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The synthesis, antimicrobial activity and docking studies of 6-(1*H*-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-4(3*H*)-ones with acetamide and 1,2,4-oxadiazol-5-ylmethyl substituents

Aim. To synthesize, study the antimicrobial activity and suggest antimicrobial activity mechanism for the novel derivatives of 6-(1*H*-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-4(3*H*)-one.

Results and discussion. As the result of the targeted modification of 6-(1*H*-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-4(3*H*)-one in position 3 with acetamide and 1,2,4-oxadiazol-5-ylmethyl substituents, the compounds, which demonstrated better antimicrobial activity in the agar well diffusion assay than the reference drug Streptomycin, were obtained. To elucidate the mechanism of action of the novel compounds, the docking studies were conducted to the active site of the 16S subunit of ribosomal RNA, the proven target for aminoglycoside antibiotics, as well as tRNA (Guanine37-N¹)-methyltransferase (TrmD), which inhibitors were considered as a new potential class of antibiotics.

Experimental part. By the interaction of 6-(1*H*-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-4(3*H*)-one with a series of *N*-arylchloroacetamides and 3-aryl-5-(chloromethyl)-1,2,4-oxadiazoles in DMF in the presence of K₂CO₃ the target compounds were obtained. The antimicrobial activity was assessed by the agar well diffusion method. The concentration of microbial cells was determined by the McFarland standard; the value was 10⁷ cells in 1 mL of the media. The 18–24 hour culture of microorganisms was used for tests. For the bacteria cultivation, Müller-Hinton agar was used, Sabouraud agar was applied for *C. albicans* cultivation. The compounds were tested as the DMSO solution with the concentration of 100 µg/mL; the volume of the solution was 0.3 mL, the same volume was used for Streptomycin (the concentration 30 µg/mL). The docking studies were performed using Autodock Vina. Crystallographic data for the complexes of Streptomycin with the 16S subunit of ribosomal RNA (1NTB) and its active site, as well as for tRNA (Guanine37-N¹)-methyltransferase (EC 2.1.1.228; TrmD) (5ZHN) and its active site were obtained from the Protein Data Bank.

Conclusions. It has been determined that 2-[6-(1*H*-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methyl-4-oxothieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-3(4*H*)-yl]-*N*-[4-(ethoxy)phenyl]acetamide, which is the most active as an antimicrobial agent among the compounds tested, also shows the best binding activity towards the active site of tRNA (guanine37-N¹)-methyltransferase.

Key words: thiophene; pyrimidine; alkylation; antimicrobial agents; inhibitors; molecular docking

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Синтез, протимікробна активність та докінгові дослідження 6-(1*H*-бензімідазол-2-іл)-5-метилтієно[2,3-*d*]піримідин-4(3*H*)-онів з ацетамідними та 1,2,4-оксадіазол-5-ілметильними замісниками

Мета. Синтезувати й дослідити протимікробну активність нових похідних 6-(1*H*-бензімідазол-2-іл)-5-метилтієно[2,3-*d*]піримідин-4(3*H*)-онів та запропонувати механізм протимікробної активності.

Результати та їх обговорення. У результаті цілеспрямованої модифікації положення 3 6-(1*H*-бензімідазол-2-іл)-5-метилтієно[2,3-*d*]піримідин-4(3*H*)-ону ацетамідним та 1,2,4-оксадіазол-5-ілметильним замісниками було одержано сполуки з визначеною методом дифузії в агар протимікробною активністю, що є більшою за активність препарату порівняння Стрептоміцину. З метою з'ясування механізму дії синтезованих сполук було проведено докінгові дослідження щодо активного сайту субодиниці 16S рибосомальної РНК, яка є підтвердженою мішенню для аміноглікозидних антибіотиків, а також тРНК (Гуанін-37-N¹)-метилтрансферази (TrmD), інгібітори якої розглядаються як новий потенційний клас антибіотиків.

