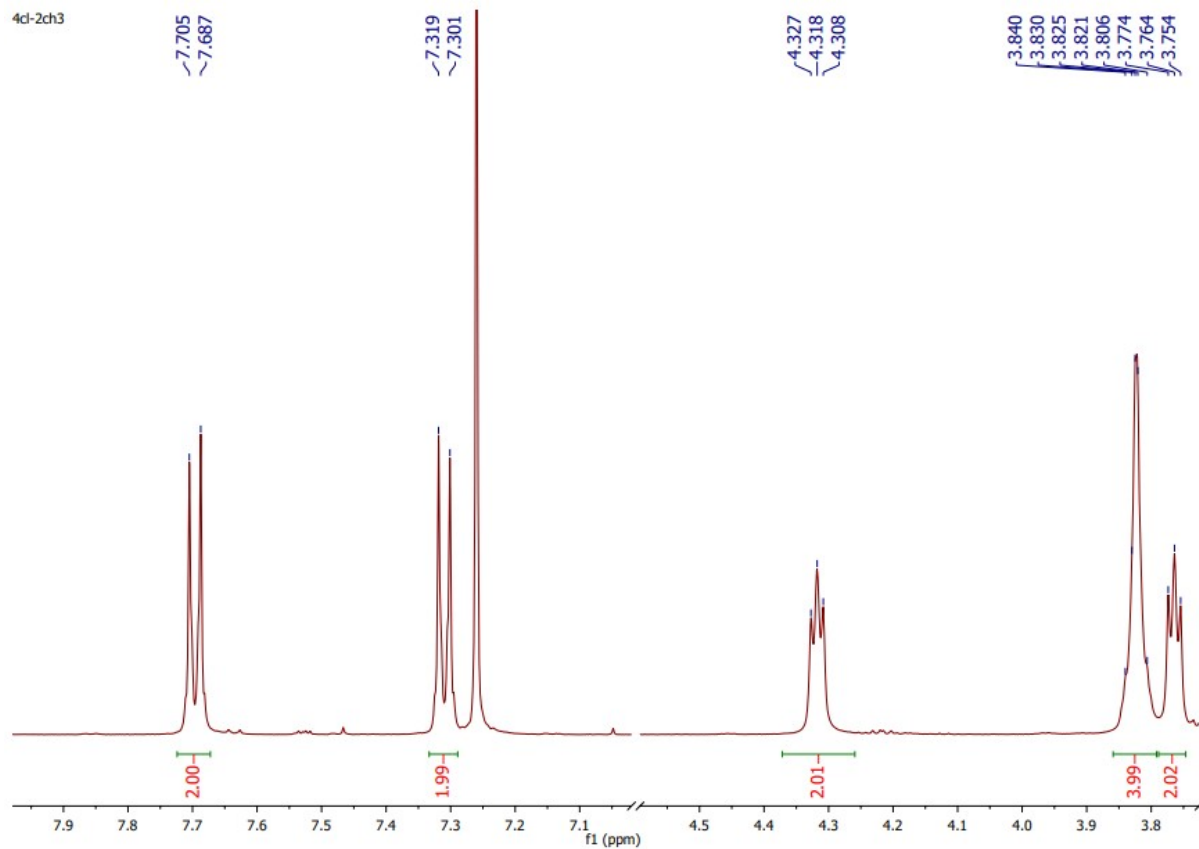


$^1\text{H-NMR}$ spectrum, 500 MHz, CDCl_3 with 0.05% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)

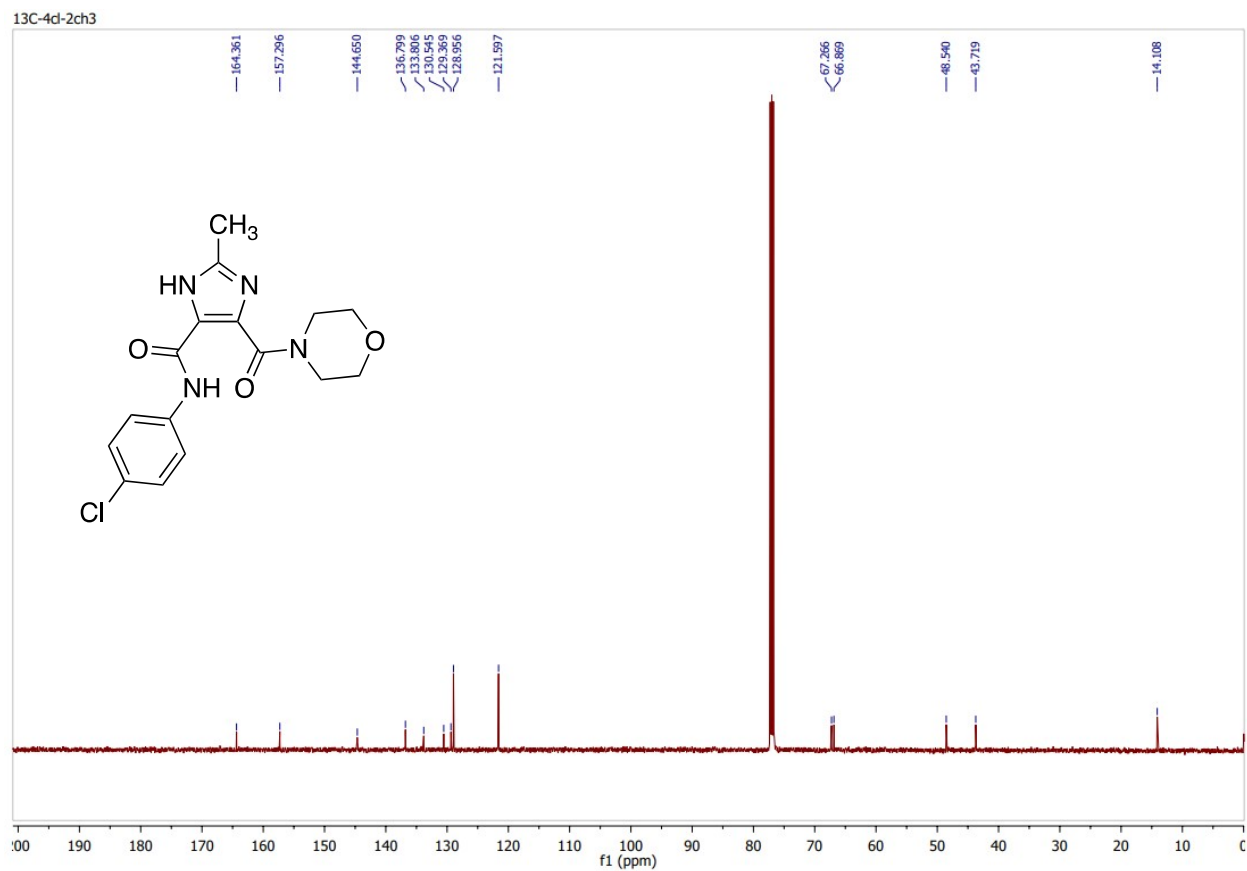
4cl-2ch3



4cl-2ch3

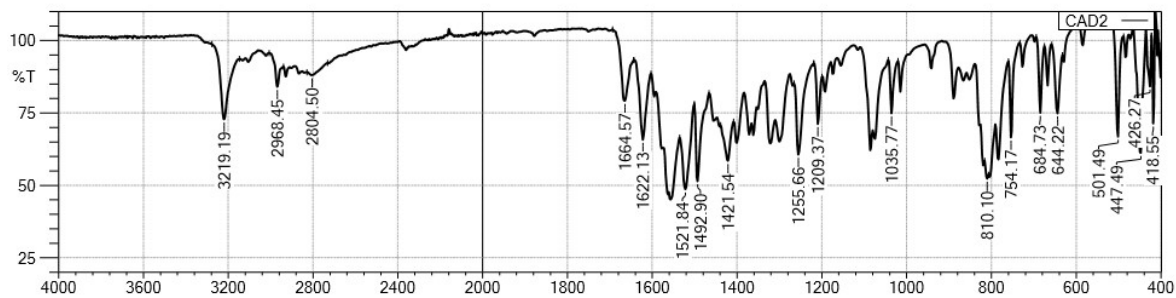


^{13}C -NMR spectrum, 125 MHz, CDCl_3 with 0.05% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)



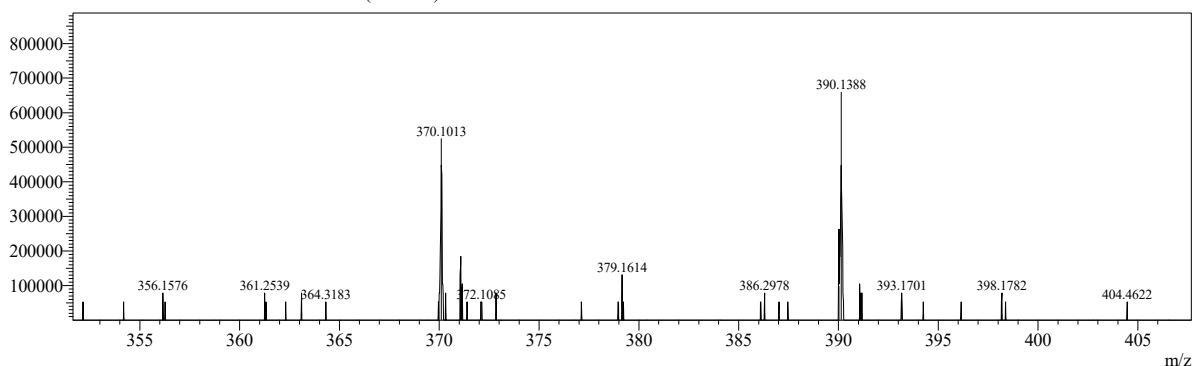
Compound 5a4

IR spectrum

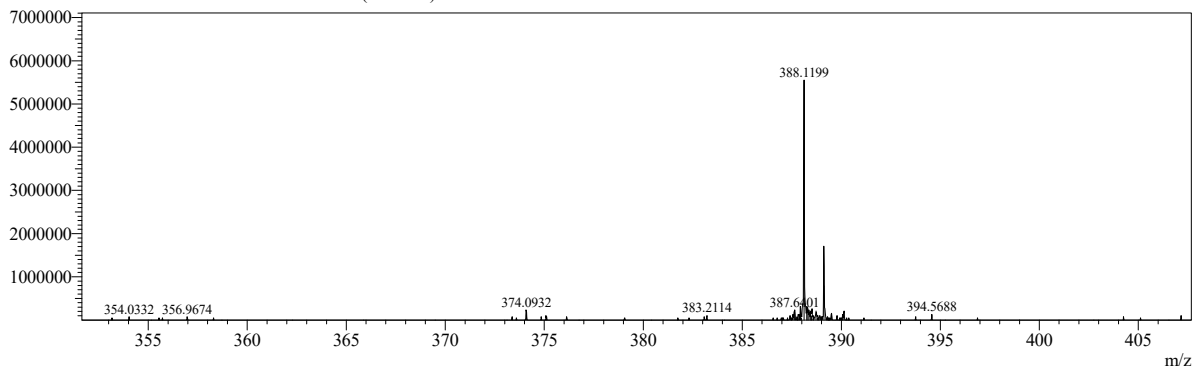


MS spectrum

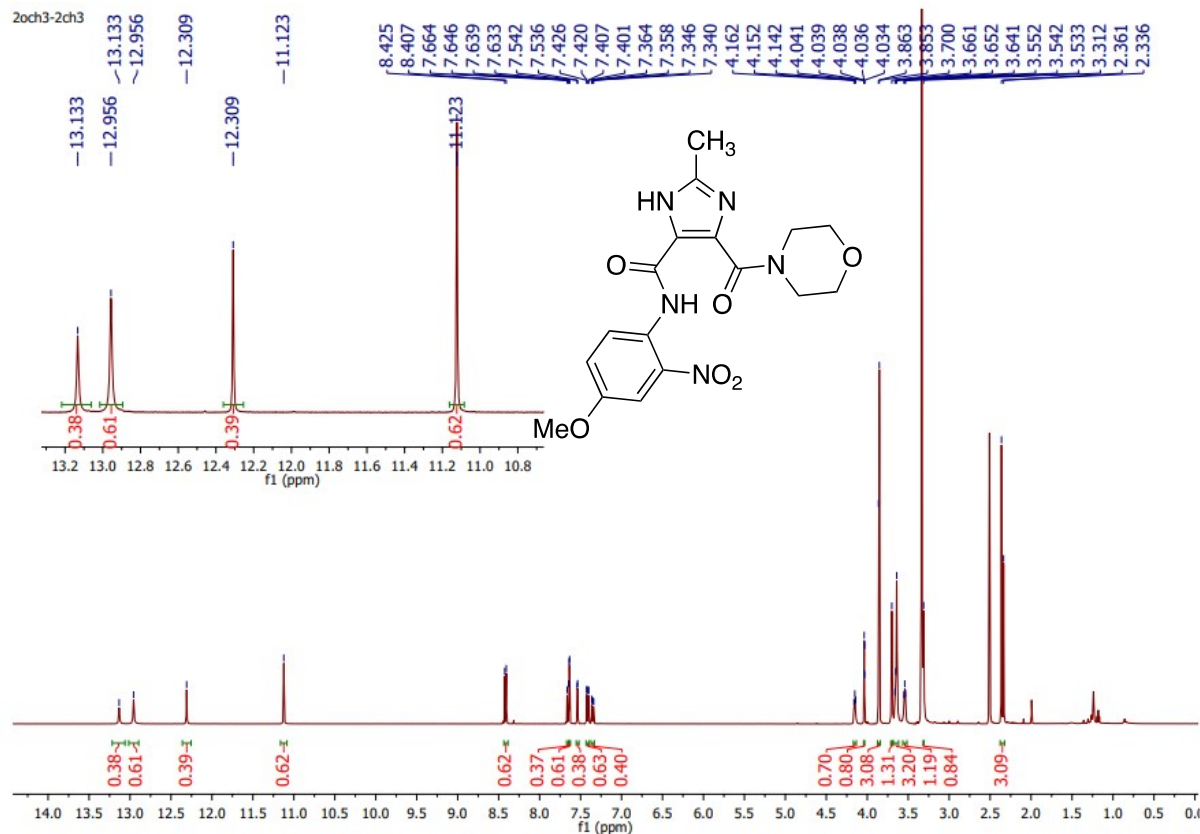
MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /+ Base Peak 412.11(9752159)



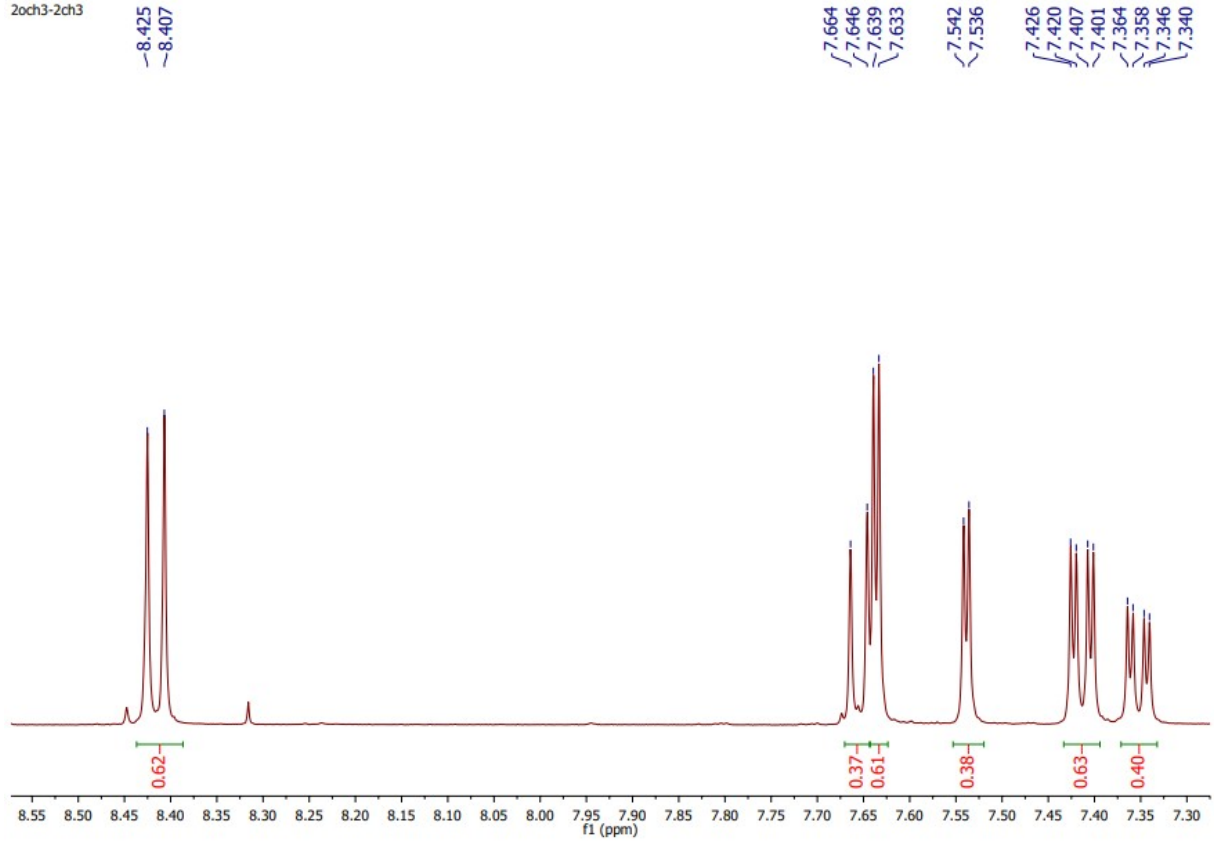
MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /- Base Peak 388.12(2558526)



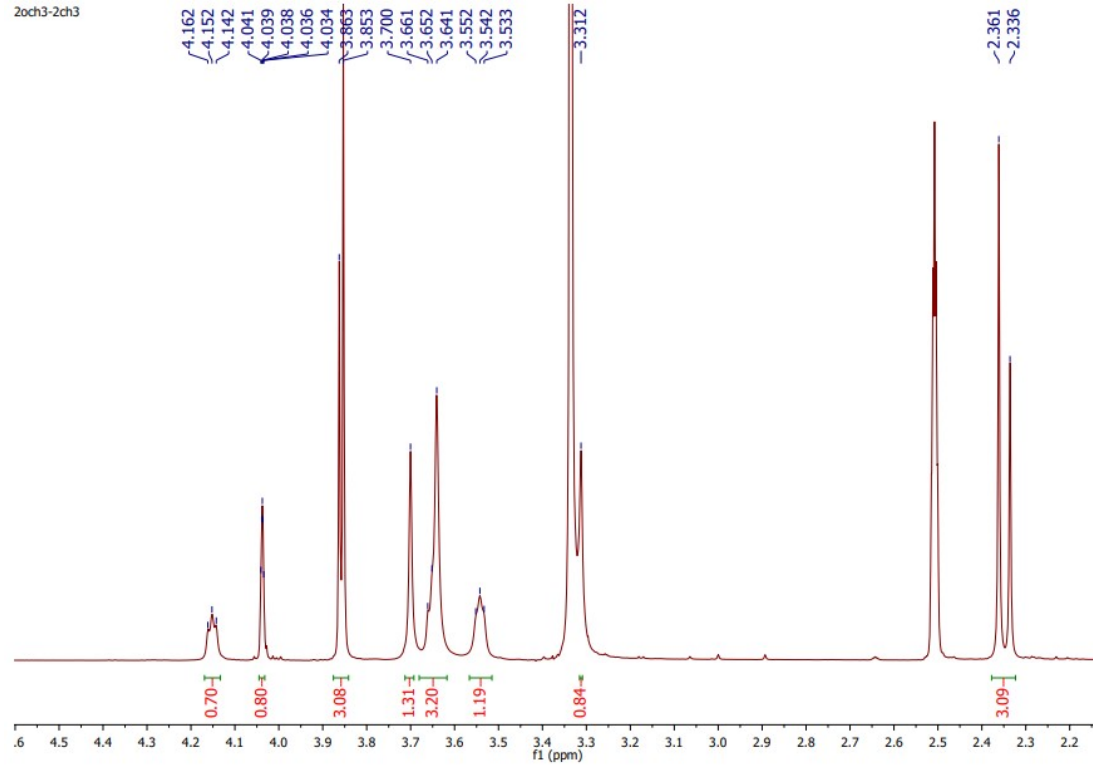
¹H-NMR spectrum, 500 MHz, DMSO-d₆



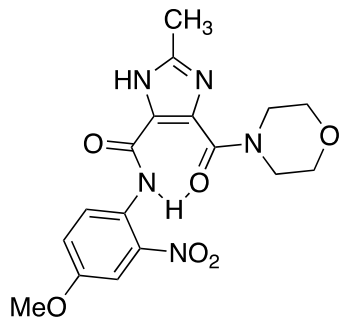
2och3-2ch3



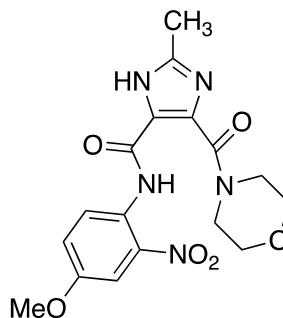
2och3-2ch3



Compound **5a4** existed in the 2 conformers: the intramolecular hydrogen bonding and the non-intramolecular hydrogen bonding between 2 amide groups at approximate ratio of 4:6.

