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Guanidine Synthesis: Use of Amidines as Guanylating Agents

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Abstract. The use of amidines for the tandem or one pot synthesis of guanidines is reported. Guanidines are obtained by oxidative rearrangement of readily available and stable amidines into carbodiimides, followed by *in situ* reaction with amines. The protocol can be executed under mild reaction conditions (30°C), in a green solvent (dimethyl carbonate). The amine scope is broad, including sterically hindered, oxidation sensitive and chiral amines. Examples for the synthesis of both acyclic and cyclic guanidines are provided. 2-PrOPhI byproduct, generated from the oxidant 2-PrOPhINTs, can be isolated in high yields making regeneration of the hypervalent iodine reagent possible. The utility and greenness of the synthetic method is demonstrated by a new route towards the antihypertensive drug Pinacidil. The Process Mass Intensity (PMI) of the new route is only 24% of the classical one.

Keywords: Guanidine synthesis; Amidine; Hypervalent iodine compound; Oxidative rearrangement

Introduction

The guanidine core is a very common functionality in natural products (e.g. guanine, creatine), pharmaceuticals (e.g. Argatroban, Imatinib) and agrochemicals (e.g. Imidacloprid).^[1] Guanidines are also used as (chiral) catalysts, superbases, explosives, super potent sweeteners or as a chlorinating agent (Palau'chlor).^[2,3] Classical approaches towards the synthesis of guanidines involve reaction of an amine and a so called guanylating agent (Scheme 1).^[3] Although these classical approaches often allow efficient synthesis of guanidines, the precursors/reagents required for the synthesis (iso(thio)cyanate, cyanogen bromide derived) and/or activation of these guanylating agents pose health, flammability and reactivity issues. Considering the importance of the guanidine entity and the limitations associated with the classical synthetic methods, there is still a need for general, simple and more sustainable methods. We envisaged that amidines are a potentially interesting new class of guanylating agents. After all, amidines are stable compounds which can be easily obtained from readily available amines and nitriles via a Pinner reaction, requiring only an alcohol and hydrochloric acid.^[3c,4] By rearrangement of amidines with an appropriate hypervalent iodine reagent, carbodiimides can be obtained. Subsequent reaction of carbodiimide with amine would give access to guanidines in one step (Scheme 1).^[5] Our group recently described the synthesis of secondary amides via reaction of *in situ* generated carbodiimide and carboxylic acid.^[6,7] However, efficient oxidative rearrangement of amidines without competitive nucleophilic addition of *in situ* generated nucleophiles and amine oxidation with periodinane is not self-evident.^[8] Hypervalent iodine compounds are interesting oxidants for rearrangement as they possess a low toxicity, are readily available and easily handled. Moreover, by changing the substituents their reactivity can be modulated and the nucleophile *in situ* generated selected.^[9] The only drawback is the iodobenzene byproduct formed. However, when this can be easily separated from the reaction product and transformed into periodinane reagent a more sustainable approach is at hand.

Scheme 1. Classical and new approach towards guanidines.

A related reaction to the aimed transformation is the Tiemann rearrangement starting from arenamidoximes. *O*-Activation of these substrates with RSO₂Cl and subsequent rearrangement followed by elimination yields an *N*-substituted cyanamide. *N,N'*-substituted guanidines can be formed by subsequent reaction with amine.^[10] Activation of substrate and rearrangement/addition are performed in separate steps. No *N,N',N''*-substituted guanidines can be obtained with this rearrangement. Aza Hofmann rearrangement of *N*-alkanesulfonyl- arenamidines with diacetoxyiodotoluene into *N*-alkanesulfonyl-*N'*-arylcarbodiimide in glyme has been described by Yagupolskii.^[11,12] Similar to the Tiemann rearrangement, the arenamidine requires a very strong electron withdrawing sulfonyl group as activator for rearrangement and only reactions with morpholine (one-pot) were reported. Moreover, in general only low yields of *N*-aryl-*N'*-(alkylsulfonyl)morpholine-4-carboximidamides were obtained and no straightforward and sufficiently mild procedure for removal of the strong electron withdrawing *N*-activating sulfonyl group was provided. Our aim was to develop a general and high yielding sustainable protocol based on amidine rearrangement featuring a broad substrate and amine scope without the need for pre-activation.

