

# THE CHEMISTRY INSIDE SPICES & HERBS: RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

VOLUME 7



Editors:  
**Pankaj Kumar Chaurasia**  
**Shashi Lata Bharati**  
**Nand Kishor Gour**

**Bentham Books**

# **The Chemistry Inside Spices & Herbs: Research and Development**

*(Volume 7)*

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Editors: Pankaj Kumar Chaurasia, Shashi Lata Bharati & Nand Kishor Gour

ISSN (Online): 3041-0932

ISSN (Print): 3041-0967

ISBN (Online): 979-8-89881-438-0

ISBN (Print): 979-8-89881-439-7

ISBN (Paperback): 979-8-89881-440-3

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First published in 2026.

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## CONTENTS

FOREWORD .....	i
PREFACE .....	ii
LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS .....	iv
<b>CHAPTER 1 NANOTECHNOLOGY: A LAUDABLE KEY TO UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL OF HERBAL THERAPEUTICS</b> .....	1
<i>Afeefa Noor and Kanchan Kohli</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
<b>RATIONALE FOR INTEGRATING NANOTECHNOLOGY FOR MODERNIZING HERBAL TREATMENTS.</b> .....	2
Reduce Toxicity .....	2
Dose Reduction .....	2
Treatment of Chronic Diseases .....	3
Bioavailability Enhancement .....	3
Degradation .....	3
Patient Compliance .....	3
<b>TECHNIQUES FOR NANOTECHNOLOGY-BASED HERBAL DRUG DELIVERY</b> .....	3
Homogenization Method (High Pressure) .....	3
Nanoprecipitation Technique .....	4
Complex Coacervation Technique .....	4
Co-precipitation Technique .....	4
Salting Out Technique .....	4
Solvent Emulsification-diffusion Method .....	4
Supercritical Fluid Technology .....	5
Self-Assembly Method .....	5
<b>NANOTECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN ADVANCES FOR HERBAL THERAPEUTICS</b> .....	5
Liposomes .....	6
Phytosomes .....	7
Herbosomes .....	8
Ethosomes .....	9
Transferosomes .....	11
Niosomes .....	12
Polymeric Nanoparticles .....	14
<i>Nanocapsules</i> .....	14
<i>Nanospheres</i> .....	15
Lipid-based Nanoparticles .....	16
<i>Solid-Lipid Nanoparticles (SLNs)</i> .....	16
<i>Nanostructured Lipid Carriers</i> .....	16
Inorganic Nanoparticles .....	19
<i>Metal Nanoparticles</i> .....	19
<i>Mesoporous Silica Nanoparticles</i> .....	20
<i>Magnetic Nanoparticles</i> .....	20
<i>Calcium Carbonate Nanoparticles</i> .....	21
Nanoemulsions-Based Herbal Drug Delivery .....	21
Dendrimer-Based Herbal Drug Delivery .....	23
<b>IN VITRO AND IN VIVO EVALUATION OF HERBAL NANOCARRIERS</b> .....	25
<b>PERSPECTIVES ON HERBAL MEDICINE INTEGRATION INTO MODERN HEALTHCARE</b> .....	26
Quality .....	26

Regulatory Aspects .....	27
Quality Assurance and Quality Control .....	27
Safety .....	28
Efficacy .....	28
<b>REGULATORY APPROVAL PROCESS OF HERBAL MEDICINE IN INDIA</b> .....	28
<b>CHALLENGES</b> .....	29
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	30
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	30
<b>CHAPTER 2 TARGETING CELLULAR OXIDATIVE STRESS AND ASSOCIATED DISEASES THROUGH INDIAN SPICES: A REVIEW</b> .....	40
<i>Satadal Adhikary, Prem Rajak and Suchandra Bhattacharya</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	40
<b>OXIDATIVE STRESS (OS): AN OVERVIEW</b> .....	42
The Production of ROS .....	42
Pathological Role of ROS .....	43
<b>SPICES IN INDIAN CUISINE</b> .....	45
<b>ROLE OF SPICES IN AMELIORATING CELLULAR OXIDATIVE STRESS</b> .....	47
Coriander .....	47
Cinnamon .....	47
Fenugreek .....	48
Cardamom .....	48
Clove .....	49
Ginger .....	50
Turmeric .....	51
Black Pepper .....	52
<b>CONCLUSION AND FUTURE PROSPECTS</b> .....	53
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	53
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	54
<b>CHAPTER 3 CHEMISTRY OF HERB-BASED BIOSENSORS AND THEIR ANALYTICAL APPLICATIONS</b> .....	60
<i>Chandani Halpani, Mansi Gandhi, Satyendra Mishra and Shashi Ranga</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	61
Overview of Biosensors .....	61
Role of Herbs in Biosensor Development .....	62
Advantages of Herb-Based Biosensors .....	63
Real-World Developments and Patent Activity .....	64
<b>CHEMISTRY OF HERB-BASED BIOSENSORS</b> .....	64
Key Components .....	66
<i>Recognition Elements</i> .....	66
Enzymes .....	66
Pigments .....	67
Secondary Metabolites .....	67
<i>Transducers</i> .....	67
Electrochemical Transducers .....	67
Optical Transducers .....	68
<i>Substrates</i> .....	69
Conductive Platforms .....	69
Mechanisms of Action .....	70
<i>Affinity-Based Sensing</i> .....	70
<i>Catalysis-Based Sensing</i> .....	70

<i>Electrochemical Sensing</i> .....	70
Chemical Stability and Selectivity .....	71
Chemical Stability .....	72
Microencapsulation Techniques .....	72
Use of Synthetic Analogs and Functionalization .....	72
Encapsulation within Nanomaterials .....	72
Encapsulation Techniques .....	73
Crosslinking .....	73
Controlled Storage Conditions .....	73
Optimizing Herbal Extract Purity .....	73
Supercritical Fluid Extraction .....	73
Chromatography .....	73
<b>DESIGN AND FABRICATION OF HERB-BASED BIOSENSORS</b> .....	74
Material Selection .....	74
Key Criteria for Herb Selection .....	74
Preparation of Herbal Extracts .....	75
Extraction Techniques .....	75
<i>Maceration</i> .....	75
<i>Soxhlet Extraction</i> .....	75
<i>Supercritical Fluid Extraction</i> .....	75
Immobilization Techniques .....	76
Challenges in Design and Fabrication .....	76
<b>ANALYTICAL APPLICATIONS OF HERB-BASED BIOSENSORS</b> .....	77
Environmental Monitoring .....	79
Pesticide Detection .....	79
Heavy Metal Analysis .....	79
Food Quality Assessment .....	79
Antioxidant Measurement .....	79
Adulteration Detection .....	80
Healthcare Diagnostics .....	80
Glucose Monitoring .....	80
Disease Biomarker Detection .....	80
Pharmaceutical Analysis .....	81
Drug Residue Analysis .....	81
Quality Control .....	81
<b>BENEFITS OF HERB-BASED BIOSENSORS</b> .....	81
Eco-friendliness .....	81
Cost-effectiveness .....	82
Biocompatibility .....	82
Versatility .....	83
<b>CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS</b> .....	83
Stability Issues .....	83
Reproducibility .....	84
Sensitivity and Selectivity .....	84
Scalability .....	84
<b>FUTURE DIRECTIONS</b> .....	85
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	86
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	87
<b>CHAPTER 4 UNVEILING THE COGNITIVE ENHANCER: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF CELASTRUS PANICULATUS</b> .....	94