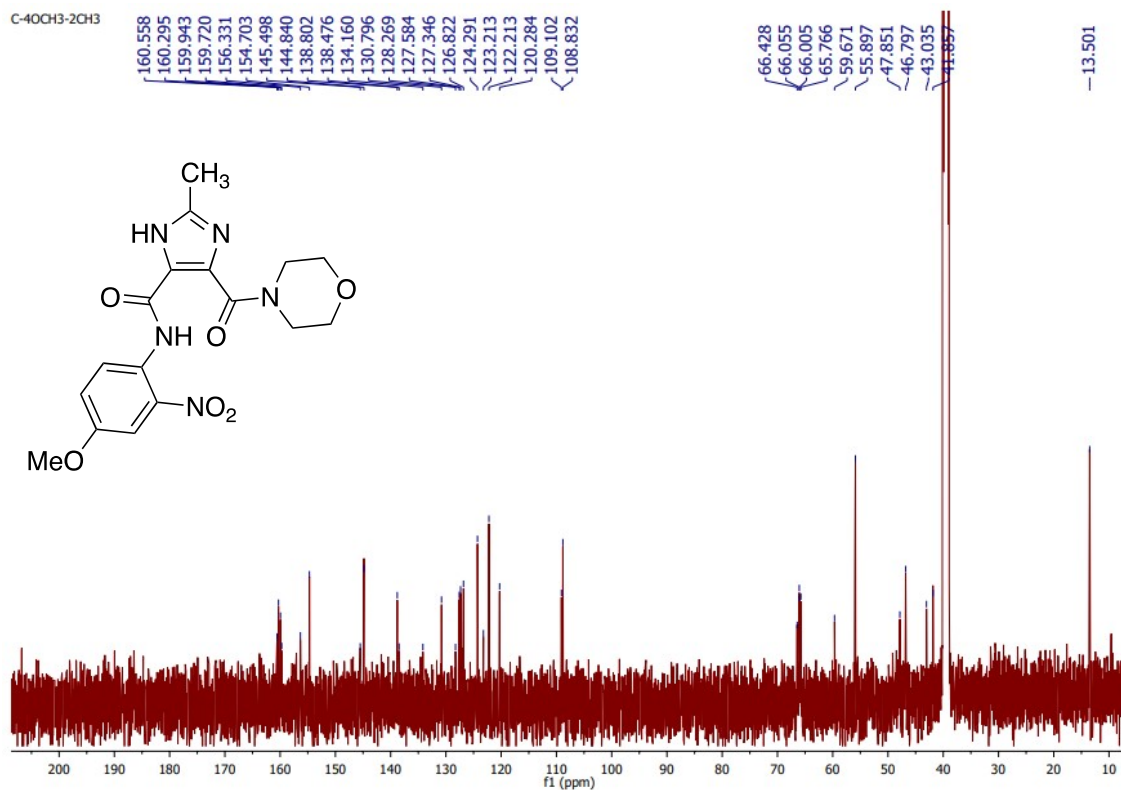


intrahydrogen bonding conformer



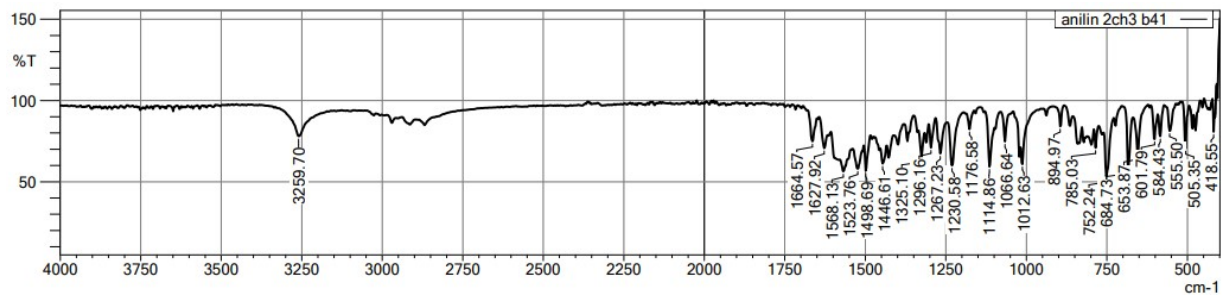
non-intrahydrogen bonding conformer

^{13}C -NMR spectrum, 500 MHz, $\text{DMSO-}d_6$



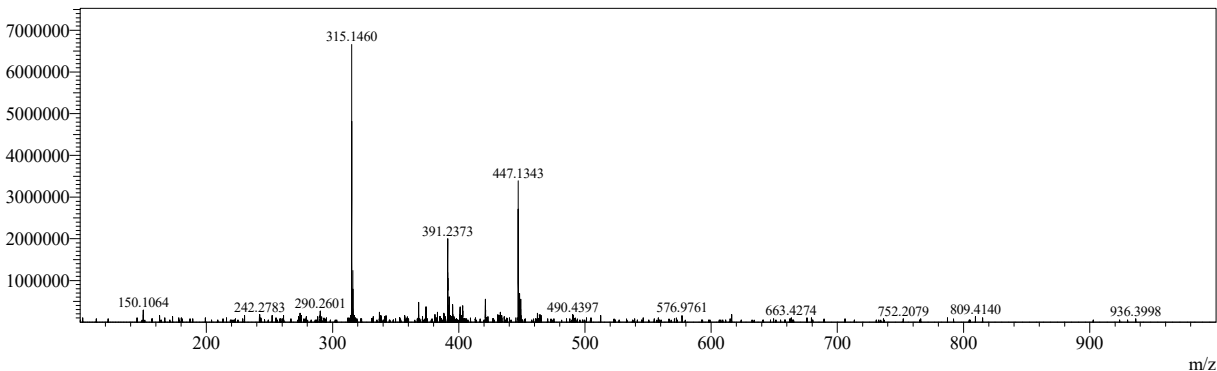
Compound 5a7

IR spectrum

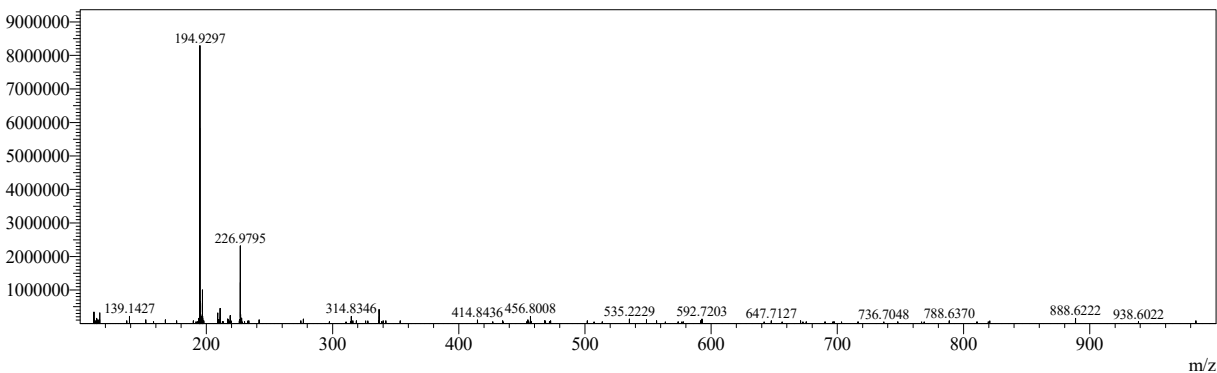


MS spectrum

MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /+ Base Peak 315.15(6663364)

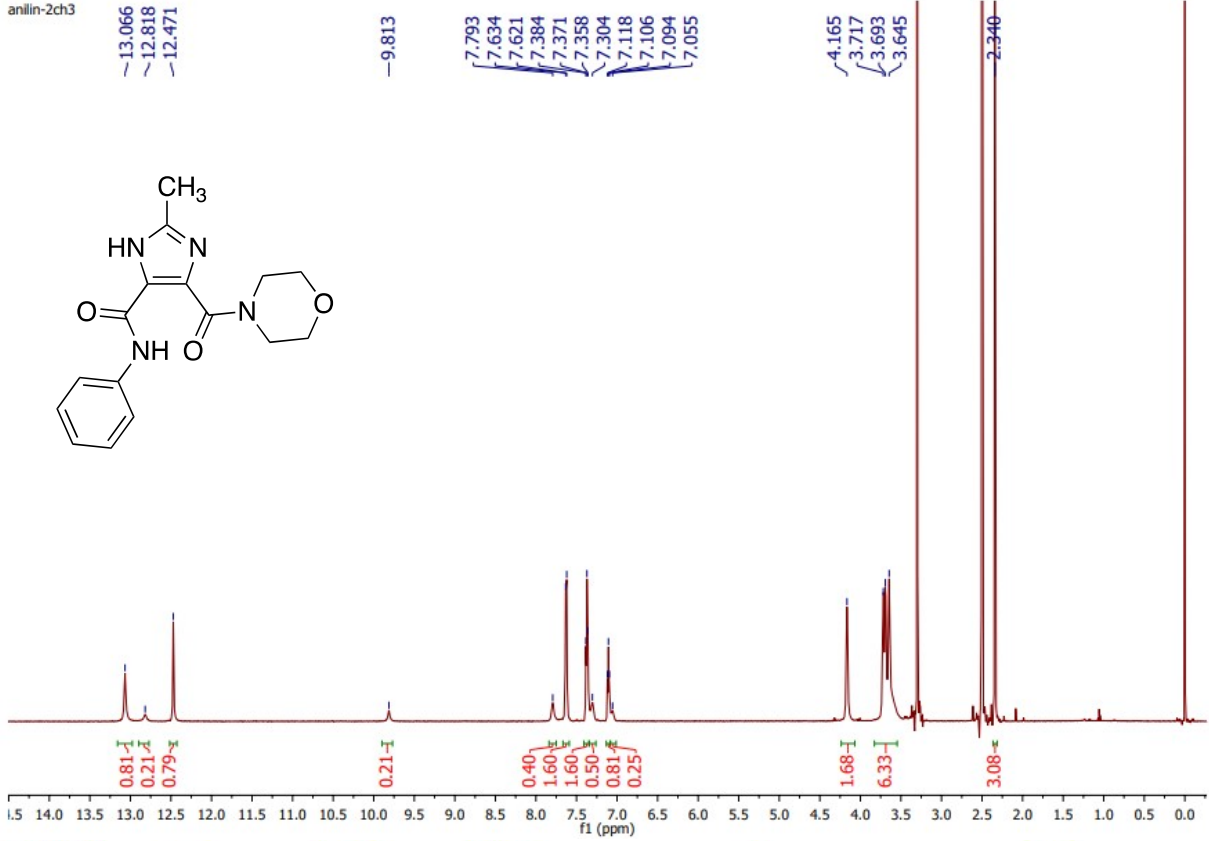


MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /- Base Peak 194.93(5822783)

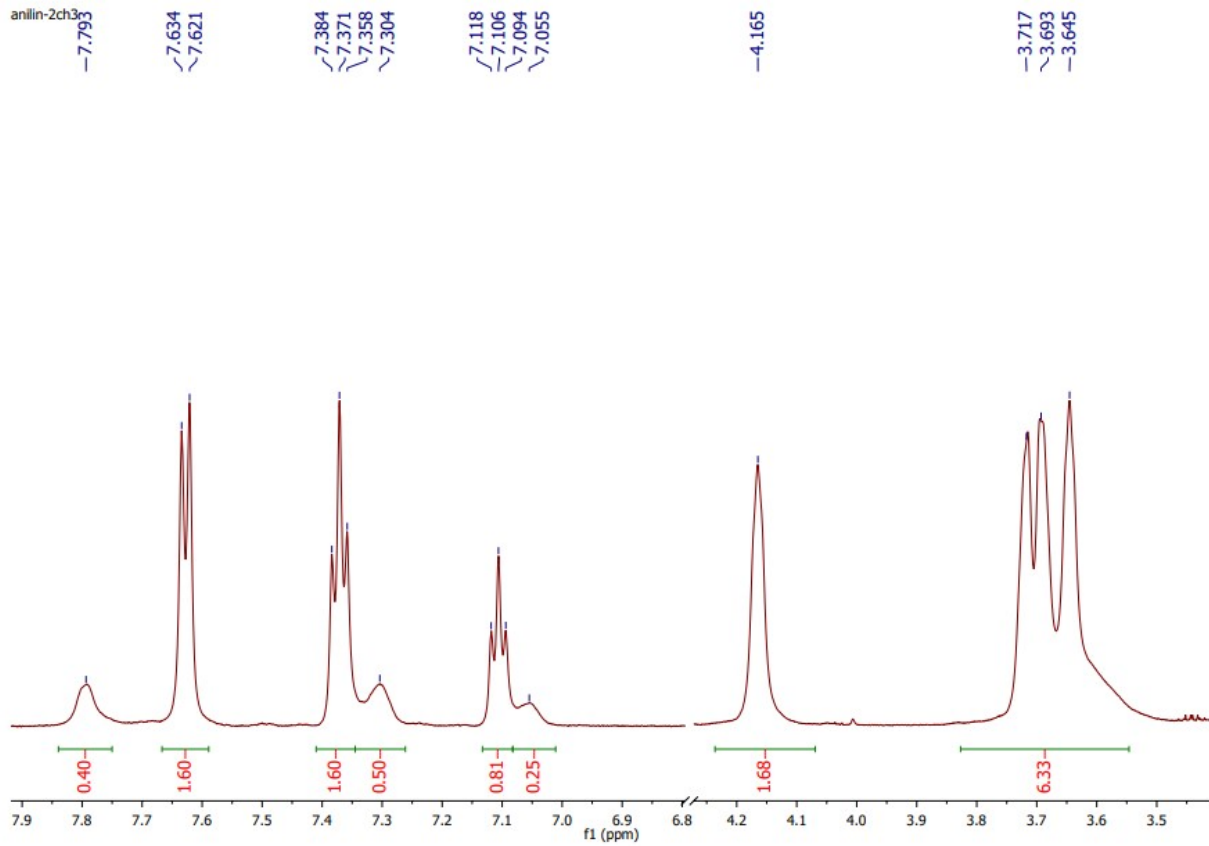


¹H-NMR spectrum, 500 MHz, DMSO-d₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)

anilin-2ch3

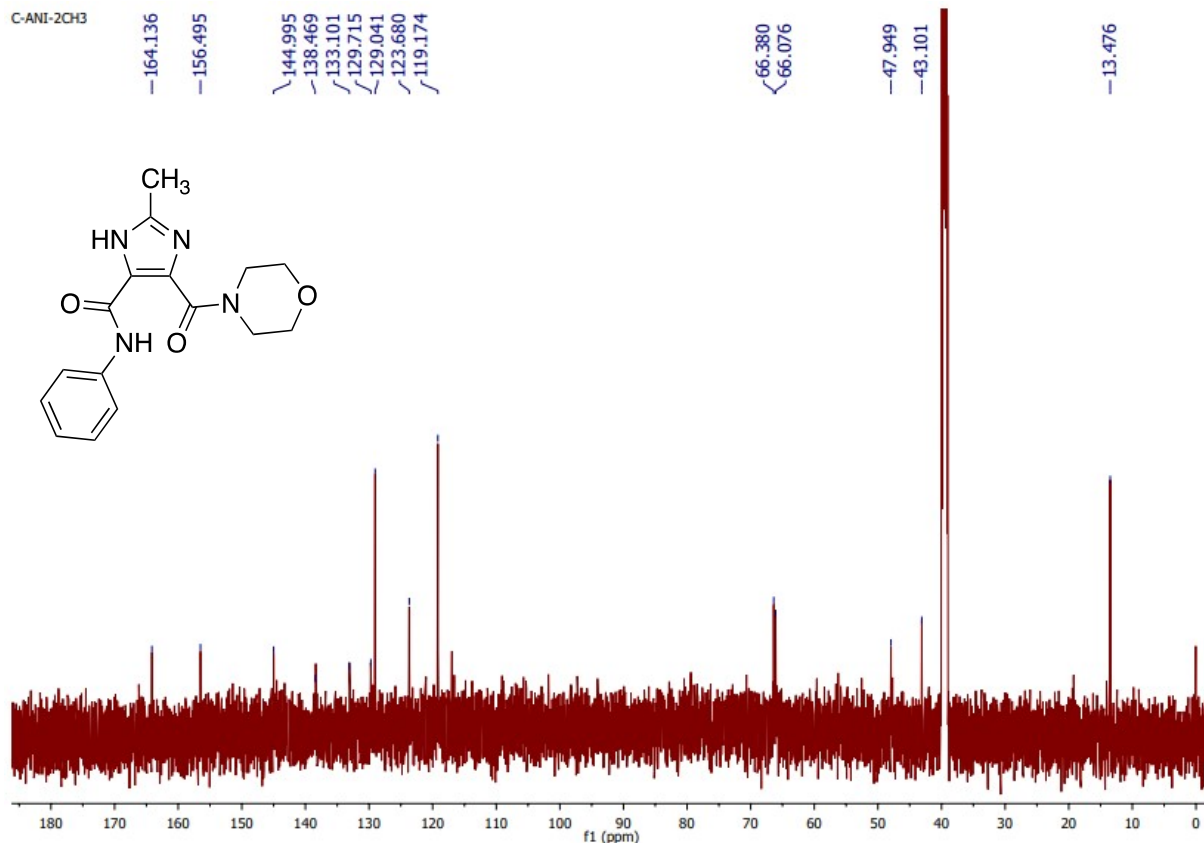


anilin-2ch3



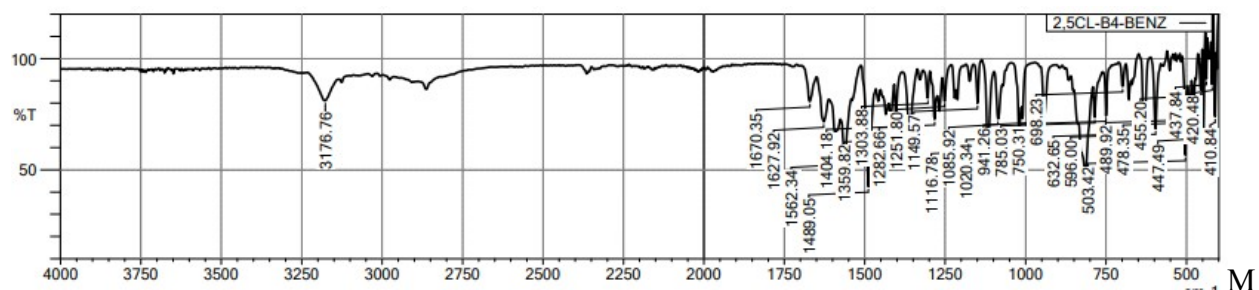
Compound **5a7** existed in the 2 conformers: the intramolecular hydrogen bonding and the non-intramolecular hydrogen bonding at approximate ratio of 8:2.