Results and Discussion

The reaction of *N*-benzylbenzamidine (**1a**) and morpholine was selected as model system. First several oxidants were tested using 1.2 eq. morpholine in dimethyl carbonate (DMC) at 30 °C in air (Table 1). PhI(OAc)₂ and PhI(OH)OTs gave guanidine **2a** but with a low mass balance (entries 1 and 2). With PhI(OCOCF₃)₂ only decomposition of substrate was observed (entry 3). The most interesting result was obtained for PhINTs giving both a high mass balance and yield (entry 4).^[9] A solvent screening with this oxidant revealed that a variety of solvents with different dielectric constant can be used (Table S1).^[13] As DMC is an environmentally benign and non-flammable solvent and it gave the highest yield it was retained.^[14] Investigation of the effect of the amount of oxidant and amine on the conversion and yield revealed that 2.2 eq. of oxidant and 1.2 eq. morpholine were optimal (Table S2). Unfortunately, when using only 1.2 eq. of PhINTs no full conversion of **1a** was obtained (entry 5). Therefore we tested 2-PrOPhINTs as it possesses a higher reactivity and better solubility versus PhINTs.^[15] Interestingly, the same yield was obtained with only 1.2 eq. oxidant (entry 4 versus 6).

Table 1. Screening of hypervalent iodine reagents.

Entry	Oxidant	Eq. Oxidant	Yield 1a/2a (%) ^{[a], [b]}
1	PhI(OAc) ₂	2.2	20/49
2	PhI(OH)OTs	2.2	12/7 ^[c]
3	PhI(OCOCF ₃) ₂	2.2	57/0
4	PhINTs	2.2	0/89 ^[d]
5	PhINTs	1.2	35/59
6	2-PrOPhINTs	1.2	6/84 ^[e]

[a] Reaction conditions: 0.5 mmol **1a**, x eq. oxidant, 1.2 eq. morpholine, DMC, air, 30 °C, 1.5 h. [b] NMR yield using 1,3,5-trimethoxybenzene as internal standard. [c] 65% *N*-benzyl-*N'*-phenylurea was formed. [d] 43% PhI was isolated. [e] 92% 2-PrOPhI was isolated.

With the optimized conditions in hand, we investigated substrate scope with morpholine as amine. At first, different substituents on nitrogen of benzamidine and *p*-toluamidine were tested (Table 2).

Table 2. Substituent scope in benzamidine (**1**) with morpholine.

Entry	1	R ¹	R ²	2	Yield (%) ^[a]	Arl (%) ^[b]
1	1a	Bn	H	2a	77	92
2	1b	Pr	H	2b	91	98
3	1c	<i>i</i> -Pr	<i>p</i> -Me	2c	91	94
4	1d	Cy	<i>p</i> -Me	2d	87	99
5	1e	<i>t</i> -Bu	<i>p</i> -Me	2e	63 ^{[c], [d]}	46
6	1f	Ph	H	2f	92	95
7	1g	Ts	H	2g	75	93
8	1h	Bn	<i>p</i> -SMe	2h	76	78
9	1i	Bn	<i>p</i> -Me	2i	78	96
10	1j	Bn	<i>m</i> -Me	2j	78	88
11	1k	Bn	<i>o</i> -Me	2k	81	92
12	1l	Bn	<i>p</i> -Cl	2l	69	94
13	1m	Bn	<i>m</i> -Cl	2m	76	84
14	1n	Bn	<i>o</i> -Cl	2n	88	90
15	1o	Bn	<i>p</i> -F	2o	70	92
16	1p	Bn	<i>p</i> -CO ₂ Et	2p	72	89

[a] Reaction conditions: 0.5 mmol **1**, 1.2 eq. 2-PrOPhINTs, 1.2 eq. morpholine, DMC, air, 30 °C, 1.5 h. [b] 2-PrOPhI isolated. [c] Under standard conditions: 26% **1e** and 26% **2e**. [d] 2.2 eq. PhINTs and 3.0 eq. morpholine.

Both primary (entries 1 and 2), secondary (a)cyclic (entries 3 and 4) as well as aromatic substituents (entry 6) are compatible. A substrate with an *N*-tert-butyl group gave only 26% yield and remaining **1e**. With more oxidant and amine, 63% **2e** could be obtained (entry 5). In accordance with the observations of Yagupolskii a tosyl gave a high yield of the corresponding guanidine (entry 7).^[11] Next, different substituents in the phenyl ring of *N*-benzylbenzamidines were tested (Table 2). Both electron donating (entries 8-11) and withdrawing (entries 12-16) substituents are well tolerated. Even a SMe group gave a good yield, despite being a sensitive group towards oxidation (entry 8).

