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An enzymatically activated fluorescence probe for targeted tumor imaging

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Abstract

β -Galactosidase is a widely used reporter enzyme, but although several substrates are available for *in vitro* detection, its application for *in vivo* optical imaging remains a challenge. To obtain a probe suitable for *in vivo* use, we modified our previously developed activatable fluorescence probe, TG- β Gal (*J. Am. Chem. Soc.*, **2005**, 127, 4888–4894), on the basis of photochemical and photophysical experiments. The new probe, **AM-TG- β Gal**, provides a dramatic fluorescence enhancement upon reaction with β -galactosidase, and further hydrolysis of the ester moiety by ubiquitous intracellular esterases affords a hydrophilic product that is well retained within the cells without loss of fluorescence. We used a mouse tumor model to assess the practical utility of **AM-TG- β Gal**, after confirming that tumors in the model could be labeled with avidin- β -galactosidase conjugate. This conjugate was administered to the mice *in vivo*, followed by **AM-TG- β Gal**, and subsequent *ex vivo* fluorescence imaging clearly visualized intraperitoneal tumors as small as 200 μ m. This strategy has potential clinical application, for example in video-assisted laparoscopic tumor resection.

Introduction

Marker enzymes are widely used to identify cell types or specific haptens, to examine transcription regulation, or to evaluate the efficiency of transfection experiments. *Escherichia coli* β -galactosidase is well characterized and extensively used as a marker enzyme in enzyme-linked immunosorbent assays (ELISA),^{1–3} *in situ* hybridizations,^{4–6} classification of mycobacteria,⁷ and gene expression studies.^{8–11} This enzyme is especially useful for studying gene expression because of its stability, high turnover rate, and ease of conjugation and detection, as well as the absence of endogenous β -galactosidase activity in eukaryotic cells. A range of substrates has been developed including colorimetric,^{12,13} fluorescence,^{14–19} chemiluminescence,^{20,21} and paramagnetic probes,²² though they have mostly been used in *in vitro* systems, with only a few successful applications *in vivo*.^{23–25}

In our previous work, we focused on simple, rapid, and sensitive detection of β -galactosidase activity, and developed a highly sensitive fluorescence probe for β -galactosidase, TG- β Gal (Scheme 1a).²⁶ This probe was rationally designed to show a dramatic fluorescence activation

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(up to 440-fold) upon reaction with β -galactosidase, and was successfully used to visualize β -galactosidase activity in living cells. We considered that such probes might be suitable to visualize tumors *in vivo*. For example, in the clinical field, video-assisted laparoscopic surgery is becoming one of the standard methods for resecting metastases,²⁷ and it already relies on optical cameras that could easily be adapted to employ fluorescence imaging.²⁸ Probes such as TG- β Gal have appropriate characteristics (high molar extinction coefficient and high fluorescence quantum yield in aqueous media after reaction with the target enzymes) for visualization of surface tumors such as intraperitoneal tumors, for which brightness of the fluorophores is more important than long-wavelength excitability, as the light does not need to penetrate the skin and tissues. Our aim in the present work was to design a TG- β Gal-based probe that would be suitable for *in vivo* tumor imaging and to test its suitability for this purpose in an animal tumor model. TG- β Gal itself was unsuitable, as its hydrophobic fluorescent hydrolysis product is easily washed out from cells (Figure 1a). We therefore designed and synthesized a new probe, **AM-TG- β Gal**. Like TG- β Gal, **AM-TG- β Gal** shows a dramatic fluorescence enhancement upon hydrolysis with β -galactosidase. Further, the ester moiety of its hydrolysis product, **AM-TG**, is cleaved by ubiquitous intracellular esterases, generating a hydrophilic product that is well retained within the cells without loss of fluorescence. To examine whether **AM-TG- β Gal** would indeed be suitable for *in vivo* tumor imaging, we used the following two-step strategy in a mouse tumor model. First, avidin- β -galactosidase conjugate was administered to the mice to target the enzyme to tumors, then **AM-TG- β Gal** was administered. Subsequent *ex vivo* fluorescence imaging clearly visualized intraperitoneal tumors as small as 200 μ m. Our findings demonstrate the feasibility of this approach to tumor imaging, which we believe has potential clinical applicability, for example in video-assisted laparoscopic tumor resection.

Results and Discussion

Design and synthesis of new probes with improved cellular retention

We aimed to modify TG- β Gal to obtain sufficient intracellular retention in the living cells by adopting the strategy of introducing an acetoxymethyl (AM) ester group.^{29,30} We anticipated that the AM-derivatized β -galactosidase probe would be hydrolyzed both by β -galactosidase to show large fluorescence activation, and by ubiquitous intracellular esterases to yield the hydrophilic fluorophore with a free carboxylate group, which would not readily leak from the cells.

From the synthetic point of view, we first thought it would be simple to introduce a methoxycarbonyl methoxy group instead of the methoxy group of TG- β Gal. According to Scheme 2, we synthesized **1^{Me}- β Gal**. Although **1^{Me}** (the hydrolysis product of **1^{Me}- β Gal**) is highly fluorescent ($\Phi_{\text{fl}} = 0.85$), **1^{Me}- β Gal** had a relatively high background fluorescence ($\Phi_{\text{fl}} = 0.069$), so the fluorescence enhancement after activation was relatively modest (46-fold) (Table 1, Scheme 1b).

In order to understand this result, we have to consider the mechanism underlying the fluorescence off/on switching of TG- β Gal, i.e., intramolecular photoinduced electron transfer (PeT), which is a non-radiative pathway from the excited state of the fluorophore. As we demonstrated in our previous paper, fluorescein derivatives, including TokyoGreens, can be considered to consist of two functional components from the viewpoint of fluorescence, namely a benzene moiety which is the electron donor and a xanthene moiety which is the fluorophore (Scheme 1a).^{31,32} Moreover, the oxidation potential of the benzene moiety can greatly influence the efficiency of PeT, and *m*-methoxytoluene, the benzene moiety of TG- β Gal, has the most suitable oxidation potential as an electron donor (1.66 V vs SCE, Table 2) in order to convert the change in reduction potential of the xanthene moiety induced by β -galactosidase-assisted hydrolysis to the maximal change in fluorescence intensity.²⁶ Therefore, we measured

the oxidation potential of *m*-methoxycarbonylmethoxytoluene, the benzene moiety of **1^{Me}-βGal** (**Bn(1^{Me})**), and found that the oxidation potential had been altered to a higher value (1.77 V vs SCE, Table 2) by the introduction of the electron-withdrawing methoxycarbonyl group with a short methylene linker, and this accounted for the increase of the background fluorescence of **1^{Me}-βGal**. The calculated energy level of the highest occupied molecular orbital (HOMO), which is known to be linearly correlated with measured oxidation potential, supported this view (-0.02141 hartree for *m*-methoxytoluene and -0.02207 hartree for **Bn(1^{Me})**) (Table 2).

Thus, we employed a strategy to lower the oxidation potential of **Bn(1^{Me})** to a similar value to that of *m*-methoxytoluene (1.66 V vs SCE) by introducing an electron-donating group. The oxidation potential of *m*-methoxycarbonylmethoxyanisole (**Bn(2^{Me})**), in which the methyl group of **Bn(1^{Me})** is replaced with a methoxy group, proved to be sufficiently small to suppress the background fluorescence (1.57 V vs SCE, Table 2) via the PeT pathway. Thus, we designed and synthesized **2^{Me}-βGal** according to Scheme 3. As we expected, **2^{Me}-βGal** showed low background fluorescence ($\Phi_{fl} = 0.004$), whereas **2^{Me}** (the hydrolysis product of **2^{Me}-βGal**) showed strong fluorescence ($\Phi_{fl} = 0.67$) (Table 1). Thus, the fluorescence enhancement is 410-fold. Unfortunately, however, the fluorescence intensity of **2^{Me}** was altered by esterase activity, because hydrolysis of the ester group lowered the oxidation potential too much, which led to quenching of the fluorescence output of **2** ($\Phi_{fl} = 0.32$), the final fluorescent species generated from **2^{Me}-βGal** (Scheme 1b, Table 1, Figure 2). For the reliable fluorescence detection of β-galactosidase activity, the fluorescence should be unaffected by cleavage of the ester.

