Evaluation of New Direct Dyes for Mutagenicity Using the Salmonella Mammalian Mutagenicity Assay

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Abstract: A series of new direct dyes based on benzidine congeners, 2,2'-dimethyl-5,5'-dipropoxybenzidine and 5,5'-dipropoxybenzidine, were evaluated for mutagenicity in Salmonella typhimurium strains TA98 and TA100. All of the dyes examined were judged to be non-mutagenic with and without metabolic activation while toxicity was seen in some dyes at high doses. The study also suggested that the standard Salmonella mutagenicity plate-incorporated assay was an excellent method for evaluation of direct dyes for mutagenicity.

Keywords: Direct dyes, Mutagenicity, Salmonella, Benzidine, Genotoxicity, Azo dyes

Introduction

Direct dyes have been used to dye cellulose for over 100 years. Owing to the ease of their application and the wide gamut of colors available at a modest cost, direct dyes are still a popular dye class [1]. Most direct dyes have disazo and trisazo structures, with each color dominated by unmetallized structures [2]. For many years, direct dyes included those made from benzidine and its analogs. The resultant dyes were used for textiles, paper, leather and plastics [3,4]. Nowadays, it is well known that benzidine is both a mutagenic amine and a human carcinogen [5-13].

Although benzidine has not been manufactured for sale in the United States since the mid-1970s, benzidine-based dyes are still used in many countries. In fact, it has been reported that more than 90 azo dyes based on benzidine and benzidine congeners are used in the US [14]. Benzidine, a synthetic chemical that does not occur naturally, is carcinogenic to a variety of mammalian species including humans [11,13,14]. Three compounds closely related to benzidine, 3,3'-dimethylbenzidine (*ortho*-tolidine), 3,3'-dimethoxybenzidine (*ortho*-dianisidine) and 3,3'-dichlorobenzidine (cf. Figure 1) also are used in the manufacture of commercial dyes and pigments. There is evidence that these three chemicals are carcinogenic in laboratory animals, although evidence of their ability to induce cancer in humans is not available [13].

$$R$$
 R H_2N NH_2

Figure 1. Structures of key benzidine homologs; R=H (benzidine), CH₃ (*ortho*-tolidine), OCH₃ (*ortho*-dianisidine).

The commercial utility of benzidine-based colorants and concern over their potential health risks have caused the search for viable nonmutagenic analogs of benzidines to be an important research problem [15-21]. In this regard, it has been shown that 2,2'-dimethyl-5,5'-dipropoxybenzidine (cf. Figure 2) is non-mutagenic [22] and gives non-mutagenic azo and azomethine pigments [23]. In previous studies in our laboratories, a series of new direct dyes (cf. Figure 3) was synthesized from non-genotoxic diamines and evaluated as technical alternatives to certain benzidine-based dyes [24,25].

Of the numerous short-term genotoxicity assays, a microbial mutagenicity assay developed by Bruce Ames and co-workers has become the most widely used and most thoroughly investigated [26-28]. The Salmonella/mammalian microsome mutagenicity assay uses specially engineered strains of the bacterium Salmonella typhimurium to screen both individual compounds and mixtures for mutagenic and carcinogenic potentials. The assay which is rapid, inexpensive, and reliable possesses a vast database. The Environmental Mutagen Information Center (EMIC) database lists publications with test data on more than 6000 pure chemical compounds. In addition, Salmonella assay information for numerous complex environmental mixtures has been published [29-36].

In the standard approach to Salmonella mutagenicity testing, a culture of a bacterial tester strain is mixed with the test agent and an optional exogenous metabolic activation system (e.g., S9) in a molten agar overlay. The overlay contents are

PrO
$$H_3$$
C PrO H_2 N H_2 N H_2 N H_2 N H_2

Figure 2. Structures of 2,2'-dimethyl-5,5'-dipropoxybenzidine (1) and 5,5'-dipropoxybenzidine (2).