*Shruti V. Kolambkar, Faizan A. Beerwala, Sheetal S. Samant, Pramod J Hurkadale and Harish R. Darasaguppe*

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	95
Overview of <i>Celastrus paniculatus</i> .....	95
Importance of Cognitive Enhancement .....	95
<b>ETHNOPHARMACOLOGY, PHARMACOGNOSTIC PROPERTIES, AND PHYTOCHEMICAL PROFILE</b> .....	96
Ethnopharmacology .....	96
Pharmacognostic Properties .....	97
Phytochemical Profile .....	97
<b>COGNITIVE ENHANCEMENT AND ITS EFFECTS</b> .....	98
Cognitive Enhancement .....	98
Studies on Memory, Learning, and Cognitive Function .....	100
<b>PHARMACOLOGICAL ACTIVITIES AND THERAPEUTIC POTENTIAL</b> .....	101
Musculoskeletal System .....	101
Antioxidant and Neuroprotective Potential .....	102
Antimicrobial Potential .....	102
Metabolic System .....	103
Anti-Cancer Potential .....	103
<b>TOXICOLOGY AND SAFETY PROFILE</b> .....	104
Acute and Chronic Toxicity Studies .....	104
Oral Administration .....	104
Symptoms Observed at High Doses .....	104
Dermal and Ocular Toxicity .....	104
Repeated Oral Administration .....	104
Behavioural and Neurological Effects .....	104
Reproductive Toxicity .....	105
Potential Hepatoprotective Effects .....	105
Safety and Tolerability in Humans .....	105
Dosing and Safety .....	105
Reported Side Effects .....	105
Tolerability .....	105
Neurobehavioral Safety .....	105
Pharmacological Evidence .....	106
<b>CLINICAL APPLICATION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS</b> .....	106
Clinical Applications .....	106
Future Research Directions and Challenges .....	106
Potential for Drug Development and Standardization .....	107
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	108
<b>ETHICAL STATEMENT</b> .....	109
<b>DECLARATION</b> .....	109
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b> .....	109
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	109
<b>CHAPTER 5 PHYTOCHEMISTRY AND PHARMACOLOGY OF ELSHOLTZIA: RESEARCH ADVANCEMENTS AND COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT</b> .....	117
<i>Arati Chourasiya, Neetu Sahu, Dilip Kumar Chourasiya and Praveen Kumar</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	118
Introduction of <i>Elsholtzia</i> .....	118
Historical Background, Distribution, and Traditional Use of <i>Elsholtzia</i> .....	119
<i>Historical Background</i> .....	119

<i>Traditional Uses</i> .....	119
<i>Distribution</i> .....	119
<b>BOTANICAL AND TAXONOMICAL PROFILE</b> .....	120
Taxonomy and Botanical Classification [14 - 16] .....	120
<i>Plant Profile</i> .....	120
<i>Synonyms of Elsholtzia griffithii</i> – .....	120
Taxonomic Classification of Elsholtzia .....	121
<b>SPECIES MORPHOLOGY AND GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF ELSHOLTZIA</b> .....	121
Morphology .....	121
Geographical Distribution .....	125
<b>CHEMICAL CONSTITUENTS</b> .....	125
<b>PHARMACOGNOSTICAL EVALUATION</b> .....	137
Physical Characteristics and Essential Oil Yield .....	137
<i>Macroscopic Examination of the Crude Drug</i> .....	137
<i>Microscopic Analysis of the Crude Drug</i> .....	138
<i>Powder Microscopy</i> .....	141
<b>PHYSICOCHEMICAL PARAMETERS</b> .....	141
Moisture Content .....	142
Total Ash .....	142
Acid-Insoluble Ash .....	142
Water-Soluble Ash .....	142
Swelling Index .....	143
Extractive Values .....	143
<b>PHYTOCHEMICAL AND ANATOMICAL STUDIES OF ELSHOLTZIA</b> .....	144
Phytochemical Screening of Elsholtzia Species .....	144
Microscopic and Anatomical Analysis of Elsholtzia ciliata .....	145
Anatomy of E. ciliata Leaves and Stems .....	145
Secondary Growth and Comparative Anatomy .....	146
Significance .....	147
<b>PHARMACOLOGICAL ACTIVITY OF ELSHOLTZIA</b> .....	148
Terms Used: .....	150
Anti-Cancer Activity .....	150
Adaptogenic Activity .....	151
Analgesic and Anti-Inflammatory Activities .....	151
Anti-Acne, Antioxidant, and Anti-Tyrosinase Activities .....	152
Antiarrhythmic Activity .....	152
Acaricidal Activity .....	153
Renal Anti-Inflammatory Activity .....	153
Ethnobotanical Uses in Thailand .....	154
Phytochemistry and Biological Activities – Summary .....	154
<b>PREPARATION AND STANDARDIZATION OF ELSHOLTZIA EXTRACTS</b> .....	155
Extraction Using Soxhlet Apparatus .....	155
Essential Oil Extraction with Clevenger Apparatus .....	156
Post-Extraction Analysis .....	156
<b>ADVANCED ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUES FOR ELSHOLTZIA PHYTOCHEMICALS</b> .....	157
Innovative Extraction Methods .....	157
Advanced Extraction Techniques: MAE and UAE .....	158
<i>Microwave-Assisted Extraction (MAE)</i> .....	158
<i>Ultrasound-Assisted Extraction (UAE)</i> .....	159
Quantitative Estimation by HPLC .....	160
GC-MS Characterization of Essential Oil .....	161

