**ABSTRACT**

Free radicals are one of the frequent products of normal cellular metabolism. Disparity in metabolism and excessive generation of free radicals predisposes to disorders like Parkinson’s disease, Alzheimer’s disease, and aging phenomenon. *Curculigo orchioides* Gaertn. is known for “adaptogen” and “aphrodisiac” activity and has been proved for antiasthmatic, estrogenic, antosteoporotic activity along with protection from cisplatin-induced cell damage. *C. orchioides* was powdered and subjected to soxhlet extraction using methanol. Phytochemical studies and estimation of polyphenols and flavonoids was performed. Acute toxicity studies were performed by Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development OECD guidelines. Animals were treated with cyclophosphamide to induce neurotoxicity. *Curculigo orchioides* was powdered and subjected to soxhlet extraction using methanol. Catalase, superoxide dismutase, glutathione peroxidase, and lipid peroxidation were estimated by reported methods. *C. orchioides* (400 mg/kg) significantly promoted restoration of catalase (*P* < 0.005), superoxide dismutase (*P* < 0.005), and glutathion (*P* < 0.05) levels. Similarly, a very significant decrease (*P* < 0.005) in the levels of malondialdehyde was observed. In all cases as mentioned previously, *C. orchioides* at dose 200 mg/kg promoted significant (*P* < 0.05) restoration of enzyme levels. *C. orchioides* (Kali Musli) is rich source of phytochemicals like flavonoids and polyphenols. Flavonoids and polyphenols are reputed to demonstrate neuroprotective effect. These phytochemicals in the present study might be responsible to demonstrate neuroprotective effect.

**Key words:** Antioxidant enzymes, brain, *Curculigo orchioides*, neuroprotective

**INTRODUCTION**

Free radicals are one of the frequent products of normal cellular metabolism. Imbalance in antioxidants defense mechanism and overproduction of free radicals due to environmental stress is ultimately responsible for neurodegeneration. Imbalance of metabolism and excessive generation of free radicals predisposes to disorders like Parkinson’s disease, Alzheimer’s disease, and aging phenomenon. Free-radicals-mediated lipid peroxidation is known to change structure cell membrane and its activity. Increase in production of free radicals stimulates lipid peroxidation which leads to increased levels of malondialdehyde. Plant sources could be considered as novel source of phytochemicals out of which flavonoids and polyphenols are of great importance that may be helpful to cope up with such oxidative stress.

*Curculigo orchioides* Gaertn. (family Amaryllidaceae), one of the jeopardized Indian “rasayan” herb, is commonly known as “Kali Musli.” The plant is known for “adaptogen” and...
“aphrodisiac” activity. The plant also finds use in Kampo and Chinese medicines. S cientifically, plant has proved for antiasthmatic, estrogenic, antosteoporotic activity. It also protects from cisplatin-induced cell damage.

The current work was undertaken to evaluate neuroprotective potential of C. orchioides against cyclophosphamide-induced neurotoxicity.

EXPERIMENTAL

Plant collection, identification, and extraction
Curculigo orchioides was purchased from Bhopal region and was authenticated at Pinnacle Biomedical Research Institute, Bhopal. Dried Curculigo orchioides was powdered and subjected to soxhlet extraction using methanol.

Phytochemical screening
Phytochemical testing was performed to identify presence of different phytoconstituents.

Phytoanalytical studies

Determination of total phenolic compounds
Total soluble phenolic compounds in the methanol extract were determined with Folin-Ciocalteu reagent according to reported method using pyrocatechol as a standard phenolic compound. Briefly, 1 ml of HEE (1000 μg/ml) in a volumetric flask was diluted with distilled water (46 ml). One milliliter of Folin-Ciocalteu reagent was added and the content of the flask was mixed thoroughly. After 3 minutes, Na₂CO₃ (3 ml, 2% w/v) was added and then allowed to stand for 2 hours with intermittent shaking. The absorbance was measured at 760 nm in a spectrophotometer (Shimadzu-1700). The total concentration of phenolic compounds in the extract determined as microgram of pyrocatechol equivalent by using an equation that was obtained from standard pyrocatechol graph:

\[
\text{Absorbance} = 0.0053 \times \text{total phenols (pyrocatechol equivalent [μg])} - 0.0059
\]

