

Aloevera- A Basic Review

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Date of Submission: 10-11-2020

Date of Acceptance: 24-11-2020

ABSTRACT: Aloe vera is one of the plants exhibiting multiple benefits and has gained considerable importance in clinical research. Historically, it has been used for a variety of medicinal purposes. It has attracted the attention of many researchers because of its different properties. More than 200 different biologically active substances were found in this plant that contributed to the fact it has been used to treat various types of diseases. The healthy effect of Aloe vera is primarily attributed to the polysaccharides contained in the gel of the leaves. It has been traditionally used to treat various conditions, including psoriasis, sunburn or radiation-related dermatitis, mucositis, oesophagitis or lichen planus. Aloe vera has also found application in wound healing, treatment of burns, protection against skin damage caused by X-ray, intestinal problems, reduction of plaque and gingivitis, regulating the levels of plasma lipoproteins, reduction of blood sugar levels and improving the immune system. Other biological activities of aloe, such as antifungal, antibacterial, antiviral, anti-inflammatory, anticancer and immunomodulatory have also been documented in numerous studies. This review examines the possible applications of Aloe vera in clinical trials.

KEYWORDS : aloe barbadensis miller, biological activities, diabetes mellitus, emblica officinalis Gaertn.

INTRODUCTION

The name Aloe comes from the Arabic word *alloe* meaning a shining bitter substance. The botanical name of Aloe Vera is *Aloe Barbadensis* Miller. It belongs to the Liliaceae family, which has about 360 species. Aloe Vera is a cactus-like plant that grows readily in hot and dry climate and currently, because of high demand, is cultivated in large quantities. It grows mainly in dry regions of Asia, Africa, America and Europe. In India, it is found in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu.

Cosmetics and some medicinal products are made from the mucilaginous tissue at the center of the Aloe vera leaf and are called Aloe Vera gel. This gel is a clear, tasteless, thin, jelly-like material. The other part of the plant is a group of specialized cells known as the pericyclic tubules. They occur just beneath the outer green rind of the leaf. These cells produce exudates that consist of bitter yellow latex with powerful laxative-like action. This plant has yellow flowers. The leaves, arranged in a rosette configuration, are triangular and spear-like and have thorny ridges^[1].



Fig 1: Aloe vera

Chemical constituents

Aloe contains two classes of Aloins: (1) nataloins, which yield picric and oxalic acids with nitric acid, and do not give a red coloration with nitric acid; and (2) barbaloins, which yield aloetic acid ($C_7H_2N_3O_5$), chrysamic acid ($C_7H_2N_2O_6$), picric and oxalic acids with nitric acid, being reddened by the acid. This second group may be divided into a-barbaloins, obtained from Barbados aloes, and reddened in the cold, and b-barbaloins, obtained from Socotrine and Zanzibar aloes, reddened by ordinary nitric acid only.

when warmed or by fuming acid in the cold. Nataloinforms bright yellow scales. Barbaloinforms yellow prismatic crystals. The plant produces at least 6 antiseptic agents such as lupeol, salicylic acid, urea nitrogen, cinnamic acid, phenols and sulphur. All of these substances are recognized as antiseptics because they kill or control mold, bacteria, fungus and viruses, explaining why plant has the ability to eliminate many internal and external infections. Lupeol and salicylic acid present in the juice are two very effective pain-killers. It contains at least three anti-inflammatory fatty acids, cholesterol, campesterol and β -sitosterol. These are highly effective in treatment of burns, cuts, scrapes, abrasions, allergic reactions, rheumatoid arthritis, rheumatic fever, acid indigestion, ulcers, plus many inflammatory conditions of the digestive system and other internal organs, including the stomach, small intestine, colon, liver, kidney and pancreas. β -sitosterol is also a powerful anti-cholesterol which helps to lower harmful cholesterol levels, helping to explain its many benefits for heart patients. About 23 polypeptides are present in Aloe juice which helps to control a broad spectrum of immune system diseases and disorders. The polypeptides plus the anti-tumor agents, Aloemodin and Aloe lectins, are now also used in treatment of cancer^[2].

