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A review of typical biological activities of glycyrrhetic acid and its derivatives

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Glycyrrhetic acid, a triterpenoid compound primarily sourced from licorice root, exhibits noteworthy biological attributes, including anti-inflammatory, anti-tumor, antibacterial, antiviral, and antioxidant effects. Despite these commendable effects, its further advancement and application, especially in clinical use, have been hindered by its limited druggability, including challenges such as low solubility and bioavailability. To enhance its biological activity and pharmaceutical efficacy, numerous research studies focus on the structural modification, associated biological activity data, and underlying mechanisms of glycyrrhetic acid and its derivatives. This review endeavors to systematically compile and organize glycyrrhetic acid derivatives that have demonstrated outstanding biological activities over the preceding decade, delineating their molecular structures, biological effects, underlying mechanisms, and future prospects for assisting researchers in finding and designing novel glycyrrhetic acid derivatives, foster the exploration of structure–activity relationships, and aid in the screening of potential candidate compounds.

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Introduction

Natural products play a crucial role in the exploration of new drugs as they possess broad-spectrum activity against bacteria, fungi, viruses, cancer, and other diseases, and they exhibit a vast array of chemically diverse structures, which hold the potential to serve as lead compounds in drug discovery. In particular, numerous compounds derived from natural

products have already exhibited substantial therapeutic potential in the treatment of specific ailments.^{1–5} Among these natural products, glycyrrhetic acid is the triterpenoid aglycone constituent of glycyrrhizic acid (Fig. 1), derived from the roots of the licorice plant (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*).^{6,7} There are two isomers of glycyrrhetic acid (GA), one is (3 β ,18 β)-3-hydroxy-11-oxoolean-12-en-30-oic acid, often called 18 β -glycyrrhetic acid or enoxolone, denoted by 18 β -GA. Another one is (3 β ,18 α)-3-hydroxy-11-oxoolean-12-en-29-oic acid, known as 18 α -glycyrrhetic acid, denoted by 18 α -GA, as shown in Fig. 2. 18 β -GA is the major bioactive constituent of *Glycyrrhiza glabra* and has been investigated to possess a wide range of biological activities, including anti-inflammatory, antitumor, antibacterial, antiviral, and antioxidant. Apart from these characteristic

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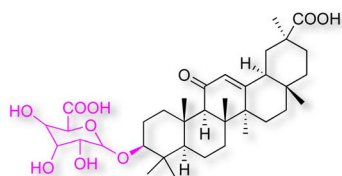
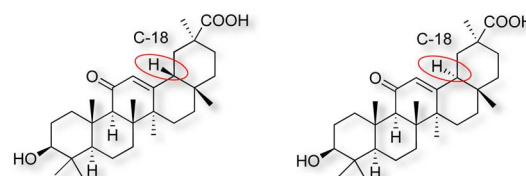


Fig. 1 Structure of glycyrrhizic acid.



18β-glycyrrhetic acid

18α-glycyrrhetic acid

Fig. 2 Structure of glycyrrhetic acid.

activities, glycyrrhetic acid has been observed to exhibit additional properties, such as anti-diabetic, anticoagulant, immunoregulatory, anti-cholinesterase, antiarrhythmic, and anti-tetanus toxin actions.⁸

However, 18β-GA's poor druggability, including low solubility and bioavailability, limits its clinical use.^{9–12} To improve the pharmacokinetic properties and enhance the bioactivity, various structural modifications of glycyrrhetic acid have been carried out to develop novel derivatives for making them attractive candidates for further development as potential drug leads; in the process, extensive studies on the structure–activity relationship (SAR) of 18β-GA and its derivatives have been extensively investigated.¹³ Furthermore, these modifications focused on altering the chemical structure, including the

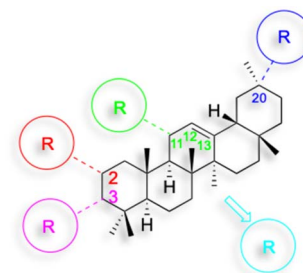


Fig. 3 Modification of C-3 sites are labeled in pink, modification of C-2 sites are labeled in red, and modification of C-11 to C-13 sites modification are labeled in fluorescent green. The C-20 carboxyl sites are labeled in blue, while the other sites are labeled in fluorescent blue.



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addition, we meticulously scrutinized 266 compounds with significant biological activity from a pool of over 500 derivatives sourced from these cited references. To provide a more comprehensive and organized overview, we have compiled tables summarizing the chemical structures and effects or mechanisms of the typical biological activities of 18 β -GA and its derivatives, including anti-inflammatory, anti-tumor, antibacterial, antiviral and antioxidant effects. The labeling scheme for the modification sites of all 18 β -GA derivatives is described in the form of a diagram. Please refer to Fig. 3 for a visual representation of the labeling scheme.

Anti-inflammatory activity

Inflammation is considered to be a driver of many diseases, including arteriosclerosis, cancer, autoimmunity, and chronic infections.¹⁴ The inflammatory process involves multiple cell types, signaling pathways, and molecular mechanisms, leading to adverse reactions such as immunosuppression and gastrointestinal problems.^{15–21} Therefore, the design and optimization of drugs become more complicated. The presence of active ingredients in natural products opens up new opportunities for the development of anti-inflammatory drugs. Extensive research has shown that 18 β -GA demonstrates anti-inflammatory effects and holds significant potential as a therapeutic agent for various ailments.²² For instance, 18 β -GA inhibits the expression of various inflammatory mediators, such as intercellular adhesion molecule-1 (ICAM-1), tumor necrosis factor- α (TNF- α), cyclooxygenase-2 (Cox-2), and inducible nitric oxide synthase (iNOS), by inhibiting the activity of the nuclear factor- κ B (NF- κ B) pathway.²³ Additionally, 18 β -GA has been found to reduce the production of inflammatory cytokines by inhibiting the activity of NF- κ B and phosphoinositide 3-kinase (PI3K) and inhibiting the production of NO, prostaglandin E₂ (PGE₂), and reactive oxygen species (ROS) under lipopolysaccharide (LPS) stimulation.²⁴ However, in an Ana-1 mouse macrophage model, 18 β -GA induced the expression of Toll-like receptor 4 and activated the TLR-4 signaling pathway *via* the myeloid differentiation primary response 88 (MYD88) pathway.²⁵

In recent years, the research of 18 β -GA on anti-inflammation has been deepened. 18 β -GA (40 mg kg⁻¹ day⁻¹) has been found to effectively improve lung function in ovalbumin (OVA)-induced asthma mouse model, reduce lung inflammation and inflammatory cell infiltration, and inhibit the phosphorylation of NF- κ B in the treatment of airway allergic inflammation. These effects are achieved through a decrease in the levels of interleukin-5 (IL-5) by approximately 40%, interleukin-13 (IL-13) by approximately 30%, and TNF- α by approximately 70%. Additionally, there is an increase in the levels of nuclear factor erythroid 2-related factor2 (Nrf2) by approximately 50% and heme oxygenase 1 (HO-1) by approximately 50%.²⁶ Gupta *et al.* found that 18 β -GA has potential therapeutic effects in treating depression. Specifically, it can improve symptoms caused by chronic unpredictable mild stress by activating the brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF)/Tropomyosin receptor kinase B (TrkB) signaling pathway in the prefrontal cortex (PFC)

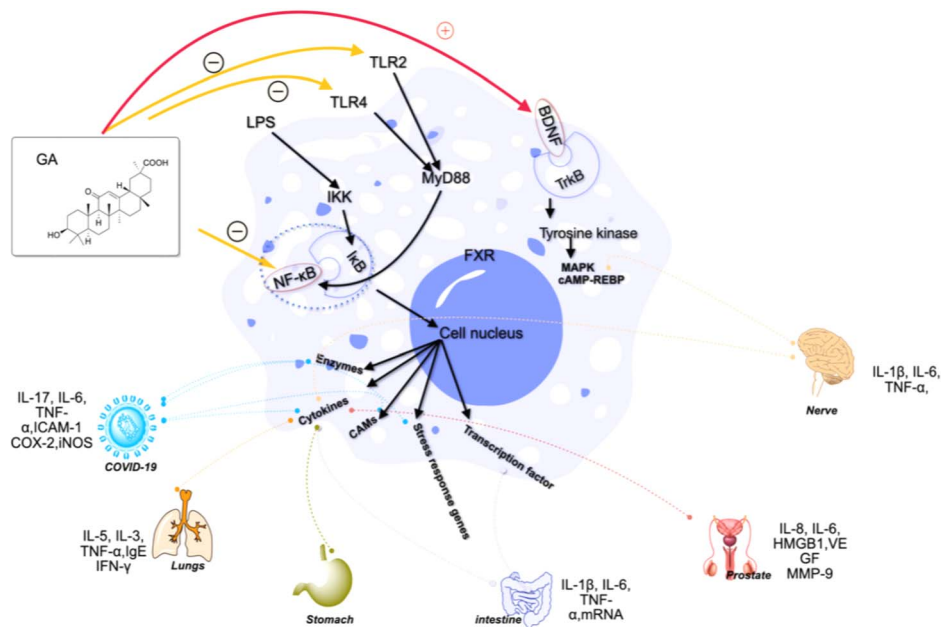
and hippocampus. This activation leads to a reduction in neuroinflammation, liver biomarkers, and stress hormones while increasing the body weight and brain neurotransmitter concentrations.²⁷

Additionally, the complex of 18 β -GA also exhibits remarkable anti-inflammatory activity. Ishida *et al.* demonstrated that the complex of 18 β -GA and hydroxypropyl- β -cyclodextrin can mitigate indomethacin-induced small intestinal injury by reducing TNF- α expression by 27.5%, interleukin-6 (IL-6) by 16.2%, and interleukin-1 β (IL-1 β) by 17.9% compared to indomethacin-treated tissue.²⁸ The salt of 18 β -GA and L-arginine can be formed through a co-solvent evaporation reaction, and a solid dispersion called 18 β -GA-SD can be created by adding a polymer solvent, Soluplus®, with a hydrophilic-hydrophobic chemical structure. 18 β -GA-SD has higher solubility, cell utilization rate, and bioavailability than 18 β -GA itself. Following treatment with 18 β -GA-SD, enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) analysis revealed an increase in LPS-induced secretion levels of cytokines such as IL-1 β , IL-6, macrophage inflammatory protein-1 (MCP-1), TNF- α , interleukin-23 (IL-23), and interleukin-17A (IL-17A) in RAW 264.7 cells; meanwhile, there was a decrease in the levels of interleukins-4 (IL-4) and -10 (IL-10).¹¹

In the context of *COVID-19*, 18 β -GA has been found to affect the disease by inhibiting the interleukin-17 (IL-17), IL-6, and TNF- α signaling pathways, thereby holding potential as a treatment strategy.²⁹ Another study found that a combination of 18 β -GA and vitamin C (VC) treatment for *COVID-19* was associated with an increase in immunity and a decrease in inflammatory stress, as well as activation of the T cell receptor signaling pathway, regulation of Fc gamma R-mediated phagocytosis, ErbB signaling pathway, and vascular endothelial growth factor signaling pathway.³⁰ Furthermore, highly biocompatible 18 β -GA nanoparticles have been synthesized and have shown promise as a treatment strategy for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) infections.³¹ Zhou *et al.* demonstrated that 18 β -GA inhibited the expression of intercellular adhesion molecule-1 (ICAM-1), TNF- α , COX-2, and iNOS, which was attributed to the inhibition of NF- κ B expression and the attenuation of NF- κ B nuclear translocation.³²

Moreover, another study discovered that 18 α -GA suppressed the invasion on Matrigel-coated transwells of DU145 prostate cancer cells by regulating the expression of nuclear factor- κ B (p65), vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF), and metalloproteinase-9 (MMP-9). 18 α -GA also augmented the expression of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory gene-1 (NAG-1) in DU-145 cells, thereby indicating its capacity for anti-inflammatory activity against prostate cancer cells.³³ The mechanisms underlying the anti-inflammatory effects of GA discussed above are graphically depicted in Fig. 4. In the realm of hepatoprotective activity, 18 β -GA has been shown to mitigate hepatic inflammatory injury caused by hepatitis virus infection by blocking the release of the high mobility group box 1 (HMGB1) cytokine and inhibiting its activity.^{34,35} Furthermore, 18 β -GA has potential as a hepatoprotective agent through activating of Nuclear factor erythroid 2-related factor 2 (Nrf2) and peroxisome proliferator-activated receptor gamma (PPAR- γ), and subsequent suppression of NF- κ B, and 18 β -GA has been





IL-7: interleukin-7, $TNF-\alpha$: factor-alpha, ICAM-1: intercellular adhesion molecule-1, COX-2: cyclooxygenase-2, iNOS: nitric oxide synthase, NF- κ B: nuclear factor- κ B, I κ B: I kappa B, IKK: I κ B kinase, LPS: lipopolysaccharide, MyD88: myeloid differentiation primary response 88, TLR4: Toll-like receptor 4, TLR2: Toll-like receptor 2, BDNF: brain-derived neurotrophic factor, TrkB: Tropomyosin receptor kinase B, FXR: farnesoid X receptor, MAPK: mitogen-activated protein kinases, cAMP-REBP: cAMP-Responsive Element Binding Protein, IL-1 β : interleukin-1 β , IL-6: interleukin-6, mRNA: messenger RNA, IL-8: interleukin-8, HMGB1:

Fig. 4 Anti-inflammatory mechanisms of glycyrrhetic acid and its derivatives.

shown to protect the liver from cholestatic liver injury induced by lithocholic acid (LCA) by inhibiting the TLR2/NF- κ B pathway and upregulating hepatic farnesoid X receptor (FXR) expression, while reducing inflammation and promoting bile excretion. 18 β -GA significantly increased the protein levels of the tubular bile acid (BA) efflux transporter bile salt export pump (BSEP) and the basolateral BA efflux transporters multidrug resistance-associated proteins 3 and 4 (MRP3 and MRP4) but decreased the expression of the BA uptake transporter OATP2A1.^{23,36–39} Since the hepatic protection effect of 18 β -GA is not only realized through the anti-inflammatory mechanism but could also through the antioxidant mechanism, the review about hepatic protection discussion is in the antioxidant part; Fig. 6 depicts all relevant studies.

In other investigations, various compounds derived from 18 β -GA, such as 1–15 (Table 1), have exhibited anti-inflammatory effects. For instance, Ma *et al.* identified three major metabolites (compounds 1–3) produced by the microbial transformation of 18 β -GA. These metabolites exhibited potent anti-inflammatory activity by inhibiting LPS-induced NO production in mouse microglia BV2 cells.⁴⁰ The structure and inhibitory activity are shown in Table 1. Another investigation found that compound 4 showed improved pharmacokinetic properties and reduced toxicity in a similar way to fungal metabolism and LPS-induced mouse models.⁴¹ Li *et al.* found that compound 5 decreased the expression of iNOS, COX-2, and mitogen-activated protein kinases (MAPKs) as well as the

activation of NF- κ B in LPS-stimulated RAW 264.7 cells.⁴² More recently, Yang *et al.* investigated the anti-inflammatory effects of compound 6 on ear edema in mice and LPS-stimulated RAW 264.7 macrophages, respectively.⁴³ Compound 6 was shown to decrease approximately 59.69% of 12-*O*-tetradecanoylphorbol-13-acetate (TPA)-induced ear edema with a gavage treatment of 40.0 mg mL⁻¹, and immunohistochemistry results revealed that this effect was related to the inhibition of TPA-induced upregulation of TNF- α . Compound 7 effectively inhibited the protein and mRNA expression of iNOS and the mRNA expression of TNF- α , IL-6, and IL-1 β in LPS-stimulated RAW 264.7 macrophages. Bian *et al.* investigated the anti-inflammatory effects of compound 8 on LPS-induced RAW 264.7 cells and found that it suppressed the expression of pro-inflammatory cytokines including IL-6, TNF- α , and NO.⁴⁴ Compounds 9–12 showed significant inhibition activity against NO and IL-6.^{45–47} Among these compounds, compound 12 was identified as the most potent anti-inflammatory agent, exhibiting a significant reduction in inflammatory cytokine levels in the mouse model of AKI by inhibiting TNF- α and IL-6 in a dose-dependent manner. Compound 13 also has anti-inflammatory activity, and studies have shown that it interacts with proteins in the inflammatory process, such as matrix metalloproteinase MMP9, neutrophil elastase, and thrombin.⁴⁸ Tu *et al.* focus on the anti-inflammatory activity of novel 18 β -GA derivatives. The study evaluated the derivatives' activity in mouse models of acute inflammation induced by carrageenan. The results showed that



Table 1 Chemical structure and anti-inflammation activity of glycyrrhethinic acid and its derivatives 1–21

