



HU000024995T2

(19) **HU****MAGYARORSZÁG**
Szellemi Tulajdon Nemzeti Hivatala(11) Lajstromszám: **E 024 995**(13) **T2**

EURÓPAI SZABADALOM

SZÖVEGÉNEK FORDÍTÁSA

- (21) Magyar ügyszám: **E 12 707745**
- (22) A bejelentés napja: **2012. 03. 05.**
- (96) Az európai bejelentés bejelentési száma:
EP 20120707745
- (97) Az európai bejelentés közzétételi adatai:
EP 2683408 A1 **2012. 09. 13.**
- (97) Az európai szabadalom megadásának meghirdetési adatai:
EP 2683408 B1 **2015. 04. 15.**
- (51) Int. Cl.: **A61K 47/48** (2006.01)
A61K 39/02 (2006.01)
A61P 31/04 (2006.01)
- (86) A nemzetközi (PCT) bejelentési szám:
PCT/EP 12/053715
- (87) A nemzetközi közzétételi szám:
WO 12119972

(30) Elsőbbségi adatok: 201103836 2011. 03. 07. GB	(73) Jogosult(ak): GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals S.A., 1330 Rixensart (BE)
(72) Feltaláló(k): BIEMANS, Ralph Leon, B-1330 Rixensart (BE) DUVIVIER, Pierre, B-1330 Rixensart (BE) GAVARD, Ollivier Francis Nicolas, B-1330 Rixensart (BE)	(74) Képviselő: Lengyel Zsolt, DANUBIA Szabadalmi és Jogi Iroda Kft., Budapest

- (54) **Eljárás bakteriális antigén hordozófehérjében történő konjugálására**

Az európai szabadalom ellen, megadásának az Európai Szabadalmi Közlönyben való meghirdetésétől számított kilenc hónapon belül, felszólalást lehet benyújtani az Európai Szabadalmi Hivatalnál. (Európai Szabadalmi Egyezmény 99. cikk(1))

A fordítást a szabadalmas az 1995. évi XXXIII. törvény 84/H. §-a szerint nyújtotta be. A fordítás tartalmi helyességét a Szellemi Tulajdon Nemzeti Hivatala nem vizsgálta.



(11) **EP 2 683 408 B1**

(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT SPECIFICATION**

(45) Date of publication and mention
of the grant of the patent:
15.04.2015 Bulletin 2015/16

(51) Int Cl.:
A61K 47/48 ^(2006.01) **A61P 31/04** ^(2006.01)
A61K 39/02 ^(2006.01)

(21) Application number: **12707745.1**

(86) International application number:
PCT/EP2012/053715

(22) Date of filing: **05.03.2012**

(87) International publication number:
WO 2012/119972 (13.09.2012 Gazette 2012/37)

(54) **PROCESS FOR CONJUGATION OF BACTERIAL ANTIGEN TO A CARRIER PROTEIN**

KONJUGATIONSVERFAHREN ZUR KOPPLUNG BAKTERIELLEN ANTIGENS AN EIN
TRÄGERPROTEIN

PROCÉDÉ DE CONJUGAISON D'UN ANTIGÈNE BACTÉRIEN À UNE PROTÉINE PORTEUSE

(84) Designated Contracting States:
**AL AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB
GR HR HU IE IS IT LI LT LU LV MC MK MT NL NO
PL PT RO RS SE SI SK SM TR**

(30) Priority: **07.03.2011 GB 201103836**

(43) Date of publication of application:
15.01.2014 Bulletin 2014/03

(73) Proprietor: **GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals S.A.**
1330 Rixensart (BE)

(72) Inventors:
• **BIEMANS, Ralph Leon**
B-1330 Rixensart (BE)
• **DUVIVIER, Pierre**
B-1330 Rixensart (BE)
• **GAVARD, Olivier Francis Nicolas**
B-1330 Rixensart (BE)

(74) Representative: **Dalton, Marcus Jonathan William**
et al
GlaxoSmithKline
Global Patents (CN925.1)
980 Great West Road
Brentford, Middlesex TW8 9GS (GB)

(56) References cited:
WO-A2-2007/071707 WO-A2-2011/110531
US-A- 4 673 574

- **DILUSHA S DALPATHADO ET AL: "Reductive amination of carbohydrates using NaBH(OAc)₃", ANALYTICAL AND BIOANALYTICAL CHEMISTRY, SPRINGER, BERLIN, DE, vol. 381, no. 6, 1 March 2005 (2005-03-01), pages 1130-1137, XP019327213, ISSN: 1618-2650, DOI: 10.1007/S00216-004-3028-9**
- **ABDEL-MAGID AF ET AL: "A Review on the Use of Sodium Triacetoxyborohydride in the Reductive Amination of Ketones and Aldehydes", ORGANIC PROCESS RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT, vol. 10, no. 5, 15 September 2006 (2006-09-15), - 15 September 2006 (2006-09-15), pages 971-1031, XP8154879, DOI: 10.1021/op0601013**

Note: Within nine months of the publication of the mention of the grant of the European patent in the European Patent Bulletin, any person may give notice to the European Patent Office of opposition to that patent, in accordance with the Implementing Regulations. Notice of opposition shall not be deemed to have been filed until the opposition fee has been paid. (Art. 99(1) European Patent Convention).

EP 2 683 408 B1

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a process of conjugation, in particular by reductive amination using the reducing agent sodium triacetoxyborohydride. The present invention also provides a process for manufacturing a pharmaceutical composition comprising a conjugate of the invention.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Children less than 2 years of age do not mount an immune response to most polysaccharide vaccines, so it has been necessary to render the polysaccharides immunogenic by chemical conjugation to a protein carrier. Coupling the polysaccharide, a T-independent antigen, to a protein, a T-dependent antigen, confers upon the polysaccharide the properties of T dependency including isotype switching, affinity maturation, and memory induction. *Streptococcus pneumoniae* is a Gram-positive bacterium responsible for considerable morbidity and mortality (particularly in the young and aged), causing invasive diseases such as pneumonia, bacteraemia and meningitis, and diseases associated with colonisation, such as acute Otitis media. The rate of pneumococcal pneumonia in the US for persons over 60 years of age is estimated to be 3 to 8 per 100,000. In 20% of cases this leads to bacteraemia, and other manifestations such as meningitis, with a mortality rate close to 30% even with antibiotic treatment.

[0003] Pneumococcus is encapsulated with a chemically linked polysaccharide which confers serotype specificity. There are 90 known serotypes of pneumococci, and the capsule is the principle virulence determinant for pneumococci, as the capsule not only protects the inner surface of the bacteria from complement, but is itself poorly immunogenic. Polysaccharides are T-independent antigens, and cannot be processed or presented on MHC molecules to interact with T-cells. They can however, stimulate the immune system through an alternate mechanism which involves cross-linking of surface receptors on B cells.

[0004] It was shown in several experiments that protection against invasive pneumococci disease is correlated most strongly with antibody specific for the capsule, and the protection is serotype specific.

[0005] *Streptococcus pneumoniae* is the most common cause of invasive bacterial disease and Otitis media in infants and young children. Likewise, the elderly mount poor responses to pneumococcal vaccines [Roghmann et al., (1987), J. Gerontol. 42:265-270], hence the increased incidence of bacterial pneumonia in this population [Verghese and Berk, (1983) Medicine (Baltimore) 62:271-285].

[0006] Conjugation of *Streptococcus pneumoniae* saccharides using cyanoborohydride ions is known, for example WO87/06838. However cyanoborohydride ions have several disadvantages including a relatively slow reaction time and the possible contamination of the product with cyanide (Ahmed F. et al J.Org.Chem., 1996, 61:3849-3862). The slow reaction time using this reagent was addressed in EP1035137 which describes an attempt to improve the reaction time of this conjugation process through use of microwave radiation.

[0007] Ahmed *et al* have described the reductive amination of aldehydes and ketones with sodium triacetoxyborohydride ($\text{NaBH}(\text{OAc})_3$) (J. Org. Chem., 1996, 61:3849-3862). Similarly the reductive amination of carbohydrates using $\text{NaBH}(\text{OAc})_3$ was described by Dalpathado et al (Anal. Bioanal. Chem (2005) 281:130-1137).

[0008] Accordingly the present invention provides an improved process for conjugation of an antigen by reductive amination using triacetoxyborohydride ($\text{BH}(\text{OA})_3$) anions at the reducing agent. The inventors have discovered that this reducing agent is suitable for use to conjugate bacterial saccharides to carrier proteins; in particular this is quicker than the equivalent reaction using cyanoborohydride ions and does not produce toxic by-products.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0009] In a first aspect of the invention there is provided a process for conjugation of an antigen comprising the steps of

- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
 - b) reacting the activated antigen and a carrier protein to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the carrier protein; and
 - c) reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxyborohydride moiety to form a conjugated antigen;
- or
- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
 - b) reacting the activated antigen and a linker to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the linker;
 - c) reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxyborohydride moiety to form an antigen-linker; and
 - d) reacting the antigen-linker with a carrier protein to form a conjugated antigen;

wherein the antigen originates from *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, *Haemophilus influenzae*, *Neisseria meningitidis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Enterococcus faecium*, *Enterococcus faecalis*, *Salmonella* Vi, or *Staphylococcus epidermidis* wherein the antigen is a bacterial capsular saccharide and wherein step a) comprises reacting the antigen with periodate.

[0010] In a second aspect of the invention there is provided a process for conjugation of an antigen comprising the steps of

- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
- a') lyophilising the activated antigen and a carrier protein followed by reconstitution in DMSO or DMF;
- b) reacting the activated antigen and the carrier protein to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the carrier protein; and
- c) reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxymethylborohydride moiety to form a conjugated antigen;
- or
- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
- a') lyophilising the activated antigen and a linker followed by reconstitution in DMSO or DMF;
- b') reacting the activated antigen and the linker to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the carrier protein; and
- c') reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxymethylborohydride moiety to form an antigen-linker;
- d) reacting the antigen-linker with a carrier protein to form a conjugated antigen wherein the antigen is a bacterial capsular saccharide and wherein step a) comprises reacting the antigen with periodate.

[0011] There is disclosed an immunogenic composition comprising the conjugated antigen mixed with a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

[0012] There is disclosed an immunogenic composition obtainable by the process of the invention.

[0013] There is disclosed an immunogenic composition obtained by the process of the invention.

[0014] There is disclosed a vaccine comprising said immunogenic composition.

[0015] There is disclosed a use of said immunogenic composition or said in the prevention or treatment of disease for example bacterial disease.

[0016] There is disclosed a use of said immunogenic composition or said in the prevention or treatment of a disease selected from the group consisting of bacterial meningitis, pneumococcal disease, *Haemophilus influenzae* disease, meningococcal disease, staphylococcal disease, enterococcal disease and *Salmonella*.

[0017] There is disclosed a use of said immunogenic composition said in the preparation of a medicament for the prevention or treatment of disease for example bacterial disease.

[0018] There is disclosed a use of said immunogenic composition said in the preparation of a medicament for the prevention or treatment of a disease selected from the group consisting of bacterial meningitis, pneumococcal disease, *Haemophilus influenzae* disease, meningococcal disease, staphylococcal disease, enterococcal disease and *Salmonella*.

[0019] There is disclosed a method of preventing or treating infection for example bacterial infection comprising administering said immunogenic composition said to a patient.

[0020] There is disclosed a method of preventing or treating a disease selected from the group consisting of bacterial meningitis, pneumococcal disease, *Haemophilus influenzae* disease, meningococcal disease, staphylococcal disease, enterococcal disease and *Salmonella* comprising administering said immunogenic composition said to a patient.

DESCRIPTION OF FIGURES

[0021]

Figure 1. Size of 23F and 6B polysaccharides following periodate treatment. The line marked with triangles shows the size of 6B in 10mM phosphate buffer, the line marked with diamonds shows the size of 23F in 10mM phosphate buffer and the line marked with squares shows the size of 23F in 100mM phosphate buffer.

Figure 2. Comparison of immunogenicity of 23F conjugates using either CDAP or reductive amination conjugation. Graph a) describes the results of an ELISA assay. Graph b) describes the results of an opsonophagocytosis assay.

Figure 3. Evaluation of the immunogenicity of PS06B-CRM conjugated using the conjugation methods described in example 4 in a Balb/c mouse model.

Figure 4. Evaluation of the immunogenicity of PS06B-CRM conjugated using the conjugation methods described in example 4 in a guinea pig model.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0022] The invention relates to an improved process for conjugating an antigen to a carrier protein. In particular, the invention provides a process for conjugating an antigen comprising the steps of

- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
 - b) reacting the activated antigen and a carrier protein to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the carrier protein; and
 - c) reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxyborohydride moiety to form a conjugated antigen;
- or
- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
 - b') reacting the activated antigen and a linker to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the linker;
 - c') reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxyborohydride moiety to form an antigen-linker; and
 - d) reacting the antigen-linker with a carrier protein to form a conjugated antigen;

wherein the antigen originates from *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, *Haemophilus influenzae*, *Neisseria meningitidis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Enterococcus faecium*, *Enterococcus faecalis*, *Salmonella* Vi, or *Staphylococcus epidermidis* wherein the antigen is a bacterial capsular saccharide and wherein step a) comprises reacting the antigen with periodate.

[0023] In an embodiment the process of the invention comprises steps a), b) and c).

[0024] The invention further provides a process for conjugation of an antigen comprising the steps of

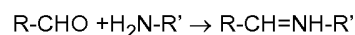
- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
 - a') lyophilising the activated antigen and a carrier protein followed by reconstitution in DMSO or DMF;
 - b) reacting the activated antigen and the carrier protein to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the carrier protein; and
 - c) reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxyborohydride moiety to form a conjugated antigen;
- or
- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
 - a') lyophilising the activated antigen and a linker followed by reconstitution in DMSO or DMF;
 - b') reacting the activated antigen and the linker to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the carrier protein; and
 - c') reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxyborohydride moiety to form an antigen-linker;
 - d) reacting the antigen-linker with a carrier protein to form a conjugated antigen wherein the antigen is a bacterial capsular saccharide and wherein step a) comprises reacting the antigen with periodate.

[0025] In a further embodiment the process of the invention comprises steps a), a'), b) and c).

[0026] For the purposes of the invention the term 'activating the antigen' refers to any process which introduces carbonyl groups onto the antigens, in particular to oxidation with periodate.

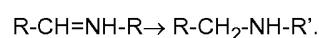
[0027] For the purposes of the invention the term 'activated antigen' refers to an antigen which has been altered by the process of 'activating the antigen'.

[0028] Step b) or b') may occur via the following reaction scheme:



wherein R-CHO is the antigen and H₂N-R' is the carrier protein.