Aloe vera (L.) Burm. f. (Family Liliaceae) is an evergreen perennial succulent plant widely used from antiquity. Aloe vera contains various carbohydrate polymers, notably glucomannans, along with a range of other organic and inorganic components. Phenolic compounds have been identified so far as chromone, anthraquinone or anthrone derivatives. Three distinct preparations of aloe plants are mostly used in medicinal practices that are quite different in their chemical composition and their therapeutic properties, aloe latex (aloe); aloe gel (Aloe vera); and, aloe whole leaf (aloe extract). Aloe latex is used for its laxative effect; aloe gel is used topically for skin ailments, such as wound healing, psoriasis, genital herpes and internally by oral administration in diabetic and hyperlipidaemic patients and to heal gastric ulcers; and, aloe extract is potentially useful for cancer and AIDS. Aloe vera possesses several pharmacological properties such as promoting and healing wound and burn, frost-bite healing, with addition to having anti-inflammatory, antifungal, hypoglycemic and gastroprotective properties^[3].

ANTI MICROBIAL

Aloe vera is an herbal medicinal plant with biological activities, such as antimicrobial,

anticancer, anti-inflammatory, and antidiabetic ones, and immunomodulatory properties. The purpose of this study was investigation of in vitro antimicrobial activity of A. vera gel against multidrug-resistant (MDR) *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* isolated from patients with burn wound infections. In this method during a 6-month study, 140 clinical isolates of *P. aeruginosa* were collected from patients admitted to the burn ward of a hospital in Tehran, Iran. Antimicrobial susceptibility test was carried out against the pathogens using the A. vera gel and antibiotics (imipenem, gentamicin, and ciprofloxacin). Results: The antibiogram revealed that 47 (33.6%) of all isolates were MDR *P. aeruginosa*. The extract isolated from A. vera has antibacterial activity against all of isolates. Also, 42 (89.4%) isolates were inhibited by A. vera gel extract at minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) $\leq 200 \mu\text{g/mL}$. MIC value of A. vera gel for other isolates (10.6%) was $800 \mu\text{g/mL}$. All of MDR *P. aeruginosa* strains were inhibited by A. vera at similar MIC₅₀ and MIC₉₀ $200 \mu\text{g/mL}$. Concluded based on our results, A. vera gel at various concentrations can be used as an effective antibacterial agent in order to prevent wound infection caused by *P. aeruginosa*. Their study supports the view that A. vera gel could be active against *P. aeruginosa* in wound infections at various concentrations and the use of it at optimum concentrations can help better therapy of many microbial diseases. Further investigations are required to identify bioactive components of A. vera gel and its effect on wide range of bacteria and fungus including the pathogenic strains. It is hoped that this study would lead to the development of aloe gel usage as a main medicinal source to treat various infectious diseases^[4].

One more study conducted, Aloe Vera compounds have inhibitory activity on fungi, bacteria, and viruses. This study examines the antibacterial activity of A. Vera purified extracts including gel, boiled skin, boiled gel, and distilled extract against pathogenic bacteria, *Staphylococcus aureus*, methicillin-resistant *S. aureus* (MRSA), *Klebsiella pneumoniae* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* were elucidated. In which the bacterial strains were collected from veterinary hospital. Freshly collected A. vera leaves were used for the juice extraction of gel, skin and distilled extracts. Antibacterial effects of various A. Vera extracts were evaluated using broth micro dilution method. The crude polysaccharides of boiled skin extract were purified by phenol method; and fractionated by anion exchange chromatography. For each bacterium, minimum inhibitory concentration of

various *A. Vera* extracts was determined. The protein expression changes of treated bacteria were detected by SDS-PAGE electrophoresis. The distillate extract exhibited more antibacterial effects than other extracts. Out of seven-carbohydrate fractions of the skin extract, the fractions 6 and 7 had antibacterial effects on *S. aureus* and MRSA at 0.089 and 0.134 mg/ml, respectively; also fraction 5 showed antibacterial effects on MRSA at 0.113 mg/ml concentration. The protein profiles of these strains before and after treatment with *A. Vera* showed significant differences at 175, 60, 200 and 70 kDa protein bands of *S. aureus*, MRSA, *P. aeruginosa* and *K. pneumoniae*, respectively. They concluded this finding showed that the distillate extract despite the minimal amount of carbohydrate and protein was more efficient against both Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria^[5].