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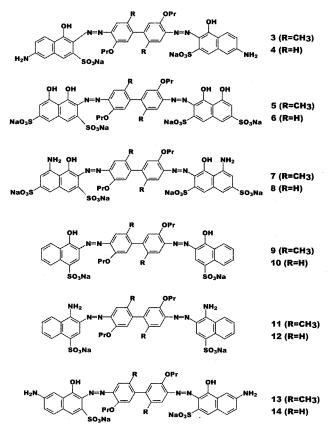


Figure 3. Structures of direct dyes derived from diamines 1 and 2 (Pr = propyl).

then poured onto minimal-histidine agar plates and, following incubation, the plates are scored for mutant colonies (revertants). By testing incremental doses of the test agent on a series of plates, dose-response relationships may be examined. Several modifications of the standard assay protocol have been reported [37-45].

In the past paper from our laboratories [46,47], the effect of bulky alkoxy substituents on the mutagenicity of a series of 4-aminoazobenzene (AAB) derivatives and 1,4-phenylenediamine (PD) derivatives was investigated. This study showed that the replacement of bulky alkoxy group in the 3-position of AAB derivatives and in the 2-position of the PD derivatives leads to a significant decrease in mutagenic activity. Shahin and co-workers have obtained similar results for a series of metaphenylenediamine derivatives [15,16]. The present study extends this approach to decreasing mutagenicity to a series of new direct dyes. This work employs the Salmonella typhimurium mutagenicity assay with strains TA98 and TA100. The new dyes tested contain 2,2'-dimethyl-5,5'dipropoxybenzidine (1) and 5,5'-dipropoxybenzidine (2) as potential alternatives to benzidine and several coupling agents such as J-acid, Chromotropic acid, H-acid, Neville-Winther acid, Naphthionic acid, and Gamma acid. The summary of mutagenicity test result including the average

number of mutant colonies (revertants) at each doses are provided for all the dyes.

Materials and Methods

Chemicals

All dyes tested are novel and were synthesized in our laboratory. Figure 3 shows the structure of all 12 direct dyes (3-14) tested. The structure of each dye was confirmed by Electro Spray Mass Spectrometry (ESMS), the details of which are shown in other publications [24,25]. The purity of the novel dyes was confirmed by thin-layer chromatography (TLC).

Mutagenicity Testing

The Salmonella mutagenicity plate-incorporated assay with and without exogenous activation was performed using the procedures of Maron and Ames [28]. This test method was introduced in 1975 and is the most widely used for the test of new chemicals. This is in-vitro test which uses more than 2 strains among 5 Salmonella typhimuriums.

All the dyes were tested at least twice, on separate days, in Salmonella typhimurium strains TA98 and TA100. The Salmonella typhimurium strains were kindly supplied by Dr. B. N. Ames of the Department of Biochemistry, University of California, DA. The activation system used was a 9000 g (S9) liver homogenate from Aroclor 1254-induced CD-1 male rats (MolTox Corporation, Boone, NC). The positive controls were sodium azide (for TA100, -S9), 2-nitrofluorene (for TA98, -S9), and 2-anthramine (for TA100 AND TA98, +S9). Chemicals were tested at levels up to at least 5 mg/ plate at a minimum of 7 doses using triplicate plates at each dose level. Toxicity to (killing of) the bacteria was detected in 3 ways. At the time of plate counting, a visual thinning of the background lawn and/or the appearance of pin-point colonies that could not be demonstrated to be true revertants was registered as toxicity. Also, if the dose-response curve or the final segment of the dose-response curve produced a significant negative slope value, the associated doses were assumed to be toxic. Appropriate negative (solvent) and positive controls were run concurrently with each assay. All of the test compounds were dissolved in dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) just prior to use. Results were designated as positive, negative, or equivocal according to the criteria of Claxton and co-workers [48]. A test compound was not determined to be positive (mutagenic) or negative unless reproducible results were obtained in at least one strain/activation combination. To be designated as mutagenic, a dye must have produced an average revertant count that was more than two times the background average (i.e., the number of colonies at the 0-mg doses). In addition, a response was determined to be positive when there was a dose-related increase in revertant counts as determined by the statistical models of Bernstein and coworkers [49]. Under these guidelines [50], a response was