[0029] Step c) or c') may occur via the following reaction scheme:



[0030] A reducing agent is an agent which is capable of reducing an imine group, preferably the reducing agent reduces imine groups in preference to aldehyde groups. Reducing agents of the invention comprise a triacetoxyborohydride

moiety (BH(OAc)₃), for example reducing agents of the invention may comprise sodium triacetoxyborohydride (Na-BH(OAc)₃) or potassium triacetoxyborohydride (KBH(OAc)₃). Preferably the reducing agent does not contain a cyanoborohydride moiety, preferably the reducing agent does not comprise sodium cyanoborohydride.

[0031] For the purposes of the invention the term 'conjugated antigen' indicates an antigen linked covalently to a carrier protein.

[0032] Lyophilisation of the activated antigen and the carrier protein may refer to co-lyophilisation i.e. mixing the activated antigen and the carrier protein together and lyophilising them in the same container, or this may refer to lyophilising the activated antigen and the carrier protein separately and combining them together after lyophilisation.

[0033] In one embodiment the antigen is a bacterial saccharide. In a further embodiment the antigen is a bacterial capsular saccharide.

[0034] The term "saccharide" throughout this specification may indicate polysaccharide, oligosaccharide or teichoic acid and includes all three. It may indicate lipopolysaccharide (LPS) or lipooligosaccharide (LOS). Before use Polysaccharides may be isolated from a source strain or isolated from the source strain and sized to some degree by known methods (see for example EP497524 and EP497525; Shousun Chen Szu et al. - Carbohydrate Research Vol 152 p7-20 (1986)) for instance by microfluidisation. Oligosaccharides have a low number of repeat units (typically 5-30 repeat units).

[0035] In an embodiment the bacterial saccharide originates from *S. pneumoniae*, *H. influenzae*, *N. meningitidis*, *S. aureus*, *E. faecalis*, *E. faecium*, *Salmonella* Vi or *S. epidermidis*. In a further embodiment the bacterial saccharide originates from *S. pneumoniae*, *H. Influenzae* or *N. meningitidis*. In a further embodiment the bacterial saccharide originates from *S. pneumoniae*. In a further embodiment the bacterial saccharide originates from *H. influenzae*. In a yet further embodiment the bacterial saccharide is a bacterial capsular saccharide selected from a list consisting of: *N. meningitidis* serogroup A (MenA), B (MenB), C (MenC), W135 (MenW) or Y (MenY), Group B Streptococcus group Ia, Ib, II, III, IV, V, VI, or VII, *Staphylococcus aureus* type 5, *Staphylococcus aureus* type 8, *Salmonella typhi* (Vi saccharide), *Vibrio cholerae*, *H. influenzae* type b and from *Streptococcus pneumoniae* serotypes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 8, 9N, 9V, 10A, 11A, 12F, 14, 15B, 17F, 18C, 19A, 19F, 20, 22F, 23F or 33F.

[0036] In a further embodiment the bacterial capsular saccharide is from an *S. pneumoniae* serotype selected from the group consisting of 5, 6B, 6A, 7F, 9V, 14, 19F and 23F. In one embodiment the bacterial capsular saccharide is *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 23F. In one embodiment the bacterial capsular saccharide is *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 6B. In one embodiment the bacterial capsular saccharide is *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 6A.

[0037] In a further embodiment the bacterial saccharide is *Haemophilus influenzae* b (Hib) polysaccharide or oligosaccharide.

[0038] The term "carrier protein" is intended to cover both small peptides and large polypeptides (>10 kDa). The carrier protein may be any peptide or protein. It may comprise one or more T-helper epitopes. The carrier protein may be tetanus toxoid (TT), tetanus toxoid fragment C, non-toxic mutants of tetanus toxin [note all such variants of TT are considered to be the same type of carrier protein for the purposes of this invention], diphtheria toxoid (DT), CRM197, other non-toxic mutants of diphtheria toxin [such as CRM176, CRM 197, CRM228, CRM 45 (Uchida et al J. Biol. Chem. 218; 3838-3844, 1973); CRM 9, CRM 45, CRM102, CRM 103 and CRM107 and other mutations described by Nicholls and Youle in Genetically Engineered Toxins, Ed: Frankel, Maecel Dekker Inc, 1992; deletion or mutation of Glu-148 to Asp, Gin or Ser and/or Ala 158 to Gly and other mutations disclosed in US 4709017 or US 4950740; mutation of at least one or more residues Lys 516, Lys 526, Phe 530 and/or Lys 534 and other mutations disclosed in US 5917017 or US 6455673; or fragment disclosed in US 5843711] (note all such variants of DT are considered to be the same type of carrier protein for the purposes of this invention), pneumococcal pneumolysin (Kuo et al (1995) Infect Immun 63; 2706-13), OMPC (meningococcal outer membrane protein - usually extracted from *N. meningitidis* serogroup B - EP0372501), synthetic peptides (EP0378881, EP0427347), heat shock proteins (WO 93/17712, WO 94/03208), pertussis proteins (WO 98/58668, EP0471177), cytokines, lymphokines, growth factors or hormones (WO 91/01146), artificial proteins comprising multiple human CD4+ T cell epitopes from various pathogen derived antigens (Falugi et al (2001) Eur J Immunol 31; 3816-3824) such as N19 protein (Baraldoi et al (2004) Infect Immun 72; 4884-7) pneumococcal surface protein PspA (WO 02/091998), iron uptake proteins (WO 01/72337), toxin A or B of *C. difficile* (WO 00/61761), *H. influenzae* Protein D (EP594610 and WO 00/56360), pneumococcal PhtA (WO 98/18930, also referred to Sp36), pneumococcal PhtD (disclosed in WO 00/37105, and is also referred to Sp036D), pneumococcal PhtB (disclosed in WO 00/37105, and is also referred to Sp036B), or PhtE (disclosed in WO00/30299 and is referred to as BVH-3).

[0039] In one embodiment of the invention the carrier protein is selected from the group consisting of: tetanus toxoid (TT), fragment C of tetanus toxoid, diphtheria toxoid (DT), CRM197, Pneumolysin (Ply), protein D, PhtD, PhtDE and N19. In a further embodiment the carrier protein is CRM197. In a still further embodiment the carrier protein is tetanus toxoid.

[0040] In an embodiment the antigen is conjugated directly to the carrier protein. In a further embodiment the antigen is conjugated to the carrier protein via the addition of a hetero- or homo-bifunctional linker using the chemistry of the invention. One end of the linker will react with the activated antigen by reductive amination, however the other end of the linker may react with the carrier protein using any type of chemistry. For this reason the linker will contain at least one reactive amino group, if the linker is homo-bifunctional it will contain two reactive amino groups, if the linker is hetero-

bifunctional it will contain one reactive amino group and a different reactive group, in one embodiment this second reactive group is a reactive carbonyl group. In one embodiment the linker is between 1 and 20 Angstroms in length. In a further embodiment the linker has between 4 and 20, 4 and 12, or 5 and 10 carbon atoms. A possible linker is adipic acid dihydrazide (ADH). Other linkers include B-propionamido (WO 00/10599), nitrophenyl-ethylamine (Gever et al (1979) Med. Microbiol. Immunol. 165; 171-288), haloalkyl halides (US4057685), glycosidic linkages (US4673574, US4808700), hexane diamine and 6-aminocaproic acid (US4459286).

[0041] In general the following types of chemical groups on the carrier protein can be used for coupling / conjugation as the second reactive group:

A) Carboxyl (for instance via aspartic acid or glutamic acid). In one embodiment this group is linked to an amino group on a linker with carbodiimide chemistry e.g. with EDAC (1-Ethyl-3-(3-dimethylaminopropyl)carbodiimide)). Note: instead of EDAC above, any suitable carbodiimide may be used.

B) Amino group (for instance via lysine). In one embodiment this group is linked to a carboxyl group on an a linker with carbodiimide chemistry e.g. with EDAC. In another embodiment this group is linked to linkers having hydroxyl groups ctivated with CDAP or CNBr; or a carbonyl group; or a succinimide ester group.

C) Sulphydryl (for instance via cysteine). In one embodiment this group is linked to a bromo or chloro acetylated linker or to a linker having maleimide groups.

D) The protein could be modified to contain an alkynyl or azide group this could be conjugated to the linker using the 'click' chemistry (described in Tetrahedron letters (June 2005) 46:4479-4482).

[0042] In one embodiment steps b) and c) or b') and c') occur simultaneously.

[0043] In a further embodiment step c) and/or step c') and/or step b) and/or step b') is carried out in the presence of a non aqueous solvent. In a further embodiment step c) and/or step c') and/or step b) and/or step b') is carried out in solvent which us essentially water free. For example the reaction may take place in the presence of dimethylsulphoxide (DMSO) or dimethylformamide (DMF). In one embodiment step c) and/or step c') and/or step b) and/or step b') takes place in a solution consisting essentially of DMSO or DMF. If the carrier protein and the activated antigen have been lyophilised, DMSO or DMF may be used to reconstitute the carrier protein and activated antigen.

[0044] In an embodiment step c), and/or step c') takes place in less than 30 hours, less than 25 hours, less than 20 hours, less than 19 hours, less than 18 hours or less than 17 hours.

[0045] In an embodiment step c), and/or step and c') takes place in between 15 mins and 30 hours, between 10 hours and 25 hours, between 8 hours and 20 hours, between 10 hours and 20 hours or between 14 hours and 19 hours. In a further embodiment step c) and/or step c') take place in around 16 hours.

[0046] In an embodiment step c) and/or c') does not result in the production of cyanide ions. For example reductive amination using a reducing agent comprising a cyanoborohydride moiety may result in the production of cyanide ions; these can be toxic if used in vaccination.

[0047] In an embodiment the antigen and the carrier protein are mixed together before step b). This can occur during step a'), in general however the carrier protein and the antigen will be mixed together after step a).

[0048] In one embodiment the antigen and the carrier protein are lyophilised before step b), preferably this occurs after step a). In one embodiment the activated antigen is lyophilised after step a), the carrier protein is also lyophilised and the activated antigen and the carrier protein are reconstituted in the same solution, this acts as mixing the antigen and the carrier protein together.

[0049] In one embodiment the lyophilisation takes place in the presence of a non-reducing sugar, possible non-reducing sugars include sucrose, lactose, trehalose, raffinose, stachyose, melezitose, dextran, mannitol, lactitol and palatinit. In an embodiment the sugar is selected from the group consisting of sucrose, trehalose, and mannitol.

[0050] In one embodiment between 0.2 and 5, between 0.5 and 3 or between 0.9 and 2.6, between 0.5 and 0.8, between 0.2 and 1.0, between 2 and 3 or between 1 and 4 molar equivalent of reducing agent is used in step c) or c'). For the purposes of the invention using 1 molar equivalent of reducing agent corresponds to using one mole of reducing agent per one mole of saccharide repeating units. In a further embodiment around 2.5 molar equivalent or between 1 and 3 molar equivalent of reducing agent is used in step c) or step c').

[0051] In one embodiment the ratio of carrier protein: antigen before step c) and/or c') is between 0.4:1 and 2:1. In an embodiment the ratio of carrier protein: antigen before step c) or c') is between 1:1 and 2:1. In a further embodiment the ratio of carrier protein: antigen before step c) and/or c') for PS23F or PS6B is between 1:1 and 2:1, between 0.4/1 and 2.5/1, between 2.0/1 and 2.5/1, or between 0.2/1 and 1.5/1. In an embodiment the ratio of carrier protein: antigen after step c) and/or c') is between 0.8:1 and 3.5:1. In a further embodiment the ratio of carrier protein: antigen after step c) and/or c') is between 1.3:1 and 2.7:1. In a further embodiment the ratio of carrier protein: antigen after step c) and/or c')

is between 1:1 and 1.5:1.

[0052] At the end of step c) or c') there may be unreacted carbonyl groups remaining in the conjugated antigens, these may be capped using a suitable capping agent. In one embodiment this capping agent is sodium borohydride (NaBH_4), for example the product of step c) or c') may be reacted with sodium borohydride for 15 mins-15hrs, 15mins-45mins, 2-10hrs or 3.5hrs, around 30 mins or around 4 hrs. In a further embodiment capping is achieved by mixing the product of step c) with 1 to 10 molar equivalents, between 1 to 5, between 1.5 and 2.5, or around 2 molar equivalents of NaBH_4 .

[0053] In one embodiment step a) comprises reacting the antigen with periodate. The term 'periodate' includes both periodate and periodic acid. This term also includes both metaperiodate (IO_4^-) and orthoperiodate (IO_6^{5-}), however in one particular embodiment the periodate used in the method of the invention is metaperiodate. The term 'periodate' also includes the various salts of periodate including sodium periodate and potassium periodate. In one embodiment the periodate used is sodium metaperiodate. When an antigen reacts with periodate, periodate oxidises vicinal hydroxyl groups to form carbonyl or aldehyde groups and causes cleavage of a C-C bond. For this reason the term 'reacting an antigen with periodate' includes oxidation of vicinal hydroxyl groups by periodate.

[0054] In one embodiment step a) comprises reacting the antigen with 0.001-0.7, 0.005-0.5, 0.01-0.5, 0.1-1.2, 0.1-0.5, 0.1-0.2, 0.5-0.8, 0.1-0.8, 0.3-1.0 or 0.4-0.9 molar equivalents of periodate, in a further embodiment step a) comprises reacting the antigen with 0.0001-0.8 molar equivalents of periodate.

[0055] In one embodiment the buffer used in step a) is a buffer which does not contain an amine group. In one embodiment the buffer is selected from the list consisting of phosphate buffer, borate buffer, acetate buffer, carbonate buffer, maleate buffer and citrate buffer. In a second embodiment the buffer is an inorganic buffer. The term inorganic buffer includes any buffer solution wherein the buffering capacity is due to the presence of a compound which does not contain carbon. Inorganic buffers of the invention include phosphate buffer and borate buffer. In one embodiment the buffer is phosphate buffer.

[0056] In one embodiment the buffer has a concentration between 1-100mM, 5-80mM, 1-50mM, 1-25mM, 10-40mM, 1-10mM, 5-15mM, 8-12mM, 10-20mM, 5-20mM, 10-50mM, around 10mM or around 20mM. In a further embodiment the pH in step a) is pH 3.0-8.0, pH 5.0-7.0, pH 5.5-6.5, pH 5.8-6.3, or around pH 6.0.

[0057] In one embodiment step a) is carried out in the dark, for example the container containing the reaction mixture may be covered with a material capable of reflecting light for example aluminium foil.

[0058] The antigen may be a native bacterial saccharide or may be a bacterial saccharide that has been reduced in size by a factor of no more than x2, x4, x6, x8, x10 or x20 (for instance by microfluidization [e.g. by Emulsiflex C-50 apparatus] or other known technique [for instance heat, chemical, oxidation, sonication methods]). In one embodiment the antigen is a bacterial saccharide which is microfluidised before step a). Oligosaccharides may have been reduced in size substantially further [for instance by known heat, chemical, or oxidation methods].

