Stereoselective synthesis of MaR2n-3 DPA

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Abstract

The first total synthesis of the n-3 docosapentaenoic derived oxygenated product MaR2n-3 DPA has been achieved. The $13R$ and $14S$ stereogenic centers were introduced using 2-deoxy-*d*-ribose in a chiral pool strategy. The geometry of the *Z,E,E*-triene moiety was prepared using highly *E*-selective Wittig- and Takai-olefination reactions as well as the *Z*-stereoselective Lindlar reduction. LC/MS-MS data of synthetic MaR2n-3 DPA matched data for the biosynthetic formed product that enabled the configurational assignment of this oxygenated natural product to be (7*Z*,9*E*,11*E*,13*R*,14*S*,16*Z*,19*Z*)-13,14-dihydroxydocosa-7,9,11,16,19-pentaenoic acid.

Keywords

Maresins; MaR2n-3 DPA; n-3 docosapentaenoic acid; Specialized pro-resolving mediator

Recent studies have demonstrated that polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) derived specialized pro-resolving mediators (SPMs) actively govern and promote the resolution of inflammation [1]. PUFAs are enzymatically converted into different families of SPMs, e.g. the lipoxins, resolvins, protectins and maresins [2]. Maresin 1 (MaR1) is biosynthesized [3] from docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) in the presence of 12-lipoxygenase and was the first member of the maresin family of SPMs to be reported [4] and prepared by total synthesis [5].

In 2013 Dalli and co-workers reported several new SPMs biosynthesized from n-3 docosapentaenoic acid (n-3 DPA) [6]. n-3 DPA, consisting of 22 carbons and five all-Z double bonds, is an elongated product of eicosapentaenoic acid and an intermediate in the biosynthesis of DHA [7]. Using a self-limited model of inflammation and targeted metabololipidomics during the onset and resolution of acute inflammation, Dalli and co-workers [6] uncovered several novel n-3 DPA SPMs that are potent bioactive molecules. The structures of $\text{MaR1}_{n\text{-3 DPA}}$ (**1**), $\text{MaR2}_{n\text{-3 DPA}}$ (**2**) and $\text{MaR3}_{n\text{-3 DPA}}$ (**3**) are shown in Fig. 1.

Based on their novel pro-resolving and anti-inflammatory bioactions, SPMs have attracted significant interest from the biomedical, pharmacological and synthetic organic communities [8]. SPMs act as agonists on individual GPCRs [9] exhibiting nanomolar pro-resolution and anti-inflammatory bioactions [10]. Some SPMs have entered initial clinical trial development programs [11]. These endogenously formed products are available in minute amounts from their natural sources and contain several stereogenic centers and conjugated E- and Z-double bonds. Hence, stereoselective synthesis for configurational assignment and extensive biological testing becomes necessary.

A few of the n-3 DPA-derived SPMs have recently been prepared [12] and subjected to biological evaluations [13], but $\text{MaR2}_{n\text{-3 DPA}}$ (**2**) has not been synthesized to date and its absolute configuration at C-13 remained to be determined. These facts, as well as the high demand for sufficient material for biological and pharmacological testing, inspired us to report the first total synthesis of $\text{MaR2}_{n\text{-3 DPA}}$ (**2**).

The three key intermediates **4**, **5** and **6** in our retrosynthetic analysis are depicted in Scheme 1. The stereogenic centers at C13 and C14 were assumed to be R and S, respectively, based on biosynthetic considerations [6]. Hence, 2-deoxy-d-ribose (**7**) was deemed a suitable commercially available starting material for preparing $\text{MaR2}_{n\text{-3 DPA}}$ (**2**). This carbohydrate has been used in the stereoselective total synthesis of other SPMs [14].

