Rapid Synthesis of L-Idosyl Glycosyl Donors from α-Thioglucosides for the Preparation of Heparin Disaccharides

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Abstract: A new methodology for the synthesis of the most challenging heparin building block has been developed. Orthogonally protected L-idosyl glycosyl donors were prepared by C5 epimerization of the corresponding thioglucosides using the hydroboration/oxidation method followed by a 4,6-acetal formation. The α-anomeric configuration was crucial and the bulky C4 substituent was advantageous for the high L-ido diastereoselectivity. The 4,6-arylmethylene group proved to be a directing element in glycosylation thereby stereoselective α-idosylation could be achieved by using idosyl donors without a C-2 participating group.

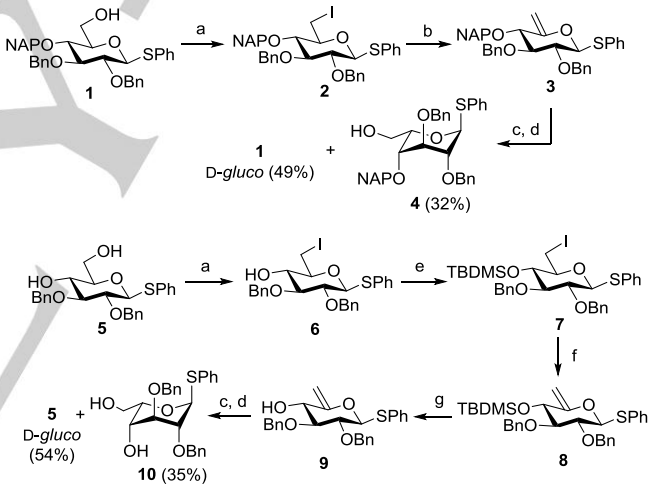
Heparin and heparan sulfates (H/HS) are highly sulfated linear glycosaminoglycan (GAG) polysaccharides, consisting of alternating *N*-glucosamine and hexuronic acid units, specifically either D-glucuronic acid or its C5 epimer L-iduronic acid (IdoA). GAGs interact with a variety of proteins and thereby play important roles in a diverse set of biological processes including blood coagulation, cell growth control, inflammation, tumor metastasis and viral infection.[1] The synthesis of specific GAG oligosaccharides or their mimetics as biological probes and potential new therapeutics is an area of great current interest.[2]

One lasting challenge in heparin/HS synthesis is the efficient preparation of L-idose or IdoA building blocks, as these sugars are not readily available. Various methods have been explored for their synthesis,[3] involving epimerization at C5 of D-glucose[4] or D-glucuronic acid derivatives,[5] isomerisation of unsaturated sugars,[6] and homologation of tetroses or pentoses.[7] However, the idose derivatives obtained by these routes are generally not applicable directly in heparin/HS syntheses and further multistep transformation is required to turn them to properly functionalized glycosyl donors.

Recently, Bols and co-workers published a general method for the preparation of all eight L-hexoses as the thioglycoside donors, ready for glycosylations.[8] While this method, based on iridium-catalyzed CH-activation of the corresponding 6-deoxy L-hexopyranosides, is highly attractive for most rare L-sugars, in the specific case of L-idose the synthesis of the corresponding 6-deoxy precursor requires fourteen steps from L-rhamnose, including epimerizations at C2 and C3,[8b] making the whole process particularly lengthy and low-yielding.

We envisaged a rapid, cost-friendly and scalable synthesis of orthogonally protected L-idose thioglycoside donors by diastereoselective hydroboration of 5-hexenopyranosides obtained from the corresponding thioglucosides. The hydroboration/oxidation is a well-elaborated method for C5 isomerisation of α-*O*-glycosides;[6a,b] however, it has not been applied on thioglycosides, probably due to the sensitivity of sulfur towards oxidation and non-trivial synthesis of α-thioglycosides. Herein, we present the first application of this approach for direct synthesis of orthogonally protected thioidosides and utilization of them in the synthesis of heparin-related disaccharides.

Although it is known that the α-anomeric configuration of *O*-glycosyl 5-enopyranosides is crucial for the high L-ido-selectivity of hydroboration, initially, we tested the viability of this procedure on β-thioglucosides which are available more easily than the α-congeners (Scheme 1).