<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	162
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	163
<b>CHAPTER 6 PHYTOCHEMICAL AND PHARMACOLOGICAL INSIGHTS ON TINOSPORA SPECIES</b> .....	170
<i>Abhishek Kumar, Deepti Dwivedi, Ankur Srivastava, Mahima and Shubham Tripathi</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	171
<b>PHYTOCHEMISTRY OF TINOSPORA</b> .....	171
Alkaloids .....	171
Diterpenoid Lactones .....	172
Glycosides .....	172
Steroids .....	173
Phenolics .....	173
<b>EXTRACTION AND CHARACTERIZATION METHODS</b> .....	173
<b>PHARMACOLOGICAL PROPERTIES</b> .....	174
Anti-inflammatory Effects .....	174
Immunomodulatory Activity .....	175
Antidiabetic Properties .....	175
Antioxidant Activity .....	175
Hepatoprotective Effects .....	176
Antimicrobial Activity .....	176
<b>MECHANISMS OF ACTION</b> .....	176
Cellular and Molecular Mechanisms .....	176
Interacting with Biological Pathways .....	177
The Synergistic Effects of Bioactive Compounds .....	178
<b>CLINICAL APPLICATIONS</b> .....	178
Efficacious Symptoms: Inflammatory Diseases Treatments .....	178
Diabetes Treatment and Management .....	179
Healthy Liver and Detox .....	179
Other Therapeutic Uses .....	180
<b>SAFETY AND TOXICOLOGY</b> .....	181
Dosage and Administration .....	181
Side Effects and Contraindications of the Potential .....	182
<b>DIRECTIONS AND RESEARCH FOR THE FUTURE</b> .....	183
Emerging Therapeutic Areas .....	184
Gaps in Current Research and Potential Studies .....	185
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	186
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	186
<b>CHAPTER 7 CHEMISTRY AND BIOLOGY OF CURCUMA LONGA L.: A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH</b> .....	191
<i>Muhammad Riaz, Sadia Ahmad, Ilkay Erdogan Orhan, Nayab Kanwal and Syed Ghulam Musharraf</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	191
<b>PHYTOCHEMISTRY OF CURCUMA LONGA</b> .....	193
Diphenylalkanooids .....	193
Terpenoids .....	197
<i>Monoterpenes</i> .....	206
<i>Sesquiterpenes</i> .....	208
Alkaloids .....	214
Phenolic Derivatives .....	215

<i>Phenolic Acids</i> .....	217
<i>Phenylpropanoids</i> .....	218
<i>Flavonoids</i> .....	218
<b>3. METHODS FOR EXTRACTION OF NATURAL PRODUCTS FROM C. LONGA</b> .....	221
<b>SYNTHESIS OF CURCUMIN</b> .....	225
<b>SYNTHETIC STRATEGIES FOR CURCUMIN DERIVATIVES</b> .....	230
Modification of Central Diketone/Enol Moiety .....	230
Modification of the Phenyl Ring .....	235
<i>Symmetrical Curcumin Derivatives</i> .....	235
<i>Asymmetrical Curcumin Derivatives</i> .....	239
<b>BIOLOGICAL PROPERTIES AND MEDICINAL IMPORTANCE OF CURCUMA</b>	
<b>LONGA</b> .....	250
Ethnopharmacological Applications .....	250
Medicinal Importance in Recent Research .....	251
<i>Anti-Inflammatory Activity</i> .....	252
<i>Antioxidant Activity</i> .....	255
<i>Wound Healing</i> .....	257
<i>Dermotherapeutic Property</i> .....	259
<i>Anticancer Activity</i> .....	262
<i>Cardioprotective Activity</i> .....	264
<i>Anti-Diabetic Activity</i> .....	266
<i>Respiratory Protective Property</i> .....	267
<i>Neuroprotective Activity</i> .....	270
<i>Hepatoprotective Activity</i> .....	272
<b>SAFETY, DOSAGE LIMITS, AND TOXICOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS</b> .....	274
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	274
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	275
<b>CHAPTER 8 SALVIA ROSEMARINUS (ROSEMARY) PHYTOCOMPOUNDS AND THEIR</b>	
<b>PHARMACOLOGICAL EFFECTS</b> .....	315
<i>Rakesh Kumar, Niraj Guleria, Neha Parmar, Puneet Kaur, Joopaka Ramu, R</i>	
<i>Karthik, Tarun Sharma and Bharat Bhushan Rana</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	316
Phytochemical Composition of <i>S. rosmarinus</i> .....	318
Pharmacological Activity of Rosemary .....	321
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	329
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	330
<b>CHAPTER 9 PHYTOCHEMISTRY AND MEDICINAL ROLES OF BOERHAAVIA</b>	
<b>DIFFUSA: A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW</b> .....	340
<i>Dibyendu Shil, Sibaji Sarkar, Niladri Shekhar Dey, Tanmay Jit, Sanglap Mallick</i>	
<i>Subhasish Pramanik and Subhendu Dey</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	340
<b>SYNONYMS</b> .....	341
<b>PHYTOCHEMISTRY</b> .....	342
<b>PHARMACOLOGY</b> .....	345
Anti-inflammatory and Analgesic Activity .....	345
Hepatoprotective Activity .....	346
Diuretic .....	347
Anti-Stress and Apoptogenic Activity .....	348
Immunomodulatory Effect .....	348
Anti-Fertility .....	349

Anti-Diabetic Activity .....	349
Radioprotective Activity .....	350
Anti-Metastatic Activity .....	350
Anti-Oxidant Activity .....	350
Anti-Microbial Activity .....	351
Anti-Viral Activity .....	352
Activity of Nitric Oxide Scavenging .....	352
Adaptogen Activity .....	353
Struvite Crystal Growth Inhibition .....	353
Anti-Fibrinolytic Activity .....	354
Chemopreventive Action .....	354
Impact on Semen and Testicular Structure .....	354
Bronchial Asthma .....	355
Anti-Lymphoproliferative Activity .....	355
Anti-Proliferative and Anti-Estrogenic Activity .....	355
Insecticidal Activity .....	356
Eye Disorders .....	356
Ethnomedicinal Uses of <i>Boerhavia diffusa</i> .....	359
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	359
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	360
<b>SUBJECT INDEX</b> .....	588

## FOREWORD

“**The Chemistry Inside Spices & Herbs: Research and Development (Volume 7)**” is a unique collection of nine pharmacologically valuable chapters written by international and national experts in the field. Each chapter is developed on an admirable topic and is full of scientific information. Chapter 1 explores the nanotechnology unlocking the potential of herbal therapeutics. Chapter 2 describes the role of Indian spices in targeting cellular oxidative stress and associated diseases. Chapter 3 elaborates on the herb-based biosensors in analytical applications. Descriptive approach on the phytochemical and medicinal roles of some specific medicinal plants like *Celastrus paniculatus*, *Elsholtzia* species, *Tinospora* species, *Curcuma longa* L., *Salvia rosmarinus* (rosemary), and *Boerhaavia diffusa* provides excellent literature for the researchers and scientists interested in the field of phytochemistry and phytochemical medications.

A comprehensive approach to the various informative topics related to the plant sciences makes this volume highly interesting and an essential reference book.

