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(54) **"PROCESS FOR PREPARING
CEPHALOSPORANIC ACID DERIVATIVES
USING ALPHA-KETOACID DERIVATIVES"**

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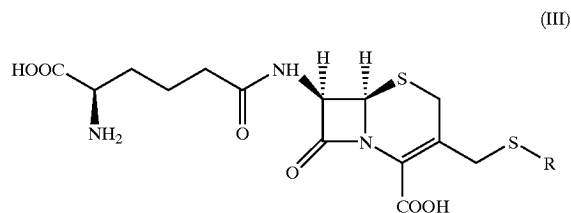
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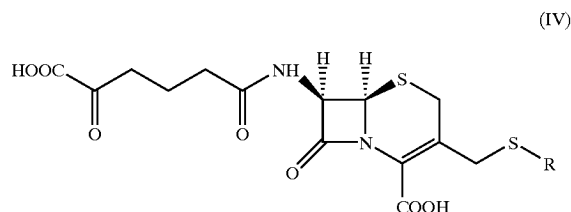
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A process for preparing cephalosporanic acid derivatives comprises the steps of enzymatically converting a 3-thiolated cephalosporin C compound of formula III:



into a 3-thiolated-α-ketoadipyl-7-aminocephalosporanic acid derivative of formula IV:



wherein R is a heterocyclic group comprising at least a nitrogen atom.

Compounds of formula IV are used in the preparation of cephalosporin C antibiotics and derivatives thereof.