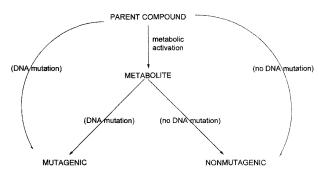


Figure 4. The decision of mutagenicity of a chemical by metabolic activation.

considered equivocal when 1) test results were not reproducible, 2) there was a reproducible low-level increase in colony forming units but no dose-related response, or 3) when an increase was observed at only one dose. The method of Bernstein and co-workers [49] was used to assign a definitive slope value when the statistical models and visual examination of the data confirmed that the test compound was mutagenic.

Results and Discussion

Tables 1-12 in Appendix provide a summary of the results obtained and slope values from the tests. The tables contain the untransformed data for one of the definitive tests. At higher dose levels, coloration of the plates was intense. This meant that precipitates were somewhat difficult to distinguish from colored colonies and in some case, an automatic colony counter could not be used for accurate counting. See the data for the precise doses at which the various dyes precipitated.

The tables give the mean, standard deviation, and slope values calculated using the method of Bernstein [49] to assess the mutagenicity for direct dyes 3-14 in Salmonella strains TA98 and TA100. A slope value is only reported if the test results are positive (mutagenic). Although replicate tests were performed as described in the text, only data from a single definitive test are represented in order to conserve space. Abbreviations used are as follows: -S9, no exogenous metabolic activation; +S9, exogenous metabolic activation; STD, standard deviation; T, toxicity; P, precipitate on plate; NEG, negative result. The positive controls employed were sodium azide (for TA100, -S9), 2-anthramine (for TA98 and TA100, +S9), and 2-nitrofluorene (for TA98, -S9). A negative solvent control of 100 μ l dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) was also used.

Mutagenicity

No positive or equivocal mutagenicity results were observed for the dyes tested in TA98 and TA100, in the presence or absence of exogenous metabolic activation. However, when S9 was used, dyes **4**, **12** and **14** produced a slightly higher number of revertant colonies in TA98. At 0.1-0.5 mg dose levels, the mean of the revertant colonies in TA98 was 50-67

compared to the background count of 36 for dye 4, 33-65 revertants versus a background count of 36 for dye 12, and 61-71 versus 42 for dye 14. These dyes utilized 5,5'-dipropoxybenzidine (2) as a replacement to benzidine and J-acid (dye 4), naphthionic acid (dye 12) and gamma acid (dye 14) as couplers. These results are in contrast with those of prior studies. For instance [51-58], it is well known that azo dyes were mutagenic owing to the regeneration of genotoxic parent amines upon reductive-cleavage of azo bonds. In the present case, however, azo group reduction would result in the release of benzidine analogs that have been established as non-mutagenic [22]. Therefore, the results we obtained were consistent with what one would expect.

Toxicity

Toxicity was observed primarily when high doses (3-5 mg) of certain dyes were used in both strains with and without exogenous activation. Among these dyes, dye 3 showed toxicity at 5 mg in TA98 and 3-5 mg in TA100 with and without S9. Also, toxicity was seen at dye 11 at 3-5 mg in TA98 and TA100 with and without S9. These dyes utilized 2,2'-dimethyl-5,5'-dipropoxybenzidine (1) as a replacement to benzidine and J-acid for dye 3 and naphthionic acid for dye 11.

