Supporting Information

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Flupirtine Analogues: Explorative Synthesis and Influence of Chemical Structure on K_v7.2/K_v7.3 Channel Opening Activity

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Specific procedures and characterization

2-Amino-6-chloro-3-nitropyridine (6a)

2,6-Dichloro-3-nitropyridine (40 mmol, 7.72g) was dissolved in 2-propanol (300 mL). An excess of aqueous ammonia (20 mL, 25%) was added. The reaction mixture was then warmed to 35 °C and stirred for 5 days. A light yellow precipitate was collected by filtration, which was washed with water (2 x 50 mL) and dried using desiccator. Light yellow solid (yield= 77%); mp: 194-195 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.40 (d, *J*= 8.6 Hz, 1H), 8.26 (br s, 2H), 6.78 (d, *J*= 8.6 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 155.0, 153.5, 138.4, 126.1, 112.0; IR: $\tilde{\nu}$ = 3442, 3277, 1633, 1556, 1495, 1422, 1338, 1234, 1148, 946, 762, 502 cm⁻¹.

6-Chloro-*N*-methyl-3-nitropyridin-2-amine (6b)

2,6-Dichloro-3-nitropyridine (5 mmol, 1.0 g) was dissolved in acetonitrile (20 mL). After adding triethylamine (7.5 mmol, 1 mL), the mixture was cooled to about 0 °C. Methylamine (6 mmol, 613 μ L) was dissolved in acetonitrile (10 mL) and added slowly over a period of 30 min. After complete addition of methylamine, the mixture was stirred for 10 min at about 0 °C and then allowed to rise to room temperature. The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 30 min. The product was purified using silica gel chromatography (solvent: toluene). Yellow solid (yield= 68%); mp: 119-120 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.72 (d, *J*= 3.1 Hz, 1H), 8.43 (d, *J*= 8.6 Hz, 1H), 6.78 (d, *J*= 8.6 Hz, 1H), 3.01 (d, *J*= 4.8 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 155.2, 152.1, 138.4, 126.9, 111.0, 28.5; IR: \tilde{v} = 3397, 3111, 1567, 1504, 1375, 1217, 758 cm⁻¹.

6-Amino-5-nitropyridine-2-thiol (7a)

Compound **6a** (4.2 mmol, 730 mg), sulfur (3.1 mmol, 103 mg), Na₂S.9H₂O (3 mmol, 702mg) and sodium hydroxide (4.2 mmol, 168 mg) were added to a round bottom flask. After adding ethanol (30 mL), the mixture was held under reflux for 5 hours. The reaction mixture was poured into ice-cooled water (100 mL) and then washed with dichloromethane (3 x 50 mL). The mixture was acidified (pH=4) with stepwise addition of 10% HCl, which resulted in precipitation of the product. Eventually, an orange coloured product was collected by filtration and dried using desiccator. Orange coloured solid (yield= 80%); mp: 190-191 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 12.64 (s,

1H), 8.69 (br d, *J*= 7.0 Hz, 1H), 7.93 (d, *J*= 9.4 Hz, 1H), 7.61 (br d, *J*= 10.4 Hz, 1H), 6.51 (d, *J*= 9.5 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ= 183.8, 149.5, 131.9, 119.5, 118.8; IR: $\tilde{\nu}$ = 3386, 3243, 1631, 1593, 1258, 1090, 755 cm⁻¹.

6-(Methylamino)-5-nitropyridine-2-thiol (7b)

Compound **6b** (7.34 mmol, 1.38 mg), sulfur (5.35 mmol, 171 mg), Na₂S.9H₂O (5.29 mmol, 1.25 g) and sodium hydroxide (7.34 mmol, 294 mg) were added to a round bottom flask. After adding ethanol (30 mL), the mixture was heated under reflux for 6 hours. The reaction mixture was poured into ice-cooled water (100 mL) and then washed with dichloromethane (3 x 50 mL). The mixture was acidified to pH=4 with stepwise addition of 10% HCl. Eventually, the product was collected by filtration and dried using desiccator. Orange coloured solid (yield= 48%); mp: 193-194 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 11.92 (br s, 1H), 9.62 (d, *J*= 4.7 Hz, 1H), 7.94 (d, *J*= 9.5 Hz, 1H), 6.52 (d, *J*= 9.5 Hz, 1H), 3.17 (d, *J*= 5.4 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 185.0, 149.4, 131.4, 119.3, 119.1, 29.5; IR: \tilde{v} = 3246, 1623, 1581, 1338, 1140, 748, 529 cm⁻¹.

6-Methyl-5-nitropyridine-2-thiol (7c)

Compound **6c** (10 mmol, 2.17 g), sulfur (7.29 mmol, 234 mg), Na₂S.9H₂O (7.2 mmol, 1.73 g) and sodium hydroxide (10 mmol, 400 mg) were added to a round bottom flask. After adding ethanol (40 mL), the mixture was heated under reflux for 3 hours. The reaction mixture was poured into ice-cooled water (100 mL) and then washed with dichloromethane (3 x 50 mL). The pH of the solution was adjusted to 4 with stepwise addition of 10% HCl. Eventually, the product was collected by filtration. Brown solid (yield= 32%); mp: 175-176 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 13.95 (br s, 1H), 7.99 (d, *J*= 9.5 Hz, 1H), 7.20 (d, *J*= 9.6 Hz, 1H), 2.73 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 183.2, 150.6, 135.5, 130.9, 130.6, 19.0; IR: \tilde{v} = 3196, 1585, 1327, 1210, 1069, 830, 510 cm⁻¹.

