Journal of **Medicinal** Chemistry

Cite This: J. Med. Chem. 2018, 61, 5435-5441



Discovery of Highly Isoform Selective Orally Bioavailable Phosphoinositide 3-Kinase (PI3K)- γ Inhibitors

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Supporting Information

ABSTRACT: In this paper, we describe the discovery and optimization of a new chemotype of isoform selective PI3K γ inhibitors. Starting from an HTS hit, potency and physicochemical properties could be improved to give compounds such as 15, which is a potent and remarkably selective PI3K γ inhibitor with ADME properties suitable for oral administration. Compound 15 was advanced into in vivo studies showing dose-dependent inhibition of LPS-induced airway neutrophilia in rats when administered orally.



INTRODUCTION

Phosphoinositide 3-kinases (PI3Ks) are lipid kinases whose primary function is to catalyze phosphorylation of the 3position of the inositol ring of membrane phosphoinositides. This initiates a complex downstream signaling network that regulates cell growth, survival, migration, and proliferation. The PI3K family is clustered into three different classes (classes I, II, and III) based on structural features and substrate preference. Class I consists of four isoforms (α , β , γ , and δ). It is by far the most extensively studied of the PI3K classes and has been an attractive target for the pharmaceutical industry over the past decade. The PI3K γ isoform is primarily found in leukocytes and is a key regulator of cellular migration.^{1,2} A PI3K γ inhibitor could thus potentially be used to treat a variety of diseases in which influx of inflammatory effector cells plays a key role in pathology, including diseases within the areas of respiratory and inflammation, metabolic disorders, and cancer.³⁻⁵ Unfortunately, highly selective PI3K γ inhibitors are rare as it has been difficult to identify truly isoenzyme selective compounds due to the high sequence homology between the PI3K isoforms. From a safety perspective, high isoform selectivity is essential as PI3K α has been shown to affect glucose and insulin signaling.⁶ It has also been shown that PI3K γ knockout mice are viable and fertile while genetic inactivation of PI3K α or - β results in embryonic lethality.^{7,8} Recently compounds with high γ isoform selectivity have been reported, including IPI-549 which is currently in clinical trials in immuno-oncology applications.^{9–11} We now report our discovery of a series of highly selective PI3K γ inhibitors. This series, which was identified in a HTS,

contains an isoindolinone core that extends deep into the ATPbinding pocket and utilizes a selectivity switch that has not been previously described for PI3K inhibitors.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Our efforts to discover selective PI3K γ inhibitors with suitable ADME properties for oral dosing started with a full HTS of our corporate screening collection using a biochemical enzyme inhibition assay for PI3K γ . This was followed by a counterscreen for PI3K α in order to identify series with some inherent PI3Ky selectivity. One hit series contained an isoindolinone core (Figure 1). Compound 1 was one of the most potent in this cluster and exhibited high selectivity toward PI3K α . It was



Figure 1. Isoindolinone containing HTS hit 1 identified as an inhibitor of PI3K γ and methylated analogue 2.

Received: March 21, 2018 Published: May 31, 2018

Table 1. Structure, PI3K Enzyme and Cell Inhibitory Potencies, and Pharmacokinetically Relevant Properties of Compounds $3-10^a$

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		I	R^2				N			
			3-9	Ľ	H N-	10	Ľ			
Compd	R ¹	R ²	PI3Kγ enz.	PI3Kα enz.	PI3Kβ enz. pIC ₅₀	PI3Kδ enz.	PI3Kγ cell	logD, pH 7.4	Sol., pH 7.4 (μM)	Rat CL _{int} ^d
			pIC ₅₀	pIC ₅₀	-	pIC ₅₀	pIC ₅₀			
3	Cl	H_2N N N H_2N N N N N H_2N N N N N N N N N N	8.0	<4.5	<4.5	NT ^c	6.2	2.6	5	2
4	Me	N NH2	7.6	<4.5*	<4.5 ⁺	5.0 ⁺	5.1+	2.6	117	43
5	Me	N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N	8.2	4.6*	<4.5 [‡]	5.2*	6.4†	4.3	7	146
6	Me		8.1 [‡]	5.2*	<4.5 [‡]	5.5*	6.4	3.8	8	4
7	Cl	HN S J	8.9 [‡]	5.0	<4.5	5.8	7.5	3.8	3	2
8	Cl	HN S S	9.1	5.6	5.0	6.5	8.2	3.9	1	3
9	Me		9.2	5.5	4.7	6.7	8.2	4.3	1	11
10 ^b	Cl		8.9	5.6	4.8	6.3	7.4	3.9	13	6

