

Supporting Information

Efficient Synthesis of RITA and its Analogues: Derivation of Analogues with Improved Antiproliferative Activity *via* Modulation of p53/miR-34a Pathway

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Table of contents

I. Biological assays	2
II. References	3
III. Spectra	4

Biological assays

Cell culture and reagents

Human cell lines, including K562 cells, A549 cells were obtained from Cell Resources Center of Shanghai Institutes for Biological Science, Chinese Academy of Science. NCM460 cells were obtained from Hanbio Biotechnology Co.LTD (China). The HCT116 human colon cancer cell lines (*p53*^{+/+} and *p53*^{-/-}) and MCF-7 cells were kindly provided by Dr. Cao Deliang (Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, USA). They were maintained in Dulbecco's modified Eagle's medium (DMEM) with 10 % fetal bovine serum, 100 µg/mL penicillin, and 100 µg/mL streptomycin at 37 °C in a humidified atmosphere of 5 % CO₂.

Cell proliferation assay and colony formation assay

Cells were seeded at a density of 5×10^3 /100 µL medium in 96-well microtiter plate and treated with the synthesized compounds at different concentrations for 72 h, ranging from 0.0125 to 50 µM. Viable cells were incubated with MTT (5 mg/mL) for 5 h, formazan precipitate was dissolved in 100 µL of DMSO and the absorbance at 490 nm was measured by Multimode Detector DTX880 (Beckman Coulter).

For colony formation assays, HCT116 cells at the exponential phase were plated into 24-well culture plate (200–300 cells/well) and allowed to adhere for 10 h before treatment. Culture medium containing RITA and compound **1f** ranging from 0.0625 to 5 µM was added to cells and incubated for 14 days. Cells were then rinsed with PBS, stained with 1.0 % crystal violet and photographed with a digital camera (Bio-Rad).

Cell morphological assay

HCT116 cells were seeded to each well of a 24-well plate and treated with 2 µM RITA and compound **1f** for 48 h in a 5 % CO₂ incubator at 37 °C. Cells were then rinsed with PBS and fixed with MeOH-HAc (3:1 v/v) for 10 min at 4 °C. Hoechst 333258 staining solution (5 µg/mL) was added to each well and incubated for 5 min at 37 °C, and then detected under a fluorescence microscope (Olympus IX51, Olympus Corporation, Japan).

Flow cytometry assay

For the apoptosis assay, untreated and drug-treated cells were collected by centrifugation and washed twice with ice-cold PBS. Apoptotic cells were measured by the Annexin VFITC/PI apoptosis detection kit (Beyotime Company) according to the protocol described using flow cytometry (Moflo XDP,

Beckman Coulter).¹

For the cell cycle profile assay, RITA and compound **1f**-treated and control cells were collected and washed twice with ice-cold PBS. The cells were fixed with 70 % ethanol at 4 °C overnight, and resuspended in propidium iodide (50 µg/mL PI in 0.1 % sodium citrate plus 0.03 % v/v NP-40) and incubated for 30 min in the dark. The tubes were packed with tin foil on ice. The cell cycle profile was analyzed with flow cytometry (Moflo XDP, Beckman Coulter).

1. C. Zhang, C. Tan, X. Zu, X. Zhai, F. Liu, B. Chu, X. Ma, Y. Chen, P. Gong and Y. Jiang, *Eur. J. Med. Chem.*, 2011, **46**, 1404.

VI. Spectra





































