6-[(4-Fluorobenzyl)thio]-3-nitropyridin-2-amine (8a)

Compound **7a** (6 mmol, 1.03 g) was dissolved in dimethylformamide (10 mL). This was followed by the addition of 10% KOH (6 mmol, 3.1 mL) and 4-fluorobenzyl bromide (6 mmol, 740 μ L). The reaction was completed after 1 hour of stirring at room temperature. The product was

precipitated with addition of water. A yellow product was collected by filtration and then washed with n-hexane and ethanol. Yellow solid (yield = 85%); mp: 139-140 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.16 (d, *J*= 8.8 Hz, 3H), 7.55 (m, 2H), 7.15 (m, 2H), 6.62 (d, *J*= 8.8 Hz, 1H), 4.45 (s, 2H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 166.3, 162.5 (d, *J*= 243 Hz, 1C), 153.1, 134.5, 134.2 (d, *J*= 3 Hz, 1C), 131.2 (d, *J*= 8 Hz, 1C), 123.5, 115.2 (d, *J*= 21 Hz, 1C), 110.3, 32.2; IR: \tilde{v} = 3458, 3333, 1558, 1345, 1220, 1144, 763 cm⁻¹.

6-[(1,1'-Biphenyl-4-yl)methylthio]-3-nitropyridin-2-amine (8b)

Compound **7a** (2.5 mmol, 430 mg) was dissolved in dimethylformamide (10 mL), to which 10% KOH (2.5 mmol, 1.4 mL) and 4-(bromomethyl)biphenyl (2.5 mmol, 668 mg) were added respectively. The reaction was completed after 1 hour of stirring at room temperature. Water was added to precipitate the product. The product was filtered and washed with n-hexane and ethanol. Yellow solid (yield= 90%); mp: 179-181 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.18 (d, J= 8.8 Hz, 3H), 7.66 (m, 6H), 7.45 (m, 2H), 7.37 (m, 1H), 6.65 (d, *J*= 8.8 Hz, 1H) 4.45 (s, 2H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 166.4, 153.1, 139.7, 139.0, 136.9, 134.4, 129.6 (2C), 128.8 (2C), 127.3, 126.6 (2C), 126.5 (2C), 123.4, 110.2, 32.7; IR: \tilde{v} = 3463, 3324, 1595, 1335, 1166, 1144, 763, 740 cm⁻¹.

6-[(3,5-Dimethoxybenzyl)thio]-3-nitropyridin-2-amine (8c)

Compound **7a** (2 mmol, 344 mg) was dissolved in dimethylformamide (10 mL). 10% KOH (2 mmol, 1.1 mL) and dimethoxybenzyl bromide (2 mmol, 463 mg) were added respectively to the reaction solution, which was stirred for 1 hour at room temperature. Water was added in order to precipitate the product. The product was washed with ethanol and n-hexane. Yellow solid (yield = 76%); mp: 124-125 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.17 (d, *J*= 8.8 Hz, 1H), 6.65 (d, *J*= 2.2 Hz, 2H), 6.62 (d, *J*= 8.8 Hz, 1H), 6.38 (t, 1H), 4.39 (s, 2H), 3.71 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 166.5, 160.4 (2C), 153.1, 139.9, 134.4, 123.4, 110.2, 107.1 (2C), 99.0, 55.1 (2C), 33.2; IR: \tilde{v} = 3488, 3362, 2834, 1577, 1462, 1204, 1145, 1052 cm⁻¹.

3-Nitro-6-[(pyridin-2-ylmethyl)thio]pyridin-2-amine (8d)

Compound **7a** (2 mmol, 344 mg) was dissolved in dimethylformamide (10 mL). 10% KOH (3 mmol, 1.8 mL) and 2-(bromomethyl)pyridine HBr (2 mmol, 502 mg) were added respectively to the reaction solution. The reaction was completed after 1 hour of stirring at room temperature. The product was precipitated with the addition of water. Eventually, the product was filtered and washed with n-hexane. Saffron coloured solid (yield = 88%); mp: 121-123 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.78 (d, *J*= 5.0 Hz, 1H), 8.34 (t, 1H), 8.19 (d, *J*= 8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.11 (d, *J*= 8.0 Hz, 1H), 7.78 (t, 1H), 6.70 (d, *J*= 8.8 Hz, 1H), 4.70 (s, 2H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 166.5, 157.0, 153.1, 149.2, 136.8, 134.5, 123.5, 122.4, 110.2, 35.3; IR: \tilde{v} = 3404, 3242, 2595, 1606, 1569, 1243, 1143, 749 cm⁻¹.

S-(6-Amino-5-nitropyridin-2-yl) 4-fluorobenzothioate (8e)

Compound **7a** (2 mmol, 344 mg) was dissolved in 2-propanol (15 mL). Triethylamine (4 mmol, 560 μ L) and 4-benzoyl chloride (2 mmol, 120 μ L) were added to the reaction solution. The mixture was held at reflux for overnight. Water was added to precipitate the product. The precipitate was filtered and washed with water and n-hexane. Eventually, the product was recrystallized from ethyl acetate. Yellow solid (yield = 82%); mp: 168-169 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.49 (d, *J*= 8.6 Hz, 1H), 8.12 (s, 2H), 8.10 (m, 2H), 7.48 (m, 2H), 7.18 (d, *J*= 8.6 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 186.3, 167.1 (d, *J*= 254 Hz, 1C), 157.8, 153.3, 152.9, 136.1, 133.5, 132.4 (d, *J*= 3 Hz, 1C), 130.4 (d, *J*= 10 Hz, 2C), 126.6, 117.0 (t, *J*= 24 Hz, 2C), 107.2; IR: \tilde{v} = 3489, 3067, 1674, 1549, 1477, 1236, 765 cm⁻¹.