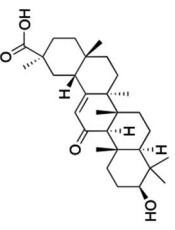
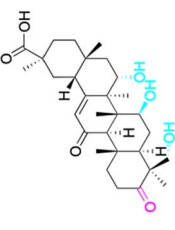
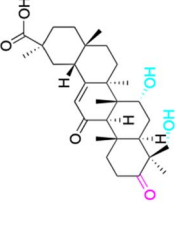
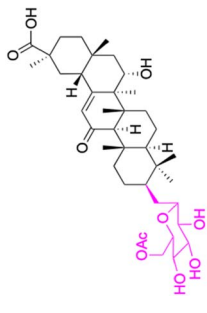
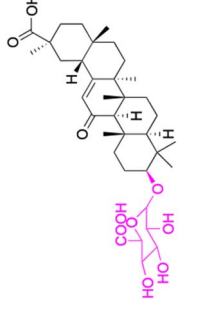
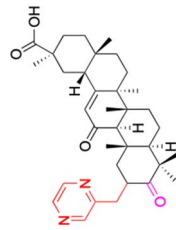
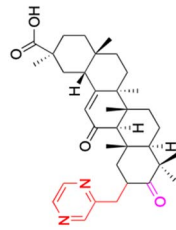
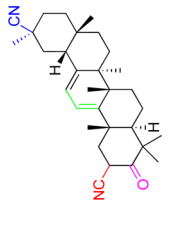
Compounds	1	2	3
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	11 β-HSD1: IC ₅₀ = 0.778 μM 11 β-HSD2: IC ₅₀ = 0.257 μM	2: NO inhibitory assay in microglia BV2 cells: IC ₅₀ = 940 μM	3: NO inhibitory assay in microglia BV2 cells: IC ₅₀ = 160 μM
Reference Compounds	51 4	40 5	40 5
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	4: NO inhibitory assay in RAW 264.7: IC ₅₀ = 10.13 μM	5: Inhibited iNOS, COX-2, MAPKs, and NF-κB in the LPS-stimulated RAW 264.7 cells	8: Inhibited TPA-induced up regulation of the pro-inflammatory cytokines TNF-α and IL-1β and decreased the expression level of p65 in the NF-κB signaling pathway
Reference Compounds	46 6	42 8	42 8
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	6: Delayed TPA-induced (20 mg kg ⁻¹) overexpression of TNF-α was better than the ibuprofen (40 mg kg ⁻¹). For IL-1β, at 40 mg kg ⁻¹ was preferable to ibuprofen at 40 mg kg ⁻¹	7: Inhibited LPS-induced NO production. Inhibited iNOS, TNF-α, IL-6, and IL-1β in LPS-stimulated RAW 264.7 macrophages Inhibition at 50 μM: 99.08%	



Table 1 (Contd.)

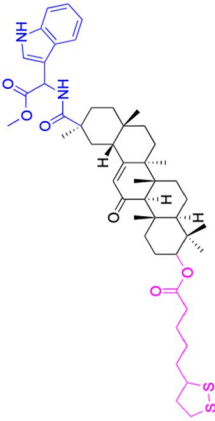
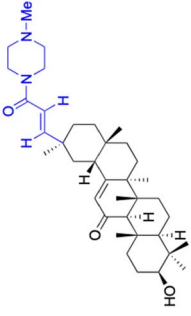
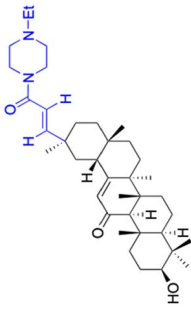
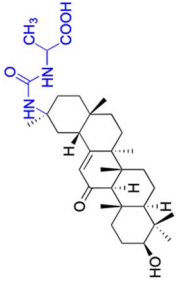
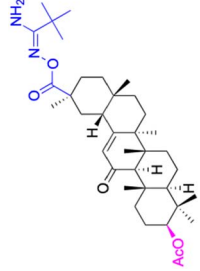
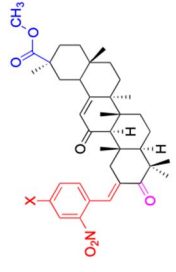
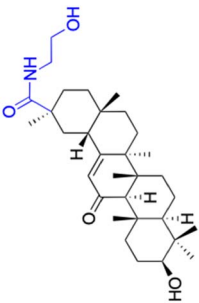
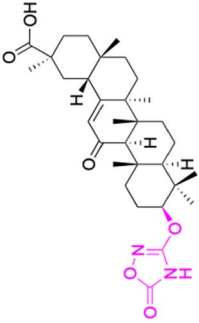
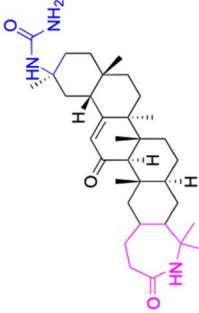
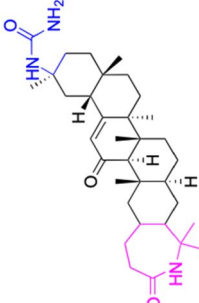
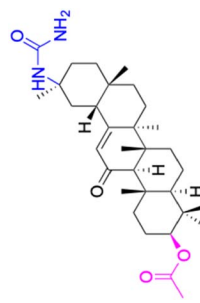
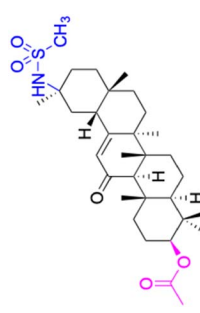
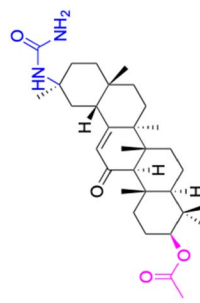
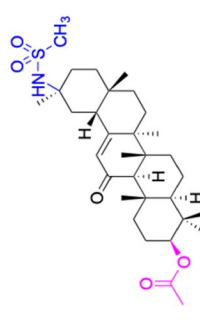
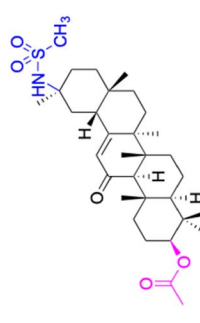
Compounds	1	2	3
Reference Compounds	43 9	44 10	
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	9: NO inhibitory assay in RAW 264.7: IC ₅₀ = 18.5 μM	10: NO and IL-6 inhibitory activity in RAW 264.7: IC ₅₀ = 13.3 μM	
Reference Compounds	45 11	46 12	
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	11: NO and IL-6 inhibitory activity in RAW 264.7: IC ₅₀ = 15.5 μM	12: NO inhibitory assay in RAW 264.7: IC ₅₀ = 2.04 μM	
Reference Compounds	46 13	47 14–15	
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	13: Inhibit inflammatory response (10–50 μM) induced by IFN γ in macrophages <i>in vitro</i> and carrageenan in murine models <i>in vivo</i> , probably by primary interactions with active sites of MMP9, neutrophil elastase, and thrombin	14: X = Cl, IC ₅₀ = 53.0 μM 15: X = F, IC ₅₀ = 55.4 μM Anti-inflammatory activities through the downregulation of NO, pro-inflammatory cytokines and chemokines (IL-1 β , IL-6, IL-12, TNF- α , MCP-1, and MIP-1 α) and upregulation of anti-inflammatory cytokines (IL-10). IC ₅₀ of NO inhibitory assay in microglia BV2 cells	



Table 1 (Contd.)

Compounds	1	2	3
Reference Compounds	48 and 52	49	17
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	16: 11 β -HSD2: IC ₅₀ = 0.004 nM	17: 11 β -HSD1: IC ₅₀ = 0.14 μ M 11 β -HSD2: IC ₅₀ = 0.011 μ M	19: 11 β -HSD1: IC ₅₀ > 40 μ M 11 β -HSD2: IC ₅₀ = 0.011 μ M
Reference Compounds	50	51	19
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	18: 11 β -HSD1: IC ₅₀ = 45 μ M 11 β -HSD2: IC ₅₀ = 0.033 μ M	20: 11 β -HSD1: IC ₅₀ = 8.3 μ M 11 β -HSD2: IC ₅₀ = 0.104 μ M	21: 11 β -HSD1: IC ₅₀ > 40 μ M 11 β -HSD2: IC ₅₀ = 0.0069 μ M
Reference Compounds	54	54	21
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	20: 11 β -HSD1: IC ₅₀ = 8.3 μ M 11 β -HSD2: IC ₅₀ = 0.104 μ M	21: 11 β -HSD1: IC ₅₀ > 40 μ M 11 β -HSD2: IC ₅₀ = 0.0069 μ M	21: 11 β -HSD1: IC ₅₀ > 40 μ M 11 β -HSD2: IC ₅₀ = 0.0069 μ M
Reference Abbreviations	IL-6: the Interleukin-6. NF- κ B: nuclear factor kappa-light-chain-enhancer of activated b cells. TNF- α : the tumor necrosis factor. COX-2: cyclooxygenase-2. MAPKs: mitogen-activated protein kinases. MIP-1 α : macrophage inflammatory protein-1 alpha. 11 β -HSD: 11 β -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase		



several compounds demonstrated significant inhibition of paw edema and leukocyte infiltration.⁴⁹ The results obtained from both *in vitro* and *in vivo* experiments indicate that compound **14** and compound **15** exhibit anti-inflammatory effects by reducing the expression of NO, pro-inflammatory cytokines, and chemokines, such as IL-1 β , IL-6, IL-12, TNF- α , MCP-1, and macrophage inflammatory protein-1 alpha (MIP-1 α) while increasing the expression of anti-inflammatory cytokine IL-10. Wang *et al.* introduced Soluplus®-glycyrrhetic acid solid dispersion, which significantly improves the bioavailability and anti-inflammatory activity of 18 β -GA. The solubility of 18 β -GA increased with the addition of Soluplus®, and the bioavailability was enhanced 2.61-fold. The anti-inflammatory activity of 18 β -GA was also improved by 32.3%.¹¹ Compounds **16–21** have been structurally modified at the C-2 and C-30 carboxyl positions of 18 β -GA. These derivatives of 18 β -GA have previously demonstrated outstanding anti-inflammatory activity, as seen in Table 1.^{50–52}

In conclusion, 18 β -GA has potential therapeutic applications for various conditions due to its anti-inflammatory effects. Although more research is required, the use of 18 β -GA and its derivatives may provide new avenues for treating inflammation-related diseases.

Antitumor activity

Cancer ravages and cripples the earth's inhabitants, ranking among the foremost destroyers of life.⁵⁵ For countless years, scholars have been devoting themselves to the quest for a cure for tumors. Presently, the globe is awash with more than 80 conventional anti-tumor medications, ranging from cytotoxic drugs and hormones, to biological response modifiers (BRMs) and monoclonal antibodies.⁵⁶ The majority of anticancer medications exhibit notable toxicity and necessitate administration in periodic cycles to mitigate adverse effects and impede the emergence of drug resistance. However, the excellent vitality of natural compounds adds new impetus to the research and development of anticancer drugs.⁵⁷ And within this pantheon of treatment options stands the 18 β -GA compound—a veritable powerhouse in its ability to vanquish cancerous cells from any part of the human body with unrivaled efficacy. Scores of meticulous studies attest to the fact that this drug is a game-changer in the fight against various forms of cancer. The sterling performance against malignant cells has been proven time and time again, and it holds immense potential as an agent in the battle against cancer. Wang *et al.* demonstrated that 18 β -GA has potent inhibitory effects on colorectal cancer cell proliferation *in vitro* and *in vivo*. This study showed that 18 β -GA treatment resulted in a significant reduction in cell migration, invasion, and wound healing capability, accompanied by the downregulation of matrix metalloproteinase (MMP) expression. Moreover, 18 β -GA decreased the protein levels of phosphorylated PI3K, protein kinase B (AKT), Signal Transducer and Activator of Transcription 3 (STAT3), c-Jun N-terminal Kinase (JNK), p38 mitogen-activated protein kinase (p38), and NF- κ B p65, where the phosphorylation of PI3K and STAT3 decreased as early as 2 h after 18 β -GA treatment.⁵⁸ Luo *et al.* found that 18 β -

GA-induced apoptosis and G2/M cell cycle arrest and inhibited migration *via* the ROS/MAPK/STAT3/NF- κ B signaling pathways in A549 lung cancer cells. They also found that 18 β -GA could reduce tumor growth in a mouse xenograft model. In breast cancer treatment,⁵⁹ Shi *et al.* found that a combination of 18 β -GA and doxorubicin enhanced cytotoxicity, apoptosis, and loss of mitochondrial membrane potential *via* the upregulation of a mitochondrial-dependent apoptosis pathway against MCF-7 (breast adenocarcinoma cell line) cells.⁶⁰ In recent years, 18 β -GA has also been found to have potential in liver cancer-targeted therapy. Speciale *et al.* provided a comprehensive review of the topic.⁶¹

The derivatives of 18 β -GA have been unearthed to harbor even more potent cancer properties in comparison to the progenitor compound. One of the most remarkable advantages of 18 β -GA lies in its all-encompassing efficacy in targeting a myriad of cancer types. It has conspicuously showcased outstanding effectiveness against cancers of the digestive tract, liver, nervous system, reproductive system, immune system, thyroid, and other organ-related cancers. This renders it an invaluable weapon in the war against cancer.^{62,63} The 18 β -GA's anti-cancer effects are believed to stem from its capacity to incite apoptosis, a process of purposeful cell death, in cancer cells. Additionally, it also exhibits anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties that can shield cells from harm and amplify the growth of healthy cells. As demonstrated in Table 2, we have amassed an extensive collection of 18 β -GA derivatives with extraordinary anticancer activity.

In the realm of liver cancer treatment, researchers have discovered that 18 β -GA holds significant potential due to its ability to exhibit toxicity against multiple liver cancer cell lines. A study conducted by Lai *et al.* found that 18 β -GA derivatives **46–60** demonstrated selective cell toxicity against human hepatocellular carcinoma, hepG2 (hepatocellular carcinoma cell line) cells, and BEL-7402 (hepatocellular carcinoma cell line) cells.⁶⁴ Similarly, derivatives **34**, **101–102**, **109–115**, **123–127**, and **147** displayed excellent cell toxicity against hepG2.^{65–72} Moreover, derivatives **73** and **74**, which were modified at position C30, exhibited noteworthy cell toxicity against SMMC-7721 (hepatocellular carcinoma cell line).^{73–76} Researchers also discovered the complex of 18 β -GA-conjugated- β -cyclodextrin and emodin's superior cell toxicity against hep3B (hepatocellular carcinoma cell line) cells when compared to emodin alone.⁷⁷

In the domain of gastrointestinal cancers, encompassing those that affect the mouth, esophagus, colon, and stomach, the extraordinary cytotoxicity of 18 β -GA and its derivatives has been strikingly demonstrated, particularly against colon cancer cell lines. The literature is replete with evidence of 18 β -GA's potent effects on HCT-116 (colorectal carcinoma cell line), HCT-8 (colorectal adenocarcinoma cell line), DLD-1 (colorectal adenocarcinoma cell line), and HT-29 (colorectal adenocarcinoma cell line) cells. For instance, derivatives **152–154** and **45** exhibit toxicity towards HCT-116, with derivative **45** also affecting HCT-8 cells and DLD-1. Likewise, derivatives **109–125** display remarkable cytotoxicity towards HT-29 cells.^{78–80} Moreover, Seribian *et al.*'s study unveiled the high cytotoxicity of 18 β -GA 1,9-epoxide on numerous human tumor cell lines,



Table 2 Chemical structure and antitumor activity of glycyrrhethinic acid and its derivatives 22–154