[0059] For the purposes of the invention, "native bacterial saccharide" refers to a bacterial saccharide that has not been subjected to a process, the purpose of which is to reduce the size of the saccharide. A bacterial saccharide can become slightly reduced in size during normal purification procedures. Such a saccharide is still native. Only if the bacterial saccharide has been subjected to techniques which reduce a saccharide in size would the polysaccharide not be considered native.

[0060] The weight-average molecular weight of a bacterial saccharide suitable for conjugation by the process of the invention may be between 20kDa and 2000kDa, between 30kDa and 1000kDa, between 40kDa and 500kDa, between 50kDa and 400kDa, between 75kDa and 300kDa or between 1000kDa and 2000kDa. In the case of the native 23F capsular saccharide from *S.pneumoniae*, the average molecular weight of the native polysaccharide is between 750-1500 kDa or 1200-1300kDa. In the case of the native Hib saccharide, the average molecular weight of the native polysaccharide is between 100 and 250kDa. The molecular weight or average molecular weight of a saccharide herein refers to the weight-average molecular weight (Mw) of the bacterial saccharide measured prior to conjugation and is measured by MALLS. The MALLS technique is well known in the art. MALLS analyses may be carried out using a TSKGMPwXl and 50 mM Na/K PO₄, 200 mM NaCl pH 7.0 as elution buffer with 0.75 ml/min using RI/DAWN-EOS detector. In an embodiment, the polydispersity of a bacterial saccharide is 1-1.5, 1-1.3, 1-1.2, 1-1.1 or 1-1.05 and after conjugation to a carrier protein, the polydispersity of the conjugated bacterial saccharide is 1.0-2.5, 1.0-2.0, 1.0-1.5, 1.0-1.2, 1.5-2.5, 1.7-2.2 or 1.5-2.0. All polydispersity measurements are generated by MALLS.

[0061] Treatment with periodate may lead to a reduction in the size of the bacterial saccharide (sizing effect). In one embodiment the process of the invention reduces this sizing effect. This is seen for the 23F bacterial saccharide from *Streptococcus pneumoniae* (as in example 1). For this reason, in one embodiment the average molecular weight of a bacterial saccharide of the invention is between 1-1100kDa, 100-470kDa, 200-300kDa, 600-1100kDa or 800-1000kDa after step a) (measured by MALLS as described above). In one embodiment the average molecular weight of the 23F saccharide is between 100-470kDa or 200-300kDa after step a). In one embodiment the average molecular weight of the Hib bacterial saccharide is between 1 and 50kDa or between 5 and 10kDa after step a).

[0062] The invention also provides a further step e) of purifying the conjugated antigen, step e) may comprise diafiltration, for example diafiltration with a cut-off of 100kDa. In addition or alternatively step e) may comprise ion exchange

chromatography. In a further embodiment step e) may comprise size exclusion chromatography. In a further embodiment step e) may comprise purifying the conjugated antigen using gel permeation. In one embodiment the process comprises a further step f), wherein the conjugate is sterile filtered.

[0063] The conjugated antigen may also be mixed with further antigens. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise at least 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 or 20 *S.pneumoniae* saccharides selected from the group consisting of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 8, 9N, 9V, 10A, 11A, 12F, 14, 15B, 17F, 18C, 19A, 19F, 20, 22F, 23F and 33F. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharides 4, 6B, 9V, 14, 18C, 19F and 23F. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharides 4, 6B, 9V, 14, 18C and 19F. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharides 4, 9V, 14, 18C, 19F and 23F. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharides 1, 4, 5, 6B, 7F, 9V, 14, 18C, 19F and 23F. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharides 1, 4, 5, 6B, 7F, 9V, 14, 18C, and 19F. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharides 1, 4, 5, 7F, 9V, 14, 18C, 19F and 23F. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharides 1, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 9V, 14, 18C, 19A, 19F and 23F. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharides 1, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 9V, 14, 18C, 19A and 19F. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharides 1, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 7F, 9V, 14, 18C, 19A, 19F and 23F. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharides 1, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 9V, 14, 18C, 19A, 19F and 23F. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharides 1, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 9V, 14, 18C, 19A and 19F. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharides 1, 4, 5, 6A, 7F, 9V, 14, 18C, 19A, 19F and 23F.

[0064] Any of the saccharides listed as 'further antigens' are optionally conjugated to a carrier protein either by the process of the invention or by a different process. Optionally these further antigens are conjugated to the carrier proteins listed above.

[0065] In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 1 conjugated to protein D or CRM197. In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 3 conjugated to protein D, CRM197, pneumolysin or PhtD or fragment or fusion protein thereof. In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 4 conjugated to protein D or CRM197. In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 5 conjugated to protein D or CRM197. In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 6B conjugated to protein D or CRM197. In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 7F conjugated to protein D or CRM197. In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 9V conjugated to protein D or CRM197. In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 14 conjugated to protein D or CRM197. In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 23F conjugated to protein D or CRM197. In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 18C conjugated to tetanus toxoid or CRM197. In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 19A conjugated to pneumolysin or CRM197. In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 22F conjugated to CRM197 or PhtD or fragment of fusion protein thereof. In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 6A conjugated to pneumolysin or a *H. influenzae* protein, optionally protein D or PhtD or fusion protein thereof or CRM197. In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 6C conjugated to pneumolysin or a *H. influenzae* protein, optionally protein D or PhtD or fusion protein thereof or CRM197. In an embodiment, the further antigens comprise *S. pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 19F conjugated to Diphtheria toxoid (DT).

[0066] The further antigens may also comprise *Streptococcus pneumoniae* proteins. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise at least 1 protein selected from the group consisting of the Poly Histidine Triad family (PhtX), Choline Binding protein family (CbpX), CbpX truncates, LytX family, LytX truncates, CbpX truncate-LytX truncate chimeric proteins (or fusions), pneumolysin (Ply), PspA, PsaA, Sp128, Sp101, Sp130, Sp125 and Sp133. In one embodiment the further antigens comprise PhtD and/or Ply.

[0067] The further antigens may also comprise antigens from further bacterial species. In one embodiment the vaccine or immunogenic composition comprises antigens originating from *S. pneumoniae*, *H. influenzae*, *N. meningitidis*, *E.coli*, *M.cattarhalis*, tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, *S.epidermidis*, enterococci, *Pseudomonas* or *S. aureus*.

[0068] In one embodiment the further antigens comprise *M.cattarhalis* antigens, preferred *M.cattarhalis* antigens are: OMP106 [WO 97/41731 (Antex) & WO 96/34960 (PMC)]; OMP21; LbpA & LbpB [WO 98/55606 (PMC)]; TbpA & TbpB [WO 97/13785 & WO 97/32980 (PMC)]; CopB [Helminen ME, et al. (1993) Infect. Immun. 61:2003-2010]; UspA1/2 [WO 93/03761 (University of Texas)]; and OmpCD. Examples of non-typeable *Haemophilus influenzae* antigens which can be included in a combination vaccine (especially for the prevention of otitis media) include: Fimbrin protein [(US 5766608 - Ohio State Research Foundation)] and fusions comprising peptides therefrom [eg LB1(f) peptide fusions; US 5843464 (OSU) or WO 99/64067]; OMP26 [WO 97/01638 (Cortecs)]; P6 [EP 281673 (State University of New York)]; TbpA and TbpB; Hia; Hmw1,2; Hap; and D15.

[0069] In a further embodiment the further antigens comprise Diphtheria toxoid (DT), tetanus toxoid (TT), and pertussis

components [typically detoxified Pertussis toxoid (PT) and filamentous haemagglutinin (FHA) with optional pertactin (PRN) and/or agglutinin 1+2 and/or agglutininogen 1+2], for example the marketed vaccine INFANRIX-DTPaTM (Smith-KlineBeecham Biologicals) which contains DT, TT, PT, FHA and PRN antigens, or with a whole cell pertussis component for example as marketed by SmithKlineBeecham Biologicals s.a., as TritanrixTM. In a further embodiment the further

antigens comprise Hepatitis B surface antigen (HepB).

[0070] In a further embodiment the further antigens comprise the PRP capsular saccharide of *H.influenzae* (Hib).

[0071] In a further embodiment the further antigens comprise at least one capsular saccharide from *N.meningitidis* A, C, W or Y. In a further embodiment the further antigens comprise at least one conjugate of a capsular saccharide from *N.meningitidis* A, C, W, Y or B.

[0072] The conjugated antigen may also be mixed with an adjuvant. Suitable adjuvants include, but are not limited to, aluminium salts (aluminium phosphate or aluminium hydroxide), monophosphoryl lipid A (for example 3D-MPL), saponins (for example QS21), oil in water emulsions, blebs or outer membrane vesicle preparations from Gram negative bacterial strains (such as those taught by WO02/09746), lipid A or derivatives thereof, alkyl glucosamide phosphates or combinations of two or more of these adjuvants.

[0073] In a further embodiment the conjugated antigen of the invention is mixed with a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient to form an immunogenic composition.

[0074] Herein disclosed is an immunogenic composition obtainable by the process of the invention. Herein also disclosed is an immunogenic composition obtained by the process of the invention. In one embodiment the pharmaceutical acceptable excipient does not contain sodium chloride. In one embodiment the pharmaceutical excipient comprises a buffer selected from the group consisting of phosphate, maleate, tris, or citrate. In a further embodiment the buffer is maleate buffer.

[0075] The immunogenic composition may comprise further antigens, in particular those described as 'further antigens' above. The immunogenic composition may comprise an adjuvant. In one embodiment the adjuvant is an aluminium salt.

[0076] Herein also disclosed is a vaccine comprising the immunogenic composition.

[0077] The vaccine preparations containing said immunogenic compositions may be used to protect or treat a mammal susceptible to infection, by means of administering said vaccine via systemic or mucosal route. These administrations may include injection *via* the intramuscular, intraperitoneal, intradermal or subcutaneous routes; or *via* mucosal administration to the oral/alimentary, respiratory, genitourinary tracts. Intranasal administration of vaccines for the treatment of pneumonia or otitis media is possible (as nasopharyngeal carriage of pneumococci can be more effectively prevented, thus attenuating infection at its earliest stage). Although the vaccine may be administered as a single dose, components thereof may also be co-administered together at the same time or at different times (for instance pneumococcal saccharide conjugates could be administered separately, at the same time or 1-2 weeks after the administration of the any bacterial protein component of the vaccine for optimal coordination of the immune responses with respect to each other). In addition to a single route of administration, 2 different routes of administration may be used. For example, saccharides or saccharide conjugates may be administered IM (or ID) and bacterial proteins may be administered IN (or ID). In addition, the vaccines may be administered IM for priming doses and IN for booster doses.

[0078] The content of protein antigens in the vaccine will typically be in the range 1-100µg, optionally 5-50µg, most typically in the range 5 - 25µg. Following an initial vaccination, subjects may receive one or several booster immunizations adequately spaced.

[0079] Vaccine preparation is generally described in Vaccine Design ("The subunit and adjuvant approach" (eds Powell M.F. & Newman M.J.) (1995) Plenum Press New York). Encapsulation within liposomes is described by Fullerton, US Patent 4,235,877. Although the vaccines disclosed herein may be administered by any route, administration of the described vaccines into the skin (ID) forms one embodiment of the present invention. Human skin comprises an outer "horny" cuticle, called the stratum corneum, which overlays the epidermis. Underneath this epidermis is a layer called the dermis, which in turn overlays the subcutaneous tissue. Researchers have shown that injection of a vaccine into the skin, and in particular the dermis, stimulates an immune response, which may also be associated with a number of additional advantages. Intradermal vaccination with the vaccines described herein forms an optional feature.

[0080] The conventional technique of intradermal injection, the "mantoux procedure", comprises steps of cleaning the skin, and then stretching with one hand, and with the bevel of a narrow gauge needle (26-31 gauge) facing upwards the needle is inserted at an angle of between 10-15°. Once the bevel of the needle is inserted, the barrel of the needle is lowered and further advanced whilst providing a slight pressure to elevate it under the skin. The liquid is then injected very slowly thereby forming a bleb or bump on the skin surface, followed by slow withdrawal of the needle.

[0081] More recently, devices that are specifically designed to administer liquid agents into or across the skin have been described, for example the devices described in WO 99/34850 and EP 1092444, also the jet injection devices described for example in WO 01/13977; US 5,480,381, US 5,599,302, US 5,334,144, US 5,993,412, US 5,649,912, US 5,569,189, US 5,704,911, US 5,383,851, US 5,893,397, US 5,466,220, US 5,339,163, US 5,312,335, US 5,503,627, US 5,064,413, US 5,520, 639, US 4,596,556, US 4,790,824, US 4,941,880, US 4,940,460, WO 97/37705 and WO 97/13537. Alternative methods of intradermal administration of the vaccine preparations may include conventional sy-

ringes and needles, or devices designed for ballistic delivery of solid vaccines (WO 99/27961), or transdermal patches (WO 97/48440; WO 98/28037); or applied to the surface of the skin (transdermal or transcutaneous delivery WO 98/20734 ; WO 98/28037).

[0082] When the vaccines disclosed herein are to be administered to the skin, or more specifically into the dermis, the vaccine is in a low liquid volume, particularly a volume of between about 0.05 ml and 0.2 ml.

[0083] The content of antigens in the skin or intradermal vaccines may be similar to conventional doses as found in intramuscular vaccines (see above). However, it is a feature of skin or intradermal vaccines that the formulations may be "low dose". Accordingly the protein antigens in "low dose" vaccines are optionally present in as little as 0.1 to 10 µg or 0.1 to 5 µg per dose; and the saccharide (optionally conjugated) antigens may be present in the range of 0.01-1 µg, or between 0.01 to 0.5 µg of saccharide per dose.

[0084] As used herein, the term "intradermal delivery" means delivery of the vaccine to the region of the dermis in the skin. However, the vaccine will not necessarily be located exclusively in the dermis. The dermis is the layer in the skin located between about 1.0 and about 2.0 mm from the surface in human skin, but there is a certain amount of variation between individuals and in different parts of the body. In general, it can be expected to reach the dermis by going 1.5 mm below the surface of the skin. The dermis is located between the stratum corneum and the epidermis at the surface and the subcutaneous layer below. Depending on the mode of delivery, the vaccine may ultimately be located solely or primarily within the dermis, or it may ultimately be distributed within the epidermis and the dermis.

[0085] Disclosed herein is a vaccine kit, comprising a vial containing an immunogenic composition as described herein optionally in lyophilised form, and further comprising a vial containing an adjuvant as described herein. It is envisioned that the adjuvant will be used to reconstitute the lyophilised immunogenic composition.

[0086] Disclosed herein is a method of preventing or treating infection for example bacterial infection comprising administering to the host an immunoprotective dose of the immunogenic composition or vaccine or kit. Also disclosed herein is a method of preventing or treating a disease selected from the group consisting of bacterial meningitis, pneumococcal disease, *Haemophilus influenzae* disease, meningococcal disease, staphylococcal disease, enterococcal disease and Salmonella comprising administering to the host an immunoprotective dose of the immunogenic composition or vaccine or kit as disclosed herein.