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## PREFACE

This book, **Volume 7** of the book series “**The Chemistry Inside Spices & Herbs: Research and Development**”, presents miscellaneous roles of phytochemistry in the form of nine chapters written by experts in the field, with extensive discussion and assessment of herbal medication. This volume deals with the comprehensive information on nanotechnology in the field of herbal medication, spices as antioxidants, herb-based biosensors, detailed phytochemistry, and medicinal applications of *Celastrus paniculatus*, *Elsholtzia* genus, *Tinospora*, *Curcuma longa* L., *Salvia rosmarinus* (rosemary), and *Boerhaavia diffusa*.

**Chapter 1**, by Noor and Kohli delves into the role of various herbal medicine-based Nanoformulations like Phytosomes, Solid lipid carriers (SLNs), Nanostructured Lipid Carriers (NLCs), Nanoemulsions, Nanogels, Polymeric nanoparticles, etc, bypassing the limitations of herbal medicines like bioavailability, solubility, stability, and therapeutic activity. The chapter also covers the latest advancements in nanotechnology, which not only overcome the key challenges of herbal medicines but also convert them into safer, sustainable, and effective formulations. The chapter explores the futuristic opportunities for herbal drug delivery, implementing nanotechnology as the key to unlock the power of herbal therapeutics.

**Chapter 2**, written by Adhikary *et al*, reviews a multitude of spice compounds as exogenous antioxidants that have been corroborated to control cellular oxidative stress and their roles in ameliorating concomitant disease conditions.

**Chapter 3**, by Halpani *et al* focuses on the progress of various herb-based biosensor and their advances in biosensing applications and development in analytical science over the last three decades. It also highlights the construction, mechanism, and key characteristics of biosensors based on herbs, as well as discussing their properties, limitations, and future perspectives.

**Chapter 4**, by Kolambkar *et al* delves into the ethnopharmacological applications, phytochemical profile, and diverse pharmacological activities of *Celastrus paniculatus* Wild (CP).

**Chapter 5**, by Sahu *et al* comprehensively explores the phytochemical and pharmacological properties and applications of the *Elsholtzia* genus.

**Chapter 6**, by Kumar *et al* aims to review phytochemistry and pharmacology of *Tinospora* with emphasis on bioactive compounds and contending pharmacological behaviours. It focuses on techniques used in isolating and chemically characterizing these compounds. In addition, the chapter revisits the current and prospective clinical uses, toxicity profile, and possible future investigations of *Tinospora*-derived drugs.

**Chapter 7**, written by Riaz *et al*, presents a very comprehensive assessment of the chemistry and biology of *Curcuma longa* L. This chapter also provides an up-to-date chemical synthesis of curcumin and its major pharmaceutical natural products, along with its derivatives/analogs. This work provides phytochemistry, pharmacology, synthesis, and essential oils from *C. longa*. It provides relevant scientific data to facilitate medicinal chemistry research for designing and developing new molecular medicine and nutraceuticals.

**Chapter 8**, written by Kumar and co-authors, provides a comprehensive update of the phytochemistry of rosemary (*Salvia rosmarinus*) plants and pharmacological effects of its phyto-compounds.

**Chapter 9**, created by Shil *et al*, presents a comprehensive overview of phytochemistry and pharmacological applications of *Boerhaavia diffusa*, a perennial creeping plant belonging to the Nyctaginaceae family. The study provides a comprehensive overview of the phytochemical and pharmacological properties of *Boerhaavia diffusa*, offering valuable insights for students, academicians, and future research.

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## CHAPTER 1

# Nanotechnology: A Laudable Key to Unlock the Potential of Herbal Therapeutics

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**Abstract:** Nanotechnology serves as a plausible tool for the transformation of traditional medicines into high-precision therapeutics with unmatched efficacy. Nanotechnological approaches bridge the gap between ancient knowledge and modern science, enabling the transformation of herbal medicines in terms of bioavailability, potency, and enhanced therapeutic activity. The chapter examines the role of various herbal medicine-based nanoformulations—such as phytosomes, Solid Lipid Nanoparticles (SLNs), nanostructured lipid carriers (NLCs), nanoemulsions, nanogels, and polymeric nanoparticles—in overcoming key limitations of herbal medicines, including poor bioavailability, low solubility, instability, and reduced therapeutic efficacy. The chapter also covers the latest advancements in nanotechnology, which not only overcome the key challenges of herbal medicines but also convert them into safer, sustainable, and effective formulations. The chapter explores future prospects in herbal drug delivery, highlighting nanotechnology as a crucial approach for unlocking the therapeutic potential of herbal medicines.

**Keywords:** Enhanced bioavailability, Herbal nanomedicine, Inorganic nanoparticles, Lipid-based nanocarriers, Nanotechnology, Polymeric nanoparticles, Quality, Regulatory aspects, Safety, Techniques.

## INTRODUCTION

The use of herbal medicines has been trusted since ancient times due to their safety, affordability, therapeutic properties, and high acceptance in the general population. Herbal medicines are recognized worldwide because of their low toxicity and feasibility compared to conventional medicines. The growing popularity of herbal medicines is largely attributed to safety concerns associated with synthetic drugs, the limited effectiveness of many conventional treatments

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for common health disorders, and the proven therapeutic efficacy and lower toxicity of herbal remedies. Studies have also shown that conventional drug delivery mainly suppresses symptoms, ignoring the underlying cause of the disease [1]. However, various challenges, including instability, poor solubility, limited absorption, and low bioavailability, hinder the pathway of herbal therapeutics. While overcoming these challenges, nanotechnology offers a solution for the hurdles faced by herbal therapeutics.

The enhanced therapeutics of herbal medicines are magnified by the lens of nanotechnology in an unprecedented way. Nanotechnology serves as a promising tool for enhancing the therapeutic efficacy and precision of herbal medicines. It increases stability, solubility, pharmacological activity, and resistance to degradation from physical and chemical environments, reduces toxicity, enhances tissue macrophage localization, and provides sustained and targeted delivery [2]. Reduction of size to the nanoscale overcomes the various challenges faced by herbal medicines and augments their solubility, stability, and bioavailability. Herbal medicines are also easily degraded by acidic gastric pH and metabolized by the liver, which hinders the attainment of the desired minimum effective concentration and reduces their therapeutic activity simultaneously [1]. A decrease in therapeutic activity also results in the consumption of large doses to achieve the desired effects [3]. Nowadays, various *in silico* tools are useful for the initial screening of herbal compounds and predicting their activity on various targets, which can be utilized as an initial step for nanotechnology-based herbal drug development [4]. Nanotechnology encompasses a range of advanced drug delivery systems—such as phytosomes, nanoemulsions, liposomes, herbosomes, and nanoparticles—that help overcome the inherent limitations of herbal therapeutics and enable therapeutic outcomes.