The solution we adopted was to reduce the electron-withdrawing effect of the methoxycarbonyl group of **Bn(1^{Me})** by lengthening the methylene chain between the methoxycarbonyl group and the benzene moiety. We calculated the HOMO energy levels of the benzene moiety with various lengths of methylene chain at the B3LYP/6-31G level, and predicted that a HOMO level similar to that of *m*-methoxytoluene could be achieved by inserting three or four methylene units between the methoxycarbonyl group and the benzene moiety (Table 2). Oxidation potentials of *m*-methoxycarbonylbutyloxytoluene (**Bn(3^{Me})**) measured by cyclic voltammetry were consistent with this expectation (1.62 V vs SCE, Table 2). According to Scheme 4, we synthesized **3^{Me}-βGal** with four methylene units. The background fluorescence of **3^{Me}-βGal** was successfully suppressed ($\Phi_{fl} = 0.009$), while the hydrolysis product of **3^{Me}-βGal** (**3^{Me}**) emits sufficiently strong fluorescence ($\Phi_{fl} = 0.85$) (Scheme 1b, Table 1). The fluorescence enhancement ratio that can be obtained with **3^{Me}-βGal** is approximately 360-fold. Moreover, its fluorescence was independent of the esterase activity (Φ_{fl} of **3** was 0.85, Figure 2). Therefore, we derivatized **3^{Me}-βGal** to the AM ester, which was designated **AM-TG-βGal** (Scheme 5). As expected, **AM-TG-βGal** shows almost no fluorescence ($\Phi_{fl} = 0.005$), but is converted by β-galactosidase to highly fluorescent AM-TG ($\Phi_{fl} = 0.86$), affording a 470-fold fluorescent enhancement (Scheme 1c, Table 1, Figure 3). Thus, we finally succeeded in developing a highly sensitive fluorescence probe for β-galactosidase with an esterase-sensitive moiety that could be removed without loss of the strong fluorescence, by finely tuning the oxidation potential to retain the highly activatable character of TG-βGal.

Relationship between oxidation potential and fluorescence quantum yield

We plotted the fluorescence quantum yields of the anionic and neutral forms of **1^{Me}**, **2^{Me}**, **3^{Me}** (the scaffold fluorophores of **1^{Me}-βGal**, **2^{Me}-βGal**, **3^{Me}-βGal**) on a graph showing the relationship between the oxidation potential and fluorescence quantum yield (Φ_{fl}) of previously reported TokyoGreen derivatives (Figure 4, Table 3).²⁶ All the values including that of **1^{Me}**, **2^{Me}**, **3^{Me}** can be fitted with the Marcus equation. It can be seen that **3^{Me}** lies between the fluorescence off/on thresholds of the anionic and neutral forms, indicating that it is the most suitable scaffold fluorophore for developing a highly sensitive fluorescence probe with

enhanced cellular retention. This result also confirms that the previously reported design strategy is valid for developing new probes with desirable features.

Cellular retention

We next examined whether or not the newly developed **AM-TG-βGal** is better retained in living cells as compared with TG-βGal. HEK293 cells expressing β-galactosidase were incubated with 10 μM **AM-TG-βGal**, and fluorescence images were captured before and after washing of the cells (Figure 1b). As expected, washing caused little change of the fluorescence, in contrast with the case of TG-βGal. This difference can be explained in terms of superior retention of the ultimate hydrolysis product of **AM-TG-βGal** in the living cells.

Targeting of β-galactosidase to tumor cells

We next tried to apply **AM-TG-βGal** to visualize intraperitoneal tumors in mice. For this purpose, we adopted a two-step procedure, employing a tumor-targeting avidin-β-galactosidase conjugate (avidin-β-galactosidase) to localize β-galactosidase to cancer cells *in vivo*,^{33,34} followed by the administration of **AM-TG-βGal**. Avidin was chosen based on its high affinity for lectins on the surface of several human ovarian cancer cell lines, including SHIN3 cells.³⁵⁻³⁷ The tumor model in mice was prepared as reported.³⁸ As a first step, we examined whether avidin-β-galactosidase could be targeted to SHIN3 cells *in vivo* by injecting it intraperitoneally into mice bearing peritoneal SHIN3 tumors. Twenty hours later, the organs were harvested and stained with X-Gal. After further incubation for 2 hours, a blue precipitate was observed only in the disseminated tumor, confirming that avidin-β-galactosidase can be efficiently targeted to SHIN3 cells *in vivo* without loss of the enzymatic activity (Figure 5).

Fluorescence detection of tumors *in vivo*

We next tried to visualize tumors pre-labelled with avidin-β-galactosidase by employing **AM-TG-βGal**. In mice intraperitoneally implanted with SHIN3 and pre-treated with avidin-β-galactosidase (ip), intraperitoneal administration of **AM-TG-βGal** followed by incubation for 1 hour revealed strongly fluorescent spots in the peritoneal cavity (Figure 6a and 6b). Although the incubation time required for imaging is likely to vary depending on the size of the tumor, one-hour incubation produced clearer fluorescence signals than 30-minute incubation in our experiment. Small tumors on the mesenterium were clearly seen (Figure 6c), and fluorescence microscopy revealed spots as small as 200 μm (Figure 6d). The fluorescence enhancement at microfoci over the surrounding tissues on the mesenterium is up to 33-fold (Supporting Figure S1). In contrast, almost no fluorescence activation could be observed in normal, tumor-free mouse treated with avidin-β-galactosidase and **AM-TG-βGal** (Supporting Figure S2). Mice given TG-βGal also showed a marked fluorescence increase in the peritoneal cavity, but this was unlikely to have been confined to tumors, owing to the leakage of the fluorescent product derived from TG-βGal (Figure 6e). Indeed, the fluorescence signal produced by **AM-TG-βGal** at the tumors was not decreased by washing, in contrast to the case with TG-βGal, suggesting that our strategy of using the hydrolyzable AM moiety did indeed improve cellular retention of the fluorescent product (Figure 7). Staining of tissue with X-Gal showed a similar distribution to that of the fluorescence signal produced by **AM-TG-βGal**, indicating that the fluorescence signal was co-localized with the β-galactosidase activity (Figure 8). As regards the specificity of the staining, it has previously been shown that at least 99 % of the small spots in the peritoneal cavity in this tumor model are tumors (Supporting Figure S3).³⁵ These results suggest that **AM-TG-βGal** had been hydrolyzed both by the SHIN3-targeted β-galactosidase, leading to fluorescence activation, and by intraplasmic esterase, resulting in good retention within cells.

Conclusion

There is increasing interest in *in vivo* optical imaging of β -galactosidase in the biological and clinical fields, but with limited success so far.²³⁻²⁵ We have developed **AM-TG- β Gal** as a highly sensitive fluorescence probe for β -galactosidase that is suitable for targeted tumor imaging *in vivo*. It represents a development of our previously reported fluorescence probe for β -galactosidase,²⁶ modified by introducing AM ester into TG- β Gal through a precisely optimized linker while retaining the advantageous optical properties of TG- β Gal. **AM-TG- β Gal** exhibits a drastic fluorescence enhancement upon reaction with β -galactosidase, and is well retained intracellularly after hydrolysis by ubiquitous intracellular esterases without loss of fluorescence. Moreover, we devised a two-step strategy for highly activatable optical imaging of intraperitoneal tumor cells without the need for prior transfection of reporter enzymes. First, a conjugate of a tumor-targeting molecule and the enzyme, avidin- β -galactosidase, is administered and binds via avidin to the tumor cell surface. Secondly, **AM-TG- β Gal** is administered, and is hydrolyzed to **AM-TG** by β -galactosidase bound to the tumor cells. **AM-TG** exhibits both highly activated fluorescence and enhanced permeability, and is readily transferred into nearby tumor cells, where it is hydrolyzed to the free carboxylate by cytoplasmic esterases. This procedure provides a tumor-specific, long-lived, and highly activated fluorescence signal. Studies to examine the feasibility of using this approach in video-assisted laparoscopic surgery are in progress. The present results indicate that chemistry-based fine-tuning of chemical properties (both fluorescence and cell permeability) could be the key to the development of small-molecular “magic bullets” in the fields of biology and clinical medicine, and we believe that the range of potential applications of our new probe is enormous.

