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EVALUATION OF ANTI-DIARRHEAL ACTIVITY OF THE EXTRACTS OF CASTANEA SATIVA SEEDS

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ABSTRACT

Diarrhea is one of the primary causes of morbidity and mortality on a global scale, leading to one billion disease episodes and approximately two million deaths each year among children under five years of age. Due to limitations associated with various treatments available, the need for developing newer drugs is imperative. The present study was aimed to evaluate the anti-diarrheal activity of the extracts of *Castanea sativa* seeds. The water and ethanolic extracts of *C. sativa* seeds were obtained by cold maceration method. Both extracts were subjected to preliminary phytochemical screening and showed the presence of alkaloids, sterols, proteins, phenolic compounds and tannins, terpenoids, carbohydrates, flavonoids, lipids and fatty acids. The anti-diarrheal activity of water and ethanol extracts was evaluated at doses of 200 and 400 mg/kg, body weight against castor oil induced diarrhea in rats. The results were statistically analyzed and compared with standard drug, Loperamide (2mg/kg). The results revealed that both extracts at different doses produced significant anti-diarrheal effect. Water extract of *C. sativa* seeds at a dose of 400mg/kg showed the best anti-diarrheal activity among all the extracts. The anti-diarrheal activity of water and ethanolic extract of *Castanea sativa* seeds might be due to the presence of pharmacologically active substance such as flavonoids, phenolic compounds and tannins.

KEYWORDS

Castanea sativa, Antidiarrheal, Water and Ethanolic extracts and Castor oil induced.

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INTRODUCTON

Diarrhea is described as an expansion in the fluidity, volume, recurrence of solid discharges, increase frequency of bowel discharge, wet feces and stomach torment, joined by increased emission and diminished absorption of liquid, and along these lines loss of water and electrolytes¹. Diarrhea can be caused by infectious agents, certain drugs, plant and insect poisons, gastrointestinal disease, and any April – June 701

materials that enhance gastrointestinal tract discharges. It can also be caused by either digestion of poorly absorbable foods or inflammation in the gastrointestinal tract². Even though diarrhea is a preventable disease, it remains the second driving reason for death (after pneumonia) among kids aged under five years around the world³. The worldwide burden of diarrheal frequency and seriousness of the disease is at peak in Southeast Asian and African regions⁴. Poverty, floods, contaminated water children underweight, supplies, water and sanitation, lack of vitamin A, and zinc insufficiency etc., add to its frequency 3,5 .

According to World Health Organization (WHO) over 80% of the total population depends on traditional treatment for their essential healthcare⁶. There have been various reports of the utilization of traditional plants for the treatment of diarrhea disease. The primary chemical constituents in plants assumed to be responsible for anti-diarrheal action are tannins and tannic acid, flavonoids, alkaloids, sesquiterpenes, diterpenes, terpenes and terpenoids⁷. The anti-inflammatory property of tannins help control all signs of gastritis, esophagitis, enteritis, and irritating bowel disorder. Diarrhea is likewise treated with a successful astringent drug that does not stop the stream of the disturbing substance in the stomach; rather, it controls the irritation in the small intestine⁸.

Castanea sativa (Sweet chest nut) is one of the blossoming plant in the family, Fagaceae and recognized as a tannin rich organic product⁹ and one of the astringent plants. The tannins are present in the bark, wood, leaves, and seed husks of C. sativa. It is a native of Southern Europe, Asia and North Africa¹⁰. The decoction of its leaves has been generally utilized for treating different respiratory infections, such as asthma, cough, cold, bronchitis, expectorating, and bronchial affections. The bark extract of Castanea sativa has imperative antioxidant and cytoprotective effects and also ready to regulate some vital heart functions¹¹. Phenolic extracts of Castanea sativa also showed high antioxidant capacity¹². As, there is no scientific report available for the anti-diarrheal activity of the extracts of C. sativa seeds, the present work was

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aimed to evaluate the anti-diarrheal activity of the extracts of *Castanea sativa* seeds.