^{*a*}All biological values are the mean of \geq 3 replicates except [‡]n = 2, [†]n = 1. ^{*b*}Compound 10, which is also depicted above, is the *R*-enantiomer. ^{*c*}NT, not tested. ^{*d*}Intrinsic clearance in rat hepatocytes ((μ L/min)/10⁶ cells).

profiled in a PI3K γ target engagement cell assay measuring phosphorylation of AKT but was inactive at 1 μ M.¹²

The attractive selectivity profile meant that this series was still deemed to be of interest. It was not immediately apparent what binding mode the compounds might have in the PI3K γ enzyme, and we made repeated efforts to crystallize compounds from this series with a PI3Ky construct to guide further design but without success. This was surprising since PI3K γ has been shown to be very amenable to crystallization and has often been used as a surrogate for the other class 1 PI3Ks;¹³ at AstraZeneca our in-house database contains more than 80 PI3K γ structures. We screened near neighbors of 1 to build a picture of the SAR. Compound 2, a methylated matched-pair analogue of 1, lost significant PI3K γ activity (Figure 1). This prompted us to hypothesize that the acetamido-substituted isoxazole might interact with the hinge region of the kinase. Even though isoxazole is not a common hinge-binding motif, it does contain a hydrogen bond donor/acceptor pair typical for

kinase inhibitors. The dependence of activity on the donor NH suggested this could be a good place to start exploring SAR.

A set of amino heterocycles that are typical kinase hingebinding motifs were therefore introduced to replace the isoxazole (Table 1). Encouragingly, several of these such as aminopyrimidine 3 and pyrrolopyrazine 5 were potent inhibitors of PI3K γ , supporting the hypothesis that this part of the molecule was interacting with the hinge. This was further strengthened with data for compounds 6-10 which all carried hinge-binding motifs that had been used in previously reported PI3K γ inhibitors.^{6,14,15} The introduction of an aminothiazole heterocycle in 7-10 gave a marked increase in enzyme potency, and to our delight this was also reflected in the data from the cell assay showing pIC_{50} of 7–8 (Table 1). These results clearly supported the hypothesis that this part of the molecule was binding to the hinge region, but we were still unable to crystallize these more potent compounds in our PI3Kγ construct.

Compounds **3–10** all showed very good selectivity toward the other class I isoforms. Compound **9**, however, was a moderately potent inhibitor of PI3K δ , and we therefore investigated crystallization in a PI3K δ construct. Rewardingly, this was successful, and crystals of **9** in mouse PI3K δ could be obtained (Figure 2). The structure confirms that the amino-



Figure 2. X-ray crystal structure of compound **9** in mouse PI3K δ (PDB code 6FTN). The aminothiazole forms hydrogen bonds to the hinge residue Val828. The carbonyl of the lactam interacts with Lys779. The *N*-alkyl tail is oriented perpendicular to the isoindolinone core and is extending deep into the ATP-binding pocket.

thiazole heterocycle is interacting with the hinge residues as bidentate hydrogen bonds to Val828 are observed. The isoindolinone core forms hydrophobic interactions with Ile825 and the carbonyl of the lactam hydrogen-bonds with the catalytic Lys779. All these interactions are made with residues that are conserved between all four isoforms and do not give any clue to the high isoform selectivity observed in this series. However, one feature that is unique in this series is the N-alkyl tail, which is oriented perpendicular to the isoindolinone core, positioning the cyclopropyl ring close to Met788 and the methyl close to Asp787, both residues that form part of the k α 3-helix (the equivalent to α C-helix in protein kinases). This observation prompted further investigation of the N-alkyl substituent, and a set of analogues was prepared. However, out of the 80 compounds prepared in this set no compound had increased potency compared to the original methylcyclopropyl moiety that originated from the HTS hit (data not shown). The stereochemistry did not have a large impact on selectivity or potency as the (R)-stereoisomer 10 had similar potency in the biochemical assay to the (S)stereoisomer 8 but was slightly less potent in the cell assay (Table 1). More interesting results were obtained when removing the alkyl group from the nitrogen altogether giving compound 11 (Table 2).