Scheme 1. Synthesis of L-idose starting from β-D-thioglucosides **1** and **5**: a) toluene, PPh_3, I_2, imidazole, 75 °C, 30 min (**2**: 80%, **6**: 79%); b) DMF, NaH, 0 °C to rt, 24 h (66%); c) THF, BH_3·THF, 0 °C,1.5 h; d) 30% H_2O_2, 2M NaOH, 0 °C to rt, 50 min; e) CH_2Cl_2, 2,6-lutidine, TBDMSOTf, 0 °C to rt, 2 h (84%); f) THF, t-BuOK, 0 °C, 30 min (85%); g) THF, TBAF, 0 °C to rt, 2 h (97%).

Iodination of **1**[9] followed by dehydrohalogenation of **2** with sodium hydride gave 6-deoxy-β-D-*xylo*-hex-5-enopyranoside **3** which was then subjected to hydroboration/oxidation. To our great satisfaction, the reactions proceeded cleanly and with high efficacy. The standard oxidation conditions (i.e. H_2O_2, NaOH) reported for *O*-glycosides proved to be well suited for thioglycosides as oxidation of the anomeric thioacetal functionality was not observed. As expected, the corresponding D-glucoside **1** was formed as the major product, nevertheless, the desired L-*ido* thioglycoside **4** was also obtained in 32% isolated yield. Recently, Łopatkiewicz and Mlynarski have demonstrated that hydroboration stereoselectivity can be substantially influenced by the C4 protective group.[10] They have found that small C4-substituents or free 4-OH group are

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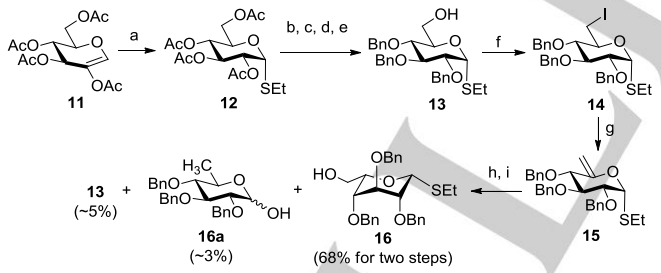
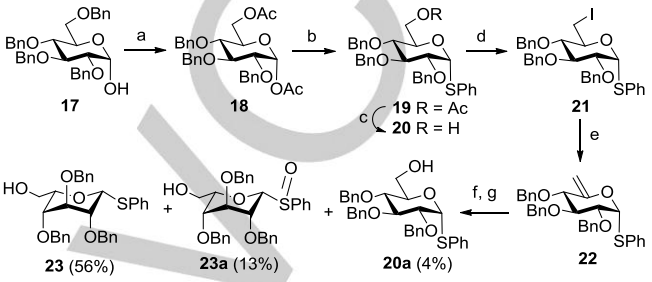
favorable, while bulky C-4 substituents are unfavorable for L-idose isomer formation. Hence, in the hope of achieving a higher L-idose ratio, 5-enopyranoside **9** with a free 4-OH group was prepared starting from diol **5**[11] *via* routine transformations including selective iodination of the primary position followed by silylation of **6**, dehydrohalogenation of **7** and desilylation of **8**. Although hydroboration/oxidation of **9** proceeded with an excellent 89% combined yield, the ratio of the L-*ido* diastereoisomer, unfortunately, did not increase.We assume that the excess borane-THF complex reacts with the 4-OH group of **9** forming a borinic ester at position C4 which exhibits a shielding effect on the bottom face of the pyranose ring upon hydroboration, similarly to that of the 4-*O*-NAP group in compound **3**.

Having established that hydroboration/oxidation of β-thioglycosides occurred with high efficacy we studied the isomerisation of the α-anomers. Ethyl 1-thioglucoside **12** was prepared with exclusive α-selectivity in 87% yield by photoinduced hydrothiolation of the peracetylated 2-hydroxyglycal **11** as previously reported[12] (Scheme 2). Deacetylation of **12** followed by selective 6-*O*-tritylation, benzylation and subsequent detritylation gave **13** which was transformed to 5-enopyranoside **15** *via* dehydrohalogenation of **14** with sodium hydride. Hydroboration/oxidation of **15** afforded the desired L-idose isomer **16** in a good yield of 68% over two steps. Interestingly, the oxidation reaction was not as clean as in the case of the β-phenylthio congeners **3** and **9**, some polar degradation products and small amount of apolar by-products were detected by TLC monitoring of the reaction. The main components of the apolar by-products, isolated as an inseparable mixture of compounds, were identified, after acetylation and a subsequent chromatographic separation, as **13**, the D-*gluco* isomer of the major product, and the 6-deoxy-D-glucose derivative **16a**.