Conclusions

The results of this study indicate that the nonmutagenic benzidine analogs 2,2'-dimethyl-5,5'-dipropoxybenzidine and 5,5'-dipropoxybenzidine are potential replacements for benzidine, a potent mutagen, in the preparation of nonmutagenic azo dyes. New unmetallized direct dyes derived from the two analogs were shown to be nonmutagenic in the Salmonella mutagenicity assay in TA98 and TA100 in the presence or absence of S9. Although a thorough examination of the toxicological properties of these dyes is required before they can be deemed viable commercial products, clearly the present results provide an important step towards that end.

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Appendix

Table 1. Mutagenicity test data for dye 3

75		T	4 98			TA 100			
Dose - (mg/plate) -	-S9		+\$9		-S9		+S9		
(mg/plate) -	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	
0	29	5.5	36	4	94	11.8	97	1	
0.1	20.3	4.2	43.6	12.5	93.3	8.5	102.3	2.1	
0.3	27.7	3.5	55	9.5	89	5.6	98.6	3.8	
0.5	21.3	4.9	44.6	3.8	88.3	12.2	94.6	13.2	
1	17.3	2.1	28	3.6	72.6	10.2	85	5.3	
3	13.3	1.5	19	3.6	59t	16.1	65.6t	6.7	
5	7.6t	3.1	13t	3.6	46t	5.3	63.6t	9.5	
Positive control	473.3	32.1	1048	88.6	828.3	50.6	1663.3	205.9	
Slope	NEG.		N.	EG.	NI	EG.	N!	EG.	

Table 2. Mutagenicity test data for dye 4

	ed s	TA	4 98		TA 100				
Dose - (mg/plate) -	-S9		+\$9		-S	-S9		59	
(mg/place) -	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	
0	29	5.6	36	4	85.3	11.8	90	1	
0.1	24.6	1.1	50.3	10.1	88	7	93.6	3	
0.3	28	4.5	61.3	5.1	87.6	5.5	101.3	13.6	
0.5	25.3	3.1	67	2.6	85	10.4	87.6	4	
1	33.3	6.6	34.3	1.5	92	10.2	100	3.5	
3	23.6	6.6	29.3	4.1	78.6	5	89	6.8	
5	25.3	4.5	26	6.2	64.6	6.6	86.3	10.1	
Positive control	473.3	32.1	1048	88.6	828.3	50.6	1663.3	205.9	
Slope	N	EG.	N.	EG.	NI	EG.	NI	EG.	

Table 3. Mutagenicity test data for dye 5

D		TA	. 98		TA 100				
Dose - (mg/plate) -	-S9		+	+89		-S9		S9	
(mg/plate) -	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	
0	32.6	6.1	34.6	8.9	87	8.5	101.6	8.1	
0.1	31.3	5.9	46	5.3	83	10.4	103	6	
0.3	33.6	6.1	35.6	4.9	97	4.4	104.6	4.5	
0.5	28.3	2.5	38.3	1.5	94	2	106.6	4.2	
1	32.3	1.5	40.3	14.6	80.6	6.2	88.3	6.8	
3	29.3	10.1	37	6.2	83	7	92.3	14.6	
5 .	18	4.3	23.3	2.5	83.3	8.3	76	1	
Positive control	760	31.2	1563.3	231.8	798.3	30.1	1415	172.9	
Slope	NE	G.	N	EG.	N	EG.	Ni	EG.	

Table 4. Mutagenicity test data for dye 6

D		T	A 98			TA	100	
Dose - (mg/plate) -	-S9		+\$9		-S9		+\$9	
(mg/plate) -	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD
0	29	5.3	44	2.6	127.3	9.5	131.3	4.1
0.1	36.3	4.7	48.6	4.2	138.6	8.9	123	17.4
0.3	29	5.6	52	5.3	133	3.4	126.3	2.1
0.5	21.6	3.5	38.3	11,8	139.6	8.3	128.3	9.3
1	26.3	4.1	40.6	2.3	133.6	5.5	147.3	10.1
3	30.6	8.6	40	2	137	2.6	143.3	17.1
5	31	9.6	42.6	5.5	126	5.3	127.6	8.5
Positive control	842.3	12.5	1606.7	141.5	1023.3	37.9	1138.3	103.7
Slope	NEG.		NI	EG.	NI	EG.	NI	EG.