MATERIAL AND METHODS Plant Material

The seeds of *Castanea sativa* were collected from Genting Highland, Pahang in March 2017. The fruits were identified and authenticated by a Pharmacognosist, KPJ Healthcare University College, Nilai. A voucher specimen was deposited at herbarium KPJ Healthcare University College, Nilai. (KPJUC/CRI/PA/2017(31)).

Preparation of extracts

The pulp of *Castanea sativa* was removed and nuts were taken out, washed and dried using hot air oven at 45-50°C. The seeds were then pulverized into coarse powder using mechanical blender and divided equally into two portions. Coarsely powdered *C. sativa* seeds (100gm) was separately macerated with distilled water and ethanol (400ml) for 6 days by cold maceration method. The water extract and ethanolic extract of *C. sativa* seeds were obtained by filtration and concentrated using rotary vacuum evaporator under reduced pressure¹³. Both extracts were preserved in refrigerator until further use.

Preliminary Phytochemical Screening

Qualitative phytochemical screening for water and ethanolic extracts of *C. sativa* seeds had was carried out using standard procedure to identify the presence of various phytoconstituents in the extracts¹⁴. Test for alkaloids, carbohydrates, proteins, phenolic compounds, tannins, flavonoids, terpenoids, sterols and lipids and fatty acids were performed and the results were recorded.

Experimental Animals

Wistar albino rats of either sex weighing about 150-250gm were acquired from KPJUC vivarium, KPJ Healthcare University College, Nilai, Negeri Sembilan and used to evaluate anti-diarrheal activity of *C. sativa* seeds on castor oil induced diarrheal animal model. The animals were kept in well ventilated room at $27^{\circ}C \pm 2^{\circ}C$, 12 h light/12 h dark cycle and 35-60% relatively humidity at the animal house with free access to commercial rodent pellet diet and distilled water. This study was April – June 702 approved by Institutional Animal Ethics Committee (IAEC), KPJ Healthcare University College, Nilai, Negeri Sembilan (Reference No: KPJUC/RIC/BPS/EC/2017/31). All the experiments were performed in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animal for Scientific Purpose.

Evaluation of Anti-Diarrheal Activity

The anti-diarrheal activity of the water and ethanolic extracts of C. sativa was assessed by castor oil-induced diarrheal animal model^{15,16}. The animals were divided into six groups of four animals each. Group I received 1ml of castor oil and served as control group. Group II received standard drug, (Loperamide, 2 mg/kg) and serve as standard group. Groups III and IV received water extract of C.sativa seeds (200 and 400mg/kg respectively). Groups V and VI received ethanolic extract of C.sativa seeds (200 and 400mg/kg respectively). Diarrhea was induced in all the overnight fasted animals by administering 1 ml of castor oil orally. The test extracts and the standard drug was administered one hour prior oral to the administration of castor oil. Each rat was kept separately and observed for diarrheal episode, for a period of 5 h. During that period, number and weight of diarrheal feces were taken and noted at every 1 h. The mean diarrhea episodes and percent protection were calculated. The anti-diarrheal activity was determined in terms of percentage inhibition at 5thh.

The percentage inhibition was calculated as follow: % inhibition = $C - T / C \times 100$

Where, C is the weight of feces obtained in control group and T is the weight of feces obtained in test group.

Statistical Analysis

The data was expressed as Mean \pm SEM. All the results were statistically analyzed and tabulated. The statistical significance was determined using one-way ANOVA. p<0.05 was considered as statistically significant¹⁶.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Colour, Consistency and Percentage Yield of Extracts

As illustrated in the Table No.1, the water extract of *C. sativa* was semi solid, dark brown in colour, and percentage yield of the extract was 17.8%. Whereas the ethanolic extract of *C. sativa* was mucilaginous, greenish yellow in colour and the percentage yield was 3.15%. Among the two extracts, the water extract showed the highest % yield (17.8%) compared to ethanolic extract (3.25%).

Preliminary Phytochemical Screening

The preliminary phytochemical screening of extracts of *C. sativa* was carried out and the results are presented in Table No.2. The results reveal the presence of alkaloids, carbohydrates, proteins, phenolic compound, tannins, flavonoids, terpenoids, sterols, lipid and fatty acids in both the extracts.

