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Synthesis of P-Chiral [18 O]-Labeled Isotopomeric Oligo(deoxyribonucleoside Phosphorothioate)s and Phosphates

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SYNTHESIS OF P-CHIRAL [^{18}O]-LABELED ISOTOPOMERIC OLIGO(DEOXYRIBONUCLEOSIDE PHOSPHOROTHIOATE)S AND PHOSPHATES

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Diastereomerically pure, isotopically labeled 5'-O-DMT-nucleoside-3'-O-(2-thio-4,4-"spiro"-pentamethylene-1,3,2-[^{18}O]oxathiaphospholane)s and -(2-oxo-4,4-"spiro"-pentamethylene-1,3,2-[^{18}O]oxathiaphospholane)s suitable for stereocontrolled synthesis of P-chiral oligonucleotide [^{18}O]phosphorothioates and [^{18}O]phosphates were synthesized. Obtained in that way "chimeric" oligonucleotide d[$\text{A}_{\text{PO}}\text{APS-R}_p\text{,S}_p\text{APS-R}_p\text{,S}_p\text{APS-R}_p\text{C}_{\text{PS}(18\text{O})}\text{-R}_p\text{GPS-R}_p\text{T}_{\text{PS-R}_p\text{,S}_p}\text{T}_{\text{PO}}\text{T}$] was used for determination of the stereochemistry of hydrolysis by endonuclease from Serratia marcescens.

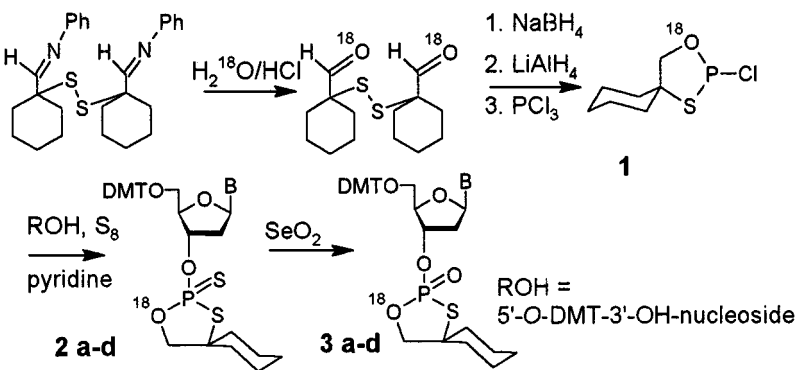
Keywords: DNA probes; isotopic labeling; nucleases

In studies on the mechanism of action of nucleases and phosphotransferases, configurational analysis of the products of enzymatic degradation of stereodefined P-chiral substrates (e.g., oligo(deoxyribonucleoside phosphorothioate)s (PS-Oligos) or [^{18}O]phosphates (P^{18}O -Oligos)) in isotopically labeled water allow one to distinguish between *one-step* and *two-step* modes of enzyme action, with enzyme-assistance in nucleophilic substitution at P atom or involvement of covalent enzyme-substrate intermediate, respectively.¹ Standard chemical methods provide PS-Oligos as a mixture of 2^n diastereoisomers, where n is a number of phosphorothioate linkages.² The first method for their stereocontrolled synthesis, so called oxathiaphospholane approach, was elaborated in this laboratory,³ and stereodefined PS-Oligos were used for biochemical and biophysical studies, including stability

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against nucleases and thermal stability of duplexes or other high-order structures.^{4–7} Since the presence of a sulfur atom changes the properties of internucleotide bonds,⁸ certain properties of PS-Oligos are different from those of natural oligonucleotides. These inconveniences can be avoided by use of P-chiral P¹⁸O-Oligos for hydrolysis in [¹⁷O]water.