## **RATIONALE FOR INTEGRATING NANOTECHNOLOGY FOR MODERNIZING HERBAL TREATMENTS.**

### **Reduce Toxicity**

Many herbal extracts contain solvents like methanol, chloroform, and acetone, which are harmful for consumption. It is unsuitable for consumption and can cause toxic effects on the body. By incorporating it into a novel drug delivery system, this issue can be resolved, and toxicity can be reduced [5].

### **Dose Reduction**

Herbal compounds are primarily bulk drugs, so they cannot be delivered in bulk amounts; an optimized dose incorporated into a suitable formulation is required for better therapeutic activity with minimal side effects [5].

### **Treatment of Chronic Diseases**

Conventional dosage forms, which are available commercially, face issues with target specificity and resistance, as well as in various antibiotic treatments. Herbal bioactives incorporated into nanocarriers can serve as alternative therapies for the treatment of various chronic diseases for which conventional treatments fail to deliver the desired therapeutic activity [5].

### **Bioavailability Enhancement**

Herbal bioactives often face permeability and solubility issues, which decrease their bioavailability. Owing to its nanoscale dimensions, nanotechnology reduces the size of bioactive compounds, enhances their permeability through target membranes, and improves solubility and absorption as a result of the increased surface area. All these factors lead to increased bioavailability [5].

### **Degradation**

Herbal extract undergoes degradation from the acidic pH of the gastric environment, biological fluids, and enzymes. Nanotechnology-based drug delivery acts as a shield for herbal compounds, protecting them from degradation, and delivers the bioactive compounds to specific targets without loss of their inherent therapeutic activity [5].

### **Patient Compliance**

Lower efficacy and a large dose lead to less patient compliance. With the aid of nanotechnology, the dose can be reduced, dosing frequency is reduced, and efficacy also increases, leading to more patient compliance [5].

The advantages of nanotechnology-based herbal drug delivery are depicted in Fig. (1).

## **TECHNIQUES FOR NANOTECHNOLOGY-BASED HERBAL DRUG DELIVERY**

Nanotechnology-based herbal drug delivery can be made through the following commonly used techniques [6]:

### **Homogenization Method (High Pressure)**

The homogenization technique involves high shear of 100 to 2000 bar pressure, which breaks the particles into a nano-sized. It is a secure, effective method for bulk manufacturing of nanocarriers like nanostructured lipid carriers,

## Targeting Cellular Oxidative Stress and Associated Diseases through Indian Spices: A Review

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**Abstract:** Antioxidants are important to the cells as they are involved in scavenging free radicals. When the rate of free radical production in the cells is greater than the rate of clearance, the cell is considered to be under oxidative stress. A number of disease conditions, including several inflammatory diseases, cancer progression, and cardiovascular diseases, are associated with oxidative stress. Indian cuisine is famous for its extensive use of spices, which are used to enhance the taste, aroma, and colour of the preparation. Interestingly, spices are also a rich source of antioxidants. The phytochemicals, primarily consisting of phenolic compounds, flavonoids, sulfur-containing compounds, phenolic diterpenes, alkaloids, tannins, and vitamins present in spices, exhibit antioxidant properties. Their antioxidant function is brought about by redox properties and their ability to obstruct Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS) production. Therefore, many phytochemicals are of great interest to modern researchers, who aim to explore their therapeutic potential for tailored clinical applications. This paper reviews a multitude of spice compounds that have been corroborated as exogenous antioxidants, which have been shown to control cellular oxidative stress and show immense potential in ameliorating concomitant disease conditions.

**Keywords:** Antioxidants, Flavonoids, Oxidative stress, Polyphenols, ROS, Spices.

### INTRODUCTION

The disparity between the yield and subsequent build-up of Reactive Oxygen Species (ROS) in cells and their competence to neutralize and scavenge them coalesce into the generation of oxidative stress. ROS are stereotypically yielded as

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byproducts of the metabolism of oxygen. Nonetheless, environmental irritants, such as pollutants, UV radiation, ionizing radiation, heavy metals, and certain xenobiotics, significantly promote ROS production [1]. Oxidative stress exerts roles in carcinogenesis as well as in various diseases, such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), atherosclerosis, Alzheimer's disease, *etc.* [2].

In the human body, the antioxidant machinery is designed to neutralize these reactive radicals, thereby maintaining a balance between the processes of oxidation and antioxidation. Proficiently scavenging these detrimental species helps preserve cellular wellbeing and avoid oxidative damage [3]. Increasing the consumption of external antioxidants can considerably mitigate the harmful consequences of oxidative stress. These antioxidants affect oxidative chain reactions in various ways, such as quenching singlet oxygen, neutralizing free radicals, and acting as reducing agents [4].

Spices are a source of phytochemicals - a broad group of bioactive compounds derived from plants and recognized for their prospective medicinal values. This includes phenolic compounds, plant sterols, flavonoids, carotenoids, sulfur-containing compounds, and glucosinolates [5]. India, often referred to as the 'Land of Spices', stands out in the global spice market with its impressive cultivation of 52 to 60 varieties among the 109 spices recognized by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). The usage of spices beyond culinary practices as flavouring or colouring agents has been employed as home remedies for certain ailments since time immemorial, as ingredients in Ayurvedic preparations [6].

Currently, interest in consuming natural products as foods and beverages is rising, and people are gradually inclining towards products with natural constituents, driven by their awareness of the potential undesirable health outcomes of synthetic products, particularly several synthetic antioxidants [5]. Since certain spices have garnered substantial interest due to their strong natural antioxidant properties, this review discusses the most up-to-date understandings of the established spice antioxidants, along with their sources and chemistry, and explores their antioxidant features in the context of therapeutic approaches. It has been established that phenolic compounds show antioxidant properties that exceed the efficacy of natural antioxidant  $\alpha$ -tocopherol and are on par with synthetic antioxidants like butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA) and butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT) [7]. As the potential of spices as antioxidants is getting established, it is becoming more important to summarize the role of spices in resolving cellular oxidative stress to figure out the research gaps and future prospects.

## OXIDATIVE STRESS (OS): AN OVERVIEW

### The Production of ROS

These ROS are crucial as secondary messengers in numerous intracellular signaling pathways. Nevertheless, at higher cellular concentrations, they can trigger injury to cellular functioning [8].

An oxygen atom holds a single unpaired electron in its outer valence shell. On the other hand, molecular oxygen possesses two unpaired electrons. Consequently, atomic oxygen functions as a free radical, whereas molecular oxygen operates as a bi-radical. Oxygen's univalent (single-electron) reduction yields reactive intermediates. This route differs from the more stable tetravalent reduction of oxygen in the electron transport chain present in the mitochondria of the cell, which safely generates water [9].

