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A Rapid Deprotection Procedure for Phosphotriester DNA Synthesis

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A RAPID DEPROTECTION PROCEDURE FOR PHOSPHOTRIESTER DNA SYNTHESIS

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Summary. An equimolar solution of aldoxime and tetramethylguanidine at 70°C cleaves all base labile protecting groups from oligonucleotides.

The synthesis of DNA using the solid phase phosphotriester method has been extensively researched in recent years, particularly to improve the rate of synthesis. However, relatively few studies have been carried out to investigate the rates of deprotection.

We have found that an equimolar solution of aldoxime and tetramethylguanidine at 70°C (0.3M solution 10ml, 50-150mgs of resin), for 12 to 17 hours, cleaves the 3'-succinyl group attaching the oligonucleotide to the support; cleaves the chlorophenyl protecting groups on the phosphorous, removes the base protection and also reverses the base modification. Reverse phase HPLC studies have shown that all four deprotected nucleosides showed no evidence of modification nor was any deamination of cytidine apparent after a 24 hour reaction.

The ion exchange HPLC profiles of an oligonucleotide deprotected by the rapid method followed by an acid treatment to remove the 5'-protecting group and by a standard method using ammonia showed no significant differences; neither was any difference seen using the mobility shift method of analysis. The oligonucleotides produced by this method have been found to be active in a range of biochemical experiments.

In conclusion therefore this deprotection procedure offers a simpler and faster method which can be incorporated easily into the cycle of an automated DNA synthesiser.