Anti-diarrheal activity of *C. sativa* seeds extracts on castor oil induced diarrheal model

From the data presented in Table No.3, it is evident that the water extract of C. sativa significantly decreased the frequency of stools over time in a dose-dependent manner. Result tabulated in the Table No.3 shows that the stool was decreasing over the 5 h of the experiment. The percentage of diarrheal inhibition compared to control was 67.76% and 81.97% at the doses of 200mg/kg and 400mg/kg, respectively. In addition, the water extract at dose 400mg/kg produced the highest diarrheal inhibition (81.97%) percentage of compared to the standard drug, Loperamide which is 61.74%. The ethanolic extract of C. sativa also significantly decreased the diarrheal feces at a dose of 200mg/kg and 400mg/kg and the percentage diarrheal inhibition was 70.49% and 71.58%, respectively.

From the results, it is observed that the weight of feces for control group was at the highest frequency compared to the other group of rats. For the first hour, water extract of *C. sativa* produced the fast effect on the inhibition of the Feces. As the time passed, the weight of feces collected was decreasing in all the animals in a dose-dependent manner. The most effective dose was water extract 400mg/kg as it produced the lowest weight of stool which is

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0.33g at 5thh, compared to standard drug, Loperamide yield the weight of feces, 0.7g.

Castor oil is a good source to induce diarrhea¹⁷. 90% of ricinoleate present in castor oil is mainly responsible for diarrhea production¹⁸. Ricinoleic acid is responsible for inducing diarrhea¹⁹. Ricinoleic acid cause the prostaglandin to release and eventually enhance gastrointestinal motility and secretion of electrolytes and water which may produce local irritation and inflammation²⁰. Furthermore, ricinoleate salts with sodium and potassium is formed in the lumen. This formation may inhibit the sodium-potassium ATPase and also may rise the intestinal epithelium permeability. This situation produce cytotoxic effect in the absorptive cells of intestine¹⁹.

The antidiarrheal activity of water and ethanolic extracts of *Castanea sativa* seeds on castor oil induced diarrheal animal models was studied. Both extracts of the seeds of *C. sativa* reduced the severity of diarrhea. Dose-dependent inhibition was observed in all diarrhea parameters such as weight of feces, total number of feces and onset of diarrhea as compared to the control group.

The anti-diarrheal properties of the medicinal plants might be due to the presence of bioactive agents such as alkaloids, flavonoids, steroids, tannins, saponins, terpenoids and phenolic compound²¹. The phytochemical screening of both extracts of *C*. *sativa* seeds revealed the presence of alkaloids, tannins, sterols, carbohydrates, protein, terpenoids, phenolic compounds and flavonoids which might be the responsible for the anti-diarrheal property of the *C*. *sativa* seeds.

Research on the extracts of various plant species showed that the phytochemicals such as tannins and flavonoids may enhance the colonic water and electrolytes reabsorption. Other phytoconstituents such as alkaloids and phenolic compounds also inhibit the intestinal motility²². Tannins found to be

astringent as it is a bitter plant polyphenols which either bind or shrink proteins. Tannins astringency may cause dried feeling in mouth following the intake of wine, tea or unripen fruit⁸. Therefore, tannins are having astringent property and could treat diarrhea. The protein precipitation caused by tannins covers the surface of the cell or tissue, acting as a barrier between the irritation and the tissue which protected from damage. This process could decrease intestinal mucous layer secretions²³. Many earlier studies on plants such as Pterocarpus erinaceus²⁴, Trichiliaemetica Vahl²⁵, Holarrhena antidysenterica²⁶ and Ruta graveolens¹⁷ revealed that the anti-diarrheal activity is due to the presence of tannins. Flavonoids are conveyed to inhibit the release of autacoids and prostaglandins, thus prevent the motility and secretion induced by castor oil⁶. Studies on the plants such as C. blanchetianus Baill, C. rhamnifolius Willd, and C. argyroglossum Baill have proved that the flavonoids and/tannins content were responsible for anti-diarrheal activity²⁷. A recent study stated that the antidiarrheal activity of the extracts of Osyris quadriartita might be due to the highest phenolics and flavonoids contents detected in leaves that supports the antidiarrheal activity of phenolic compounds and tannins and flavonoids present in the C. sativa seeds²⁸.