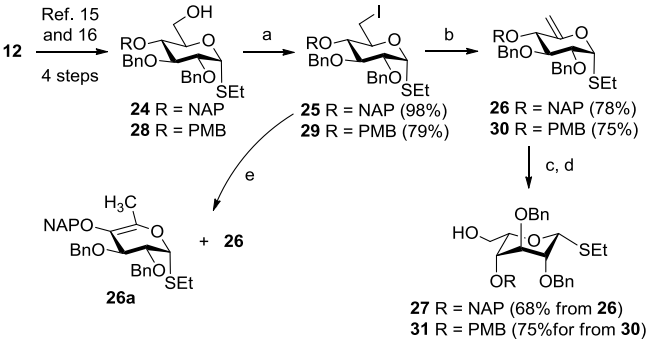
Scheme 2. Synthetic route to L-idose starting from ethylthio α-D-glucopyranoside **12**: a) Ref. 12, EtSH, DPAP, hv, rt, 3 x 15 min (87%); b) NaOMe, MeOH, rt, 24 h; c) pyr, TrCl, DMAP, 0 °C to rt, 24 h; d) DMF, NaH, BnBr, 0 °C to rt, 24 h; e) CH_2Cl_2, 90% TFA, rt, 30 min (70% over four steps); f) toluene, PPh_3, I_2, imidazole,75 °C, 30 min (76%); g) DMF, NaH, 0 °C to rt, 24 h (78%); h) THF, BH_3·THF, 0 °C, 1.5 h; i) H_2O_2, 2M NaOH, 0 °C to rt, 50 min.

In order to test whether the formation of by-products could be suppressed by changing the alkylthio aglycone into an aryl one, the phenylthio glucoside **21** was prepared and subjected to the isomerisation process (Scheme 3). After partial acetolysis of **17**[13] the obtained **18** was reacted with thiophenol in the presence of Lewis acid resulting in **19** as an α:β mixture in an 8:1 ratio. Zemplén deacetylation of **19** followed by iodination and subsequent chromatographic purification provided the pure α-anomer of **21** in 71% yield over two steps. Dehydrohalogenation of **21** with sodium hydride followed by hydroboration and oxidation of the obtaining **22** provided the desired L-idose **23** in 56% yield along with its sulfoxide derivative **23a** (13%) and glucose isomer **20** (4%). Although sulfoxide **23a**, formed by over-oxidation of **23**, can also be used as a glycosyl donor[14] no benefits were found using phenyl aglycone instead of ethyl.



Scheme 3. Synthesis of L-idose *via* hydroboration-oxidation of phenylthio α-enoglycopyranoside **22**: a) Ac_2O, AcOH, H_2SO_4, 0 °C, 30 min; b) CH_2Cl_2, PhSH, BF_3·Et_2O, 0 °C to rt 2 h (63% over two steps), c) MeOH, NaOMe, rt, 24 h d) THF, imidazole, Ph_3P, I_2, 75 °C, 30 min (71% over two steps); e) DMF, NaH, 0 °C to rt, 24 h (72%); f) THF, BH_3·THF, 0 °C, 1.5 h; g) 30% H_2O_2, 2M NaOH, 0 °C to rt, 50 min.

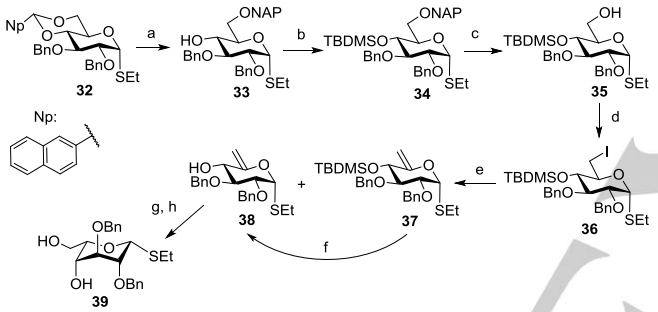
Next, we we turned our attention to the synthesis of orthogonally protected idosyl thioglycosides, useful as building blocks in glycosylation reactions (Scheme 4). Hence, compound **24**[15] bearing the 2-napthylmethyl group at C4 position was prepared and converted to enopyranoside **26** *via* sodium hydride mediated elimination of the 6-iodo derivative **25**. The two-step isomerisation process of **26** resulted in the desired idose derivative **27** in 68% yield over two steps. Improving the dehydroiodination of **25** by using potassium *tert*-butoxide instead of NaH was unsuccessful, because this reaction led to the formation of an inseparable 1:2 mixture of **26** and **26a**. Subjecting this mixture to the hydroboration/oxidation process, **26a** having an endocyclic double bond remained unchanged.