Subsequently, the amine scope was tested using **1a** as substrate (Table 3). Acyclic secondary amines gave a good result as exemplified by diethylamine (entry 2).

Besides butylamine (entry 1) more challenging primary amines such as benzylamine (entry 3) and allylamine (entry 4) can be used, although a benzylic position is oxidation sensitive and a double bond is known to react with the oxidant with formation of *N*-tosylaziridines.^[14a] Primary amines which are secondary and tertiary at the alpha position also performed well (entries 5-7). Next, compatibility with heteroatom containing functional groups which can potentially also be oxidized were tested. 2-Ethoxyethanamine gave 68% of the guanidine but 22% of the substrate was still remaining (entry 8). Also the reactions with 4-aminobutanol, (*S*)-1-Boc-3-aminopiperidine, *N,N*-dimethylethane-1,2-diamine, 4-hydroxypiperidine and ethyl piperazine-1-carboxylate suffered from an incomplete conversion and moderate yields were obtained (entries 10, 12, 14, 16, 18). With *N*-methylpiperazine no guanidine was obtained and 48% of the substrate remained (entry 21). To achieve full conversion in these challenging cases simply switching to a one-pot approach was tested. Gratifyingly, when nucleophile was added after just 10 minutes reaction of amidine with oxidant at 30°C, full conversion and significantly improved isolated yields were obtained (up to 35%) (entries 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 22). For piperazines the yield can be further increased to over 90% when three equivalents were added (entries 20 and 23). Even cyanamide, a very oxidative sensitive and poor nucleophile, can be used in the one-pot protocol (entry 25).^[16] Addition of a base (NEt₃) and applying a higher reaction temperature (80°C) were beneficial for the yield (entry 26). Next we investigated reagents featuring two primary amines. Applying the one-pot protocol on **1a** with butane-1,4-diamine gave selectively 68% of the desired mono guanidine product (entry 27). Only when the amidine was added in excess (3 eq.) it was possible to functionalize both amino groups and obtain the bisguanidine **3t** in 96% (see SI). With L-lysine and L-ornithine esters, featuring two chemically different primary amino groups, good yields were achieved with complete selectivity for the unbranched primary amino group, providing an easy access towards arginine mimetics (entries 28 and 29).^[17] Finally, a bisamine consisting of a primary and secondary amine was tested. 4-Aminopiperidine gave selectively the guanidine including the secondary amine (entry 30).

Table 3. Amine scope with *N*-benzylbenzamidine (**1a**).

Entry	Amine	Product	Yield 1a/3 (%)	ArI (%) ^[a]	Procedure ^[b]
1	BuNH ₂	3a	0/84	89	A
2	Et ₂ NH	3b	0/78	89	A
3	BnNH ₂	3c	0/66	88	A
4		3d	0/70	84	A
5		3e	0/82	87	A
6	<i>t</i> -BuNH ₂	3f	0/82	87	A
7		3g	0/68	67	A
8		3h	22/68 ^[c]	-	A
9			0/78	74	B
10		3i	25/64 ^[c]	-	A
11			0/75	71	B
12		3j	13/73 ^[c]	-	A
13			0/78	70	B
14		3k	29/55	98	A
15			0/90	93	B
16		3l	17/76 ^[c]	-	A
17			0/87	78	B
18		3m	26/68 ^[c]	-	A
19			0/79 ^[c]	-	B
20			0/94 ^[d]	76	B
21		3n	48/0 ^[c]	-	A
22			0/67 ^[c]	-	B
23			0/90 ^[d]	91	B
24	NCNH ₂	3o	55/0 ^[c]	-	A
25			0/51 ^[c]	-	B
26			0/70 ^[e]	84	B
27		3p	0/68 ^[d]	82	B
28		3q	0/57	67	B
29		3r	0/78	74	B
30		3s	0/82	82	B

[a] 2-PrOPhI isolated. [b] Procedure A: 0.5 mmol **1a**, 1.2 eq. 2-PrOPhINTs, 1.2 eq. amine (present from start), DMC, air, 30 °C, 1.5 h. Procedure B: Similar, but amine added after 10 min. [c] NMR yield with 1,3,5-trimethoxybenzene as internal standard. [d] Amine (3.0 eq.) used. [e] Cyanamide (5.0 eq.) and Et₃N (3.0 eq.) were added after 10 min. Then increasing temperature to 80 °C and stirring for 3 h.