Table 5. Mutagenicity test data for dye 7

		T	A 98		TA 100				
Dose - (mg/plate) -	-S9		+\$9		-S9		+\$9		
(mg/plate) -	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	
0.	29.3	7.4	44.6	7.5	105	11.8	114.6	21.1	
0.1	29.3	5.5	43.6	1.5	126.6	1.5	138.6	11.9	
0.3	27	7 .	43.3	7.6	127	18.1	119.3	9.8	
0.5	37	6	46.6	13.1	100.6	5.5	132.6	12.5	
1	27.3	5.5	39.6	3.1	110.3	10.8	100.6	6.4	
3	32.3	6.1	31.6	5.5	138	16.4	104.6	3.1	
5	29.3	2.1	32.6	10.1	152.6	7.2	116	8.2	
Positive control	896.3	30.7	1803.3	156.9	1194.3	44.1	1645.7	371.7	
Slope	NEG.		N	EG.	NE	G.	NI	E G .	

Table 6. Mutagenicity test data for dye 8

D		TA	. 98		TA 100				
Dose - (mg/plate) -	-S9		+S9		-S9		+89		
(mg/plate) =	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	
0	26.6	6.1	36.6	11.4	78	13.1	96	5.3	
0.1	28.3	10.1	40.3	1.5	105.3	5.7	106.6	8.5	
0.3	26.6	3.8	36.3	3.1	99.3	10.6	108.6	8.5	
0.5	25.3	4.1	39.3	7.3	93.3	7.6	94.6	10.8	
1	27.6	7.6	29	10.9	91.6	16.5	95.6	15.3	
3	29.3	9.3	34.3	6.8	73.6	15.1	98.6	8.1	
5	34.6	3.5	30	1	87.3	7.1	94.6	4.7	
Positive control	170	12	56.3	3.7	235	25	107.7	11.1	
Slope	NEG.		NI	EG.	NE	EG.	NE	G.	

Table 7. Mutagenicity test data for dye 9

Deer		TA	A 98		TA 100			
Dose - (mg/plate) -	-S9		+\$9		-S9		+S9	
(mg/piate) -	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD
0	29.3	7.3	44.6	7.5	105	11.8	114.6	21.1
0.1	32.3	7.1	47.6	5.9	99.6	16.1	99.6	9.1
0.3	23.6	4.5	40	2.6	115.3	10.2	115.6	7.1
0.5	26.3	4.1	34.6	7.1	104.6	13.1	107.3	10.5
1	32	2.6	35.6	5.5	133	21.6	121	12.1
3	31.3	9.1	32	3	122.6	15.1	136.6	3.8
5	25	2.6	29.3	6.1	122	14.2	131	8.9
Positive control	896.3	30.7	1803.3	156.9	1194.3	44.1	1645.7	371.7
Slope	NI	EG.	N	EG.	NE	G.	NE	EG.

Table 8. Mutagenicity test data for dye 10

D		TA	A 98		TA 100				
Dose - (mg/plate) -	-S9		+\$9		-S9		+\$9		
(mg/plate) -	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	
0	30.6	4.2	35	8.2	81	13.9	90.6	10.1	
0.1	24.6	4.2	36.3	5.5	96.6	4.2	101.3	11.6	
0.3	26.3	4.7	38.6	3.1	100.6	6.1	103	2	
0.5	22	7.8	37	6.1	97.6	4.1	102.6	13.1	
1	25	3.6	32.3	5.2	96.3	3.8	95.3	11.1	
3	27.3	3.5	22.6	7.2	92.6	10.6	99	9.5	
5	21.6	4.9	24.3	4.9	97	4.6	91.6	5.5	
Positive control	778.3	12.6	1131.7	10.4	947	32.5	970.7	152.8	
Slope	N	EG.	NI	EG.	NI	EG.	N	EG.	