Experimental Section

All procedures were carried out in compliance with the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animal Resources (1996), National Research Council, and approved by the National Cancer Institute Animal Care and Use Committee. All experiments were carried out at 25 °C, unless otherwise specified.

Materials and instruments

Chemicals used for organic synthesis were of the best grade available, supplied by Tokyo Chemical Industries, Wako Pure Chemical or Aldrich Chemical Company, and were used without further purification. ¹H-NMR spectra and ¹³C-NMR spectra were recorded on a JNM-LA300 (JEOL) instrument at 300 MHz and 75 MHz, and on a JNM-AL400 (JEOL) instrument at 400 MHz. Mass spectra (MS) were measured with a SX-102A (JEOL) for EI, a MS700 (JEOL) for FAB and a JMS-T100LC (JEOL) for ESI-TOF.

UV/VIS and fluorescence analysis

For the absorption or fluorescence measurement, compounds were dissolved in dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO, fluorometric grade, Dojindo) to obtain 10 mM stock solutions. These stock solutions were diluted with buffer as specified in the figure legends, to the desired concentration. For determination of the quac(Φ_f), fluorescein in 100 mM aq. NaOH ($\Phi_f = 0.85$) was used as a fluorescence standard.³⁹ β -Galactosidase and porcine liver esterase were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich Japan K.K. All absorption spectra were obtained with a 8453 UV/Vis spectrometer (Agilent) or with a UV-1600 UV/Vis spectrometer (Shimadzu). All fluorescence spectra were obtained with a LS-55 fluorescence spectrometer (Perkin-Elmer) or a F4500 fluorescence spectrometer (Hitachi).

Cyclic voltammetry

Cyclic voltammetry was performed on a 600A electrochemical analyzer (ALS). A three-electrode arrangement in a single cell was used for the measurements: a Pt wire as the auxiliary electrode, a glassy carbon electrode as the working electrode, and an Ag/Ag⁺ electrode as the reference electrode. The sample solutions contained 1.0 mM sample and 100 mM tetrabutylammonium perchlorate (TBAP) as a supporting electrolyte in acetonitrile, and argon was bubbled for 10 min before each measurement. Obtained potentials (vs. Ag/Ag⁺) were converted to those vs. SCE by adding 0.248 V.

Photochemical calculation

HOMO energy levels were calculated at the B3LYP/6-31G level with Gaussian 98W.

Intracellular retention assay

HEK293 cells expressing β -galactosidase were incubated with a 10 μ M solution of TG- β Gal or **AM-TG- β Gal** in physiological salt solution, pH 7.4, containing 150 mM NaCl, 4 mM KCl, 2 mM CaCl₂, 1 mM MgCl₂, 5 mM HEPES, and 0.1% glucose (PSS), and 0.1 % DMSO as a cosolvent for 2 hours. Then, confocal fluorescence images and DIC images were captured before and after washing with PSS. The images were obtained with an Olympus fluoview system using an IX81 inverted microscope, an Ar ion laser, and a PlanApo 40x/1.40 objective lens (Olympus, Tokyo, Japan). The excitation wavelength was 488 nm, and the emission wavelength was 510-550 nm.

Mouse preparation

The intraperitoneal tumor model was prepared as previously reported.³⁸ Briefly, 2×10^6 SHIN3 cancer cells suspended in PBS(-) were injected intraperitoneally into female nude mice (National Cancer Institute Animal Production Facility, Frederick, MD, USA). Experiments with these tumor-harboring mice were performed at 10-13 days after dissemination, when numerous small, intraperitoneally disseminated tumors had formed, especially around the stomach, the subphrenic region, at the hepatic and splenic hila, and on the mesentery.

Biodistribution of avidin- β -galactosidase *in vivo*

Avidin- β -galactosidase (100 μ g) in PBS(-) was injected intraperitoneally into tumor-bearing mice. Twenty hours later, the mice were sacrificed by exposure to CO₂ gas. The main internal organs (tumor, mesentery, intestine, stomach, liver, kidney, spleen, lung, heart) were removed for routine X-Gal staining.

Fluorescence imaging of tumors in a mouse tumor model

Avidin- β -galactosidase (100 μ g) in PBS(-) was injected intraperitoneally into a tumor-bearing mouse and, which was left for 16-23 hours. Then, a 3.3 μ M solution of **AM-TG- β Gal** was injected. After 1 hour, the mouse was sacrificed under anesthesia, and the abdominal walls were removed. Fluorescence images in the peritoneal cavity were captured with a MaestroTM In-Vivo Imaging System (CRI Inc., Woburn, MA, USA). The excitation wavelength was 445-490 nm. Spectral unmixing was performed to obtain the fluorescence unmixed images. Fluorescence images of tumor nodules on the mesentery were captured with a BX51 microscope (Olympus USA, Melville, NY) equipped with an UPLAPO10x objective lens (Olympus USA, Melville, NY).

Synthesis of 2-Bromo-5-(*tert*-butyldimethylsilyloxy)toluene (1)

A mixture of 4-bromo-3-methylphenol (2 g, 10.7 mmol), *tert*-butyldimethylsilyl chloride (TBDMS-Cl) (4.8 g, 30 mmol), and imidazole (3.6 g, 50 mmol) in dry DMF (10 ml) was stirred

at room temperature under argon for 3 hours. The solvent was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was diluted with water and extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times. The combined organic solution was washed with water and saturated aq. NaCl, dried over Na₂SO₄ and evaporated to give **1** as a colorless clear oil (3.04 g, 95 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.33 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.6 Hz), 6.72 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.9 Hz), 6.53 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 2.9 Hz), 2.32 (s, 3H), 0.97 (s, 9H), 0.18 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 154.88, 138.79, 132.76, 122.59, 119.10, 116.16, 25.64, 22.98, 18.18, -4.48; MS (FAB): *m/z* 301, 303 (M+1)⁺.

Synthesis of 9-[1-[4-(*tert*-Butyldimethylsilyloxy)-2-methylphenyl]]-6-hydroxy-3*H*-xanthen-3-one (**2**)

A solution of **1** (1.28 g, 4.27 mmol) in distilled THF (10 ml) was cooled down to -78 °C (dry ice-acetone). *t*-Butyllithium in *n*-pentane solution (4.5 ml, 6.57 mmol) was added dropwise to the reaction mixture using a syringe. 3,6-Bis-(*t*-butyldimethylsilyloxy)xanthen-9-one (1.07 g, 2.37 mmol) dissolved in distilled THF (20 ml) was added dropwise to the mixture using a syringe. The mixture was stirred at -78 °C under argon for 30 min, then 2 N aq. HCl was added, and the red precipitate was collected by filtration. The precipitate was chromatographed on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂-MeOH (100:3-100:5) as the eluent to give **2** as an orange powder (774.6 mg, 82 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CD₃OD): δ 7.27 (d, 2H, *J* = 9.2 Hz), 7.15 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.3 Hz), 7.01-6.86 (m, 6H), 2.01 (s, 3H), 1.06 (s, 9H), 0.31 (s, 6H); HRMS (ESI⁻): calcd for [M-H]⁻, 431.16786; found, 431.16636.

Synthesis of 9-[1-(4-hydroxy-2-methylphenyl)]-6-hydroxy-3*H*-xanthen-3-one (**3**)

To a solution of **2** (2.62 g, 6.2 mmol) in distilled THF (200 ml), a 1 M solution of tetrabutylammonium fluoride in THF (6.2 ml, 6.2 mmol) was added. The mixture was stirred at room temperature under argon for 2 hours, then evaporated, and the residue was chromatographed on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂-MeOH (100:5 – 100:7) as the eluent to give **3** as an orange powder (1.13 g, 58 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CD₃OD): δ 7.06 (d, 2H, *J* = 9.7 Hz), 6.94 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.2 Hz), 6.78 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.4 Hz), 6.74 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2.4 Hz), 6.63 (dd, 2H, *J* = 9.7 Hz, 2.0 Hz), 6.63 (d, 2H, *J* = 2.0 Hz), 1.88 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 172.60, 168.75, 161.03, 160.78, 138.82, 134.65, 131.78, 122.84, 121.30, 118.66, 118.29, 114.30, 103.40, 20.25; HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+H]⁺, 319.09703; found, 319.09652.

