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Maria Marinescu

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# Benzimidazole-Triazole Hybrids as Antimicrobial and Antiviral Agents

## Maria Marinescu

Department of Organic Chemistry, Biochemistry and Catalysis, Faculty of Chemistry, University of Bucharest, 030018 Soseaua Panduri, Romania; maria.marinescu@chimie.unibuc.ro

Abstract: Bacterial infections have attracted the attention of researchers in recent decades, especially due to the special problems they have faced, such as their increasing diversity and resistance to antibiotic treatment. The emergence and development of the SARS-CoV-2 infection stimulated even more research, to find new structures with antimicrobial and antiviral properties. Among the heterocyclic compounds with remarkable therapeutic properties, benzimidazoles and triazoles stand out, possessing antimicrobial, antiviral, antitumor, anti-Alzheimer, anti-inflammatory, analgesic, antidiabetic, or anti-ulcer activities. In addition, the literature of the last decade reports benzimidazole-triazole hybrids with improved biological properties compared to the properties of simple mono-heterocyclic compounds. This review aims to provide an update on the synthesis methods of these hybrids, along with their antimicrobial and antiviral activities, as well as the structure–activity relationship reported in literature.

Keywords: benzimidazole; triazole; hybrids, antimicrobial, antiviral, pharmaceutical properties

#### 1. Introduction

Heterocyclic compounds have a central place in medicinal chemistry, being used as therapeutic agents to treat most diseases [1-3]. Among these heterocycles, benzimidazole stands out, as a purine-analog pharmacophore, with a wide biological activity, such as antimicrobial [4-8], antiviral [9,10], antihistamine [11,12], anticonvulsant [3,13], antitumor [14-16], proton pump inhibitors [17], antiparasitic [16,18,19], anti-inflammatory [20-22], or antihypertensive [23,24]. Some benzimidazoles are efficient agents in Diabetes mellitus [25-27], while astemizole compounds possess anti-prion activity to treat Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease [5,28]. The literature also reports anti-Alzheimer [29,30], psychoactive, anxiolytic, analgesic [31,32], and anticoagulant properties [33,34] of benzimidazole derivatives. Also, for triazole compounds, the literature mentions a series of therapeutic activities, such as antimicrobial [35-38], antitubercular [39,40], potential inhibitors of SARS CoV-2 [41-43], antiviral [43,44] anti-inflammatory [45,46] antitumor [47-50], antihypertensive [50], antioxidant [47,51,52] and antiepileptic [53,54]. Pharmacological applications of triazoles refer to their activity as  $\alpha$ -glucosidase inhibitors [55,56], analgesic [50,57], anticonvulsant [53,58], and antimalarial agents [57,59]. Triazole derivatives are efficient in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease [60,61] and are very effective neuroprotective agents [62,63].

The successive events happened from the spring of 2020 up to and including the present, regarding the emergence and development of the COVID-19 pandemic, have led the scientific world to investigate more closely the possibility of treating this infectious disease with various antiviral [64-66], antimicrobial [67], immunomodulatory [68] or anti-inflammatory drugs [69], therefore, the discovery of new molecules with simple or hybrid structures, with biological properties that satisfy the requirements of the treatment of this condition it is absolutely necessary and constitutes the engine of the development of new effective therapeutic agents.

Classical drugs containing benzimidazole and triazole rings recommend these heterocycles as essential in building new target compounds with antimicrobial, antiviral, antiparasitic, etc. properties (Fig. 1). In addition, the literature mentions a series of benzimidazole-triazole hybrids with remarkable antimicrobial properties, antiviral activities, including new anti-SARS-COV-2 agents [70-74], with particular importance in the context of the recent pandemic, which led to the study of

synthesis methods, antimicrobial properties, structure-property relationships and their biological activities. As expected, the study refers to both 1,2,3-triazole-benzimidazole hybrids and 1,2,4-triazole-benzimidazole hybrids, even if it seems that the literature is richer in the second category, in terms of antimicrobial activity.

In order to highlight the structures of the heterocycles in the discussed compounds, we colored benzimidazole nucleus with red, 1,2,3-triazole with blue and 1,2,4-triazole with green.

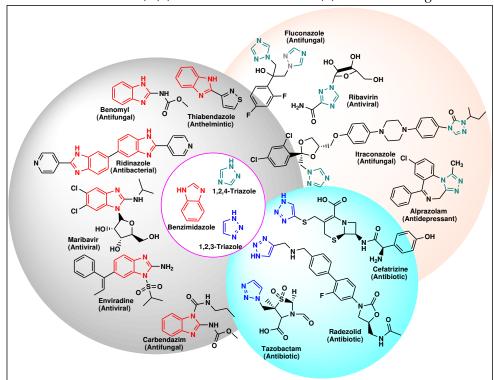


Figure 1. Chemical structures of some benzimidazole, 1,2,3-triazole and 1,2,4-triazole-based marketed drugs

The recent literature marks several strategies for the synthesis of 1,2,3-triazoles, like click reaction [75], Bouiton-Katritzky rearrangement [76], oxidative cyclization of hydrazones [77], post-cycloaddition functionalization [78], alkylation or arylation of triazoles [79]. Also, for benzimidazoles, the literature mentions several methods of synthesis, such as reaction of *o*-phenenediamine with aldehydes or ketones (Phillips-Ladenburg reaction) [3,80-82], with acids or their derivatives (Weidenhagen reaction) [81], or green methods of classic syntheses [80, 83-86].

In the following, we will present syntheses of benzimidazole-triazole hybrids with antimicrobial and antiviral properties.

#### 2. Synthesis and antimicrobial activities of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazoles

#### 2.1. 2-Benzimidazole-R(Ar)-1,4-disubstituted-1,2,3-triazole hybrids

 mL<sup>-1</sup>), and that compounds **3a** and **3f** were the most active compounds against *E. coli* as they showed 70% of that of Fluconazole (MIC =  $6.25 \mu mol mL^{-1}$ ) while compound **3b** showed the highest activity against *Staphylococcus aureus* (65% of that of Ciprofloxacin, MIC =  $18 \mu mol mL^{-1}$ ) [87].

Scheme 1. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 2a-2l and 3a-3f

Al-blewi et *al.* used an azide–alkyne Huisgen cycloaddition reaction carried out by simultaneously mixing thiopropargylated benzimidazole **4** with the appropriate sulfa drug azides **5a–5f**, copper sulfate and sodium ascorbate in DMSO/ H<sub>2</sub>O to regioselectively furnish target mono-1,4-disubstituted-1,2,3-triazole tethered benzimidazole-sulfonamide conjugates **6a–6f** with 85–90% yields after 6–8 h of heating at 80 °C (Scheme 2). All compounds were evaluated for their antimicrobial activity (Table 1) against four pathogenic bacterial strains (Gram-positive: *Bacillus cereus* ATTC 10876, *Staphylococcus aureus* ATTC 25923 and Gram-negative: *Escherichia coli* ATTC 25922, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* ATTC 27853 and two fungal strains, *Candida albicans* ATTC 50193, *Aspergillus brasiliensis* ATTC 16404). As can be seen in Table 1, compound **6a** shown the best antibacterial activity against *Bacillus cereus* and *Staphylococcus aureus* (64 μgmL<sup>-1</sup>) and compounds **6c**, **6d** and **6e** the best antibacterial activity against *Escherichia coli* (64 μgmL<sup>-1</sup>) [88].

Scheme 2. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 6a-6f

Table 1. Antimicrobial screening results of compounds 6a–6f presented as MIC (μgmL¹).