As full conversion could be obtained with the one-pot protocol when amidine substrate was remaining in the tandem approach, a link between the rate of oxidation of amine versus amidine was assumed. To demonstrate this, the stability of the different amines used in this study towards 2-PrOPhINTs was tested by ¹H-NMR analysis in CD₂Cl₂ (Table 4). On the basis of the remaining amine (10 minutes after oxidant

addition) a good correlation between the rate of amine decomposition and performance in the tandem approach revealed.

Table 4. Reaction of amines with ArIX₂ reagents.

$\begin{array}{c} \text{R}^1 \\ \\ \text{NH} \\ \\ \text{R}^2 \end{array} \xrightarrow[\text{DCM-}d2, \text{ air}]{1.0 \text{ eq. ArIX}_2} \text{Decomposition}$ 30 °C, 10 min			
Entry	Amine	ArIX ₂	Amine (%) ^{[a],[b]}
1	Butylamine	2-PrOPhINTs	68
2	Butylamine	PhI(OAc) ₂	48
3	Diethylamine	2-PrOPhINTs	51
4	Diethylamine	PhI(OAc) ₂	12
5	<i>t</i> -Butylamine	2-PrOPhINTs	73
6	<i>t</i> -Butylamine	PhI(OAc) ₂	60
7	Adamantylamine	2-PrOPhINTs	98
8	Adamantylamine	PhI(OAc) ₂	19
9	Allylamine	2-PrOPhINTs	0
10	Allylamine	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
11	2-Ethoxyethanamine	2-PrOPhINTs	0
12	2-Ethoxyethanamine	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
13	4-Hydroxypiperidine	2-PrOPhINTs	0
14	4-Hydroxypiperidine	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
15	<i>N</i> -Methylpiperazine	2-PrOPhINTs	0
16	<i>N</i> -Methylpiperazine	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
17	Cyanamide	2-PrOPhINTs	0
18	Cyanamide	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
19	4-Aminopiperidine	2-PrOPhINTs	0
20	4-Aminopiperidine	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
21	Morpholine	2-PrOPhINTs	25
22	Morpholine	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
23	Cyclopentylamine	2-PrOPhINTs	51
24	Cyclopentylamine	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
25	Benzylamine	2-PrOPhINTs	42
26	Benzylamine	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
27	4-Aminobutanol	2-PrOPhINTs	52
28	4-Aminobutanol	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
29	(<i>S</i>)-1-Boc-3-aminopiperidine	2-PrOPhINTs	69
30	(<i>S</i>)-1-Boc-3-aminopiperidine	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
31	Ethyl piperazine-1-carboxylate	2-PrOPhINTs	32
32	Ethyl piperazine-1-carboxylate	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
33	Me ₂ NCH ₂ CH ₂ NH ₂	2-PrOPhINTs	32
34	Me ₂ NCH ₂ CH ₂ NH ₂	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
35	Butane-1,4-diamine	2-PrOPhINTs	49
36	Butane-1,4-diamine	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
37	L-Lysine, Me ester	2-PrOPhINTs	42
38	L-Lysine, Me ester	PhI(OAc) ₂	0
39	L-Ornithine, <i>t</i> Bu ester	2-PrOPhINTs	41
40	L-Ornithine, <i>t</i> Bu ester	PhI(OAc) ₂	0

[a] Reaction conditions: 0.2 mmol amine, 1.0 eq. hypervalent iodine reagent, 0.5 mL DCM-*d*2, 30 °C, 10 min. [b] Remaining amine calculated by NMR with 1,3,5-trimethoxybenzene as internal standard.

A similar study with PIDA indicated that always less amine remained versus 2-PrOPhINTs (and in most cases none) justifying why it is not a good oxidant in this process. Control experiments on **1a** for several amines with PIDA as oxidant confirmed the superiority of 2-PrOPhINTs irrespective of the protocol applied (tandem or one pot) (Table 5).