Comparison of the matched-pair analogues 9 and 11 showed a dramatic 2 log drop in PI3K γ potency, while PI3K α potency increased by 1.6 log. Interestingly, PI3K δ potency was hardly affected and PI3K β potency increased but less dramatically than α . The remarkable PI3K γ selectivity thus seems to originate from the *N*-alkyl tail extending deep into the ATP-binding pocket and pushing on the k α 3-helix. Comparison of the obtained structure with PI3K γ -structures of reported selective inhibitors shows that this is a unique feature of this series as none of the reported inhibitors extend as far into the ATPbinding pocket (Figure S1, Supporting Information). Table 2. PI3K Enzyme and Cell Inhibitory Potencies for 9 and the Matched-Pair Analogue 11^a



It is important to remember that the crystal structure of 9 is in murine PI3K δ and thus may not reveal all structural details relevant to understanding the high PI3Ky selectivity. Compound 9 was profiled in a panel of 132 kinases at 1 μ M (Thermo Fisher). Approximately 100% inhibition was observed for PI3Ky and also for DRAK1, while greater than 50% inhibition was observed for CLK4 and PI3K δ (Table S1, Supporting Information). The pIC₅₀ values of 9 against DRAK1, and CLK4 were determined and show that even though 9 has a good kinase selectivity profile it is also a potent inhibitor of DRAK1 and CLK4 with pIC₅₀ values of 8.0 and 6.9, respectively. The most potent compounds 8 and 9 did not have a suitable profile for oral administration as they had poor solubility, high in vitro clearance and were very lipophilic. To improve ADME properties, design was focused on reducing lipophilicity. It has been shown that sulfonamides,6 reversed sulfonamides,¹⁶ and sulfones¹⁷ can be introduced in the ribose pocket of PI3Ks; overlay of the crystal structure of 9 with the public structure of PIK-93 (PDB code 2CHZ),⁶ suggested that it could be possible to target the ribose pocket from the isoindolinone core by substitution on the 7-position (Figure 3). This was judged to be a good position to introduce more polar functionalities to decrease lipophilicity. Sulfonamides 12-14, sulfones 15 and 16, and reversed sulfonamides 17 and 18



Figure 3. X-ray crystal structure of compound **9** in mouse PI3K δ (ligand in green, protein in gray, PDB code 6FTN) overlaid with structure of literature compound PIK-93 in PI3K γ (ligand in yellow, protein in blue, PDB code 2CHZ).⁶

Table 3. Structure, PI3K Enzyme and Cell Inhibitory Potencies, and Pharmacokinetically Relevant Properties of Compounds 12–18^a



^{*a*}All biological values are the mean of \geq 3 replicates except [‡]n = 2, [†]n = 1. ^{*b*}Intrinsic clearance in rat hepatocytes ((μ L/min)/10⁶ cells).

Table 4. Selected	Properties	of Compounds	13,	15, an	d 17
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property	13	15	17
PI3Kγ cell pIC ₅₀	8.3	8.1	8.6
PI3K $\alpha/\beta/\delta$ cell pIC ₅₀	<4.5/<4.5/6.4	<4.5/<4.5/6.0	<4.5/<4.5/6.1
aq solubility pH 6.5 (µM)	9	111	5
hERG pIC ₅₀	<4.5	4.5	4.7
cytotoxicity THP1 pIC ₅₀	3.8	4.1	4.7
mitochondrial toxicity	not active	not active	not active
PPB human/rat/dog (% free)	9/8/10	12/12/22	1/1/5
hepatocyte Cl_{int} human/rat/dog (($\mu L/min$)/10 ⁶ cells)	0.5/4.5/2.1	0.4/1.7/1.0	3.4/3.7/7.6
in vivo PK			
rat Cl ((mL/min)/kg), $t_{1/2}$ (h), F (%), V_{ss} (L/kg)	4.4, 2.6, 30, 1.0	6.3, 2.3, 51, 1.2	0.7, 6.7, 49, 0.4
dog Cl ((mL/min)/kg), $t_{\rm 1/2}$ (h), F (%), $V_{\rm ss}$ (L/kg)	2.1, 12, 44, 2.2	3.3, 3.9, 82, 1.1	6.2, 1.3, 1.6, 0.7