Compound	Gram-positive organisms			Gram-negative organisms		rganisms
_	B.c.	S.a.	P.a.	E.c.	A.b.	C.a.
6a	64	64	256	128	128	128
6b	128	128	128	128	256	256
6c	256	128	256	64	256	156
6d	256	128	256	64	256	256
6e	256	128	256	64	256	256
6f	512	512	256	256	512	512
Ciprofloxacin	8	4	8	4	-	-

Rashdan et *al.* synthesized hybrids **10** starting from 2-azido-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazole derivatives **7a–7b** which reacted with acetylacetone in the presence of sodium ethoxide to obtain hybrids molecules **8a–8b**. The latter acted as a key molecules for the synthesis of new carbazone derivatives **9a–9b** that were submitted to react with 2-oxo-N-phenyl-2 (phenylamino)acetohydrazonoyl chloride to obtain the target hybrid derivatives **10a–10b** (Scheme 3). All compounds were screened for their *in vitro* antimicrobial activity against pathogenic microorganisms *Staphylococcus aureus*, *E. coli*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Aspergillus niger*, and *Candida albicans*. The results showed that compounds **10a** and **10b** had strong activity against all the tested pathogenic microbes. Compounds

**8a** and **9a** only showed effects against the Gram-negative and Gram-positive bacteria and had no effect on the tested fungi. In addition, *in silico* and *in vitro* findings showed that compounds **10a** and **10b** were the most active against bacterial strains, and could serve as potential antimicrobial agents (Table 2). The hybrids **8–10** were subjected to molecular docking studies with DNA gyrase B and exhibited binding energy that extended from -9.8 to -6.4 kcal/mol, which confirmed their excellent potency. The compounds **10a** and **10b** were found to be with the minimum binding energy (-9.8 and -9.7 kcal/mol) as compared to the standard drug Ciprofloxacin (-7.4 kcal/mol) against the target enzyme DNA gyrase B [89].

Scheme 3. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 8a-8b, 9a-9b and 10a-10b

Table 2. In vitro antimicrobial screening of hybrids 8, 9 and 10 using the agar diffusion method.

Hybrids _	Inhibition zone diameters using the agar diffusion method (mm)					
Trybitus —	S. aureus	E. coli	P. aeruginosa	A. niger	C. albicans	
8a	$15 \pm 0.14$	12 ± 1.08	22 ± 1.01	-	-	
8b	-	$5 \pm 0.2$	-	$30 \pm 1.16$	$27 \pm 1.1$	
9a	$23 \pm 0.8$	-	$13 \pm 0.65$	-	-	
9b	-	-	$12 \pm 0.8$	$14 \pm 0.15$	$19 \pm 1.04$	
10a	$24 \pm 0.6$	$25 \pm 0.9$	$17 \pm 0.75$	$20 \pm 0.9$	$16 \pm 0.89$	
10b	$29 \pm 1.2$	$21 \pm 1.14$	$19 \pm 0.79$	$18 \pm 0.12$	$14 \pm 0.58$	
Ciprofloxacin	$20 \pm 0.9$	$23 \pm 1.02$	$21 \pm 0.9$	-	-	
Nystatin	-	-	-	$22 \pm 0.18$	$23 \pm 1.15$	

Compounds **11a–11g** with terminal acetylene and 2-(azidomethoxy)ethyl acetate were condensed using CuI as catalyst and triethylamine (TEA) under microwave irradiation, to achieve hybrids 1,2,3-triazole connected *via* benzene to the benzimidazole nucleus **12a–12g** with excellent yields (70-90%)(Scheme 2). The cleavage of the acetyl group using potassium carbonate (K<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub>) in methanol liberated the hydroxy group of the corresponding hybrid triazoles **13a–13g** in almost quantitative yields. Compounds **6a–6g** were screened for *in vitro* antifungal activities against two phytopathogenic fungi *Verticillium dahliae* Kleb and *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *albedinis*. The result of the mycelia linear growth rate indicates that some of the compounds show a weak inhibition against the two fungi, the only compound that shows a significantly increased rate is compound **6e** with rate of 29.76% against *Verticillium dahliae* [90].

Scheme 4. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 6a-6g

Bistrović et *al.* synthesized in two steps hybrids **19a–19e**, **20a–20e** and **21a–21e** starting from 4-(prop-2-ynyloxy)benzaldehyde **14** (Scheme 5). All compounds were evaluated for their *in vitro* 

antibacterial activity against Gram-positive bacteria: *S. aureus* ATCC 25923, methicillin-sensitive *S. aureus*, *E. faecalis*, vancomycin-resistant *E. faecium*, and Gram-negative bacteria: *E. coli* ATCC 25925, *P. aeruginosa* ATCC 27853, *A. baumannii* ATCC 19606 and ESBL-producing *K. pneumoniae* ATCC 27736. Generally, compounds showed better activities against Gram-positive than Gram-negative bacteria. Compounds **20a–20e** with better binding affinity relative to other amidines, were the most active against *S. aureus* (MIC = 8–32  $\mu$ gmL-1). Compound **19a** was the most promising candidate because of its higher potency (MIC = 4  $\mu$ gmL-1) against ESBL-producing *E. coli* [91].

OHC 
$$R_1N_3$$
 OHC  $N_2N$   $R_1$   $N_2$   $N_2$   $N_3$   $N_4$   $N_2$   $N_4$   $N_5$   $N_5$ 

Scheme 5. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 19a-19e, 20a-20e and 21a-21e

Rao et *al.* synthesized hybrids **22a–22b** (Fig. 1), using click chemistry approach. Compounds had weak activity against *Mycobacterium bovis* strain (BCG values % inhibition = 27.3 and 26.2 respectively) [92]. Ashok et *al.* synthesized in three steps hybrids **26a–26j**, starting from 1*H*-indole-3-carbaldehyde 7 (Scheme 6). The compounds were evaluated for their antimicrobial activity against gram-positive *Staphylococcus aureus* ATCC 6538, *Bacillus subtilis* ATCC 6633 and gram-negative *Proteus vulgaris* ATCC 29213, *Escherichia coli* ATCC 11229 bacteria using Gentamicin as standard. Antifungal activity was tested against *Candida albicans* ATCC 10231 and *Aspergillus niger* ATCC 9029 strains with standard drug Fluconazole. Compounds **26b**, **26c** and **26h** with with MIC of

HN N 
$$= N$$
  $= N$   $= N$ 

Figure 1. Structure of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 22a-22b

Scheme 6. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 26a-26j

3.125–6.25 µgmL<sup>-1</sup> were found to be the most promising potential antimicrobial molecules [93]. Mallikanti et *al.* synthesized novel benzimidazole-conjugated 1,2,3-triazole analogues **29a–29l** in two steps: 1. formation of benzimidazole intermediate by reaction between 3',5'-difluorobiphenyl-3,4-diamine **27** and 2-hydroxy-4-(prop-2-ynyloxy) benzaldehyde **28**, and 2. microwave-assisted coppercatalyzed click reaction (Scheme 7). Compounds **29a-29l** have shown minimal inhibition zones against all gram positive (*S. aureus*, *B. subtilis*) and gram-negative (*E. coli*, *P. aeruginosa*) strains using Ampicillin as standard drug. Among all tested compounds, the **29i** and **29k** have showed greater

activity against *P. aeruginosa, S. aureus* and *B. subtilis* than standard reference. Compounds **29a, 29b, 29c, 29d, 29e, 29f, 29g, 29h, 29j** and **29l** demonstrated moderate antibacterial activity against the same. Also, compounds **29i, 29j** and **29k** established potent activity against both fungal strains, *C. albicans* MTCC 183 and *A. niger* MTCC 9652 stains compared to standard drug Griseofulvin [70]. Chandrika et *al.* reported hybrids **30–32** with broad spectrum antifungal activity (0.975-3.9 µgmL<sup>-1</sup> against *C. albicans*; 0.12-0.48 µgmL<sup>-1</sup> against *C. parapsilosis*) (Fig. 2). These compounds also displayed good activity against *C. albicans* biofilms [94].