Synthesis of 9-[1-(4-Methoxycarbonylmethoxy-2-methylphenyl)]-6-hydroxy-3*H*-xanthen-3-one (**4**)

To a mixture of **3** (60 mg, 0.18 mmol) and Cs₂CO₃ (400 mg, 1.2 mmol) in dry dimethylformamide (5 ml), methyl bromoacetate (17 μl, 0.18 mmol) was added. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature under argon overnight. The inorganic precipitate was filtered off and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was diluted with water and extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times. The combined organic solution was washed with water and saturated aq. NaCl, dried over Na₂SO₄ and evaporated. The residue was chromatographed on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂-MeOH (100:5) as the eluent to give **4** as a red powder (41.7 mg, 57 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.10 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.4 Hz), 7.08 (d, 2H, *J* = 9.2 Hz), 6.95 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.5 Hz), 6.89 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.4 Hz, 2.5 Hz), 6.84 (d, 2H, *J* = 2.0 Hz), 6.80 (dd, 2H, *J* = 9.2 Hz, 2.0 Hz), 4.73 (s, 2H), 3.86 (s, 3H), 2.03 (s, 3H); HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+H]⁺, 391.11816; found, 391.11455.

Synthesis of 9-[1-(4-Methoxycarbonylmethoxy-2-methylphenyl)]-6-hydroxy-3*H*-xanthen-3-one mono(2',3',4',6'-tetra-O-acetyl-β-D-galactopyranoside) (**5**)

A mixture of **4** (39 mg, 0.1 mmol), Cs₂CO₃ (200 mg, 0.6 mmol) and 2,3,4,6-tetra-O-acetyl-α-D-galactopyranosyl bromide (100 mg, 0.25 mmol) in dry dimethylformamide (2 ml) was stirred at room temperature under argon overnight. The inorganic precipitate was filtered off and the

filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was diluted with water and extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times. The combined organic solution was washed with water and saturated aq. NaCl, dried over Na₂SO₄ and evaporated. The residue was chromatographed on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂-MeOH (100:3) as the eluent to give **5** as an orange powder (41.8 mg, 58 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.10-6.80 (m, 7H), 6.57 (dd, 1H, *J* = 9.7 Hz, 1.9 Hz), 6.40 (d, 1H, *J* = 1.9 Hz), 5.57-5.48 (m, 2H), 5.18-5.12 (m, 2H), 4.73 (s, 2H), 4.22-4.16 (m, 3H), 3.87 (s, 3H), 2.19 (s, 3H), 2.13 (s, 3H), 2.07 (s, 3H), 2.03 (s, 3H), 2.05 (s, 3H); HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+Na]⁺, 743.19519; found, 743.19309.

Synthesis of 9-[1-(4-Methoxycarbonylmethoxy-2-methylphenyl)]-6-hydroxy-3H-xanthen-3-one mono-β-D-galactopyranoside (**6**)

To a solution of **5** (5 mg, 6.9 μmol) in methanol (2 ml), a 5 M methanol solution of NaOMe (2 μl, 10 μmol) was added. The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 1 hour, then neutralized with Amberlite IR-120 (H⁺). The Amberlite IR-120 was filtered off, and the filtrate was evaporated. The residue chromatographed on silica gel with CHCl₃-MeOH (100:10) as the eluent to give **6** as an orange powder (2.4 mg, 62 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CD₃OD): δ 7.36 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.2 Hz), 7.18 (d, 1H, *J* = 9.0 Hz), 7.17 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.4 Hz), 7.15 (d, 1H, *J* = 9.6 Hz), 7.07-7.12 (m, 1H), 7.06 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.6 Hz), 7.00 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.4, 2.6 Hz), 6.61 (dd, 1H, *J* = 9.6, 2.0 Hz), 6.47 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.0 Hz), 5.10 (dd, 1H, *J* = 7.7, 2.6 Hz), 4.84 (s, 2H), 3.92 (d, 1H, *J* = 3.5 Hz), 3.82 (s, 3H), 3.73-3.89 (m, 4H), 3.62 (dd, 1H, *J* = 9.7, 3.3 Hz), 2.03 (s, 3H); HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+H]⁺, 553.17099; found, 553.16771.

Synthesis of 9-[1-(4-Carboxymethoxy-2-methylphenyl)]-6-hydroxy-3H-xanthen-3-one (**7**)

To a solution of **4** (15 mg, 38 μmol) in methanol (4 ml), 2 M aq. NaOH 1 ml (2 mmol) was added. The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 4 hours, then neutralized with 2 N aq. HCl. The methanol was evaporated off, and the residue was diluted with H₂O and extracted with CH₂Cl₂. The combined organic layer was evaporated, and the residue was chromatographed on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂-MeOH (100:5) as the eluent to give **7** as an orange powder (12 mg, 83 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CD₃OD): δ 7.00 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.4 Hz), 6.93-6.88 (m, 2H), 6.88 (d, 2H, *J* = 9.0 Hz), 6.44 (dd, 2H, *J* = 9.0, 2.1 Hz), 6.41 (d, 2H, *J* = 2.1 Hz), 4.39 (s, 2H), 1.92 (s, 3H). HRMS (ESI⁻): calcd for [M-H]⁻, 375.08686; found, 375.08779.

Synthesis of 2-Bromo-5-(toluene-4-sulfonyloxy)anisole (**8**)

A mixture of 4-bromoresorcinol (2.0 g, 10.5 mmol), p-toluenesulfonyl chloride (2.21 g, 11.6 mmol), and K₂CO₃ (4.4 g, 32 mmol) in dry acetone (150 ml) was refluxed overnight. MeI (1.3 ml, 21 mmol) was added, and the reaction mixture was refluxed overnight again. The inorganic precipitate was filtered off and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was diluted with water and extracted with AcOEt three times. The combined organic solution was washed with water and saturated aq. NaCl, dried over Na₂SO₄ and evaporated to give **8** as light pink oil (3.8 g, quant.). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.72 (d, 2H, *J* = 8.3 Hz), 7.40 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.6 Hz), 7.33 (d, 2H, *J* = 8.3 Hz), 6.59 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.5 Hz), 6.40 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 2.5 Hz), 3.78 (s, 3H), 2.45 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 156.47, 156.25, 133.04, 113.19, 105.06, 103.03, 56.08, 25.64, 18.19, -4.45; MS (EI): 356, 358 (M⁺).

Synthesis of 4-Bromo-3-methoxyphenol (**9**)

To a solution of **8** (3.08 g, 8.6 mmol) in dist MeOH (100 ml), 2N aq. NaOH (20 ml) was added. The solution was refluxed for 1.5 hrs, then the solvent was evaporated. The obtained residue was neutralized with 2 N aq. HCl and extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times. The organic solution was washed with water and saturated aq. NaCl, dried over Na₂SO₄ and evaporated to give **9** as clear oil (1.57 g, 89 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.34 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.6 Hz), 6.45 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.7 Hz), 6.32 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 2.7 Hz), 3.86 (s, 3H); MS (EI): 202, 204 (M⁺).

Synthesis of 2-Bromo-5-(*tert*-butyldimethylsilyloxy)anisole (10)

A mixture of **9** (1.57 g, 7.7 mmol), TBDMS-Cl (3.5 g, 23 mmol), and imidazole (2.6 g, 39 mmol) in dry DMF (10 ml) was stirred at room temperature under argon overnight. The solvent was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was diluted with water and extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times. The combined organic solution was washed with water and saturated aq. NaCl, dried over Na₂SO₄ and evaporated. The residue was chromatographed on silica gel with hexane-AcOEt (4:1) as the eluent to give **10** as a light yellow clear oil (1.88 g, 76.7 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.33 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.6 Hz), 6.41 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.6 Hz), 6.34 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.6 Hz, 2.6 Hz), 3.85 (s, 3H), 0.98 (s, 9H), 0.20 (s, 6H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 156.46, 149.55, 145.61, 133.28, 132.03, 129.80, 128.59, 115.20, 109.92, 106.97, 56.34, 21.70; MS (EI): 316, 318 (M⁺).