3-Nitro-6-{[2-(piperidin-1-yl)ethyl]thio}pyridin-2-amine (8f)

Aqueous KOH 10% (3 mmol, 1.8 mL) was added to the round bottom flask that contains compound **7a** (2 mmol, 344 mg) and 1-(2-chloroethyl)piperidine HCl. Dimethylformamide (10 mL) was added to put the above compounds into a solution. The solution was stirred for 1 hour at room temperature. The product was precipitated by the addition of water. The precipitate was then washed with *n*-hexane and aqueous NaOH 10%. Saffron coloured solid (yield= 87%); mp: 108-109 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.15 (d, *J*= 8.8 Hz, 1H), 8.04 (s, 2H), 6.62 (d, *J*= 8.8 Hz, 1H), 3.32 (t, 2H), 2.56 (t, 2H), 2.40 (m, 4H), 1.51 (m, 4H), 1.40 (m, 2H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz,

DMSO-d₆): δ = 167.7, 153.2, 134.1, 123.2, 110.6, 57.41, 53.8 (2C), 27.1, 25.5 (2C), 24.0; IR: \tilde{v} = 3457, 3328, 2933, 2760, 1607, 1557, 1347, 1229, 1141, 766 cm⁻¹.

6-(Benzylthio)-N-methyl-3-nitropyridin-2-amine (8g)

Compound **7b** (3.25 mmol, 602 mg) was dissolved in dimethylformamide (10 mL). 10% KOH (3.25 mmol, 2 mL) and benzyl bromide (3.25 mmol, 387 μ L) were added sequentially to the above mixture. The mixture was stirred for 1 hour and a yellow product was precipitated with the addition of water. The precipitate was washed with ethanol and n-hexane. Yellow solid (yield= 89%); mp: 133-134 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.76 (d, *J*= 4.4 Hz, 1H), 8.20 (d, *J*= 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.44 (m, 2H), 7.35 (m, 2H), 7.23 (m, 1H), 6.65 (d, *J*= 8.8 Hz, 1H), 4.53 (s, 1H), 3.09 (d, *J*= 4.8 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 166.8, 151.8, 137.4, 134.6, 128.7 (2C), 128.5 (2C), 127.2, 124.1, 109.3, 33.4, 28.3; IR: \tilde{v} = 3374, 1577, 1374, 1212, 1036, 928, 760 cm⁻¹.

6[(4-Fluorobenzyl)thio]-2-methyl-3-nitropyridine (8h)

Compound **7c** (3 mmol, 510 mg) was dissolved in dimethylformamide (10 mL). This was followed by the addition of aqueous KOH 10% (3 mmol, 1.68 mL) and 4-fluorobenzyl bromide (3 mmol, 374 μ L) respectively. After 1 hour of stirring at room temperature, the reaction was complete. The product was precipitated with the addition of water. Eventually, the product was filtered and further purified by washing with n-hexane. Pale yellow solid (yield= 66%); mp: 66-67 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.23 (d, *J*= 8.7 Hz, 1H), 7.51 (m, 2H), 7.42 (d, *J*= 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.12 (m, 2H), 4.50 (s, 2H), 2.78 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 163.4, 162.5 (d, *J*= 243 Hz, 1C), 153.4, 142.1, 133.7 (d, *J*= 3 Hz, 1C), 133.1, 131.0 (d, *J*= 8 Hz, 2C), 119.6, 115.3 (d, *J*= 22 Hz, 2C), 32.8, 23.9; IR: \tilde{v} = 3074, 1566, 1499, 1324, 1066, 753, 530 cm⁻¹.

N-{2-Amino-6-[(4-fluorobenzyl)thio]pyridin-3-yl}-3,4-difluorobenzamide (9a)

Compound **8a** (5 mmol, 1.4 g), iron powder (50 mmol, 2.8 g) and ammonium chloride (50 mmol, 2.675 g) were suspended in 4:1 ethanol/water (15 mL). The suspension was stirred at 100 °C for 1 hour. The suspension was filtered through a glass filter protected with 1 cm layer of diatomaceous earth and washed with ethyl acetate (2 x 50 mL). The filtrate was poured into water (50 mL) and extracted with ethyl acetate (2 x 50 mL). Triethylamine (7.5 mmol, 1.05 mL)

was added to the combined filtrate. The solution was cooled to about 0 °C and 3,4-difluorobenzyl chloride (5 mmol, 630 µL) was added slowly over a period of 30 min. After complete addition of 3,4-difluorobenzyl bromide, the mixture was stirred for 1 hour at room temperature. Eventually, the mixture was concentrated and left in the refrigerator to allow precipitation of the product. The product was further purified by recrystallization from dichloromethane. White solid (yield= 35%); purity 99%; mp: 150-151 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 9.64 (s, 1H), 8.08 (m, 1H), 7.86 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 7.63 (m, 1H), 7.56 (m, 2H), 7.34 (d, 1H), 7.13 (m, 2H), 6.49 (d, *J* = 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.09 (s, 2H), 4.34 (s, 2H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 167.3, 162.3 (d, *J*= 241 Hz, 1C), 154.6, 152.5, 150.3, 147.8, 135.2, 135.0 (d, *J* = 3 Hz, 1C), 130.8 (d, *J* = 8 Hz, 2C), 125.4, 117.5 (d, *J* = 9 Hz, 1C), 117.3 (d, *J* = 9 Hz, 1C), 115.1 (d, *J* = 21 Hz, 2C), 114.1, 109.0, 32.5; IR: \tilde{v} = 3396, 3298, 3150, 1629, 1504, 1462, 1226, 750 cm⁻¹; HRMS-ESI m/z [M-H]⁻ calcd for C₁₉H₁₄N₃OF₃S: 388.0737, found: 388.0747.