Compounds	18 β -GA	22–25	26–27	28–33
Structure				
Effects or mechanisms	<p>518A2: IC₅₀ = 83.92 μM</p> <p>8505C: IC₅₀ = 86.50 μM</p> <p>A253: IC₅₀ = 80.78 μM</p> <p>A2780: IC₅₀ = 74.57 μM</p> <p>A431: IC₅₀ = 79.58 μM</p> <p>A549: IC₅₀ = 82.76 μM</p> <p>DLD-1: IC₅₀ = 81.21 μM</p> <p>FADU: IC₅₀ = 84.55 μM</p> <p>HCT-8: IC₅₀ = 78.85 μM</p> <p>HT-29: IC₅₀ = 80.09 μM</p> <p>LIPO: IC₅₀ = 81.44 μM</p> <p>MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 84.70 μM</p> <p>SW480: IC₅₀ = 86.80 μM</p> <p>SW1736: IC₅₀ = 76.93 μM</p> <p>NIH 3T3: IC₅₀ = 18.52 μM</p> <p>HCT-11: IC₅₀ = 78.83 μM</p> <p>HCT-116: IC₅₀ = 78.83 μM</p>	<p>22: R = SO₂CH₃</p> <p>KU7: IC₅₀ = 3.3 μM</p> <p>Panc-1: IC₅₀ = 7.6 μM</p> <p>Panc-28: IC₅₀ = 9.7 μM</p> <p>23: R = I</p> <p>253JB-V: IC₅₀ = 2.6 μM</p> <p>KU7: IC₅₀ = 3.0 μM</p> <p>Panc-1: IC₅₀ = 4.0 μM</p> <p>24: R = P=O(OCH₃)₂</p> <p>253JB-V: IC₅₀ = 7.9 μM</p> <p>KU7: IC₅₀ = 3.7 μM</p> <p>Panc-1: IC₅₀ = 6.1 μM</p> <p>Panc-28: IC₅₀ = 8.1 μM</p> <p>25: R = CF₃</p> <p>253JB-V: IC₅₀ = 0.67 μM</p> <p>KU7: IC₅₀ = 0.38 μM</p> <p>Panc-1: IC₅₀ = 0.82 μM</p> <p>Panc-28: IC₅₀ = 1.1 μM</p> <p>82 and 83</p> <p>35–37</p>	<p>26: R = I</p> <p>253JB-V: C₅₀ = 3.6 μM</p> <p>KU7: C₅₀ = 2.6 μM</p> <p>Panc-1: IC₅₀ = 4.4 μM</p> <p>Panc-28: IC₅₀ = 3.6 μM</p> <p>27: R = CF₃</p> <p>253JB-V: IC₅₀ = 0.3 μM</p> <p>KU7: IC₅₀ = 1.3 μM</p> <p>Panc-1: IC₅₀ = 0.68 μM</p> <p>Panc-28: IC₅₀ = 1.1 μM</p> <p>82 and 83</p> <p>38–41</p>	<p>28: R = OCH₃</p> <p>253JB-V: IC₅₀ = 0.25 μM</p> <p>KU7: IC₅₀ = 1.59 μM</p> <p>Panc-1: IC₅₀ = 1.22 μM</p> <p>Panc-28: IC₅₀ = 1.80 μM</p> <p>29: R = H</p> <p>253JB-V: IC₅₀ = 6.10 μM</p> <p>KU7: IC₅₀ = 5.88 μM</p> <p>Panc-1: IC₅₀ = 3.81 μM</p> <p>Panc-28: IC₅₀ = 7.32 μM</p> <p>30: R = piperidinyl</p> <p>HL-60: IC₅₀ = 1.4 μM</p> <p>31: R = 1,4-bipiperidinyl</p> <p>HL-60: IC₅₀ = 0.8 μM</p> <p>32: R = 4-methylpiperazinyl</p> <p>HL-60: IC₅₀ = 1.2 μM</p> <p>33: R = piperazinyl</p> <p>HL-60: IC₅₀ = 1.7 μM</p> <p>82 and 83</p> <p>42–43</p>
Reference Compounds	<p>59–61 and 88</p> <p>34</p>	<p>35: R = piperidinyl</p> <p>HL-60: IC₅₀ = 5.5 μM</p> <p>36: R = 1,4'-bipiperidinyl</p> <p>HL-60: IC₅₀ = 3.3 μM</p> <p>37: R = 4-methylpiperazinyl</p> <p>HL-60: IC₅₀ = 6.1 μM</p>	<p>38: R = piperidinyl</p> <p>HL-60: IC₅₀ = 1.7 μM</p> <p>39: R = 1,4'-bipiperidinyl</p> <p>HL-60: IC₅₀ = 7.7 μM</p> <p>40: R = 4-methylpiperazinyl</p> <p>HL-60: IC₅₀ = 7.9 μM</p> <p>41: R = piperazinyl</p> <p>HL-60: IC₅₀ = 8.2 μM</p>	<p>42: R = piperidinyl</p> <p>HL-60: IC₅₀ = 8.6 μM</p> <p>43: R = 1,4'-bipiperidinyl</p> <p>HL-60: IC₅₀ = 7.5 μM</p>
Structure				
Effects or mechanisms	<p>34: HepG-2: IC₅₀ = 0.22 μM</p>	<p>82 and 83</p> <p>35–37</p>	<p>82 and 83</p> <p>38–41</p>	<p>82 and 83</p> <p>42–43</p>



Table 2 (Contd.)

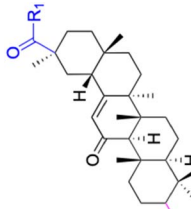
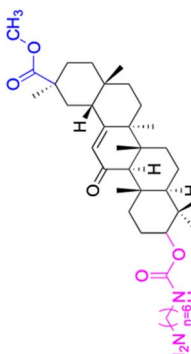
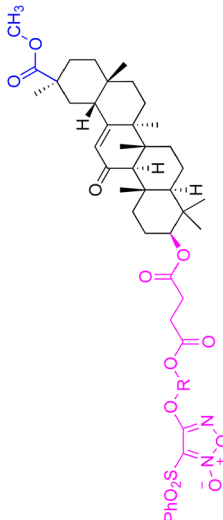
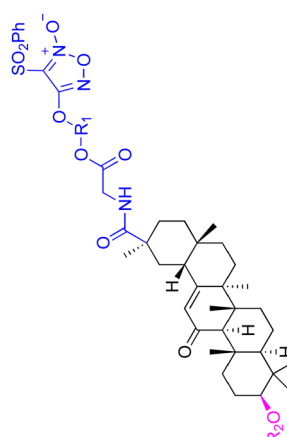
Reference Compounds	83	83	83
65			
44			
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	<p>44: R₁ = O-i-Pr or OEt or OCH₃ or OBn R₂ = O-β-alanine or O-α-alanine or O-glycine</p> <p>8505C: IC₅₀ = 1.9–7.4 μM, A253: IC₅₀ = 2.2–6.2 μM, A2780: IC₅₀ = 1.3–5.9 μM A549: IC₅₀ = 1.7–6.4 μM, DLD-1: IC₅₀ = 2.5–8.5 μM, LIPO: IC₅₀ = 2.3–7.5 μM Average: IC₅₀ = 2.3–7.0 μM</p>	<p>45: 518A2: IC₅₀ = 1.0 μM, 8505C: IC₅₀ = 1.6 μM, A253: IC₅₀ = 1.1 μM A2780: IC₅₀ = 1.3 μM, A549: IC₅₀ = 1.5 μM, DLD-1: IC₅₀ = 0.91 μM FADU: IC₅₀ = 1.7 μM, HCT-116: IC₅₀ = 1.1 μM, HCT-8: IC₅₀ = 0.6 μM HT-29: IC₅₀ = 0.5 μM, LIPO: IC₅₀ = 1.5 μM, MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 1.1 μM SW1736: IC₅₀ = 1.6 μM, SW480: IC₅₀ = 2.2 μM</p>	
Reference Compounds	89	80	80
46–51			
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	<p>46: R = (CH₂)₂O BEL7402: IC₅₀ = 7.8 μM 47: R = (CH₂)₃O BEL7402: IC₅₀ = 9.2 μM 48: R = (CH₂)₂CH(CH₃)O BEL7402: IC₅₀ = 6.0 μM 49: R = (CH₂)₄O BEL7402: IC₅₀ = 8.2 μM 50: R = CH₂CH=CHCH₂O HepG2: IC₅₀ = 7.9 μM, BEL7402: IC₅₀ = 7.3 μM 51: R = CH₂CH₂NH HepG2: IC₅₀ = 2.9 μM, BEL7402: IC₅₀ = 2.9 μM</p>	<p>52: R₁ = (CH₂)₂, R₂ = H HepG2: IC₅₀ = 9.0 μM, BEL7402: IC₅₀ = 1.3 μM 53: R₁ = (CH₂)₃, R₂ = H HepG2: IC₅₀ = 3.7 μM, BEL7402: IC₅₀ = 0.43 μM 54: R₁ = (CH₂)₂CH(CH₃), R₂ = H HepG2: IC₅₀ = 3.0 μM, BEL7402: IC₅₀ = 1.1 μM 55: R₁ = (CH₂)₄, R₂ = H HepG2: IC₅₀ = 6.7 μM, BEL7402: IC₅₀ = 0.25 μM 56: R₁ = (CH₂)₅O(CH₂)₂, R₂ = H HepG2: IC₅₀ = 5.1 μM, BEL7402: IC₅₀ = 3.7 μM 57: R₁ = CH₂CH=CHCH₃, R₂ = H HepG2: IC₅₀ = 1.3 μM, BEL7402: IC₅₀ = 0.32 μM 58: R₁ = CH₂CH=CHCH₂, R₂ = H</p>	



Table 2 (Contd.)

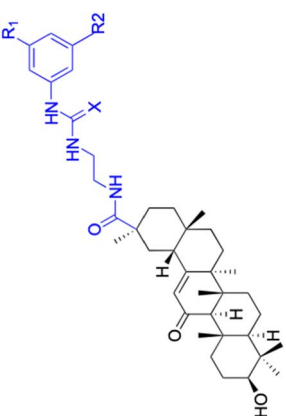
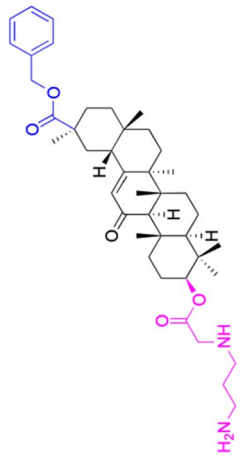
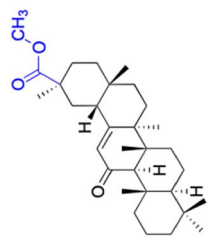
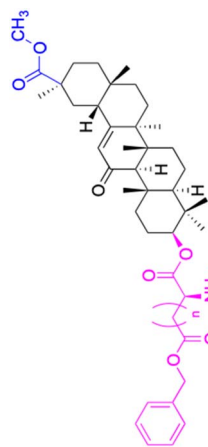
Reference Compounds	64 61–62		HepG2: IC ₅₀ = 3.3 μM, BEL7402: IC ₅₀ = 0.84 μM 59: R ₁ = (CH ₂) ₄ , R ₂ = Ac HepG2: IC ₅₀ = 8.3 μM, BEL7402: IC ₅₀ = 4.8 μM 60: R ₁ = (CH ₂) ₂ O(CH ₂) ₂ , R ₂ = H HepG2: IC ₅₀ = 6.4 μM, BEL7402: IC ₅₀ = 9.4 μM 64 63
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	61: R ₁ = R ₂ = CF ₃ , X = O A549: IC ₅₀ = 7 μM, SKMEL: IC ₅₀ = 9 μM HS683: IC ₅₀ = 6 μM, U373: IC ₅₀ = 6 μM PC3: IC ₅₀ = 8 μM, MCF7: IC ₅₀ = 4 μM 816F10: IC ₅₀ = 4 μM 62: R ₁ = R ₂ = H, X = S HS683: IC ₅₀ = 8 μM, PC3: IC ₅₀ = 9 μM 74 64		63: 518A2: IC ₅₀ = 5.1 μM, 8505C: IC ₅₀ = 2.0 μM, A253: IC ₅₀ = 1.9 μM A549: IC ₅₀ = 4.7 μM, DLD-1: IC ₅₀ = 4.9 μM, Lipo: IC ₅₀ = 2.9 μM 90 65–66
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	64: 518A2: IC ₅₀ = 23.69 μM, 8505C: IC ₅₀ = 24.30 μM, A2780: IC ₅₀ = 10.39 μM LIPO: IC ₅₀ = 25.52 μM, SW1736: IC ₅₀ = 16.98 μM 65: n = 1 A253: IC ₅₀ = 7.9 μM, A2780: IC ₅₀ = 8.8 μM, MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 7.3 μM 66: n = 2 518A2: IC ₅₀ = 1.7 μM, 8505C: IC ₅₀ = 1.7 μM, A253: IC ₅₀ = 1.2 μM A2780: IC ₅₀ = 1.6 μM, A549: IC ₅₀ = 1.7 μM, LIPO: IC ₅₀ = 1.7 μM MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 1.2 μM, SW1736: IC ₅₀ = 2.3 μM		



Table 2 (Contd.)

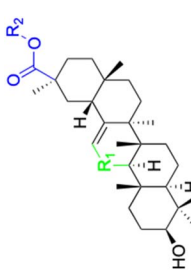
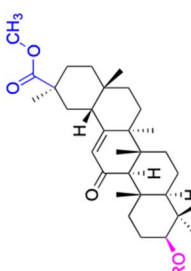
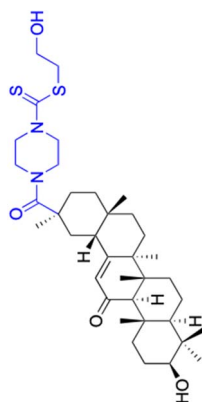
Reference Compounds	90 67-71	91 72
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms	<p>67: R₁ = CH₂, R₂ = H 518A2: IC₅₀ = 71.49 μM, 8505C: IC₅₀ = 78.52 μM, A2780: IC₅₀ = 62.78 μM</p> <p>A431: IC₅₀ = 86.13 μM, A549: IC₅₀ = 79.13 μM, DLD-1: IC₅₀ = 90.50 μM HCT-116: IC₅₀ = 87.70 μM, HCT-8: IC₅₀ = 88.76 μM, HT-29: IC₅₀ = 90.30 μM LIPO: IC₅₀ = 73.88 μM, MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 90.19 μM, SW1736: IC₅₀ = 72.47 μM NIH 3T3: IC₅₀ = 68.70 μM 68: R₁ = C=O, R₂ = CH₃ 518A2: IC₅₀ = 27.54 μM, 8505C: IC₅₀ = 26.07 μM, A2780: IC₅₀ = 25.54 μM A431: IC₅₀ = 25.28 μM, A549: IC₅₀ = 23.50 μM, DLD-1: IC₅₀ = 26.12 μM HCT-116: IC₅₀ = 22.10 μM, HCT-8: IC₅₀ = 24.36 μM, HT-29: IC₅₀ = 27.54 μM LIPO: IC₅₀ = 20.47 μM, MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 22.14 μM, SW1736: IC₅₀ = 34.87 μM NIH 3T3: IC₅₀ = 22.81 μM 69: R₁ = CH₂, R₂ = CH₃ 518A2: IC₅₀ = 34.54 μM, 8505C: IC₅₀ = 33.88 μM, A2780: IC₅₀ = 23.58 μM A431: IC₅₀ = 33.55 μM, A549: IC₅₀ = 31.59 μM, DLD-1: IC₅₀ = 31.73 μM HCT-116: IC₅₀ = 31.82 μM, HCT-8: IC₅₀ = 31.34 μM, HT-29: IC₅₀ = 23.89 μM LIPO: IC₅₀ = 34.81 μM, MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 34.37 μM, SW1736: IC₅₀ = 32.35 μM NIH 3T3: IC₅₀ = 42.22 μM 70: R₁ = C=O, R₂ = Et 518A2: IC₅₀ = 25.23 μM, 8505C: IC₅₀ = 24.58 μM, A2780: IC₅₀ = 26.96 μM A431: IC₅₀ = 23.45 μM, A549: IC₅₀ = 22.74 μM, DLD-1: IC₅₀ = 28.14 μM HCT-116: IC₅₀ = 21.58 μM, HCT-8: IC₅₀ = 43.42 μM, HT-29: IC₅₀ = 22.14 μM</p>	<p>72: R = <i>l</i>-2,4-diaminobutanoyl or <i>D</i>-alanyl or sacrosyl or <i>l</i>- prolyl or <i>l</i>-phenylalanyl or <i>l</i>-methionyl or <i>l</i>-ornithyl or <i>l</i>-lysyl 8505C: IC₅₀ = 2.4–9.6 μM, A253: IC₅₀ = 2.2–7.4 μM, A2780: IC₅₀ = 1.5–5.5 μM A549: IC₅₀ = 2.1–9.9 μM, DLD-1: IC₅₀ = 1.4–8.7 μM, LIPO: IC₅₀ = 0.8–7.9 μM MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 2.2–6.0 μM</p>



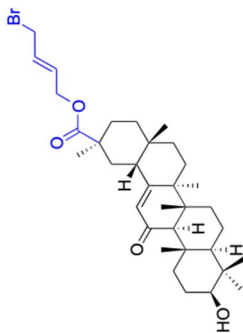
Table 2 (Contd.)

