

# **Communication: the dark singlet state as a doorway state in the ultrafast and efficient intersystem crossing dynamics in 2-thiothymine and 2-thiouracil.** <sup>[1]</sup>

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<sup>[2]</sup>

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## Abstract

Femtosecond broadband transient absorption experiments are reported for 2-thiothymine and 2-thiouracil in aqueous buffer solution and in acetonitrile. It is shown that the  $S_1(n^?*)$  state acts as a doorway state in the ultrafast and efficient population of the  $T_1(??*)$  state upon 316 nm excitation. A sequential kinetic model is presented to explain the excited-state dynamics in 2-thiothymine and 2-thiouracil upon UVA excitation:  $S_2(??*) \rightarrow S_1(n^?*) \rightarrow T_1(??*)$ . The experimental results are also used to scrutinize the excited-state relaxation pathways recently predicted for 2-thiouracil at the CASPT2//CASSCF level of theory [G. Cui and W. Fang, J. Chem. Phys. 138, 044315 (2013)]. The efficient population of the  $T_1(??*)$  state for both 2-thiothymine and 2-thiouracil in a few hundreds of femtoseconds lends further support to the emerging idea that thiobase derivatives exhibit photo-toxic properties that can be effectively harnessed in photo-chemotherapeutic applications.

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