Експериментальна частина. Шляхом взаємодії 6-(1*H*-бензімідазол-2-іл)-5-метилтієно[2,3-*d*]піримідин-4(3*H*)-ону з рядом *N*-арилхлороацетамідів та 3-арил-5-(хлорометил)-1,2,4-оксадіазолів в умовах ДМФА- K_2CO_3 було одержано цільові сполуки. Антимікробну активність визначали методом дифузії в агар. Концентрацію мікробних клітин визначали за МакФарландом; мікробне навантаження складало 10^7 мікробних одиниць в 1 мл середовища. Для тестів використовували 18–24 годинну культуру мікроорганізмів. Для культивування бактерій використовували агар Мюллера-Гінтона; для культивування *S. albicans* використовували агар Сабуро. Сполуки вводили методом дифузії в агар (лунками) у вигляді розчину у ДМСО в концентрації 100 мг/мл в об'ємі 0,3 мл; аналогічний об'єм використовували для Стрептоміцину (конц. 30 мг/мл). Докінгові дослідження проводили за допомогою програми Autodock Vina. Кристалографічні дані для комплексів стрептоміцину з 16S субодиницею рибосомальної РНК (1NTB) та її активного сайту і для тРНК (Гуанін-37-*N*¹)-метилтрансферази (EC 2.1.1.228; TrmD) (5ZHN) та її активного сайту було отримано з Protein Data Bank.

Висновки. Виявлено, що сполука 2-[6-(1*H*-бензімідазол-2-іл)-5-метил-4-оксотієно[2,3-*d*]піримідин-3(4*H*)-іл]-*N*-[4-(етокси)феніл]ацетамід, яка характеризується найбільшою протимікробною активністю, у докінгових розрахунках є також найбільш ефективним інгібітором тРНК (Гуанін-37-*N*¹)-метилтрансферази.

Ключові слова: тіофен; піримідин; алкілування; протимікробні засоби; інгібітори; молекулярний докінг

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Introduction

Derivatives of 6-(1*H*-benzimidazol-2-yl)thieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidines attract attention of researchers as promising biologically active compounds. Earlier different preparation methods for these compounds were reported [1–3], and the selectivity of their alkylation with benzyl chlorides was studied [3]. The works published in recent years has also shown the positive impact of the acetamide or isoxadiazole substituent in position 3 of thieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidine on the antimicrobial activity [4, 5]. The substitution of other positions of the core heterocyclic structure with 1,2,4-oxadiazole was also effective for improving the antimicrobial activity [6–9]. Therefore, with the aim of studying the impact of both acetamide and 1,2,4-oxadiazol-5-ylmethyl substituents on the antimicrobial activity of thieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-4(3*H*)-one bearing in position 6 the fragment of 1*H*-benzimidazole the construction of them starting from 6-(1*H*-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-4(3*H*)-one was planned.

Results and discussion

Taking into account the positive results of our previous research on the regioselectivity of the alkylation of 6-(1*H*-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-4(3*H*)-one with benzyl chlorides [3], as well as some successful experience of the transfer of the method developed for benzyl chlorides to chloroacetamides for the similar systems with the fragment of 5-methylthieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-4(3*H*)-one [4] we decided to do the same for benzimidazole containing derivatives. The starting compound **1** obtained according to the method previously reported [3] was treated with either *N*-arylchloroacetamides or 3-aryl-5-(chloromethyl)-1,2,4-oxadiazoles in the DMF media using the equimolar amount of potassium carbonate to promote the reaction (Scheme).