Ethyl-{6-[(1,1'-biphenyl-4-yl)methylthio]-2-aminopyridin-3-yl}carbamate (9b)

Compound **8b** (2 mmol, 675 mg) and tin (II) chloride dihydrate (10 mmol, 2.26 g) were suspended in absolute ethanol (20 mL). The suspension was carefully set under an argon atmosphere and stirred at 70 °C. After 24 hours, the temperature was reduced to 40 °C and then triethylamine (20.4 mmol, 2.85 mL) and ethyl chloroformate (2.6 mmol, 248 μ L) were added respectively. The reaction was stirred for overnight. The suspension was filtered through a protected glass filter and washed with ethanol (2 x 30 mL). The filtrate was concentrated and water was added to precipitate the product. The product was further purified by recrystallization from dichloromethane. Beige coloured solid (yield = 38%); purity 97%; mp: 165-167 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.58 (s, 1H), 7.65 (m, 2H), 7.60 (m, 2H), 7.50 (m, 5H), 7.56 (m, 1H), 6.48 (d, *J*= 8.0 Hz, 1H), 5.96 (s, 2H), 4.35 (s, 2H), 4.12 (q, *J*= 7.1 Hz, 2H), 1,24 (t, *J*= 7.1 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 154.9, 154.2, 152.0, 139.6, 139.5, 130.8 (2C), 129.9, 128.9 (2C), 127.5, 126.5 (2C), 126.4 (2C), 120.1, 108.6, 60.6, 58.7, 14.4; IR: \tilde{v} = 3484, 3290, 3161, 1703, 1622, 1460, 1219, 1065, 747 cm⁻¹; HRMS-ESI m/z [M-H]⁻ calcd for C₂₁H₂₁N₃O₂S: 378.1282, found: 378.1272. Ethyl-{2-amino-6-[(3,5-dimethoxybenzylthio)pyridin-3-yl]}carbamate (9c)

Compound **8c** (2.5 mmol, 800 mg) and tin (II) chloride dihydrate (12.5 mmol, 2.82 g) were suspended in absolute alcohol (20 mL). The suspension was carefully set under an argon atmosphere and stirred at 70 °C for overnight. The temperature was lowered to 40 °C. Triethylamine (25.5 mmol, 3.5 mL) and ethyl chloroformate (3.25 mmol, 310 μ L) were added sequentially and the mixture was stirred for 4 hours. The mixture was then filtered through a protected glass filter and washed with ethanol (3x 20 mL). The product was separated using column flash chromatography (solvent: n-hexane and ethyl acetate). The fractions that contain the product were combined and evaporated to dryness. The product was dissolved in ethanol and then precipitated with the addition of water. Off-white solid (yield = 52%); purity 100%; mp: 84-85 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.57 (br s, 1H), 7.41 (d, *J*= 5.1 Hz, 1H), 6.57 (d, *J*= 2.1 Hz, 2H), 6.44 (d, *J*= 8.0 Hz, 1H), 6.34 (t, 1H), 5.94 (s, 2H), 4.22 (s, 2H), 4.12 (q, *J*= 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.70 (s, 6H), 1.24 (t, *J*= 7.0 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 160.2 (2C), 154.4, 152.8, 150.4, 140.9, 131.8, 115.2, 109.4, 106.7 (2C), 98.7, 60.3, 55.1 (2C), 33.7, 14.5; IR: \tilde{v} = 3475, 3285, 3163, 2935, 1685, 1598, 1520, 1460, 1202, 1148, 1057 cm⁻¹; HRMS-ESI m/z [M+H]⁺ calcd for C₁₇H₂₁N₃O₄S: 364.1326, found: 364.1317.

Ethyl-{2-amino-6-[(pyridin-2-ylmethylthio)pyridin-3-yl]}carbamate (9d)

Compound **8d** (1 mmol, 263 mg) and tin (II) chloride dihydrate (4.6 mmol, 1.04 g) were suspended in ethanol (10 mL). The suspension was carefully set under an argon atmosphere and then stirred at 70 °C for 22 hours. The temperature was lowered to 40 °C. Triethylamine (10.2 mmol, 1.4 mL) and ethyl chloroformate (1.3 mmol, 120 μ L) were added respectively and stirred overnight. The filtrate was concentrated and water was added. The product was then partitioned into dichloromethane and packed for flash column chromatography (solvent: dichloromethane and methanol). The fractions containing the product were combined and evaporated to dryness. Brown solid (yield= 30%); purity 100%; mp: 129-131 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.57 (s, 1H), 8.49 (d, *J*= 4.3 Hz, 1H), 7.73 (m, 1H), 7.50 (d, *J*= 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.41 (d, *J*= 6.0 Hz, 1H), 7.25 (m, 1H), 6.49 (d, *J*= 8.0 Hz, 1H), 5.94 (s, 2H), 4.39 (s, 2H), 4.12 (q, *J*= 7.1 Hz, 2H), 1.24 (t, *J*= 7.1 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 158.2, 154.5, 152.8, 150.3, 149.0, 136.7, 131.9, 130.1, 123.1, 122.1, 115.2, 109.2, 60.4, 45.6, 35.7, 14.5; IR: \tilde{v} = 3361, 3227, 2979, 2929, 1721, 1524, 1456, 1245, 1221, 1071 cm⁻¹; HRMS-ESI m/z [M+H]⁺ calcd for C₁₄H₁₆N₄O₂S: 305.1067, found: 305.1061.