[0087] Also disclosed herein is an immunogenic composition for use in the treatment or prevention of disease for example bacterial disease. A further aspect of the invention is said immunogenic composition for use in the treatment or prevention of a disease selected from the group consisting of bacterial meningitis, pneumococcal disease, *Haemophilus influenzae* disease, meningococcal disease, staphylococcal disease, enterococcal disease and Salmonella.

[0088] Also disclosed herein is the use of the immunogenic composition or vaccine or kit in the manufacture of a medicament for the treatment or prevention of disease for example bacterial disease. A further aspect of the disclosure is the use of said immunogenic composition or vaccine or kit in the manufacture of a medicament for the prevention or treatment of a disease selected from the group consisting of bacterial meningitis, pneumococcal disease, *Haemophilus influenzae* disease, meningococcal disease, staphylococcal disease, enterococcal disease and Salmonella.

[0089] "Around" or "approximately" are defined as within 10% more or less of the given figure for the purposes of the invention.

[0090] The terms "comprising", "comprise" and "comprises" herein are intended by the inventors to be optionally substitutable with the terms "consisting of", "consist of" and "consists of", respectively, in every instance.

[0091] Embodiments herein relating to "vaccine compositions" are also applicable to embodiments relating to "immunogenic compositions" and vice versa.

[0092] In order that this invention may be better understood, the following examples are set forth. These examples are for purposes of illustration.

[0093] Embodiments of the invention are further described in the subsequent numbered paragraphs.

Paragraph 1. A process for conjugation of an antigen comprising the steps of

- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
- b) reacting the activated antigen and a carrier protein to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the carrier protein; and
- c) reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxymethylborohydride moiety to form a conjugated antigen;
- or
- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
- b') reacting the activated antigen and a linker to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the linker;
- c') reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxymethylborohydride moiety to form an antigen-linker; and
- d) reacting the antigen-linker with a carrier protein to form a conjugated antigen;

wherein the antigen originates from *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, *Haemophilus influenzae*, *Neisseria meningitidis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Enterococcus faecium*, *Enterococcus faecalis*, *Salmonella* Vi, or *Staphylococcus epidermidis*.

Paragraph 2. The process of paragraph 1 comprising the steps of

- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
- b) reacting the activated antigen and a carrier protein to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the carrier protein; and
- c) reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxyborohydride moiety to form a conjugated antigen;

wherein the antigen originates from *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, *Haemophilus influenzae*, *Neisseria meningitidis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Enterococcus faecium*, *Enterococcus faecalis*, *Salmonella* Vi, or *Staphylococcus epidermidis*.

Paragraph 3. A process for conjugation of an antigen comprising the steps of

- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
- a') lyophilising the activated antigen and a carrier protein followed by reconstitution in DMSO or DMF;
- b) reacting the activated antigen and the carrier protein to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the carrier protein; and
- c) reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxyborohydride moiety to form a conjugated antigen;
- or
- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
- a') lyophilising the activated antigen and a linker followed by reconstitution in DMSO or DMF;
- b') reacting the activated antigen and the linker to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the carrier protein; and
- c') reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxyborohydride moiety to form an antigen-linker;
- d) reacting the antigen-linker with a carrier protein to form a conjugated antigen.

Paragraph 4. The process of paragraph 3 comprising the steps of:

- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
- a') lyophilising the activated antigen and a carrier protein followed by reconstitution in DMSO or DMF;
- b) reacting the activated antigen and the carrier protein to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the carrier protein; and
- c) reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxyborohydride moiety to form a conjugated antigen.

Paragraph 5. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein the reducing agent does not contain a cyanoborohydride moiety.

Paragraph 6. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein the antigen is a bacterial saccharide.

Paragraph 7. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein the antigen is a bacterial capsular saccharide.

Paragraph 8. The process of any one of paragraphs 1-7 wherein the antigen is a bacterial saccharide originating from *S.pneumoniae*, *H.influenzae*, *N.meningitidis*, *S.aureus*, *E.faecalis*, *E.faecium*, *Salmonella* Vi, or *S.epidermidis*.

Paragraph 9. The process of any one of paragraphs 7 or 8 wherein the antigen is a bacterial capsular saccharide from an *S.pneumoniae* serotype selected from the group consisting of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 8, 9N, 9V, 10A, 11A, 12F, 14, 15B, 17F, 18C, 19A, 19F, 20, 22F, 23F and 33F.

Paragraph 10. The process of any one of paragraphs 7-9 wherein the bacterial capsular saccharide is from an *S.pneumoniae* serotype selected from the group consisting of 5, 6B, 6A, 7F, 9V, 14, 19F and 23F.

Paragraph 11. The process of any one of paragraphs 7-10 wherein the bacterial capsular saccharide is *S.pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 23F.

Paragraph 12. The process of any one of paragraphs 7-11 wherein the bacterial capsular saccharide is *S.pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 6B.

Paragraph 13. The process of any one of paragraphs 7-12 wherein the bacterial capsular saccharide is *S.pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 6A.

Paragraph 14. The process of any one of paragraphs 7-8 wherein the bacterial saccharide is *Haemophilus influenzae* b (Hib) polysaccharide or oligosaccharide.

Paragraph 15. The process of any one of paragraphs 1-5 wherein the antigen is a protein or a fragment of a protein.

Paragraph 16. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein the carrier protein is a protein selected from the group consisting of tetanus toxoid (TT), fragment C of TT, diphtheria toxoid, CRM197, Pneumolysin, protein D, PhtD, PhtDE and N19.

Paragraph 17. The process of paragraph 16 wherein the carrier protein is CRM197.

Paragraph 18. The process of paragraph 16 wherein the carrier protein is tetanus toxoid.

Paragraph 19. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein the antigen is conjugated directly to the carrier protein.

Paragraph 20. The process of any one of paragraphs 1-18 wherein the antigen is conjugated to the carrier protein via a linker.

Paragraph 21. The process of paragraph 20 wherein the linker is between 1 and 20 Angstroms in length.

Paragraph 22. The process of any one of paragraphs 20-21 wherein the linker comprises an ADH linker.

Paragraph 23. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein steps b) and c), or steps b') and c') occur simultaneously.

Paragraph 24. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein step c) and/or c') is carried out in the presence of DMSO.

Paragraph 25. The process of any one of paragraphs 1-23 wherein step c) and/or c') is carried out in the presence of DMF.

Paragraph 26. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein steps c) and/or c') take place in less than 30 hours or less than 20 hours.

Paragraph 27. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein steps c) and/or c') take place in between 15 mins and 30 hours, or between 10 hours and 20 hours.

Paragraph 28. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein step c) and/or c') do not result in the production of cyanide ions.

Paragraph 29. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein the antigen and the carrier protein are mixed together before step b) and/or before step a').

Paragraph 30. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein the antigen and the carrier protein are lyophilised before step b).

Paragraph 31. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein the antigen and the carrier protein are lyophilised after step a).

EP 2 683 408 B1

Paragraph 32. The process of any one of paragraphs 30 or 31 wherein the antigen and the carrier protein are lyophilised in the presence of a non-reducing sugar.

Paragraph 33. The process of paragraph 32 wherein the non-reducing sugar is selected from the group consisting of sucrose, lactose, trehalose, raffinose, stachyose, melezitose, dextran, mannitol, lactitol and palatinit.

Paragraph 34. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein between 0.5 and 3, between 0.5 and 10 or between 8 and 12 molar equivalent of reducing agent is used in step c) and/or c').

Paragraph 35. The process of paragraph 34 wherein between 0.5 and 0.8 molar equivalent of reducing agent is used in step c) and/or c').

Paragraph 36. The process of any one of paragraphs 34 or 35 wherein between 2 and 3 molar equivalent of reducing agent is used in step c) and/or c').

Paragraph 37. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein the ratio of carrier protein: antigen before step c) and/or c') is between 0.4:1 and 2:1 or between 0.4/1 and 2.5/1.

Paragraph 38. The process of paragraph 37 wherein the ratio of carrier protein: antigen before step c) and/or c') is between 1:1 and 2:1.

Paragraph 39. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein the ratio of carrier protein: antigen after step c) and/or c') is between 0.8:1 and 3.5:1.

Paragraph 40. The process of paragraph 39 wherein the ratio of carrier protein: antigen after step c) and/or c') is between 1.3:1 and 2.7:1.

Paragraph 41. The process of paragraph 39 wherein the ratio of carrier protein: antigen after step c) and/or c') is between 1:1 and 1.5:1.

Paragraph 42. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein any unreacted carbonyl groups are capped by reaction with sodium borohydride (NaBH_4).

Paragraph 43. The process of paragraph 42 wherein between 1-10 molar equivalents of sodium borohydride are used.

Paragraph 44. The process of any one of paragraphs 42-43 wherein the product of step c) or c') is reacted with sodium borohydride for 15 mins-15 hrs.

Paragraph 45. The process of paragraph 44 wherein step a) comprises reacting the antigen with periodate.

Paragraph 46. The process of paragraph 45 wherein step a) comprises reacting the antigen with 0.001-0.7 molar equivalents of periodate.

Paragraph 47. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein step a) occurs in a buffer which does not contain an amine group.

Paragraph 48. The process of paragraph 47 wherein the buffer is selected from the group consisting of phosphate buffer, maleate buffer, borate buffer, acetate buffer, carbonate buffer and citrate buffer.

Paragraph 49. The process of paragraph 48 wherein the buffer is phosphate buffer.

Paragraph 50. The process of any one of paragraphs 47-49 wherein the buffer has a concentration between 1-50mM, 1-25mM, 1-10mM, 5-15mM, 8-12mM, or 10-50mM or around 10mM.

Paragraph 51. The process of any one of any preceding paragraph wherein the pH during step a) is pH 3.0-8.0, pH 5.0-7.0, or pH 5.5-6.5 or around pH 6.0.

Paragraph 52. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein step a) is carried out in the dark.

Paragraph 53. The process of any one of paragraphs 6-14 or 16-52 wherein the antigen is either a native bacterial saccharide or is a bacterial saccharide that has been reduced in size by a factor of no more than x20 (for instance by microfluidization).

Paragraph 54. The process of paragraph 53 wherein the antigen is microfluidised before step a).

Paragraph 55. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein the average molecular weight of the antigen is between 1-1100kDa, 100-470kDa, 200-300kDa, 600-1100kDa or 800-1000kDa after step a).

Paragraph 56. The process of paragraph 55 wherein the average molecular weight of the antigen is between 100-470kDa or 200-300kDa after step a).

Paragraph 57. The process of paragraph 55 wherein the average molecular weight of the antigen is between 1 and 50 kDa or between 5 and 10kDa after step a).

Paragraph 58. The process of any preceding paragraph comprising a further step e) of purifying the conjugated antigen.

Paragraph 59. The process of paragraph 58 wherein step e) comprises purifying the conjugated antigen using diafiltration.

Paragraph 60. The process of any one of paragraphs 58-59 wherein step e) comprises purifying the conjugated antigen using ion exchange chromatography.

Paragraph 61. The process of any one of paragraphs 58-60 wherein step e) further comprises gel permeation chromatography.

Paragraph 62. The process of any preceding paragraph comprising a further step f) wherein the conjugated antigen is sterile filtered.

Paragraph 63. The process of any preceding paragraph containing a further step of mixing the conjugated antigen with further antigens.

Paragraph 64. The process of paragraph 63 wherein the further antigens comprises at least 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 or 20 *S.pneumoniae* saccharides selected from the group consisting of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 8, 9N, 9V, 10A, 11A, 12F, 14, 15B, 17F, 18C, 19A, 19F, 20, 22F, 23F and 33F.

Paragraph 65. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-64 wherein the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharides 4, 9V, 14, 18C, and 19F.

Paragraph 66. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-65 wherein the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharide 19A.

Paragraph 67. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-66 wherein the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharide 6A.

Paragraph 68. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-67 wherein the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharide 1.

Paragraph 69. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-68 wherein the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharide 5.

Paragraph 70. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-69 wherein the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharide 7F.

Paragraph 71. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-70 wherein the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae*

saccharide 3.

Paragraph 72. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-71 wherein the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharide 23F.

Paragraph 73. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-72 wherein the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharide 6B.

Paragraph 74. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-73 wherein the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharide 6A.

Paragraph 75. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-74 wherein the further antigens comprise *S.pneumoniae* saccharide 33F.

Paragraph 76. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-75 wherein the further antigens comprise one or more *S.pneumoniae* proteins selected from the group consisting of the Poly Histidine Triad family (PhtX), Choline Binding Protein family (CbpX), CbpX truncates, LytX family, LytX truncates, CbpX truncate-LytX truncate chimeric proteins (or fusions), pneumolysin (Ply), PspA, PsaA, Sp128, Sp101, Sp130, Sp125 and Sp133.

Paragraph 77. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-76 wherein the further antigens comprise Diphtheria Toxoid (DT), Tetanus Toxoid (TT), and either killed whole-cell *Bordetella pertussis* (Pw), or two or more acellular pertussis components (Pa).

Paragraph 78. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-77 wherein the further antigens comprise Hepatitis B surface antigen (HepB)

Paragraph 79. The process of any one of paragraphs 63-78 wherein the further antigens comprise one or more conjugates of a carrier protein and a capsular polysaccharide of a bacterium selected from the group consisting of *N.meningitidis* type A (MenA), *N.meningitidis* type C (MenC), *N.meningitidis* type W (MenW) and *N.meningitidis* type Y (MenY).

Paragraph 80. The process of any preceding paragraph wherein the conjugated antigen is mixed with an adjuvant.

Paragraph 81. The process of paragraph 80 wherein the adjuvant is an aluminium salt.

Paragraph 82. An immunogenic composition comprising the conjugated antigen mixed with a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

Paragraph 83. An immunogenic composition obtainable by the process of any one of paragraphs 1-82.

Paragraph 84. An immunogenic composition obtained by the process of any one of paragraphs 1-82.

Paragraph 85. The immunogenic composition of any one of paragraphs 82-84 wherein the pharmaceutical excipient does not comprise sodium chloride.

Paragraph 86. The immunogenic composition of any one of paragraphs 82-85 wherein the immunogenic composition comprises maleate buffer.

Paragraph 87. The immunogenic composition of any one of paragraphs 82-86 further comprising an adjuvant.

Paragraph 88. The immunogenic composition of paragraph 87 wherein the adjuvant is an aluminium salt.

Paragraph 89. A vaccine comprising the immunogenic composition of paragraphs 82-88.

Paragraph 90. The immunogenic composition of any one of paragraphs 82-88 or the vaccine of paragraph 89 for use in the treatment or prevention of disease for example bacterial disease.