Resulting as metabolic by-products, superoxide radicals ( $O_2^{\cdot-}$ ), hydroxyl radicals ( $\cdot OH$ ), hydrogen peroxide ( $H_2O_2$ ), and singlet oxygen ( $^1O_2$ ) are some common ROS [1]. Maintaining a lower level of ROS is crucial for some important cellular processes. These include activation of several transcription factors, protein phosphorylation, differentiation, immunity, and programmed cell death [10].

Free radicals are produced both from exogenous and endogenous sources (Fig. 1). Internally, the production of ROS relies on both enzymatic and non-enzymatic chemical reactions. Enzymatic reactions involved in ROS yield include the processes occurring in the respiratory chain, during phagocytosis, prostaglandin production, and the cytochrome P450 system. Superoxide radicals ( $O_2^{\cdot-}$ ) are generated by NADPH oxidase, peroxidases, *etc.* These are able to take part in several subcellular reactions, yielding hydroxyl radicals ( $OH\cdot$ ), hydrogen peroxide ( $H_2O_2$ ), hypochlorous acid ( $HOCl$ ), and peroxynitrite ( $ONOO^-$ ), which are some significant ROS of the cellular environment. Hydrogen peroxide ( $H_2O_2$ ) is also produced by several oxidase enzymes. These include xanthine oxidase and amino acid oxidase. The Fenton reaction, involving the reaction of  $O_2^{\cdot-}$  with  $H_2O_2$  catalysed by  $Fe^{2+}$  or  $Cu^+$ , produces one of the most reactive free radicals - the hydroxyl radical ( $OH\cdot$ ). Oxidation of arginine to citrulline by the enzyme nitric oxide synthase (NOS) results in the yield of Nitric Oxide radical ( $NO\cdot$ ).

## Chemistry of Herb-Based Biosensors and Their Analytical Applications

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**Abstract:** Biosensors are analytical tools designed to detect chemical or physiological changes in an environment through the integration of biological recognition parts with physical transducers. They are widely used in clinical diagnostics, environmental monitoring, food safety, and pharmaceutical analysis due to their rapid response times, high sensitivity, and ease of operation. These devices offer a reliable and cost-effective alternative to conventional analytical techniques. Herb-based biosensors, which use bioactive phytochemicals including enzymes, flavonoids, terpenoids, and polyphenols derived from plants, have emerged as a sustainable and ecologically friendly alternative in recent years. These compounds interact with specific analytes through chemical mechanisms such as redox reactions, hydrogen bonding, and catalytic oxidation, enabling the detection of a wide range of targets, including drugs, hormones, pesticides, and amino acids. Examples include the use of banana or asparagus pulp to track pesticide residues and palm fruit fibers to detect adrenaline. Tissues from broccoli, potato, and tomato have also been employed to detect phenolic compounds, achieving detection limits in the micromolar range and performance comparable to standard electrochemical methods. The chemical basis of these sensors lies in the functional groups of herbal compounds, which contribute to signal generation through electron transfer, pH-sensitive color change, or catalytic reactions, depending on the transduction method used. These herb-derived materials are not only biocompatible and biodegradable, but also available at low cost, making them attractive for green analytical technologies. The chemistry of sensor-analyte interactions, manufacturing techniques, and material design are highlighted in this chapter, which summarizes thirty years of study in the creation of herb-based biosensors. Additionally, it examines new developments that have the potential to revolutionize analytical science, including polymeric encapsulation for stability, AI-assisted diagnostics, IoT-enabled real-time monitoring, and nanomaterial-enhanced sensitivity.

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**Keywords:** Biosensor, Enzymes, Electrochemical transducers, Herbs, Herbicide.

## INTRODUCTION

### Overview of Biosensors

Biosensors are analytical tools that detect and measure analytes of interest by combining a physicochemical transducer with a biological recognition element [1]. An electrical, optical, or thermal transducer is the part that transforms the biological interaction into a measurable signal [2]. Trapped biological elements, such as antibodies, enzymes, or cells that bind to target molecules, lead to tangible signs [3 - 5]. Biosensors also have an extensive number of potential uses, including medical examinations, environmental surveillance, food hygiene, and enabling rapid, accurate, and specific detection [1, 3, 6]. A number of various kinds of biosensors, including immune sensors, microbial biosensors, and biosensors with electrochemical activity, have been developed for the detection of biological and chemical analytes [7]. Recent improvements in biological approaches and nanoparticles have enhanced the sensitivity of biosensors [3, 4]. The encapsulation of macromolecules on support structures is vital for biosensor functioning [4]. Biosensors offer advantages such as cost-effectiveness, excellent sensitivity, and specificity, making them valuable tools in several fields from scientific research to everyday applications [4].

Physicochemical transducers and biological recognition components are incorporated in biosensors to convert biochemical signals into quantifiable outputs. Biological or chemical interactions are converted into a measurable signal, usually electrical, optical, or thermal, using a transducer. Biocompatibility, chemical stability, and the ability to form specific interactions with target analytes are among the key qualities that materials suitable for biosensing must possess [5, 8].

Many contemporary biosensors use innovative methods to enhance their performance, such as integrating bioactive compounds on Field-Effect Transistors (FETs) and photonic systems or immobilizing them into electrode surfaces. Because of their natural abundance, inherent redox activity, and selectivity, herbal chemicals are being increasingly investigated for these kinds of uses. Drugs, hormones, poisons, and neurotransmitters are just a few of the analytes that can be detected by successfully integrating these natural compounds with sensor technologies.

This chapter outlines the basic concepts of biosensors to provide a clear framework. Next, the incorporation of herbal materials, their chemical properties,

and the unique benefits they offer are discussed. This logical approach ensures technical depth and readability for readers from a variety of fields.

### **Role of Herbs in Biosensor Development**

The wide availability and varied phytochemical composition of herbs and plant-derived materials make them suitable biorecognition components for biosensor design. These bioactive substances, which include enzymes, polyphenols, flavonoids, alkaloids, and terpenoids, possess inherent chemical reactivity that facilitates the detection of specific analytes using molecular recognition mechanisms, redox reactions, and hydrogen bonds [9 - 11].

Herbs like basil (*Ocimum basilicum*) and green tea (*Camellia sinensis*) are rich in polyphenols, which are redox-active compounds that take part in electron transfer reactions [12 - 15]. These substances undergo oxidation or reduction at the electrode surface, resulting in detectable currents, which permit electrochemical sensing of antioxidants and phenolic pollutants [16]. Multiple hydroxyl groups in flavonoids, which are present in foods like hibiscus (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*) and green tea (*Camellia sinensis*), allow them to form hydrogen bonds with metal ions or reactive oxygen species. Heavy metals, oxidative stress biomarkers, and free radicals are all detected by taking advantage of this interaction [17, 18]. Furthermore, many flavonoids exhibit colorimetric shifts and are pH-sensitive, making them suitable for optical biosensors [19 - 21].