The phosphonium salt **8** was synthesized from Z-hex-3-en-1-ol (**9**) as previously described [12c]. Intermediate **11** was obtained from known TBS-protected aldehyde **10 [**12d] using a highly Z-selective Wittig reaction with the *in situ* generated ylide of **8** (Scheme 2). This produced **11** as one diastereomer in 84% yield (ESI). Next, selective deprotection of the primary TBS-group in **11** was achieved with *para*-toluene sulfonic acid (PTSA) in MeOH at −20 °C giving alcohol **12** that was oxidized (Dess-Martin periodinane (DMP), $NaHCO_3$, CH_2Cl_2) to its aldehyde **13** in 40% yield over the two steps. Aldehyde **13** was dissolved in toluene and 1.3 equiv. of the stabilized ylide (triphenyl-phosphoranylidene)acetaldehyde was added. The reaction mixture was heated at reflux for 19 h to afford the E-configured α,β-

unsaturated aldehyde **14** in 60% yield after purification by column chromatography (ESI). To complete the formation of fragment **4**, a Takai reaction was performed on aldehyde **14**. After acidic work-up and purification by column chromatography the sensitive *E,E*-vinylic iodide **4** was isolated in 73% yield (Scheme 2).

Terminal alkyne **5** was conveniently prepared in a four-step sequence, starting from cycloheptanone (**15**), see Scheme 3. Bayer-Villiger oxidation on **15** followed by Fischer-esterification gave hydroxyl-ester **16** that was oxidized to aldehyde **17** and reacted in the Ohira-Bestmann reaction affording alkyne **5** in 12% yield from **15**.

The Sonogashira coupling reaction with key fragments **4** and **5** produced alkyne **18** in 50% isolated yield after careful chromatographic purification (Scheme 4). Next, removal of the two-TBS groups in **18** with excess TBAF in THF produced diol **19**. Reduction of the internal alkyne in **19** using the Lindlar-reduction (Pd-CaCO$_3$, EtOAc/pyridine/1-octene, H$_2$ 1 atm) gave the methyl ester of MaR2$_{n-3\ DPA}$ (**20**) in 55% isolated yield over the two steps and with >95% chemical purity (HPLC, ESI). Finally, careful saponification (LiOH, H$_2$O, MeOH, 0 °C) of **20** gave MaR2$_{n-3\ DPA}$ (**2**) in 97% yield (Scheme 4). Data from NMR, LC/MS-MS and UV experiments (ESI) confirmed the structure of **2**.

We next tested whether synthetic **2** matched the endogenous MaR2$_{n-3\ DPA}$ (**2**) prepared from human samples. We first isolated material from human serum and the retention time of the endogenous mediator using RP-HPLC-MS-MS lipid mediator profiling experiments [15]. Using multiple reaction monitoring (MRM) of the parent ion with m/z 361 and the daughter ions m/z 223 or m/z 193, we obtained a sharp peak with retention time (R$_T$) of 14.4 min (Fig. 2A). Of note, a similar retention time of 14.4 min was obtained with synthetic **2** (see Fig. 2A). Moreover, co-injection (2 μL) of a homogenous sample of biological MaR2$_{n-3\ DPA}$ (**2**) with synthetic **2** in a 1:10 M ratio, respectively, gave a single sharp peak in MRM experiments, with R$_T$ 14.4 min (Fig. 2A). Similar findings were made with platelet rich plasma, where endogenous MaR2$_{n-3\ DPA}$ (**5**) gave a R$_T$ of 14.4 min that co-eluted with synthetic **2** (Fig. 2B). To obtain further evidence that the chemical structure for synthetic **2** matches that of endogenous MaR2$_{n-3\ DPA}$ we next assessed the MS/MS fragmentation spectra. Here we found that, in accordance with published findings [6], MaR2$_{n-3\ DPA}$ from both human serum and platelet rich plasma gave the following ions m/z 361 = M−H, m/z 344 = M−H−H$_2$O, m/z 325 = M−H−2H$_2$O, m/z 317 = M−H−Co$_2$, m/z 299 = M−H−H$_2$O −CO$_2$, m/z 281 = M−H−2H$_2$O−CO$_2$, m/z 179 = 223-CO$_2$, m/z 161 = 223-H$_2$-O−CO$_2$, m/z 149 = 193-CO$_2$, ions that were also found in the MS/MS spectrum of synthetic **2** (Fig. 3).