S-{6-Amino-5-[(ethoxycarbonyl)amino]pyridin-2-yl} 4-fluorobenzothioate (9e)

Compound **8e** (1 mmol, 293 mg) and tin (II) chloride dihydrate (5 mmol, 1.13 g) were suspended in absolute ethanol (10 mL). The suspension was carefully set under argon atmosphere. The suspension was stirred at 70 °C for 48 hours. The temperature was lowered to 40 °C. Triethylamine (10.2 mmol, 1.4 mL) and ethyl chloroformate (2.6 mmol, 240 μ L) were added respectively. After 4 hours of stirring at 40 °C, the reaction was complete. The mixture was filtered through a protected glass filter and washed with ethanol (3 x 20 mL). The product was separated by flash column chromatography (solvent: dichloromethane and ethanol). The product was further purified using preparative HPLC (water and methanol). Off-white solid (yield= 28%); purity 100%; mp: 156-157 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.84 (s, 1H), 8.03 (m, 2H), 7.81 (d, *J*= 7.2 Hz, 1H), 7.44 (m, 2H), 6.92 (d, *J*= 7.8 Hz, 1H), 6.19 (s, 2H), 4.18 (q, *J*= 6.8 Hz, 2H), 1.28 (t, *J*= 6.8 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 188.2, 166.7 (d, *J*= 251 Hz, 1C), 154.2, 132.8, 130.0 (d, *J*= 10 Hz, 1C), 119.8, 119.4, 116.5 (d, *J*= 23 Hz, 1C), 60.6, 14.4; IR: \tilde{v} = 3434, 3377, 3161, 1736, 1649, 1505, 1470, 1201, 906 cm⁻¹; HRMS-ESI m/z [M+H]⁺ calcd for C₁₅H₁₄N₃O₃FS: 336.0813, found: 336.0816.

Ethyl {2-amino-6-([2-(piperidin-1-yl)ethylthio]pyridin-3-yl}carbamate (9f)

Compound **8f** (1 mmol, 282 mg) and tin (II) chloride dihydrate (4.6 mmol, 1.02g) were suspended in absolute ethanol (10 mL). After carefully setting under argon atmosphere, the suspension was stirred at 70 °C for 25 hours. The temperature was lowered to 40 °C. Triethylamine (10.2 mmol, 1.4 mL) and ethyl chloroformate (2.6 mmol, 240 μ L) were added and the mixture was stirred for 3 hours. The mixture was filtered and washed with ethanol (3 x 20 mL). The filtrate was concentrated and poured into water (50 mL). The product was partitioned into dichloromethane, which was evaporated to dryness in order to give a pure product. Brown coloured solid (yield= 32%); purity 100%; mp: 136-137 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.55 (s, 1H), 7.40 (d, *J*= 6.1 Hz, 1H), 6.44 (d, *J*= 8.0 Hz, 1H), 5.82 (s, 2H), 4.12 (q, *J*= 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.14 (q, *J*= 8.8 Hz, 2H), 2.50 (m, 2H), 2.38 (m, 4H), 1.51 (m, 4H), 1.39 (m, 2H), 1.24 (t, *J*= 7.1 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO- d₆): δ= 154.5, 152.8, 151.1, 131.9, 114.9, 109.3, 60.3, 58.2, 53.8 (2C), 26.9, 25.5 (2), 24.0, 14.5; IR: \tilde{v} = 3341, 3212, 2934, 1713, 1530, 1452, 1214, 1065 cm⁻¹; HRMS-ESI m/z [M+H]⁺ calcd for C₁₅H₂₄N₄O₂S: 325.1693, found: 325.1698.

N-[6-(Benzylthio)-2-(methylamino)pyridin-3-yl]-2-(3,5-difluorophenyl)acetamide (9g)

Compound 8g (2.8 mmol, 771 mg), iron powder (28 mmol, 1.57 g) and ammonium chloride (28 mmol, 1.5 g) were suspended in 15 mL ethanol 20%. The suspension was stirred at 100 °C for 2 hours, filtered over diatomaceous earth, and the filter washed with ethyl acetate. The filtrate was poured into water. The collected precipitate was washed with ethyl acetate. 2,6-Dichlorophenyl acetic acid (2.8 mmol, 600 mg) and O-(7-azabenzotriazole-1-yl)-N,N,N,N'tetramethyluroniumhexafluorophosphate (HATU, 5.6 mmol, 2.1 g) were added and the mixture was stirred at 40 °C overnight. The product was separated using silica gel chromatography (solvent: ethyl acetate/hexane). The combined product containing fractions were evaporated to dryness. The residue was dissolved in ethanol and water was added to precipitate the product. Lavender coloured solid (yield = 8%); purity 100%; mp: 201-202 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ= 9.25 (s, 1H), 7.40 (m, 2H), 7.30 (m, 4H), 7.13 (m, 3H), 6.41 (d, J= 7.8 Hz, 1H), 6.23 (d, J= 4.6 Hz, 2H), 4.38 (s, 2H), 3.70 (s, 2H), 2.89 (d, J= 4.6 Hz, 2H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ= 168.7, 163.4 (dd, J= 13 Hz, J= 244Hz, 2C), 153.2, 151.6, 140.4 (t, J= 10 Hz, 1C), 138.9, 133.2, 128.6 (2C), 128.3 (2C), 126.8, 115.1, 112.7 (dd, J= 6 Hz, J= 17Hz, 2C), 107.9, 102.2 (t, J= 26 Hz, 1C), 41.8, 33.3, 27.9; IR: \tilde{v} = 3442, 3404, 3269, 1652, 1591, 1496, 1389, 1230, 1119, 991, 696 cm⁻¹; HRMS-ESI m/z [M-H]⁻ calcd for C₁₄H₁₆N₄O₂S: 398.1144, found: 398.1157.