The oxathiaphospholane method has been applied for the synthesis of stereodefined PS¹⁸O-Oligos and P¹⁸O-Oligos. The synthesis of labeled phosphitylating reagent 2-chloro-“spiro”-4,4-pentamethylene-1,3,2-[¹⁸O]oxathiaphospholane (**1**) is depicted on Scheme 1. Attempts



SCHEME 1

at acid-catalyzed hydrolysis of cyclohexanecarbo-*N*-phenyl-imine to introduce the isotope label yielded the crystalline cyclic trioxane (resulting from trimerization of cyclohexanecarbaldehyde) instead of the desired labeled aldehyde. For the trimeric product, the m.p. 173–179°C was found, and its ¹H NMR contained characteristic doublet at δ 4.49 ppm assigned to O–CHC₆H₁₁–O. The isotope label was introduced by hydrolysis of 2,2'-dithiobis(cyclohexanecarbo-*N*-phenyl-imine) upon treatment with anhydrous HCl in the presence of 1.1 molar equivalent of [¹⁸O]water (95 at.% ¹⁸O). After two-step reduction of the aldehyde group and disulfide bond followed by reaction of resulting (1-sulfanyl- cyclohexyl)methan[¹⁸O]ol with PCl₃, the phosphitylating reagent **1** was obtained with isotope enrichment of 87 atom % ¹⁸O. Phosphitylation of 5'-O-DMT-nucleosides with **1**, followed by sulfurization, gave monomers **2a–d** (B = Ade^{Bz}, Cyt^{Bz}, Gua^{iBu}, Thy), which subsequently were separated chromatographically into pure P-diastereomers of R_P and S_P absolute configuration, the precursors of [¹⁸O]phosphorothioate dinucleotides of the R_P and S_P absolute configuration, respectively.

To obtain monomers for direct synthesis of stereodefined P¹⁸O-Oligos, diastereomerically pure monomers **2a–d** were stereospecifically

(as judged by ^{31}P NMR spectroscopy) and quantitatively oxidized with SeO_2 yielding 5'-*O*-DMT-nucleoside-3'-*O*-(2-oxo-"spiro"-4,4-pentamethylene-1,3,2- ^{18}O)oxathiaphospholane)s (**3a-d**), further characterized by FAB MS and ^{31}P NMR. Chemical correlation proved that a sequence of reactions: *slow*-**2** \rightarrow **3** \rightarrow P^{18}O -Oligo yields the [^{18}O]phosphate internucleotide bond of R_P absolute configuration. The ^{18}O -labeled cytidyl monomer **2b** and appropriate 2-thio and 2-oxo unlabeled oxathiaphospholane monomers were used for the synthesis of oligonucleotide $\text{d}[\text{A}_{\text{PO}}\text{A}_{\text{PS-Rp,Sp}}\text{A}_{\text{PS-Rp,Sp}}\text{A}_{\text{PS-Rp}}\text{C}_{\text{PS}(18\text{O})-\text{Rp}}\text{G}_{\text{PS-Rp}}\text{T}_{\text{PS-Rp}}\text{T}_{\text{PS-Rp,Sp}}\text{T}_{\text{PO}}\text{T}]$. Its structure was based on the results of precise studies on the stereochemical and sequence preferences of the otherwise sequence nonspecific *Serratia marcescens* nuclease. Therefore, the hydrolysis (in unlabeled water) by the enzyme produced the ^{18}O -labeled oligomer $\text{d}[\text{PS}(18\text{O})\text{G}_{\text{PS-Rp}}\text{T}_{\text{PS-Rp}}\text{T}_{\text{PS-Rp}}\text{T}_{\text{PO}}\text{T}]$ almost quantitatively. It was isolated by RP-HPLC and ligated by T4 DNA ligase to the 3'-end of a 44-base long "hairpin" oligonucleotide template 5'- $\text{d}[\text{CGCATCTCAAAAAACAGAAGAGGGCCCTTTTGGGCCCTCTTCT}]\text{-3'}$. According to Mizuuchi, the ligation of a 5'-*O*-phosphorothioylated DNA is stereoselective and results in formation of an R_P -internucleotide phosphorothioate bond.⁹ The ligation product was treated with nuclease P1 and resulting $\text{d}[\text{PO}\text{T}_{\text{PS}(18\text{O})-\text{Rp}}\text{G}_{\text{PS-Rp}}\text{T}_{\text{PS-Rp}}\text{T}_{\text{PS-Rp}}\text{T}]$ was analyzed by MALDI TOF mass spectrometry, which confirmed the retention of ^{18}O -oxygen. This result indicates that the *Serratia* endonuclease cleaves the internucleotide phosphorothioate with inversion of configuration via *in-line* mechanism.

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