Next we looked at the suitability of other amidines than *C*-aryl-*N*-alkylamidines as substrates. The use of isomeric *C*-alkyl-*N*-arylamidines as substrate does not offer any added value as these would go through the same carbodiimide intermediate delivering the same guanidines. In fact, *C*-alkyl-*N*-arylamidines lead to 1*H*-benzimidazoles rather than to a carbodiimide via a faster direct amination reaction.^[6] Unfortunately, *N*-unsubstituted benzamidines and alkanimidamides did not rearrange to the corresponding carbodiimide/cyanamide under our reaction conditions. Therefore *N*-protection on these substrates was explored (Table 6). Gratifyingly, *N*-Boc benzamidine (**4a**) and *N*-Boc-phenylethanimidamide (**4b**) worked smoothly under the standard reaction conditions yielding the corresponding *N*-Boc guanidines (**5**) in good yields (entries 1 and 2). Other *N*-Boc alkanimidamides required a higher reaction temperature to obtain full conversion to **5** in 1.5 h (entries 4-7). Addition of HCl to the crude reaction of **5** mixture before work-up allowed for quantitative deprotection of the Boc-group and yielded the target guanidines **6** in a one pot reaction (Table 6).

Table 5. Control experiments using PIDA in the oxidative rearrangement and nucleophilic addition protocol with *N*-benzylbenzamidine (**1a**) and selected amines.

Entry	Amine	Product	Yield 1a/2a or 3 (%) ^[a]	Procedure ^[b]
1	Butylamine	3a	8/63	A
2			10/52	B
3	Morpholine	2a	48/32	A
4			42/17	B
5	Allylamine	3d	25/23	A
6			6/20	B
7	4-Hydroxy- piperidine	3l	27/17	B
8	<i>N</i> -Methyl- piperazine	3n	42/6	B
9	Cyanamide	3o	32/12	B

[a] NMR yield with 1,3,5-trimethoxybenzene as internal standard. [b]

Procedure A: 0.5 mmol **1a**, 1.2 eq. PhI(OAc)₂, 1.2 eq. amine (present from start), DMC, air, 30 °C, 1.5 h. Procedure B: Similar, but the amine was added after 10 min.

Table 6. Guanylation with *N*-unsubstituted amidines via Boc protection.

Entry	Substrate	R	T (°C)	Product	Yield 4/5 (%) ^[a]	ArI (%) ^[b]	Product	Yield 6 (%)
1	4a	Ph	30	5a	0/89	89	6a	88 ^[c]
2	4b	Bn	30	5b	0/83	70	6b	61 ^[d]
3	4c	Et	30	5c	18/70	-	6c	-
4	4c		30	5c	0/78 ^[e]	-	6c	-
5	4c		50	5c	21/70	-	6c	-
6	4c		80	5c	0/88	82	6c	62 ^[d]
7	4d	Cy	80	5d	0/90	82	6d	73 ^[d]

[a] Reaction conditions: 0.5 mmol **4**, 1.2 eq. 2-PrOPhINTs, 1.2 eq. morpholine, DMC, air, T, 1.5 h. [b] 2-PrOPhI isolated for the synthesis of **5**. [c] As in [a] but one pot deprotection by addition of conc. aq. HCl, 30 °C, 1 h. [d] As in [a] but one pot deprotection by addition of 2 mL HCl (4 M in dioxane), 30 °C, 4 h. [e] The reaction time was 3 h instead of 1.5 h.

Subsequently, we investigated whether our protocol could be used to make cyclic guanidines. When aminoacetals are used as the nucleophiles followed by an additional deprotection and condensation step on the crude reaction mixture 2-amino-1*H*-imidazoles can be synthesized. With *N*-benzylbenzamidinium (**1a**) as substrate and 2,2-dimethoxyethan-1-amine as the nucleophile, 78% of the corresponding guanidine **7** was obtained under the standard reaction conditions. Addition of HCl immediately after the tandem reaction without prior work-up provided 2-benzylamino-1-phenyl-1*H*-imidazole (**8a**) in 75% yield (Scheme 2). Even with a bismethylated analogue, 3,3-dimethoxybutan-2-amine, the same protocol delivered 2-benzylamino-3,4-dimethyl-1-phenyl-1*H*-imidazole (**8b**) in good yield (Scheme 2). When we tested this procedure on *N*-Boc-benzamidinium (**4a**) and *N*-Boc-ethanimidamide (**4c**) with 2,2-dimethoxyethan-1-amine, 2-phenylamino-1*H*-imidazole (**8d**) and 1-ethyl-2-amino-1*H*-imidazole (**8c**) respectively, were obtained (Scheme 2).