Paragraph 91. The immunogenic composition of any one of paragraphs 82-88 or the vaccine of paragraph 89 for

use in the treatment or prevention of a disease selected from the group consisting of bacterial meningitis, pneumococcal disease, *Haemophilus influenzae* disease, meningococcal disease, staphylococcal disease, enterococcal disease and Salmonella.

Paragraph 92. A use of the immunogenic composition of any one of paragraphs 82-88 or the vaccine of paragraph 89 in the prevention or treatment of disease for example bacterial disease.

Paragraph 93. A use of the immunogenic composition of any one of paragraphs 82-88 or the vaccine of paragraph 89 in the prevention or treatment of a disease selected from the group consisting of bacterial meningitis, pneumococcal disease, *Haemophilus influenzae* disease, meningococcal disease, staphylococcal disease, enterococcal disease and Salmonella.

Paragraph 94. A use of the immunogenic composition of any one of paragraphs 82-88 or the vaccine of paragraph 89 in the manufacture of a medicament for the prevention or treatment of disease for example bacterial disease.

Paragraph 95. A use of the immunogenic composition of any one of paragraphs 82-88 or the vaccine of paragraph 89 in the manufacture of a medicament for the prevention or treatment of a disease selected from the group consisting of bacterial meningitis, pneumococcal disease, *Haemophilus influenzae* disease, meningococcal disease, staphylococcal disease, enterococcal disease and Salmonella.

Paragraph 96. A method of preventing or treating infection for example bacterial infection comprising administering the immunogenic composition of paragraphs 82-88 or the vaccine of paragraph 89 to a patient.

Paragraph 97. A method of preventing or treating a disease selected from the group consisting of bacterial meningitis, pneumococcal disease, *Haemophilus influenzae* disease, meningococcal disease, staphylococcal disease, enterococcal disease and Salmonella comprising administering the immunogenic composition of paragraphs 82-88 or the vaccine of paragraph 89 to a patient.

EXAMPLES

Example 1 - Oxidation of 23F and 6B using periodate

[0094] Polysaccharides (PS) 23F or 6B were dissolved in 100mM KH_2PO_4 (pH 7.4), 10mM KH_2PO_4 or WFI, to form solutions of 2mg PS/ml. The solution was incubated for 2 hours under agitation at room temperature. After this time the pH was adjusted to pH 6.0 with 1N HCl. Periodate was added as a powder or in liquid form (10mg/ml in WFI) in various amounts to achieve a range of molar ratios (table 1). The solutions were incubated for 17 hours at room temperature (20-25°C), after which time the samples were dialyzed or diafiltered against WFI.

[0095] High performance gel filtration chromatography coupled with refractive index and multiangle laser light scattering (MALLS-) detectors was used to measure the molecular weight. Size exclusion media (TSK5000PWXL-Tosoh) was used to profile the molecular size distribution of the polysaccharide (elution 0.5ml/min in NaCl 0.2M-Na₃ 0.02%).

[0096] Table 1 and figure 1 describe the results of these experiments. Table 1 refers to samples labelled 23F and 23FATCC. The samples labelled 23F were 23F samples produced in GSK, whereas the samples labelled 23FATCC were carried out using a cell line obtained from ATCC (American Type Culture Collection). These results demonstrate that for the 23F saccharide substantial sizing occurs on oxidation using high molar equivalents of periodate in 100mM phosphate buffer. This sizing effect can be reduced by reducing the concentration of phosphate buffer or the molar equivalents of periodate used.

Table 1:

23F				6B			
Sample	molar equivalent of periodate	Buffer	Size (KDa)	Sample	molar equivalent of periodate	buffer	Size (KDa)
23F	0	Water	861	6B	0	10mM phosphate	1022
23F	0	10mM phosphate	847	6B	0.1	10mM phosphate	975

(continued)

23F				6B			
Sample	molar equivalent of periodate	Buffer	Size (KDa)	Sample	molar equivalent of periodate	buffer	Size (KDa)
23F	0	100mM phosphate	860	6B	0.2	10mM phosphate	990
23F ATCC	0	100mM phosphate	1655	6B	0.3	10mM phosphate	961
23F	1	100mM phosphate	<1	6B	0.75	10mM phosphate	868
23F	1	Water	36				
23F	1.2	100mM phosphate	<1				
23FATCC	1	100mM phosphate	2				
23FATCC	0.125	100mM phosphate	39				
23F	0.1	10mM phosphate	466.9				
23F	0.15	10mM phosphate	398.5				
23F	0.2	10mM phosphate	336				
23F	0.5	10mM phosphate	179.1				

Example 2 - conjugation of 23F to CRM197 using reductive amination and CDAP chemistry(reference example)Reductive amination

[0097] 1g of PS23F was dissolved in 500ml of 10mM KH_2PO_4 , pH 7.15. This solution was incubated at room temperature for two hours. The pH was adjusted to 6.0 with 1 M HCl. 111 mg of periodate (NaIO_4 , 0.4 molar equivalents of periodate) was added to the PS23F solution, and the solution was incubated for 17 hours in the dark at room temperature to oxidise PS23F. The solution was then diafiltered against WFI (cut off 100 kDa).

[0098] The activated PS23F was lyophilised with the CRM197 protein (at a CRM/PS ratio (w/w): 0.625) in the presence of a stabilising agent.

[0099] 900 mg of the lyophilised PS23F/CRM197 mixture was solubilised by addition of 350ml of DMSO solvent and incubating for 2 hours at room temperature. To reduce the PS23F/CRM197 mixture 1 molar equivalent of NaBH_3CN was added (735 μl of a solution of 100mg/ml in WFI). The solution was incubated for a further 40 hours room temperature (15°C-25°C) under agitation. After this time 2 molar equivalents of NaBH_4 (100mg/ml in WFI) were added and the solution incubated for 4 hours at room temperature. 2200ml of 150mM NaCl were added before diafiltration (cut-off 100kDa) and purification by DEAE. The fractions of interest were pooled and filtered through a 0.22 μm filter.

CDAP

[0100] 200mg of microfluidized PS23F were dissolved in WFI until a concentration of 10mg/ml was obtained. NaCl was added to this solution at a final concentration of 2M.

[0101] Sufficient CDAP solution (100mg/ml freshly prepared in 5/50 v/v acetonitrile/WFI) was added to reach a CDAP/PS ratio of 0.75/1 (w/w)

[0102] After 90 seconds, the pH was raised to pH 9.5 by addition of 0.1 N NaOH. 3 minutes later sufficient CRM197 (10mg/ml in 0.15M NaCl) was added to reach a ratio of 1.5 (CRM197:PS (w/w)), the pH was maintained at pH 9.5. This

solution was incubated for 1 hour at pH 9.5.

[0103] After this coupling step, 10ml of 2M glycine solution was added to the mixture and the pH was adjusted to pH 9.0 (the quenching pH). The solution was stirred for 30 minutes at room temperature. The conjugate was purified using a 5µm filter followed by Sephacryl S400HR which removes small molecules and unconjugated polysaccharides and protein.. Elution was achieved using 150mM NaCl. The fractions of interest were pooled and filtered on 0.22 µm membrane. The resulting conjugate had a final CRM197/PS ratio (w/w) of 1.35/1.

Example 3 - Immunogenicity of 23F-CRM197 conjugates made by reductive amination and CDAP chemistry(reference example)

[0104] Conjugates were made using the methods described in example 2. Female guinea pigs were immunized intramuscularly three times (at days 0, 14 and 28) with 0.25 µg of the PS23F-CRM197 conjugates. Animals were bled on day 42 and the antibody response directed against PS23F was measured by ELISA and OPA.

ELISA

[0105] Microplates were coated with purified pneumococcal polysaccharide in PBS buffer. The plates were washed four times with 0.9% NaCl and 0.05% Tween 20. Sera were incubated for 1 hour at 37°C with CPS (V/V) in PBS 0.05 % Tween 20. Sera were added to the microwells and serially diluted (two-fold dilution step) in PBS- 0.05% Tween. The plates were incubated under agitation for 30 minutes at room temperature. The plates were washed as above and an anti-guinea pig IgG antibodies peroxidase conjugate was added, the plates were then incubated for 30 minutes at RT. After washing, the substrate (4 mg of OPDA in 10 ml of citrate 0.1 M pH 4.5 and 5 µl of H₂O₂) was added to each well for 15 minutes. The reaction was stopped by addition of HCl 1N. Absorbance was read at 490-620 nm using a spectrophotometer. The colour developed is directly proportional to the amount of antibody present in the serum. The level of anti-PS IgG present in the sera is determined by comparison to the reference curve serum added on each plate and expressed in µg/ml. Results were analysed statistically after assuming homogeneity of variance (checked by Cochran's C test) and normality (checked using the Shapiro-Wilk test). All statistics were carried out using Anova (Tukey-HSD) on log transformation concentration IgG.

Opsonophagocytosis

[0106] Serum samples were heated for 45 min at 56 °C to inactivate any remaining endogenous complement. Twenty-five microlitre aliquots of each 1:2 diluted serum sample were serially diluted (two fold) in 25 µl OPA buffer (HBSS-14.4% inactivated FBS) per well of a 96-well round bottom microtitre plate. Subsequently, 25 µl of a mixture of activated HL-60 cells (1 × 10⁷ cells/ml), freshly thawed pneumococcal working seed and freshly thawed baby rabbit complement in an e.g. 4/2/1 ratio (v/v/v) was added to the diluted sera to yield a final volume of 50 µl. The assay plate was incubated for 2 h at 37 °C with orbital shaking (210 rpm) to promote the phagocytic process. The reaction was stopped by laying the microplate on ice for at least 1 min. A 20 µl aliquot of each well of the plate was then transferred into the corresponding well of a 96-well flat bottom microplate and 50 µl of Todd-Hewitt Broth-0.9% agar was added to each well. After overnight incubation at 37 °C and 5% CO₂, pneumococcal colonies appearing in the agar were counted using an automated image analysis system (KS 400, Zeiss, Oberkochen, Germany). Eight wells without serum sample were used as bacterial controls to determine the number of pneumococci per well. The mean number of CFU of the control wells was determined and used for the calculation of the killing activity for each serum sample. The OPA titre for the serum samples was determined by the reciprocal dilution of serum able to facilitate 50% killing of the pneumococci. The opsonophagocytic titre was calculated by using a 4-parameter curve fit analysis.

[0107] Results were analysed statistically after assuming homogeneity of variance (checked by Cochran's C test) and normality (checked using the Shapiro-Wilk test). All statistics were performed by Anova (Tukey-HSD) on log transformation concentration IgG for ELISA and Kruskal-Wallis on log dilution for OPA.

[0108] A significantly higher antibody response was induced in the guinea pigs after immunisation with PS23F-CRM197 conjugated by reductive amination than PS23F-CRM197 conjugated by CDAP chemistry as seen in figure 2.

Table 2

Assay	23F-CRM197 made by reductive amination	23F-CRM197 made by CDAP
ELISA Titer (µg/ml)	213.3	40.5
OPA (50% killing)	9232	591

Example 4 - a further example of reductive amination of 23F**23 F-C RM-RA-116**

5 **[0109]** 150 mg of native PS23F (PS23FP114) were dissolved at a concentration of 2 mg/ml in 10 mM phosphate buffer (pH 7.2) for 4 hours. After dissolution, pH was adjusted to pH 6.0 with 1 N HCl. Then 0.4 molar equivalent of periodate (NaIO_4) was added to the PS solution and incubated for 17 hrs in the dark at 25°C. The solution was then diafiltered (cut off 30 kDa) against WFI and the oxidised PS was filtered on 0.22 μm membrane.

10 **[0110]** 50 mg of oxidised PS and 75 mg of CRM197 were lyophilized together (CRM/PS ratio (w/w): 1.5/1) with a stabilising agent. Lyophilized PS + CRM197 were solubilised with 20 ml of DMSO for 2 hrs at room temperature (15-25°C). 1 molar equivalent of Sodium triacetoxyborohydride was then added (13.7 mg) and after 17 hrs under agitation, 2 molar equivalent of NaBH_4 (100 mg/ml in 0.1 M NaOH) were added followed by an incubation at room temperature for 30 minutes. The solution was diluted 5x by addition of WFI followed by a diafiltration (cut-off 30 kDa) against 10 mM phosphate buffer, 150 mM NaCl pH 7.2. The conjugate was then loaded onto DEAE resin and eluted in 10 mM phosphate buffer, 500 mM NaCl pH 7.2. The conjugate was finally filtered on 0.22 μm . The resulting conjugate has a final CRM/PS ratio (w/w) of 2.3 /1.

15 **[0111]** For further conjugates, a second diafiltration step was added after DEAE column in order to change the buffer (150 mM NaCl as final buffer).

Example 5 - conjugation of 6B to CRM197 using reductive amination (with different protein:saccharide ratios and different sized microfluidised 6B saccharides) and CDAP chemistry**6B-CRM-RA-122**

25 **[0112]** 200 mg of microfluidized PS6B (84 kDa, 11.7 mg/ml) were diluted at 2 mg/ml in 10 mM phosphate buffer (pH 7.2). pH was adjusted to pH 6.0 with 1N HCl. Then 0.1 molar equivalent of periodate (Na IO_4) was added to the PS solution and incubated for 17 hrs in the dark at room temperature. The solution is then diafiltered (cut off 30 kDa) against WFI. 50 mg of PS and 30 mg of CRM197 were lyophilized together (CRM/PS ratio (w/w): 0.6/1) with a stabilising agent. Lyophilized PS + CRM197 were solubilised with 20 ml of DMSO for 3 hrs at room temperature. Then 2.5 molar equivalents of sodium triacetoxyborohydride were added (38.7 mg) and after 16 hrs under agitation, 2 molar equivalents of NaBH_4 (100 mg/ml in 0.1 M NaOH) were added followed by an incubation at room temperature for 30 minutes. The solution was diluted 4x by addition of WFI followed by a diafiltration (cut-off 100 kDa). The conjugate was then filtered on 0.22 μm . The resulting conjugate has a final CRM/PS ratio (w/w) of 1.1/1.

6B-CRM-RA-123:

35 **[0113]** Microfluidized PS6B (84 kDa) was conjugated to CRM197 as described for 6B-CRM-RA-122 except the freeze-drying step was carried out using an initial CRM197/PS ratio (w/w) of 2/1 and 33 ml of DMSO was used for the dissolution in DMSO step (instead of 20 ml). The resulting conjugate had a final CRM/PS ratio (w/w) of 3.0/1.