Synthesis of 9-[1-[4-(*tert*-Butyldimethylsilyloxy)-2-methoxyphenyl]]-6-hydroxy-3*H*-xanthen-3-one (11)

10 (1.39 g, 4.4 mmol) was dissolved in distilled THF (10 ml) and the solution was cooled to -78 °C (dry ice-acetone). *tert*-Butyllithium in *n*-pentane solution (4.5 ml, 6.57 mmol) was added dropwise to the reaction mixture, then 3,6-bis-(*t*-butyldimethylsilyloxy)xanthen-9-one (1.19 g, 2.6 mmol) dissolved in dist THF 20 ml was further added dropwise. The mixture was stirred at -78 °C under argon for 30 min, and 2 N aq. HCl was added. The solvent was evaporated under reduced pressure to leave a residue, which was diluted with water and extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times. The combined organic solution was washed with water and saturated aq. NaCl, dried over Na₂SO₄ and evaporated. The precipitate was chromatographed on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂-MeOH (100:5) as the eluent to give **11** as an orange powder (43.6 mg, 3.7 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.18 (d, 2H, *J* = 9.0 Hz), 7.02 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.3 Hz), 6.80-6.75 (m, 4H), 6.60 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2.0 Hz), 6.56 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.0 Hz), 3.67 (s, 3H), 1.04 (s, 9H), 0.31 (s, 6H); HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+H]⁺, 449.17842; found, 449.17790.

Synthesis of 9-[1-(4-Hydroxy-2-methoxyphenyl)]-6-hydroxy-3*H*-xanthen-3-one (12)

To a solution of **11** (43.6 mg, 97 μmol), 2 N aq. HCl (2 ml) was added, and the mixture was refluxed for 5 hrs. The solvent was evaporated under reduced pressure. The obtained residue was chromatographed on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂-MeOH (100:5) as the eluent to give **12** as a red powder (22.7 mg, 70 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CD₃OD): δ 7.82 (d, 2H, *J* = 9.2 Hz), 7.32 (d, 2H, *J* = 2.4 Hz), 7.24 (dd, 2H, *J* = 9.2 Hz, 2.4 Hz), 7.18 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.3 Hz), 6.76 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.0 Hz), 6.70 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2.0 Hz), 3.70 (s, 3H); HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+H]⁺, 335.09195; found, 335.08862.

Synthesis of 9-[1-(2-Methoxy-4-methoxycarbonylmethoxyphenyl)]-6-hydroxy-3*H*-xanthen-3-one (13)

A mixture of **12** (22.7 mg, 68 μmol), bromomethyl acetate (6.27 μl, 68 μmol), and Cs₂CO₃ (66.5 mg, 204 μmol) was stirred at room temperature under argon overnight. The inorganic precipitate was filtered off and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was diluted with water and extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times. The combined organic solution was washed with water and saturated aq. NaCl, dried over Na₂SO₄ and evaporated. The residue was chromatographed on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂-MeOH (100:5) as the eluent to give **13** as an orange powder (17.4 mg, 63 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.16 (d, 2H, *J* = 9.0 Hz), 7.10 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.3 Hz), 6.81 (m, 3H), 6.75 (dd, 2H, *J* = 9.0 Hz, 2.0 Hz), 6.59 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2.2 Hz), 4.74 (s, 2H), 3.87 (s, 3H), 3.69 (s, 3H); HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+H]⁺, 407.11308; found, 407.11006.

Synthesis of 9-[1-(2-Methoxy-4-methoxycarbonylmethoxyphenyl)]-6-hydroxy-3H-xanthen-3-one mono(2',3',4',6'-tetra-O-acetyl-β-D-galactopyranoside)(14)

A mixture of **13** (3.8 mg, 9.3 μmol), Cs₂CO₃ (38.4 mg, 117 μmol), and 2,3,4,6-tetra-O-acetyl-α-D-galactopyranosyl bromide (100 mg, 0.25 mmol) in dry DMF (2 ml) was stirred at room temperature under argon for 4.5 hrs. The inorganic precipitate was filtered off and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was diluted with water and extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times. The combined organic solution was washed with water and saturated aq. NaCl, dried over Na₂SO₄, and evaporated. The residue was chromatographed on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂-MeOH (100:3) as the eluent to give **14** as an orange powder (6.4 mg, 94.2 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.13-7.06 (m, 4H), 6.81 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 2.4 Hz), 6.74 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.3 Hz), 6.59 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.2 Hz, 2.3 Hz), 6.57 (dd, 1H, *J* = 9.7 Hz, 1.8 Hz), 6.39 (d, 1H, *J* = 1.8 Hz), 5.56-5.49 (m, 2H), 5.18-5.13 (m, 2H), 4.74 (s, 2H), 4.25-4.17 (m, 3H), 3.86 (s, 3H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 2.20 (s, 3H), 2.14 (s, 3H), 2.07 (s, 3H), 2.03 (s, 3H); HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+H]⁺, 737.20816; found, 737.20860.

Synthesis of 9-[1-(2-Methoxy-4-methoxycarbonylmethoxyphenyl)]-6-hydroxy-3H-xanthen-3-one mono-β-D-galactopyranoside(15)

To a solution of **14** (2 mg, 2.7 μmol) in methanol (1 ml), a 5 M methanol solution of NaOMe (2 μl, 5 μmol) was added. The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 1 hour, then neutralized with Amberlite IR-120 (H⁺). The Amberlite IR-120 was filtered off, and the filtrate was evaporated. The residue chromatographed on silica gel with CHCl₃-MeOH (100:10) as the eluent to give **15** as an orange powder (0.74 mg, 48 %). ¹H NMR (400 MHz, CD₃OD): δ 7.35 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.4 Hz), 7.30 (d, 1H, *J* = 9.3 Hz), 7.27 (d, 1H, *J* = 9.8 Hz), 7.19 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.3 Hz), 7.11 (dd, 1H, *J* = 9.3, 2.4 Hz), 6.88 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.2 Hz), 6.77 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.3, 2.2 Hz), 6.62 (dd, 1H, *J* = 9.8, 2.0 Hz), 6.46 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.0 Hz), 5.10 (dd, 1H, *J* = 7.3, 1.5 Hz), 4.78 (s, 2H), 3.93 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.4 Hz), 3.89-3.75 (m, 4H), 3.73 (s, 3H), 3.70-3.69 (m, 1H), 3.65 (s, 3H). HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+H]⁺, 569.16590; found, 569.16846.

Synthesis of 9-[1-(4-Carboxymethoxy-2-methoxyphenyl)]-6-hydroxy-3H-xanthen-3-one (16)

To a solution of **13** (4.1 mg, 10 μmol) in methanol (1 ml), 2 N aq. NaOH 0.1 ml (0.2 mmol) was added. The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 4 hours, then neutralized with 2 N aq. HCl. The solvent was evaporated off, and the residue was subjected to reverse-phase preparative TLC (RP18W) with acetonitrile/water (1:1) as the eluent to give **16** as an orange powder (3 mg, 76 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CD₃OD): δ 7.25 (d, 2H, *J* = 9.17 Hz), 7.12 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.25 Hz), 6.84 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.20 Hz), 6.74 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.25, 2.20 Hz), 6.66-6.72 (m, 4H), 4.52 (s, 2H), 3.73 (s, 3H); HRMS (ESI⁻): calcd for [M-H]⁻, 391.08178; found, 391.07947.