^{13}C -NMR spectrum, 125 MHz, $\text{DMSO-}d_6$ with 0.03% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)



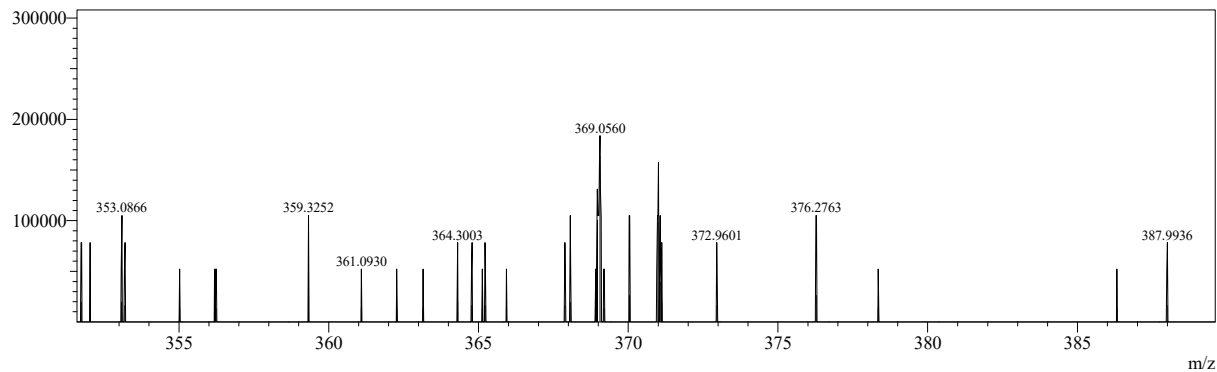
Compound **5b1**

IR spectrum

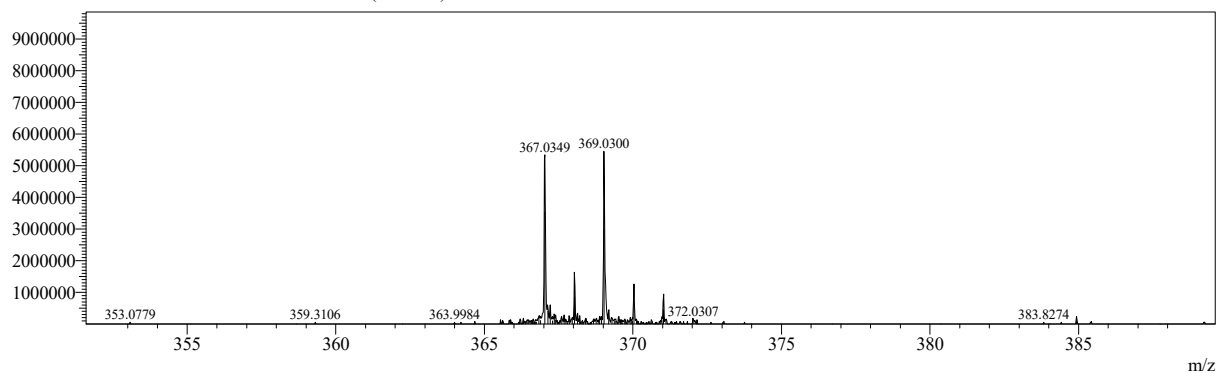


S spectrum

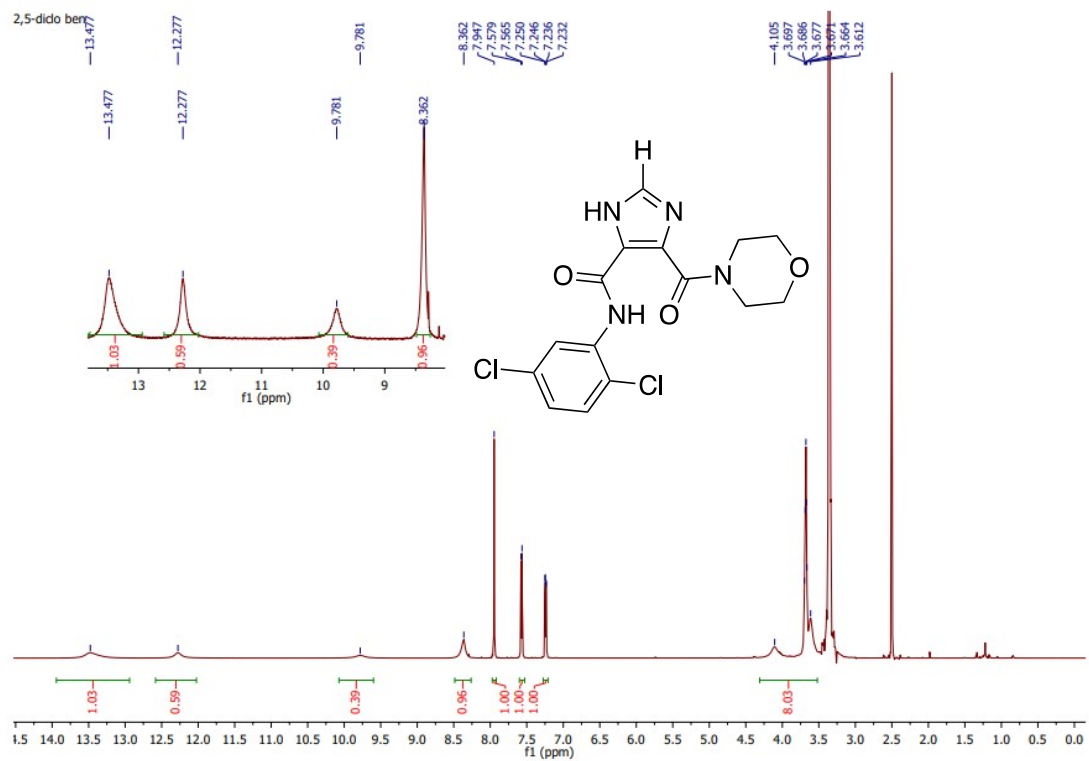
MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /+ Base Peak 701.49(3493435)

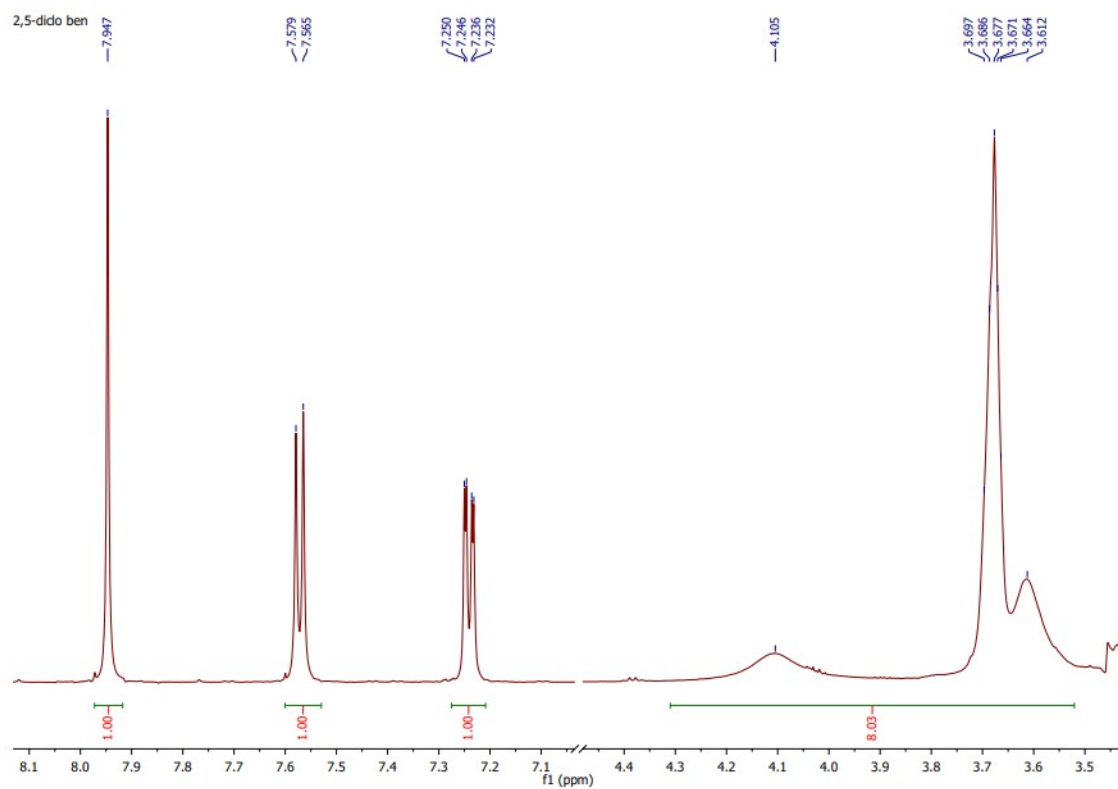


MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /- Base Peak 367.03(3536409)



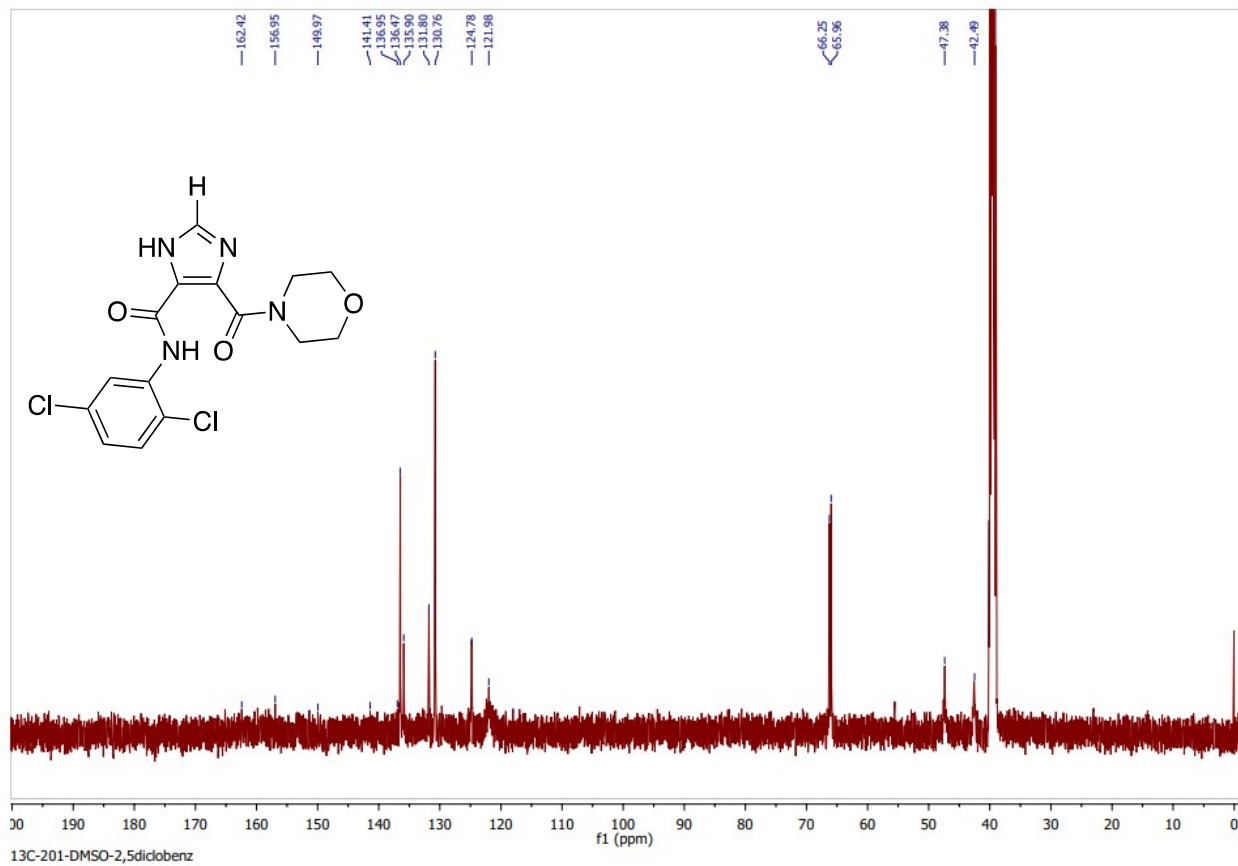
¹H-NMR spectrum, 600 MHz, DMSO-d₆





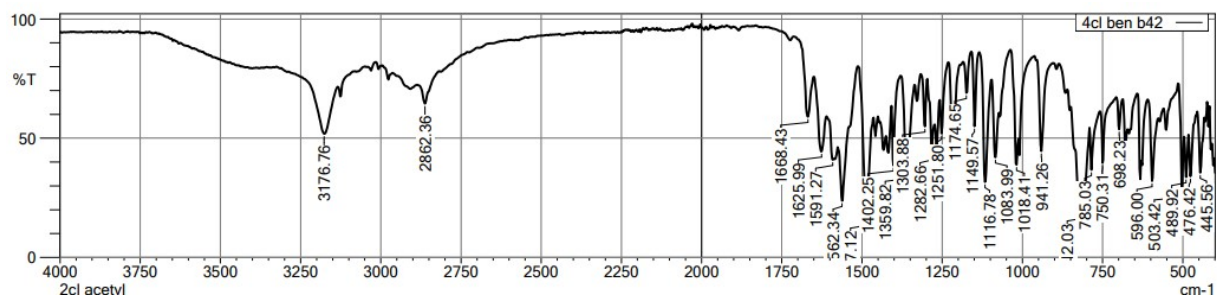
Compound **5b1** existed in the 2 conformers: the intramolecular hydrogen bonding and the non-intramolecular hydrogen bonding at approximate ratio of 6:4.

^{13}C -NMR spectrum, 125 MHz, $\text{DMSO-}d_6$ with 0.03% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)



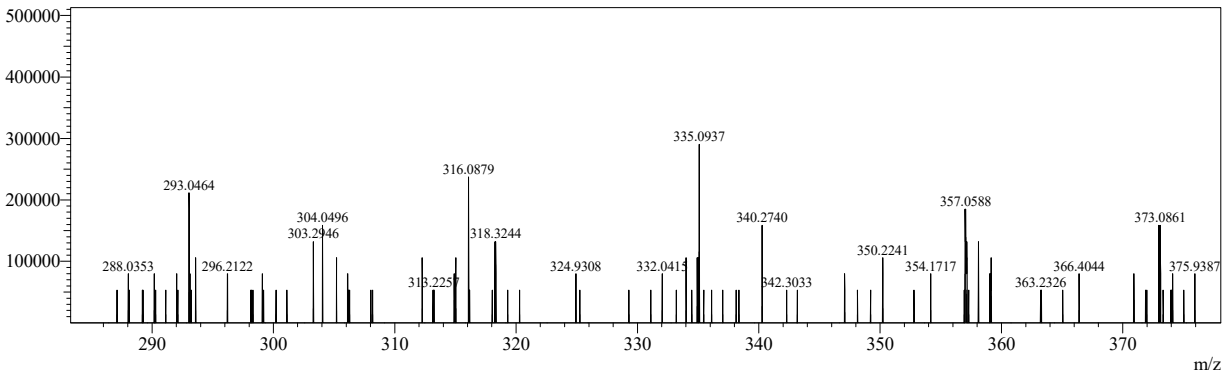
Compound 5b2

IR spectrum

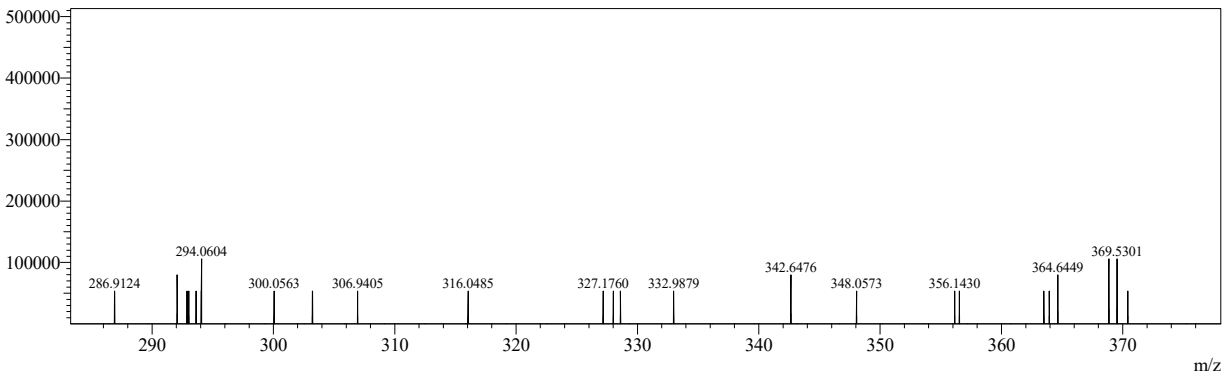


MS spectrum

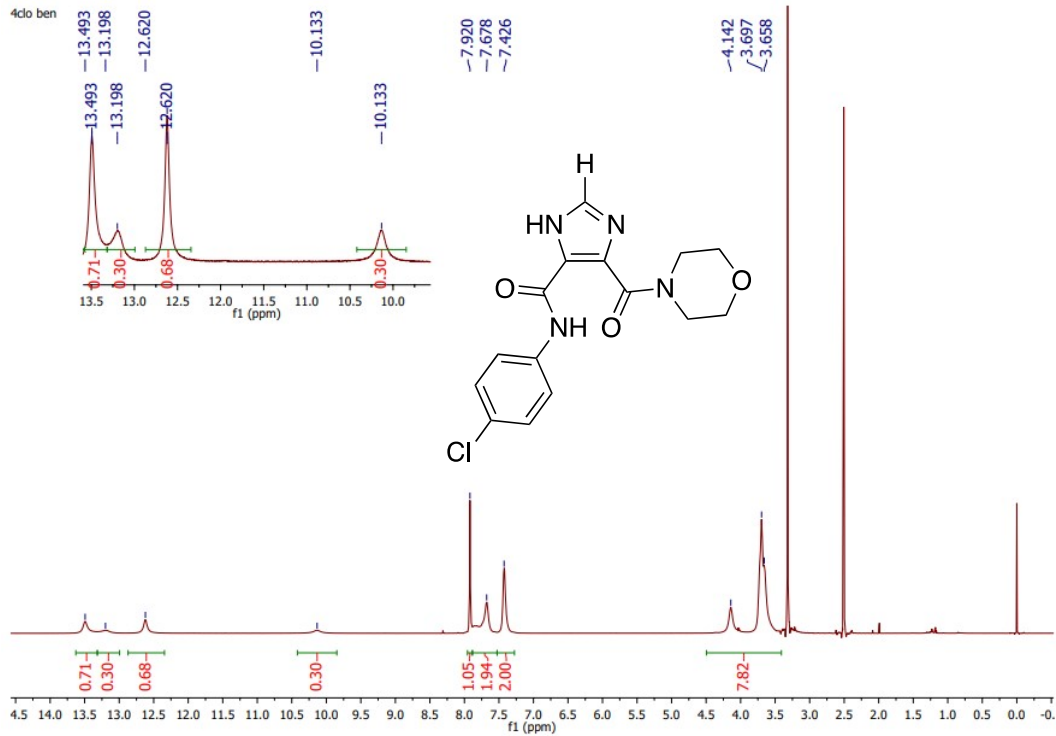
MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /+ Base Peak 179.02(2186970)