6B-CRM-RA-124:

45 **[0114]** 200 mg of microfluidized PS6B (350 kDa,) were diluted to 2 mg/ml in 10 mM phosphate buffer (pH 7.2). pH was adjusted to pH 6.0 with 1N HCl. Then 0.1 molar equivalent of periodate (NaIO_4) was added to the PS solution and incubated for 17 hrs in the dark at room temperature. The solution was then diafiltered (cut off 100 kDa) against WFI. 50 mg of PS and 60 mg of CRM197 were lyophilized together (CRM/PS ratio (w/w): 1.2/1) with a stabilising agent. Lyophilized PS + CRM197 were solubilised with 20 ml of DMSO for 5 hrs at room temperature. 2.5 molar equivalents of sodium triacetoxyborohydride were then added (38.7 mg) and after 16 hrs under agitation, 2 molar equivalents of NaBH_4 (100 mg/ml in 0.1 M NaOH) were added followed by incubation for 30 min at room temperature. The solution was diluted 4x by addition of WFI followed by a diafiltration (cut-off 100 kDa). The conjugate was then filtered on 0.22 μm . The resulting conjugate has a final CRM/PS ratio (w/w) of 1.6/1.

6B-CRM-RA-125:

55 **[0115]** Microfluidized PS6B (350 kDa) was conjugated to CRM197 as described for 6B-CRM-RA-124 except the freeze-drying step was carried out using an initial CRM197/PS ratio (w/w) of 2/1 and the dissolution in DMSO was carried out using 33 ml (instead of 20 ml). The resulting conjugate had a final CRM/PS ratio (w/w) of 2.9/1.

6B-CRM-003:

[0116] 50 mg of microfluidized PS6B were diluted at 10 mg/ml in WFI. NaCl in solid form was added to reach a final concentration of 2M. CDAP solution (100 mg/ml freshly prepared in 50/50 v/v acetonitrile/WFI) was added to reach the appropriate CDAP/PS ratio (1.5 mg/mg PS). After 1.5 minutes, the pH was raised to the activation pH 9.5 by addition of 0.1N NaOH and was stabilised at this pH until addition of CRM197. After 3 minutes, CRM197 (10 mg/ml in 0.15 M NaCl) was added to reach a ratio CRM197 /PS (w/w) of 2; the pH was maintained at the coupling pH 9.5. The solution was left for 2 hrs under pH regulation.

[0117] After the coupling step, 2.5 ml of 2M glycine solution were added to the mixture. The pH was adjusted to the quenching pH (pH 9.0). The solution was stirred for 30 min at room temperature. Then the conjugate was filtered using a 5 µm filter and injected on Sephacryl S400HR column. Elution was carried out in 150 mM NaCl. Interesting fractions were pooled and filtered on 0.22 µm membrane. The resulting conjugate had a final CRM197/PS ratio (w/w) of 1.5/1.

6B-CRM-RA-144

[0118] 1 g of microfluidized PS6B (245 kDa,) was diluted to 2 mg/ml in 10 mM phosphate buffer (pH 7.2). The pH was adjusted to pH 6.0 with 1 N HCl. 0.1 molar equivalent of periodate (NaIO_4) was then added to the PS solution and incubated for 18 hrs in the dark at room temperature. The solution was then diafiltered against WFI (Cut-off 100kDa). 200 mg of oxidized PS and 240 mg of CRM197 were lyophilized together (CRM/PS ratio (w/w): 1.2/1) with a stabilising agent. Lyophilized PS + CRM197 were solubilised with 80 ml of DMSO for 6 hrs at 25°C. Then 2.5 molar equivalents of sodium triacetoxyborohydride were added (154.9 mg) and after 16 hrs under agitation at 25°C, 2 molar equivalents of NaBH_4 (100 mg/ml in 0.1M NaOH) were added and incubated for 30 min. The solution was diluted 5x in WFI and after 30 min was diafiltered 10x with 150 mM NaCl and then 5x with PO_4 (K/K₂) 10mM pH7.2/ 150 mM NaCl (Cut-off 100 kDa). Then the retentate was loaded onto a DEAE column. The column was washed with PO_4 (K/K₂) 10mM pH7.2 /NaCl 150mM buffer. The conjugate was eluted with PO_4 (K/K₂) 10mM pH7.2 /NaCl 500 mM buffer. The eluate was concentrated and diafiltered with 5 volumes of 150 mM NaCl and then filtered on 0.22 µm filter. The resulting conjugate has a final CRM/PS ratio (w/w) of 1.6/1.

Example 6 - Immunogenicity of 6B-CRM197 conjugates made by reductive amination and CDAP chemistry

[0119] Groups of 40 female Balb/c mice (4 weeks-old) were immunized intramuscularly three times at days 0, 14 and 28 with 0.1 µg of PS6B conjugates produced by reductive amination or CDAP chemistry formulated on AlPO_4 . PS6B-PD was used as benchmark. Mice were bled on day 42 and the antibody response directed against each antigen was measured by ELISA and OPA.

[0120] Groups of 20 female guinea pig (150 gr from Hartley) were immunized intramuscularly three times at days 0, 14 and 28 with 0.25 µg of PS6B conjugates produced by reductive amination or CDAP chemistry adjuvanted with AlPO_4 . PS6B-PD was used as benchmark. Guinea pigs were bled on day 42 and the antibody response directed against each antigen was measured by ELISA and OPA.

Mouse and Guinea pig OPA

[0121] Serum samples were heated for 45 min at 56 °C to inactivate any remaining endogenous complement. Twenty-five microlitre aliquots of each 1:2 diluted serum sample was two-fold serially diluted in 25 µl OPA buffer (HBSS-14.4% inactivated FBS) per well of a 96-well round bottom microtitre plate. Subsequently, 25 µl of a mixture of activated HL-60 cells (1×10^7 cells/ml), freshly thawed pneumococcal working seed and freshly thawed baby rabbit complement in an e.g. 4/2/1 ratio (v/v/v) were added to the diluted sera to yield a final volume of 50 µl. The assay plate was incubated for 2 h at 37 °C with orbital shaking (210 rpm) to promote the phagocytic process. The reaction was stopped by laying the microplate on ice for at least 1 min. A 20 µl aliquot of each well of the plate was then transferred into the corresponding well of a 96-well flat bottom microplate and 50 µl of Todd-Hewitt Broth-0.9% agar was added to each well. After overnight incubation at 37 °C and 5% CO_2 , pneumococcal colonies appearing in the agar were counted using an automated image analysis system (KS 400, Zeiss, Oberkochen, Germany). Eight wells without serum sample were used as bacterial controls to determine the number of pneumococci per well. The mean number of CFU of the control wells was determined and used for the calculation of the killing activity for each serum sample. The OPA titre for the serum samples was determined by the reciprocal dilution of serum able to facilitate 50% killing of the pneumococci. The opsonophagocytic titre was calculated by using a 4-parameter curve fit analysis.

[0122] Table 3 describes the GMC levels obtained by immunisation of balb/c mice with the conjugates made using the methods of example 4.

	G1	G2	G3
Subject/Result	PS06B-CRM122 (R:1/1,PS 84	PS06B-CRM123 (R:3/1,PS 84 kDa)	PS06B-CRM124 (R:1.5/1,PS 350 kDa)
GMC (UG-ML)	0.83	0.37	1.18
Responders(%)	31/40	26/40	33/40

	G4	G5	G6
Subject/Result	PS06B-CRM125 (R:2.9/1,PS 350 kDa)	PS06B-CRM003 (CDAP)	PS06B-PD
GMC (UG-ML)	0.64	0.31	0.10
Responders(%)	29/40	29/40	15/40

Table 3

[0123] The immunogenicity of these conjugates in balb/c mice is described in figure 3. Together figure 3, and table 3 demonstrate that in the mouse model the conjugates produced by reductive amination were comparable with those produced using CDAP chemistry. In particular figure 3 demonstrates that the immunogenicities of the conjugates produced using reductive amination was higher than the immunogenicity of the conjugate made using CDAP chemistry.

[0124] Table 4 describes the GMC levels obtained by immunisation of guinea pigs with the conjugates made using the methods of example 4.

	G1	G2	G3
Subject/Result	PS06B-CRM122 (R:1/1,PS 84 kDa)	PS06B-CRM123 (R:3/1,PS84 kDa)	PS06B-CRM124 (R:1.5/1,PS0350 kDa)
GMC (UG-ML)	3.51	7.70	2.84
Responders(%)	20/20	20/20	20/20

	G4	G5	G6
Subject/Result	PS06B-CRM125 (R:2.9/1,PS 350 kDa)	PS06B-CRM003 (CDAP)	PS06B-PD
GMC (UG-ML)	19.93	3.70	1.55
Responders(%)	20/20	20/20	20/20

Table 4

[0125] The immunogenicity of these conjugates in guinea pigs is described in figure 4. Similar to the experiments carried out in the mouse model, the results in table 4 and figure 4 show that the conjugates produced by reductive amination were comparable with those produced using CDAP chemistry, in particular PS06B-CRM125 demonstrated significantly higher GMC levels and immunogenicities than the conjugate produced using CDAP.

Example 7 Conjugation of Hib to tetanus toxoid using reductive amination

Hib-IO4-LS080

[0126] 2.9 g of PS (orcinol dosage, AHIBCPA007 lot) were dissolved in 260 ml of 10 mM phosphate buffer (Na/K₂) pH 6.2 for 4h30 at room temperature and then overnight at +4°C. After 4 hours dissolution, PS was diluted at 10 mg/ml with phosphate buffer and then oxidised in the dark with 0.07 molar equivalent of NaIO₄ during 60 minutes. Oxidised PS was diafiltered (Cut-off 2 kDa) against 3.5 volumes of phosphate buffer and then filtered on a 0.22µm filter.

[0127] The number of repeating units obtained after oxidation was estimated by ¹H-NMR and was found to be around 21.

Hib-TT-LS210, 212 and 213

[0128] 200 mg of oxidised PS (14.56 mg/ml) were mixed with 300 mg of TT (31.18 mg/ml, TT/PS ratio (w/w): 1.5/1) and diluted to 4 mg/ml with 36.64 ml of 10 mM phosphate buffer (Na/K₂) pH 6.2. The solution was lyophilized with a stabilising agent. Lyophilized PS + TT was solubilised with 20 ml of DMSO for 6 hrs at 25°C. Then 10 molar equivalent seq of sodium triacetoxyborohydride were added (38.7 mg) and after 16 hrs under agitation, 2 molar equivalents of NaBH₄ (100 mg/ml in 0.1 M NaOH) were added followed by an incubation of 30 min at room temperature. The solution was diluted 3x by addition of WFI followed by a diafiltration step (5 volumes of WFI followed by 5 volumes of 10 mM acetate buffer 150 mM NaCl pH 6.2, 100 kDa MWCO). The sample was then loaded on Sephacryl S300HR resin. Elution was carried out in 10 mM acetate buffer using 150 mM NaCl (pH 6.2). Interesting fractions were pooled and filtered on a

0.22 μ m filter. The resulting conjugates had a final TT/PS ratio (w/w) of 2.1/1.

Claims

1. A process for conjugation of an antigen comprising the steps of

- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
- b) reacting the activated antigen and a carrier protein to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the carrier protein; and
- c) reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxyborohydride moiety to form a conjugated antigen;
- or
- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
- b') reacting the activated antigen and a linker to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the linker;
- c') reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxyborohydride moiety to form an antigen-linker; and
- d) reacting the antigen-linker with a carrier protein to form a conjugated antigen;

wherein the antigen originates from *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, *Haemophilus influenzae*, *Neisseria meningitidis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Enterococcus faecium*, *Enterococcus faecalis*, *Salmonella* Vi, or *Staphylococcus epidermidis* wherein the antigen is a bacterial capsular saccharide and wherein step a) comprises reacting the antigen with periodate.

2. A process for conjugation of an antigen comprising the steps of

- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
- a') lyophilising the activated antigen and a carrier protein followed by reconstitution in DMSO or DMF;
- b) reacting the activated antigen and the carrier protein to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the carrier protein; and
- c) reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxyborohydride moiety to form a conjugated antigen;
- or
- a) activating the antigen to form an activated antigen;
- a') lyophilising the activated antigen and a linker followed by reconstitution in DMSO or DMF;
- b') reacting the activated antigen and the linker to form an imine group linking the activated antigen to the carrier protein; and
- c') reducing the imine group using a reducing agent comprising a triacetoxyborohydride moiety to form an antigen-linker;
- d) reacting the antigen-linker with a carrier protein to form a conjugated antigen wherein the antigen is a bacterial capsular saccharide and wherein step a) comprises reacting the antigen with periodate.

3. The process of any one of the preceding claims wherein the reducing agent does not contain a cyanoborohydride moiety.

4. The process of any one of claims 1-3 wherein the antigen is a bacterial saccharide originating from *S.pneumoniae*, *H.influenzae*, *N.meningitidis*, *S.aureus*, *E.faecalis*, *E.faecium*, *Salmonella* Vi, or *S.epidermidis*.

5. The process of claim 4 wherein the antigen is a bacterial capsular saccharide from an *S.pneumoniae* serotype selected from the group consisting of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 8, 9N, 9V, 10A, 11A, 12F, 14, 15B, 17F, 18C, 19A, 19F, 20, 22F, 23F and 33F.

6. The process of claim 5 wherein the bacterial capsular saccharide is *S.pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 23F.

7. The process of claim 5 wherein the bacterial capsular saccharide is *S.pneumoniae* capsular saccharide 6B.

8. The process of claim 5 wherein the bacterial saccharide is *Haemophilus influenzae* b (Hib) polysaccharide or oligosaccharide.

9. The process of any preceding claim wherein the carrier protein is a protein selected from the group consisting of tetanus toxoid (TT), fragment C of TT, diphtheria toxoid, CRM197, Pneumolysin, protein D, PhtD, PhtDE and N19.
10. The process of any preceding claim wherein the antigen and the carrier protein are lyophilised after step a).
11. The process of claim 10 wherein the antigen and the carrier protein are lyophilised in the presence of a non-reducing sugar.
12. The process of any preceding claim wherein step a) comprises reacting the antigen with 0.0001-0.7 molar equivalents of periodate.
13. The process of any preceding claim comprising a further step e) of purifying the conjugated antigen and/or comprising a further step f) wherein the conjugated antigen is sterile filtered and/or a further step of mixing the conjugated antigen with further antigens.
14. The process of claim 13 wherein the further antigens comprise at least 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 or 20 *S.pneumoniae* saccharides selected from the group consisting of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 8, 9N, 9V, 10A, 11A, 12F, 14, 15B, 17F, 18C, 19A, 19F, 20, 22F, 23F and 33F.
15. The process of any preceding claim wherein the conjugated antigen is mixed with an adjuvant optionally wherein the adjuvant is an aluminium salt.