extending from the 7-position of the isoindolinone core were prepared. The majority of these compounds had maintained or increased PI3K γ potency while at the same time having a lower log *D* (Table 3). The most potent compounds in the enzymatic and cellular assay were *N*-methylsulfonamide 13, methyl sulfone 15, and reversed methylsulfonamides 17 and 18. Compound 18, however, exhibited high intrinsic clearance in rat hepatocytes. Compounds 13, 15, and 17 were selected for further profiling.

All the shortlisted compounds, 13, 15, and 17, showed excellent isoform selectivity in the biochemical assays, and this profile was also confirmed in mechanism-based cellular assays measuring phosphorylation of AKT. The compounds showed high activity in the PI3Ky target engagement cell assay and >100-fold selectivity in a human Jeko-1B cell line that assesses PI3K δ activity (Table 4). The compounds were inactive in two other cell assays: a human MDA MB-468 cell line and a human BT4 cell line that assess activity of PI3K α and PI3K β , respectively. Compound 15 had considerably better kinetic solubility than 13 and 17 (Table 3). The difference was less pronounced when thermodynamic solubility at pH 6.5 was measured, but 15 was still the most soluble (Table 4). The compounds had a clear margin against inhibition of the hERG channel and also for general cytotoxicity assessed in THP1 cells and HepG2 cells. In vitro PK data of the three compounds showed that 15 consistently had the lowest intrinsic clearance and highest free fraction across three species (human, rat, and dog). In vivo, 17 showed low clearance in rat and had the longest half-life of the shortlisted compounds in this species.

Also in dog, 17 had a lower clearance than predicted from in vitro data, but in this species in vivo clearance was the highest among the three compounds. In addition, bioavailability of 17 in dog was only 1.6%. Compound 15 on the other hand had good bioavailability and low clearance in both species which was consistent with in vitro data. On the basis of these data, 15 was identified as the compound with the best profile for oral administration and was chosen for further profiling. Kinase selectivity profiling of 15 at 1 μ M in a panel of 395 kinases (Thermo Fisher) including protein and lipid kinases showed excellent kinase selectivity (Table S2, Supporting Information), and no activity could be detected for the previously observed off-targets DRAK1 and CLK4.

Except for PI3K γ (95%) and - δ (66%) the only kinases that showed greater than 50% inhibition at 1 μ M were the class II PI3Ks: PI3KC2 β (84%) and PI3KC2 γ (71%). Thus, to get a more complete view of the selectivity toward class II and class III PI3Ks, pIC₅₀ values of **15** against all class II and class III PI3Ks were determined (Table 5). These data showed that **15**

Table 5. Selectivity Profiling of Compound 15 toward Class II and Class III PI3Ks a

		pIC ₅₀		
PI3Kγ enz	PI3KC2 α enz	PI3KC2 β enz	PI3KC2γ enz	PI3KC3 enz
>9.2 ^b	<5	7.5	5.5	5.1

"All biological values are the mean of ≥ 2 replicates. "The exact pIC₅₀ could not be determined in this assay format.

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inhibits the class II PI3K PI3KC2 β with a pIC₅₀ of 7.5 as compared to a pIC₅₀ > 9.2 for PI3K γ in a comparable biochemical assay. Relatively little is known about the role of class II PI3Ks,¹⁸ and no notable activity of **15** was recorded for the other class II and class III PI3Ks.