Ethyl [6-(4-fluorobenzylthio)-2-methylpyridin-3-yl]carbamate (9h)

Compound **8h** (1.8 mmol, 501 mg) and tin (II) chloride dihydrate (9 mmol, 2.03 g) were suspended in absolute ethanol (20 mL). The suspension was carefully set under argon atmosphere. The mixture was stirred at 70 °C for overnight. The temperature was then lowered to 40 °C. Triethylamine (18.36 mmol, 2.56 mL) and ethyl chloroformate (2.34 mmol, 223 μ L) were added respectively. The reaction mixture was vigorously stirred for 3 hours and then filtered through a glass filter protected with 1 cm layer of diatomaceous earth. The mixture was washed with ethanol (3 x 10 mL). Eventually, the mixture was concentrated and water added to precipitate the product. Beige coloured solid (yield = 84%); purity 100%; mp: 102-103 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.99 (s, 1H), 7.60 (d, *J*= 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.46 (m, 2H), 7.13 (m, 3H), 4.36 (s, 2H), 4.13 (q, *J*= 7.1 Hz, 2H), 2.40 (s, 3H), 1.25 (t, *J*= 7.1 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 162.3 (d, *J*= 243 Hz, 1C), 154.4, 152.0, 134.7 (d, *J*= 3 Hz, 1C), 132.8, 130.8 (d, *J*= 8 Hz, 2C), 129.5, 119.5, 115.1 (d, *J*=21 Hz, 2C), 60.43, 32.8, 20.8, 14.5; IR: $\tilde{\nu}$ = 3284, 2980, 1689, 1509, 1442, 1250, 1061 cm⁻¹; HRMS-ESI m/z [M+H]⁺ calcd for C₁₆H₁₇N₂O₂FS: 321.1068, found: 321.1060.

N-[2-Amino-6-(4-fluorobenzylsulfinyl)pyridin-3-yl]-3,4-difluorobenzamide (10a)

Compound **9a** (1 mmol, 390 mg) was dissolved in dichloromethane (15 mL) and was allowed to cool using an ice-cold water bath. 3-chloroperbenzoic acid (1.1 mmol, 190 mg) was dissolved in dichloromethane (15 mL) and was added slowly to the reaction mixture. Following the complete addition of 3-chloroperbenzoic acid, the solution was stirred for 1 hour. The solution was concentrated and left in the refrigerator for overnight. The product was collected by filtration and washed with 10% NaHCO₃. The product was further purified by recrystallization from ethanol. Beige coloured solid (yield = 30%); purity 100%; mp: 118-119 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 9.81 (s, 1H), 8.12 (m, 1H), 7.91 (m, 1H), 7.70 (d, *J*= 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.65 (m, 1H), 7.12 (m, 4H), 6.77 (d, *J*= 7.8 Hz, 1H), 6.51 (s, 2H), 4.38 (d, *J*= 13.0 Hz, 1H), 4.05 (d, *J*= 13.0 Hz, 1H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 163.9, 163.1 (d, *J*= 243 Hz, 1C), 157.5, 154.6, 134.7, 132.3 (d, *J*= 8 Hz, 1C), 131.7, 126.6, 125.6, 119.3, 117.6, 117.4, 115.1 (d, *J*= 21 Hz, 2C), 108.1, 57.6; IR: \tilde{v} = 3470, 3349, 3234, 1657, 1596, 1494, 1456, 1289, 1229, 1042 cm⁻¹; HRMS-ESI m/z [M-H]⁻ calcd for C₁₉H₁₄N₃O₂F₃S: 404.0686, found: 404.0701.

Ethyl {6-[(1,1'-biphenyl-4-yl)methylsulfinyl]-2-aminopyridin-3-yl}carbamate (10b)

Compound **9b** (0.64 mmol, 241 mg) was dissolved in dichloromethane (15 mL) and was cooled in an ice-cold water bath. 3-chloroperbenzoic acid (0.71 mmol, 122mg) was dissolved in dichloromethane (15 mL) and added slowly to the reaction solution. The solution was stirred for an additional 1 hr, which was then concentrated and left in the refrigerator to allow precipitation of the product. The product was collected by filtration, which was washed with 10% NaHCO₃. Offwhite solid (yield = 88%); purity 100%; mp: 224-225 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.90 (br s, 1H), 7.86 (d, *J*= 7.8 Hz, 1H), 7.66 (d, *J*= 7.3 Hz, 2H), 7.60 (d, *J*= 8.2 Hz, 2H), 7.45 (t, 2H), 7.38 (t,

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1H), 7.19 (d, *J*= 8.2 Hz, 2H), 6.82 (d, *J*= 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.39 (s, 2H), 4.39 (d, *J*= 12.9 Hz, 1H), 4.16 (q, *J*= 7.1 Hz, 2H), 4.04 (d, *J*= 12.9 Hz, 1H), 1.27 (t, *J*= 7.1 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 154.9, 154.1, 152, 139.6, 139.5, 130.8 (2C), 129.9, 128.9 (2C), 127.5, 126.6 (2C), 126.4 (2C), 120.6, 108.6, 60.6, 58.7, 14.4; IR: $\tilde{\nu}$ = 3341, 3211, 2988, 1725, 1530, 1465, 1220, 1030, 762 cm⁻¹; HRMS-ESI m/z [M+H]⁺ calcd for C₂₁H₂₁N₃O₃S: 396.1376, found: 396.1366.

