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Preparation of (-)-Nutlin-3 Using Enantioselective Organocatalysis at Decagram Scale

J. Org. Chem. 2013, 78, 10605–10616.

Synthesis of (-)-Nutlin-3

Significance: Nutlin-3 inhibits the interaction between proteins p53 and MDM2. It is of interest as an investigative tool in cancer biology. The key step in the decagram-scale synthesis depicted is an enantioselective aza-Henry reaction catalyzed by the novel bis(amidine) **C** that provides high enantioselectivity at higher temperatures and lower catalyst loadings than previously possible (T. A. Davis, J. Johnston *Chem. Sci.* **2011**, *2*, 1076).

Comment: The optimized conditions of the aza-Henry reaction include the following: 0.5 mol% catalyst loading, slow addition of imine (ca. 0.06 equiv aliquots over 8 h), essentially stoichiometric amounts of the two partners A and B, a relatively high reaction concentration (0.4 M in PhMe), and exclusive precipitation of the desired diastereoisomer. A 90% yield of product D was produced after filtration in 91% ee and a dr > 200:1.

SYNFACTS Contributors: Philip Kocienski Synfacts 2014, 10(1), 0001 Published online: 13.12.2013 **DOI:** 10.1055/s-0033-1340328; **Reg-No.:** K07413SF Category

Synthesis of Natural Products and Potential Drugs

Key words

nutlin-3

cis-imidazolines

organocatalysis

chiral bis(amidine) catalysts

asymmetric aza-Henry reaction

