

Cytotoxic pheofungins from an engineered fungus impaired in posttranslational protein modification.

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Abstract

What makes a fungus blush? The deletion of a gene that is required for global protein N-acetylation triggers the production of unprecedented metabolites in *Aspergillus nidulans*. The pronounced red pigmentation of the engineered mutant is caused by pheofungins (benzothiazinone chromophores), the biogenesis of which is strikingly similar to those of pheomelanins found in red bird feathers and hair of Celtic origin.

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