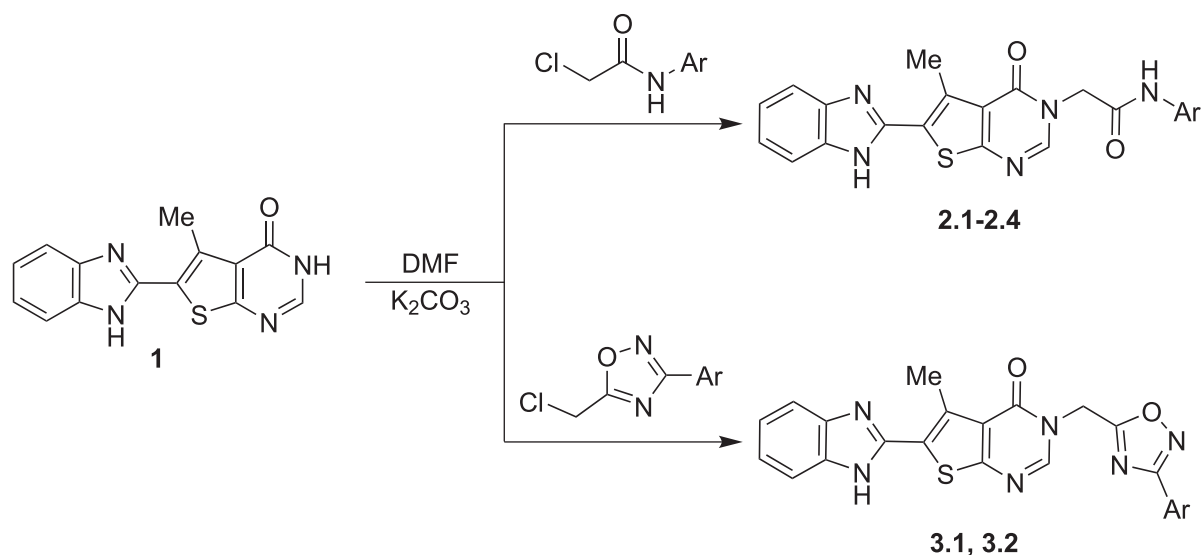
The reaction was carried out for 5–8 hours at 60°C. After cooling the reaction mixture was quenched with

water; and the crystalline products were filtered. The properties of compounds **2** and **3** synthesized are given in the Experimental part. If required, products **2** and **3** can be additionally purified by boiling in ethanol.

In the ¹H NMR spectra of compounds **2** the signals of the acetamide CH₂ group protons were observed in the region of 4.83–4.86 ppm, while for compounds **3** the signals of CH₂ were in the region of 5.61–5.63 ppm. All compounds **2** and **3** had the signal of benzimidazole NH at 12.63–12.68 ppm; for compounds **2** the signal of the acetamide NH proton was observed in the region of 10.33–10.70 ppm. The signal of the methyl group in position 5 of the thieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidine system was found as a singlet at 2.86–2.88 ppm (Table 1).

Most of the compounds from **2** and **3** series moderately inhibited the growth of the strains of the microorganisms in the experiment. The best result was demonstrated by 2-[6-(1*H*-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methyl-4-oxothieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-3(4*H*)-yl]-*N*-[4-(ethoxy)phenyl]acetamide (**2.2**), which appeared to be the most active against the bacterial strains (Table 1).

To elucidate the mechanism of action of the 3-(*N*-arylacetamido/1,2,4-oxadiazol-5-ylmethyl)-6-(1*H*-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-4(3*H*)-ones synthesized the docking studies were conducted. For the antimicrobial activity screening experiment Streptomycin was used as a reference drug. It is widely used in clinics and can effectively tackle many dangerous strains of pathogenic bacteria [10–12]. On the other hand, for now there are many resistant strains towards this antibiotic [13], and it encourages the search for new antimicrobials with a possibly similar mechanism of action. As for most of aminoglycoside antibiotics [14, 15] the complexes of Streptomycin with its molecular target 16S subunit of ribosomal RNA were isolated and studied in details [16]. The structures of these complexes are available as pdb files (1NTB and 1NTA), which represent the structures with different metal cations. For our calculations we chose the model containing a Magnesium cation (1NTB). The results of the docking studies showed that none



2.1: Ar = 4-*i*Pr-C₆H₄; **2.2:** Ar = 4-EtO-C₆H₄; **2.3:** Ar = 4-F-3-Cl-C₆H₃; **2.4:** Ar = 3,5-*d*iMeO-C₆H₃
3.1: Ar = 4-Me-C₆H₄; **3.2:** Ar = 4-Cl-C₆H₄

Scheme. Alkylation of 6-(1H-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3-d]pyrimidin-4(3H)-one with a series of N-arylchloroacetamides and 3-aryl-5-(chloromethyl)-1,2,4-oxadiazoles

of the target molecules appeared to be suitable as a ligand for the active site. According to the docking results it is very unlikely for 3-(N-arylacetamido/1,2,4-oxadiazol-5-ylmethyl)-6-(1H-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3-d]pyrimidin-4(3H)-ones to have the mechanism of the antimicrobial action similar to aminoglycoside antibiotics.