Alkaloids with nitrogen-containing functional groups, like linalool from *O. basilicum* and berberine from turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), interact with proteins, DNA, or metabolites to provide high specificity in pharmaceutical analysis and biomedical diagnostics [22, 23]. In sensor systems, enzymes such as horseradish peroxidase from horseradish (*Armoracia rusticana*) and polyphenol oxidase from *O. basilicum* serve as biocatalysts, accelerating biochemical reactions that generate detectable signals. These are particularly useful for identifying phenols, hydrogen peroxide, and other redox-active substances [24 - 28].

When these phytochemicals interact with analytes, their chemical functionality, such as hydroxyl, carboxyl, amine, or methoxy groups, allows them to bind, change, or produce signals. The stability, sensitivity, and selectivity of herb-based biosensors are dependent on these mechanistic functions [16, 29]. Utilizing this molecular-level reactivity, herb-based biosensors offer a low-cost and sustainable sensing method in addition to exhibiting powerful performance in a variety of applications, such as food quality evaluation, environmental monitoring, and medical diagnostics.

## Unveiling the Cognitive Enhancer: A Comprehensive Review of *Celastrus paniculatus*

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**Abstract:** *Celastrus paniculatus* (CP) is an evergreen climbing plant that occurs in the subtropical and tropical parts of India. This plant is used in traditional Indian medicine, primarily in Ayurveda, Unani, and Siddha. CP seeds and oil are traditionally used for treating various neurological disorders, including cognitive impairment, paralysis, epilepsy, and insomnia, and for other disorders like rheumatism and arthritis. Phytochemical analysis revealed the presence of several classes of compounds, including monoterpenes, sesquiterpene esters, diterpenoids, triterpenoids, alkaloids, fatty acids, steroids, and flavonoids. Gas chromatography-mass spectrometry revealed that CP was high in various types of monoterpenes, including linalool,  $\alpha$ -terpinyl acetate, and nerol acetate. Sesquiterpene esters, such as malkanguniol, malkangunin, valerenal, globulol, and viridiflorol, are also present. The plant also contains diterpenoids, including phytone and isophytol, as well as triterpenoids, including lupeol and pristimerin. CP contains phytochemicals with diverse activities and may be complementary to its therapeutic effects. This plant exhibits various pharmacological effects, including cognitive improvement, neuroprotection, and mood-stabilizing properties. It also shows antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant properties and is a promising healing agent for various diseases. This chapter reviews the ethnopharmacological uses, pharmacognostiCProperties, phytochemical characterization, and diverse pharmacological activities of CP

**Keywords:** *Celastrus paniculatus*, Jyotishmati, Neurological disorders, Pharmacological activities, Phytochemistry, Therapeutic potential, Traditional medicine.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Overview of *Celastrus paniculatus*

*Celastrus paniculatus* (CP) is an important plant in the Indian subcontinent. It has been used for centuries in Ayurvedic and other traditional systems of medicine [1 - 3]. CP has recently gained attention for its potential cognitive benefits. It contains bioactive compounds that can aid with memory, learning, and mental clarity [4, 5]. CP is a climbing shrub, evergreen with broad, dark green leaves and tiny, yellowish flowers [6, 7]. The *Celastrus* family has over 100 species of shrubs, four of which are native to India and are found in North America, Japan, China, and tropical Asia [8]. A popular “Medhya Rasayana” (nervine tonic) in Ayurveda, CP Wild. (family Celastraceae) is one of these, and is frequently referred to as the “Elixir of Life” [9]. This woody, climbing shrub can grow up to a height of 18 meters and is found mostly in the hilly areas of India, especially the Himalayas, Eastern Ghats, and Western Ghats, usually at altitudes of around 1800 meters. The yellow-reddish ripening fruits from a CP plant contain reddish brown seeds, with scarlet aril as the covering [10]. The small, oblong, and oily seeds are the parts that are most commonly used in medicinal formulations. The seeds are rich in unsaturated fatty acids and contain several active compounds, including alkaloids, flavonoids, sterols, and other phytochemicals, which are believed to contribute to their therapeutic properties [6, 7]. CP is a major Ayurvedic herb that positively affects cognitive function and enhances brain function. Its seeds and their oil are said to improve cognitive function and are beneficial for bones, joints, and the nervous system [11]. CP seeds and oil are traditionally used to treat a variety of neurological diseases, including epilepsy, dementia, and neurodegenerative diseases that result in nerve injuries and cognitive dysfunctions [4].

### Importance of Cognitive Enhancement

Neurodegenerative disorders refer to a collection of diseases that gradually destroy the central nervous system. Examples include Alzheimer’s disease, Parkinson’s disease, Huntington’s disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, and other such debilitating conditions [12]. Neurodegenerative diseases are characterized by a progressive decline in cognitive skills, memory impairment, emotional changes, motor weakness, and problems with speech [13, 14]. The accumulation of pathological forms of particular proteins is a common feature of multiple major neurodegenerative diseases. For example, Alzheimer’s disease is distinguished by the accumulation of tau and amyloid- $\beta$  proteins, whereas Parkinson’s disease is characterized by the aggregation of  $\alpha$ -synuclein, and Huntington’s disease is marked by the accumulation of mutant huntingtin protein [15 - 18]. Furthermore,

additional proteins that are inherently prone to aggregation may also experience aberrant folding patterns if the misfolded protein species are not effectively cleared by the cell's quality control machinery, including the Unfolded Protein Response (UPR) pathway [19]. The gradual decline in sensory, motor, and cognitive abilities is a direct result of the abnormal changes that occur within neurons. These changes also initiate a series of downstream events, including increased oxidative stress, mitochondrial impairment, and cellular apoptosis [20]. Unravelling the molecular mechanisms underlying neuronal cell toxicity in neurodegenerative diseases could provide a crucial foundation for the development of novel, mechanism-based treatments that aim to halt or slow disease progression, ideally before symptoms emerge [21]. The primary area where CP has gained attention is in its ability to enhance cognitive function. In traditional systems like Ayurveda, it is regarded as a powerful herb for enhancing mental clarity, improving memory, and promoting overall brain health. The plant is typically used to treat conditions such as memory loss, anxiety, depression, and even epilepsy [22, 23].