Scheme 7. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 29a-29l

NH H<sub>2</sub>N H<sub>2</sub>N H<sub>2</sub>N O OH NH<sub>2</sub>N O OH 
$$H_2$$
N O OH  $H_2$ N O OH  $H_$ 

**Figure 2.** Structure of benzimidazole-1,2,3- hybrids **30–32** 

# $2.2.\ 1$ -Benzimidazole-R(Ar)-1,4-disubstituted-1,2,3-triazole hybrids

Deswal et *al.* synthesized a new series of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole-indoline derivatives **35** by employing click reaction between substituted N-propargylated benzimidazole derivatives **33** and *in situ* formed substituted 2-azido-1-(indolin-1-yl) ethanone derivatives **34** in moderate to good yields (Scheme 8). The obtained results indicate stronger inhibitory effect of compound **35d** against *E. coli*, while compound **35g** showed good inhibition against all the tested strains except *B. subtilis* (Table 3). The good antimicrobial activity of the compounds was correlated with the presence of the pyridine ring in position "2" of the benzimidazole and the NO<sub>2</sub> group on the indole ring [6].

$$\begin{array}{c} R_2 \\ R_2 \\ R_2 \\ R_3 \\ R_4 \\ R_4 \\ R_5 \\ R_6 \\ R_6 \\ R_7 \\ R_8 \\ R_8 \\ R_9 \\$$

Scheme 8. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 35a–35g

0.031

0.020

0.026

0.039

35g

Norfloxacin

Fluconazole

0.026

0.020

Compound S. aureus E. coli B. subtilis S. epidermitis C. albicans A. niger 35a 0.028 0.056 0.056 0.056 0.056 0.056 35b 0.031 0.062 0.062 0.062 0.062 0.062 35c 0.029 0.058 0.058 0.058 0.058 0.058 35d 0.060 0.030 0.0600.030 0.060 0.060 35e 0.0290.056 0.056 0.056 0.056 0.056 35f 0.026 0.052 0.052 0.052 0.052 0.052

0.026

0.039

0.026

0.04

0.052

0.039

Table 3. Antimicrobial activity of the compounds 35 in terms of MIC (µmol mL-1).

Saber et *al.* synthesized new 1,4-disubstituted-1,2,3-triazole containing benzimidazolone derivatives **37a–37d** exclusively using click chemistry (Scheme 9). All derivatives exhibited antibacterial activity against tested strains, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Escherichia coli* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, but compounds **37b** and **37d** are more effective against Gram-positive bacterium *S. aureus* (MIC = 3.125 μgmL<sup>-1</sup>) and **37b** has better activity against Gram-negative bacterium *E. coli* (MIC = 3.125 μgmL<sup>-1</sup>) with Chloramphenicol as standard drug [95]. Mohsen et *al.* synthesized hybrids **41a–41e** in three steps starting from benzimidazole **38**, namely two alkylation reactions and a click reaction (Scheme 10). New derivatives exhibited good zone inhibition of 6.8, 5.4, 5.2, 4.5, 5.3 mm for *S. aureus* and 5.4, 3.8, 4.2, 3.3, 4.9 mm for *E. coli* strain, indicating that the 1,2,3-triazole core contributed significantly to bacterial growth suppression (Ciprofloxacin showed 10.2 mm for *S. aureus* and 10.4 mm for *E. coli*) [96].

Scheme 9. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 37a-37d

Scheme 10. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 41a-41e

#### 2.3. 1,2-. bis-substitutedBenzimidazoles-R(Ar)-1,4-disubstituted-1,2,3-triazole

Rezki reported the intramolecular cyclization of thiosemicarbazides **42a–42d** in refluxing aqueous sodium hydroxide (2N) for 6 h with the formation of hybrids **43a–43d** with yields of 82–86% (Scheme 11). Among all the 1,2,4-triazole derivatives, N4-phenyl and N4-(4-fluorophenyl) derivatives **43a** and **43b** were found the most potent with MIC values of 4–8  $\mu$ g mL<sup>-1</sup>. Also, triazoles **43a** and **43b** exerted the best inhibition against both tested fungal strains, *A. brasiliensis* and *Candida albicans*, with MIC values ranging from 0.5–4  $\mu$ g mL<sup>-1</sup>, more potent than the reference drug Fluconazole. Condensation of compound **44** with several benzaldehydes in refluxing ethanol for 4–6 h with a catalytic amount of HCl produced a new class of hybrid Schiff bases **45a–45g** with yields of 84–86% (Scheme 12). The antimicrobial bioassay results for the synthesized Schiff bases **45a–45g** revealed that all of the tested compounds were more effective towards all of the organisms, with MIC values of 1–16  $\mu$ g mL<sup>-1</sup>. Among them, Schiff bases **45c**, **45d** and **145e** with a fluorine atom at position "2" exhibited the highest antibacterial inhibition potency at MIC 1–8  $\mu$ g mL<sup>-1</sup>. The Schiff base **45e** containing a CF<sub>3</sub> group exerted the highest antifungal inhibition activity with MIC of 1  $\mu$ g mL<sup>-1</sup> [97].

Scheme 11. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazoles 43a-43d

Scheme 12. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazoles 45a-45g

Al-blewi et *al.* synthesized triazoles **47a–47f** in two steps: i. regioselective alkylation of **4** with two equivalents of propargyl bromide in the presence of two equivalents of potassium carbonate as a base catalyst to afford benzimidazole **46** with 91% yield after stirring at room temperature overnight; ii. Copper-mediated Huisgen 1,3-dipolar cycloaddition reaction on compound **46** in good yields (82–88%) (Scheme 13). In general, bis-1,2,3-triazoles **47a–47f** exhibited more potent antimicrobial activities than their mono-1,2,3-triazole derivatives **6a-6f**. This was attributed to the synergistic effect of the sulfonamoyl and tethered heterocyclic components in addition to the improved

lipophilicity of the bis-substituted derivatives. Among the synthesized compounds, compound 47a was the most potent antimicrobial agent with MIC values ranging between 32 and 64 µgmL<sup>-1</sup> against all tested strains *B. cereus, S. aureus, E. coli P. aeruginosa, C. albicans*, and *A. brasiliensis* [88].

Br 
$$A_1$$
  $A_2$   $A_3$   $A_4$   $A_4$   $A_4$   $A_5$   $A$ 

Scheme 13. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazoles 47a-47f

Aparna et *al.* used a similar strategy for obtaining nine new bis-1,2,3-triazol-1*H*- 4-yl-substituted arylbenzimidazole-2-thiol derivatives **48a-48l** (Fig. 3). Antibacterial activity of triazole derivatives **48** demonstrates moderate to good activity against gram negative (*E. coli, S. typhy, P. aeruginosa*) and gram positive (*S. aureus*) bacterial strains. The products **48i**, **48k**, and **48l** characterized by a broad spectrum of antibacterial activity at concentration of 10 μgmL<sup>-1</sup>. The derivative **48l** displays the highest dock score of –7.69 kcal/mol and the least dock score of –0.942 kcal/mol is obtained for **48h** [98].

$$\begin{array}{c} \textbf{R}_2\\ \textbf{N}\\ \textbf{N$$

Figure 3. Structure of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 48a-48l

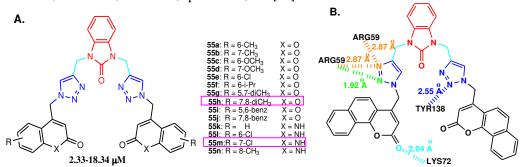
#### 2.4. Benzimidazole-R(Ar)-1,2,3-triazole hybrids as antitubecular agents