Patentansprüche

1. Verfahren zur Konjugation eines Antigens, umfassend die Schritte:

- a) Aktivieren des Antigens, um ein aktiviertes Antigen zu bilden;
- b) Reagieren des aktivierten Antigens und eines Trägerproteins, um eine Imin-Gruppe zu bilden, die das aktivierte Antigen an das Trägerprotein bindet; und
- c) Reduzieren der Imin-Gruppe mittels eines Reduktionsmittels, das einen Triacetoxyborhydrid-Rest umfasst, um ein konjugiertes Antigen zu bilden;
- oder
- a) Aktivieren des Antigens, um ein aktiviertes Antigen zu bilden;
- b') Reagieren des aktivierten Antigens und eines Linkers, um eine Imin-Gruppe zu bilden, die das aktivierte Antigen an den Linker bindet;
- c') Reduzieren der Imin-Gruppe mittels eines Reduktionsmittels, das einen Triacetoxyborhydrid-Rest umfasst, um einen Antigen-Linker zu bilden; und
- d) Reagieren des Antigen-Linkers mit einem Trägerprotein, um ein konjugiertes Antigen zu bilden;

wobei das Antigen aus *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, *Haemophilus influenzae*, *Neisseria meningitidis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Enterococcus faecium*, *Enterococcus faecalis*, *Salmonella* Vi, oder *Staphylococcus epidermidis* stammt wobei das Antigen ein bakterielles Kapsel-Saccharid ist und wobei Schritt a) Reagieren des Antigens mit Periodat umfasst.

2. Verfahren zur Konjugation eines Antigens, umfassend die Schritte:

- a) Aktivieren des Antigens, um ein aktiviertes Antigen zu bilden;
- a') Lyophilisieren des aktivierten Antigens und eines Trägerproteins gefolgt von Rekonstitution in DMSO oder DMF;
- b) Reagieren des aktivierten Antigens und des Trägerproteins, um eine Imin-Gruppe zu bilden, die das aktivierte Antigen an das Trägerprotein bindet; und
- c) Reduzieren der Imin-Gruppe mittels eines Reduktionsmittels, das einen Triacetoxyborhydrid-Rest umfasst, um ein konjugiertes Antigen zu bilden;
- oder
- a) Aktivieren des Antigens, um ein aktiviertes Antigen zu bilden;
- a') Lyophilisieren des aktivierten Antigens und eines Linkers gefolgt von Rekonstitution in DMSO oder DMF;
- b') Reagieren des aktivierten Antigens und des Linkers, um eine Imin-Gruppe zu bilden, die das aktivierte

Antigen an das Trägerprotein bindet; und

c') Reduzieren der Imin-Gruppe mittels eines Reduktionsmittels, das einen Triacetoxyborhydrid-Rest umfasst, um einen Antigen-Linker zu bilden;

d) Reagieren des Antigen-Linkers mit einem Trägerprotein, um ein konjugiertes Antigen zu bilden, wobei das Antigen ein bakterielles Kapsel-Saccharid ist und wobei Schritt a) Reagieren des Antigens mit Periodat umfasst.

3. Verfahren gemäß einem der vorhergehenden Ansprüche, wobei das Reduktionsmittel keinen Cyanoborhydrid-Rest enthält.

4. Verfahren gemäß einem der Ansprüche 1-3, wobei das Antigen ein bakterielles Saccharid ist, das aus *S. pneumoniae*, *H. influenzae*, *N. meningitidis*, *S. aureus*, *E. faecium*, *E. faecalis*, *Salmonella* Vi, oder *S. epidermidis* stammt.

5. Verfahren gemäß Anspruch 4, wobei das Antigen ein bakterielles Kapsel-Saccharid von einem *S. pneumoniae*-Serotyp ist, ausgewählt aus der Gruppe bestehend aus 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 8, 9N, 9V, 10A, 11A, 12F, 14, 15B, 17F, 18C, 19A, 19F, 20, 22F, 23F und 33F.

6. Verfahren gemäß Anspruch 5, wobei das bakterielle Kapsel-Saccharid *S. pneumoniae* Kapsel-Saccharid 23F ist.

7. Verfahren gemäß Anspruch 5, wobei das bakterielle Kapsel-Saccharid *S. pneumoniae* Kapsel-Saccharid 6B ist.

8. Verfahren gemäß Anspruch 5, wobei das bakterielle Saccharid *Haemophilus influenzae* b (Hib) Polysaccharid oder Oligosaccharid ist.

9. Verfahren gemäß einem beliebigen vorhergehenden Anspruch, wobei das Trägerprotein ein Protein ist, ausgewählt aus der Gruppe bestehend aus Tetanus Toxoid (TT), Fragment C des TT, Diphtherie Toxoid, CRM197, Pneumolysin, Protein D, PhtD, PhtDE und N19.

10. Verfahren gemäß einem beliebigen vorhergehenden Anspruch, wobei das Antigen und das Trägerprotein nach Schritt a) lyophilisiert werden.

11. Verfahren gemäß Anspruch 10, wobei das Antigen und das Trägerprotein in Gegenwart eines nicht-reduzierenden Zuckers lyophilisiert werden.

12. Verfahren gemäß einem beliebigen vorhergehenden Anspruch, wobei Schritt a) Reagieren des Antigens mit 0,0001-0,7 molaren Äquivalenten an Periodat umfasst.

13. Verfahren gemäß einem beliebigen vorhergehenden Anspruch, umfassend einen weiteren Schritt e) des Reinigens des konjugierten Antigens und/oder umfassend einen weiteren Schritt f), wobei das konjugierte Antigen steril filtriert wird und/oder einen weiteren Schritt des Mischens des konjugierten Antigens mit weiteren Antigenen.

14. Verfahren gemäß Anspruch 13, wobei die weiteren Antigene mindestens 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 oder 20 *S. pneumoniae* Saccharide umfassen, ausgewählt aus der Gruppe bestehend aus 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 8, 9N, 9V, 10A, 11A, 12F, 14, 15B, 17F, 18C, 19A, 19F, 20, 22F, 23F und 33F.

15. Verfahren gemäß einem beliebigen vorhergehenden Anspruch, wobei das konjugierte Antigen mit einem Adjuvans gemischt wird, wobei das Adjuvans gegebenenfalls ein Aluminiumsalz ist.

Revendications

1. Procédé de conjugaison d'un antigène comprenant les étapes suivantes

a) l'activation de l'antigène pour former un antigène activé ;

b) la réaction de l'antigène activé et d'une protéine de support pour former un groupe imine liant l'antigène activé à la protéine de support ; et

c) la réduction du groupe imine en utilisant un agent réducteur comprenant un radical triacétoxyborohydrure pour former un antigène conjugué ;

ou

- a) l'activation de l'antigène pour former un antigène activé ;
- b') la réaction de l'antigène activé et d'un lieu pour former un groupe imine liant l'antigène activé au lieu ;
- c') la réduction du groupe imine en utilisant un agent réducteur comprenant un radical triacétoxyborohydrure pour former un antigène-lieu ; et
- d) la réaction de l'antigène-lieu avec une protéine de support pour former un antigène conjugué ;

où l'antigène provient de *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, *Haemophilus influenzae*, *Neisseria meningitidis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Enterococcus faecium*, *Enterococcus faecalis*, *Salmonella* Vi, ou *Staphylococcus epidermidis* où l'antigène est un saccharide capsulaire bactérien et où l'étape a) comprend la réaction de l'antigène avec du periodate.

2. Procédé de conjugaison d'un antigène comprenant les étapes suivantes

- a) l'activation de l'antigène pour former un antigène activé ;
 - a') la lyophilisation de l'antigène activé et d'une protéine de support, suivie de la reconstitution dans du DMSO ou du DMF ;
 - b) la réaction de l'antigène activé et de la protéine de support pour former un groupe imine liant l'antigène activé à la protéine de support ; et
 - c) la réduction du groupe imine en utilisant un agent réducteur comprenant un radical triacétoxyborohydrure pour former un antigène conjugué ;
 - ou
 - a) l'activation de l'antigène pour former un antigène activé ;
 - a') la lyophilisation de l'antigène activé et d'un lieu, suivie de la reconstitution dans du DMSO ou du DMF ;
 - b') la réaction de l'antigène activé et du lieu pour former un groupe imine liant l'antigène activé à la protéine de support ; et
 - c') la réduction du groupe imine en utilisant un agent réducteur comprenant un radical triacétoxyborohydrure pour former un antigène-lieu ;
 - d) la réaction de l'antigène-lieu avec une protéine de support pour former un antigène conjugué ;
- où l'antigène est un saccharide capsulaire bactérien et où l'étape a) comprend la réaction de l'antigène avec du periodate.

3. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel l'agent réducteur ne contient pas de radical cyanoborohydrure.

4. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 3, dans lequel l'antigène est un saccharide bactérien provenant de *S. pneumoniae*, *H. influenzae*, *N. meningitidis*, *S. aureus*, *E. faecalis*, *E. faecium*, *Salmonella* Vi, ou *S. epidermidis*.

5. Procédé selon la revendication 4, dans lequel l'antigène est un saccharide capsulaire bactérien provenant d'un sérotype de *S. pneumoniae* choisi dans le groupe constitué de 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 8, 9N, 9V, 10A, 11A, 12F, 14, 15B, 17F, 18C, 19A, 19F, 20, 22F, 23F et 33F.

6. Procédé selon la revendication 5, dans lequel le saccharide capsulaire bactérien est le saccharide capsulaire de *S. pneumoniae* 23F.

7. Procédé selon la revendication 5, dans lequel le saccharide capsulaire bactérien est le saccharide capsulaire de *S. pneumoniae* 6B.

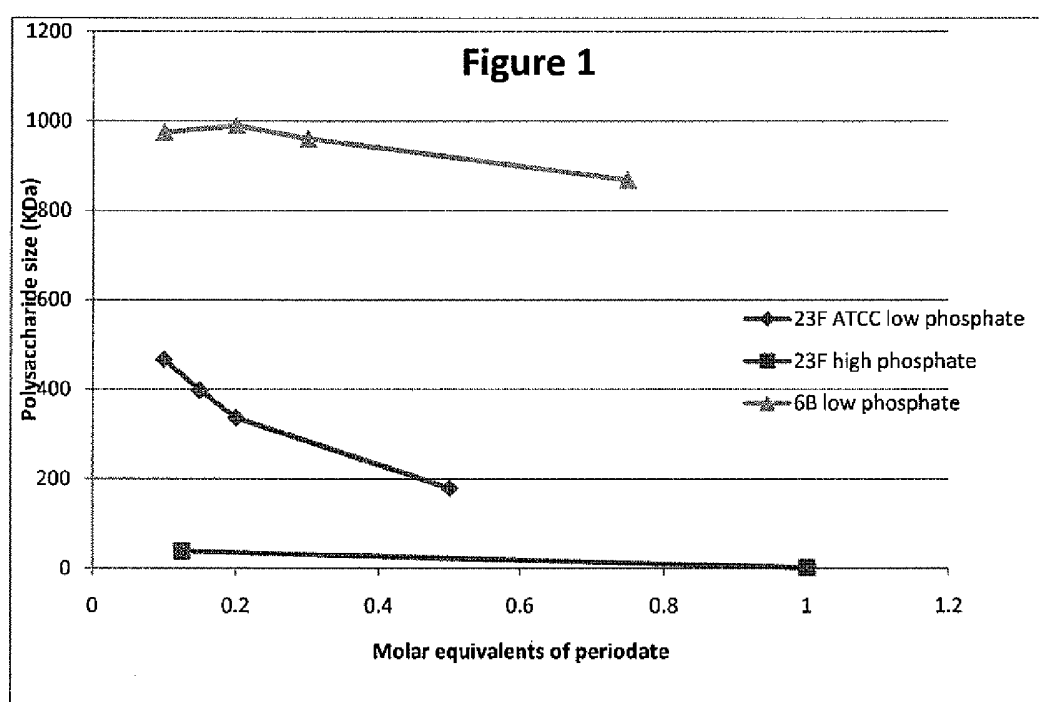
8. Procédé selon la revendication 5, dans lequel le saccharide bactérien est le polysaccharide ou l'oligosaccharide de *Haemophilus influenzae* b (Hib).

9. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel la protéine de support est une protéine choisie dans le groupe constitué de l'anatoxine tétanique (TT), le fragment C de TT, l'anatoxine diphtérique, CRM197, la pneumolysine, la protéine D, PhtD, PhtDE et N19.

10. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel l'antigène et la protéine de support sont lyophilisés après l'étape a).

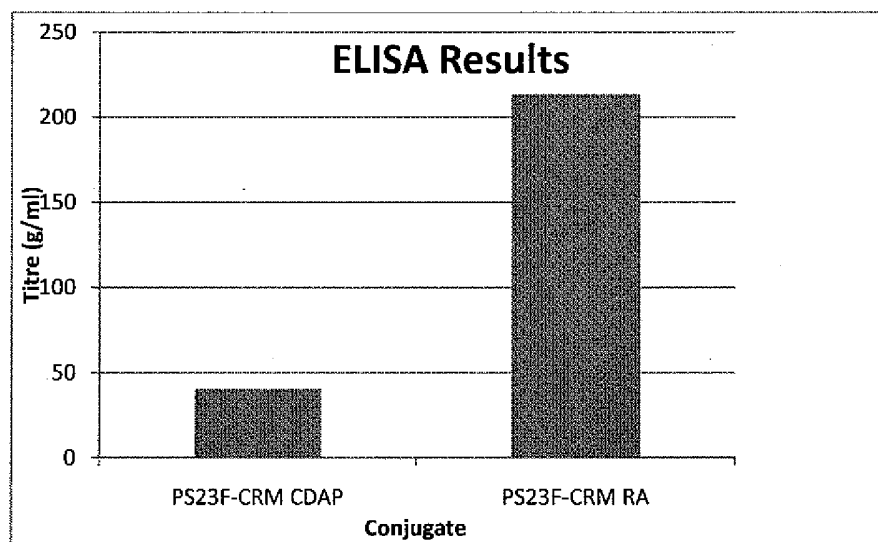
EP 2 683 408 B1

11. Procédé selon la revendication 10, dans lequel l'antigène et la protéine de support sont lyophilisés en présence d'un sucre non réducteur.
12. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel l'étape a) comprend la réaction de l'antigène avec 0,0001 à 0,7 équivalent molaire de periodate.
13. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes comprenant une autre étape e) de purification de l'antigène conjugué et/ou comprenant une autre étape f) dans laquelle l'antigène conjugué est stérilisé par filtration et/ou une autre étape de mélange de l'antigène conjugué avec d'autres antigènes.
14. Procédé selon la revendication 13, dans lequel les autres antigènes comprennent au moins 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 ou 20 saccharides de *S. pneumoniae* choisis dans le groupe constitué de 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 8, 9N, 9V, 10A, 11A, 12F, 14, 15B, 17F, 18C, 19A, 19F, 20, 22F, 23F et 33F.
15. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel l'antigène conjugué est mélangé avec un adjuvant, éventuellement où l'adjuvant est un sel d'aluminium.



a)

Figure 2



b)