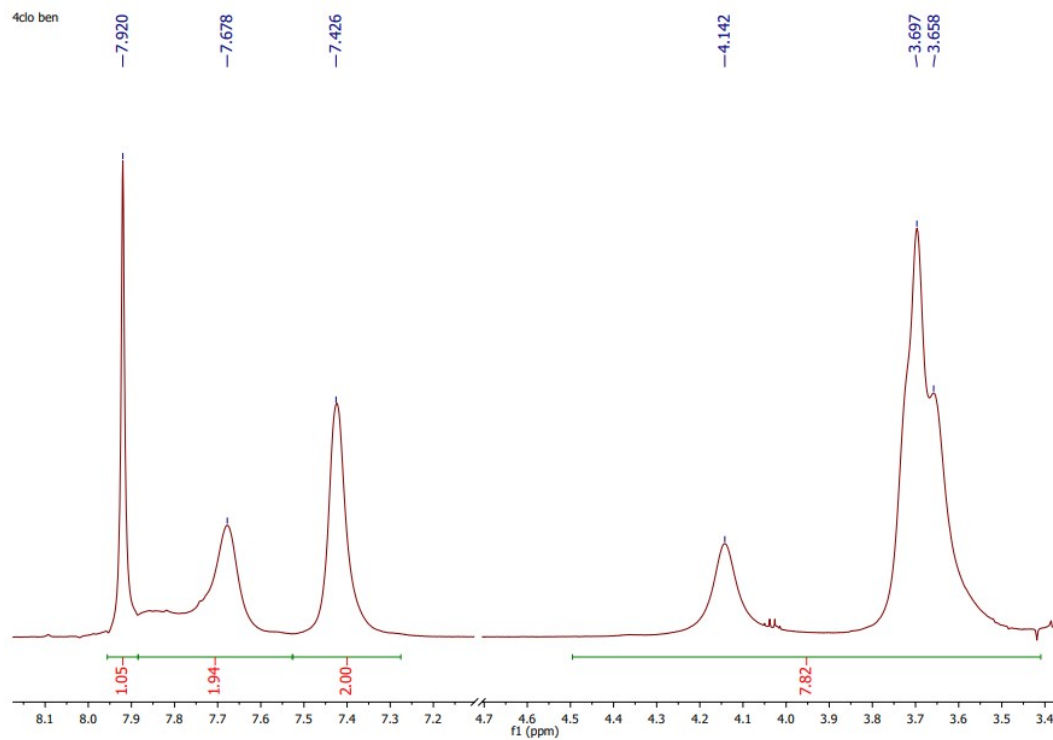


MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /- Base Peak 226.98(2176613)



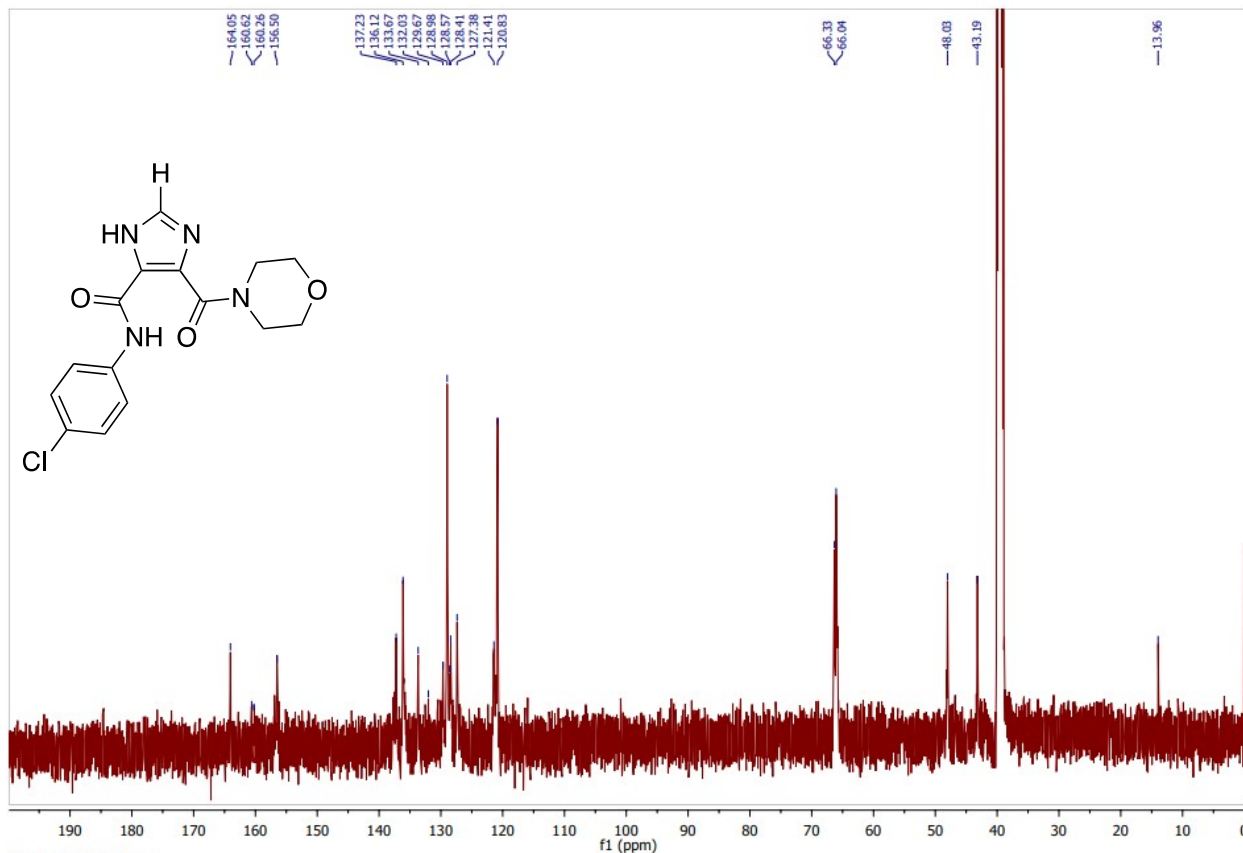
¹H-NMR spectrum, 125 MHz, DMSO-d₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)





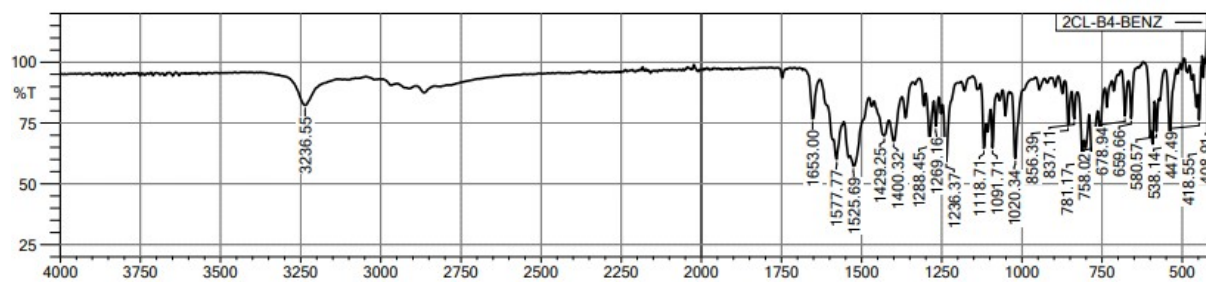
Compound **5b2** existed in the 2 conformers: the intramolecular hydrogen bonding and the non-intramolecular hydrogen bonding at approximate ratio of 7:3.

^{13}C -NMR spectrum, 125 MHz, $\text{DMSO-}d_6$ with 0.03% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)



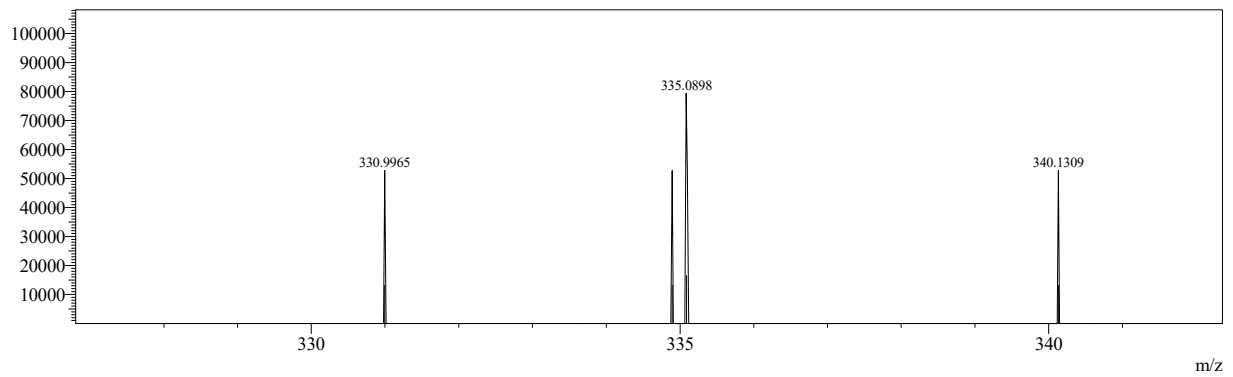
13C-202-DMSO-4clobenz
Compound 5b3

IR spectrum

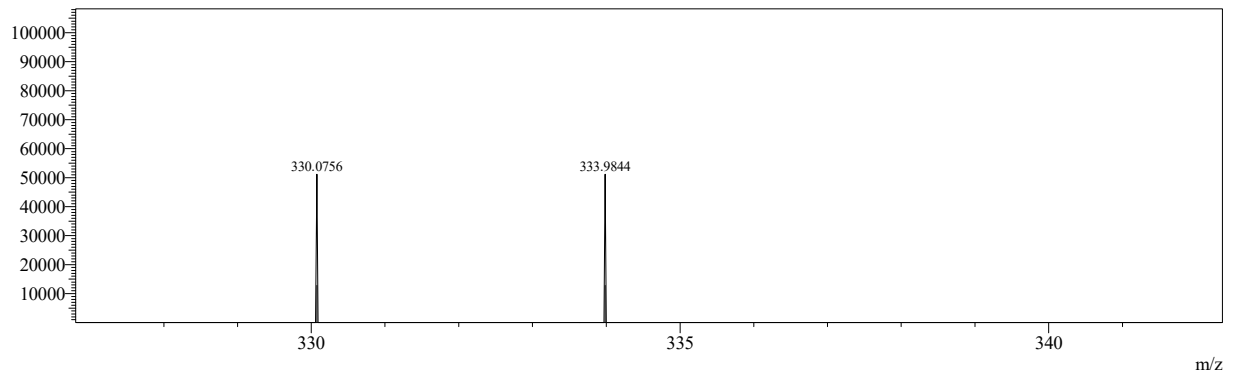


MS spectrum

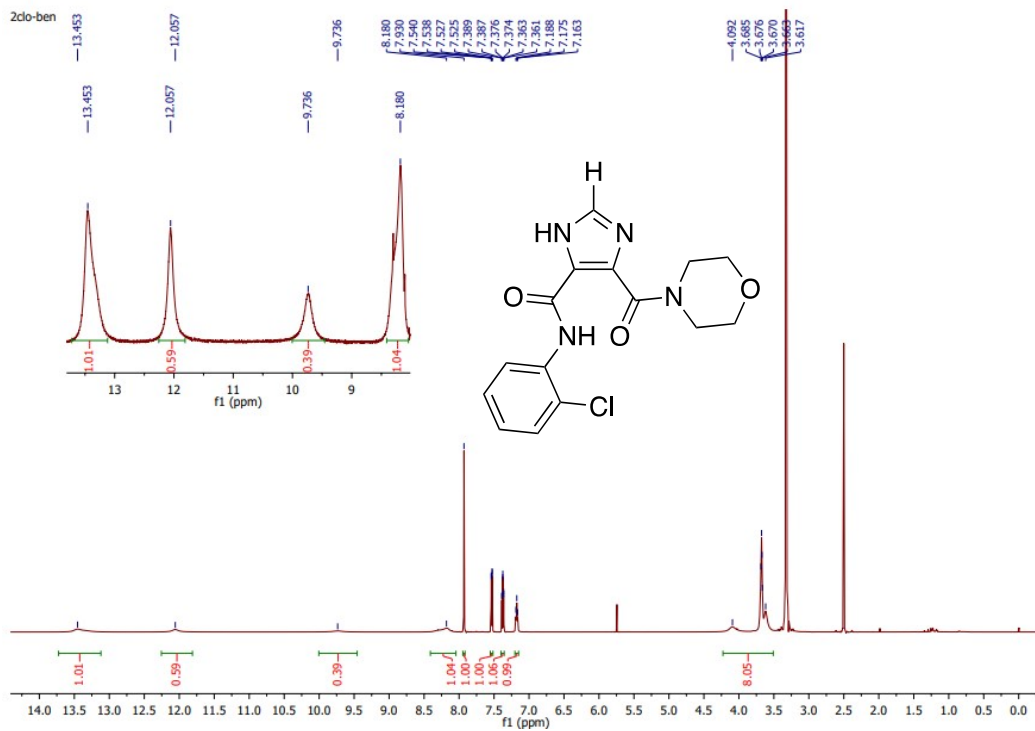
MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /+ Base Peak 261.16(354238)

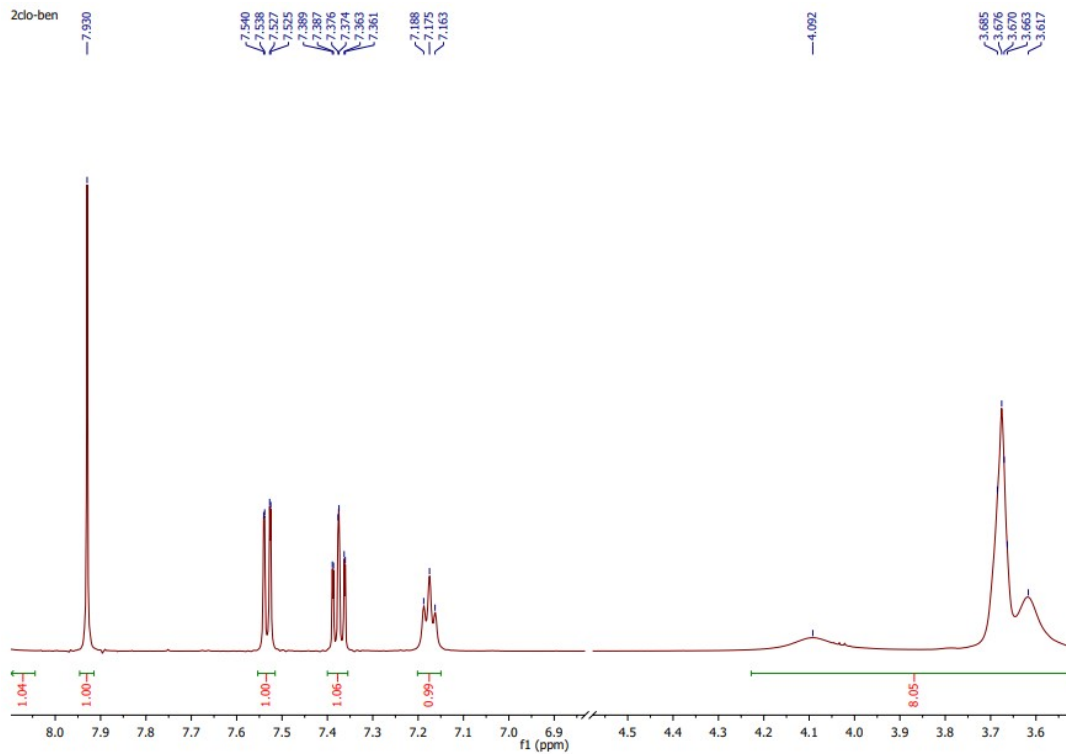


MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /- Base Peak 226.97(1359507)