Ashok reported compound 26h as best antitubercular drug candidate by inhibiting the growth of the MTB (Mycobacterium tuberculosis) strain with MIC =  $3.125\mu$  mL<sup>-1</sup> (7.1  $\mu$ M) (control Rifampicin MIC =  $0.04 \mu gmL^{-1}$  and isoniazid MIC =  $0.38 \mu gmL^{-1}$ ). The best antitubercular activity of **26h** may be attributed to the presence of nitro group on phenyl ring at ortho position. Compound 26b (MIC = 6.25  $\mu g \text{ mL}^{-1} (14.7 \mu \text{M}))$  with chlorine substituent, compound 26i (MIC = 6.25  $\mu g \text{mL}^{-1} (14.2 \mu \text{M}))$  with trifluoromethyl substituent and compound 26j (MIC = 12.5 µgmL-1 (28.4µM)) with benzyl substituent exhibited moderate antitubercular activity. Therefore, incorporation of the electron-withdrawing nitro group, electronegative chlorine and trifluoromethyl groups on the phenyl ring was highly favored for antitubercular activity [93]. Gill et al. reported synthesis of hybrids 51a-51d by reaction between 2-(3-fluorophenyl)-1H-benzo[d]imidazole 50 and phenyl-substituted 4-(bromomethyl)-1phenyl-1H-1,2,3-triazole 49 in DMF at room temperature (Scheme 14). Trifluorosubstitutedcompound 51a possessed enhanced anti-mycobacterial activity, > 96% of inhibition at 6.25 µg concentration. Also, compounds 51b and 51c, which had antimicrobial activities superior to the other compounds, were reported as the best choice for the preparation of new derivatives in order to improve effectiveness on intracellular mycobacteria (macrophage) or in infected animal [99]. Anand et al. reported one pot reaction between 2-propargylthiobenzimidazole 4, 4-bromomethyl coumarins/1-aza-coumarins 52/53 and sodium azide under click chemistry conditions to give exclusively 1,4-disubstituted triazoles 54a-54n. Anti-tubercular assays against M. tuberculosis (H37Rv) coupled with in silico molecular docking studies indicated that dimethyl substituents 54c and 54d showed promising activity

i. NaH, 4-bromomethyl-1-phenyl-1H-[1,2,3]-triazole, DMF, rt. **51a–51d** R<sub>2</sub> **Scheme 14.** Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazoles **51a-51d** 

Scheme 15. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazoles 54a-54n

(MIC =  $3.8 \,\mu\text{Mol L}^{-1}$ ) with higher C-score values [100]. Khanapurmath et *al.* synthesized triazoles 55 by click reaction (Fig. 4A). Benzimidazolone bis-triazoles 55a–55n showed better activity with MIC in the range 2.33– $18.34 \,\mu\text{M}$  and most active compounds were 55h and 55m. All compounds exhibited moderate to low levels of cytotoxicity with IC50 values of the human embryonic kidney cells in the range of 943– $12294 \,\mu\text{M}$ , and none of 14 compounds exhibited any significant cytotoxic effects, suggesting huge potential for their *in vivo* use as antitubercular agents. Docking studies revealed an additional interaction of benzimidazolone oxygen in these compounds (Fig. 4B) [101]. Also, Sharma et *al.* summarizes 1,2,3-triazoles as antitubercular compounds, and various hybrids with benzimidazole, coumarin, isoniazid, quinolines, etc [39].



**Figure 4. A.** Structure of benzimidazolone bis-1,2,3-triazoles **55a**–**55n**. B. Representation of docked view of compound **55j** at the active site of RmlC.

#### 3. Synthesis and antimicrobial activities of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles

#### $3.1.\ 2$ -Benzimidazole-R(Ar)-1-(1,2,4-triazole)

Pandey et *al.* synthesized hybrids **59a–59e** in three steps: reaction of 7-hydroxy-4-methyl coumarin with thiosemicarbazide to form triazole intermediate57**1**, which underwent Mannich reaction with formaldehyde, and an amino acid to form intermediates **58a–58e**, which gave benzimidazolo-1,2,4-triazole hybrids in poor yields by reaction with *o*-phenylenediamine in pyridine (Scheme 16). Compound **59a** displayed promising antifungal activity against *Candida albicans* and *Cryptococcus himalayensis*, since the MIC value in each case was found to be 3.5 µg mL<sup>-1</sup>. Compound **59b** showed low to moderate antifungal activity against all the five fungi, *Candida albicans*, *Cryptococcus himalayensis*, *Sporotrichum schenkii*, *Trichophyton rubrum* and *Aspergillus fumigatus* [102].

Scheme 16. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles 59a-59e

Jadhav et *al.* synthesed a series of hybrids 1,2,4-triazolyl-fluorobenzimidazoles in two steps: i. synthesis of 2-(4-(1*H*-1,2,4-triazol-1-yl)phenyl)-4,6-difluoro-1*H*-benzo [d]imidazole **62** by reaction between 3,5-difluorobenzene-1,2-diamine **60** and 4-(1*H*-1,2,4- triazol-1-yl)benzaldehyde **61** in toluene at 110°C, and ii. alkylation of compound **62** in DMF at room temperature, with the formation of the final hybrids **63a-63o** (Scheme 17). All compounds were screened for the antimicrobial activity against different gram positive organisms *S. aureus*, *P. aeruginosa* and gram negative organisms *E. coli* and *S. typhosa* using Gentamycin as a reference standard. The data generated from preliminary screening showed that compounds displayed moderate to better antimicrobial activity. Compounds **63a**, **63e**, **63f**, **63h**, **63i**, and **63l** displayed maximum activity (Table 4)[103].

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{F} \\ \text{NH}_2 \\ \text{60} \\ \text{63a: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_3 \\ \text{63b: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3 \\ \text{63c: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3 \\ \text{63d: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3 \\ \text{63d: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3 \\ \text{63d: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3 \\ \text{63e: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{CH} + \text{Ch}_2 \\ \text{63e: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{CH} \\ \text{63f: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{CN} \\ \text{63f: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{CN} \\ \text{63g: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{CN} \\ \text{63g: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{Ch}_5 \\ \text{63g: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{Ch}_5 \\ \text{63g: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{Ch}_5 \\ \text{63o: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3\text{Ch}_5 \\ \text{63o: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{CH}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_5 \\ \text{63o: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_5 \\ \text{63o: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_5 \\ \text{63o: } \text{R} = \text{CH}_2\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3 \\ \text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3 \\ \text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3 \\ \text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3 \\ \text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3 \\ \text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3 \\ \text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3 \\ \text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3 \\ \text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3 \\ \text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3 \\ \text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3 \\ \text{Ch}_3\text{Ch}_3\text$$