Ethyl [2-amino-6-(3,5-dimethoxybenzylsulfinyl)pyridin-3-yl]carbamate (10c)

Compound **9c** (0.8 mmol, 291 mg) was dissolved in dichloromethane (15 mL) and was cooled in an ice-cold water bath. 3-chloroperbenzoic acid (0.88 mmol, 152 mg) was dissolved in dichloromethane (15 mL) and was added to the reaction mixture over a period on 1 hour. After full addition of 3-chloroperbenzoic acid, the solution stirred for 1 hr, concentrated and left in the refrigerator for overnight. The precipitate was collected by filtration and washed with 10% NaHCO₃. The product was separated using flash column chromatography (solvent: dichloromethane and ethanol).White solid (yield = 18%); purity 100%; mp: 200-202 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 8.88 (s, 1H), 7.84 (d, *J*= 7.8 Hz, 1H), 6.83 (d, *J*= 7.9 Hz, 1H), 6.40 (t, 1H), 6.37 (s, 2H), 6.23 (d, *J*= 2.2 Hz, 2H), 4.25 (d, *J*= 12.8 Hz, 1H), 4.17 (q, *J*= 7.1 Hz, 2H), 3.93 (d, *J*= 12.8 Hz, 1H), 3.65 (s, 6H), 1.27 (t, *J*= 7.1 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 160.0 (2C), 154.9, 154.2, 152.1, 132.7, 129.7, 120.5, 108.7, 108.1 (2C), 99.8, 60.7, 59.1, 55.1 (2C), 14.4; IR: \tilde{v} = 3340, 3210, 1732, 1595, 1524, 1208, 1036 cm⁻¹; HRMS-ESI m/z [M+H]⁺ calcd for C₁₇H₂₁N₃O₅S: 380.1275, found: 380.1274.

Ethyl [6-(4-fluorobenzylsulfinyl)-2-methylpyridin-3-yl]carbamate (10d)

Compound **9d** (0.8 mmol, 275 mg) was dissolved in dichloromethane (15 mL). The solution was put in an ice-cold water bath. 3-Chloroperbenzoic acid (0.88 mmol, 152 mg) was dissolved in dichloromethane (15 mL) and added to the reaction solution slowly over a period of 1 hour. After complete addition, the solution was stirred for another 1 hour. The solution was then concentrated and left in the refrigerator to allow the precipitation of the product. The product was washed with 10% NaHCO₃ and dried under reduced pressure. White solid (yield = 25%); purity 100%; mp: 155-156 °C; ¹H NMR (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 9.28 (s, 1H), 8.03 (d, *J*= 8.4 Hz, 1H), 7.37 (d, *J*= 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.10 (m, 4H), 4.39 (d, *J*= 13.08 Hz, 1H), 4.19 (q, *J*= 7.1 Hz, 2H), 4.07 (d,

J= 13.08 Hz, 1H), 1.28 (t, J= 7.1 Hz, 3H); ¹³C NMR (100 MHz, DMSO-d₆): δ = 163.1 (d, J= 244 Hz, 1C), 156.6, 154.1, 151.3, 134.2, 132.3 (d, J= 8 Hz, 2C), 131.4, 126.3 (d, J= 3 Hz, 1C), 118.2, 115.0 (d, J= 22 Hz, 2C), 60.8, 57.9, 21.0, 14.4; IR: \tilde{v} = 3164, 3058, 2994, 1712, 1528, 1231, 1040, 870 cm⁻¹; HRMS-ESI m/z [M+H]⁺ calcd for C₁₆H₁₇N₂O₃FS: 337.1017, found: 337.1008.

Determination of LogD_{7.4}

LogD_{7.4} values were determined using a HPLC method. Column: Phenomenex Kinetex PFP 2.6 μM 75×4.6 mm, flow rate 0.5 mL/min, mobile phase: **A**: 95% ammonium formate buffer (21.05 mM, pH 7.4) and 5% methanol, **B** 5% ammonium formate buffer (0.36 mM, pH 7.4) and 95% methanol, gradient: 0-50 min 0 à 100% **B**, 50-52 min 100 à 0% **B**, 52-60 min 0% **B**.

2-Amino-6-chloro-3-nitropyridine (6a)





6-Chloro-N-methyl-3-nitropyridin-2-amine (6b)

6-Amino-5-nitropyridine-2-thiol (7a)





6-(Methylamino)-5-nitropyridine-2-thiol (7b)





6-[(4-Fluorobenzyl)thio]-3-nitropyridin-2-amine (8a)



6-[(1,1'-Biphenyl-4-yl)methylthio]-3-nitropyridin-2-amine (8b)



6-[(3,5-Dimethoxybenzyl)thio]-3-nitropyridin-2-amine (8c)



3-Nitro-6-[(pyridin-2-ylmethyl)thio]pyridin-2-amine (8d)



S-(6-Amino-5-nitropyridin-2-yl) 4-fluorobenzothioate (8e)



3-Nitro-6-{[2-(piperidin-1-yl)ethyl]thio}pyridin-2-amine (8f)



6-(Benzylthio)-N-methyl-3-nitropyridin-2-amine (8g)



6[(4-Fluorobenzyl)thio]-2-methyl-3-nitropyridine (8h)



N-{2-Amino-6-[(4-fluorobenzyl)thio]pyridin-3-yl}-3,4-difluorobenzamide (9a)



Ethyl-{6-[(1,1'-biphenyl-4-yl)methylthio]-2-aminopyridin-3-yl}carbamate (9b)



Ethyl-{2-amino-6-[(3,5-dimethoxybenzylthio)pyridin-3-yl]}carbamate (9c)



Ethyl-{2-amino-6-[(pyridin-2-ylmethylthio)pyridin-3-yl]}carbamate (9d)



S-{6-Amino-5-[(ethoxycarbonyl)amino]pyridin-2-yl} 4-fluorobenzothioate (9e)



Ethyl {2-amino-6-([2-(piperidin-1-yl)ethylthio]pyridin-3-yl}carbamate (9f)