By using *Aloe Vera* as a capping agent Zinc oxide (ZnO) nanostructures were synthesized on the surface of cotton fabric via a simple wet chemical method for providing antimicrobial activity. Surface morphology and surface chemistry were characterized by scanning electron microscopy (SEM) coupled with energy-dispersive X-ray spectroscopy. Antibacterial and (FTIR) Spectroscopy. Activity was evaluated against Gram-negative *E. coli* and Gram-positive *Staphylococcus aureus* bacteria. Nanostructures were homogeneously formed on the fibers' surface in case of using *Aloe Vera* capping agent, most of them are bundle-like particles having different sizes. Antibacterial tests showed that the ZnO-coated fabric possesses good bacteriostatic activity against *Staphylococcus* and *E. coli* with *Aloe Vera*. Representative bacteria, demonstrated by the zone of inhibition. However, there was no reduction in the number of bacteria, proving the lack of bactericidal activity. Demonstrate its excellent ability to block the UV radiation. The washing durability was also confirmed by performing repeated home laundering^[6].

IMMUNITY BOOSTERS

This study evaluated the potential of *Aloe Vera* (*Aloe barbadensis* Miller) and vitamin E as immunostimulants on humoral and cellular immune responses in broilers. Broilers were randomly assigned to three dietary treatments: a negative control (basal diet + with no additive), basal diet + 1% *Aloe Vera* gel in drinking water, and basal diet + 100 mg/Kg vitamin E in the feed. Antibody titers against sheep red blood cells and Newcastle disease virus were used to examine

the humoral immune response, whereas cellular immune response was evaluated using the phytohemagglutinin-P tests. Result was the highest level of antibody titer against sheep red blood cells on examination days 28 and 38, and the highest response to injection of phytohemagglutinin-P on day 38 was observed in the *Aloe Vera* gel group ($p < 0.05$). However, the response of broilers fed *Aloe Vera* gel was not different from those receiving vitamin E ($p > 0.05$). In addition, the greatest antibody level against Newcastle disease virus was obtained on days 25 and 35 in the vitamin E group, with no significant difference from the *Aloe Vera* gel group ($p > 0.05$). Concluded that in general, our findings demonstrated that both *Aloe Vera* gel and vitamin E can enhance humoral and cellular immune responses of broilers, while *Aloe Vera* gel can be used as an immunostimulant in chickens^[7].

The purpose of this research work was to evaluate the *Aloe Vera* (*Aloe barbadensis*) and Yeast (*Saccharomyces Cerevisiae*) powder. A total of 72 (Arbor-Acres) day-old chicks were used in this study. Four levels of an *Aloe Vera* and Yeast powder at the rate of 0.00%, 0.50% (Yeast), 0.50% (*Aloe Vera*), and 0.50% Yeast + 0.50% *Aloe Vera* were incorporated into the basal diet for six weeks. Feeding period for all groups was lasted for 42 days. Results revealed a significant effect of *Aloe Vera* and Yeast powder in feeds on mean body weights per broilers and mean feed conversion ratio per broilers in 5th week ($P < 0.05$) were significantly on feed supplemented with 0.50% Yeast + 0.50% *Aloe Vera* powder. It was concluded from this study that 0.50% Yeast + 0.50% *Aloe Vera* powder feed supplemented has a beneficial impact on the growth performance of broiler chicks^[8].

ANTI BACTERIAL AND ANTI FUNGUL

New materials hold the key to fundamental advances in antibacterial and antifungal activities, both of which are vital in order to meet the challenge of global warning of microorganism's advantages and limitations and the finite nature of medicinal plants. The use of additive to augment the effect of a synthetic or natural drug candidate is well known. Here we report the use of nanoparticles of tin oxide (SnO₂) to enhance the antibacterial and antifungal potency of *Aloe Vera* extract when compared to bulk tin oxide (SnO₂). The possible advantage and limitations of this result will be discussed. It is hoped that this study would lead to the establishment of nanomaterial compounds that could be used to formulate new and more potent antimicrobial drugs

of natural origin. Antibacterial activity of Alovera extracts was checked against these gram positive isolates of *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Escherichia Coli E*, *Salmonella Typhi*, *Streptococcus pyogenes* and gram negative isolates of *Pseudomonas Aeruginosa*. They observed that effective antibacterial and anti-fungal activities for SnO₂ nanoparticles, particularly for *Streptococcus pyogenes* micro organisms and antifungal microorganisms of *Aspergillus niger*, *Mucor indicus* microorganism than bulk SnO₂. Here there report the findings of the use of nanoparticles of SnO₂ with Aloe vera for anti-bacterial and anti-fungal properties. These studies highlight the size modified inorganic salt that modulates the biological property of a natural compound. Further studies to optimize the ratio and concentration of SnO₂ nanoparticles for maximum potency will be conducted. It is hoped that this study would lead to the establishment of some compounds that could be used to formulate new and more potent antimicrobial drugs of natural origin. Studies are in progress to identify the bioactive compound and to evaluate the mechanisms of action of Alovera extracts on some organisms associated with human diseases^[9].