¹H-NMR spectrum, 600 MHz, DMSO-d₆

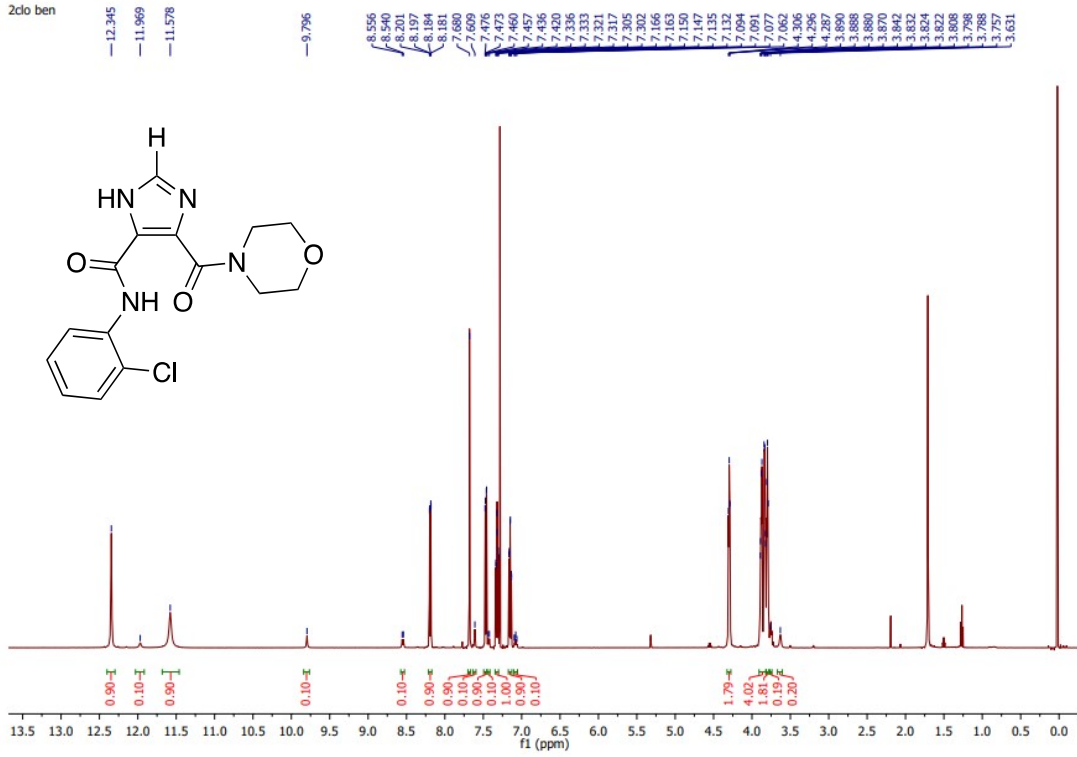




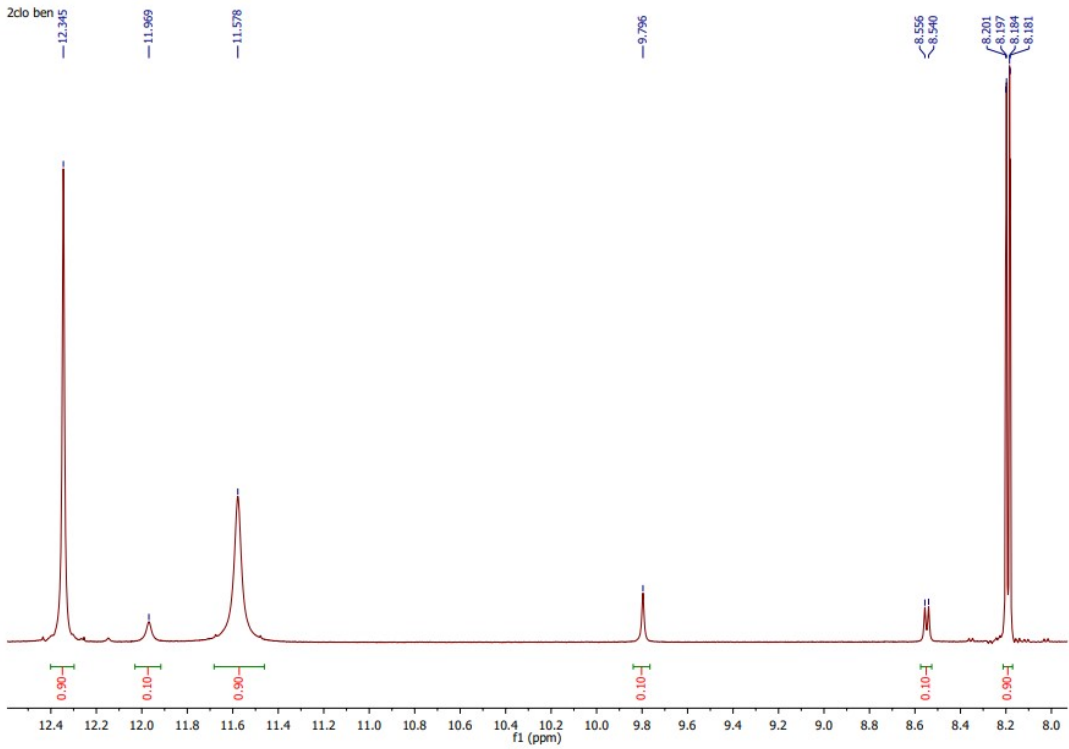
Compound **5b3** existed in the 2 conformers in DMSO: the intramolecular hydrogen bonding and the non-intramolecular hydrogen bonding at approximate ratio of 6:4.

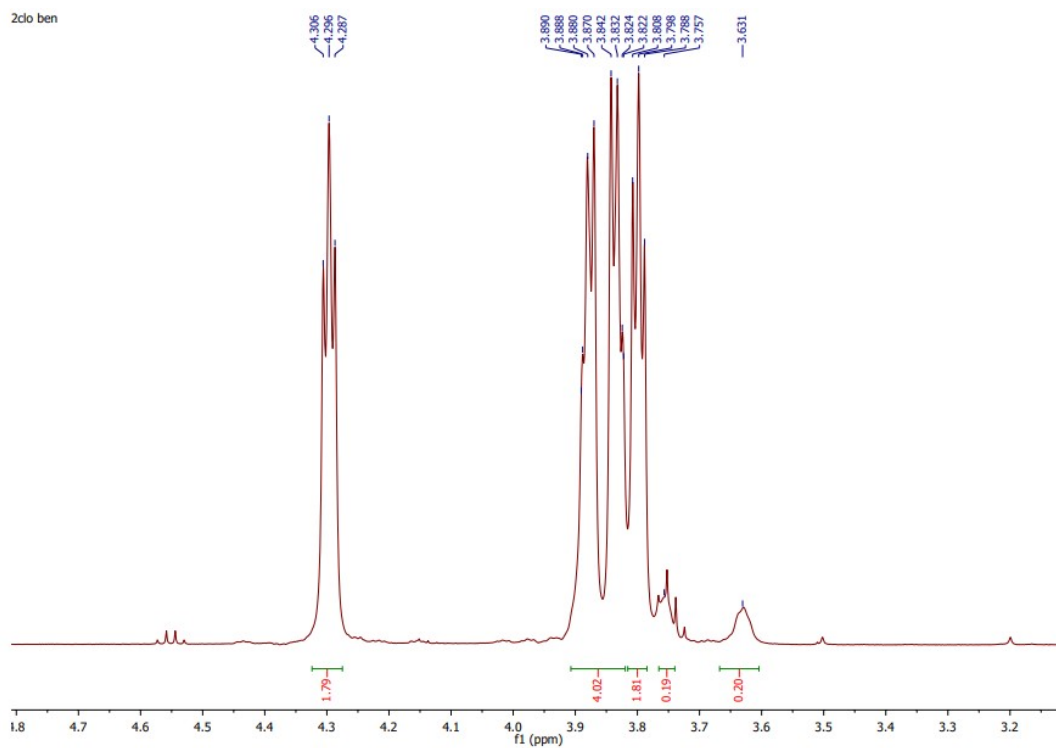
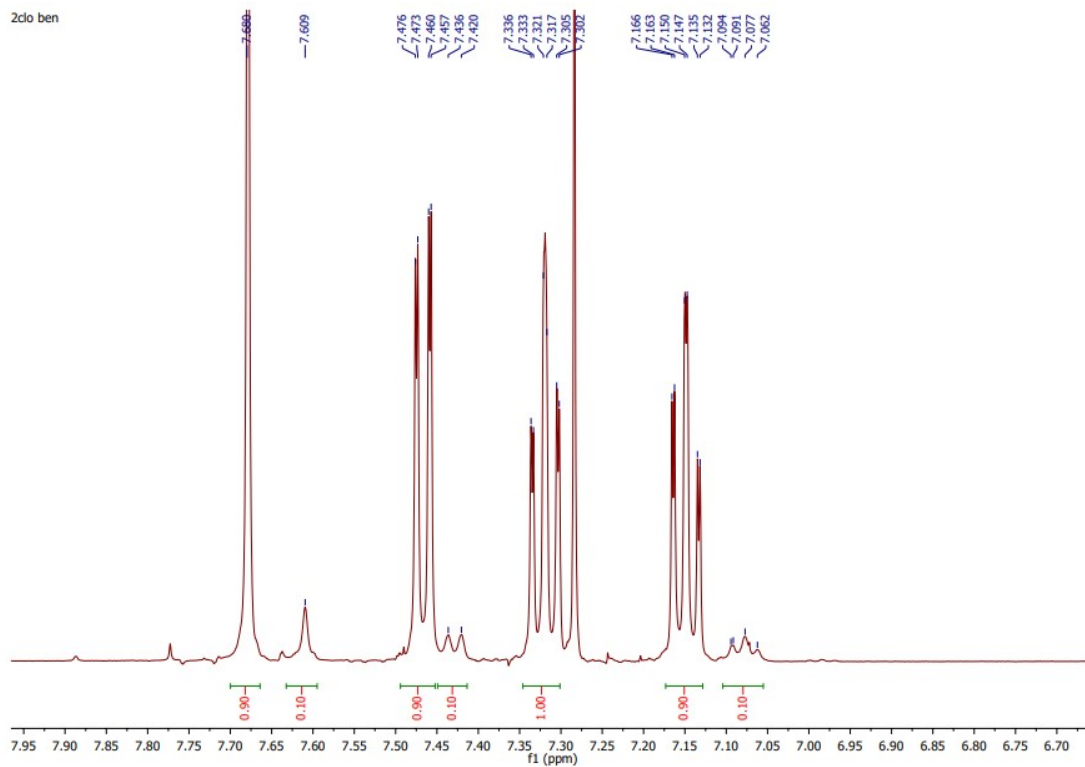
$^1\text{H-NMR}$ spectrum, 500 MHz, CDCl_3 with 0.05% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)

zclo ben



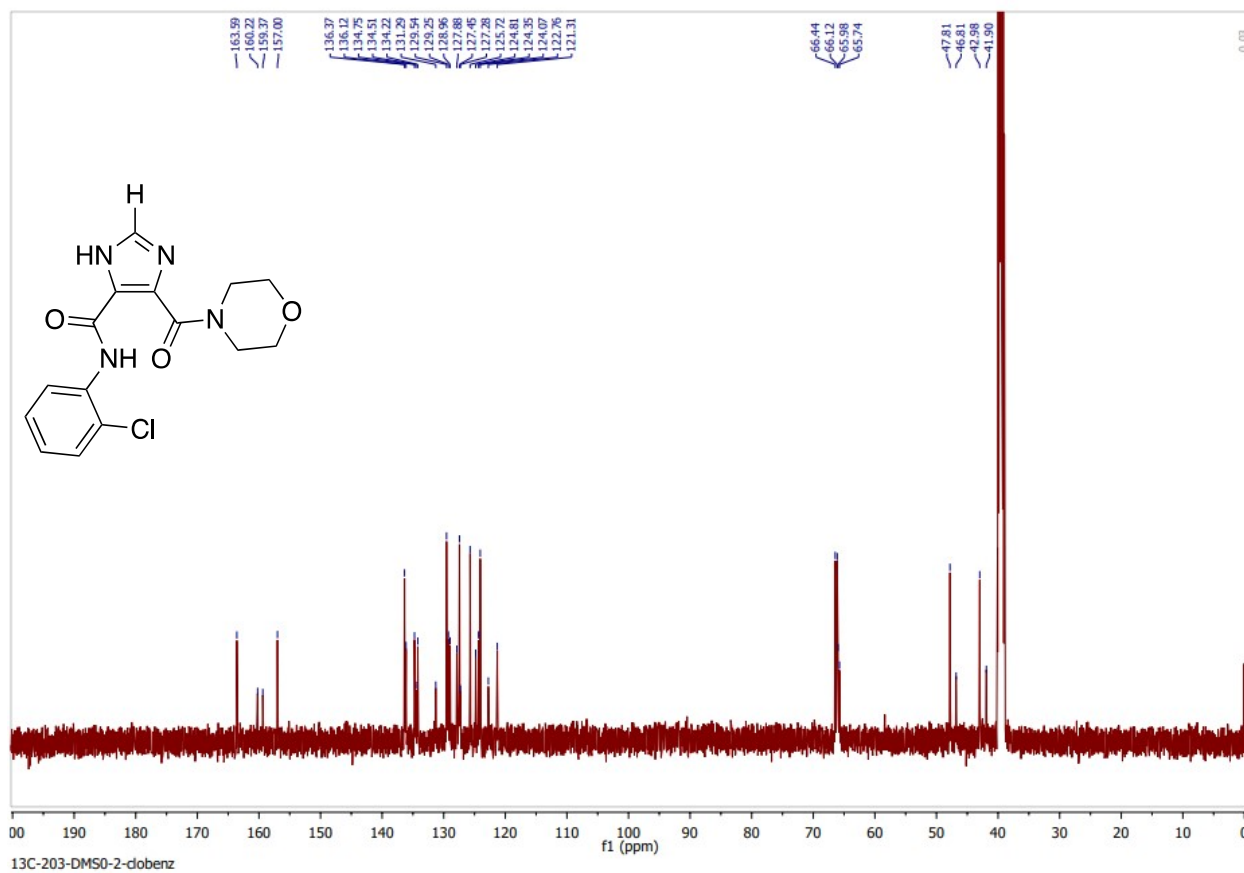
zclo ben





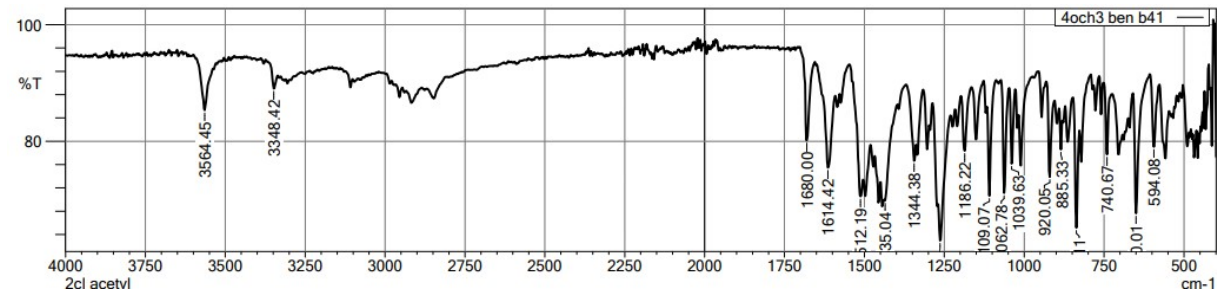
Compound **5b3** existed in the 2 conformers in CDCl_3 : the intramolecular hydrogen bonding and the non-intramolecular hydrogen bonding at approximate ratio of 9:1.

^{13}C -NMR spectrum, 125 MHz, $\text{DMSO-}d_6$ with 0.03% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)



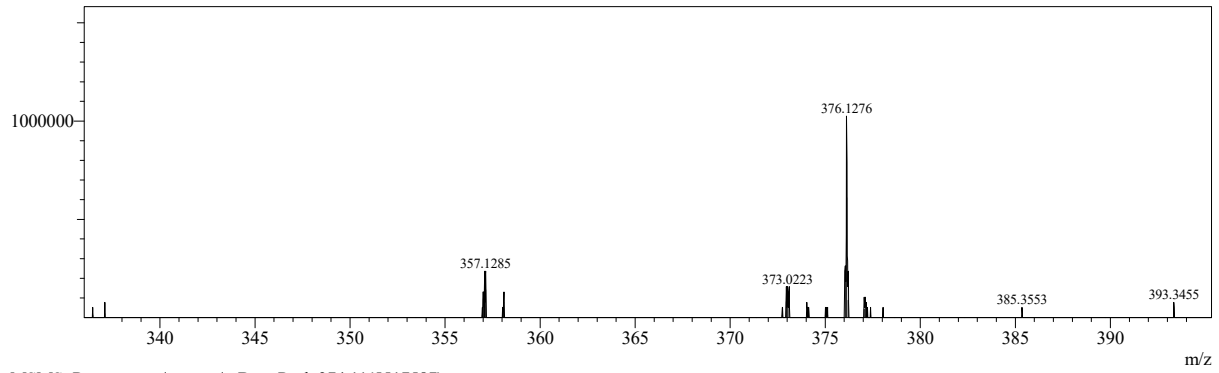
Compound 5b4

IR spectrum

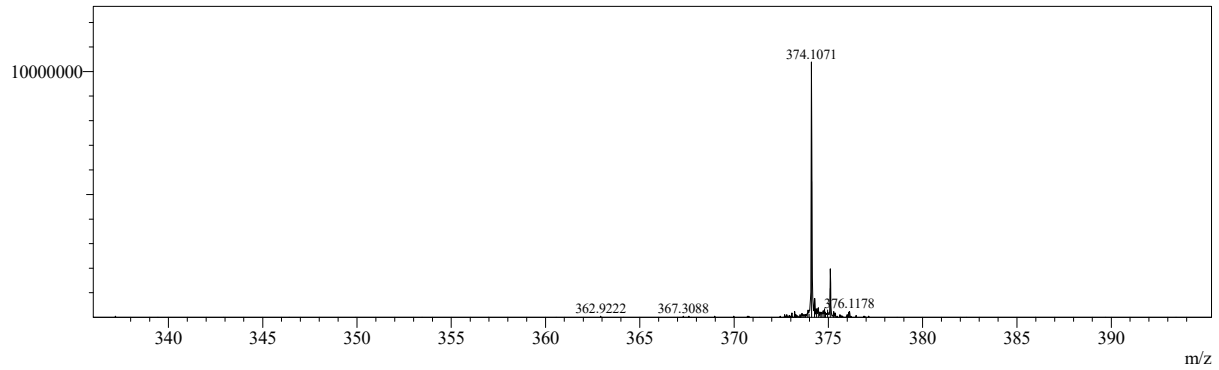


MS spectrum

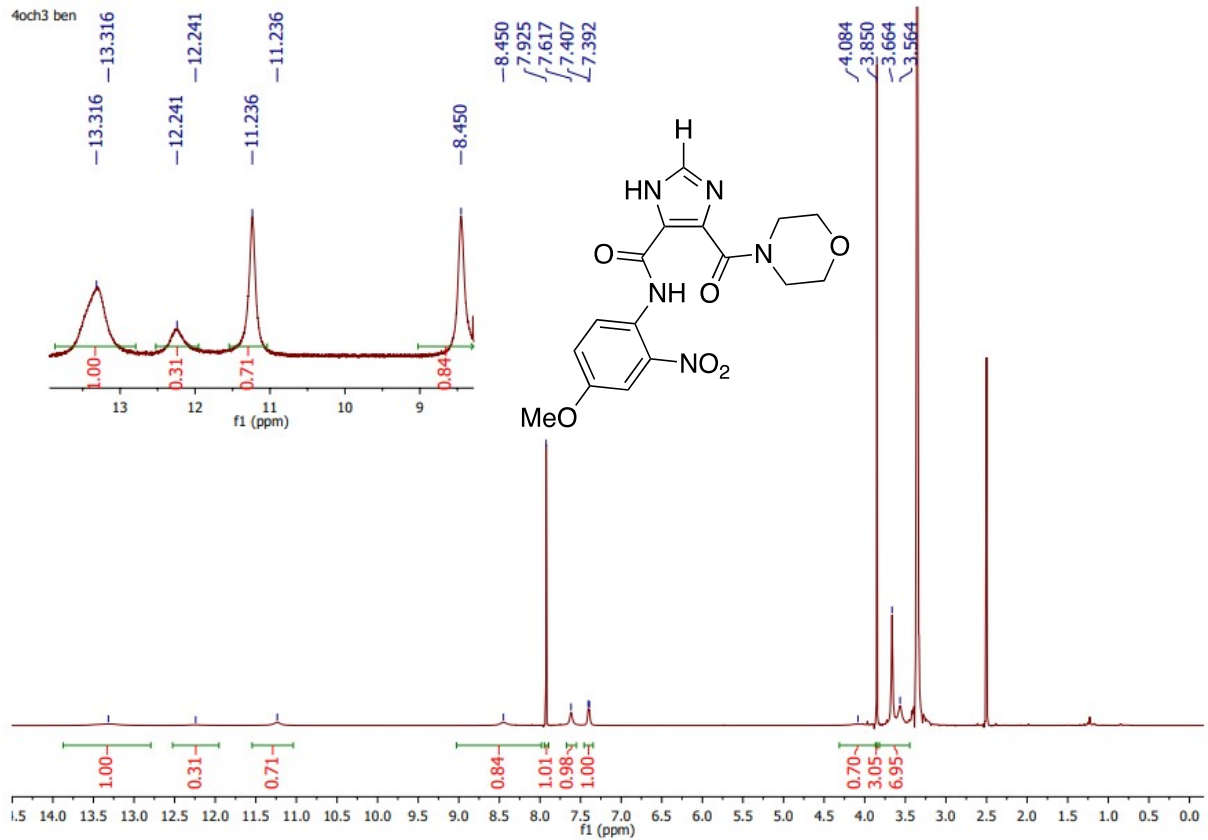
MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /+ Base Peak 414.03(4690447)