LIPO: IC₅₀ = 27.66 μM, MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 18.61 μM,
 SW1736: IC₅₀ = 13.37 μM
 NIH 3T3: IC₅₀ = 23.66 μM
 71: R₁ = CH-OH, R₂ = Et
 518A2: IC₅₀ = 51.52 μM, 8505C: IC₅₀ = 52.80 μM,
 A2780: IC₅₀ = 57.01 μM
 A431: IC₅₀ = 46.55 μM, A549: IC₅₀ = 48.97 μM, DLD-1:
 IC₅₀ = 52.80 μM
 HCT-116: IC₅₀ = 47.78 μM, HCT-8: IC₅₀ = 44.32 μM,
 HT-29: IC₅₀ = 44.32 μM
 LIPO: IC₅₀ = 52.80 μM, MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 48.97 μM,
 SW1736: IC₅₀ = 45.48 μM
 NIH 3T3: IC₅₀ = 43.16 μM

Reference
 Compounds
 91
 73

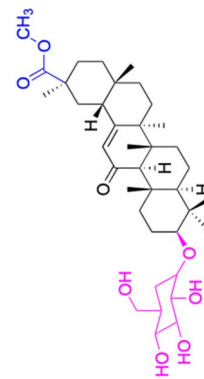


92
 74

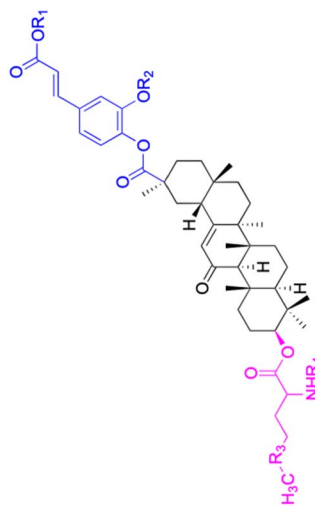


Effects or
 mechanisms
 Reference
 Compounds
 73:
 SMMC-7721 (after 72 h): IC₅₀ = 14.42 μg mL⁻¹
 73-76
 75

74:
 8505C: IC₅₀ = 8.8 μM, SW1736: IC₅₀ = 1.8 μM
 93
 76



Effects or
 mechanisms
 MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 1.8-8.6 μM
 MDA-MB-231: IC₅₀ = 1.3-6.4 μM



76:
 R₁ = CH₃ or Et, R₂ = CH₃ or H, R₃ = S or Se, R₄ =
 CO₂tBu or H
 MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 1.8-8.6 μM
 MDA-MB-231: IC₅₀ = 1.3-6.4 μM

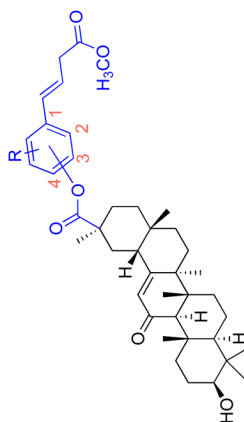




Table 2 (Contd.)

94

Reference
Compounds
80–90



Structure

Effects or
mechanisms80: 18 β -GAO-4

R = H

A549: IC₅₀ = 2.0 μ M, SKMEL: IC₅₀ = 3.0 μ M, T98G: IC₅₀ = 3.0 μ MHS683: IC₅₀ = 3.0 μ M, U373: IC₅₀ = 2.0 μ M, PC3: IC₅₀ = 2.0 μ MMCF7: IC₅₀ = 3.0 μ M, 816F10: IC₅₀ = 3.0 μ M81: 18 β -GAO-4R = 3-OCH₃MDA-MB-231: IC₅₀ = 5.0 μ M82: 18 β -GAO-4

R = 3-OEt

MDA-MB-231: IC₅₀ = 8.1 μ M83: 18 β -GAO-3R = 4-OCH₃MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 8.5 μ M, MDA-MB-231: IC₅₀ = 7.3 μ M84: 18 β -GAO-3

R = 4-OEt

MDA-MB-231: IC₅₀ = 9.4 μ M85: 18 β -GAO-4R = 3-OCH₃KB: ED₅₀ = 1.6 μ M, KB-VIN: ED₅₀ = 2.5 μ M, A549: ED₅₀ = 2.0 μ M1A9: ED₅₀ = 0.9 μ M, HCT-8: ED₅₀ = 1.7 μ M, ZR-751: ED₅₀ = 2.8 μ MPC-3: ED₅₀ = 1.4 μ M, DU-145: ED₅₀ = 3.1 μ M, LN-Cap: ED₅₀ = 0.6 μ M87: 18 β -GAO-3R = 4-OCH₃KB: ED₅₀ = 0.9 μ M, KB-VIN: ED₅₀ = 1.9 μ M, A549: ED₅₀ = 2.8 μ M1A9: ED₅₀ = 1.6 μ M, HCT-8: ED₅₀ = 2.0 μ M, ZR-751: ED₅₀ = 1.9 μ MPC-3: ED₅₀ = 2.8 μ M, DU-145: ED₅₀ = 9.9 μ M, LN-Cap: ED₅₀ = 6.5 μ M88: 18 β -GAO-3

R = 3-OEt

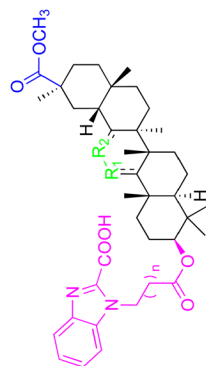
KB: ED₅₀ = 1.8 μ M, KB-VIN: ED₅₀ = 1.7 μ M, A549: ED₅₀ = 1.7 μ M1A9: ED₅₀ = 1.1 μ M, HCT-8: ED₅₀ = 2.7 μ M, ZR-751: ED₅₀ = 5.2 μ MPC-3: ED₅₀ = 3.3 μ M, DU-145: ED₅₀ = 5.8 μ M, LN-Cap: ED₅₀ = 1.1 μ M89: 18 β -GAO-2R = 3-OCH₃KB: ED₅₀ = 0.8 μ M, KB-VIN: ED₅₀ = 2.8 μ M, A549: ED₅₀ = 2.2 μ M1A9: ED₅₀ = 0.8 μ M, HCT-8: ED₅₀ = 1.9 μ M, ZR-751: ED₅₀ = 3.0 μ MPC-3: ED₅₀ = 1.1 μ M, DU-145: ED₅₀ = 3.6 μ M, LN-Cap: ED₅₀ = 2.8 μ M90: 18 β -GAO-2

R = 3-F

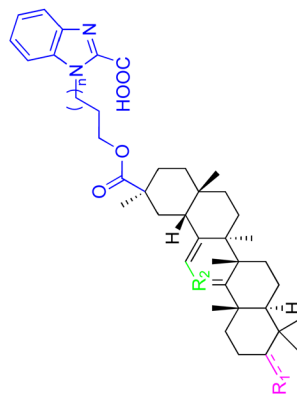
KB: ED₅₀ = 3.0 μ M, KB-VIN: ED₅₀ = 8.7 μ M, A549: ED₅₀ = 3.2 μ M1A9: ED₅₀ = 1.3 μ M, HCT-8: ED₅₀ = 2.2 μ M, ZR-751: ED₅₀ = 2.7 μ MPC-3: ED₅₀ = 1.6 μ M, DU-145: ED₅₀ = 2.7 μ M, LN-Cap: ED₅₀ = 4.4 μ M

Table 2 (Contd.)

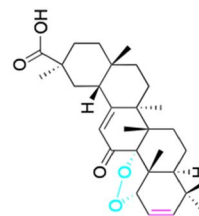
86: 18 β -GAO-2
R = 3-OEt
KB: ED₅₀ = 2.9 μ M, A549: ED₅₀ = 3.0 μ M, 1A9: ED₅₀ = 1.8 μ M
HCT-8: ED₅₀ = 4.9 μ M, ZR-751: ED₅₀ = 8.8 μ M, PC-3: ED₅₀ = 3.5 μ M
LN-Cap: ED₅₀ = 6.8 μ M
75 and 76
91–93

Reference
Compounds

91: R₁ = C=O, R₂ = CH, n = 0
Pin1 inhibition: IC₅₀ = 1.0 μ M
PC-3: IC₅₀ = 7.80 μ M
92: R₁ = CH, R₂ = CH, n = 0
Pin1 inhibition: IC₅₀ = 2.3 μ M
93: R₁ = CH₂, R₂ = C=O, n = 1
Pin1 inhibition: IC₅₀ = 2.3 μ M

Effects or
mechanisms**94–99**

94: R₁ = B-OAc, R₂ = C=O, n = 1
Pin1 inhibition: IC₅₀ = 1.3 μ M
95: R₁ = B-OAc, R₂ = C=O, n = 0
Pin1 inhibition: IC₅₀ = 1.0 μ M
96: R₁ = B-OH, R₂ = CH₂, n = 1
Pin1 inhibition: IC₅₀ = 2.8 μ M
97: R₁ = B-OAc, R₂ = CH₂, n = 0
Pin1 inhibition: IC₅₀ = 2.1 μ M
PC-3: IC₅₀ = 3.52 μ M, LNCaP: IC₅₀ = 7.92 μ M
98: R₁ = B-OAc, R₂ = CH₂, n = 0
Pin1 inhibition: IC₅₀ = 4.7 μ M
99: R₁ = O, R₂ = CH₂, n = 1
Pin1 inhibition: IC₅₀ = 3.8 μ M

Reference
Compounds95
101

Structure

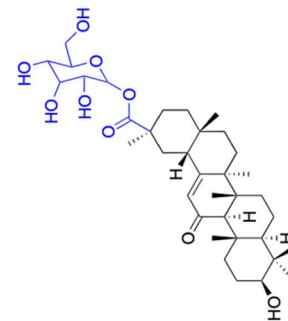


Table 2 (Contd.)

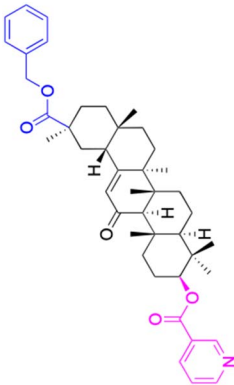
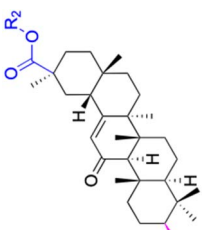
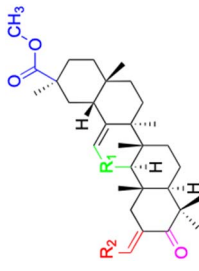
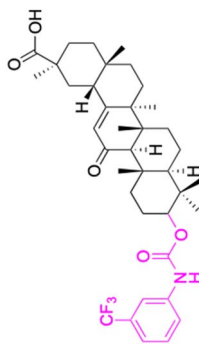
Effects or mechanisms	100: A375: EC ₅₀ = 1.5 μM, A2780: EC ₅₀ = 1.0 μM, HT29: EC ₅₀ = 1.7 μM MCF7: EC ₅₀ = 2.9 μM, 518A2: EC ₅₀ = 1.2 μM	101: HepG2: IC ₅₀ = 7.2 μM, MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 7.7 μM
Reference	81	69
Compounds	102	103–108
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms	102: SGC-7901: IC ₅₀ = 7.57 μM, MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 5.51 μM, Eca-109: IC ₅₀ = 5.03 μM HeLa: IC ₅₀ = 20.21 μM, Hep-G2: IC ₅₀ = 4.11 μM, HSF: IC ₅₀ = 23.18 μM	103: R ₁ = (<i>E</i>)-3-(4-acetoxyphenyl)acryl, R ₂ = Bn HeLa: IC ₅₀ = 4.3 μM 104: R ₁ = nicotiny, R ₂ = Bn SGC-7901: IC ₅₀ = 7.5 μM, MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 5.5 μM Eca-109: IC ₅₀ = 5.0 μM, Hep-G2: IC ₅₀ = 4.1 μM 105: R ₁ = isonicotiny, R ₂ = Bn MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 8.6 μM, Hep-G2: IC ₅₀ = 8.7 μM 106: R ₁ = 3-acetoxybenzyl, R ₂ = Bn HeLa: IC ₅₀ = 7.8 μM 107: R ₁ = 2-ethoxy-2-oxoacetyl, R ₂ = H A-549: IC ₅₀ = 1.0 μM 108: R ₁ = dodecanyl, R ₂ = H A-549: IC ₅₀ = 1.2 μM 70 and 71
Reference	70 and 71	115
Compounds	109–114	
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms	109: R ₁ = C=O, R ₂ = 1-imidazolyl MCF7: IC ₅₀ = 6.4 μM, SH-SY5Y: IC ₅₀ = 6.0 μM, Jurkat: IC ₅₀ = 3.2 μM 110: R ₁ = CH ₃ , R ₂ = 1-imidazolyl HT-29: IC ₅₀ = 3.3 μM, A549: IC ₅₀ = 2.8 μM, MIA-Paca2: IC ₅₀ = 3.3 μM	115: A549: IC ₅₀ = 2.81 μM, HT29: IC ₅₀ = 3.19 μM, HepG2: IC ₅₀ = 5.55 μM MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 5.26 μM, PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 5.96 μM, Karpas299: IC ₅₀ = 5.59 μM

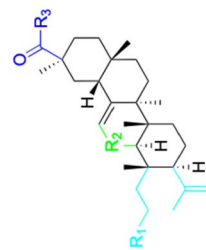


Table 2 (Contd.)

HeLa: IC₅₀ = 2.2 μM, A375: IC₅₀ = 2.0 μM, MCF7: IC₅₀ = 3.0 μM
 HepG2: IC₅₀ = 3.1 μM, SH-SY5Y: IC₅₀ = 1.7 μM, Jurkat: IC₅₀ = 1.1 μM
 Bj: IC₅₀ = 6.9 μM
 111: R₁ = C=O, R₂ = 2-methyl-1-imidazolyl
 HT-29: IC₅₀ = 9.4 μM, A375: IC₅₀ = 7.1 μM, MCF7: IC₅₀ = 5.6 μM
 SH-SY5Y: IC₅₀ = 5.6 μM, Jurkat: IC₅₀ = 2.4 μM
 112: R₁ = CH₃, R₂ = 2-methyl-1-imidazolyl
 HT-29: IC₅₀ = 3.6 μM, A549: IC₅₀ = 3.1 μM, MIA-Paca-2: IC₅₀ = 3.3 μM
 HeLa: IC₅₀ = 2.6 μM, A375: IC₅₀ = 2.3 μM, MCF7: IC₅₀ = 3.2 μM
 HepG2: IC₅₀ = 3.5 μM, SH-SY5Y: IC₅₀ = 2.2 μM, Jurkat: IC₅₀ = 1.3 μM
 113: R₁ = C=O, R₂ = 1,2,3-triazolyl-4-methyl carboxylate
 A375: IC₅₀ = 7.2 μM, MCF7: IC₅₀ = 6.0 μM, SH-SY5Y: IC₅₀ = 3.7 μM
 Jurkat: IC₅₀ = 1.7 μM
 114: R₁ = CH₃, R₂ = 1,2,3-triazolyl-4-methyl carboxylate
 HT-29: IC₅₀ = 8.9 μM, A549: IC₅₀ = 7.9 μM, MIA-Paca-2: IC₅₀ = 6.9 μM
 HeLa: IC₅₀ = 5.4 μM, A375: IC₅₀ = 4.9 μM, MCF7: IC₅₀ = 5.2 μM
 HepG2: IC₅₀ = 9.0 μM, SH-SY5Y: IC₅₀ = 3.2 μM, Jurkat: IC₅₀ = 1.5 μM

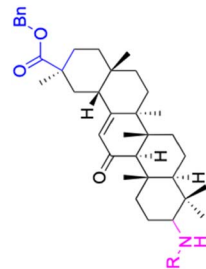
66
 Reference Compounds

116–122



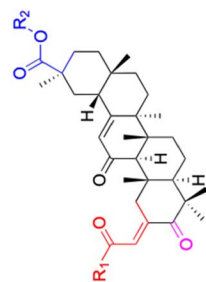
116: R₁ = CO₂H, R₂ = C=O, R₃ = OBn
 NTUB1: IC₅₀ = 2.3 μM
 117: R₁ = CO₂ CH₃, R₂ = C=O, R₃ = OBn
 NTUB1: IC₅₀ = 9.4 μM
 118: R₁ = CO₂H, R₂ = C=O, R₃ = NHCH₂H₅
 NTUB1: IC₅₀ = 3.3 μM
 119: R₁ = CO₂H, R₂ = C=O, R₃ = NHCH(CH₃)₂

67
 123–127



123: R = L-ala
 A549: IC₅₀ = 2.109 μM
 MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 2.135 μM
 HepG2: IC₅₀ = 2.439 μM
 HeLa: IC₅₀ = 2.39 μM
 MDCK: IC₅₀ = 4.645 μM
 124: R = L-gly

128–143



128: R₁ = OH, R₂ = Bn
 MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 3.8 μM, PC-3: IC₅₀ = 1.6 μM
 129: R₁ = OCH₃, R₂ = Bn
 MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 1.1 μM, PC-3: IC₅₀ = 1.2 μM
 130: R₁ = NHCH₃, R₂ = Bn
 MCF-7: IC₅₀ = 1.1 μM, PC-3: IC₅₀ = 0.40 μM
 131: R₁ = NHEt, R₂ = Bn

Structure

Effects or mechanisms





Table 2 (Contd.)