Assay for total flavonoids content
Total flavonoid content was determined using the method given elsewhere. Briefly, aluminium trichloride (1 ml, 2% w/v) in methanol was mixed with the same volume of the HEE (1 ml, 2000 μg/ml). Absorption readings at 415 nm were taken after 10 minutes against a blank sample consisting of a methanol extract (1 ml, 2000 μg/ml) with methanol (1 ml) without AlCl₃. The concentrations of flavonoid compounds were calculated according to the following equation that was obtained from the standard quercetin graph:

\[
\text{Absorbance} = 0.0338 \times \text{quercetin [μg]} - 0.0002; \quad R^2 = 0.9969
\]

Acute oral toxicity studies
Acute oral toxicity study was carried out in mice as per OECD-423 guidelines. The four fixed dose levels were selected as 5, 50, 300, 2000 mg/kg body weight. The mice were continuously observed for their mortality and behavioral response for 24 hours and thereafter once in a day for 14 days. Hence, a dose of 200 mg/kg and 400 mg/kg was used in this study.

Animal grouping and treatment
Animals were divided into four groups containing five animals each. Animals were dosed as

Group I: Normal control
Group II: Toxic control [Cyclophosphamide (50 mg/kg i.p.)]
Group III: Extract treated [Cyclophosphamide (50 mg/kg i.p.)] + 200 mg/kg extract
Group IV: Extract treated [Cyclophosphamide (50 mg/kg i.p.)] + 400 mg/kg extract

Cyclophosphamide was administered once on the first day; extract was administered for 5 consecutive days.

Brain isolation and brain antioxidants study
After euthanasia, brains from animals were isolated and rinsed with ice-cold normal saline, followed by ice-cold 0.15 M tris HCl (pH 7.4). For estimation of antioxidant markers, viz., superoxide dismutase, catalase, glutathione, and malondialdehyde, a 10% w/v tissue homogenate in 0.15 M tris HCl and centrifuged at 15,000 rpm for 15 minutes at 4°C, supernatant was used for analysis.

Catalase, superoxide dismutase, glutathione peroxidase, and lipid peroxidation were estimated by reported methods.

Statistical analysis
All results were analyzed by one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and post-hoc analysis was performed with Bonferroni’s test. Value of \( P < 0.05 \) was considered to be statistically significant in all the cases.

RESULTS

Phytochemical screening and phytoanalytical studies
Phytochemical screening of extract demonstrated presence of flavonoids, polyphenolics, and alkaloids. The total amount of phenolic content present in extract was found to be 752.23 ± 5.78 mg pyrocatechol equivalent (PE)/100 g. By using the standard curve of quercetin (\( R^2 = 0.9998 \)), the total flavonoid content of extract was found to be 203.52 ± 4.56 mg quercetin equivalent (QE)/100 g.
Acute toxicity studies

C. orchioides extract did not showed any toxicity at a dose of 2000 mg/kg as evidenced by observations. No signs of abnormal behavior or mortality were observed during the study period. Thus, dose of 200 mg/kg and 400 mg/kg of extract were selected for further studies.

Brain antioxidants study

As evident by Figure 1, C. orchioides (400 mg/kg) significantly promoted the restoration of catalase (P < 0.005), superoxide dismutase (P < 0.005), and glutathione (P < 0.05) levels. Similarly, a very significant decrease (P < 0.005) in the levels of malondialdehyde was observed. In all cases as mentioned previously, C. orchioides at dose 200 mg/kg promoted significant (P < 0.05) restoration of enzyme levels.