Scheme 4. Hydroboration-oxidation of orthogonally protected α-thioglucosides: a) toluene, PPh_3, I_2, imidazole, 75 °C, 30 min; b) DMF, NaH, 0 °C to rt, 24 h; c) THF, BH_3·THF, 0 °C, 1.5 h; d) 30% H_2O_2, 2 M NaOH, 0 °C to rt, 50 min, e) THF, *t*-BuOK, 0 °C, 30 min (97%, **26a** : **26**, 2:1).

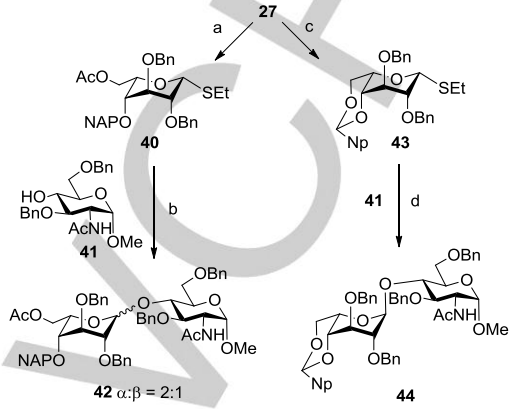
The iodination and subsequent elimination reaction were also performed on compound **28**[16] bearing 4-*O*-*p*-methoxybenzyl ether as a temporary protecting group. We were pleased to find that hydroboration/oxidation of the obtaining enopyranoside **30** having the bulky 4-OPMB group gave rise to the desired idose derivative **31** in an excellent 75% yield.

We investigated if the isomerisation process could be further improved by applying a 4-OH derivative in the hydroboration step (Scheme 5). Compound **32**[15] was converted to **33** by reductive cleavage of the 4,6-acetal ring using the Garegg method.[17] The freed 4-OH group was temporarily protected by silylation to afford **34** which was transformed to the 6-OH derivative **35** by oxidative cleavage of the NAP ether using DDQ. Iodination followed by sodium hydride mediated dehydroiodination of the obtained **36** gave **37** along with its desilylated derivative **38** in 36% and 14% yields, respectively. Treatment of **37** with TBAF afforded enopyranoside **38** in 61% yield. Unfortunately, hydroboration/oxidation of **38** having a free hydroxyl group at position C4 proceeded with low efficacy resulting in the desired idose derivative only in a 41% yield.



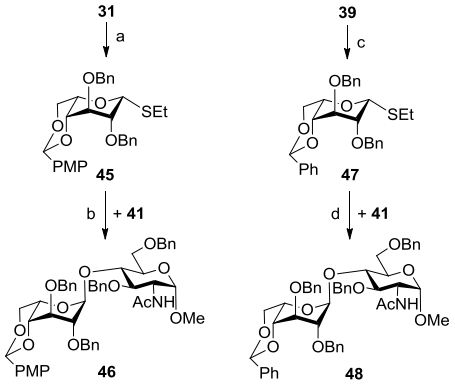
Scheme 5. Hydroboration-oxidation of 5-enopyranoside **38** with a free 4-OH group: a) THF, $(CH_3)_3N{\cdot}BH_3$, $AlCl_3$, rt, 30 min (64%); b) CH_2Cl_2, 2,6-lutidine, TBDMSOTf, 0 °C to rt, 2.5 h (75%); c) CH_2Cl_2, H_2O, DDQ, rt, 30 min (87%); d) toluene, PPh_3, I_2, imidazole, 75 °C, 30 min (99%); e) DMF, NaH, rt, 24 h (**37**: 36%, **38**: 14%); f) THF, TBAF, 0 °C to rt, 2 h (61%); g) THF, $BH_3{\cdot}$THF, 0 °C, 1.5 h, h) 30% H_2O_2, 2M NaOH, 0 °C to rt, 50 min (41% over two steps).