INHIBITORY ACTIVITY

Various concentrations of 2ml, 4ml, 6ml, 8ml and 10mls were prepared from the extract. Samples of palm oil and palm kernel oil were obtained fresh from the source and their physicochemical properties determined. The results obtained were kept as references. The oil samples were then blended with the various concentrations of the plant extract and times varied from 24 hours to 120 hours. Results obtained from the physicochemical analysis of blended oil samples showed that the effects of the plant extract at various concentrations was distinctively noticed after a period of 72 hours of treatment. Results obtained from acid value analysis of the blended oil increased from 7.6 mg/KOH/g to a constant value of 8.5 mg/KOH/g at 72 hours. Peroxide value of 1.6 mmol/kg increased steadily to a constant value of 2.1 mmol/kg. Value of free fatty acids of 4.1 in the control was steady at the value of 4.7 after 72 hours. Iodine value of 58.4 mg/g in the control increased steadily to a constant value of 58.4 mg/g in the blend after 72 hours. Saponification value of 147 increased to a steady value of 151 in the blend even after 48 hours. These results indicated that the concentrations of the extract used has some degree of significance and points to the plausibility of using natural sources as antioxidants. Foods, oils

and other allied industries may be potential beneficiaries of this botanical resource^[10].

ANTI-DIABETIC

Delayed wound healing is one of the complications of diabetes mellitus. The present study was performed to investigate the effect of Aloe vera oral administration on open wounds in type 2 diabetic rats. Full thickness open wounds (1.5 X 1.5 cm) were created under general anesthesia on the backs of the rats. These rats were divided into two groups, a control group (Group C) and an Aloe vera oral administration group (Group A). Each wound area was measured on days 1, 2, 4 and 8 postwounding. The stages of wound granulation tissues were evaluated histopathologically. The expression of transforming growth factor (TGF)- β 1 and vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) were determined by immunohistochemically. The wounds were significantly contracted in Group A on days 2, 4 and 8 postwounding. Histological results revealed that the inflammatory cell infiltration, angiogenesis, extracellular matrix deposition and epithelialization were promoted in Group A, respectively. The immunohistochemical results revealed that both TGF- β 1 and VEGF protein-positive cells increased in Group A on day 4 postwounding. We concluded that Aloe vera oral administration accelerated wound healing in type 2 diabetic rats^[11].

One of the complications of diabetes mellitus is diabetic ulcer. Diabetic ulcer is commonly infected by infectious agents, especially methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). This study aimed to evaluate the potential effects of alcoholic extracts of Aloe vera, *Apium gra veolens*, and *Sauropus androgynus* promoting wound healing in a diabetic wound infected with MRSA. A total of 60 male Sprague-Dawley rats (6 months old, weighing 250-300 g) were injected with 65 mg/kg body weight of streptozotocin to induce diabetes. On day 7, the backs of the rats were shaved, and two circular wounds (4 mm in diameter) were created on their back, which were infected with MRSA. The rats were divided into six groups: Group I = control, Group II = treated with cream base without extract, Group III = treated with 2% *A. vera* cream, Group IV = treated with 2% *A. graveolens* cream, Group V = treated with 2% *S. androgynus* cream, and Group VI = treated with 2% *A. vera* + 2% *A. graveolens* + 2% *S. androgynus* cream. The wounds were treated twice a day for 14 days. The data were collected on days 7 and 14. The results showed that all three herbal extracts and their combination decreased

wound area and percentage of the wound, increased tensile strength of skin, collagen deposition, vascular endothelial growth factor expression, and skin thickness, and depressed the C-reactive protein profile and cyclooxygenase-2 expression. Concluded with *A. vera*, *A. graveolens*, and *S. androgynus* creams can be used as herbal therapies against diabetic wounds infected with MRSA, both as a single and combination treatment^[12].