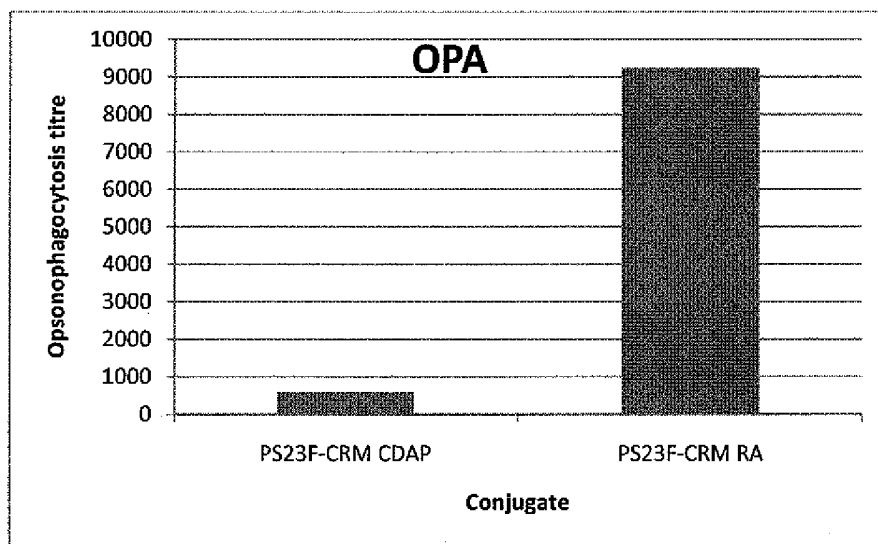


Figure 3

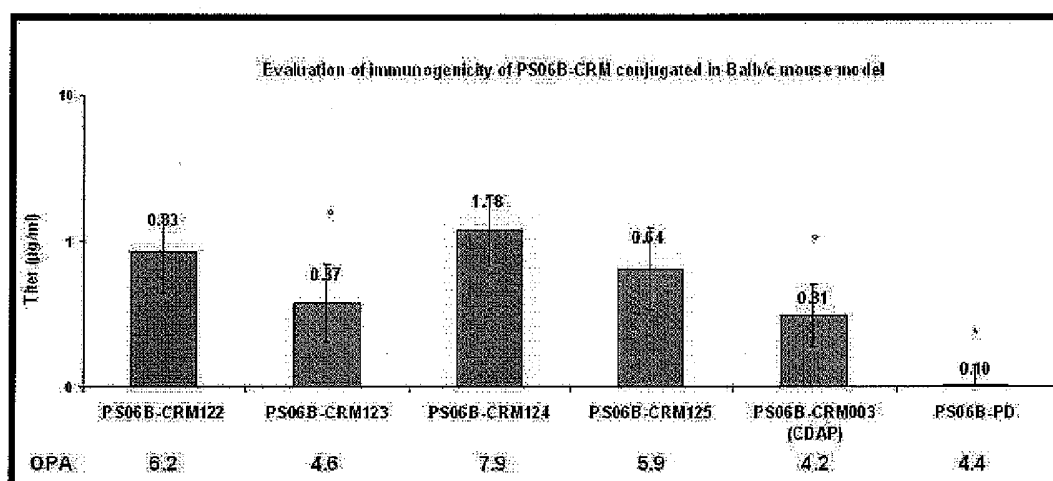
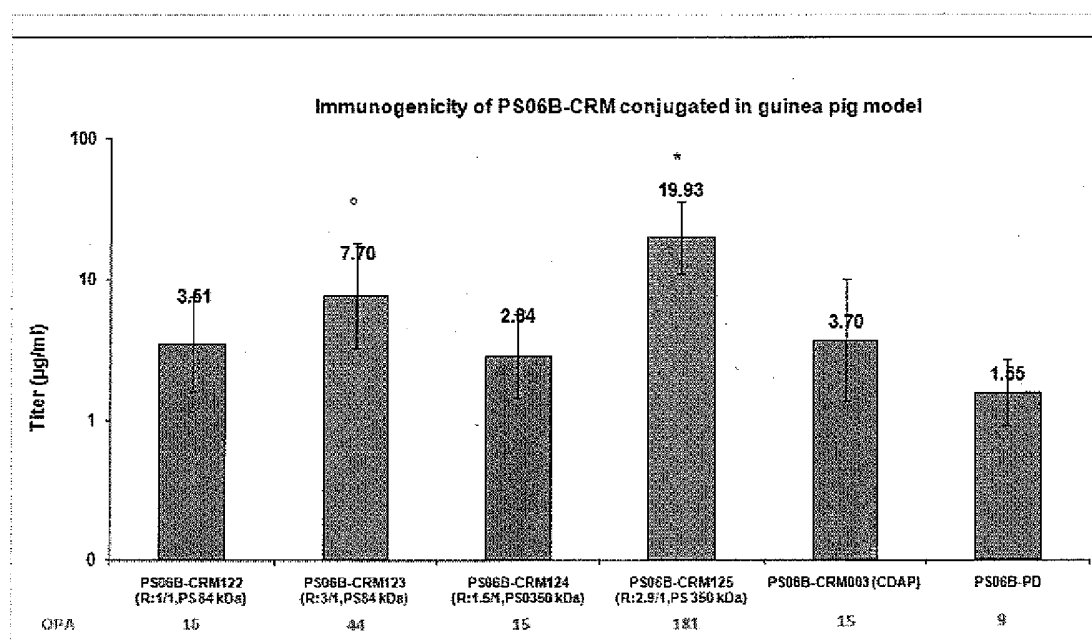


Figure 4

REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

This list of references cited by the applicant is for the reader's convenience only. It does not form part of the European patent document. Even though great care has been taken in compiling the references, errors or omissions cannot be excluded and the EPO disclaims all liability in this regard.

Patent documents cited in the description

- WO 8706838 A [0006]
- EP 1035137 A [0006]
- EP 497524 A [0034]
- EP 497525 A [0034]
- US 4709017 A [0038]
- US 4950740 A [0038]
- US 5917017 A [0038]
- US 6455673 B [0038]
- US 5843711 A [0038]
- EP 0372501 A [0038]
- EP 0378881 A [0038]
- EP 0427347 A [0038]
- WO 9317712 A [0038]
- WO 9403208 A [0038]
- WO 9858668 A [0038]
- EP 0471177 A [0038]
- WO 9101146 A [0038]
- WO 02091998 A [0038]
- WO 0172337 A [0038]
- WO 0061761 A [0038]
- EP 594610 A [0038]
- WO 0056360 A [0038]
- WO 9818930 A [0038]
- WO 0037105 A [0038]
- WO 0030299 A [0038]
- WO 0010599 A [0040]
- US 4057685 A [0040]
- US 4673574 A [0040]
- US 4808700 A [0040]
- US 4459286 A [0040]
- WO 9741731 A [0068]
- WO 9634960 A [0068]
- WO 9855606 A [0068]
- WO 9713785 A [0068]
- WO 9732980 A [0068]
- WO 9303761 A [0068]
- US 5766608 A [0068]
- US 5843464 A [0068]
- WO 9964067 A [0068]
- WO 9701638 A [0068]
- EP 281673 A [0068]
- WO 0209746 A [0072]
- US 4235877 A [0079]
- WO 9934850 A [0081]
- EP 1092444 A [0081]
- WO 0113977 A [0081]
- US 5480381 A [0081]
- US 5599302 A [0081]
- US 5334144 A [0081]
- US 5993412 A [0081]
- US 5649912 A [0081]
- US 5569189 A [0081]
- US 5704911 A [0081]
- US 5383851 A [0081]
- US 5893397 A [0081]
- US 5466220 A [0081]
- US 5339163 A [0081]
- US 5312335 A [0081]
- US 5503627 A [0081]
- US 5064413 A [0081]
- US 5520 A [0081]
- US 639 A [0081]
- US 4596556 A [0081]
- US 4790824 A [0081]
- US 4941880 A [0081]
- US 4940460 A [0081]
- WO 9737705 A [0081]
- WO 9713537 A [0081]
- WO 9927961 A [0081]
- WO 9748440 A [0081]
- WO 9828037 A [0081]
- WO 9820734 A [0081]

Non-patent literature cited in the description

- **ROGHMANN et al.** *J. Gerontol.*, 1987, vol. 42, 265-270 [0005]
- **VERGHESE ; BERK.** *Medicine*, 1983, vol. 62, 271-285 [0005]
- **AHMED F. et al.** *J.Org.Chem.*, 1996, vol. 61, 3849-3862 [0006]
- *J. Org. Chem.*, 1996, vol. 61, 3849-3862 [0007]
- **DALPATHADO et al.** *Anal. Bioanal. Chem*, 2005, vol. 281, 130-1137 [0007]
- **SHOUSUN CHEN SZU et al.** *Carbohydrate Research*, 1986, vol. 152, 7-20 [0034]
- **UCHIDA et al.** *J. Biol. Chem.*, 1973, vol. 218, 3838-3844 [0038]
- **KUO et al.** *Infect Immun*, 1997, vol. 63, 2706-13 [0038]
- **FALUGI et al.** *Eur J Immunol*, 2001, vol. 31, 3816-3824 [0038]

EP 2 683 408 B1

- **BARALDO** et al. *Infect Immun*, 2004, vol. 72, 4884-7 [0038]
- **GEVER** et al. 1979) *Med. Microbiol. Immunol.*, 1979, vol. 165, 171-288 [0040]
- *Tetrahedron letters*, June 2005, vol. 46, 4479-4482 [0041]
- **HELMINEN ME et al.** *Infect. Immun.*, 1993, vol. 61, 2003-2010 [0068]
- The subunit and adjuvant approach. *Vaccine Design*. Plenum Press, 1995 [0079]

Szabadalmi igénypontok

1. Eljárás antigén konjugálására, amely eljárás a következő lépéseket foglalja magában

a) az antigén aktiválását aktivált antigént hozva létre;
b) az aktivált antigén és hordozófehérje reagáltatását az antigént és hordozófehérjét összekötő imin-csoportot hozva létre; és

c) az imin-csoport redukálását triacetoxiborohidrid molekularészt tartalmazó redukálószer alkalmazásával konjugált antigént hozva létre;

vagy

a) az antigén aktiválását aktivált antigént hozva létre;

b') az aktivált antigén és kapcsolómolekula reagáltatását az antigént és kapcsolómolekulát összekötő imin-csoportot hozva létre;

c') az imin-csoport redukálását triacetoxiborohidrid molekularészt tartalmazó redukálószer alkalmazásával konjugált antigén-kapcsolómolekulát hozva létre; és

d) az antigén-kapcsolómolekula és hordozófehérje reagáltatását konjugált antigént hozva létre;

ahol az antigén a következőkből származik: *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, *Haemophilus influenzae*, *Neisseria meningitidis*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Enterococcus faecium*, *Enterococcus faecalis*, *Salmonella* Vi vagy *Staphylococcus epidermidis*, ahol az antigén bakteriális burokszacharid és ahol az a) lépés magában foglalja az antigén perjodáttal történő reagáltatását.

2. Eljárás antigén konjugálására, amely eljárás a következő lépéseket foglalja magában

a) az antigén aktiválását aktivált antigént hozva létre;

a') az aktivált antigén és hordozófehérje liofilizálását majd feloldását DMSO-ban vagy DMF-ben;

b) az aktivált antigén és a hordozófehérje reagáltatását az antigént és hordozófehérjét összekötő imin-csoportot hozva létre; és

c) az imin-csoport redukálását triacetoxiborohidrid molekularészt tartalmazó redukálószer alkalmazásával konjugált antigént hozva létre;

vagy

a) az antigén aktiválását aktivált antigént hozva létre;

a') az aktivált antigén és kapcsolómolekula liofilizálását majd feloldását DMSO-ban vagy DMF-ben;

b') az aktivált antigén és a kapcsolómolekula reagáltatását az aktivált antigént és hordozófehérjét összekötő imin-csoportot hozva létre; és

c') az imin-csoport redukálását triacetoxiborohidrid molekularészt tartalmazó redukálószer alkalmazásával konjugált antigén-kapcsolómolekulát hozva létre;

d) az antigén-kapcsolómolekula és hordozófehérje reagáltatását konjugált antigént hozva létre, ahol az antigén bakteriális burokszacharid és ahol az a) lépés magában foglalja az antigén perjodáttal történő reagáltatását.

3. Az előző igénypontok bármelyike szerinti eljárás, ahol a redukálószer nem tartalmaz cianoborohidrid molekularészt.

4. Az 1-3. igénypontok bármelyike szerinti eljárás, ahol az antigén a következőkből származó bakteriális szacharid: *S.pneumoniae*, *H.influenzae*, *N.meningitidis*, *S.aureus*, *E.faecalis*, *E.faecium*, *Salmonella* Vi vagy *S.epidermidis*.

5. A 4. igénypont szerinti eljárás, ahol az antigén a következő *S. pneumoniae* szerotípusok által alkotott csoportból származó bakteriális burokszacharid: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 8, 9N, 9V, 10A, 11A, 12F, 14, 15B, 17F, 18C, 19A, 19F, 20, 22F, 23F és 33F.

6. Az 5. igénypont szerinti eljárás, ahol a bakteriális burokszacharid *S.pneumoniae* 23F burokszacharid.

7. Az 5. igénypont szerinti eljárás, ahol a bakteriális burokszacharid *S.pneumoniae* 6B burokszacharid.

8. Az 5. igénypont szerinti eljárás, ahol a bakteriális burokszacharid *Haemophilus influenzae* b (Hib) poliszacharid vagy oligoszacharid.

9. Az előző igénypontok bármelyike szerinti eljárás, ahol a hordozófehérje a következők által alkotott csoportból kiválasztott fehérje: tetanusz toxoid (TT), TT C-fragmense, diftéria toxoid, CRM197, pneumolizin, protein-D, PhtD, PhtDE és N19.

10. Az előző igénypontok bármelyike szerinti eljárás, ahol az antigén és a hordozófehérje liofilizálva van az a) lépés után.

11. A 10. igénypont szerinti eljárás, ahol az antigén és a hordozófehérje nem-redukáló cukor jelenlétében van liofilizálva.

12. Az előző igénypontok bármelyike szerinti eljárás, ahol az a) lépés magában foglalja az antigén 0,0001-0,7 moláris ekvivalens perjodáttal történő reagáltatását.

13. Az előző igénypontok bármelyike szerinti eljárás, amely magában foglal egy további e) lépést is, a konjugált antigén tisztítására és/vagy magában foglal egy további f) lépést is, ahol a konjugált antigén sterilre van szűrve és/vagy egy további lépést is a konjugált antigén további antigénnel történő összekeverésére.

14. A 13. igénypont szerinti eljárás, ahol a további antigének legalább 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 vagy 20 *S. pneumoniae* szacharid, az 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6A, 6B, 7F, 8, 9N, 9V, 10A, 11A, 12F, 14, 15B, 17F, 18C, 19A, 19F, 20, 22F, 23F és 33F által alkotott csoportból kiválasztva.

15. Az előző igénypontok bármelyike szerinti eljárás, ahol a konjugált antigén adjuvánssal van összekeverve, ahol adott esetben az adjuváns alumíniumsó.