

CURRENT PATENTS GAZETTE



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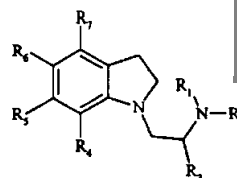
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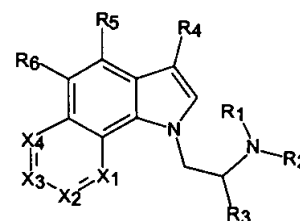
DRUG PATENTING IN CONTEXT

Current Patents *Gazette* is the most rapid competitive intelligence service covering innovation in the pharmaceutical industry. Patent applications published during the past week have been classified and analysed, in order to place the inventions in context. For the most crucial innovations, those involving new chemical compounds, additional information is given in the form of front page images. These can be enlarged to show details of chemical structures and inventor teams, for example. Applications filed jointly, representing collaborative research, are highlighted, as are sequences of inter-related documents.

NEW THIS WEEK



Pyrroloquinoline and indoline based 5-HT_{2C} agonists are the focus of five new applications from Cerebrus, claiming their use as an obesity therapy (Page 6)



HIGHLIGHTS THIS WEEK

A series of chemical process cases from **SmithKline Beecham** at first sight unrelated, describes the steps required to synthesize **phenylurea derivatives**. One of the reagents used is 2-amino-5-cyanophenol, identified in a second case by the alternative name 3-hydroxy-4-aminobenzonitrile. Remarkably, this pair of cases do not have in common a single title word, inventor or IPC, and even the attorney's first and last names have been transposed on the second, as if to obliterate all trace of a connection. The applications have restricted territorial coverage, but may well signal the selection of a lead candidate from among a substantial series of **IL-8 antagonists** first described in 1997.

From the UK national press we have gleaned a report that a citizen of Bristol has filed a patent application at the **UK Patent Office** entitled "**Myself**". She is reported to have said that she was both novel and useful (and had taken 31 years of hard labor to "invent") - and she clearly considers herself worthy of legal protection. Whilst on the one hand this might seem to be a naïve and even amusing use of the patent system, it is arguably no more unreasonable than many of the applications currently being filed by biotech companies seeking to monopolize genetic material. We shall watch this case with interest as it proceeds.

Cerebrus Pharmaceuticals of Wokingham, UK has five applications this week claiming a variety of indolines, pyrroloindoles, pyridoindoles, pyrroloquinolines and azepinoindoles as **5-HT_{2B}/5-HT_{2C} receptor ligands**. The compounds are said to have a wide range of indications including treatment of CNS, cardiovascular and gastrointestinal disorders, but with particular emphasis placed upon obesity. These publications are part of the company's ongoing investigations of serotonin **5-HT_{2C} agonists as potential therapies for obesity**, which began in 1997 as a collaboration with the **University of California**. Cerebrus had hoped to have a candidate ready for clinical development by the end of 1998 but, following its acquisition by **Vanguard** last year, has now revised its plans and expects to move into phase I by the end of 2001. In December 1999, the worldwide rights to the technology were licensed to **Roche**, who will be responsible for development, registration and commercialization of any products arising from the project while Cerebrus will receive milestone payments and further project funding as the program progresses through development.

Elsewhere, among this week's Biotech cases an application from **Incyte Genetics** can be found claiming **methods for obtaining nucleic acid containing a mutation**, and is very similar to **WO9925872**, which names **Hexagen** as assignee. Incyte acquired Hexagen in 1998 as part of a plan to sequence the human genome within one year, and Incyte Genetics was set up as a separate unit, where this project is being conducted. This appears to be the first time that the name Incyte Genetics has appeared as an assignee.