NTUB1: IC ₅₀ = 4.7 μM	A549: IC ₅₀ = 2.442 μM	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 0.59 μM, PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 0.27 μM
120: R ₁ = CO ₂ CH ₃ , R ₂ = H ₂ , R ₃ = NHCH(CH ₃)CO ₂ Me Jurkat: IC ₅₀ = 9.6 μM	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 2.853 μM HepG2: IC ₅₀ = 3.472 μM	132: R ₁ = NH-nPr, R ₂ = Bn MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 1.4 μM, PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 0.46 μM
121: R ₁ = CO ₂ CH ₃ , R ₂ = CH ₂ , R ₃ = NHCH(CH ₃)CO ₂ CH ₃ Jurkat: IC ₅₀ = 6.1 μM	HeLa: IC ₅₀ = 3.01 μM	133: R ₁ = pyrrolidinyl, R ₂ = Bn
122: R ₁ = CO ₂ Et, R ₂ = C=O, R ₃ = OEt	MDCK: IC ₅₀ = 3.749 μM	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 3.0 μM, PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 3.4 μM
518A2: IC ₅₀ = 9.2 μM, A2780: IC ₅₀ = 5.8 μM	125: R = 1-Boc-gly	134: R ₁ = morpholinyl, R ₂ = Bn
	A549: IC ₅₀ = 2.751 μM	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 4.9 μM, PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 5.2 μM
	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 3.811 μM	135: R ₁ = 1,4-bipiperidinyl, R ₂ = Bn
	HepG2: IC ₅₀ = 3.306 μM	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 2.1 μM, PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 3.0 μM
	HeLa: IC ₅₀ = 3.296 μM	136: R ₁ = piperazinyl, R ₂ = Bn
	MDCK: IC ₅₀ = 4.431 μM	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 3.1 μM, PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 2.7 μM
	126: R = 1-phe	137: R ₁ = 1-methylpiperazinyl, R ₂ = Bn
	A549: IC ₅₀ = 3.006 μM	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 3.3 μM, PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 3.1 μM
	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 3.281 μM	138: R ₁ = 1-Boc-piperazinyl, R ₂ = Bn
	HepG2: IC ₅₀ = 5.048 μM	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 0.44 μM, PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 0.23 μM
	HeLa: IC ₅₀ = 3.296 μM	139: R ₁ = aniliny, R ₂ = Bn
	MDCK: IC ₅₀ = 5.024 μM	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 0.73 μM, PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 0.45 μM
	127: R = 1-pro	140: R ₁ = 4-nitroaniliny, R ₂ = Bn
	A549: IC ₅₀ = 3.261 μM	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 5.8 μM, PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 2.0 μM
	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 7.623 μM	141: R ₁ = 4-chloroaniliny, R ₂ = Bn
	HepG2: IC ₅₀ = 2.143 μM	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 8.9 μM, PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 0.85 μM
	HeLa: IC ₅₀ = 2.209 μM	142: R ₁ = 4-aminoperidinyl, R ₂ = Bn
	MDCK: IC ₅₀ = 2.528 μM	MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 0.98 μM, PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 0.69 μM
		143: R ₁ = 1-Boc-piperazinyl, R ₂ = CH ₃
		MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 1.0 μM, PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 0.68 μM

Table 2 (Contd.)

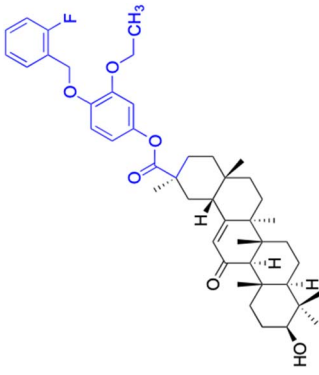
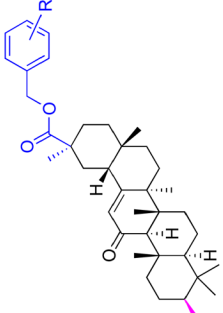
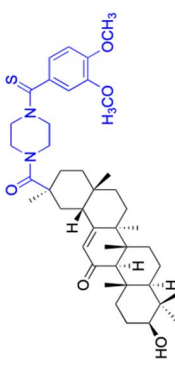
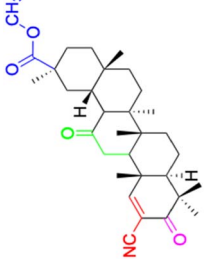
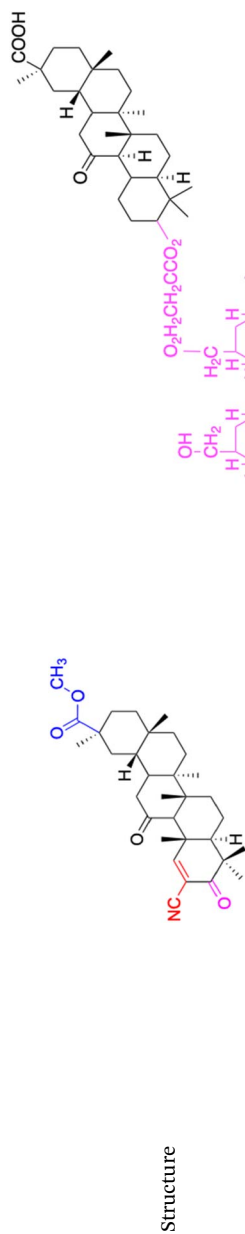
Reference Compounds	66 and 96 144	97
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms	144: HeLa: IC ₅₀ = 1.1 μM	145: R = 2,4-diCl, R ₁ = C=O MDA-MB-231: IC ₅₀ = 9.6 μM 146: R = 3-OEt, 5-F, 4-(methoxymethyl)benzene, R ₁ = OH HeLa: IC ₅₀ = 1.1 μM
Reference Compounds	98 147	148
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms	147: Karpas299: IC ₅₀ = 6.51 μM, A549: IC ₅₀ > 40 μM HepG2: IC ₅₀ = 6.93 μM, MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 18.85 μM PC-3: IC ₅₀ = 18.18 μM	149: KB-3-1: IC ₅₀ = 5.5 μM
Reference Compounds	72 150	99
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms		148: 253JB-V: IC ₅₀ = 0.11 μM KU7: IC ₅₀ = 0.12 μM Panc-1: IC ₅₀ = 0.07 μM Panc-28: IC ₅₀ = 0.05 μM KB-3-1: IC ₅₀ = 0.3 μM KB-8-5: IC ₅₀ = 1.2 μM HeLa: IC ₅₀ = 1.3 μM MCF-7: IC ₅₀ = 5 μM SK-N-MC: IC ₅₀ = 0.8 μM MDA-MB-231: IC ₅₀ = 5.97 μM
Reference Compounds		99 151

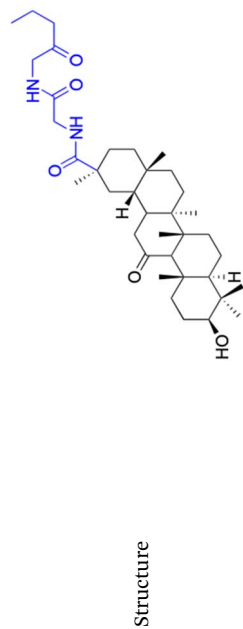


Table 2 (Contd.)



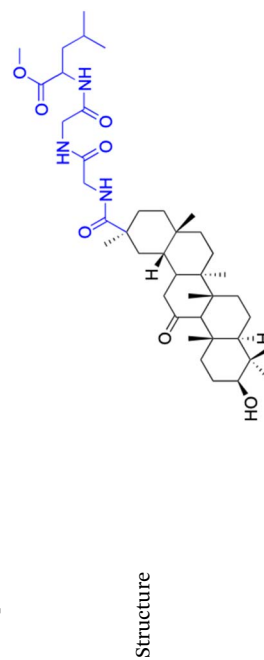
84–87
152

Effects or mechanisms
Reference
Compounds



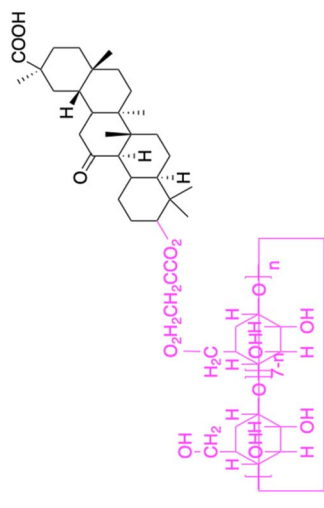
MCF-7: $IC_{50} = 5.1 \mu M$, HCT-116: $IC_{50} = 7.40 \mu M$
79
154

Effects or mechanisms
Reference
Compounds



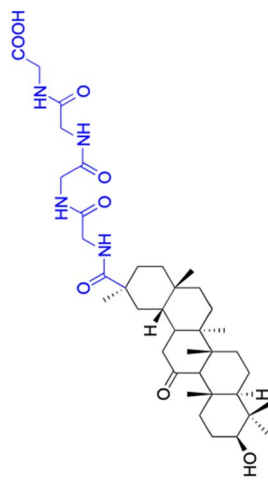
MCF-7: $IC_{50} = 3.70 \mu M$, HCT-116: $IC_{50} = 3.0 \mu M$, HepG-2: $IC_{50} = 3.30 \mu M$

Effects or mechanisms



77
153

Effects or mechanisms



MCF-7: $IC_{50} = 5.0 \mu M$, HCT-116: $IC_{50} = 5.2 \mu M$
100
155–156

MCF-7: $IC_{50} = 6.9 \mu M$, HepG2: $IC_{50} = 9.9 \mu M$
MCF-7: $IC_{50} = 9.5 \mu M$, HepG2: $IC_{50} = 25.6 \mu M$





Table 2 (Contd.)

101

Reference	79
Abbreviations	HepG-2: hepatocellular carcinoma cell line. HCT-116: colorectal carcinoma cell line. MCF-7: breast adenocarcinoma cell line. MDCK: Madin-Darby canine kidney cell line. HeLa: cervical cancer cell line. A549: lung adenocarcinoma cell line. Hep3B: hepatocellular carcinoma cell line. SW1736: thyroid carcinoma cell line. LIPO: liposarcoma cell line. A2780: ovarian cancer cell line. 8505C: thyroid cancer cell line. 518A2: melanoma cell line. HSF: fibroblast cell line. Eca-109: esophageal carcinoma cell line. SGC-7901: gastric cancer cell line. average: unknown cell line. DU-145: prostate cancer cell line. Karpas299: lymphoma cell line. DLD-1: colorectal adenocarcinoma cell line. NIH 3T3: mouse embryonic fibroblast cell line. BEL7402: hepatocellular carcinoma cell line. SMMC-7721: hepatocellular carcinoma cell line. NTUB1: bladder cancer cell line. LN-Cap: prostate adenocarcinoma cell line. Jurkat: T-cell leukemia cell line. ZR-751: breast cancer cell line. KB: oral epidermoid carcinoma cell line. KB-VIN: multidrug-resistant oral epidermoid carcinoma cell line. A549: lung adenocarcinoma cell line. PC-3: prostate cancer cell line. SKMEL: melanoma cell line. T98G: glioblastoma cell line. HS683: glioma cell line. U373: glioblastoma cell line. 816F10: melanoma cell line. Pin1: peptidyl-prolyl <i>cis-trans</i> isomerase NIMA-interacting 1. FADU: hypopharyngeal carcinoma cell line. Panc-28: pancreatic carcinoma-28 cell line. Panc-1: pancreatic carcinoma-1 cell line. 253JB-V: bladder carcinoma cell line. KU7: a cell line derived from human bladder cancer. SK-N-MC: human neuroblastoma cell line. KB-8-5: human epidermoid carcinoma cell line. KB-3-1: human epidermoid carcinoma cell line. SH-SY5Y: human neuroblastoma cell line. MIApaca2: pancreatic carcinoma cell line. HL-60: human promyelocytic leukemia cell line

including HT-29 cells.⁸¹ Compounds 22–29 manifest substantial activity against Panc-1 (pancreatic carcinoma-1 cell line) and Panc-28 (pancreatic carcinoma-28 cell line) cells, and compounds 109–114 have been established as inhibitors of MIApaca2 (pancreatic carcinoma cell line) cells.^{66,67,82,83} As for human oral epidermoid cancer cell lines, such as KB-3-1, KB-8-5, KB, and KB-VIN, compounds 85–90 and 148–150 have displayed their significant prowess.^{74,76,84–87}

In the context of prostate cancer cell lines such as PC-3 (androgen-independent) and LN-Cap, compounds 61–62, 86–90, and 128–143 have demonstrated significant inhibitory effects.^{75,76,97} In ovarian cancer cell lines like A2780, compounds 64–71 exhibited inhibitory activity up to 1.5 μM .^{90,91} Notably, compounds 109–114, 103, 106, 102, 144, and 146 displayed notable inhibitory activity against HeLa cells (cervical cancer cell line).^{70,71,81,98} Additionally, compounds 152–156 showed strong inhibitory activity against MCF-9 breast cancer cell line.^{79,101}

Beyond these realms, GA and its derivatives have also exhibited their anticancer activity in other areas. Prior research has established that GA and its derivatives have the ability to inhibit Neurosystem-associated cancer cell lines, such as SH-SY5Y (human neuroblastoma cell line) and SK-N-MC (human neuroblastoma cell line).^{66,84} In the investigation conducted by Csuk *et al.* conducted an investigation, which found that GA and its derivatives displayed robust activity against thyroid cancer.⁹¹ Li *et al.* found that 18 β -GA exert anticancer effects as pin1 inhibitors.⁹⁵ Furthermore, GA and its derivatives have demonstrated significant inhibitory activity against various types of cancer cells including those associated with lung cancer, lymphoma, melanoma, and breast cancer.^{66–68,74–76,80,82,83,89,91–94,96}

In conclusion, 18 β -GA and its derivatives have shown promising anti-tumor properties in various types of cancer, including colorectal, breast, lung, and liver. The cytotoxic effects of 18 β -GA have been attributed to its ability to induce apoptosis, cell cycle arrest, inhibit migration, and downregulate various signaling pathways involved in cancer progression. In addition, 18 β -GA has been shown to enhance the cytotoxicity of conventional chemotherapeutic agents, making it a potential adjuvant therapy for cancer treatment. Although 18 β -GA and its derivatives have shown potential as anti-tumor agents, further studies are needed to fully understand their mechanisms of action and to optimize their pharmacological properties for clinical applications.