Scheme 17. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles 63a-63e

Barot et al. synthesized hybrid 64 and determined its antimicrobial activity against Bacillus cereus MTCC-430, Enterococcus faecalis MTCC-493, S. aureus MTCC-737, Escherichia coli MTCC-1687, Pseudomonas aeruginosa MTCC-2642, Klebsiella pneumonia MTCC-109, Candida albicans MTCC-3017, Aspergillus niger MTCC-1344 and Fusarium oxyspora MTCC-1755, of MIC = 13-18 µg ml<sup>-1</sup>, with Ofloxacine and Fluconazole as standard drugs [104]. Also, Jiang et al. reported antifungal activity for hybrid 65 against Candida albicans, Candida tropicalis, Cryptococcus neoformans, Trichophyton rubrum, and Aspergillus fumigatus, of MIC<sub>80</sub> = 1-64 μg mL<sup>-1</sup> considering Fluconazole as standard drug (Fig. 5) [105]. Luo et al. reported a series of naphthalimide benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazole hybrids 68a-68h and the corresponding triazoliums salts 69a-69d prepared by convenient and efficient procedures starting from naphthalimide triazole 66 (Scheme 18). 2-Chlorobenzyl triazolium 68g and compound 69b with octyl group exhibited the best antibacterial activities among all the tested compounds, especially against S. aureus with inhibitory concentration of 2 µgmL-1 which was equipotent potency to Norfloxacin (MIC=2 μgmL-1) and more active than Chloromycin (MIC= 7 μgmL-1). Triazoliums 68g and 68f bearing 3-fluorobenzyl moiety displayed the best antifungal activities (MIC=2-19 µgmL-1) against all the tested fungal strains, C. albicans ATCC 76615, A. fumigatus ATCC 96918, C. utilis, S. cerevisia and A. flavus, without being toxic to PC12 cell line within concentration of 128 µg mL-1. Further investigations showed that compound 68g could intercalate into calf thymus DNA to

form the **68g**-DNA complex which could block DNA replication, exerting powerful antimicrobial activities. [106]. Benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazole Mannich base **70** was active against *Bacillus subtilis* and *Bacillus pumilus* (inhibition zone diameters being 19 and 17 mm, respectively, compared to Ciprofloxacin with 28 and 30 mm, respectively) [107]. Kankate et *al.* reported synthesis of the hybrids **73a**–**731** (Scheme 19). Antifungal activity of compounds **73a** was tested against *Candida albicans* spores *in vitro* (turbidimetric

Table 4. Antimicrobial activity of the compounds 63a-63o using the agar diffusion method

Commound	Inhibition zone diameters using the agar diffusion method (mm)				
Compound	S. aureus P. aeruginosa		E. coli	S. typhosa	
63a	28	26	21	19	
63b	23	18	16	14	
63c	21	23	18	19	
63d	20	22	23	23	
63e	25	23	21	24	
63f	27	26	24	20	
63g	19	20	15	13	
63h	29	26	22	24	
63i	26	22	19	18	
63j	14	12	16	16	
63k	22	21	20	18	
631	25	23	19	21	
63m	21	18	18	16	
63n	24	22	22	21	
63o	19	21	18	14	
Gentamycin	34	35	31	30	

Figure 5. Structure of benzimidazole hybrids 64, 65 and 70

$$\begin{array}{c} R_1 \\ R_3 \\ R_2 \\ R_4 \\ R_5 \\ R_6 \\ R_7 \\ R_8 \\ R_9 \\$$

Scheme 18. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles 68 and 69

method) and in vivo (kidney burden test). Compound 73i had a good antifungal activity as compared with the other twelve compounds at 0.0075 µmole ml-1 which is equivalent to Fluconazole activity both in vitro and in vivo [108]. Ahuja et al. reported antifungal activity of compounds 74a-74c against F. verticillioides, D. oryzae, C. lunata and F. fujikuroi (Fig. 6). All compounds had increased potency than the standard commercial benzimidazole fungicide, carbendazim (Table 5). Compound 74c exhibited ED50 values lower than triazole fungicide, propiconazole. The results reinforced the synergistic effects of benzimidazole and 1,2,4-triazole combination supported by computational approach [109]. Evren et al. reported synthesis of the compounds 79a-79c in two steps: i. reaction of 1,2,4-triazole 75 with 4-fluorobenzaldehyde 76 in DMF with the formation of 4-(1H-1,2,4-triazol-1yl)benzaldehyde 77; ii. reaction of aldehyde 77 with 1,2-phenylene diamines 78 (Scheme 20). Although the antibacterial activities of compounds 79a-79c against Escherichia coli ATCC 35218, E. coli ATCC 25922, Klebsiella pneumoniae NCTC 9633, Pseudomonas aeruginosa ATCC 27853, Salmonella typhimurium ATCC 13311, and Staphylococcus aureus ATCC 25923, were weak, the antifungal activities against C. albicans were found promising, with MIC values of 3.9, 7.8, and 3.9 µg mL<sup>-1</sup> respectively, using as reference drug Ketokonazole (MIC = 7.8 µgmL <sup>-1</sup>). Theoretical ADME calculations of the 79a, 79b, and 79c were made, and the compounds were found to have good lipophilicity, moderate water solubility, and within the limiting rules of Lipinski, Ghose, Veber, Egan, and Muegge [110]. Ghobadi et al. reported synthesis of compounds 85a-85e, in two different ways, from 3,4-diaminobenzophenone 80, i. formation of 2-mercapto benzimidazole derivatives 82, 83, and ii. nucleophilic ring opening of various oxiranes 84a-84e with benzimidazoles 82 and 83 using NaHCO<sub>3</sub> in ethanol at room temperature (Scheme 21). Compounds 85a-85e, containing 5benzoylbenzimidazole scaffold showed better antifungal activity against Candida spp. and Cryptococcus neoformans than related benzimidazole and benzothiazole derivatives. The better results were obtained with the 4-chloro-derivative 85b displaying MICs < 0.063–1 μgmL-1. Also, compound

**86c**, synthesized analogously, is as potent as compound **85b**. In vitro and in silico ADMET evaluations of the most promising compounds **85b** indicated that the selected compounds have desirable ADMET properties in comparison to standard drug Fluconazole. Docking simulation study demonstrated that the benzimidazol-2-yl-thio moiety is responsible for the potent antifungal activity of these compounds [72].

Scheme 19. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles 73a-73l

74a: 
$$R_1 = H$$
;  $R_2 = COCH_2$   
74b:  $R_1 = OCH_3$ ;  $R_2 = COCH_2$   
74c:  $R_1 = OCH_3$ ;  $R_2 = COCH_2$ NH

Figure 6. Structure of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazole hybrids 74a-74c

Table 5. ED₅0 values (µg mL⁻¹) of compounds against test fungi.

	\(\frac{1}{2}\)	/ 1	U	
Compound	F. verticillioides	D. oryzae	C. lunata	F. fujikuroi
74a	35	50	28	45
74b	30	25	18	30
74c	16	12	10	15
Carbendazim	230	-	-	150
Propiconazole	20	25	22	21

Scheme 20. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles 79a-79c

Scheme 21. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles 85a-85e and compound 86c

#### $3.2.\ 1$ -Benzimidazole-R(Ar)-2-1,2,3-triazole

Ansari et *al.* synthesized hybrids **88a–88c** in two steps from 2-(2-methyl-1*H*-benzo [d]imidazol-1-yl)acetohydrazide **87** (Scheme 22). Generally, all benzimidazole-triazole hybrids showed low antimicrobial activity (Table 6) [111]. Tien et *al.* synthesized hybrids **89a–89d** in three steps from 2-(2-methyl-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl)acetohydrazide **87b** (Scheme 23). All compounds exhibited antifugal activity against *A. niger* (MIC =  $50 \mu g \text{ mL}^{-1}$ ). Only compound **89b** exhibited activity against *F. oxysporum* (Table 7) [112]. Kantar et *al.* reported antimicrobial activity of hybrid **90** (Fig. 7) against four Gram-positive, *Bacillus cereus* 702 Roma (62.5  $\mu g \text{ mL}^{-1}$ ), *B. megaterium* DSM-32 (125  $\mu g \text{ mL}^{-1}$ ), *B. subtilis* ATCC 6633 (62.5  $\mu g \text{ mL}^{-1}$ ), *Staphylococcus aureus* ATCC 25923 (250  $\mu g \text{ mL}^{-1}$ ), and four

Scheme 22. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles 88a-88c

Table 6. Antimicrobial activity of compounds 88a-88c expressed as MIC in µg mL-1

Compound	S. aureus,	B. subtilis	S. mutans	P. aeruginosa	C. albicans
88a	NT	NT	16	16	32
88b	8	16	16	16	NT
88c	8	16	32	32	32
Ampicillin	2	2	< 1	4	NT
Kanamycin	2	< 1	4	2	NT

NT = not tested

Scheme 23. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles 89a–89c

Table 7. The minimum inhibitory concentrations (µg mL-1)) of the compounds against fungi.