Synthesis of 9-{1-[4-(4-Methoxycarbonylbutyloxy)-2-methylphenyl]}-6-hydroxy-3H-xanthen-3-one (17)

To a mixture of **3** 63.8 mg (0.20 mmol) and Cs₂CO₃ 400 mg (1.2 mmol) in dry dimethylformamide (2 ml), methyl 5-bromovalerate (21 μl, 0.18 mmol) was added. The reaction mixture was stirred at room temperature under argon overnight. The inorganic precipitate was filtered off and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was diluted with water and extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times. The combined organic solution was washed with water and saturated aq. NaCl, dried over Na₂SO₄ and evaporated. The residue was chromatographed on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂-MeOH (100:5) as the eluent to give **17** as a red powder (53.7 mg, 62 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.10 (d, 2H, *J* = 9.2 Hz), 7.07 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.3 Hz), 6.91-6.84 (m, 4H), 6.81 (dd, 2H, *J* = 9.2 Hz, 2.0 Hz), 4.06 (m, 2H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 2.45 (m, 2H), 2.02 (s, 3H), 1.88 (m, 4H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 175.04, 174.08, 159.73, 157.43, 152.90, 137.67, 130.77, 130.21, 124.47, 121.80, 116.42, 115.57,

111.84, 103.68, 67.41, 53.35, 33.58, 28.54, 21.55, 19.83; HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+H]⁺, 433.16511; found, 433.16853.

Synthesis of 9-{1-[4-(4-methoxycarbonylbutyloxy)-2-methylphenyl]}-6-hydroxy-3*H*-xanthen-3-one Mono(2',3',4',6'-tetra-O-acetyl-β-D-galactopyranoside) (18)

A mixture of **17** (18.2 mg, 42 μmol), Cs₂CO₃ (250 mg, 0.77 mmol) and 2,3,4,6-tetra-O-acetyl-α-D-galactopyranosyl bromide (100 mg, 0.25 mmol) in dry dimethylformamide (1 ml) was stirred at room temperature under argon overnight. The inorganic precipitate was filtered off and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was diluted with water and extracted with CH₂Cl₂ three times. The combined organic solution was washed with water and saturated aq. NaCl, dried over Na₂SO₄ and evaporated. The residue was chromatographed on silica gel with AcOEt as the eluent to give **18** as an orange powder (25 mg, 78 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.08-6.80 (m, 7H), 6.57 (dd, 1H, *J* = 9.7 Hz, 2.0 Hz), 6.39 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.0 Hz), 5.56-5.48 (m, 2H), 5.18-5.12 (m, 2H), 4.22-4.11 (m, 3H), 4.06 (m, 2H), 3.70 (s, 3H), 2.19 (s, 3H), 2.13 (s, 3H), 2.07 (s, 3H), 2.03 (s, 3H), 1.88 (m, 4H); HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+H]⁺, 763.26019; found, 763.25543.

Synthesis of 9-{1-[4-(4-methoxycarbonylbutyloxy)-2-methylphenyl]}-6-hydroxy-3*H*-xanthen-3-one Mono-β-D-galactopyranoside (19)

To a solution of **18** (28 mg, 37 μmol) in methanol (5 ml), a 5 M methanol solution of NaOMe (10 μl, 50 μmol) was added. The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 1 hour, then neutralized with Amberlite IR-120 (H⁺). The Amberlite IR-120 was filtered off, and the filtrate was evaporated. The residue was subjected to reverse-phase preparative TLC (RP18W) with acetonitrile/water (1:1) as the eluent to give **19** as an orange powder (7.4 mg, 34 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CD₃OD): δ 7.37 (d, *J* = 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.19 (d, *J* = 8.8 Hz, 1H), 7.16 (d, *J* = 9.7 Hz, 1H), 7.15 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1H), 7.10 (d, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 2.4 Hz, 1H), 7.03 (d, *J* = 1.8 Hz, 1H), 6.99 (dd, *J* = 8.3 Hz, 1.8 Hz, 1H), 6.61 (dd, *J* = 9.7 Hz, 2.0 Hz, 1H), 6.47 (d, *J* = 2.0 Hz, 1H), 4.10 (m, 2H), 5.10 (dd, 7.7 Hz, 3.0 Hz, 1H), 3.92 (d, *J* = 3.5 Hz, 1H), 3.88-3.74 (m, 4H), 3.62 (dd, 9.5 Hz, 3.1 Hz, 1H), 3.67 (s, 3H), 2.45 (m, 2H), 2.06 (s, 3H), 1.88 (m, 4H); HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+H]⁺, 595.21794; found, 595.21862.

Synthesis of 9-{1-[4-(4-Carboxybutyloxy)-2-methylphenyl]}-6-hydroxy-3*H*-xanthen-3-one (20)

To a solution of **17** (9.3 mg, 21.5 μmol) in methanol (2 ml), 2 M aq. NaOH 0.5 ml (1 mmol) was added. The mixture was stirred at room temperature for 4 hours, then neutralized with 2 N aq. HCl. The methanol was evaporated off, and the residue was diluted with H₂O, then extracted with CH₂Cl₂. The combined organic layer was evaporated, and the residue was chromatographed on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂-MeOH (100:5) as the eluent to give **20** as an orange powder (7 mg, 78 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CD₃OD): δ 7.11-7.16 (m, 3H), 7.03 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.6 Hz), 6.98 (dd, 1H, *J* = 8.4, 2.6 Hz), 6.70-6.75 (m, 4H), 4.10 (t, 2H, *J* = 5.6 Hz), 2.40 (t, 2H, *J* = 6.8 Hz), 2.02 (s, 3H), 1.92-1.78 (m, 4H); HRMS (ESI⁻): calcd for [M-H]⁻, 417.13381; found, 417.13084.

Synthesis of 9-{1-[4-(4-Carboxybutyloxy)-2-methylphenyl]}-6-hydroxy-3*H*-xanthen-3-one mono(2',3',4',6'-tetra-O-acetyl-β-D-galactopyranoside) (21)

To a solution of **18** (37.7 mg, 0.049 mmol) in methanol/water (1.5 ml: 0.5 ml), 2 M aq. NaOH 1 ml (2 mmol) was added. The mixture was stirred at 0 °C for 30 minutes, then neutralized with Amberlite IR-120 (H⁺). The Amberlite IR-120 was filtered off, and the filtrate was evaporated. The residue was subjected to reverse-phase preparative TLC (RP18W) with acetonitrile/water (1:1) as the eluent to give **21** as an orange powder (15.1 mg, 53 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CD₃OD): δ 7.26 (d, 1H, *J* = 2.2 Hz), 7.11 (d, 1H, *J* = 8.5 Hz), 7.08 (d, 1H, *J* = 9.6

Hz), 7.03 (d, 1H, $J = 8.2$ Hz), 7.02 (dd, 1H, $J = 8.5$ Hz, 2.2 Hz), 6.94 (d, 1H, $J = 2.3$ Hz), 6.89 (dd, 1H, $J = 8.2$ Hz, 2.3 Hz), 6.53 (dd, 1H, $J = 9.6$ Hz, 2.0 Hz), 6.37 (d, 1H, $J = 2.0$ Hz), 4.01 (m, 2H), 5.00 (dd, 1H, $J = 7.7$ Hz, 2.6 Hz), 3.83 (d, 1H, $J = 3.3$ Hz), 3.82–3.64 (m, 4H), 3.53 (dd, 1H, $J = 9.7$ Hz, 3.3 Hz), 2.17 (m, 2H), 1.93 (s, 3H), 1.74 (m, 4H); HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+Na]⁺, 603.18423; found, 603.18242.

Synthesis of 9-{1-[4-(4-acetoxymethoxycarbonylbutyloxy)-2-methylphenyl]}-6-hydroxy-3H-xanthen-3-one mono-β-D-galactopyranoside (**22**)

To a solution of **21** (10 mg, 17.2 μmol) in methanol/acetonitrile (1 ml: 2ml), a solution of bromomethyl acetate (68.5 μl, 690 μmol) and N,N-diisopropylethylamine (22.3 μl, 130 μmol) in acetonitrile (2ml) was added slowly. The mixture was stirred at room temperature under argon for 10 hrs, then concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified by semi-preparative reverse-phase HPLC using eluent A (100 mM triethylammonium acetate buffer, pH 6.5) and eluent B (acetonitrile) (A/B = 65/35) to give **22** as an orange powder (10.9 mg, 97 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CD₃OD): δ 7.28 (d, 1H, $J = 2.2$ Hz), 7.13–6.88 (m, 6H), 6.53 (dd, 1H, $J = 9.7$ Hz, 2.0 Hz), 6.38 (dd, 1H, $J = 2.0$ Hz), 5.65 (s, 2H), 4.02 (m, 2H), 5.01 (dd, 1H, $J = 8.1$ Hz, 2.8 Hz), 3.83 (d, 1H, $J = 3.1$ Hz), 3.79–3.65 (m, 4H), 3.53 (dd, 1H, $J = 9.5$ Hz, 3.6 Hz), 2.42 (m, 2H), 1.99 (s, 3H), 1.94 (s, 3H), 1.78 (m, 4H); HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+Na]⁺, 675.20536; found, 675.20359.