Compound **15** was also screened in a wide ligand profile screen (CEREP), covering 89 distinct molecular targets (Table S4, Supporting Information). Compound **15** showed good selectivity margins, with only one target, P2Y₁, with a K_i below 1 μ M. Follow-up screening showed no activity (<100 μ M) of **15** as agonist or antagonist in whole cell P2Y₁ assays. On the basis of the encouraging pharmacokinetic and safety/selectivity profile of **15**, we decided to progress into a rat LPS-induced acute inflammation model, measuring airway neutrophilia. Compound **15** was dosed 2 h prior to challenge and inhibited neutrophil migration with a dose-response over doses of 0.1, 0.5, and 2.5 mg/kg (Figure 4). These data strongly suggest that oral administration of **15** inhibits PI3K γ function in vivo.



Figure 4. Effect of compound **15** on LPS-induced neutrophil migration in rats. LPS challenged Wistar females were dosed po with **15** 2 h prior to challenge. 4 h after challenge the animals were sacrificed. Lung fluid was collected by lavage, and differential cell count was performed using a SYSMEX XT-1800i. Neutrophil migration was significantly inhibited in a dose-dependent manner with **15**. n = 8 in all groups (n = 10 for vehicle group). Statistical significance is indicated as follows above the columns: (*) p < 0.001; (***) p < 0.05.

Compound 15 was prepared in four steps starting from a methylester derivative that was reacted with (S)-1-cyclopropylethanamine to give isoindolinone 19 (Scheme 1). The aminothiazole was introduced by a Pd-catalyzed coupling of isoindolinone 19 with *N*-(4-methylthiazol-2-yl)acetamide. This was followed by an S_NAr reaction with sodium methanthiolate

Scheme 1. Synthesis of Compound 15^a

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to give the intermediate sulfide which could be oxidized to the desired sulfone 15 by using *m*-CPBA.

CONCLUSION

A series of highly isoform-selective PI3K γ inhibitors have been developed starting from a high quality HTS hit. This series, which contains an alkyl-substituted isoindolinone core, exhibits remarkable isoform selectivity which originates from the *N*alkyl tail extending deep into the ATP-binding pocket. The initial hit was efficiently progressed by use of structure based design to more advanced compounds, e.g., **15**. This compound combines high biochemical and cellular potency with excellent isoform selectivity and has an attractive pharmacokinetic and in vitro safety profile. Oral administration of **15** resulted in a dosedependent inhibition of LPS-induced airway neutrophilia in rats.

EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

All compounds were purified to \geq 95% purity (HPLC). Further synthetic details and full descriptions of biological methods are contained in the Supporting Information.

N-(5-{7-Chloro-2-[(15)-1-cyclopropylethyl]-1-oxo-2,3-dihydro-1*H*-isoindol-5-yl}-4-methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)acetamide (8). Cs₂CO₃ (37.3 g, 114 mmol) was added to a flask containing 19 (18.0 g, 57 mmol), *N*-(4-methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)acetamide (10.7 g, 69 mmol), tri-*tert*-butylphosphonium tetrafluoroborate (3.3 g, 11 mmol), and Pd(OAc)₂ (1.3 g, 6 mmol) in DMF (300 mL). The resulting mixture was heated at 100 °C. After 2 h it was cooled to rt, filtered through Celite, and concentrated. The residue was chromatographed (silica gel; 0–25% of MeOH in DCM) to afford the title compound (14.0 g, 63%) as a yellow solid. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 0.2–0.27 (m, 1H), 0.35–0.43 (m, 2H), 0.52–0.61 (m, 1H), 1.08–1.14 (m, 1H), 1.28 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 3H), 2.16 (s, 3H), 2.40 (s, 3H), 3.52– 3.63 (m, 1H), 4.56 (s, 2H), 7.50 (s, 1H), 7.64 (s, 1H), 12.23 (s, 1H). HRMS: *m*/z calcd 390.1043, found 390.1022.