To demonstrate the applicability of the synthetic method developed, we synthesized the antihypertensive drug Pinacidil (**10**) in an alternative manner, starting from the same substrate (Scheme 3). 4-Cyanopyridine was transformed into amidine **9** via a Pinner-like reaction.^[18] By evaporation of the solvent and subsequent washing with aq. NaOH, crude **9** could be isolated. Without further purification **9** was converted into **10** applying the one-pot oxidative rearrangement and nucleophilic addition protocol with cyanamide as the nucleophile.^[19] The reaction product **10** could be purified by crystallization. The classical Pinacidil route is a 6 step process with an overall yield of 25%^[19] while our approach reduces the synthesis to only 2 steps, with an overall yield of 59%. To further demonstrate the greenness of the guanidine synthesis we compared the Process Mass Intensity (PMI) of both approaches towards this API.^[21] The PMI is defined as the total mass of substrates, reagents and chemicals (e.g. solvents) needed for work-up, divided by the mass of the product. Therefore the PMI is not only a measure for the mass efficiency of the reaction, but also for its sustainability. After all, a lower PMI also means less waste production.

Scheme 2. One-pot 2-amino-1H-imidazole (**8a-d**) formation starting from amidines (**1a** or **4**).

The classical synthesis revealed a PMI of 551 while the new process features a PMI of only 131. Moreover, the use of undesirable reagents (from a health and flammability point of view) such as CS_2 is avoided. Interestingly, the 2-PrOPhI by-product generated by reduction of the oxidant can be isolated in high yield (82%) in the Pinacidil synthesis by simple extraction with heptane. This recovery has not been taken into account in the PMI calculation.

Scheme 3. New and classical synthesis of Pinacidil (**10**) from 4-cyanopyridine.

In fact, generally high yields of 2-PrOPhI were obtained in all experiments (Tables 2-4). It can be easily separated from the guanidine product by eluting with 100% heptane at the start of the purification by column chromatography on silicagel. No attempts were made to recover TsNH_2 . Based on its polarity, a simple and general applicable separation is not straightforward. Moreover, 2-iodophenol from which 2-PrOPhI is made is 30 times more expensive than TsNH_2 .^[22] As 2-PrOPhINTs is synthesized from 2-PrOPhI, via oxidation with $\text{Ac}_2\text{O}/\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ followed by treatment with TsNH_2 under basic conditions,^[15] 2-PrOPhI recovery positively contributes to the overall sustainability of the process as initially aimed. Although we standardly applied column chromatography for the purification of the guanidines, the synthesis of Pinacidil illustrates that it is certainly possible to purify by crystallization while maintaining the interesting feature of 2-PrOPhI recovery.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we developed a general method for the transformation of readily available and stable amidine substrates (Pinner reaction) into substituted guanidines using 2-PrOPhINTs as an oxidant and an amine as the reagent. The rate of rearrangement of amidine into carbodiimide versus the competitive oxidation of amine determines which approach has to be used; tandem or one-pot. The use of 2-PrOPhINTs as hypervalent iodine reagent is crucial to obtain a good mass balance and a high yield of guanidine target compound, irrespective whether the amine is added from the start or after 10 minutes reaction. The amine scope is broad, including (α) chiral, non nucleophilic (cyanamide) and sterically hindered representatives. When aminoacetals are selected as reagents, cyclic guanidines can be synthesized by *in situ* deprotection of the guanidine acetals initially obtained. The guanylation reactions can be performed in a sustainable solvent (DMC) under mild reaction conditions (30 °C) and 2-PrOPhI byproduct generated can be reused. The new synthesis of Pinacidil illustrates the usefulness of the developed protocol. Comparison of the PMI of the new and classical synthesis of this API underlines the greenness of the new approach.

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Experimental Section

General procedure for the synthesis of guanidines: A vial was loaded with 0.5 mmol amidine and amine (0.6 mmol). Me_2CO_3 (1 mL) and 2-PrOPhINTs (259 mg, 0.6 mmol) were added. Subsequently, the vial was sealed and the reaction mixture was stirred for 1.5 h at 30 °C. The solvent was removed in vacuo and the crude product was purified via an automated chromatography system using a Silica Flash Cartridge. For oxidation-sensitive amines, a one pot protocol where the amine was added after 10 minutes was used.

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