Conversion of D-Glucals into L-Glycals and Mirror-Image Carbohydrates

Fabien P. Boulineau and Alexander Wei*
Department of Chemistry, Purdue University, 560 Oval Drive, West Lafayette, Indiana 47907-2084
alexwei@purdue.edu
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ABSTRACT

L-Glycals can be prepared in seven steps from readily available D-glucals, enabling the facile construction of mirror-image carbohydrates such as the L-lactosamine derivative shown above.

Chiral intermediates derived from readily available D-glycals are frequently employed as starting materials in the synthesis of complex carbohydrates and other natural products.1 In principle, compounds derived from these unsaturated D-sugars represent only 50% of the available chiral space; the remaining “left-handed” half can be routed by default through the antipodal L-glycals. In addition to providing direct access to a broad range of L-sugars and related glycoconjugates with medicinal value (e.g., bleomycin2 and the aminoglycoside antibiotics3), L-glycals can serve as the basis set for mirror-image carbohydrates. Several intriguing hypotheses can be developed around antipodal carbohydrate ligands in the context of chiral biological systems: while their physicochemical properties would be essentially identical to those of naturally occurring sugars, their interactions with proteins and other biomacromolecules would not. In particular, the unnatural enantiomers of carbohydrates and other bioorganic structures may have the capacity to evade antibody detection and enzymatic degradation.4 Wong and co-workers have recently described a novel strategy involving synthetic L-sugars based on this premise.5

While numerous synthetic routes toward L-sugars have been developed, very few have been targeted at the synthesis of L-glycals despite their broader synthetic utility. Some de novo approaches have been reported: 6-deoxy- and C5 phenyl-substituted L-glycals have been prepared by Danishefsky and co-workers via cyclocondensation of activated aldehydes and electron-rich dienes followed by enzymatic resolution.6 6-Deoxy-L-glycals have also been synthesized by McDonald and co-workers via endo-selective cyclization of chiral alkynols.7 However, methods for preparing L-glycals bearing C5 hydroxymethyl groups (e.g., L-glucal and L-galactal) have so far depended on the degradation of rare or unnatural L-sugars, with obvious economical drawbacks.8

Here we report an efficient synthesis of L-glycals from readily available D-glucal via pseudodesymmetrization of

Reagents and conditions: (a) DMDO, CH₂Cl₂/acetone, 0 °C, (b) (iPrO)Me₂SiCH₂MgCl (3.5 equiv), CuI (0.5 equiv), THF, -10 °C, (c) 30% H₂O₂, KOH, MeOH/THF, rt (66% over three steps), (d) (n-Bu)₂SnO, BnBr, TBAI, toluene, reflux, (e) AcOH/THF/H₂O, 45 °C (90% over two steps). TEMPO (5 mol %), bleach, saturated aq NaHCO₃, CH₂Cl₂, 0 °C. (g) N,N-Dimethylformamide dineopentyl acetal (DMFDNA), followed by Tamao—Kumada oxidation (see Scheme 1). 16,17 The unsymmetrically protected C-glycoside 2 was converted in two steps to partially benzylated triol 3, followed by TEMPO oxidation to carboxylic acid 4 and decarboxylative elimination to 3*-6*-O-dibenzy1-L-glucal 5 using N,N-dimethylformamide dineopentyl acetal (DMFDNA). 18 The latter procedure has been used previously to introduce Δ4^-unsaturation into the pyranose ring of α-glycosides. 19 Overall, the conversion of D-glucal 1 to L-glucal 5 was accomplished in seven steps and 36% yield.

With respect to the mechanism of decarboxylative elimination, we note that the temperature required for the decomposition of β-C-glucuronide intermediate 4 (150 °C) is considerably higher than that for α-O-glycosides, whose elimination is complete after 1 h at 120 °C. 21 This suggests that the glucuronides must first adopt geometries with trans dialixial C4 and C5 substituents such as 1*C to twist-boat conformations (see Figure 1), as opposed to the formation of a cyclic orthoamide intermediate. 22 In the case of 4, the benzzyloxyethyl group at C1 raises the barrier to interconversion and may destabilize transition-state geometries by introducing sterically unfavorable interactions.

L-Glucal 5 can be readily transformed into the antipodal isomers of several common pyranoside derivatives, and is an ideal precursor for constructing mirror-image carbohydrates. As a demonstration, we have synthesized the methyl glucuronide of N-acetyl-L-lactosamine (L-Gal-(β1→4)-L-GlcNAc-β-OMe), whose antipode is the core disaccharide found in human blood group antigens and serves as a substrate for a number of glycosyltransferases (see Scheme 2). 23,24

3*-6*-O-dibenzy1-L-glucal 5 was oxidized using the Dess—Martin periodinane and treated immediately with NaBH₄, affording the corresponding dibenzyl-L-galactal as the major isomer (84% yield, L-Gal/L-Glc > 30:1). Tribenzyl-L-galactal 6 was isolated in diastereomERICally pure form after benzoylation.

(18) To maintain a consistent nomenclature, the carbons of L-glycals and derivatives thereof have been numbered 1* through 6*.


(21) We have observed that decarboxylative elimination of β-O-glucuronides also requires 1 h at 150 °C.

translation and treated with anhydrous DMDO to yield the desired R-epoxide, which was then reacted with EtSLi and acetylated to produce thioethyl-β-L-galactoside donor 7 in 63% yield from 6. Galactosyl donor 7 was coupled with L-glucal 5 (1.5 equiv) using the thioglycoside activation conditions described by Seeberger et al. to furnish protected L-lactal 8 in 73% yield.25 After surveying several different conditions for installing the acetamido group at C2*, we used a slightly modified version of the sulfonamidoglycosylation procedure developed by Danishefsky and co-workers.26 L-lactal 8 was transformed into its 2*-β-iodo-1*-α-phenylsulfonamido derivative and then treated with NaOMe in MeOH to give methyl N-phenylsulfonyl-β-L-lactosaminoside, followed by acetylation to afford 9 in 80% yield after three steps. Desulfonylation with sodium naphthalenide at −78 °C cleanly produced N-acetyl derivative 10, which was globally deprotected to methyl N-acetyl-β-L-lactosaminoside 11 in 79% overall yield from 9.27

In summary, we have developed an expedient route to L-glycals and mirror-image oligosaccharides from D-glucals. We anticipate that in addition to preparing L-sugars such as those described here, the decarboxylative elimination of pyranosides may have broad utility in the stereocontrolled synthesis of highly substituted dihydro- and tetrahydropyrans.

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Supporting Information Available: Experimental details and analytical data for the preparation of L-glucal 5 from D-glucal 1. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at http://pubs.acs.org.

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(27) Methyl N-acetyl-β-L-lactosamine 11 was found to be spectroscopically identical to its enantiomer but opposite in optical activity. 11: [α]D +24.0° (c 0.5, MeOH). en11 (synthesized from the corresponding D-glycals): [α]D +23.4° (c 0.5, MeOH).