Synthesis of 9-{1-[4-(4-acetoxymethoxycarbonylbutyloxy)-2-methylphenyl]}-6-hydroxy-3H-xanthen-3-one (**23**)

To a solution of **20** (2.8 mg, 6.7 μmol) in dimethylformamide (0.5 ml), a solution of bromomethyl acetate (6.8 μl, 69 μmol) and N,N-diisopropylethylamine (2.2 μl, 13 μmol) in dimethylformamide (0.5 ml) was added. The mixture was stirred at room temperature under argon overnight, then diluted with H₂O, and extracted with ethyl acetate. The combined organic layer was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was purified by semi-preparative reverse-phase HPLC with a linear gradient of eluent A (100 mM triethylammonium acetate buffer, pH 6.5) and eluent B (acetonitrile) (initial: 70 % A / 30 % B, final (20 minutes): 30 % A / 70 % B) to give **23** as an orange powder (0.88 mg, 27 %). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CD₃OD): δ 7.11 (d, 1H, $J = 8.3$ Hz), 7.00–7.05 (m, 3H), 6.97 (dd, 1H, $J = 8.3$, 2.5 Hz), 6.59–6.64 (m, 4H), 5.48 (s, 2H), 4.11 (t, 2H, $J = 5.3$ Hz), 2.50 (t, 2H, $J = 6.6$ Hz), 2.07 (s, 3H), 2.02 (s, 3H), 1.90–1.84 (m, 4H). HRMS (ESI⁺): calcd for [M+H]⁺, 491.17059; found, 491.17493.

Synthesis of *m*-methoxycarbonylmethoxytoluene (Bn(**1**^{Me}))

A mixture of *m*-cresol (3 g, 27.7 mmol), bromomethyl acetate (4.67 g, 30.5 mmol), and Cs₂CO₃ (18 g, 55.5 mmol) in DMF (100 ml) was stirred at room temperature under argon for 4 hours. The inorganic precipitate was filtered off and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was diluted with CH₂Cl₂ three times, washed with water and saturated aq. NaCl, dried over Na₂SO₄, and evaporated. The residue was chromatographed on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂ as the eluent to give Bn(**1**^{Me}) as a colorless clear oil (5 g, quant.). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.17 (t, 1H, $J = 7.9$ Hz), 6.79–6.84 (m, 1H), 6.73–6.76 (m, 1H), 6.72–6.68 (m, 1H), 4.62 (s, 2H), 3.79 (d, 3H, $J = 4.58$ Hz), 2.33 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 169.47, 157.72, 139.64, 129.22, 122.57, 115.49, 111.28, 65.19, 52.14, 21.41; MS (EI): m/z 180 (M⁺).

Synthesis of *m*-methoxycarbonylmethoxyanisole (Bn(**2**^{Me}))

A mixture of *m*-methoxyphenol (1.72 g, 13.8 mmol), bromomethyl acetate (2.34 g, 15.2 mmol), and Cs₂CO₃ (9 g, 27 mmol) in DMF (100 ml) was stirred at room temperature under argon for 4 hours. The inorganic precipitate was filtered off and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was diluted with CH₂Cl₂ three times, washed with water and

saturated aq. NaCl, dried over Na₂SO₄, and evaporated. The residue was chromatographed on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂ as the eluent to give **Bn(2^{Me})** as a colorless clear oil (2.66 g, 98%). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.18 (t, 1H, *J* = 8.1 Hz), 6.57–6.53 (m, 1H), 6.50–6.45 (m, 2H), 4.61 (s, 2H), 3.80 (s, 3H), 3.78 (s, 3H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 169.29, 160.83, 158.92, 129.95, 107.45, 106.30, 101.30, 65.24, 55.24, 52.19; MS (EI): *m/z* 196 (M⁺).

Synthesis of *m*-methoxycarbonylbutyloxyluene (**Bn(3^{Me})**)

A mixture of *m*-cresol (1 g, 9.2 mmol), 5-bromovaleric acid methyl ester (1.98 g, 10.1 mmol), and Cs₂CO₃ (6 g, 18.5 mmol) in DMF (50 ml) was stirred at room temperature under argon for 4 hours. The inorganic precipitate was filtered off and the filtrate was concentrated under reduced pressure. The residue was diluted with CH₂Cl₂ three times, washed with water and saturated aq. NaCl, dried over Na₂SO₄, and evaporated. The residue was chromatographed on silica gel with CH₂Cl₂ as the eluent to give **Bn(3^{Me})** as a colorless clear oil (2 g, 99%). ¹H NMR (300 MHz, CDCl₃): δ 7.16 (t, 1H, *J* = 7.7 Hz), 6.74–6.78 (m, 1H), 6.68–6.74 (m, 2H), 3.96 (t, 2H, *J* = 5.9 Hz), 3.68 (s, 3H), 2.41 (t, 2H, *J* = 7.0 Hz), 2.33 (s, 3H), 1.86–1.80 (m, 4H); ¹³C NMR (75 MHz, CDCl₃): 173.82, 158.89, 139.34, 129.08, 121.36, 115.27, 111.24, 67.08, 51.43, 33.61, 28.65, 21.60, 21.43; MS (EI): *m/z* 222 (M⁺).

Supplementary Material

Refer to Web version on PubMed Central for supplementary material.

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Figure 1.

Fluorescence microscopic imaging of β -galactosidase activity in living cells with TG- β Gal and **AM-TG- β Gal** and comparison of their intracellular retention. HEK293 cells expressing β -galactosidase were incubated with a 10 μ M solution of TG- β Gal (a) or **AM-TG- β Gal** (b) in physiological salt solution, pH 7.4, containing 150 mM NaCl, 4 mM KCl, 2 mM CaCl_2 , 1 mM MgCl_2 , 5 mM HEPES, and 0.1% glucose (PSS), and 0.1 % DMSO as a cosolvent for 2 hours. Then, confocal fluorescence images and DIC images were captured before (Upper) and after (Lower) washing with PSS. A clear decrease of fluorescence was observed in the case of cells incubated with TG- β Gal, while little change was observed in the case of cells incubated with **AM-TG- β Gal**.

Figure 2.

Fluorescence change of **1Me**, **2Me**, **3Me** upon reaction with esterase. Porcine liver esterase (10 units) was added at 0 minute to solutions of **1Me**, **2Me**, and **3Me** in 100 mM sodium phosphate buffer, pH 7.4, containing 0.1 % DMSO as a cosolvent. Excitation and emission wavelengths were 491 nm and 510 nm, respectively.

Figure 3.

In vitro reaction of **AM-TG-βGal** with β-galactosidase. The fluorescence increase of 1 μM **AM-TG-βGal** in 100 mM sodium phosphate buffer, pH 7.4, containing 1 mM MgCl₂, 14.3 mM 2-mercaptoethanol, 0.1 % DMSO, and 6 U of β-galactosidase at 37 °C is shown. Excitation and emission wavelengths were 492 nm and 509 nm, respectively.

Figure 4.

Relationship between the oxidation potential of the benzene moiety and Φ_{fl} of the anion form (red) and neutral form (blue). Data for previously reported TokyoGreen derivatives²⁶ and the newly developed **1^{Me}**, **2^{Me}**, and **3^{Me}** are depicted on the same graph. The curve represents the best fit to the Marcus equation.

Figure 5.

In vivo targeting of avidin- β -galactosidase to intraperitoneal SHIN3 tumors in mouse. Avidin- β -galactosidase (100 μ g) in PBS(-) was injected intraperitoneally into a SHIN3-implanted mouse, and after 20 hours the mouse was sacrificed. The main internal organs (tumor (T), mesentery (Me), intestine (I), stomach (St), liver (Li), kidney (K), spleen (Sp), lung (Lu), heart (H), muscle (Mu), bone (B)) were removed and stained with X-Gal for 2 hours.