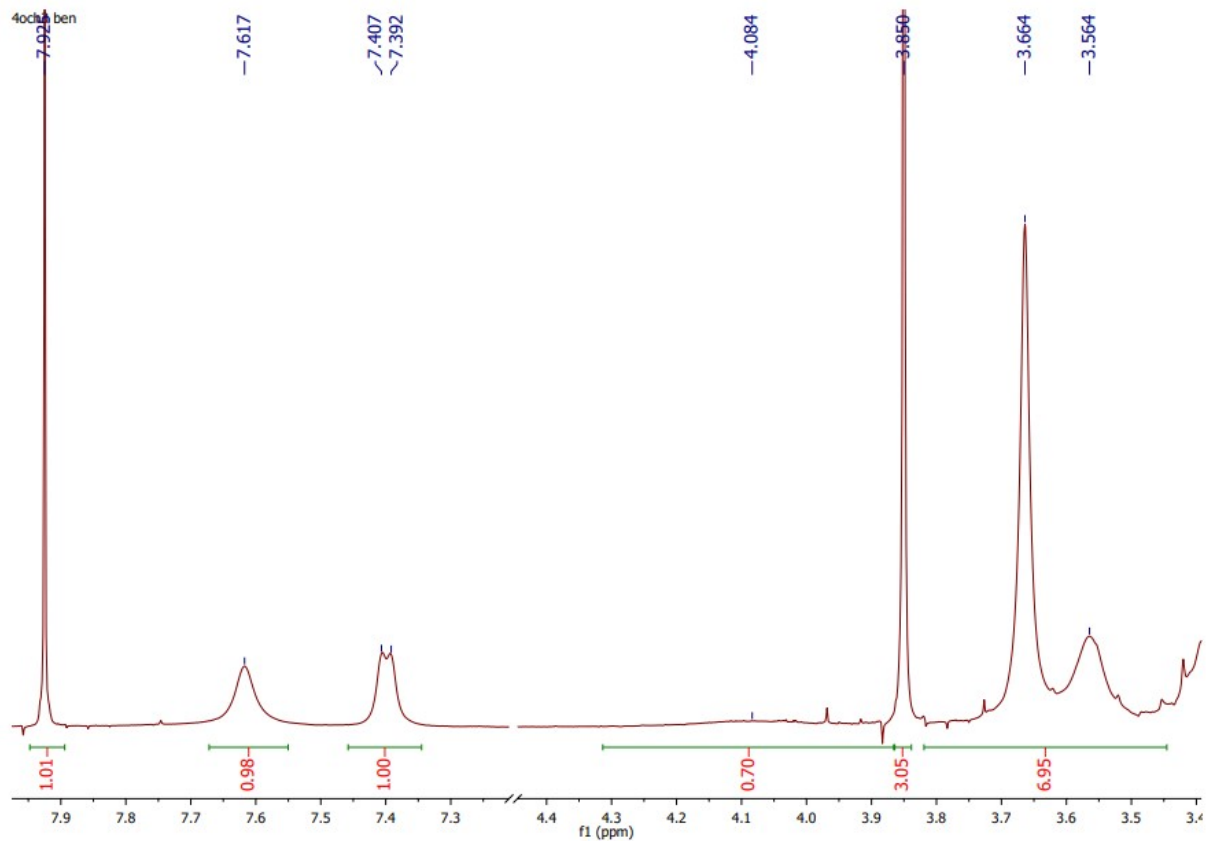


MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /- Base Peak 374.11(5517587)



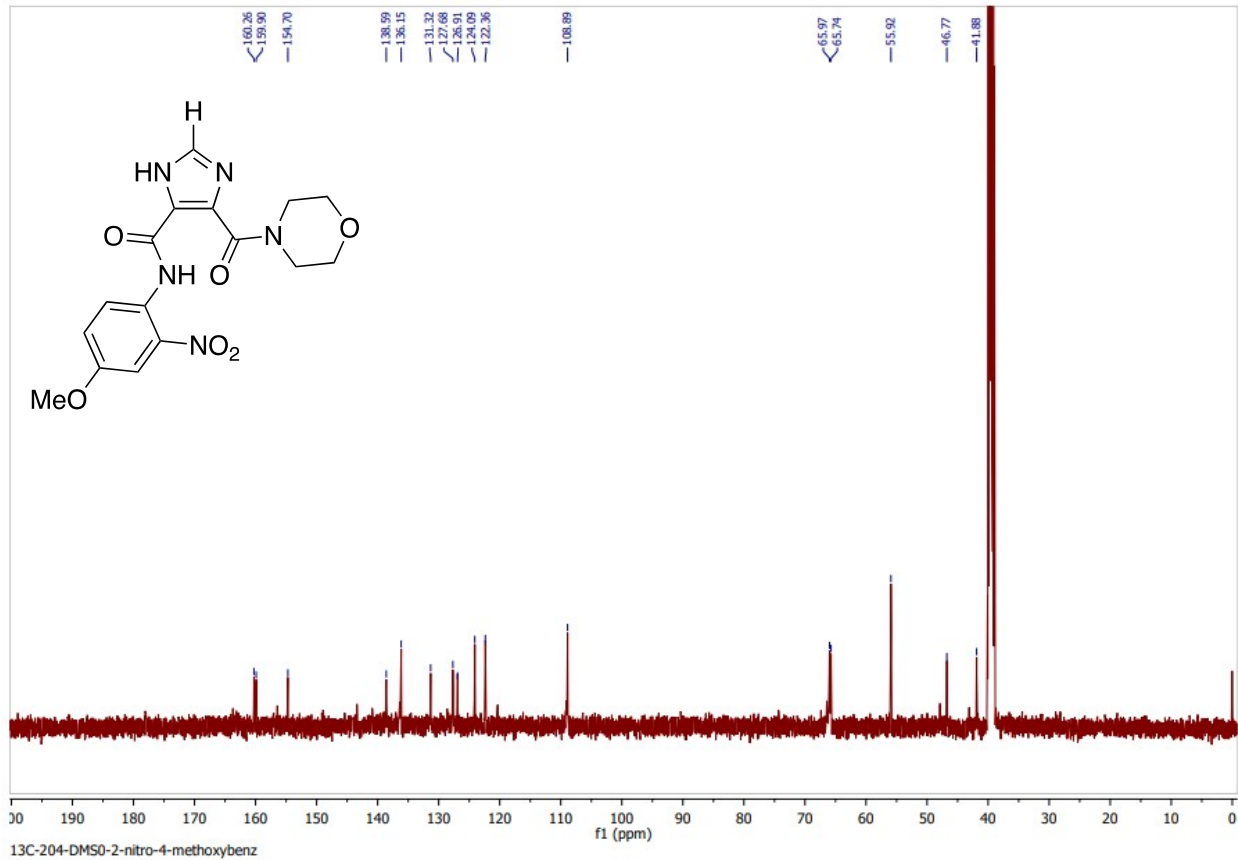
¹H-NMR spectrum, 600 MHz, DMSO-d₆





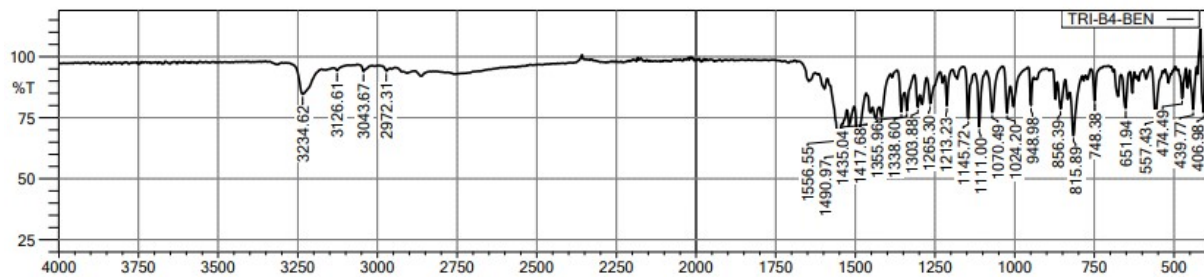
Compound **5b4** existed in the 2 conformers: the intramolecular hydrogen bonding and the non-intramolecular hydrogen bonding at approximate ratio of 3:7.

¹³C-NMR spectrum, 125 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)



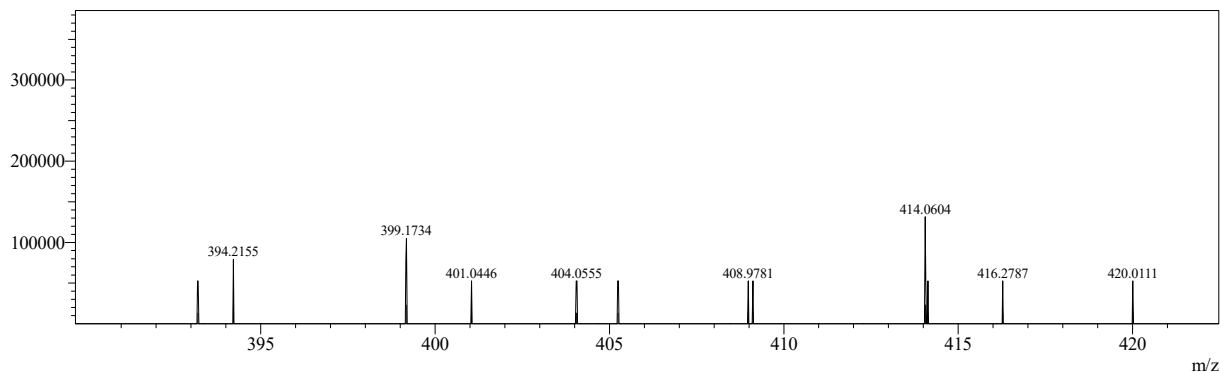
Compound 5b5

IR spectrum

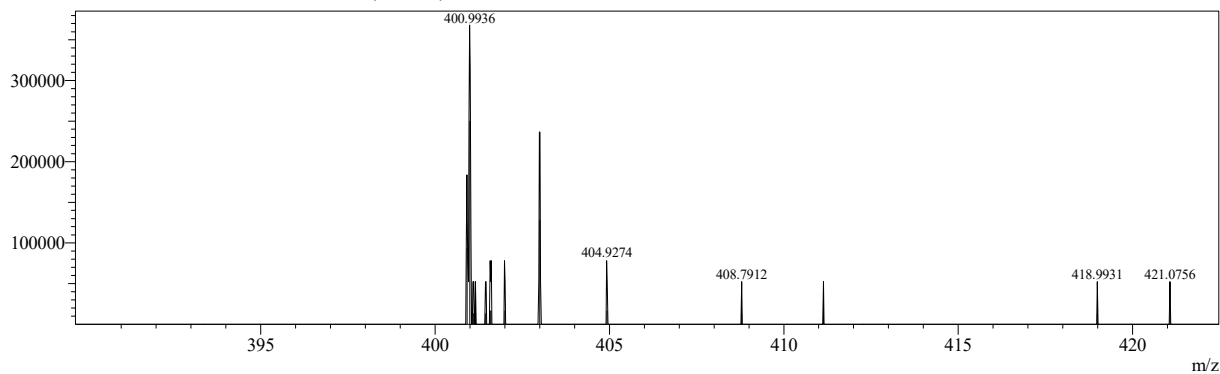


MS spectrum

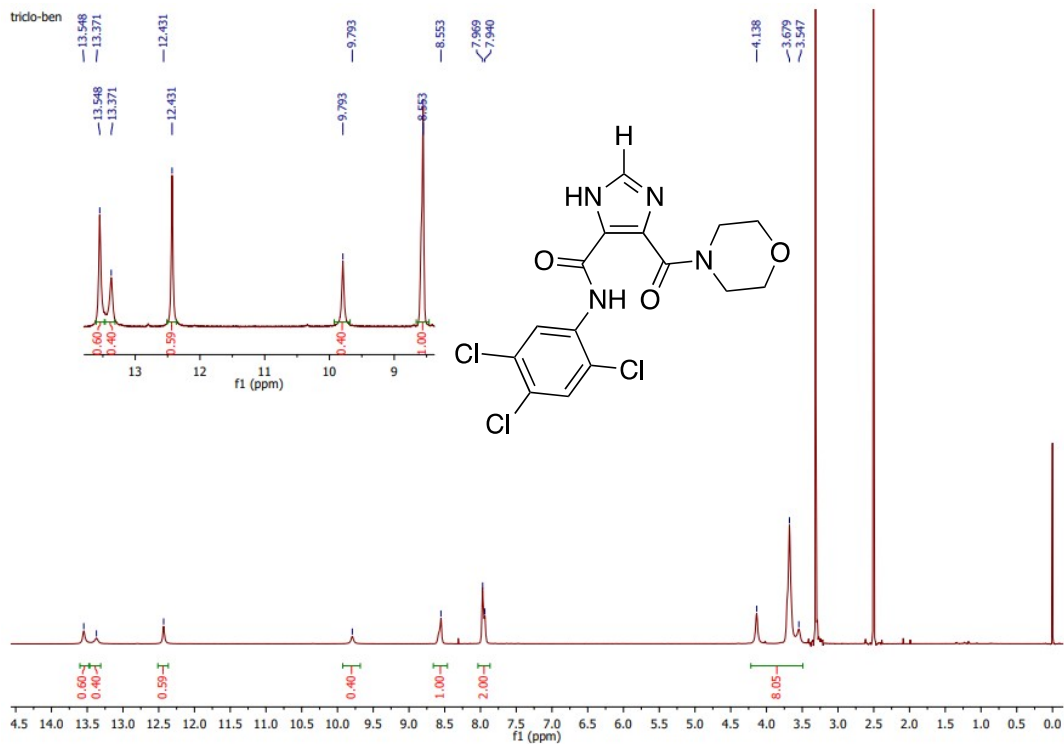
MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /+ Base Peak 274.24(320108)



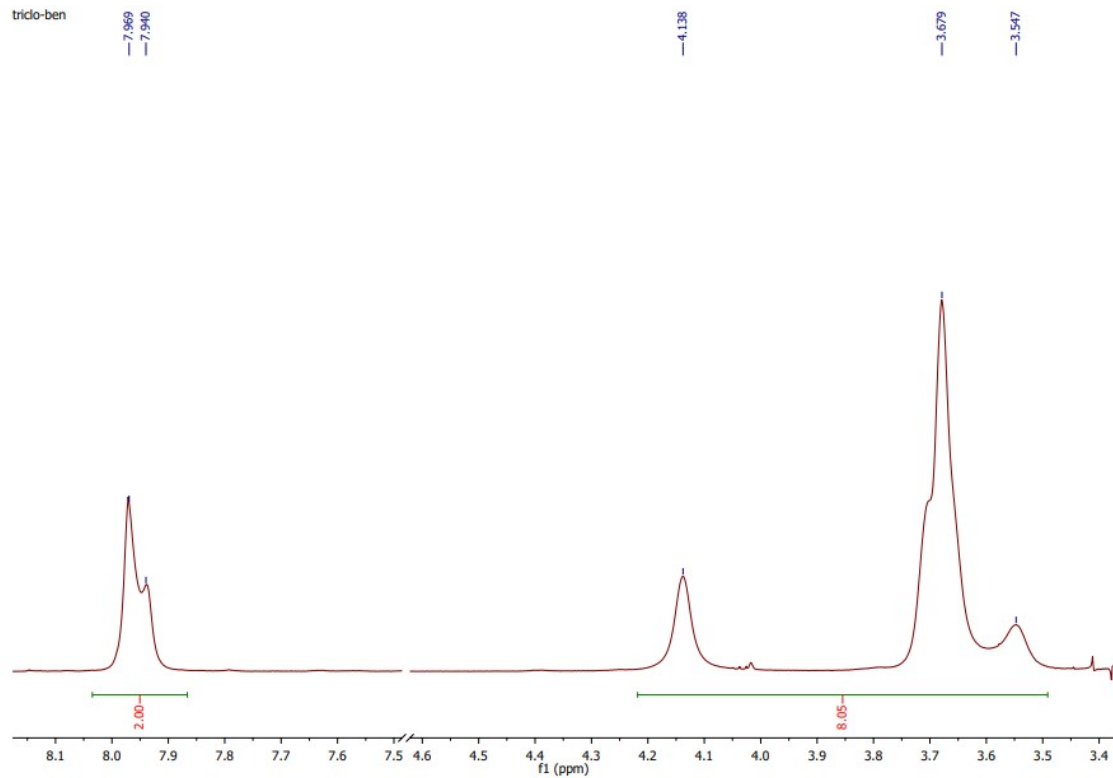
MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /- Base Peak 226.98(1158827)



¹H-NMR spectrum, 125 MHz, DMSO-d₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)