Compound	Concentration (µg mL-1)	Aspergillus niger	Fusarium oxysporum
89a	50	50	-
89b	50	50	50
89c	50	50	-
89d	50	50	-

Gram-negative bacteria, Escherichia coli ATCC 25922 (250 µg mL-1), Enterobacter cloaceae ATCC13047 (125 µg mL-1), Pseudomonas aeruginosa ATCC 27853 (250 µg mL-1), and Yersinia pseudotuberculosis ATCC 911 (125 µg mL-1) bacteria [113]. Nandwana et al. reported compound 91 synthesized in good yield (70%) with promising antibacterial activity, with minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) values of 4-8 µg mL<sup>-1</sup> for all bacterial tested strains (Escherichia coli, Pseudomonas putida, Salmonella typhi, Bacillus subtilis, Staphylococcus aureus), as compared to the positive control Ciprofloxacin, and also with pronounced antifungal activity against both tested strains, Aspergillus niger and Candida albicans (MIC = 8-16 µg mL-1) as compared with Amphotericin B [114]. Al-Majidi et al. synthesized 2-mercaptobenzimidazole derivatives 95, 96 and 97 by cyclization of intermediate precursors 93, 94 and 95 under reflux with 2N NaOH (Scheme 24). The compounds generally showed a moderate antimicrobial activity against all tested strains, as can be seen in Table 8 [115]. El-masry et al. synthesized compounds 98 and 99 and found that they did not exhibit antimicrobial activity (Fig. 8) [116]. Menteşe et al. synthesized compounds 100a-100d, for which they found no antimicrobial activity on the ten strains tested [117]. Karale et al. synthesized bis-benzimidazole-1,2,4triazole hybrids 102a-102e in four steps, from 7-methyl-2-propyl-3H-benzo[d]imidazole-5-carboxylic acid. All compounds 102 did not show antimicrobial activity against the strains tested, C. albicans, A. fumigatus, S. aureus and E. coli [118,119].

Figure 7. Structure of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazole hybrids 90 and 91

Table 8. Antimicrobial activity of compounds 89a-89c

	Tubic 0.73	intillifici Obiai acti	vity of compo	arias ora ore	
Compound (800 µg mL <sup>-1</sup> )	S. aureus	P. aerugnosa	B. subtilis	A. baumannii	C. albicans
95	18	14	15	-	10
96	19	11	12	-	11
97	17	15	14	12	-
Amoxicillin	33	32	33	-	-
Fluconazole	-	-	-	-	25

Scheme 24. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles 95-97

Figure 8. Structure of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazole hybrids 98-100

Scheme 25. Synthesis of bis-benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles 102a-102e

#### $3.3.\ 2$ -Benzimidazole-R(Ar)-2-1,2,4-triazole

Eisa et *al.* synthesized compounds **105a** and **105b** by the reaction between 2-(chloromethyl)-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazole **103** and 4-phenyl-5-(pyridin-3-yl)-4*H*-1,2,4-triazole-3-thiol **103** and 4-phenyl-5-(pyridin-3-yl)-4*H*-1,2,4-triazole-3-thiol **104b**, at reflux in absolute ethanol, for 12 hours. Also, they reported synthesis of the compounds **107a** and **107b** from 2-(2-(phenylthiomethyl)-1*H*-benzo[d]imidazol-1-yl) acetohydrazide in two steps (Scheme 27). All compounds showed antimicrobial activity against *Escherichia coli* superior to that of standard Gentamicin. Compound **107a** exhibited only a moderate activity against *Staphylococcus aureus* [120].

103

Ar 
$$\frac{\text{abs EtOH, CH}_3\text{COONa}}{\text{reflux, 12h}}$$

105a: R = 3-Pyridyl (87%)  $\frac{\text{NN}}{\text{NN}}$ 

105b: R = 2-Thienyl (85%)

Scheme 26. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles 105a-105b

<b>Table 9.</b> Antimicrobial activity	of compounds 105	<b>a–105b</b> and <b>107a–107b</b>

	Minimum inhibitory concentrations (μgmL <sup>-1</sup> )				
Compound	Gram-positive bacteria		Gram-negat	tive bacteria	
	B. subtilis	S. aureus	E. coli	P. aeruginosa	
105a	98	-	52	-	
105b	-	-	65	-	
107a	75	105	62	-	
107b	79	-	72	-	
Gentamycin*	64	56	72	48	

<sup>\*</sup> Concentration of Gentamycin = 30 µg mL<sup>-1</sup>

Scheme 27. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles 107a-107b

Nevade et al. synthesized compounds 109a-109h in five steps from 1H-benzo[d]imidazole-2thiol 108 (Scheme 28). The antimicrobial screening results presented in Table 10 reveal that compounds 109a, 109c, 109e exhibited satisfactory effect against S.aureus and E.coli, while the compounds 109b, 109f, 109g have shown the moderate activity against the same microbes. Also antifungal activity of these compounds was screened against Candida albicans. Compounds 109a and 109d showed highest degree of inhibition against C.albicans when compared with the Standard drug Ketoconazole [121]. Can et al. synthesized hybrids 111a–111h in four steps from methyl 4-(5-methyl-1H-benzo[d]imidazol-2-yl)benzoate 110 (Scheme 29). All compounds were screened for antifungal activity against Candida albicans ATCC 24433, Candida glabrata ATCC 90030, Candida krusei ATCC 6258 and Candida parapsilosis ATCC 22019 (Table 11). Compounds 111i and 111s exhibited significant inhibitory activity against *Candida* strains with MIC<sub>50</sub> values ranging from 0.78 to 1.56 μg mL<sup>-1</sup> [122]. Gencer et al. synthesized compounds 112 in good yields (77-88%) using a similar strategy (Fig. 9). Microbiological studies revealed that compounds 112a, 112b, 112c, 112e, 112f, 112g and 112h possess a good antifungal profile against all tested strains, C. albicans, C. glabrata, C. krusei, C. parapsilopsis, with MIC<sub>50</sub> = 0.78-1.56 µg mL<sup>-1</sup>. Compound **112i** was the most active derivative and showed comparable antifungal activity to those of reference drugs Ketoconazole and Fluconazole [123]. The SAR (Structure-activity relationship) on the synthesized benzimidazole-triazole compounds are summarized in Fig. 10. It is observed that the presence of chlorine or fluorine in the "5" position of benzimidazole, as well as the presence of fluorine in the "4" position of phenyl increase the antibacterial activity, while the presence of fluorine in the "2" position of phenyl does not change the activity, and the presence of groups CH<sub>3</sub> or C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub> in position "4" in the triazole nucleus does not bring any change in the antibacterial activity of the compounds. Güzel et al. synthesized a new series of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazole derivatives 113a-113l using the same procedure described in Scheme 29 as potential antifungal agents. All the compounds were screened for their in vitro antifungal activity against four fungal strains, namely, C. albicans, C. glabrata, C. krusei, and C. parapsilopsis and were found to exhibit excellent activity against C. glabrata. Especially, compounds 113b, 113i, and 113j were found to be the most effective

