Synthesis of branched and linear 1,4-linked galactan oligosaccharides

We report the synthesis of linear and branched (1→4)-D-galactans. Four tetra- and one pentasaccharide were accessed by adopting a procedure of regioselective ring opening of a 4,6-O-naphthylidene protecting group followed by glycosylation using phenyl thioglycoside donors. The binding of the linear pentasaccharide with galectin-3 is also investigated by determination of a co-crystal structure. The binding of the (1→4)-linked galactan to Gal-3 highlights oligosaccharides of pectic galactan, which is abundant in the human diet, as putative Gal-3 ligands.

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