The SPMs are among the most exciting small and naturally occurring molecules currently undergoing investigations towards drug development of new anti-inflammatory drugs [1,16]. The stereoselective synthesis of **2** using the Lindlar reaction, the Sonogashira coupling reaction and the Takai olefination produced multi milligram quantities of **2** that is now available for further biological and pharmacological evaluations to be conducted.

Supplementary Material

Refer to Web version on PubMed Central for supplementary material.

Acknowledgments

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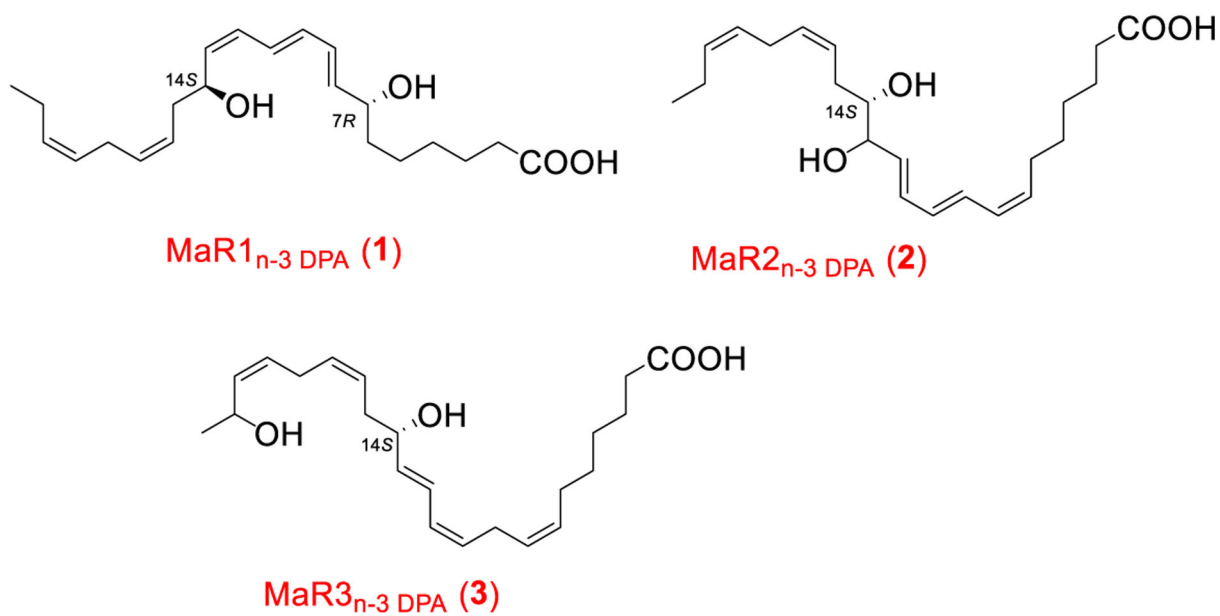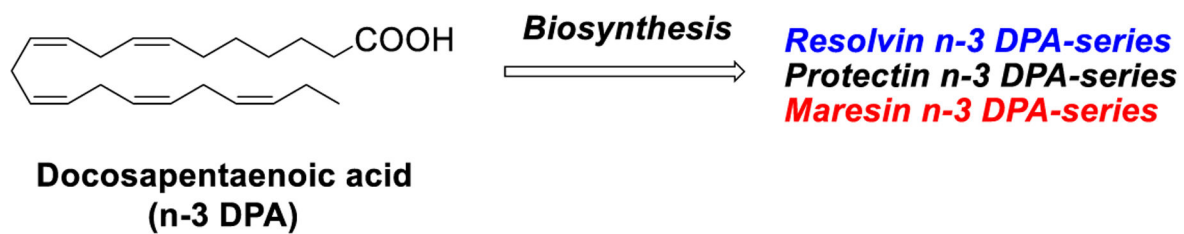
Fig. 1.
Structures of MaR1$_{n-3\ DPA}$ (**1**), MaR2$_{n-3\ DPA}$ (**2**) and MaR3$_{n-3\ DPA}$ (**3**). The absolute configuration is presented where established.
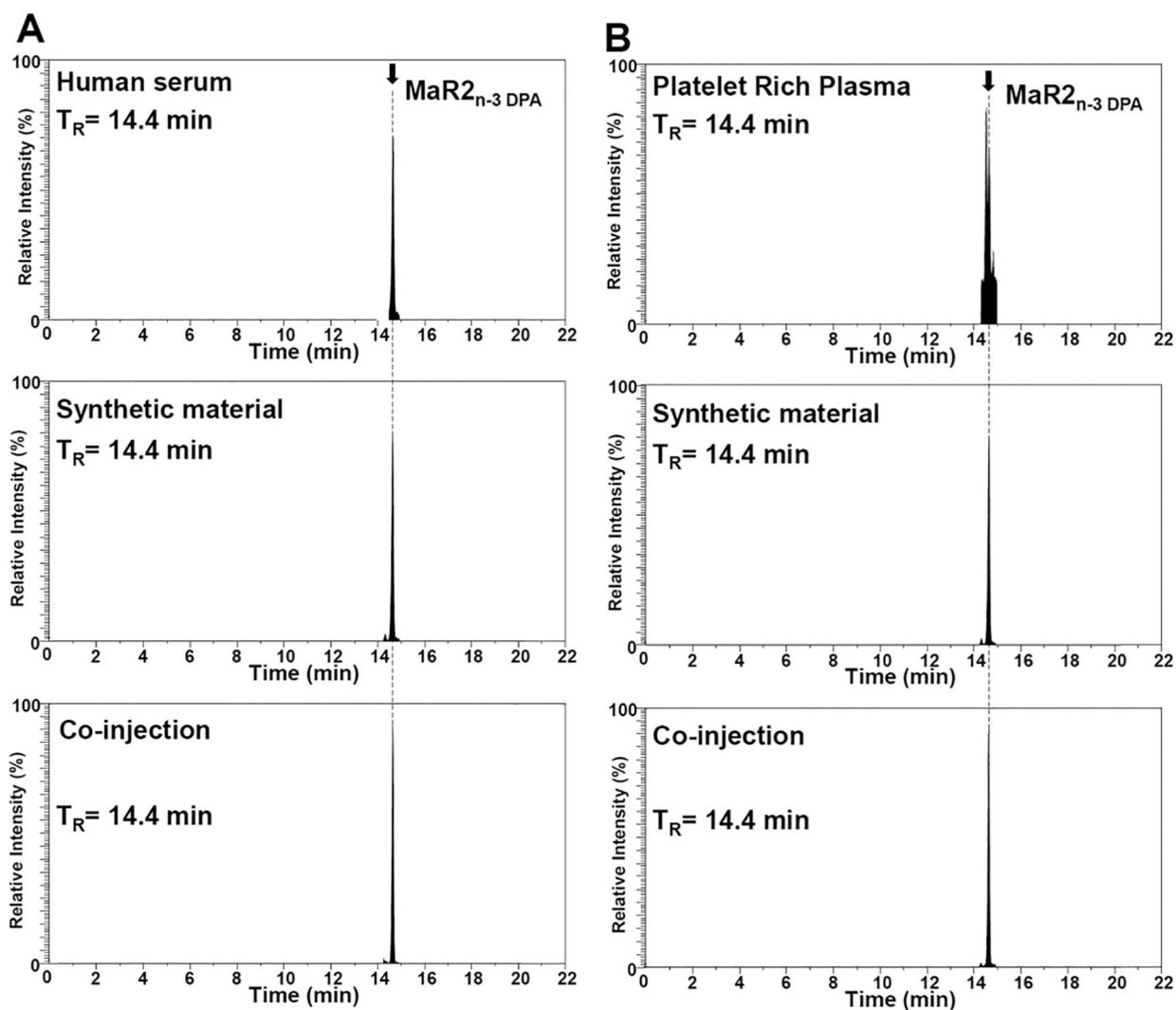
Fig. 2.
Synthetic **2** matches endogenous $MaR2_{n-3\ DPA}$ in human serum and cells. (A) human serum