Table 9. Mutagenicity test data for dye 11

_		Tz	A 98		TA 100				
Dose (mg/plata)	-S9		+\$9		-S9		+S9		
(mg/plate)	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	
0	32.6	6.1	34.6	8.9	87	8.5	101.6	8.1	
0.1	27	2.6	35	4.4	90.6	9.3	99.6	1.5	
0.3	21.3	6.7	28.3	3.9	89	5.3	97.6	8.9	
0.5	18.6	1.5	26.3	2.1	86	7.8	85.3	10.1	
1	15	4	23	6	71	13.5	85.6	3.2	
3	8t	1	17t	2.6	4 8t	13.7	61.6t	6.1	
5	8.3t	4.5	15t	7.5	41.3t	10.1	53.6t	10.1	
Positive control	760	31.2	1563.3	231.8	798.3	30.1	1415	172.9	
Slope	N	NEG.		EG.	NEG.		NEG.		

Table 10. Mutagenicity test data for dye 12

		TA	98			TA	100	
Dose -	-S9		+S9			-S9	+89	
(mg/plate) -	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD
0	26.6	6.1	36.6	11.3	78	13.1	96	5.3
0.1	33.6	4.2	64.6	10.8	99	5.6	123	5.6
0.3	29	2.6	44.6	6.7	100	8.5	114.3	5.5
0.5	43.6	1.5	33.3	5.1	87	6.1	105.6	15.1
1	36.3	1.5	31.6	7.1	93.6	12.5	106.6	7.6
3	30.3	5.1	22.6	1.5	86.3	12.9	95.6	16.2
5	22.6	4.2	21	4.3	72.3	10.2	98.3	6.1
Positive control	170	12	56.3	3.7	235	25	107.7	11.1
Slope	N	NEG. NEG.		EG.		NEG.	NI	EG.

Table 11. Mutagenicity test data for dye 13

_		Tz	A 98		TA 100			
Dose - (mg/plate) -	-S9		+\$9		-S9		+S9	
(mg/plate) -	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD
0	30.6	4.2	35	8.2	81	13.9	90.6	10.1
0.1	23	4.6	44.3	3.2	70.3	10.4	84.3	1.5
0.3	23.3	1.5	49	3.6	101	7	110	1
0.5	23.6	1.5	58	3.6	89.3	4.9	96.3	10.1
1	24	3	28.3	6.1	91.6	11.1	91	3.6
3	17.3	5.1	22	2.6	91.6	9.1	94.6	11.6
5	15.3	4.1	20.6	2.5	77	4.3	86.3	2.1
Positive control	778.3	12.6	1131.7	10.4	947	32.5	970.7	152.8
Slope	N	E G .	· NI	EG.	NE	EG.	NI	EG.

Table 12. Mutagenicity test data for dye 14

ъ		TA	4 98		TA 100				
Dose - (mg/plate) -	-S9		+\$9		-S9		+\$9		
(mg/plate) -	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	Mean	STD	
0	34.6	1.5	42.6	4.1	120.3	13.8	104	8.8	
0.1	39.6	7.8	61	9	120.3	6.1	133.6	12.5	
0.3	32.6	8.6	70.6	10.1	127	15.3	124.6	3.5	
0.5	36.3	2.1	62.6	10.2	119.3	9.1	112.3	10.5	
1	34.3	2.5	34.3	6.8	128.3	10.1	110	10.8	
3 .	37	7.5	39.3	6.1	122.6	6.4	120	3.6	
5	39.6	6.8	31.6	6.1	111	7.9	107.6	12.7	
Positive control	883	50.2	1640	62.4	1160.7	50.2	1317.3	325.1	
Slope	NEG.		N	EG.	NE	EG.	NI	EG.	