Among the recently discovered molecular targets, which can be applied for the search of new antibiotics, there is tRNA (Guanine37-N¹)-methyltransferase (TrmD) known as the enzyme important for survival of different bacteria under stress [17]. It has been proven that its inhibitors are effective antimicrobials [17–20]. Therefore, we tried this protein for the docking calculations with compounds **2** and **3** as ligands.

The calculation performed showed that compared to the known inhibitors the molecules of derivatives **2** and **3** were unable to interact with all of the amino acids of the active site. The best binding results were obtained for compound **2.2**, which also showed the best result in the antimicrobial activity assay against *P. vulgaris* (ATCC 4636) and *P. aeruginosa* (ATCC 27853) (Table 2). Its activity was even higher than that one for the reference drug Streptomycin. The obvious correlation between the ability to bind the active site of tRNA (Guanine37-N¹)-methyltransferase and the antimicrobial activity screening results can be the evidence for the possible impact of compounds **2** and **3** on the activity of the enzyme. On the other hand, the results of the docking studies were shown no

Table 1

The results of the antimicrobial activity screening for 3-(N-arylacetamido/1,2,4-oxadiazol-5-ylmethyl)-6-(1H-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3-d]pyrimidin-4(3H)-ones **2** and **3** (the concentration 100 µg/mL)

Cmp	Diameter of the growth inhibition zone, mm					
	<i>S. aureus</i> ATCC 25923	<i>E. coli</i> ATCC 25922	<i>P. vulgaris</i> ATCC 4636	<i>P. aeruginosa</i> ATCC 27853	<i>B. subtilis</i> ATCC 6633	<i>C. albicans</i> ATCC 653/885
2.1	16, 17, 16	16, 16, 16	14, 14, 15	14, 15, 15	17, 17, 18	growth
2.2	16, 17, 18	16, 16, 16	14, 15, 15	14, 14, 14	18, 17, 18	growth
2.3	17, 17, 18	16, 15, 17	14, 15, 14	15, 15, 14	17, 17, 17	growth
2.4	16, 16, 16	16, 16, 16	14, 15, 14	15, 15, 15	17, 17, 18	growth
3.1	15, 14, 15	14, 13, 14	growth	growth	16, 17, 16	growth
3.2	15, 14, 15	13, 14, 13	growth	growth	15, 16, 16	growth
Strep.*	15, 16, 15	15, 16, 17	growth	growth	17, 16, 17	growth

Note: * – Streptomycin, H₂O solution (the concentration 30 µg/mL).

Table 2

The results of the computer docking study of the interaction of compounds **2** and **3** with the active site of PaTrmDc

Cmp	Affinity, kcal/mol	Ligand binding with the active site (+/-), amino acids of the active site interacting with the ligand*
2.1	-9.5	+/- VAL142; ASP178 ; GLY179; LEU180 ; LEU181 ; ASP182
2.2	-9.7	+ LEU92 ; PRO94; ARG119; TYR120 ; ILE138 ; TYR141 ; VAL142; LEU143 ; GLY145 ; PRO149; LEU228
2.3	-9.8	+/- TYR91; PRO94; GLN95; ARG119; TYR120 ; GLY122; VAL142; ASP178 ; GLY179; LEU180 ; ASP182; HIS185
2.4	-10.1	+/- TYR91; GLN95; ARG119; TYR120 ; ASP140; VAL142; GLN101; ALA102; ARG105; ASP178 ; LEU180 ; ASP182 ; HIS185
3.1	-10.5	+/- GLY118; ARG119; TYR120 ; VAL142; ASP178 ; GLY179; LEU180
3.2	-10.4	+/- GLY118; ARG119; TYR120 ; VAL142; GLN101; ASP178 ; GLY179; LEU180

Notes: + – almost complete binding; +/- – partial binding; - - no binding observed. * – amino acids binding to the known inhibitor are provided in bold.

evidence for them to have the antimicrobial activity mechanism being similar to Streptomycin.

Experimental part

Chemical part

All solvents and conventional reagents were obtained from the commercial sources or prepared by the well known methods. ¹H NMR spectra were recorded on a Varian Mercury-200 device (200 MHz) in DMSO-*d*₆ solution; TMS was used as an internal standard; the spectral chemical shift scale was presented as δ (ppm). The elemental analysis was performed on a EuroVector EA-3000 instrument. Melting points were determined on a Kofler bench.