(B) platelet rich plasma were collected, placed in ice-cold methanol, lipid mediators were
extracted and $MaR2_{n-3\ DPA}$ was identified using lipid mediator profiling. Panels depict
representative MRM chromatograms for m/z 361 > 223 (human serum) or m/z 361 > 193
(platelet rich plasma). Top panels depict the chromatograms obtained with biological
material, center panels depict chromatograms obtained with synthetic **2** and bottom panels
depict chromatograms obtained with the biological material co-injected with synthetic **2**.
Results are representative of three determinations for A and n = 3 distinct human donors for
B.
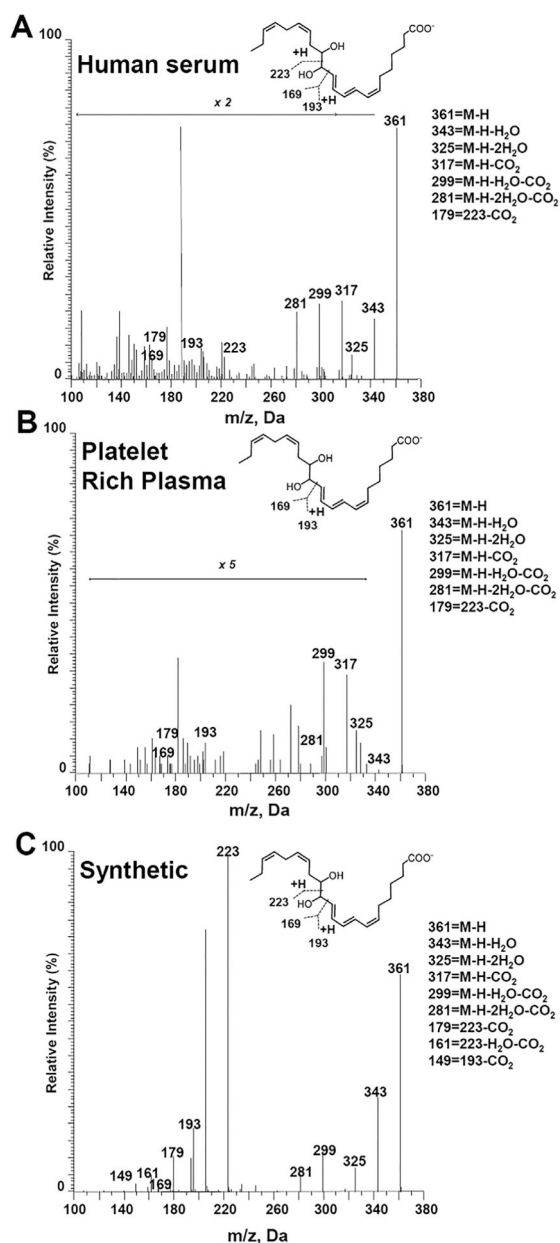
Fig. 3.
MS/MS fragmentation spectra for synthetic **2** and MaR2$_{n-3\ DPA}$ from human serum and platelet rich plasma. Lipid mediators were extracted from (A) human serum and (B) platelet rich plasma and MS/MS spectra for endogenous MaR2$_{n-3\ DPA}$, together with those of (C) synthetic **2**, were obtained using lipid mediator profiling. Results are representative of n = 3 determination for A and C and 3 volunteers for B.