With the functionalized idosyl thioglycosides **27**, **31** and **39** in hand, stereoselective synthesis of heparinoid disaccharides was attempted. First, compound **27** was acetylated and the obtaining **40** was reacted with the aminoglycoside acceptor **41**[18] (Scheme 6). Unfortunately, the glycosylation occurred with a low α-stereoselectivity affording an inseparable 2:1 mixture of the α- and β-linked disaccharide **42** in 51% yield. The moderate yield of coupling can be explained with the low reactivity of the 4-OH group of *N*-acetylglucosamine.[19] To investigate whether a 4,6-*O*-acetal had a beneficial effect on the stereochemical outcome of glycosidation, compound **27** was converted to the corresponding 4,6-*O*-(2-naphthyl)methylene derivative **43** by oxidative ring closure[20] with DDQ (Scheme 6). To our great delight, reaction of **41** with the donor **43** led to exclusive formation of disaccharide **44** with the required α-interglycosidic linkage. It is well-known from the works by Crich and co-workers that the 4,6-benzylidene acetal of a donor is a control element in glycosylations permitting stereoselective 1,2-cis-β glycosidic bond formation in the mannopyranose series[21] and 1,2-cis-α glycosidation in the gluco- and galactopyranose series.[22] However, to the best of our knowledge, the directing effect of the 4,6-acetal group has not been exploited for stereoselective 1,2-trans-α glycosylations in the lack of a C2 participating group.



Scheme 6. Synthesis of heparin-related disaccharides using idosyl donors obtained from **27**: a) pyr, Ac_2O, 0 °C to rt, 24 h (81%); b) CH_2Cl_2, NIS, TfOH, -50 to +5 °C, 4 h, (51%); c) CH_2Cl_2, DDQ, rt, 2 h (61%); d) CH_2Cl_2, NIS, AgOTf, -10 °C to rt, 3 h (52%).

A similar glycosylation strategy was pursued with the idosyl thioglycosides **31** and **39** (Scheme 7.) The oxidative cyclization of **31** gave **45** in 77% yield. Coupling of **45** with **41** also proceeded with full α-stereoselectivity giving the heparinoid disaccharide **46** in 51% yield. Finally, diol **39** was benzylidenated and the obtained 4,6-*O*-acetal derivative **47** was coupled with **41** to result in the desired disaccharide **48** with exclusive α-stereoselectivity.



Scheme 7. α-Selective glycosylations with 4,6-*O*-acetal-protected thioidosides: a) CH_2Cl_2, DDQ, rt, 1.5 h (77%); b) CH_2Cl_2, NIS, AgOTf, *sym*-collidine, -10 °C to rt, 3 h (51%); c) DMF, $PhCH(OMe)_2$, *p*-TSA, 50 °C, 1 h (80%); d) CH_2Cl_2, NIS, AgOTf, -10 °C to rt, 3 h (53%).

In conclusion, a short route to L-idosyl glycosyl donors was developed from properly functionalized α-thioglucosides. The

key steps include C5 epimerization by hydroboration/oxidation of the corresponding 5-enopyranosides followed by a 4,6-*O*-acetal formation of the obtained 6-hydroxy or 4,6-dihydroxy L-idosides. We demonstrated that the 4,6-arylmethylene group has a directing effect on the stereochemistry of glycosylation reaction, which can be exploited in the stereoselective formation of the α-L-idosidic bond in the lack of a C2 participating group. Importantly, idose or iduronic acid donors with a C-2 participating group have found exclusive application in heparin syntheses, hitherto. Our results pave the way to designing new, more diverse protecting group strategies for the synthesis of H/HS oligosaccharides. Moreover, the obtained thioidosides can be oxidised into the corresponding L-iduronic acids in a chemo- and regioselective manner using the TEMPO/BAIB[23] reagent combination and this oxidative transformation can easily be performed at an oligosaccharide level as well.[24]

The optimization of our epimerization and glycosylation procedures and their application in the synthesis of heparin oligosaccharides are in progress.

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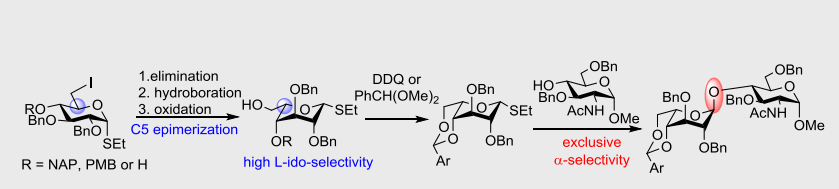

Synthesis of L-idopyranosyl glycosyl donors starting from α- and β-thio-D-glucopyranosides *via* the corresponding 5-enopyranosides were studied for the first time. Hydroboration of the α-configured 5-enopyranosides proceeded with very high L-*ido* stereoselectivity. After a 4,6-*O*-acetal formation, the obtained idosyl thioglycosides proved to be useful as donors in the synthesis of heparin-related disaccharides.

*Mihály Herczeg, Fruzsina Demeter, Tímea Balogh, Viktor Kelemen and Anikó Borbás**

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Rapid Synthesis of L-Idosyl Glycosyl Donors from α-Thioglucosides for the Preparation of Heparin Disaccharides