6-(1H-Benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-4(3H)-one (1) was obtained according to the method previously reported [3].

The general method for preparation of 3-(N-arylacetamido/1,2,4-oxadiazol-5-ylmethyl)-6-(1H-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-4(3H)-ones 2 and 3

To the suspension of 6-(1H-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-4(3H)-one (**1**) (0.15 g, 0.531 mmol) in DMF an alkylating agent (0.531 mmol) and potassium carbonate (0.074 g, 0.531 mmol) are added. The mixture is stirred at 60°C for 5–8 hours. After the reaction mixture is cooled, it is quenched with water, then the precipitate formed is filtered and dried at 70°C. If required, compounds **2** and **3** can be purified by boiling in ethanol.

2-[6-(1H-Benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methyl-4-oxothieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-3(4H)-yl]-N-(4-isopropylphenyl)acetamide (2.1)

Yield – 0.155 g (64%), a white solid. M. p. > 300°C. Anal. Calcd. for C₂₅H₂₃N₅O₂S, %: C 65.63; H 5.07; N 15.31. Found, %: C 65.78; H 5.05; N 15.43. ¹H NMR (200 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆), δ, ppm: 1.15 (6H, d, *J* = 7.0 Hz, CH(CH₃)₂); 2.82–2.87 (1H, m, CH(CH₃)₂); 2.88 (3H, s, CH₃); 4.84 (2H, s, CH₂); 7.12–7.29 (4H, m, ArH); 7.43–7.71 (4H, m, ArH); 8.45 (1H, s, CH); 10.39 (1H, s, NH); 12.65 (1H, s, NH).

2-[6-(1H-Benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methyl-4-oxothieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-3(4H)-yl]-N-(4-ethoxyphenyl)acetamide (2.2)

Yield – 0.190 g (78%), a grey solid. M. p. > 300°C. Anal. Calcd. for C₂₄H₂₁N₅O₃S, %: C 62.73; H 4.61; N 15.24. Found, %: C 62.86; H 4.68; N 15.27. ¹H NMR (200 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆), δ, ppm: 1.28 (3H, t, *J* = 7.0 Hz, OCH₂CH₃); 2.88 (3H, s, CH₃); 3.96 (2H, q, *J* = 7.0 Hz, OCH₂CH₃); 4.83 (2H, s, CH₂); 6.86 (2H, d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, Ar 2'-H + 6'-H); 7.16–7.28 (2H, m, ArH); 7.54 (2H, d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, Ar 3'-H + 5'-H); 7.54–7.69 (2H, m, ArH); 8.45 (1H, s, CH); 10.33 (1H, s, NH); 12.65 (1H, s, NH).

2-[6-(1H-Benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methyl-4-oxothieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-3(4H)-yl]-N-(3-chloro-4-fluorophenyl)acetamide (2.3)

Yield – 0.206 g (83%), a white solid. M. p. 288–289°C. Anal. Calcd. for C₂₂H₁₅ClFN₅O₂S, %: C 56.47; H 3.23; N 14.97. Found: C 56.28; H 3.35; N 14.95. ¹H NMR (200 MHz, DMSO-*d*₆), δ, ppm: 2.88 (3H, s, CH₃); 4.86 (2H, s, CH₂); 6.86 (2H, m, ArH); 7.33–7.71 (4H, m, ArH); 7.85–7.92 (1H, m, ArH); 8.45 (1H, s, CH); 10.70 (1H, s, NH); 12.66 (1H, s, NH).

2-[6-(1H-Benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methyl-4-oxothieno[2,3-*d*]pyrimidin-3(4H)-yl]-N-(3,5-dimethoxyphenyl)acetamide (2.4)

Yield – 0.156 g (62%), a beige solid. M. p. 266–267°C. Anal. Calcd. for $C_{24}H_{21}N_5O_4S$, %: C 60.62; H 4.45; N 14.73. Found, %: C 60.70; H 4.49; N 14.82. 1H NMR (200 MHz, DMSO- d_6), δ , ppm: 2.88 (3H, s, CH_3); 3.69 (6H, s, $2 \times OCH_3$); 4.84 (2H, s, CH_2); 6.23 (1H, t, $J = 2.1$ Hz, Ar 4'-H); 6.83 (2H, d, $J = 2.1$ Hz, Ar 2'-H + 6'-H); 7.17–7.27 (2H, m, ArH); 7.54–7.66 (2H, m, ArH); 8.45 (1H, s, CH); 10.44 (1H, s, NH); 12.63 (1H, s, NH).