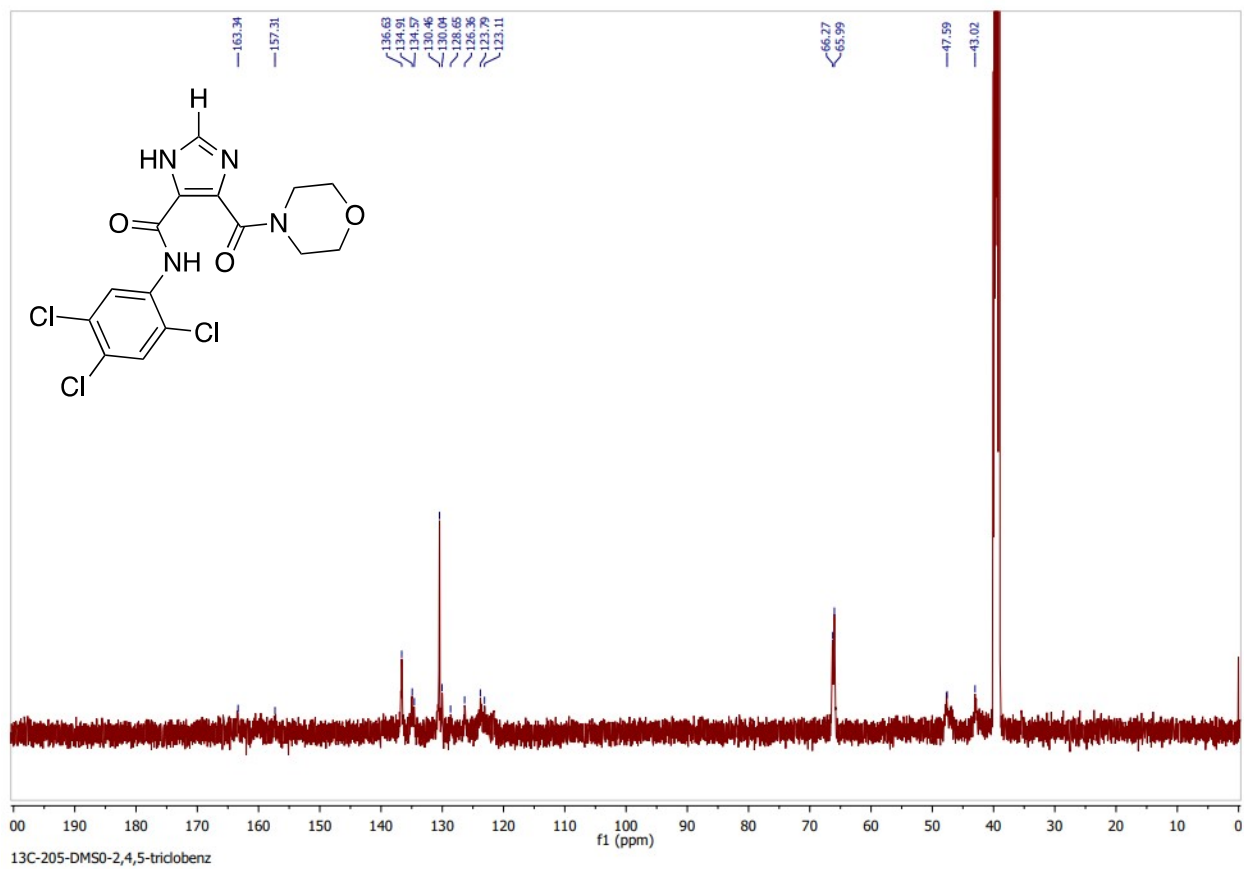


triclo-ben



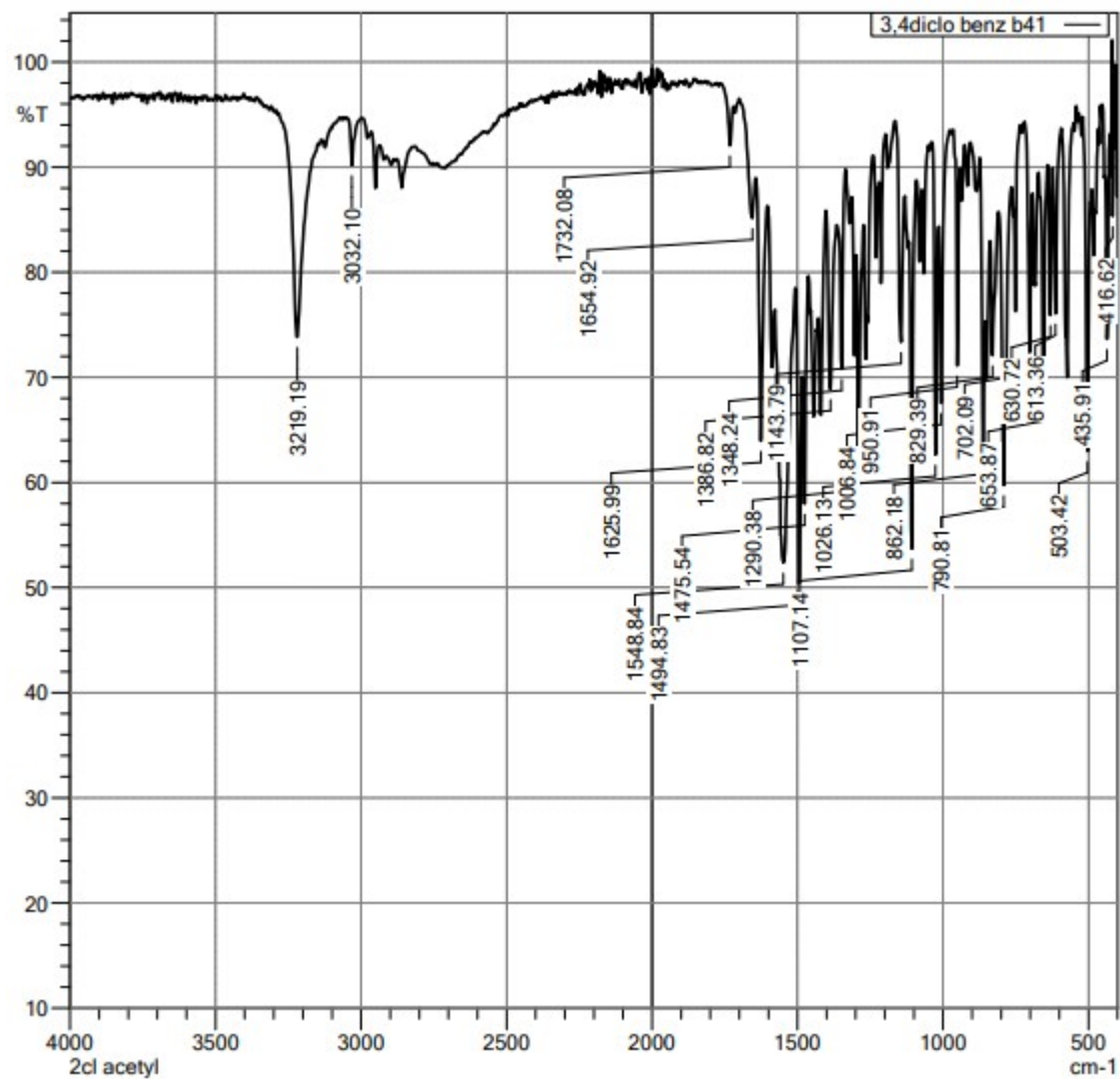
Compound **5b5** existed in the 2 conformers: the intramolecular hydrogen bonding and the non-intramolecular hydrogen bonding at approximate ratio of 6:4.

¹³C-NMR spectrum, 125 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)



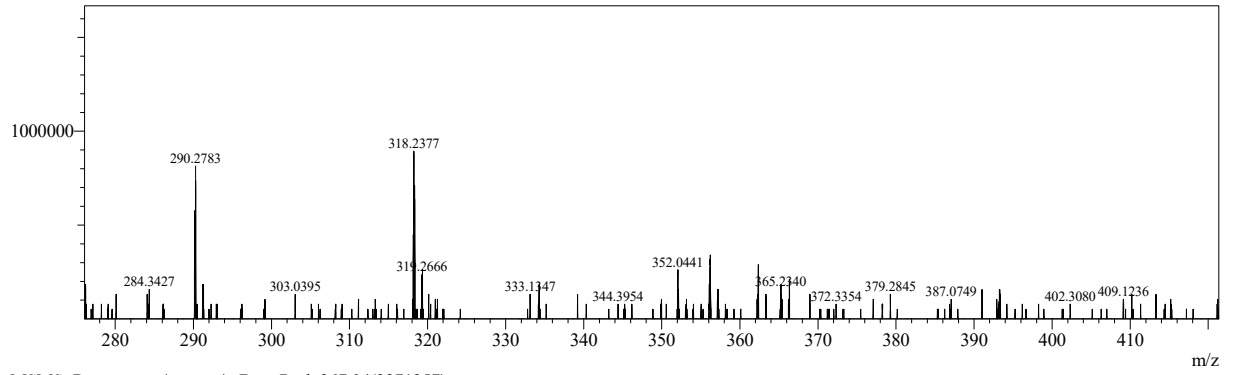
Compound 5b6

IR spectrum

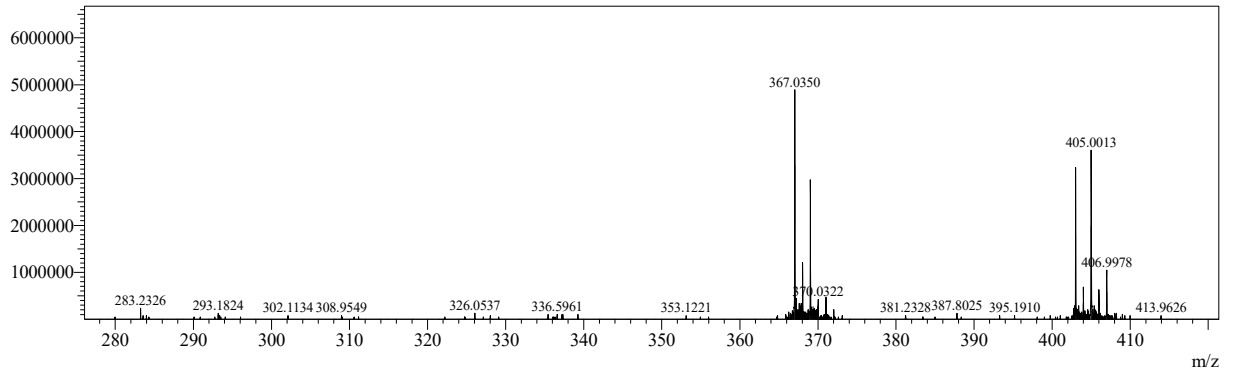


MS spectrum

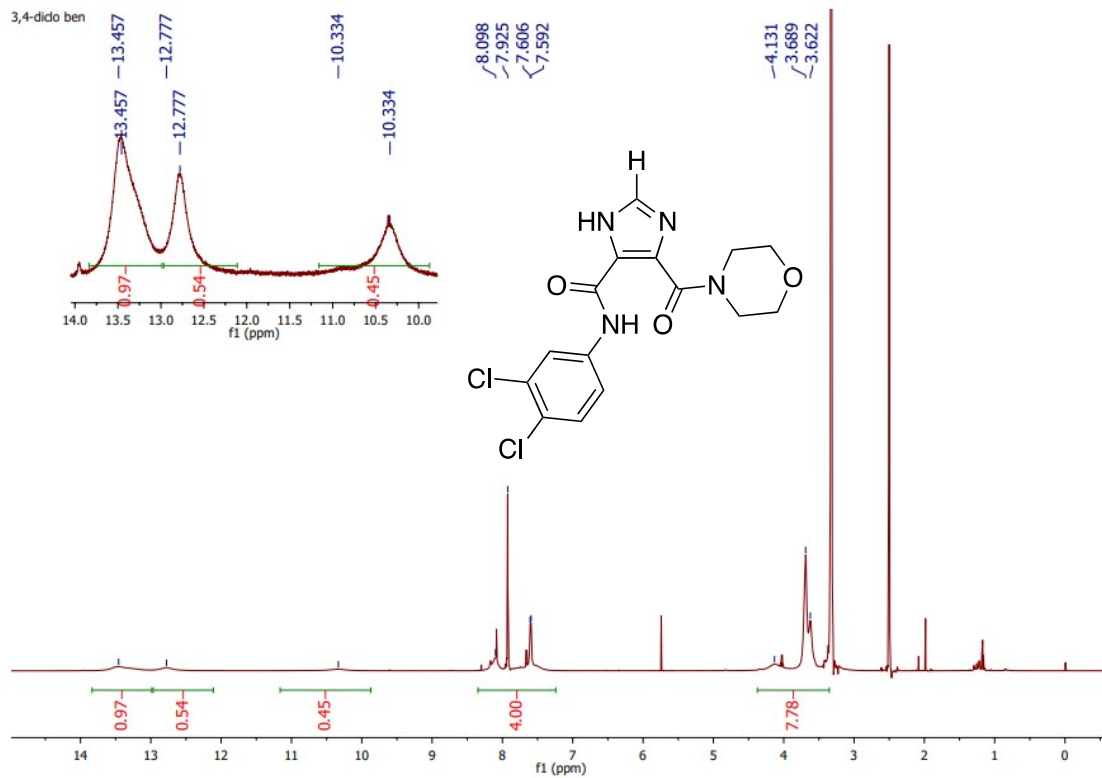
MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /+ Base Peak 179.01(12811080)



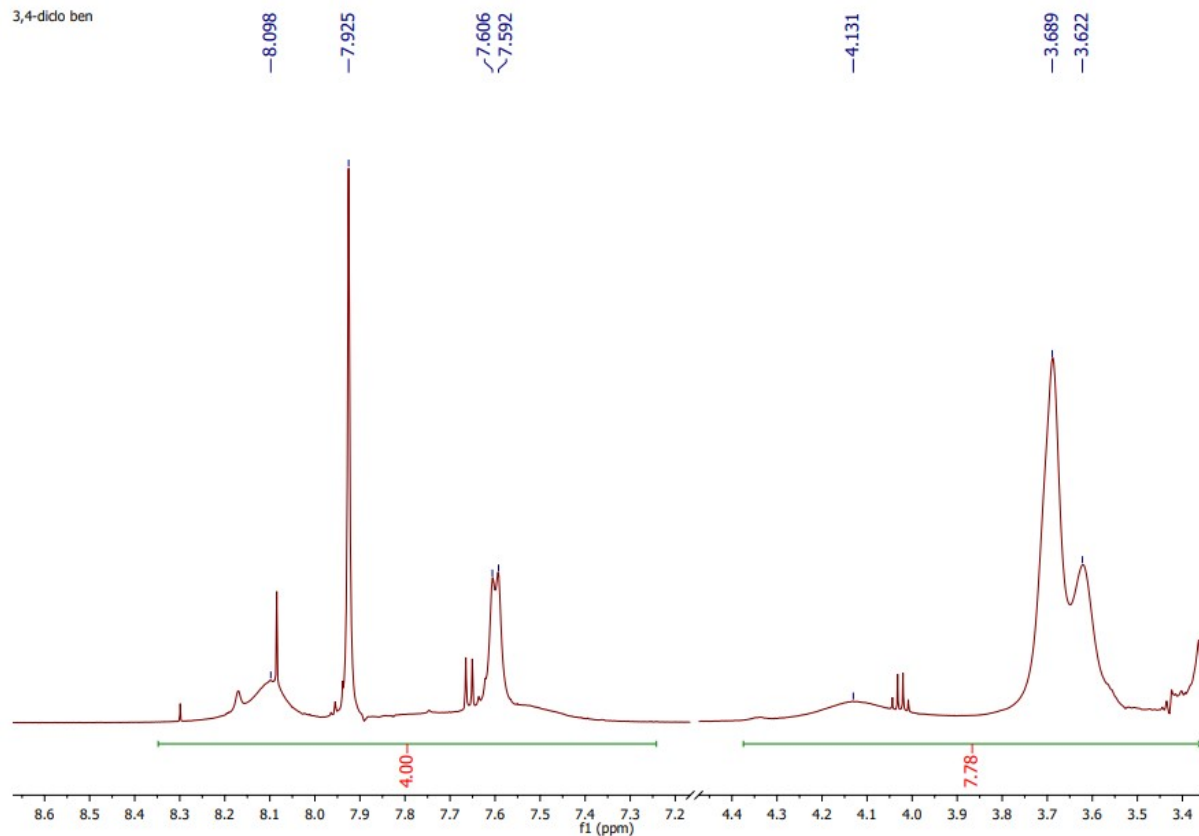
MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /- Base Peak 367.04(3271357)



¹H-NMR spectrum, 600 MHz, DMSO-d₆

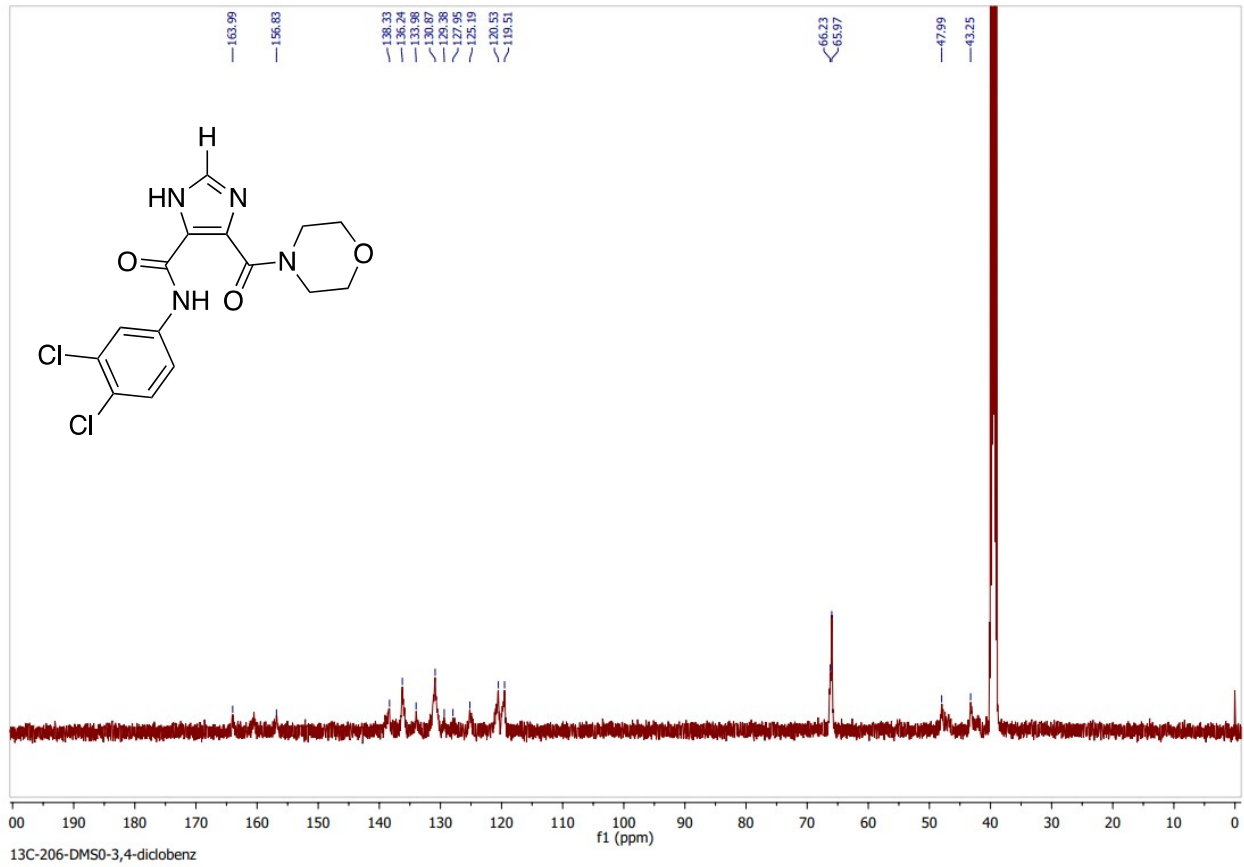


3,4-dido ben



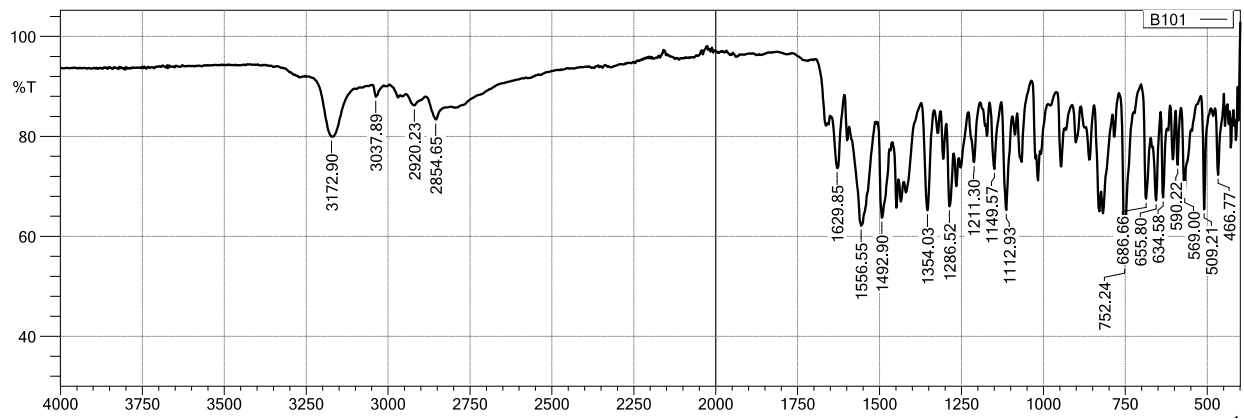
Compound **5b6** existed in the 2 conformers: the intramolecular hydrogen bonding and the non-intramolecular hydrogen bonding at approximate ratio of 5.4:4.5.