N-(5-{2-[(15)-1-Cyclopropylethyl]-7-(methylsulfonyl)-1-oxo-2,3-dihydro-1*H*-isoindol-5-yl}-4-methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)acetamide (15). Sodium methanethiolate (5.0 g, 71 mmol) was added to 8 in DMF (80 mL). The resulting mixture was heated at 110 °C for 2 h. The solvent was removed under reduced pressure, and the reaction mixture was poured into water. The resulting precipitate was collected by filtration, washed with water (200 mL) and EtOAc (50 mL), and dried under vacuum to afford the intermediate sulfide (4.10 g, 72%), which was used in the next step (below) without further purification.

m-CPBA (3.3 g, 19.3 mmol) was added to the sulfide prepared above (3.1 g, 7.7 mmol) in DCM (120 mL). The resulting mixture was stirred at 0 °C for 1 h, then warmed to rt and stirred for 1 h. The reaction mixture was quenched with saturated NaHCO₃ (200 mL) and extracted with DCM. The organic layer was dried over Na₂SO₄, filtered, and concentrated. The crude product was purified by preparative HPLC to afford the title compound **15** (1.2 g, 36%) as a white solid. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 0.24–0.29 (m, 1H), 0.38–0.46 (m, 2H), 0.57–0.62 (m, 1H), 1.11–1.19 (m, 1H), 1.31 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 3H), 2.17 (s, 3H), 2.44 (s, 3H), 3.59–3.65 (m, 4H), 4.70 (s,



^aReagents and conditions: (i) (S)-1-cyclopropylethanamine, B(OH)₃, K₂CO₃, MeCN, 80 °C, 34%; (ii) N-(4-methylthiazol-2-yl)acetamide, Pd(OAc)₂, [(t-Bu)₃PH]BF₄, Cs₂CO₃, DMF, 100 °C, 63%; (iii) (a) NaSMe, DMF, 110 °C, 72%, (b) *m*-CPBA, DCM, 0 °C, 36%.

2H), 8.00 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 1H), 8.05 (d, *J* = 1.5 Hz, 1H), 12.30 (s, 1H). ¹³C NMR (126 MHz, DMSO- d_6) δ 3.4, 3.9, 15.5, 16.3, 18.0, 22.5, 43.1, 45.9, 52.1, 121.8, 126.6, 127.3, 127.7, 135.4, 137.7, 144.6, 145.9, 156.3, 163.6, 168.7. [α]_D +60 (*c* 1 g/100 mL, MeCN, 20 °C). HRMS: *m/z* calcd 434.1208, found 434.1201.

5-Bromo-7-chloro-2-[(15)-1-cyclopropylethyl]-2,3-dihydro-1H-isoindol-1-one (19). (*S*)-1-Cyclopropylethanamine (2.4 mL, 23 mmol) was added to a flask containing methyl 4-bromo-2- (bromomethyl)-6-chlorobenzoate (7.8 g, 23 mmol) in acetonitrile (80 mL). Boric acid (1.4 g, 23 mmol) was added, followed by portionwise addition of K₂CO₃ (6.3 g, 46 mmol) over 2 min. The mixture was allowed to stir at rt overnight. The reaction mixture was filtered and washed with acetonitrile. The combined acetonitrile filtrates were concentrated and the residue was chromatographed (silica gel; 5–30% of EtOAc in heptane) to afford the title compound (2.4 g, 34%) as a pink solid. ¹H NMR (500 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆) δ 0.15–0.26 (m, 1H), 0.32–0.45 (m, 2H), 0.51–0.61 (m, 1H), 1.06–1.14 (m, 1H), 1.26 (d, *J* = 6.8 Hz, 3H), 3.48–3.58 (m, 1H), 4.52 (s, 2H), 7.76 (d, *J* = 1.3 Hz, 1H), 7.84 (d, *J* = 1.3 Hz, 1H). *m/z* (ESI) 316 [M + H]⁺.

ASSOCIATED CONTENT

S Supporting Information

The Supporting Information is available free of charge on the ACS Publications website at DOI: 10.1021/acs.jmed-chem.8b00447.

Experimental procedures and spectroscopic data for final compounds and detailed pharmacology methods (PDF) Molecular formula strings and some data (CSV)

Accession Codes

The crystal structure for compound **9** (PDB code 6FTN) has been deposited with the Protein Data Bank. The authors will release coordinates and experimental data upon publication.

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Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

ABBREVIATIONS USED

CLK, CDC-like kinase; DRAK, DAPK-related apoptosisinducing kinase; LPS, lipopolysaccharide; PI3K, phosphoinositide 3-kinase

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