6-(1H-Benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methyl-3- $\{[3-(4$ -methylphenyl)-1,2,4-oxadiazol-5-yl]methyl}thieno[2,3- d]pyrimidin-4(3H)-one (**3.1**)

Yield – 0.205 g (85%), a white solid. M. p. > 300°C. Anal. Calcd. for $C_{24}H_{18}N_6O_2S$, %: C 63.42; H 3.99; N 18.49. Found, %: C 63.38; H 4.12; N 18.57. 1H NMR (200 MHz, DMSO- d_6), δ , ppm: 2.35 (3H, s, CH_3); 2.86 (3H, s, CH_3); 5.61 (2H, s, CH_2); 7.17–7.27 (2H, m, ArH); 7.33 (2H, d, $J = 7.9$ Hz, ArH); 7.51–7.71 (2H, m, ArH); 7.84 (2H, d, $J = 6.4$ Hz, ArH); 8.69 (1H, s, CH); 12.68 (1H, s, NH).

6-(1H-Benzimidazol-2-yl)-3- $\{[3-(4$ -chlorophenyl)-1,2,4-oxadiazol-5-yl]methyl}-5-methylthieno[2,3- d]pyrimidin-4(3H)-one (**3.2**)

Yield – 0.194 g (77%), a white solid. M. p. 291–292°C. Anal. Calcd. for $C_{23}H_{15}ClN_6O_2S$, %: C 58.17; H 3.18; N 17.70. Found, %: C 58.18; H 3.24; N 17.78. 1H NMR (200 MHz, DMSO- d_6), δ , ppm: 2.86 (3H, s, CH_3); 5.63 (2H, s, CH_2); 7.17–7.29 (2H, m, ArH); 7.51–7.71 (4H, m, ArH); 7.96 (2H, d, $J = 8.2$ Hz, ArH); 8.69 (1H, s, CH); 12.68 (1H, s, NH).

Biological and *in silico* studies

The study of the antimicrobial activity of compounds **2** and **3** was performed by the agar well diffusion method [21, 22]. The concentration of microbial cells was determined by the McFarland standard [23]; the value was 10^7 cells in 1 mL of the media. The 18–24 hour culture of microorganisms was used for tests. For the bacteria cultivation, Müller-Hinton agar

was used, Sabouraud agar was applied for *C. albicans* cultivation. The compounds were tested as the DMSO solution with the concentration of 100 μ g/mL; the volume of the solution was 0.3 mL, the same volume was used for Streptomycin (the concentration 30 μ g/mL). Each experiment was repeated thrice. The antibacterial activity was estimated by the growth inhibition zone diameter for each microorganism.

The docking studies were performed using Autodock Vina [24]. They were performed for flexible ligands and rigid models of proteins. Crystallographic data for complexes of Streptomycin with the 16S subunit of ribosomal RNA (1NTB) with its active site [25] and tRNA (Guanine37- N^1)-methyltransferase (EC 2.1.1.228; TrmD) (5ZHN) with its active site [26] were obtained from the Protein Data Bank.

Conclusions

The possibility to use aromatic chloroacetamides and 3-aryl-5-(chloromethyl)-1,2,4-oxadiazoles for alkylation of position 3 of 6-(1H-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3- d]pyrimidin-4(3H)-one in the conditions similar to the previously reported for benzyl chlorides has been proven. In this manner the series of novel 3-(*N*-arylacetamido/1,2,4-oxadiazol-5-ylmethyl)-6-(1H-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methylthieno[2,3- d]pyrimidin-4(3H)-ones have been obtained.

It has been determined that 2-[6-(1H-benzimidazol-2-yl)-5-methyl-4-oxothieno[2,3- d]pyrimidin-3(4H)-yl]-*N*-[4-(ethoxy)phenyl]acetamide, which is the most active as an antimicrobial agent among the compounds tested, also shows the best binding activity towards the active site of tRNA (Guanine37- N^1)-methyltransferase.

Conflict of interests: the authors have no conflict of interests to declare.

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