Scheme 28. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles 109a-109h

Table 10. Antibacterial activity of compounds s 109a-109h

Nic	Commound	Zone of inhibition (mm)				
No	Compound -	E. coli	S. aureus	C. albicans		
1	109a	15	13	18		
2	109b	13	11	12		
3	109c	17	16	14		
4	109d	12	13	16		
5	109e	13	17	9		
6	109f	10	8	11		
7	109g	8	11	12		
8	109h	12	7	10		
9	Ampicilline	24	25	-		
10	Ketokonazole	-	-	20		

Scheme 29. Synthesis of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazoles 111a-111s

Table 11. MIC<sub>50</sub> (ug mL<sup>-1</sup>) values of compounds 111a-111s

Compound	С.	G. glabrata	C. krusei	C. parapsilosis
	albicans			
111a	12.5	6.25	6.25	12.5
111b	6.25	3.12	6.25	6.25
111c	12.5	6.25	6.25	12.5
111d	6.25	12.5	6.25	6.25
111e	12.5	6.25	12.5	12.5
111f	6.25	3.12	3.12	6.25
111g	3.12	6.25	6.25	6.25
111h	12.5	6.25	12.5	6.25
111i	0.78	1.56	1.56	0.78
111j	12.5	6.25	12.5	12.5
111k	12.5	6.25	12.5	12.5
1111	6.25	12.5	6.25	12.5
111m	3.12	3.12	3.12	6.25
111n	3.12	3.12	1.56	3.12
111o	3.12	3.12	6.25	6.25
111p	12.5	12.52	6.25	6.25
111r	6.25	3.12	3.12	3.12
111s	0.78	1.56	1.56	0.78
Ketokonazole	0.78	1.56	1.56	1.56

Floconazole	0.78	1.56	1.56	Ď	0.	78
R <sub>1</sub> N N N H	N-N N-N N-N N-N N-N S-112a-112i R <sub>2</sub>	$R_3$ $R_4$	112a: R <sub>1</sub> = Cl 112b: R <sub>1</sub> = Cl 112c: R <sub>1</sub> = Cl 112d: R <sub>1</sub> = Cl 112e: R <sub>1</sub> = Cl 112f: R <sub>1</sub> = F 112g: R <sub>1</sub> = F 112h: R <sub>1</sub> = F 112i: R <sub>1</sub> = F	$R_2 = CH_3$ $R_2 = C_2H_5$ $R_2 = C_2H_5$ $R_2 = C_2H_5$ $R_2 = C_4H_5$ $R_2 = C_4H_5$ $R_2 = C_4H_5$	$R_3 = H$ $R_3 = F$ $R_3 = H$ $R_3 = CI$ $R_3 = F$ $R_3 = F$ $R_3 = H$ $R_3 = F$	$R_4 = F \\ R_4 = F \\ R_4 = F \\ R_4 = CI \\ R_4 = F \\ R_4$

Figure 9. Structure of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazole hybrids 112a–112i

compounds in the series with an MIC value of 0.97 μg mL<sup>-1</sup> [71]. Aryal et *al.* reported synthesis of new 2-substituted benzimidazole containing 1,2,4-triazoles **114a** and **114b** (Fig. 12). The compounds did not show antimicrobial activity against the tested strains *Staphylococcus aureus* ATCC 6538P and *Staphylococcus epidermidis* ATCC 1228 [124]. Kazeminejad et *al.* did a study on 1,2,4-triazoles as well as structure-activity relationships (SAR) [125].

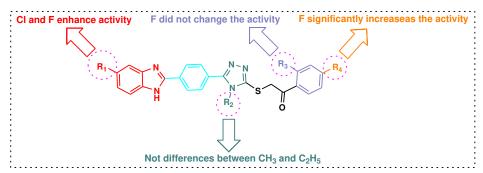


Figure 10. SAR outline of the benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazole hybrids 112a-112i

NC N 
$$R_3$$
  $R_1$  =  $R_2$  =  $R_3$  =  $R_3$  +  $R_4$  +  $R_3$  =  $R_4$  +  $R_3$  =  $R_4$  +  $R_4$  =  $R_4$  +  $R_5$  =  $R_5$  +  $R$ 

Figure 11. Structure of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazole hybrids 113a-113l

HO

114a

$$S = N$$
 $N = N$ 
 $N = N$ 

Figure 12. Structure of benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazole hybrids 114a-114l

# $3.4.\ 6-substituted-Benzimidazole-R(Ar)-1-1,2,4-triazole$

Nandha et *al.* reported synthesis of 6-substituted-benzimidazoles with 1-(1,2,4-triazole) **115a--115d** in three steps from 5-chloro-4-fluoro-2-nitrobenzenamine (Scheme 30). All compounds were screened against *M. tuberculosis* and four fungal strains, *C. albicans, C. glabrata, C. krusei* and *C. tropicalis*. Compound **115c** was the most active against *M. tuberculosis* and all tested fungal strains (MIC = 25 µg mL<sup>-1</sup>) [126].

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{F} \\ \text{NN} \\ \text{NH}_2 \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \text{1,2,3} \\ \text{NN} \\ \text{N} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \text{N} \\ \text{N} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \text{N} \\ \text{N} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \text{R} \\ \text{N} \\ \text{N} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \text{R} \\ \text{N} \\ \text{N} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \text{R} \\ \text{N} \\ \text{N} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \text{115a-115d} \end{array} \\ \text{1.15a: R = H} \\ \text{1.15b: R = 4-Cl} \\ \text{115c: R = 4-N(CH_3)_2} \\ \text{3. R-CHO, DMF, Na}_2S_2O_{5}, \text{ stirring, 125°C, 15h} \end{array} \begin{array}{c} \text{115a: R = H} \\ \text{115b: R = 3,4,5-(OCH_3)_3} \\ \text{115d: R = 3,4,5-(OCH_3)_3} \end{array}$$

Scheme 30. Synthesis of benzimidazole-triazoles 115a-115d

#### 4. Synthesis and antiviral activities of benzimidazole-triazoles

Youssif et *al.* reported synyhesis of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 2-{4-[(1-benzoylbenzimidazol-2-ylthio)methyl]-1H-1,2,3-triazol-1-yl}-N-(p-nitro--phenyl)-acetamide **116** and 2-(4-{[1-(p-chlorobenzoyl)-benzimidazol-2-ylthio)methyl]-1H-1,2,3-triazol -1-yl}-N-(p-nitrophenyl)-acetamide **117** which showed significant activity against hepatitis C virus (HCV) (Fig. 13). Thus, fifty percent effective concentrations (EC50) of HCV inhibition for compounds **116** and **117** were 7.8 and 7.6 µmol L<sup>-1</sup>, respectively, and the 50 % cytotoxic concentrations (CC50) were 16.9 and 21.1 µmol L<sup>-1</sup>. The results gave an insight into the importance of the substituent at position 2 of benzimidazole for the inhibition of HCV [73].

Figure 13. Structure of antiviral benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 116 and 117

Antiviral activity of compounds **59a–59e** was tested against two viruses, viz., *Japanese encephalitis virus* (JEV) (P20778), a RNA virus of higher pathogenicity, and *Herpes simplex virus* type-I (HSV-I) (753166), the most common virus present in the environment. The antiviral activity of the compounds data are given in Table 12. All but one of the five compounds were found active against JEV. Compound **59b** displayed 90% CPE (cytopathic effect) *in vitro* with an effective concentration of 8 µg mL<sup>-1</sup> while its *in vivo* activity was less significant (16% protection with a MST of 4 days). The authors sugested that that these compounds are better anti-JEV agents than anti-HSV agents, since two such compounds, namely **59b** and **59e**, also displayed a measurable degree of anti-JEV activity *in vivo*. Compound **59c** was found antivirally inactive against both viruses. The anti HSV-I activity was found to be in the order of 33, 46, 53 and 64% for compounds **59a**, **59b**, **59d** and **59e**, respectively. Since among compounds **59a** to **59e** only compound **59e** contains a methyl group instead of H as R<sub>1</sub>, it follows that R<sub>1</sub> does not seem to be responsible for the biological activity [87].