Antibacterial activity

The emergence and spread of drug-resistant bacteria pose a significant threat to global health. Conventional antibiotics are often rendered ineffective against these resistant strains, leading to prolonged and complicated treatment regimens, as well as increased morbidity and mortality rates. Consequently, there is a critical need to identify novel antibiotics that can effectively target and eliminate these drug-resistant bacteria.¹⁰² Researchers have turned their attention to natural compounds as potential sources of new antibiotics. Natural compounds have long been recognized for their diverse chemical structures

Table 3 Chemical structure and antibacterial activity of glycyrrhethinic acid and its derivatives 155–223

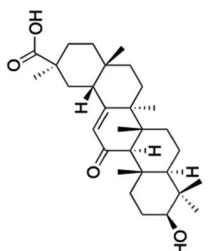
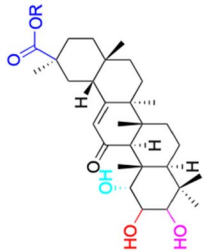
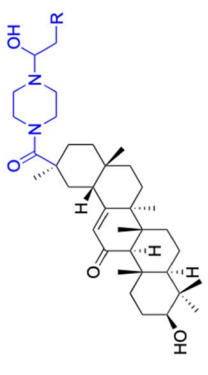
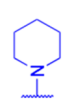
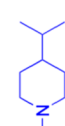
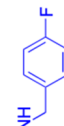
Compounds	18 β -GA	157–163	164–166
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	<p><i>Bacillus subtilis</i>: MIC = 7.6 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>Staphylococcus</i>: MIC = 12.5 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>A. actinomycetemcomitans</i>: MIC = 8 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>E. corrodens</i>: MIC = 16 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>C. sputigena</i>: MIC = 8 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>Edwardsiella ictaluri</i>: MIC > 470.7 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>H. pylori</i>: MIC = 20.8 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>P. aeruginosa</i>: MIC = 160 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>P. gingivalis</i> ATCC 33277: MIC = 64 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. gordonii</i>: MIC = 64 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>N. gonorrhoeae</i>: MIC = 3.9–62.5 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p>	<p>157: R = CH_2CH_3</p> <p><i>B. subtilis</i>: MIC = 16.9 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. scabies</i>: MIC = 2.1 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. aureus</i>: MIC = 4.2 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>MRSA: MIC = 4.0 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>158: R = $(\text{CH}_2)_2\text{CH}_3$</p> <p><i>B. subtilis</i>: MIC = >34.8 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. scabies</i>: MIC = 4.3 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. aureus</i>: MIC = 4.3 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>MRSA: MIC = 2.0 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>159: R = $(\text{CH}_2)_3\text{CH}_3$</p> <p><i>B. subtilis</i>: MIC = >34.8 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. scabies</i>: MIC = 4.3 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. aureus</i>: MIC = 4.3 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>MRSA: MIC = 2.0 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>160: R = CH_3</p> <p><i>B. subtilis</i>: MIC = 4.0 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. scabies</i>: MIC = 1.0 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. aureus</i>: MIC = 2.0 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>161: R = CH_2CH_3</p> <p><i>B. subtilis</i>: MIC = 2.0 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. scabies</i>: MIC = 4.1 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. aureus</i>: MIC = 1.0 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>MRSA: MIC = 1.0 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>162: R = $\text{CH}(\text{CH}_3)_2$</p> <p><i>B. subtilis</i>: MIC = >33.9 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. scabies</i>: MIC = 4.2 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. aureus</i>: MIC = 8.4 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>MRSA: MIC = 2.0 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>163: R = $(\text{CH}_2)_3\text{CH}_3$</p> <p><i>B. subtilis</i>: MIC = >34.8 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. scabies</i>: MIC = 4.3 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p><i>S. aureus</i>: MIC = >34.8 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>MRSA: MIC = >32.0 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p>	<p>164: R = </p> <p>Xoo: EC_{50} = 2.28 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>Xac: EC_{50} = 1.42 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>165: R = </p> <p>Xoo: EC_{50} = 3.57 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>Xac: EC_{50} = 0.93 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>166: R = </p> <p>Xoo: EC_{50} = 2.63 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>Xac: EC_{50} = 2.31 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p>



Table 3 (Contd.)

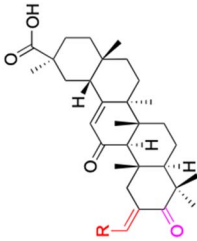
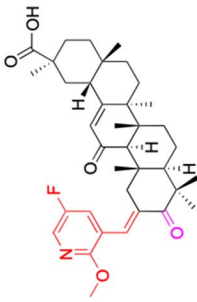




Reference Compounds	104, 105, 107, 110, 111, 113 and 125 167–171	117	118 172
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	<p>167: R = </p> <p><i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 6538): MIC = 54.88 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 29213): MIC = 6.86 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus epidermidis</i> (ATCC 12228): MIC = 27.44 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>168: R =</p> <p><i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 6538): MIC = 3.39 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 29213): MIC = 6.79 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus epidermidis</i> (ATCC 12228): MIC = 3.39 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>169: R = </p> <p><i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 6538): MIC = 2.72 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 29213): MIC = 2.72 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus epidermidis</i> (ATCC 12228): MIC = 2.72 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>170: R = </p> <p><i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 6538): MIC = 6.83 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 29213): MIC = 13.67 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus epidermidis</i> (ATCC 12228): MIC = 6.83 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p> <p>171: R = </p> <p><i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 6538): MIC = 27.34 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 29213): MIC = 54.68 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus epidermidis</i> (ATCC 12228): MIC = 27.34 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$</p>	<p>172:</p> <p><i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 6538):</p> <p>MIC = 6.25 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> subsp. <i>aureus</i> (ATCC 29213): MIC = 6.25 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus epidermidis</i> (ATCC 12228):</p> <p>MIC = 6.25 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$</p>	



Table 3 (Contd.)

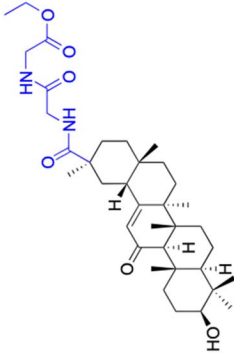
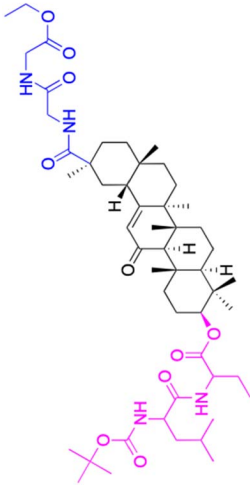
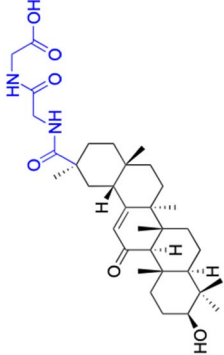
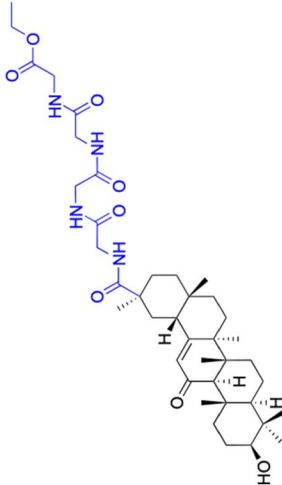
Reference Compounds	43 173	123 174
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms	<p>173: <i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i> RCMB 010010: Diameter of inhibition zone = 15 mm <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> ATCC25923: Diameter of inhibition zone = 15 mm <i>Micrococcus luteus</i>: Diameter of inhibition zone = 30 mm <i>Escherichia coli</i> ATCC25922: Diameter of inhibition zone = 20 mm <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> ATCC7853: Diameter of inhibition zone = 18 mm</p>	<p>174: <i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i> RCMB 010010: Diameter of inhibition zone = 12 mm <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> ATCC25923: Diameter of inhibition zone = 17 mm <i>Micrococcus luteus</i>: Diameter of inhibition zone = 30 mm <i>Escherichia coli</i> ATCC25922: Diameter of inhibition zone = 18 mm <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> ATCC7853: Diameter of inhibition zone = 15 mm</p>
Reference Compounds	79 175	79 176
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms	<p>175: <i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i> RCMB 010010: Diameter of inhibition zone = 17 mm <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> ATCC25923: Diameter of inhibition zone = 17 mm <i>Micrococcus luteus</i>: Diameter of inhibition zone = 30 mm <i>Escherichia coli</i> ATCC25922: Diameter of inhibition zone = 16 mm <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> ATCC7853: Diameter of inhibition zone = 15 mm</p>	<p>176: <i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i> RCMB 010010: Diameter of inhibition zone = 11 mm <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> ATCC25923: Diameter of inhibition zone = 10 mm <i>Micrococcus luteus</i>: Diameter of inhibition zone = 29 mm <i>Escherichia coli</i> ATCC25922: Diameter of inhibition zone = 13 mm <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> ATCC7853: Diameter of inhibition zone = 13 mm</p>

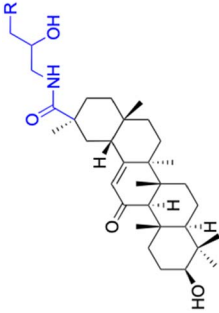
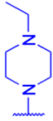



Table 3 (Contd.)

Reference Compounds	<p><i>Proteus vulgaris</i> RCMB 010085: Diameter of inhibition zone = 17 mm</p> <p><i>Candida albicans</i>: Diameter of inhibition zone = 12 mm</p> <p>119 177</p>	<p><i>Proteus vulgaris</i> RCMB 010085: Diameter of inhibition zone = 12 mm</p> <p><i>Candida albicans</i>: Diameter of inhibition zone = 15 mm</p> <p>124 178</p>
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms	<p>177: Xoo: EC₅₀ = 5.89 μg mL⁻¹ Psa: EC₅₀ = 16.1 μg mL⁻¹ Xac: EC₅₀ = 3.64 μg mL⁻¹</p> <p>119 179–184</p>	<p>178: Xoo: EC₅₀ = 36.5 μg mL⁻¹ Psa: EC₅₀ = 114 μg mL⁻¹ Xac: EC₅₀ = 29.1 μg mL⁻¹</p> <p>119 185–187</p>
Reference Compounds	<p>119 179–184</p>	<p>119 185–187</p>
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms	<p>179: R = Bn</p> <p><i>Theilertia annulata</i> (T339): GI₅₀ = 7.431 μmol L⁻¹ <i>Theilertia annulata</i> (T5815): GI₅₀ = 7.595 μmol L⁻¹</p> <p>180: R = CH₂CH₃ <i>Theilertia annulata</i> (T339): GI₅₀ = 5.638 μmol L⁻¹ <i>Theilertia annulata</i> (T5815): GI₅₀ = 7.557 μmol L⁻¹</p> <p>181: R = CH₃ <i>Theilertia annulata</i> (T5815): GI₅₀ = 5.977 μmol L⁻¹</p> <p>182: <i>Theilertia annulata</i> (T5815): GI₅₀ = 5.977 μmol L⁻¹</p>	<p>185: R =</p> <p>Xoo: EC₅₀ = 4.69 μg mL⁻¹, Xac: EC₅₀ = 6.29 μg mL⁻¹</p> <p>186: R =</p> <p>Xoo: EC₅₀ = 3.64 μg mL⁻¹, Xac: EC₅₀ = 20.5 μg mL⁻¹</p> <p>187: R =</p> <p>Xoo: EC₅₀ = 5.56 μg mL⁻¹, Xac: EC₅₀ = 8.83 μg mL⁻¹</p>



Table 3 (Contd.)

	R = CH ₂ CH ₂ CH ₃ <i>Theileria annulata</i> (T339): GI ₅₀ = 5.549 μmol L ⁻¹ <i>Theileria annulata</i> (T5815): GI ₅₀ = 3.55 μmol L ⁻¹		
	183: R = CH(CH ₃) ₂ <i>Theileria annulata</i> (T339): GI ₅₀ = 1.638 μmol L ⁻¹ <i>Theileria annulata</i> (T5815): GI ₅₀ = 1.499 μmol L ⁻¹		
Reference Compounds	R = (CH ₂) ₅ CH ₃ <i>Theileria annulata</i> (T5815): GI ₅₀ = 9.946 μmol L ⁻¹ 124 188–189		
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	188: R = Xoo: EC ₅₀ = 10.2 μg mL ⁻¹ Xac: EC ₅₀ = 4.16 μg mL ⁻¹	189: R = Xoo: EC ₅₀ = 10.9 μg mL ⁻¹ Xac: EC ₅₀ = 5.16 μg mL ⁻¹	190: R = 5-fluoro-2-nitro-benzene <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 6538): MIC = 10 μmol L ⁻¹ <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 29213): MIC = 10 μmol L ⁻¹ <i>Staphylococcus epidermidis</i> (ATCC 12228): MIC = 10 μmol L ⁻¹ MRSA: MIC = 16 μmol L ⁻¹ 191: R = 4-chloro-2-nitro-benzene <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 6538): MIC = 10 μmol L ⁻¹ <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 29213): MIC = 5 μmol L ⁻¹ <i>Staphylococcus epidermidis</i> (ATCC 12228): MIC = 5 μmol L ⁻¹ MRSA: MIC = 8 μmol L ⁻¹ 192: R = 4-methoxy-2-nitro-benzene <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 6538): MIC = 5 μmol L ⁻¹ <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 29213): MIC = 5 μmol L ⁻¹ <i>Staphylococcus epidermidis</i> (ATCC 12228): MIC = 5 μmol L ⁻¹ MRSA: MIC = 4 μmol L ⁻¹ 193: R = 5-bromo-2-nitro-benzene <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 6538): MIC = 2.5 μmol L ⁻¹ <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 29213): MIC = 2.5 μmol L ⁻¹

120

190–195

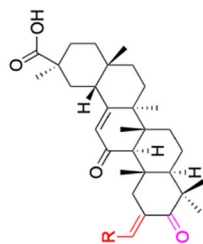
**190:** R = 5-fluoro-2-nitro-benzene*Staphylococcus aureus* (ATCC 6538): MIC = 10 μmol L⁻¹*Staphylococcus aureus* (ATCC 29213): MIC = 10 μmol L⁻¹*Staphylococcus epidermidis* (ATCC 12228): MIC = 10 μmol L⁻¹
MRSA: MIC = 16 μmol L⁻¹**191:** R = 4-chloro-2-nitro-benzene*Staphylococcus aureus* (ATCC 6538): MIC = 10 μmol L⁻¹*Staphylococcus aureus* (ATCC 29213): MIC = 5 μmol L⁻¹*Staphylococcus epidermidis* (ATCC 12228): MIC = 5 μmol L⁻¹
MRSA: MIC = 8 μmol L⁻¹**192:** R = 4-methoxy-2-nitro-benzene*Staphylococcus aureus* (ATCC 6538): MIC = 5 μmol L⁻¹*Staphylococcus aureus* (ATCC 29213): MIC = 5 μmol L⁻¹*Staphylococcus epidermidis* (ATCC 12228): MIC = 5 μmol L⁻¹
MRSA: MIC = 4 μmol L⁻¹**193:** R = 5-bromo-2-nitro-benzene*Staphylococcus aureus* (ATCC 6538): MIC = 2.5 μmol L⁻¹*Staphylococcus aureus* (ATCC 29213): MIC = 2.5 μmol L⁻¹

Table 3 (Contd.)

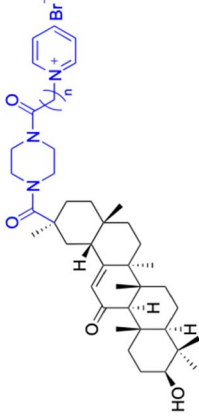
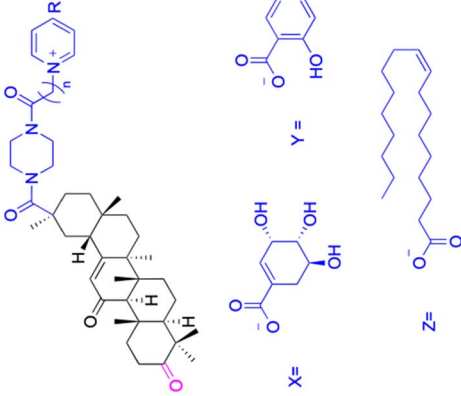
		<p><i>Staphylococcus epidermidis</i> (ATCC 12228): MIC = 2.5 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$ MRSA: MIC = 16 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$ 194: R = 4-bromo-2-nitro-benzene <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 6538): MIC = 12.5 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 29213): MIC = 12.5 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus epidermidis</i> (ATCC 12228): MIC = 12.5 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$ MRSA: MIC = 16 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$ 195: R = 4-fluoro-2-nitro-benzene <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 6538): MIC = 5 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> (ATCC 29213): MIC = 5 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$ <i>Staphylococcus epidermidis</i> (ATCC 12228): MIC = 5 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$ MRSA: MIC = 8 $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$</p>
Reference	120	
Compounds	196–201	
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms	196: $n = 5$ Xoo: EC ₅₀ = 8.57 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$, Xac: EC ₅₀ = 7.67 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ 195: $n = 6$ Xoo: EC ₅₀ = 5.24 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$, Xac: EC ₅₀ = 9.55 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ 197: $n = 7$ Xoo: EC ₅₀ = 5.06 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$, Xac: EC ₅₀ = 8.16 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ 198: $n = 5$; R = Br ⁻ Xoo: EC ₅₀ = 9.47 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$, Xac: EC ₅₀ = 11.8 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ 203: $n = 6$; R = Br ⁻ Xoo: EC ₅₀ = 9.18 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$, Xac: EC ₅₀ = 34.5 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ 204: $n = 7$; R = Br ⁻ Xoo: EC ₅₀ = 7.12 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$, Xac: EC ₅₀ = 9.53 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ 205:	

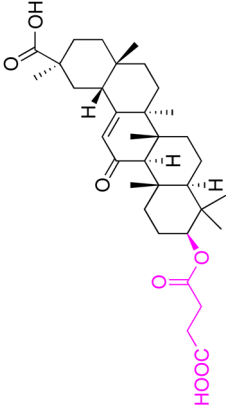


Table 3 (Contd.)