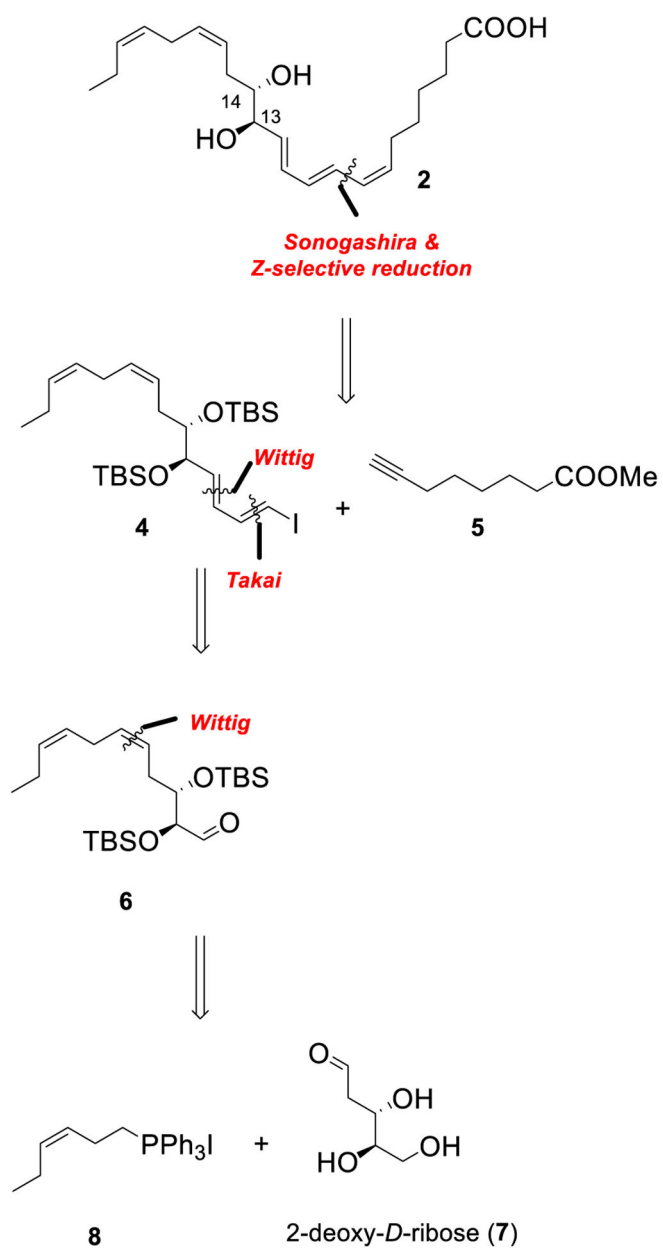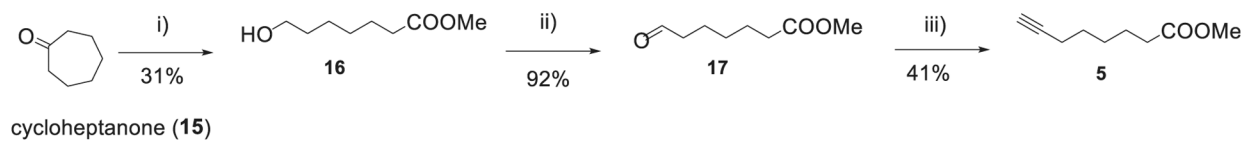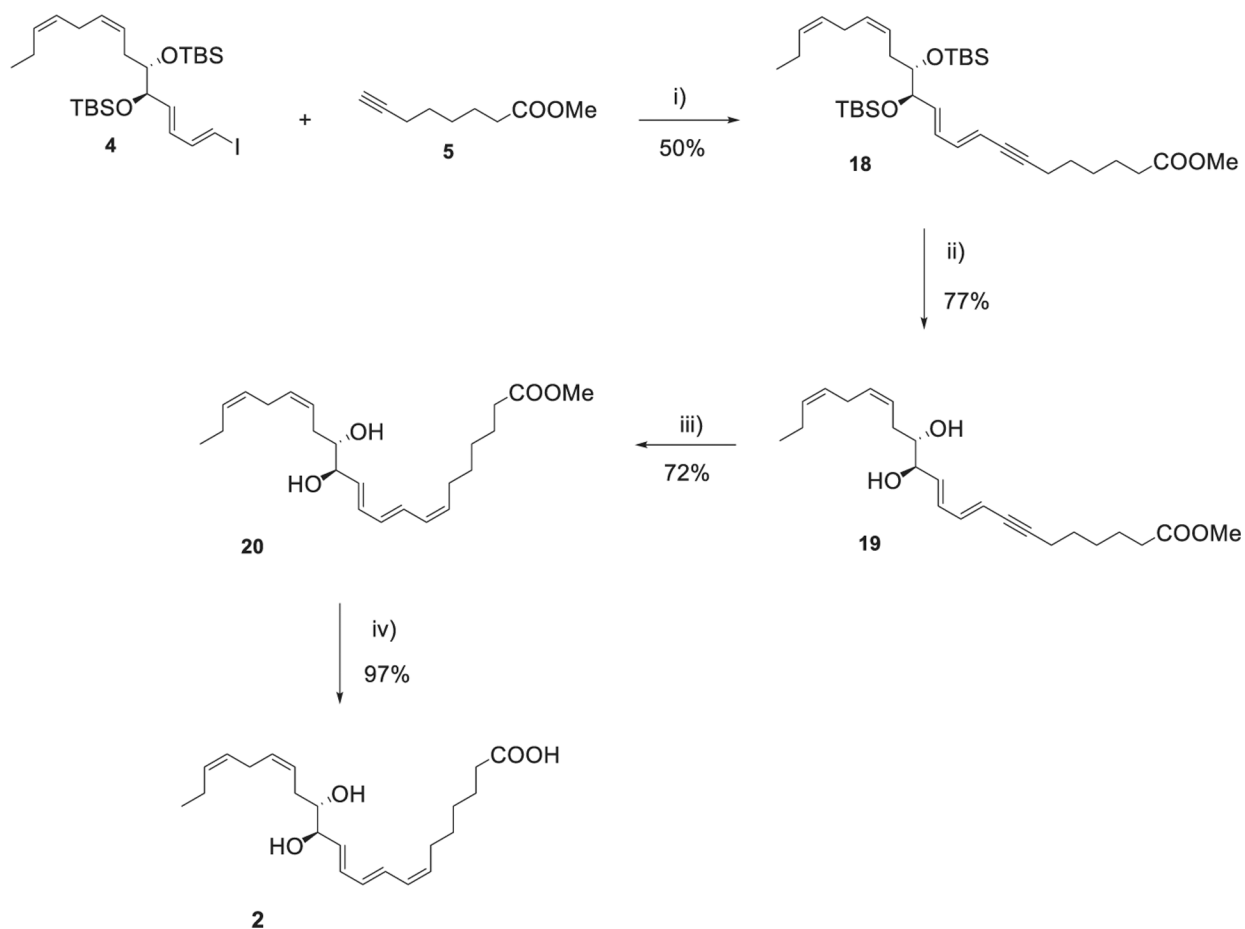
Scheme 1.
Retrosynthetic analysis of MaR2$_{n-3\ DPA}$ (**2**).
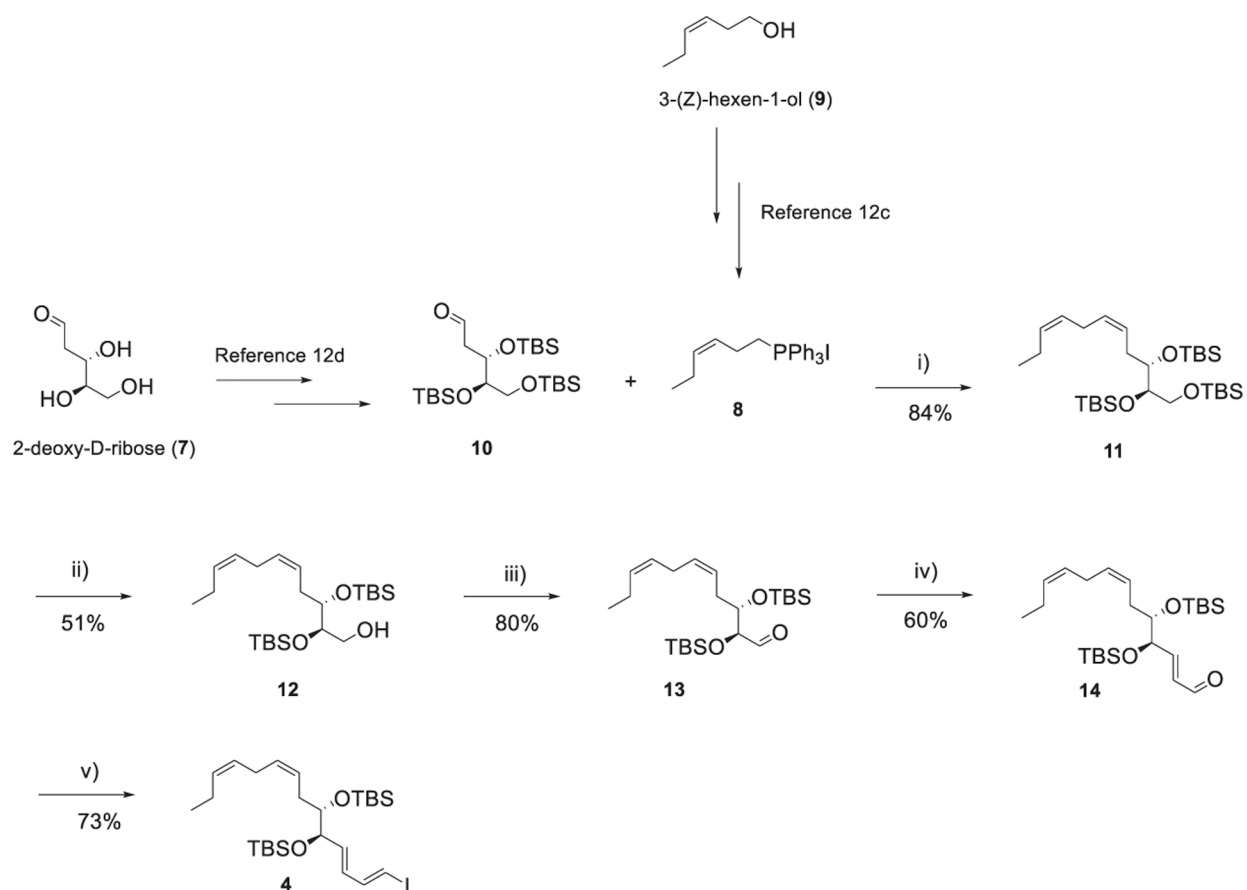
Scheme 2.
Synthesis of vinylic iodide **4**. Reagents and conditions: i) NaHMDS, CH$_2$Cl$_2$, − 78 °C; ii) *para*-toluene sulfonic acid (PTSA), MeOH, −20 °C; iii) DMP, NaHCO$_3$, CH$_2$Cl$_2$; iv) toluene, (triphenyl-phosphoranylidene)acetaldehyde,   ; v) CrCl$_2$, dioxane, THF, CHI$_3$, 0 °C.

cycloheptanone (**15**)

Scheme 3.
Synthesis of alkyne **5**. Reagents and conditions: i) a) *m*-CPBA, CH$_2$Cl$_2$; b) MeOH, H$_2$SO$_4$;
ii) DMP, NaHCO$_3$, CH$_2$Cl$_2$; iii) dimethyl(1-diazo-2-oxopropyl) phosphonate; K$_2$CO$_3$,
MeOH.

Scheme 4.

Total synthesis of MaR2$_{n-3\ DPA}$ (**2**). Reagents and conditions: i) CuI, Et$_2$NH, Pd(PPh$_3$)$_4$ (5%); ii) TBAF, THF; iii) Pd/CaCO$_3$, EtOAc/pyridine/1-octene, H$_2$; iv) LiOH, H$_2$O, MeOH, 0 °C.