Table 12. Anti-JEV and anti-HSV activity of compounds 59a-59e.

	In vitro		In vivo				
Compd.	CT50	EC <sub>50</sub>	TI	CPE	Dose (µg per	MST	Protection
	(µg mL <sup>-1</sup> )	(µg mL <sup>-1</sup> )	11	Inhibition (%)	mouse per day)	(days)	(%)
				Anti-JEV			
59a	125	4	31	30	200	-	-
59b	125	8	16	90	200	4	16
59c	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
59d	125	4	31	30	200	-	-
59e	250	62.5	4	50	200	2	10
				Anti-HSV			
59a	125	62.5	2	33	-	-	-
59b	125	62.5	2	46	-	-	-
59c	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
59d	125	31.25	4	53	200	-	-
59e	250	7.8	32	64	200	-	-

 $CT_{50}$  – 50% cytotoxic concentration,  $EC_{50}$  – 50% effective concentration, TI –therapeutic index (TI= CT<sub>50</sub>/ EC<sub>50</sub>) CPE - cytopathic effect, MST – mean survival time

Tonelli et *al.* synthesized a series of 1-substituted 2-[(benzotriazol-1/2-yl)methyl] benzimidazoles **118-137** and tested for antiviral activity against a large panel of RNA and DNA viruses (Fig. 14). Twelve compounds exhibited high activity against RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus), with EC50 values in most cases below 1  $\mu$ M, comparing favorably with the reference drug 6-azauridine, which, moreover, exhibited a high toxicity against both the MT-4 and Vero-76 cell lines (S.I. =16.7). The observed activity against BVDV, YFV, and CVB2 is moderate, with EC50 values in the range of 6 – 55  $\mu$ M for the best compounds (Table 13)[127].

Figure 14. Structure of antiviral benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 118-137

Table 13. RSV, BVDV, YFV, and CVB2 Inhibitory Activity of hybrids 118-137 expressed as  $EC_{50}$  ( $\mu M$ )

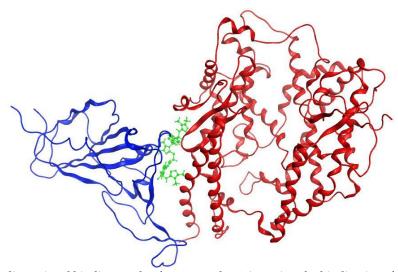
Compound	Anti-RSV activity	Anti-BVDV activity	Anti-YFV activity	Anti-CVB2 activity
118	0.7	-	-	-
119	2.3	-	-	-
120	0.7	> 100	80	> 100
121	0.7	63	> 90	> 100
122	0.3	53	> 70	> 100
123	0.15	51	> 60	> 100
124	0.03	-	-	-
125	0.7	-	-	-
126	0.06	90	> 100	> 100
127	0.1	72	> 54	> 100
128	0.9	15	6	40
129	0.05	19	> 21	> 88
130	0.02	14	> 20	26
131	10.0	-	-	-
132	7.0	-	-	-
133	1.9	67	> 36	> 100
134	> 36	15	> 18	> 36
135	9	-	-	-
136	11	80	> 45	> 100
137	23.0	80	27	> 83
6-Azaurine	1.2	> 100	26	> 100

SARS-CoV-2 and its variants, especially the Omicron variant, remain a great threat to human health. Al-Humaidi et al. reported synthesis a series of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazoles **138–140** (Fig. 15). Molecular docking studies and *in vitro* enzyme activity revealed that most of the investigated compounds demonstrated promising binding scores against the SARS-CoV-2 and Omicron spike proteins, in comparison to the reference drugs (Table 14).

Figure 15. Structure of antiviral benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids 138-140

**Table 14.** Antiviral activity of benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids **138-140** 

Compound	CC <sub>50</sub> (mg mL <sup>-1</sup> )	EC <sub>50</sub> (mg mL <sup>-1</sup> )	Selectivity Index (SI)	
Ceftazidime	1045.53	85.07	12.29	
138	1065.51	155.05	6.87	
139	1530.5	306.1	5.0	
140	1028.28	80.4	12.78	



**Figure 16.** Three-dimensional binding mode of compound **140** (green) at the binding interface between the Omicron S-RBD (red) and human ACE2 (blue)

Three-dimensional binding mode of compound **140** is shown in Fig. 16 [74]. Benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids can be potent anti-HSV (Herpes simplex virus) agents. These compounds were screened against flaviviruses and pestiviruses. Compound **141** showed excellent activity against respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) with an EC<sub>50</sub> value of 0.02 mM (Fig. 17) [128].



Figure 17. Structure of antiviral benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrid 141

## 5. Conclusions

This review summarizes the syntheses of benzimidazole–triazole compounds with antimicrobial an antiviral properties mentioned in the literature. The presence of certain groups grafted on the benzimidazole and trizole nuclei, such as -F, -Cl, -Br, -CF<sub>3</sub>, -NO<sub>2</sub>, -CN, -NHCO, -CHO, -OH, OCH<sub>3</sub>, -N(CH<sub>3</sub>)<sub>2</sub>, COOCH<sub>3</sub>, as well as other heterocycles in the molecule (pyridine, pyrimidine, thiazole, indole, isoxazole, thiadiazole, coumarine), increases the antimicrobial activity of the compounds [4,5,83,84,129-131]. From the presented literature data, we can highlight some aspects related to the correlation structure - antimicrobial properties.

- The presence of substituents in the "4" or "5" positions of the benzimidazole nucleus can increase the antimicrobial activity of the benzimidazole-triazole hybrids (compounds 12, 13, 19, 20, 35).
- The presence of the *ortho* or *para* substituted phenyl substituent in the "1" position of 1,2,3-triazoles in benzimidazole-triazole hybrids can increase their antimicrobial activity.
- In the case of benzimidazoles substituted in the "1" position with triazoles, the presence of an aliphatic or aromatic radical substituent increases the antimicrobial activity of the hybrids.
- The presence of the oxygen atom in the bridge that connects the benzimidazole and triazole rings is favorable to the antimicrobial activity of the hybrids (compounds 19, 20, 21, 29, 30)
- The presence of the sulfur atom in the bridge that connects the benzimidazole and triazole rings is favorable to the antimicrobial activity of the hybrids, and even to the antitubercular activity (95-97, 105, 107).

- The presence of a supplementary triazole ring in benzimidazole-triazole hybrids improves their antimicrobial activity (compounds 43, 45, 47).
- The presence of the benzoyl substituent in the "5" position of the benzimidazole in the benzimidazole-1,2,4-triazole hybrids clearly improves their antimicrobial activity (compounds 85a-85e).
- The phenyl nucleus as a spacer between the "1" position of 1,2,4-triazole and the "2" position of benzimidazole favors the formation of antimicrobial compounds, and the substituents in the "5" position of the benzimidazole nucleus increase the antimicrobial activity (compounds **79**, **111**, **112**, **113**).
- Only benzimidazole-1,2,3-triazole hybrids are mentioned in the literature as having antiviral properties.
- 2-Substituted or 1,2-disubstituted benzimidazoles with 1,2,3-triazoles are mentioned as antiviral compounds and the presence of an additional triazole ring improves the antiviral activity (compound 140).

We hope that this review will be useful for the design and synthesis of new benzimidazole-triazole hybrids with antimicrobial and antiviral properties in the context of exacerbation of microbial and viral infections and of resistance to treatments with drugs known on the market.

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