BURNS EFFECTS

Burn injury is a major cause of death and disability worldwide. Healing of burn wounds still remains a challenge to modern medicine. The aim of the present study was to evaluate the efficacy of Aloe vera (AV) gel in the treatment of deep second-degree burn wounds and compare its results with those of silver sulfadiazine (SSD) in dogs. A standard deep second-degree burn wound was produced, five dogs, each dog has three groups, AV gel, SSD 1% cream and control (no topical therapy at all). The efficacy of treatment was assessed based on the healing percentage of the wound, time to complete wound healing and the degree of inflammation and exudation. Wound contraction was higher in the AV group than both SSD and the control group. It was significantly higher in the AV group than the control group on days 18, 21 and 24, 27 while significantly higher than the SSD group on days 21 and 24. The mean times for wound complete closure were 22.9 ± 2.56 and 25.7 ± 2.31 days for AV and SSD, respectively, being significantly shorter for AV. Clinically, inflammatory reaction and exudation were less in AV group than the SSD group and control group. Concluded using topical AV will accelerate the burn wound healing process in comparison with both the control and SSD groups and can be used as an adjunctive or alternative agent in the future^[13].

The corneal alkali-burn injury model was established unilaterally in Wistar rats by filter paper saturated with 0.01 M NaOH contacting the eyes for 45 seconds. Rats were divided into four groups: normal control (NC), normal AV (NAV), diabetic control (DC), and diabetic AV (DAV). NAV and DAV groups were treated with AV gel eye drops four times daily, and NC and DC groups were treated with normal saline for 3 days. Corneal epithelial wound closure and degree of edema were recorded using slit lamp and optical coherence tomography at 0, 24, 48, and 72 hours postwounding. Histological examination was conducted to evaluate the degree of inflammation and the healing effect. Result concluded that corneal epithelial wound healing was better in the

NAV group than in the NC group, and it was significantly higher in the DAV group than in the DC group (P,0.05). In comparison to the DC group, DAV treated with AV demonstrated a marked reduction in edema at 48 and 72 hours. Histologically, corneal re-epithelialization was complete and higher in DAV group than that in DC group; moreover, the inflammatory cells were increased in DC group than DAV group (P,0.05). This study demonstrated the efficacy of AV for enhanced corneal re-epithelialization, as well as reduced inflammatory response after alkali burn in rats; therefore, it could be useful as a therapy for diabetic keratopathy^[14].

PROTECTIVE EFFECT

Bisphenol A (BPA), an endocrine-disrupting chemical, has been considered as a possible risk factor for fertility because it induces testicular toxicity. Thus, there sought to analyze the effect of Aloe vera as plant with antioxidant properties on tissues and oxidative stress parameters in male rats. In this experimental study, 50 adult male Wistar rats (200 ± 20 g) have been used in this 56 day study. Animals were completely randomized and divided into five groups: A1 (control), A2 (vehicle control), A3 (Aloe vera gel 300 mg/kg), B1 (BPA 20 μ g/kg bw) and B2 (Aloe vera gel+ BPA). At the end of the study, the rats were anesthetized and 2 ml blood samples were obtained for evaluation of oxidative stress markers. Also, both testes were collected for histological examinations. In which BPA significantly decreased (P<0.05) body and testis weights. Seminiferous tubule diameter (STD) and height of seminiferous epithelium (HSE), were significantly decreased (P<0.05) in the groups receiving BPA as compared to the control. There was also a reduction in the quantity of spermatocyte and spermatids. Moreover, malondialdehyde (MDA) increased and thiol protein (G-SH) decreased. But, co-administration of Aloe vera with BPA accelerated the total antioxidant capacity and testicular tissue structure healing. According to our findings, Aloe vera gel extract can overcome the damaging effects of BPA on the reproductive system of rats and protects rats' testes against BPA-induced toxicity^[15].

ANTI FUNGAL

The present study was undertaken to screen potential antifungal activity of extracts of *Emblica officinalis* Gaertn. fruits, *Aloe vera* L. leaves and *Vitex negundo* L. leaves. The plant extracts were prepared by sequential cold maceration

method using hexane, ethylacetate, methanol and distilled water as a solvent. Extracts were evaluated for their antifungal activity against *Aspergillus niger*, *Aspergillus flavus*, *Aspergillus oryzae*, *Penicillium chrysogenum* and *Trichoderma viridae* by using agar well diffusion method. All the plants showed maximum antifungal activity against *Trichoderma viridae*. While *Penicillium chrysogenum* was most resistant fungal strain against plant extracts used in the study. Aqueous extracts of all the plants showed maximum inhibitory action as compared to other extracts. Presence of various phytochemicals in the extract will lead to contribution in the antifungal activity. The knowledge of extent and mode of action for antifungal activity of specific compounds, present in the plant extracts, may lead to the successful utilization of such natural compounds for treatment of infections caused by pathogenic fungi^[16].

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