The current study revealed that both the extracts of *C. sativa* effectively inhibited the castor oil induced diarrhea due to its anti-motility and anti-secretory mechanism. This is proved from the observation of diarrheic feces and the reduction in frequency of stools in the tested groups at both doses of extracts. These effects were noticeable when comparing with the standard drug, Loperamide at 2mg/kg. The anti-diarrheal effect of *Castanea sativa* seeds might be due to the presence of phytoconstituents such as phenolic compounds and tannins and flavonoids.

S.No	Type of Extract	Colour	Consistency	Percentage Yield (%)
1	Water Extract	Dark brown	Semi solid	17.8
2	Ethanolic Extract	Greenish yellow	Mucilagenous	3.15

Table No.1: Colour, consistency and percentage yield of Castanea Sativa seeds extracts

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S.No	Phytoconstituents	Water Extract	Ethanolic Extract +		
1	Alkaloids	+			
2	Carbohydrates	+	+		
3	Proteins	+	+		
4	Phenolic compounds	+	+		
5	Tannins	+	+		
6	Flavonoids	+	+		
7	Terpenoids	+	+		
8	Sterols	+	+		
9	Lipids and fatty acids	+	+		

 Table No.2: Preliminary phytochemical screening for C. sativa seeds extracts

+ = Present, - = Absent

 Table No.3: Anti-diarrheal activity of C. sativa seeds extracts on castor oil induced diarrheal model

Group	Treatment	Total number	Weight of feces (gm)				Inhibition of	
		of feces	1 h	2 h	3 h	4 h	5 h	diarrhea (%)
Ι	Castor oil (1ml)	15	1.87 ±	1.9 ±	2.06 ±	1.93 ±	1.83 ±	
			0.12	0.2	0.21	0.20	0.08	-
II	Standard	7	2.19 ±	1.18 ±	$0.75 \pm$	0.7 ±	0.7 ±	61.74
	drug + Castor oil		0.01	0.06*	0.15**	0.1**	0.01***	
III	Water extract (200	10	1.44 ±	1.13 ±	$1.10 \pm$	0.8 ±	0.59 ±	67.76
	mg/kg) + Castor oil		0.05*	0.06*	0.05*	0.1**	0.03***	
IV	Water extract (400	8	1.18 ±	0.41 ±	0.35 ±	0.35 ±	$0.33 \pm$	81.97
	mg/kg) + Castor oil		0.06**	0.08***	0.04***	0.03***	0.02***	
V	Ethanol extract (200	14	1.65 ±	1.13 ±	1.03 ±	0.6 ±	0.54 ±	70.49
	mg/kg) + Castor oil		0.11	0.03**	0.01**	0.08***	0.08***	
VI	Ethanol extract (400	12	1.81 ±	0.74 ±	0.71 ±	0.68 ±	$0.52 \pm$	71.58
	mg/kg) + Castor oil		0.07	0.05***	0.07***	0.05***	0.03***	

***P<0.001, **P<0.01 and *P<0.05 statistically (Mean + SEM) significant from control group (n=4)

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study revealed that the water and ethanolic extracts of C. sativa possessed significant anti-diarrheal activity on castor oil induced diarrhea model. Furthermore, the water extract showed high spectrum of anti-diarrheal activity than ethanolic extract. The results scientifically support the anti-diarrheal activity of Castanea sativa seeds as a natural anti-diarrheal agent in treating diarrhea. The anti-diarrheal effect of Castanea sativa seeds might be due to the presence of phytoconstituents like flavonoids, phenolic compounds and tannins. However, more detailed phytochemical investigation is important to describe the bioactive compounds which might be responsible for anti-diarrheal activity of Castanea sativa seeds that will lead to further explore the possible mode of action at molecular level.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We declare that we have no conflict of interest.

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