DISCUSSION

Etiopathogenesis of various nerve-racking situations lead to generation of several “psychotic disorders” where normal physiological functions of neurotransmitters are altered. Cyclophosphamide, an anticancer agent is reported to produce adverse effects on brain[17] which is possibly due to development of oxidative stress. Antioxidant is any molecule that is capable of alleviating effects of free radicals prior to attack to cell. Human body contains a variety of antioxidant systems and enzymes that continuously protect body from harm full effects of free radicals and oxidative stress. Supplementation with antioxidant-rich food could be useful to provide adequate protection.[18]

Superoxide dismutase, an antioxidant enzyme, catalyzes translation of superoxide free radical to hydrogen peroxide and water, and serves to be useful in inhibiting oxidative stress.[19] Catalase is an important enzyme accountable for disposition of H2O2. Diminution of activity of this enzyme is associated with increased activity of free radicals, which may lead to alter the activity of cell membranes.[20] In the present study, restoration in the levels of antioxidant enzymes by extract demonstrated protective effect.

Basically, there exists equilibrium between production of reactive oxygen species and antioxidant defense system which regulates homeostasis towards oxidative stress of cell. Due to low levels of antioxidant enzymes, hippocampal neurons are predominantly vulnerable to oxidative stress. Glutathione can be regarded as a chief “intracellular non-protein thiol compound” and act as scavenger of free radicals. Thus, glutathione could be regarded as a first line of antioxidant defense.[21] Glutathione depletion therefore may cause death of nerve cells after ischemia of forebrain.[22]

Flavonoids from plants are widely recognized to prevent membrane damage and thus protect the integrity of cell.[23] Curculigo orchioides (Kali Musli) is rich source of phytochemicals like flavonoids and polyphenols. Flavonoids[24,25] and polyphenols[26,27] are reputed to demonstrate neuroprotective effect. These phytochemicals in the present study might be responsible to demonstrate neuroprotective effect. However, more systematic studies along isolation and characterization of phytoconstituents responsible for activity seem to be necessary.

REFERENCES

1. Uttara B, Singh AV, Zamboni P, Mahajan RT. Oxidative stress and neurodegenerative diseases: A review of upstream and downstream antioxidant therapeutic options. Curr Neuropenarmacol 2009;7:65-74.
2. Senthilkumar S, Yogeeta SK, Subashini R, Devaki T. Attenuation of cyclophosphamide induced toxicity by squalene in experimental rats. Chem Biol Interact 2006;160:252-60.
3. Oboh G, Rocha JB. Polyphenols in red pepper (Capsicum annuum var. aviculare) and their protective effect on some pro-oxidants induced lipid peroxidation in brain and liver. Eur Food Res Technol 2007;225:239-47.
4. Chauhan NS, Sharma V, Thakur M, Dixit VK. Curculigo orchioides: The black gold with numerous health benefits. Zhong Xi Yi Jie He Xue Bao 2010;8:613-23.
5. Pandit P, Singh A, Bafna AR, Kadam PV, Patil MJ. Evaluation of Antiasthmatic Activity of Curculigo orchioides Gaertn. Rhizomes. Indian J Pharm Sci 2008;70:440-4.
6. Vijayanarayana K, Rodrigues RS, Chandrashekhar KS, Subrahmanyam EV. Evaluation of estrogenic activity of alcoholic extract of rhizomes of Curculigo orchioides. J Ethnopharmacol 2007;114:241-5.
7. Jiao L, Cao DP, Qin LP, Han T, Zhang QY, Zhu Z, et al. Antiosteoporotic activity of phenolic compounds from Curculigo orchioides. Phytomedicine 2009;16:874-81.
8. Kang TH, Hong BN, Jung SY, Lee JH, So HS, Park R, et al. Curculigo orchioides protects cisplatin-induced cell damage. Am J Chin Med 2013;41:425-41.
9. Harborne JB. Phytochemical method: A guide to modern techniques of plants analysis. New York: Chapman and Hall; 1983, 11-23.
10. Mustafa RA, Abdul Hamid A, Mohamed S, Bakar FA. Total phenolic compounds, flavonoids, and radical scavenging activity of 21 selected tropical plants. J Food Sci 2010;75:C28-35.

11. Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Guideline 423 for testing chemicals. Paris: OECD Guidelines; 2001. p. 1-14.

12. Nitharwal RK, Patel H, Karchuli MS, Ugale RR. Chemoprotective potential of Coccinia indica against cyclophosphamide-induced toxicity. Indian J Pharmacol 2013;45:502-7.

13. Gornal AC, Bardawill CJ, David MM. Determination of serum protein by means of biuret reaction. J Biol Chem 1949;177:751-66.

14. Liu J, Simon LM, Phillips JR, Robin ED. Superoxide dismutase (SOD) activity in hypoxic mammalian systems. J Appl Physiol Respir Environ Exerc Physiol 1977;42:107-10.

15. Khyriem D, Prasad SB. Changes in endogenous tissue glutathione level in relation to murine ascites tumor growth and the anticancer activity of cisplatin. Braz J Med Biol Res 2003;36:53-63.

16. Rokla EA, Kourounakis AP, Kourounakis PN. Investigation of the effect of chamazulene on lipid peroxidation and free radical processes. Res Commun Mol Pathol Pharmacol 1996;92:361-4.

17. Oboh G, Akomolafe TL, Adetuyi AO. Inhibition of cyclophosphamide-induced oxidative stress in brain by dietary inclusion of red dye extracts from sorghum (Sorghum bicolor) stem. J Med Food 2010;13:1075-80.

18. Hsiao G, Fong TH, Tzu NH, Lin KH, Chou DS, Sheu JR. A potent antioxidant, lycopene, affords neuroprotection against microglia activation and focal cerebral ischemia in rats. In Vivo 2004;18:351-6.

19. Malstrom B, Andreasson L, Reinhammer B. Ed. The Enzymes. XI1B, Academic Press, New York; 1975. p. 533.

20. Cheng L, Kellogg EW 3rd, Packer L. Photoinactivation of catalase. Photochem Photobiol 1981;34:125-9.

21. Coyle JT, Puttfarcken P. Oxidative stress, glutamate, and neurodegenerative disorders. Science 1993;262:689-95.

22. Al-Majed AA, Sayed-Ahmed MM, Al-Omar FA, Al-Yahya AA, Aleisa AM, Al-Shabanah OA. Carnitine esters prevent oxidative stress damage and energy depletion following transient forebrain ischaemia in the rat hippocampus. Clin Exp Pharmacol Physiol 2006;33:725-33.

23. Essa MM, Subramanian P. Protective role of Pongamia pinnata leaf extract on tissue antioxidant status and lipid peroxidation in Ammonium chloride induced hyperammonemic rats. Toxicol Mech Methods 2006;16:477-83.

24. Abbasi E, Nassiri-Asl M, Shafeei M, Sheikh M. Neuroprotective effects of vitesin, a flavonoid, on pentylenetetrazole-induced seizure in rats. Chem Biol Drug Des 2012;80:274-8.

25. Vauzour D, Vafeiadou K, Rodriguez-Mateos A, Rendeiro C, Spencer JP. The neuroprotective potential of flavonoids: A multiplicity of effects. Genes Nutr 2008;3:115-26.

26. Basli A, Soulet S, Chaher N, Merillon JM, Chibane M, Monti JP, et al. Wine polyphenols: Potential agents in neuroprotection. Oxid Med Cell Longev 2012;2012:805762.

27. Mo H, Chen Y, Huang L, Zhang H, Li J, Zhou W. Neuroprotective effect of tea polyphenols on oxygen-hemoglobin induced subarachnoid hemorrhage in mice. Oxid Med Cell Longev 2013;2013:74:3938.

How to cite this article: Ramchandani D, Ganeshpurkar A, Bansal D, Karchuli MS, Dubey N. Protective effect of Curculigo Orchioides Extract on Cyclophosphamide-Induced Neurotoxicity in Murine Model. Toxicol Int 2014;21:232-5.

Source of Support: Self. Conflict of Interest: None declared.