¹³C-NMR spectrum, 125 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆ with 0.03% v/v TMS (TMS peak was at 0 ppm)



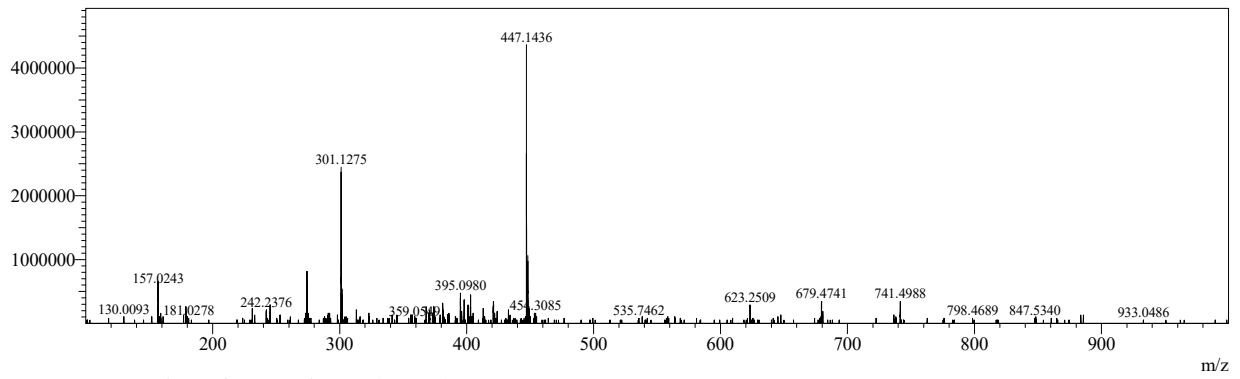
Compound 5b7

IR spectrum

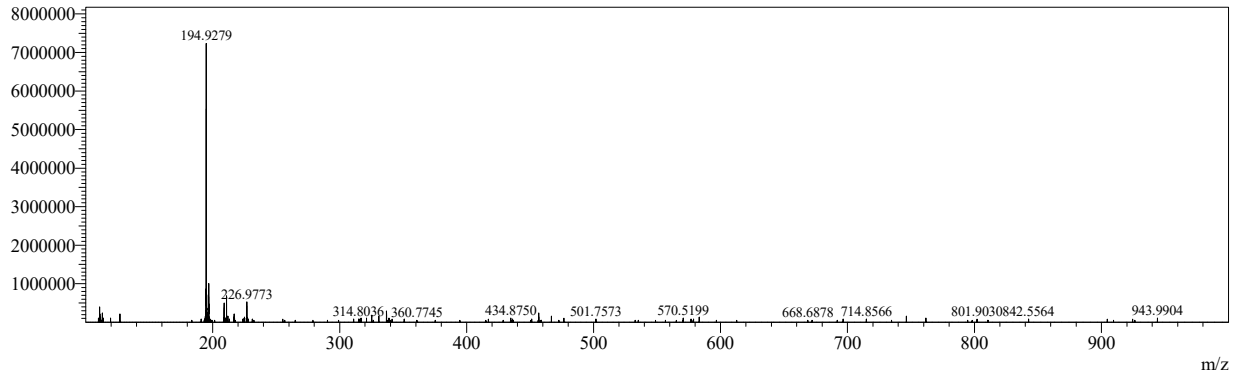


MS spectrum

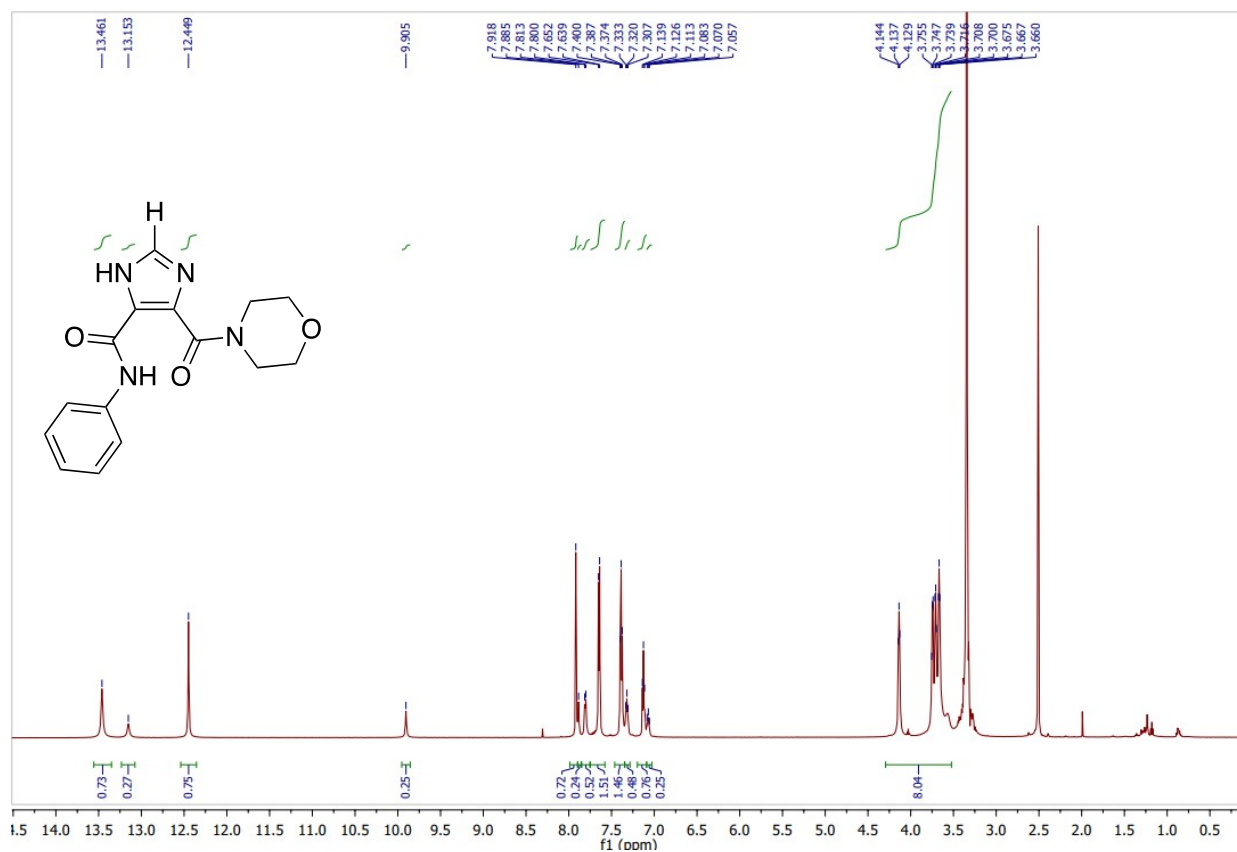
MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- +/- Base Peak 447.14(4367677)



MSMS: Precursor m/z ----- /- Base Peak 194.93(5531948)

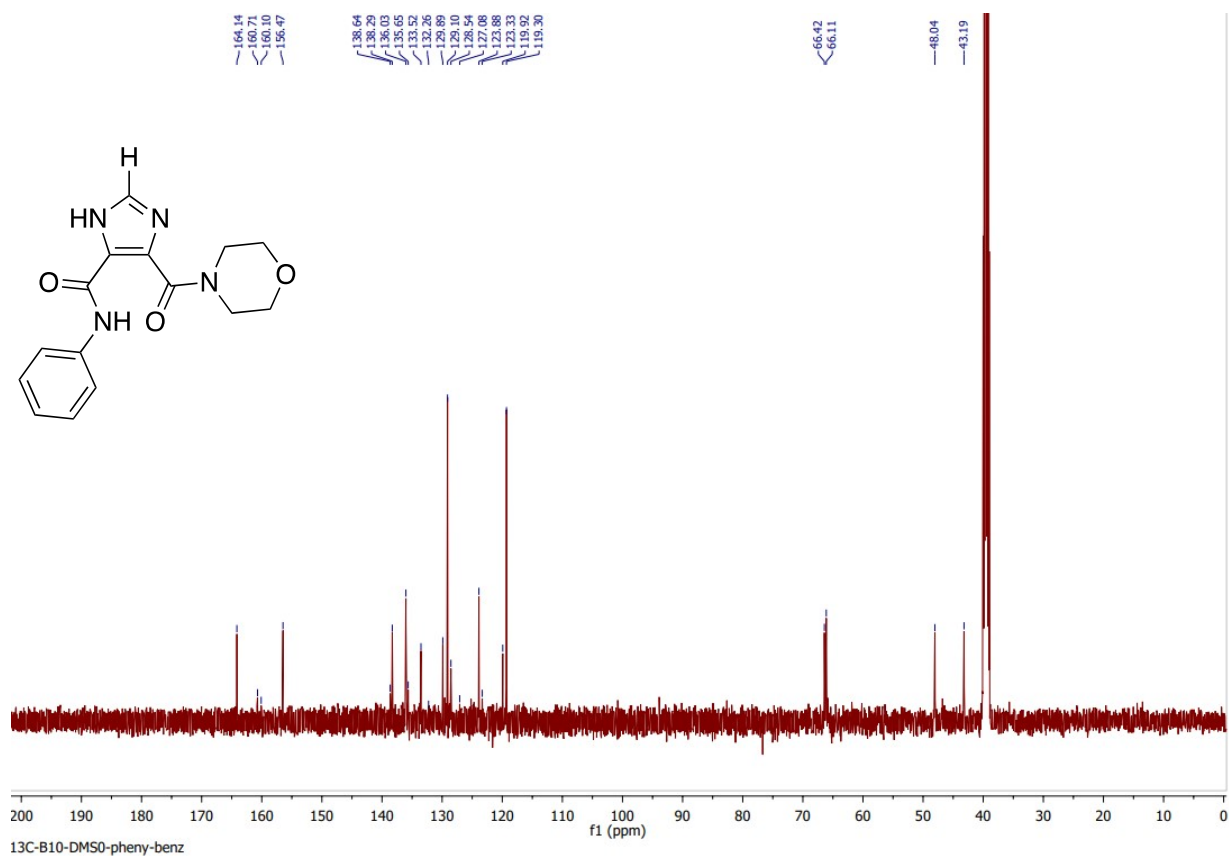


$^1\text{H-NMR}$ spectrum, 600 MHz, $\text{DMSO-}d_6$



Compound **5b7** existed in the 2 conformers: the intramolecular hydrogen bonding and the non-intramolecular hydrogen bonding at approximate ratio of 7.5:2.5.

¹³C-NMR spectrum, 125 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆



2. Screening for M^{pro} inhibitory activity at 1 μ M

Compound	I%	Compound	I%	Compound	I%
5a1	38%	5b1	18%	Ritonavir	24%
5a2	38%	5b2	3%	Lopinavir	33%
5a3	25%	5b3	28%	Ebselen	100%
5a4	28%	5b4	30%		
5a5	39%	5b5	16%		
5a6	33%	5b6	33%		
5a7	24%	5b7	15%		

3. Dose-response inhibition data

5a1		
LogC (μ M)	Mean (%)	SD (%)
-0.61	0.00	0.00
-0.31	0.00	0.00

-0.01	0.00	0.00
0.29	5.09	7.19
0.59	23.49	9.66
0.89	41.34	3.83
1.19	79.47	7.10
1.49	93.39	9.35
1.80	100.00	0.00
2.10	100.00	0.00
2.40	100.00	0.00
2.70	100.00	0.00

5a2

LogC (μM)	Mean (%)	SD (%)
-0.61	0.00	0.00
-0.31	1.81	2.56
0.29	28.19	0.51
0.59	39.44	5.27
0.89	52.69	3.99
1.49	74.10	7.32
1.80	84.33	10.04
2.10	96.59	4.82
2.40	100.00	0.00
2.70	100.00	0.00

5a5

LogC (μM)	Mean (%)	SD (%)
0.19	0.00	0.00
0.49	0.00	0.00
0.80	5.56	7.86
1.10	46.94	4.95
1.70	100.00	0.00

2.00	100.00	0.00
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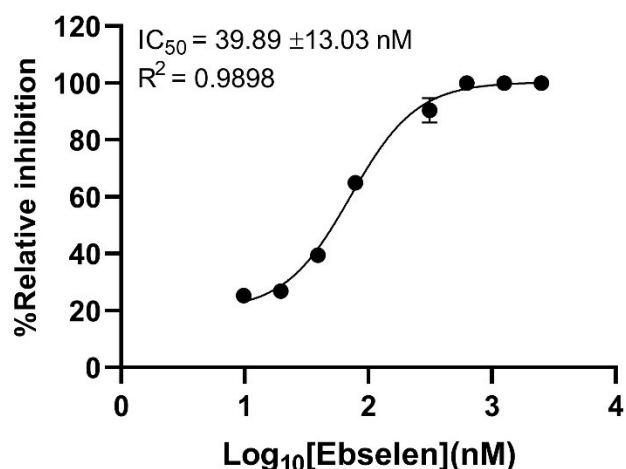
5a6

LogC (μM)	Mean (%)	SD (%)
-1.31	11.00	10.42
-1.01	6.67	9.43
-0.71	14.67	7.13
-0.41	9.33	6.80
-0.11	15.00	5.66
0.19	37.00	7.79
0.80	55.00	7.79
1.10	42.00	3.56
1.40	54.67	1.70
1.70	100.00	0.00
2.00	100.00	0.00

5b6

LogC (μM)	Mean (%)	SD (%)
0.29	8.61	6.12
0.59	9.88	7.01
0.89	10.75	7.71
1.19	37.58	2.54
1.49	38.76	6.42
1.80	62.88	6.52
2.10	100.00	0.00
2.40	100.00	0.00
2.70	100.00	0.00

4. Dose-response Inhibition of ebselen against SARS-CoV-2 M^{pro}



5. Enzyme kinetic inhibition plots of SARS-CoV-2 M^{pro} inhibition by 5a2 (Mean±SD%)

[S] (μM)	[I] (μM)		
	0	2.5	5
80	0.269±0.055	0.282±0.056	0.313±0.064
60	0.363±0.085	0.412±0.126	0.409±0.082
40	0.452±0.047	0.486±0.023	0.570±0.050
20	0.571±0.025	0.690±0.066	0.850±0.036
10	1.081±0.056	1.272±0.158	1.558±0.236

6. The cytotoxic effect on 16HBE14o cell line of potential compounds

Compound	Mean (%)	SD (%)
0.2%DMSO	100.00	4.02
5a1	100.84	7.78
5a2	91.65	3.53
5a5	99.52	9.13
5a6	97.02	1.89
5a7	95.35	1.61

7. The distribution of the four substituents of the native ligand across the four pockets (S1-4) of the binding site in SARS-CoV-2's M^{pro}

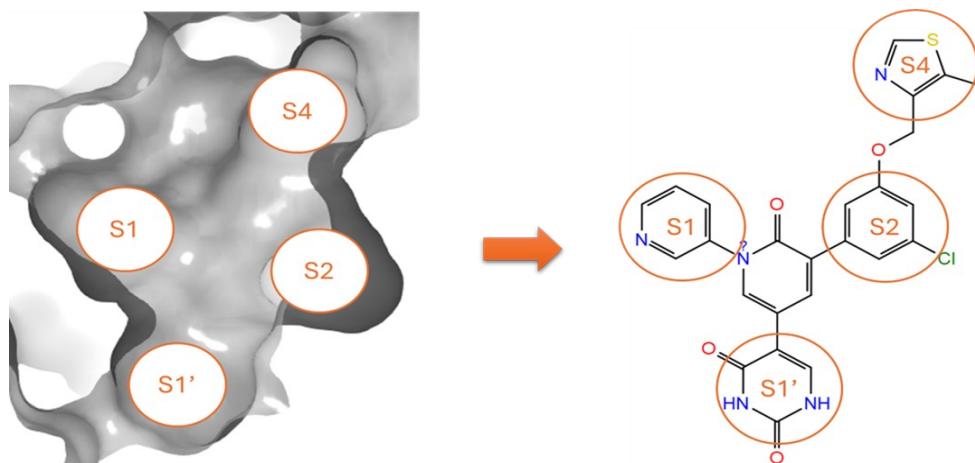


Figure S1. The distribution of the four substituents of the native ligand across the four pockets (S1-4) of the binding site (gray shape) (PDB: 7N44).