N-[6-(Benzylthio)-2-(methylamino)pyridin-3-yl]-2-(3,5-difluorophenyl)acetamide (9g)



Ethyl [6-(4-fluorobenzylthio)-2-methylpyridin-3-yl]carbamate (9h)



N-[2-Amino-6-(4-fluorobenzylsulfinyl)pyridin-3-yl]-3,4-difluorobenzamide (10a)



Ethyl {6-[(1,1'-biphenyl-4-yl)methylsulfinyl]-2-aminopyridin-3-yl}carbamate (10b)



Ethyl [2-amino-6-(3,5-dimethoxybenzylsulfinyl)pyridin-3-yl]carbamate (10c)



Ethyl [6-(4-fluorobenzylsulfinyl)-2-methylpyridin-3-yl]carbamate (10d)

Calibration curve and retention times for LogD_{7.4} determination

Reference	Retention time (mean)	k'	Logk'	LogP (Lit.)
Uracil	2.72			
Pyridine	11.92	3.38	0.53	0.65
Benzyl alcohol	14.95	4.50	0.65	1.1
Acetanilide	16.25	4.98	0.70	1.16
Picoline	19.09	6.02	0.78	1.2
Acetophenone	24.15	7.88	0.90	1.7
Methyl benzoate	29.39	9.82	0.99	2.1
Ethyl benzoate	33.65	11.38	1.06	2.6
Benzophenone	37.18	12.68	1.10	3.2
Phenyl benzoate	39.18	13.42	1.13	3.6
Diphenyl ether	40.85	14.03	1.15	4.2
Diphenyl ethane	43.94	15.17	1.18	4.8
Triphenylamine	47.87	16.62	1.22	5.7

Retention time, retention factor and literature LogP values of references

Calibration curve



Compounds	Retention time	k'	Logk'	LogD _{7.4}
	(mean)			
9a	41.00	13.85	1.14	3.90
9b	44.26	15.03	1.18	4.34
9с	38.76	13.04	1.12	3.61
9d	30.39	10.18	1.01	2.62
9e	34.00	11.31	1.05	3.00
9f	25.99	8.41	0.92	2.04
9g	43.73	14.84	1.17	4.27
9h	40.64	13.72	1.14	3.85
10a	35.88	12.00	1.08	3.24
10b	39.61	13.34	1.12	3.72
10c	32.50	10.77	1.03	2.81
10d	34.18	11.38	1.06	3.02

Retention time, retention factor and LogD_{7.4} of synthesized compounds

Biological Evaluations

MTT cell viability assay

The TAMH and HEP-G2 cell lines were a gift of Dr. Sidney D. Nelson (University of Washington, Seattle, USA) and purchased from the Leibniz-Institute DSMZ-Deutsche Sammlung von Mikroorganismen und Zellkulturen GmbH, Braunschweig, Germany), respectively. Cultivation of TAMH cell line and the determination of the LD₅₀ values with the MTT cell viability assay have been described elsewhere [1]. The HEP-G2 cell line was cultured in T75 flask (Sarstedt) with RPMI 1640 (PAN Biotech), supplemented with 10% heat-inactivated fetal bovine serum (FBS) (Sigma Aldrich) and 1% penicillin/streptomycin (PAN-Biotech) and were incubated at 37 °C in a humidified incubator with 95% air/5% CO2. The HEP-G2 cells were detached from flask by Trypsin-EDTA (Sigma Aldrich) when ~70% confluent and suspended in RPMI 1640. Cells were counted with an EVE[™] Automated Cell Counter (NanoEntek) and 15000 cells/well/100 µL RPMI 1640 media were seeded into 96 well plates (Sarstedt). Cells were allowed to attach for 24 h in a humidified incubator at 37 °C. Test compounds and controls were then added to the wells of the plates as previously described for TAMH cells [1]. Both cell lines were exposed for 48 h to the test compounds that had shown activity in $K_V7.2/3$ channel opening assay (were a EC_{50} value could be generated). The LD_{25} is the estimated concentration that reduces the T/C_{corr} by 75% and was determined by plotting (log)concentration of test compound versus T/C_{corr} and performing linear regression analysis in Microsoft Excel (2013). Determined values are the mean of at least three independent experiments ± standard deviation (SD).



Figure 1. Cell viability as a function of compound concentration in TAMH (A) and HEP-G2 cell line (B) after a 48 h exposure, determined by MTT assay; values are the mean \pm SD from \geq 3 independent experiments.

K_V7.2/3 channel opening assay

Cultivation of HEK293 cells expressing K_V7.2/3 and K_V7.2/3 channel opening assay were performed as descibed [1]. E_{max} value indicates intrinsic activity of a compound relative to flupirtine. It was determined by calculating the difference of lowest and highest corr. Δ F/F value of an obtained sigmoidal curve of a compound when corr. Δ F/F were plotted versus log(concentration) and related to E_{max} of flupirtine maleate that was defined as 100%. E_{max} value of a compound is the mean of at least three independent experiments ± standard deviation (SD).

Toxicity/Activity ratio

To estimate the therapeutic ratio between pharmacological activity (i.e., $K_V7.2/3$ channel opening activity) and toxicity (i.e., reduced viability in either the TAMH and HEP-G2 cell lines), a toxicity/activity ratio was calculated following the known safety index [2]. Here, the average LD₂₅ value by the MTT assay after a 48 h exposure of compound in either the TAMH or HEP-G2 cell lines was divided by the average EC₅₀ value obtained in $K_V7.2/3$ channel opening assay with transfected HEK293 cells.

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[2] Y. Y. Pang, W. K. Yeo, K. Y. Loh, M. L. Go, H. K. Ho. Food Chem. Toxicol. 2014, 71, 207-216.