$n = 8$	$n = 8; R = Br^-$
Xoo: $EC_{50} = 3.54 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 10.3 \mu g mL^{-1}$	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 3.38 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 18.7 \mu g mL^{-1}$
199:	206:
$n = 9$	$n = 9; R = Br^-$
Xoo: $EC_{50} = 3.47 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 34.1 \mu g mL^{-1}$	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 2.29 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 25.6 \mu g mL^{-1}$
200:	207:
$n = 10$	$n = 10; R = Br^-$
Xoo: $EC_{50} = 6.60 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 17.4 \mu g mL^{-1}$	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 1.37 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 37.4 \mu g mL^{-1}$
	208:
	$n = 5; R = X$
	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 14.08 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 14.76 \mu g mL^{-1}$
	209:
	$n = 5; R = Y$
	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 19.53 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 6.8 \mu g mL^{-1}$
	210:
	$n = 5; R = Z$
	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 19.06 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 4.59 \mu g mL^{-1}$
	211:
	$n = 6; R = X$
	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 12.11 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 6.88 \mu g mL^{-1}$
	212:
	$n = 6; R = Y$
	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 12.9 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 25.03 \mu g mL^{-1}$
	213:
	$n = 6; R = Z$
	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 20.59 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 14.81 \mu g mL^{-1}$
	214:
	$n = 7; R = X$
	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 6.5 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 14.81 \mu g mL^{-1}$
	215:
	$n = 7; R = Y$
	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 6.17 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 11.69 \mu g mL^{-1}$
	216:
	$n = 7; R = Z$
	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 17.25 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 14.39 \mu g mL^{-1}$
	217:
	$n = 8; R = X$
	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 5.17 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 7.16 \mu g mL^{-1}$
	218:
	$n = 9; R = X$
	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 4.18 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 10.32 \mu g mL^{-1}$
	219:
	$n = 10; R = X$
	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 1.6 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 8.48 \mu g mL^{-1}$
	220:
	$n = 8; R = Y$
	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 4.93 \mu g mL^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 3.82 \mu g mL^{-1}$
	221:
	$n = 9; R = Y$



Table 3 (Contd.)

Reference Compounds	121 226	Xoo: $EC_{50} = 7.56 \mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 4.38 \mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ 222: $n = 10$; R = Y Xoo: $EC_{50} = 4.14 \mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 10.15 \mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ 223: $n = 8$; R = Z Xoo: $EC_{50} = 13.77 \mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 22.17 \mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ 224: $n = 9$; R = Z Xoo: $EC_{50} = 12.46 \mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 2.07 \mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ 225: $n = 10$; R = Z Xoo: $EC_{50} = 2.98 \mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$, Xac: $EC_{50} = 6.08 \mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$ 121
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms	226: MRSA SA5002: MIC = 16 mg L^{-1} MRSA SA5053: MIC = 16 mg L^{-1} MSSA SA5028: MIC = 16 mg L^{-1} 122	
Reference Abbreviations	Xoo: <i>Xanthomonas oryzae</i> pv. <i>oryzae</i> . Psa: <i>Pseudomonas syringae</i> pv. <i>actinidiae</i> . MRSA: methicillin-resistant <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>	



and biological activities. By studying and modifying these compounds, scientists hope to develop more potent and effective antibiotics. Among the natural compounds explored for their antibacterial properties, 18 β -GA and related compounds have shown promise. These compounds have exhibited antibacterial effects against various bacterial strains, suggesting their potential as therapeutic agents. Further investigations are underway to elucidate the mechanisms of action and optimize the activity of these compounds.¹⁰³

The antimicrobial properties of 18 β -GA, a compound extracted from the licorice plant, have been extensively studied by various researchers. Kim *et al.* discovered that 18 β -GA has the ability to disrupt bacterial cell membranes, leading to the eradication of these microorganisms. This finding has generated significant interest in the potential of 18 β -GA as a novel antibacterial agent.¹⁰⁴ Salari *et al.* further supported the antibacterial activity of 18 β -GA against periodontopathogenic and capnophilic bacteria, while another investigation found that this natural compound can inhibit the growth of *Helicobacter pylori*.^{105,106} In a comprehensive study, Schrader *et al.* explored the antibacterial properties of various natural plant compounds, including 18 β -GA and 18 α -GA, and evaluated their efficacy against common pathogens found in pond-cultured channel catfish.¹⁰⁷ It has been demonstrated that 18 β -GA can effectively combat antibiotic-resistant bacterial strains, such as methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), by inhibiting their survival and virulence gene expression.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, this compound has shown potential in preventing the growth and formation of supragingival plaque bacteria and treating *H. pylori* infections.^{109,110} In the fight against opportunistic nosocomial *P. aeruginosa*, 18 β -GA has proven to be a valuable ally.¹¹¹ Additionally, 18 β -GA has been investigated for its ability to enhance the activity of tobramycin and polymyxin B against MRSA.¹¹² In the quest to combat opportunistic nosocomial *P. aeruginosa*, 18 β -GA has been found to be a valuable ally.¹¹³ Moreover, 18 β -GA has been used in combination with nanoparticles and hydrogels to combat bacterial infections. Darvishi *et al.* developed and evaluated the antibacterial activity of 18 β -GA-loaded PL18 β -GA nanoparticles, which demonstrated significant antibacterial activity against both Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria.¹¹⁴ Similarly, Zhao *et al.* engineered an injectable moldable hydrogel assembled from natural glycyrrhizic acid, which exhibited remarkable antibacterial activity against both types of bacteria.¹¹⁵ Recently, the remarkable antibacterial capabilities of 18 β -GA derivatives have come to light. These derivatives have shown promising inhibitory effects against various bacterial strains, making them potential candidates for combating bacterial infections.¹¹⁶ In this review, our objective is to classify and elucidate the antibacterial activities of different 18 β -GA derivatives against specific bacterial species. 18 β -GA and its derivatives, as shown in Table 3, have demonstrated significant potential in inhibiting pathogens.

Compounds 157–163 have emerged as potent inhibitors of *Streptomyces scabies*, a notorious plant pathogen. These derivatives have exhibited remarkable inhibitory activity, suggesting their potential application in managing plant bacterial

diseases.¹¹⁷ Compound 161 has demonstrated superior inhibitory activity against *Bacillus subtilis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, and MRSA compared to conventional antibiotics such as ampicillin, streptomycin, and vancomycin. This finding highlights the potential of 18 β -GA derivatives as effective alternatives for combating drug-resistant bacterial strains.

Furthermore, compounds 164–166, compounds 177–178, compounds 183–187, and compounds 196–225 have displayed robust inhibitory activity against *Xanthomonas oryzae* pv. *oryzae* (Xoo) and *X. axonopodis* pv. *citri* (Xac).^{118–121} Xiang *et al.* particularly emphasized the potency of compounds 164 and 165. *In vivo* trials have further confirmed the potential of these compounds in managing rice bacterial blight disease, with control efficacy ranging between 50.57% and 53.70% at 200 $\mu\text{g mL}^{-1}$.¹¹⁸

Moreover, Yang *et al.* discovered that derivatives of 18 β -GA (compounds 167–176, 190–195, and 226) exhibit potent antibacterial activity against *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Staphylococcus epidermidis*, and MRAS.^{43,122} Compound 172, as identified by Guo *et al.*, has demonstrated robust antibacterial properties and has been used to prepare supramolecular self-assembly hydrogels with exceptional thermodynamic stability and high melting temperatures.¹²³ Additionally, compounds 173–176 have exhibited high activity against various bacteria, particularly showing enhanced antibacterial effects against *Micrococcus luteus* compared to gentamicins.⁷⁹

Tropical bovine theileriosis (TBT) is one of the progressive and lymphoproliferative tick-borne diseases caused by *Theileria annulata*. Buvanavaragurunathan *et al.* investigated the effect of 18 β -GA esters (compounds 179–184) on the growth of *Theileria annulata* and found that they induced apoptosis in parasite cells. Among these esters, the isopropyl ester of 18 β -GA (compound 183) showed improved anti-theileriosis efficacy than other 18 β -GA derivatives.¹²⁴

In conclusion, the rise of drug-resistant bacteria necessitates the discovery of novel antibiotics that can effectively combat these resilient strains mentioned above. Natural compounds, such as 18 β -GA and its derivatives, offer a promising avenue for antibiotic development. Future research efforts should focus on understanding the mode of action of these compounds and optimizing their efficacy against drug-resistant bacteria.

Antiviral activity

Over the past two decades, the potencies have been extensively investigated for pentacyclic triterpenoids, such as asiatic acid, betulinic acid, boswellic acid, glycyrrhizin, 18 β -GA, lupeol, oleanolic acid, and ursolic acid, and their analogs and derivatives, as potent antitumor and antiviral agents. These triterpenoids have displayed remarkable cytotoxic activity against various tumor cell lines and exhibit antiviral properties, in particular, anti-HIV activity.¹²⁶ The main active constituents of licorice are triterpenoids, which have shown inhibitory effects on several viruses, including SARS-CoV-2.¹²⁷ It has been revealed that these compounds achieve their antiviral effects through various mechanisms such as inhibiting virus replication, directly inactivating viruses, halting inflammation mediated by HMGB1/TLR4, preventing β -chemokines, reducing the binding



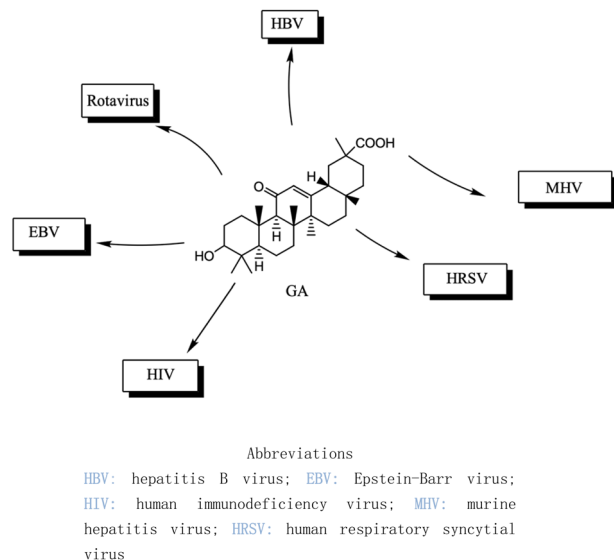


Fig. 5 The effect of 18β-GA on antiviral.

of HMGB1 to DNA to weaken virus activity, and inhibiting reactive oxygen species formation.^{128,129} While these natural products offer great potential as anti-viral and anti-microbial agents, they comprise complex mixtures of organic molecules, making it difficult to determine their exact effectiveness. Hence, further research is required to gain an intricate understanding of their mechanisms of action and their potential for use as food or herbal medicine. Additionally, it is vital to carefully consider the pleiotropic effects of these compounds to avoid potential negative consequences.

Several studies have shown that 18β-GA inhibit several viruses (Fig. 5), for example, Sato *et al.* reported that 18β-GA inhibits *hepatitis B virus* (HBV) by suppressing surface antigens,¹³⁰ while Hardy *et al.* showed that 18β-GA exhibits significant antiviral activity against rotavirus replication *in vitro*.¹³¹ Other investigations demonstrated that 18β-GA inhibited rotavirus SA11 *via* the Fas/FasL pathway, inhibits *Epstein-Barr virus* (EBV) in superinfected Raji cells, showed significant antiviral activity against human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), inhibits infection of *human respiratory syncytial virus* (HRSV), and significantly protects against *murine hepatitis virus* (MHV)-induced severe hepatic injury by suppressing HMGB1 release.^{35,132–135}

In recent years, researchers have also worked on the antiviral properties of 18β-GA derivatives (Table 4). Baltina *et al.* synthesized a series of 18β-GA derivatives. They found that compounds 227–230 exert the most significant antiviral activity ($IC_{50} = 0.13 \mu\text{M}$) against ZIKV, with compound 227 demonstrating promising potential as an antiviral agent against ZIKV infection.¹³⁶ Similarly, Zigolo *et al.* reported that compound 231 exhibited significant antiviral activity against TK+ and TK- strains of *herpes simplex virus type 1* (HSV-1).¹³⁷ Liang *et al.* found that water-soluble β-cyclodextrin-18β-GA (compounds 232–237) showed promising antiviral activity against the influenza A/WSN/33 (H1N1) virus.^{138,139} More recently, Ding *et al.*

suggested that 18β-GA and its derivatives (compounds 238–241) could alleviate the symptoms of COVID-19 patients.¹⁴⁰ Additionally, Wang *et al.* synthesized several compounds and observed that compounds 242–243 exhibited significant inhibitory activities against HBV DNA replication.⁷³ These findings highlight the potential of 18β-GA and its derivatives as potent antiviral agents with remarkable antiviral activity against numerous viral infections.

In summary, the research on pentacyclic triterpenoids, including 18β-GA and its derivatives, suggests their immense potential as effective and safe antiviral agents. These compounds have demonstrated varying degrees of antiviral activity against numerous viral infections, making them a promising area of ongoing research. However, further studies are necessary to comprehensively investigate their mechanisms of action and how they can be effectively used as food or herbal medicine while considering the possible negative consequences of their pleiotropic effects.

Antioxidant activity

18β-GA has been found to exhibit significant antioxidant activity, which makes it of great interest in the research of antioxidants. Alanazi *et al.* found that the serum concentrations of final glucose, aspartate aminotransferase (AST), alanine aminotransferase (ALT), and alkaline phosphatase (ALP) in mice treated with 20 mg per kg acrylamide (Acr) increased to $131 \pm 12.2 \text{ mg dL}^{-1}$, $76.5 \pm 12.0 \mu\text{U}^{-1}$, $47.7 \pm 9.17 \mu\text{L}^{-1}$, and $82.5 \pm 10.3 \mu\text{L}^{-1}$, which is much higher than the normal concentrations (serum final glucose, AST, ALT, and alkaline ALP concentrations of $87.7 \pm 5.93 \text{ mg dL}^{-1}$, $21.1 \pm 2.60 \mu\text{U}^{-1}$, $10.7 \pm 1.16 \mu\text{L}^{-1}$, and $24.1 \pm 3.97 \mu\text{L}^{-1}$), respectively, compared to these serums in the 18β-GA-Acr (50 mg per kg 18β-GA) group. The biochemical variables of rats return to normal. The findings provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that 18β-GA possesses the capability to suppress the production of oxygen species and reinstate the antioxidant mechanisms in diabetic rats afflicted with acrylamide-induced liver and kidney cytotoxicity.¹⁴¹ Similarly, Melekoglu *et al.* discovered that the antioxidant defense system parameters, encompassing malondialdehyde (MDA), reduced glutathione (GSH), superoxide dismutase (SOD), and catalase (CAT), were significantly higher in the ovarian tissues of rats treated with 18β-GA ($100 \text{ mg kg}^{-1} \text{ day}^{-1}$) compared to those subjected to ischemia-reperfusion (I/R) alone.¹⁴² These findings suggest that 18β-GA may have protective effects against oxidative stress in a variety of tissues and systems. In addition to its potential antioxidant properties, recent research has also explored the potential therapeutic applications of 18β-GA in the context of viral infections. For example, Rehman *et al.* found that 18β-GA exhibited a solid binding affinity for several SARS-CoV-2 protein targets, including main protease (binding energy = $-9.46 \text{ kcal mol}^{-1}$), helicase (binding energy = $-9.91 \text{ kcal mol}^{-1}$), spike glycoprotein (S) (binding energy = $-8.08 \text{ kcal mol}^{-1}$), and E-channel proteins (binding energy = $-9.72 \text{ kcal mol}^{-1}$), through ligand-protein interactions. This





Table 4 Chemical structure and antiviral activity of 230–246

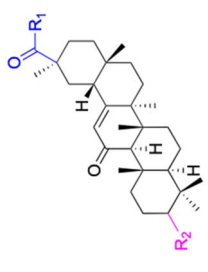
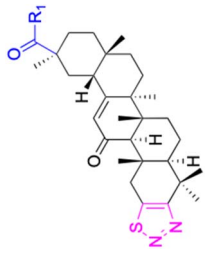
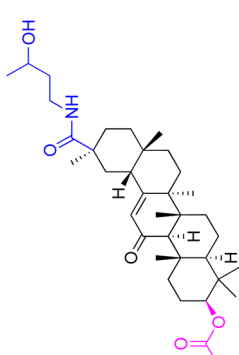
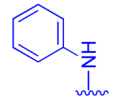
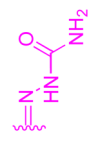
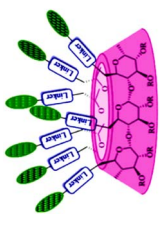
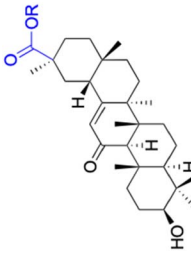
Compounds	227–228	229–230	231
Structure			
Effects or mechanisms	<p>227: R₂ = OAc</p> <p>R₂ =</p>  <p>ZIKA virus: CC₅₀ > 50 μM IC₅₀ = 0.13 μM, CC₅₀/IC₅₀ > 384</p> <p>228: R₂ =</p>  <p>R₁ = COOBu ZIKA virus: CC₅₀ > 50 μM IC₅₀ = 0.56 μM, CC₅₀/IC₅₀ > 90.9</p>	<p>229: R₁ = COOBu</p> <p>ZIKA virus: CC₅₀ > 50 μM, IC₅₀ = 0.29 μM, CC₅₀/IC₅₀ > 172.4</p> <p>230: R₁ = COOCH₃ ZIKA virus: CC₅₀ > 50 μM, IC₅₀ = 0.56 μM CC₅₀/IC₅₀ > 89.3</p>	<p>231: HSV-1 virus: CC₅₀ = 190.2 μM, EC₅₀ = 4.95 μM, CC₅₀/EC₅₀ = 38.38</p>
Reference Compounds	136 232–237	136 238–241	137
Structure			

Table 4 (Contd.)