Figure 6.

Ex vivo fluorescence imaging of SHIN3-targeted β -galactosidase activity with **AM-TG- β Gal** or TG- β Gal. (a) Tumors were imaged with **AM-TG- β Gal**, following pretreatment with avidin- β -galactosidase. Tumors (Arrows) were clearly visualized with a high tumor-to-nontumor signal ratio. (b) *Ex vivo* fluorescence imaging of the main internal organs of the mouse. T; tumor, Me; mesentery, I; intestine, St; stomach, Li; liver, K; kidney, Sp; spleen, Lu; lung, H; heart. (c) Magnified image of a peritoneal tumor. Strong fluorescence signals reveal tiny peritoneal tumor nodules (Arrows). (d) Fluorescent microfoci as small as 200 μ m in diameter can be seen by using fluorescence microscopy. (e) Tumor imaging with TG- β Gal, following pretreatment with avidin- β -galactosidase. Strong fluorescence was observed in the

peritoneal cavity, however, this was unlikely to have been confined to tumors, owing to the rapid leakage of its fluorescent product. The unmixed fluorescence images (Left) and white light images (Right) of (a), (b), (c) and (e) were captured with a Maestro™ In-Vivo Imaging System (CRI Inc., Woburn, MA, USA). To obtain the unmixed fluorescence images, spectral division was performed using the autofluorescence of intestine (Yellow) and the fluorescence at the tumor (Green). The fluorescence image (Left) and DIC image (Right) of (d) were captured with a BX51 microscope (Olympus USA, Melville, NY).

Figure 7. Fluorescence images of SHIN3 tumors removed from a mouse after incubation with TG- β Gal (a) or AM-TG- β Gal (b), before and after washing with PBS.

Figure 8. Distribution of β -galactosidase activity in the removed tumor. Avidin- β -galactosidase was intraperitoneally injected into SHIN3-implanted mouse, then **AM-TG- β Gal** was administered. The tumor was removed and stained with X-Gal for 1 hour.

Scheme 1.

Reaction schemes of our fluorescence probes with β -galactosidase and intracellular esterase. (a) Reaction of our previously reported β -galactosidase probe, TG- β Gal, with β -galactosidase. (b) Newly developed β -galactosidase substrates bearing an esterase-sensitive methylester, $\underline{1}^{\text{Me}}\text{-}\beta\text{Gal}$, $\underline{2}^{\text{Me}}\text{-}\beta\text{Gal}$, and $\underline{3}^{\text{Me}}\text{-}\beta\text{Gal}$. (c) Our newly developed fluorescence probe, AM-TG- β Gal, which shows a large fluorescence increase upon reaction with β -galactosidase, and is further hydrolyzed by intracellular esterase to the free carboxylate, which is well retained in the cells without loss of fluorescence.

Scheme 2.

Synthetic scheme of **1^{Me}-βGal**. Reagents. (a) TBDMS-Cl, imidazole, DMF; (b) 3,6-Bis-(*t*-butyldimethylsilanyloxy)xanthen-9-one, *t*-BuLi, THF; (c) TBAF, THF; (d) Methyl bromoacetate, Cs₂CO₃, DMF; (e) 2,3,4,6-tetra-O-acetyl-α-D-galactopyranosyl bromide, Cs₂CO₃, DMF; (f) NaOMe, MeOH; (g) aq.NaOH, MeOH.

Scheme 3.

Synthetic scheme of **2^{Me}-βGal**. Reagents. (a) 1) TsCl, K₂CO₃, acetone, 2) MeI; (b) aq. NaOH, MeOH; (c) TBDMS-Cl, imidazole, DMF; (d) 3,6-Bis-(*t*-butyldimethylsilanyloxy)xanthen-9-one, *t*-BuLi, THF; (e) TBAF, THF; (f) Methyl bromoacetate, Cs₂CO₃, DMF; (g) 2,3,4,6-tetra-O-acetyl-α-D-galactopyranosyl bromide, Cs₂CO₃, DMF; (h) NaOMe, MeOH; (i) aq. NaOH, MeOH.

Scheme 4.

Synthetic scheme of $3^{\text{Me}}\text{-}\beta\text{Gal}$. Reagents. (a) Methyl bromovalerate, Cs_2CO_3 , DMF; (b) 2,3,4,6-tetra-O-acetyl- α -D-galactopyranosyl bromide, Cs_2CO_3 , DMF; (c) NaOMe, MeOH; (d) aq. NaOH, MeOH.

Scheme 5.

Synthetic scheme of **AM-TG-βGal**. Reagents. (a) aq.NaOH, MeOH/H₂O; (b) Bromomethyl acetate, DIEA, MeOH/MeCN; (c) Bromomethyl acetate, DIEA, DMF.

Table 1

Absorption and fluorescence properties of the newly developed β -galactosidase substrates and their esterase and/or β -galactosidase-catalyzed hydrolysis products.

Compound	Absorption maximum (nm) ^a	Emission maximum (nm) ^a	Fluorescence quantum yield ^b	Fluorescence enhancement ^c
1^{Me}-βGal	454	515	0.069	46
2^{Me}-βGal	452	527	0.004	410
3^{Me}-βGal	452	512	0.009	370
AM-TG-βGal	453	518	0.005	470
1^{Me}	492	511	0.85	-
1	491	510	0.83	-
2^{Me}	494	516	0.67	-
2	494	515	0.32	-
3^{Me}	491	510	0.85	-
3	491	510	0.85	-
AM-TG	491	510	0.86	-

^aData for **1^{Me}- β Gal**, **2^{Me}- β Gal**, **3^{Me}- β Gal**, and **AM-TG- β Gal** were measured in 100 mM sodium phosphate buffer, pH 7.4, containing 0.1 % DMSO as a cosolvent. Data for **1^{Me}**, **2^{Me}**, **3^{Me}**, **1**, **2**, **3**, and **AM-TG** were measured in 100 mM sodium phosphate buffer, pH 9.0, containing 0.1 % DMSO as a cosolvent.

^bFor determination of the fluorescence quantum yield, fluorescein in 100 mM aq. NaOH (0.85) was used as a fluorescence standard.³⁹

^cFluorescence enhancement represents the ratio of fluorescence intensity at 509-511 nm before and after hydrolysis by β -galactosidase.

Table 2

Oxidation potential and calculated HOMO energy level of the benzene moiety of **1^{Me}-βGal**, **2^{Me} βGal**, and **3^{Me}-βGal**. **Bn(1^{Me})**, **Bn(2^{Me})**, and **Bn(3^{Me})** correspond to the benzene moiety of **1^{Me}-βGal**, **2^{Me} βGal**, and **3^{Me}-βGal**, respectively.

Benzene moiety		Oxidation potential (V vs SCE) ^a	Calcd. HOMO (hartrees) ^b
<i>m</i> -methoxytoluene	1.66	-0.2141
n = 1: Bn(1^{Me})	1.77	-0.2207
	n = 2:	n.d. ^c	-0.2198
	n = 3:	n.d. ^c	-0.2156
	n = 4: Bn(3^{Me})	1.62	-0.2152
Bn(2^{Me})	1.57	-0.2107

^a All data were measured in 100 mM TBAF MeCN, with Ag/Ag⁺ as a reference electrode.

^b HOMO level was calculated at the B3LYP/6-31G level.

^c n.d.; not determined.

Table 3Fluorescence quantum yields of anionic and neutral forms of 1^{Me}, 2^{Me}, 3^{Me}.

Compound	Φ_{fl} (pH 9.0) ^a	Φ_{fl} (pH 3.4) ^b
<u>1</u> ^{Me}	0.85	0.13
<u>2</u> ^{Me}	0.67	0.008
<u>3</u> ^{Me}	0.85	0.005

^a Data for anionic form were measured in 100 mM sodium phosphate buffer, pH 9.0, containing 0.1 % DMSO as a cosolvent.

^b Data for neutral form were measured in 100 mM sodium phosphate buffer, pH 3.4, containing 0.1 % DMSO as a cosolvent. For determination of the fluorescence quantum yield, fluorescein in 100 mM aq. NaOH (0.85) was used as a fluorescence standard.³⁹