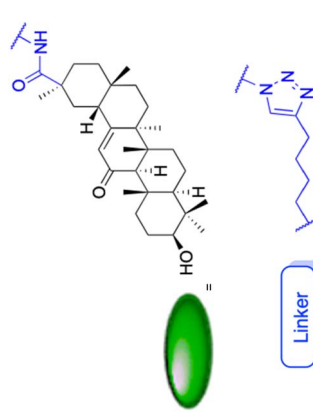
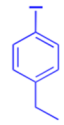
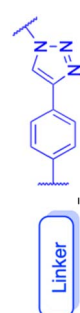
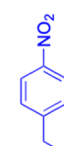
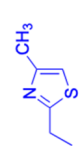
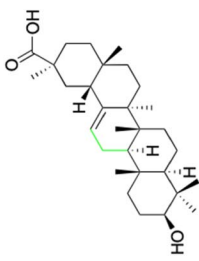
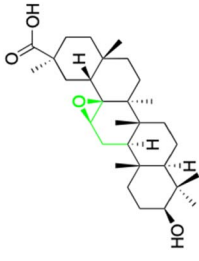
		
	232:	238:
	R = Ac	R = 
	Influenza A/WSN/33 (H1N1) virus: IC ₅₀ = 12.1 μM, CC ₅₀ > 100 μM, SI > 8.3	HBV: CC ₅₀ > 985.68 μM, IC ₅₀ = 5.71 μM, SI > 172.6
	233:	239:
	R = H	R = 
	Influenza A/WSN/33 (H1N1) virus: IC ₅₀ = 9.03 μM, CC ₅₀ > 100 μM, SI > 11.1	HBV: CC ₅₀ > 1373.13 μM, IC ₅₀ = 5.36 μM, SI > 255.9
	234:	240:
Effects or mechanisms	R = Ac	R = 
	Influenza A/WSN/33 (H1N1) virus: IC ₅₀ = 20.7 μM, CC ₅₀ > 100 μM, SI > 4.8	HBV: CC ₅₀ > 1327.92 μM, IC ₅₀ : 8.90 μM, SI > 149.2
	235:	241:
	R = H	R = 
	Influenza A/WSN/33 (H1N1) virus: IC ₅₀ = 11.0 μM, CC ₅₀ > 100 μM, SI > 9.1	HBV: CC ₅₀ = 37.17 μM, IC ₅₀ = 9.08 μM, SI = 4.1
	236:	
	R = Ac	
	Influenza A/WSN/33 (H1N1) virus: IC ₅₀ = 20.7 μM, CC ₅₀ > 100 μM, SI > 4.8	
	237:	
	R = H	
	Influenza A/WSN/33 (H1N1) virus: IC ₅₀ = 11.0 μM, CC ₅₀ > 100 μM, SI > 9.1	



Table 4 (Contd.)

Reference Compounds	138 and 139 242		243: HBV: CC ₅₀ = 161.68 μM IC ₅₀ = 47.00 μM SI = 3.4	73
Reference Compounds	140 243		243: HBV: CC ₅₀ = 35.71 μM IC ₅₀ = 18.37 μM SI = 1.9	73

finding suggests that 18β-GA may have the potential as a therapeutic agent in the fight against COVID-19.¹⁴³

We have discovered that a significant number of studies on the antioxidant properties of 18β-GA focus on its hepatoprotective function. In the mouse model of carbon tetrachloride (CCl₄)-induced chronic liver fibrosis, it was observed that CCl₄ inhibited the expression of Nrf2 regulatory genes, including CAT, glutathione peroxidase 2 (GPX2), and superoxide dismutase 3 (SOD3). However, 18β-GA was found to protect the mouse liver from oxidative stress by potentially activating the nuclear trans of Nrf2, enhancing the expression of its target genes, and increasing the activity of antioxidant enzymes.³⁷ Furthermore, 18β-GA was also found to have the ability to inhibit the activity of xanthine oxidase (XO) significantly. XO is responsible for reducing O₂ to superoxide anionic radical O₂⁻, leading to oxidative stress.¹⁴⁴ In a mouse model of methotrexate (MTX)-induced liver injury, Mahmoud *et al.* discovered that 18β-GA was able to reverse the significant manifestations of Nrf2, hemoxygenase-1, and PPARγ induced by MTX, thus restoring antioxidant defense.³⁸ Another study demonstrated that 18β-GA significantly reduced alpha-naphthylisothiocyanate (ANIT)-induced liver damage primarily by increasing the expression of nuclear factors (such as Sirt1, FXR, and Nrf2) and their targeted excretion transporters in the liver, which play a crucial role in maintaining bile acidosis in hepatocytes. The plasma levels of ALT, AST, ALP, γ-glutamyl transpeptidase (GGT), and total bilirubin (TBIL) were significantly elevated by 31.2-, 33.4-, 5.1-, 5.0-, and 91.3-fold, respectively, in rats induced with ANIT ($P < 0.0001$). However, for 18β-GA (60 mg kg⁻¹ for 7 days treatment), all of these levels showed a significant reduction of 62.0%, 38.5%, 45.7%, 51.6%, and 39.7%, respectively ($P < 0.05$).¹⁴⁵ Moreover, the study also revealed that 18β-GA exerts its hepatoprotective effects against RTS-induced liver damage through the phosphatidylinositol 3-kinase (PI3K)/protein kinase B (AKT) pathway and enhanced glycogen synthase kinase 3 beta (GSK3β) pathway, which promotes the Nrf2-mediated antioxidant system.¹⁴⁶ Fig. 6 briefly illustrates the hepatoprotective effect of 18β-GA based on anti-inflammatory and antioxidant mechanisms. Additionally, other hepatoprotective mechanisms are also discussed, such as the inhibition of the TLR/NF-κB pathway and upregulation of hepatic FXR to facilitate bile acid synthesis, transport, and detoxification, competitive inhibition of cyto P450 (CYP) enzymes responsible for the activation of pyrrolizidine alkaloid (PA) metabolism, particularly C3A1, which protects against liver damage, activation of PXR to regulate autophagy and lysosomal biogenesis, thereby alleviating acute liver injury, inhibition of hepatic stellate cell activation, and direct transcriptional inhibition of α2 (I) collagen gene (COL1A2), as observed in transgenic reporter mice, and other mechanisms.^{147–150}

18β-GA derivatives (Table 5) also demonstrated significant antioxidant activity. It was discovered that compounds 244–247 exhibited robust antioxidant activity and inhibited ROS activity by up to 41%.¹⁵¹ Maitraie *et al.* observed that compounds 249–258 displayed both anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, with compound 254 specifically exerting inhibitory effects on NO and superoxide anions in RAW 246.7 cells.¹⁵² Moreover,





Fig. 6 Mechanism of hepatoprotective effect of glycyrrhetic acid.

Zhang *et al.* found that compounds 259–263 hindered the proliferation of activated hepatic stellate cells (HSC)-T6 cells by inducing apoptosis and arresting them in the G0/G1 phase. They used rat hepatic stellate cell line T6 cells activated by transforming growth factor- β -1 as the cell model and as the 18 β -GA control. The IC₅₀ value of the compound on cell proliferation was determined by tetrazolium salt colorimetry. It was found that the inhibitory effect of compounds 259–263 on activated HSC-T6 was stronger than that of GA (IC₅₀ = 78.4 \pm 2.3 μ M).¹⁵³ Numerous studies have demonstrated a strong association between COX-2 and the activation of hepatic stellate cells (HSCs), thereby facilitating the initiation and progression of hepatic fibrosis. Among them, compounds 262 and 265 strongly inhibit the activation of HSC-T6 cells by downregulating the expression of alpha-smooth muscle actin (α -SMA) and type I collagen (Col1) proteins, which are biomarkers of liver fibrosis. After treatment with compound activated HSC-T6, the expression levels of the two biomarkers were down-regulated. Second, both compounds downregulated the expression levels of COX-2 and transforming growth factor beta1 (TGF- β ₁) and reduced ROS levels in a concentration-dependent manner. This suggests that they inhibit HSC-T6 activation and may also be due to downregulation of COX-2 levels, inhibition of the TGF- β ₁ signaling pathway, and reduction of ROS levels.

Overall, while the study of oxidative stress and its effects on the body is complex, recent research has shed light on the

potential benefits of compounds like 18 β -GA in combatting this process. By exploring the mechanisms of these compounds and their effects on various tissues and systems, we can better understand how to combat oxidative stress and its associated health risks.

Discussion

Experience has imparted the understanding that when a compound manifests a biological activity characterized by an IC₅₀ value lower than 10 μ M, it may be classified as potential biological efficacy. Additionally, in the process of scrutinizing lead and candidate compounds, it is importance to consider both cost-effectiveness and the intricacy of synthetic routes. Keeping these pivotal factors in consideration, the investigation unveiled that compounds 16–21 exhibited noteworthy inhibitory activities against 11 β -HSD2 within the sub-micromolar (nM) range. Particularly remarkable is compound 16, which boasts an exceptionally modest synthetic complexity, necessitating a single-step reaction initiated from 18 β -GA. The incorporation of amide and hydroxyl groups at the C-30 position has substantially augmented the solubility of 18 β -GA. Compounds of this kind exhibit tremendous promise for further in-depth exploration. Moreover, numerous studies have demonstrated that the majority of structural alterations to 18 β -GA revolve around rigid five-ring skeleton structure, encompassing the

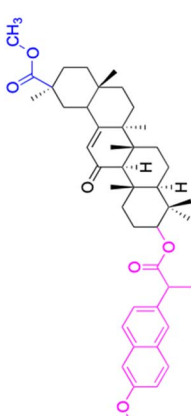
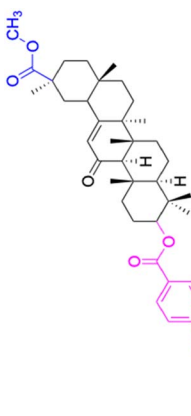
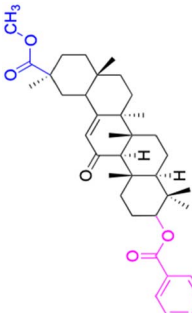
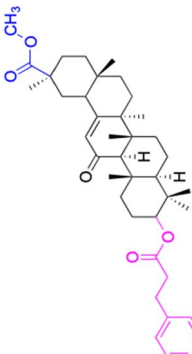
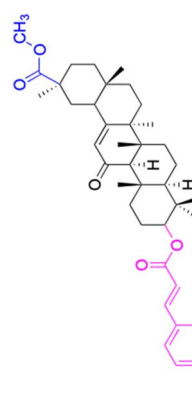




Table 5 Chemical structure and antioxidant activity of derivatives 247–266

Compounds	244	245	246	247
Structure				
Effects or mechanisms	244: ROS: Inhibition of 50% activity (1.0 mg mL ⁻¹)	245: ROS: Inhibition of 51% activity (1.0 mg mL ⁻¹)	246: ROS: Inhibition of 44% activity (1.0 mg mL ⁻¹)	247: ROS: Inhibition of 41% activity (1.0 mg mL ⁻¹)
Reference Compounds	151 248	151 249–258	151	151
Structure				
Effects or mechanisms	248: R = CH ₃ PMA: IC ₅₀ = 12.9 μM	249: R ₁ = H, R ₂ = H fMPL/CB: IC ₅₀ = 7.0 μM 250: R ₁ = CH ₃ , R ₂ = H RAW 264.7 (B): IC ₅₀ = 26.1 μM 251: R ₁ = CH ₃ , R ₂ = CH ₃ RAW 264.7 (A): IC ₅₀ = 44.3 μM 252: R ₁ = CH ₃ , R ₂ = CH(CH ₃) ₂ RAW 264.7 (A): IC ₅₀ = 43.0 μM 253: R ₁ = CH ₃ , R ₂ = Bn PMA: IC ₅₀ = 17.0 ± 1.5 μM RAW 264.7 (A): IC ₅₀ = 44.5 μM RAW 264.7 (B): IC ₅₀ = 13.7 μM 254: R ₁ = CH ₃ , R ₂ = CH(CH ₃) ₂ PMA: IC ₅₀ = 15.6 μM RAW 264.7 (A): IC ₅₀ = 13.1 μM 255: R ₁ = CH ₃ , R ₂ = C ₆ H ₅ RAW 264.7 (B): IC ₅₀ = 15.5 μM 256: R ₁ = H, R ₂ = Bn RAW 264.7 (B): IC ₅₀ = 2.3 μM 257: R ₁ = H, R ₂ = CH(CH ₃) ₂ fMPL/CB: IC ₅₀ = 9.8 μM 258: R ₁ = H, R ₂ = C ₆ H ₅ RAW 264.7 (B): IC ₅₀ = 27.7 μM		

Table 5 (Contd.)

Reference Compounds	152 259	152 260
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms Reference Compounds	259: HSC-T6*: IC ₅₀ = 17.6 μM 153 261	260: HSC-T6*: IC ₅₀ = 63.8 μM 153 262
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms Reference Compounds	261: HSC-T6*: IC ₅₀ = 54.5 μM 153 263	262: HSC-T6*: IC ₅₀ = 30.3 μM 153
Structure		
Effects or mechanisms Reference Abbreviations	263: HSC-T6*: IC ₅₀ = 59.8 μM 153	ROS: reactive oxygen species. PMA: superoxide anion formation from neutrophils stimulated with PMA. fMLP/CB: superoxide anion formation from rat neutrophils stimulated with fMLP/CB. RAW 264.7 (A): the accumulation of NO ₂ in RAW 264.7 cells stimulated with LPS. RAW 264.7 (B): TNF-α formation from RAW 264.7 cells stimulated with LPS. HSC-T6*: HSCs activated by TGF-β1 (10 ng mL ⁻¹)



addition, removal, and replacement of functional groups. Comparatively, few studies explore the strategy, such as scaffold hopping and changes in the skeleton itself to the biological activity. Reports about compounds 38–41, 116–122, 227–230, and 248–259 have discernible indicated that brought about a substantial augmentation in the anti-tumor, antiviral, and antioxidant properties of 18 β -GA through the processes of ring opening and ring expansion. The modifications in 18 β -GA from the complexity of the derivative structure is mainly due to addition rather than subtraction. It may be connected with that there are few reaction methods for removing carbon atoms in the rigid alkyl skeleton.

It is particularly noteworthy that compounds 227–230 demonstrate an inhibitory activity against the ZIKA virus within the sub-micromolar (nM) range. Perhaps designing modifications that involve adding or reducing rings could provide excellent solutions for enhancing the target binding strength, selectivity, bioavailability, selective tissue distribution, and metabolic stability of 18 β -GA derivatives. However, further studies are necessary to comprehensively reveal their mechanisms or the target protein to further guide the modification of compounds. Moreover, 18 β -GA derivatives that self-assemble, including gels, micelles, nanoparticles, and liposomes, hold potential for application in food additives and intelligent drug delivery due to availability, biocompatibility, and controllable degradability.¹⁵⁴ Additionally, while the mainstream research direction focuses on the aforementioned topics, shifting the focus to other biologically active research areas such as anti-diabetes, anti-coagulation, and neuroprotection, could prove worthwhile, as the studies in these areas are still relatively scarce. This could further broaden the development prospects of 18 β -GA derivatives and increase their role in various fields.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the past decade has yielded promising research on the therapeutic potential of 18 β -GA and its derivatives for various diseases, including cancer, inflammation, bacterial infection, hepatic diseases, and viral infections. Pharmacological effects have been observed through a variety of pathways, including inflammation-related signaling, immune response modulation, and gene expression regulation. However, it is unfortunate that no derivatives have entered clinical trials (from <https://www.clinicaltrials.gov>) due to their poor pharmacological properties, low bioavailability, significant toxic side effects, and other factors.

The review of over 200 chemical structures and key activity data in this review article serves as a valuable data resource for pharmaceutical chemists and also provides future research directions. Future research, except self-assembling derivatives, as well as exploring other related fields should more focus on revealing the mechanisms of action or the target protein and the relationship with the SAR of derivatives and to further guide the structural modifications. With further research and optimization, 18 β -GA derivatives will address the above crucial issues that hold great promise as potential therapeutic agents for various diseases.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts to declare.

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