## **ETHNOPHARMACOLOGY, PHARMACOGNOSTIC PROPERTIES, AND PHYTOCHEMICAL PROFILE**

### **Ethnopharmacology**

The CP plant exhibited potential in treating rheumatism, gout, insomnia, dyspepsia, epilepsy, and cognitive impairment [24]. CP has been used as a nervine tonic, stimulant, rejuvenator, sedative, and diuretic in Ayurveda [25]. The methanolic extract of CP has been found to exhibit antioxidant properties, reducing the cytotoxic effects of hydrogen peroxide and protecting against DNA damage in human fibroblasts. This herb is traditionally used to treat various central nervous system disorders, leveraging its neuroprotective effects [26]. CP prevents several types of disorders and gastrointestinal issues, including stomach ulcers and dyspepsia [27]. Additionally, CP has been used to treat cognitive deficiencies in children with intellectual disabilities. CP fruit seed oil has demonstrated antioxidant and neuroprotective properties [28]. The seeds of CP yield a dark brown oil when extracted with petroleum ether, commonly known as Malkanguni oil or *Celastrus* oil. Initial investigations into the oil's composition have identified a range of fatty acids, including palmitic, stearic, oleic, linoleic, and linolenic acids [29]. Oil analysis shows a high composition with sesquiterpene alkaloids such as celapanin, celapanigin, and celapagin, which have analgesic, anti-inflammatory, and anxiolytic effects [30]. Other studies have reported that oil can enhance learning and memory, likely through the regulation of biogenic amines or antioxidant effects. Historically, this oil was used for everything from pain management and skin concerns to nutritional deficiencies

## CHAPTER 5

## Phytochemistry and Pharmacology of *Elsholtzia*: Research Advancements and Comprehensive Assessment

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**Abstract:** *Elsholtzia* (family Lamiaceae) is a genus of aromatic plants long utilized in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) to treat ailments such as colds, fever, and pneumonia. This genus comprises approximately 48 species (with 33 varieties) predominantly distributed in East Asia. Several *Elsholtzia* species are ingredients in patented herbal formulations (e.g., the Chinese “Huangshi Cold Tablet” for respiratory infections) and are available over-the-counter. *Elsholtzia* plants exhibit notable antioxidant, anticancer, and anti-inflammatory activities, attributable to their rich arsenal of bioactive constituents, including volatile oils, flavonoids, terpenoids, and phenylpropanoids. These metabolites are utilized as spices, flavorings, herbal infusions, cosmetic substances, and aromatherapeutic chemicals, as well as to enhance the genus's therapeutic potential. Phytochemical investigations have identified a plethora of compounds (e.g., diverse flavonoids, terpenes, and other volatiles) in *Elsholtzia*, and extracts and pure compounds from this genus display a broad spectrum of pharmacological effects in both *in vitro* and *in vivo* studies. This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the traditional uses, distribution, phytochemistry, and pharmacological activities of *Elsholtzia*, highlighting recent research advancements to facilitate further drug development and clinical exploration.

**Keywords:** *Elsholtzia*, Herbal medicine, Natural compound, Pharmacological activities, Phytochemicals.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Introduction of *Elsholtzia*

For millennia, plants have been a vital source of medicine, with humans relying on nature to meet basic health needs. Ancient systems such as Greek, Roman, Ayurvedic, and TCM have significantly contributed to the development of natural medicine. TCM, in particular, remains one of the few enduring ethnomedical traditions. Due to its affordability, proven efficacy, local availability, and minimal side effects, TCM has become increasingly accepted globally despite challenges in standardization and integration into modern healthcare [1]. *Elsholtzia* is a genus of aromatic plants in the mint family (Lamiaceae), named in honor of Prussian botanist Johann Sigismund Elsholtz. This genus comprises approximately 70–71 species distributed mainly in East and Southeast Asia, with a few species in North America. *Elsholtzia* species are mostly herbs (with a few woody subshrubs) and are ecologically significant, particularly in the Sino-Himalayan region. Molecular phylogenetic studies suggest that woodiness in this group has evolved multiple times from herbaceous ancestors [2]. *Elsholtzia* has a rich history in traditional medicine and folk usage. These plants have been used to treat fever, headaches, diarrhea, colds, and other ailments. They also appear in herbal teas, foods, spices, and fragrances, and some species are employed for phytoremediation of heavy-metal-contaminated soils. Phytochemically, *Elsholtzia* is characterized by an extensive profile of secondary metabolites, including cyanogenic glycosides, flavonoids, terpenoids, phenylpropanoids, and phytosterols. Correspondingly, *Elsholtzia* extracts and compounds exhibit diverse bioactivities such as antibacterial, antiviral, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant effects. The combination of wide traditional use and broad pharmacological potential makes *Elsholtzia* an important genus for drug discovery and ethnobotanical research [3]. The *Lamiaceae*, also known as the mint family, is the sixth-largest family of flowering plants. This family is also one of the most economically important because most of its members have fragrant qualities. Historically, it has been believed that Verbenaceae and Lamiaceae are closely related, even though many genera that were once included in Verbenaceae should now be included in Lamiaceae [4 - 6]. Only a small number of *Elsholtzia* species—the only ones in the tribe that exhibit a woody habit—display this trait, making the genus diverse. All of *Elsholtzia*'s woody species are found in the Sino-Himalayan subkingdom, though it's unclear if they had a common ancestor. Woody species have often evolved independently of their herbaceous origins, according to several molecular phylogenetic analyses of unrelated plant groups [7]. Folk medicine uses *Elsholtzia* plants to treat a variety of ailments, including colds, headaches, diarrhea, and fever. Herbal teas, food, beverages, spices, cosmetics, fragrances, and

aromatherapy all contain them. Some species are used to treat soil contaminated with heavy metals. *Elsholtzia* plants can be found growing in North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa in both temperate and tropical climates. The highest diversity of *Elsholtzia* species may be found in the province of Yunnan, China. They consist of cyanogenic glycosides, flavonoids, terpenoids, phenylpropanoids, and phytosterols. *Elsholtzia* plants have antibacterial, antiviral, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant properties [8, 9].

## **Historical Background, Distribution, and Traditional Use of *Elsholtzia***

### ***Historical Background***

Prussian botanist Johann Sigismund Elsholtz was honored with the naming of the species *Elsholtzia*, which is a member of the Lamiaceae family [mint family]. Traditional medicine and various cultural practices have utilized this collection of aromatic plants for centuries. *Elsholtzia* has garnered attention for its medicinal and biological potential due to its extensive phytochemical profile [10].

### ***Traditional Uses***

Across East Asia, Africa, North America, and Europe, *Elsholtzia* species have been indispensable in traditional medicine, valued for their aromatic properties and diverse therapeutic applications. Common ethnomedicinal uses include treatment of respiratory conditions (tonsillitis, cough, pharyngitis, colds), gastrointestinal disorders (diarrhea, dysentery, hepatitis, gastroenteritis), pain and inflammation (toothache, arthritis), and other ailments such as skin itching, nephritis, night blindness, menstrual disorders, hypertension, and fever [11, 12]. For example, in Chinese folk medicine, extracts of *Elsholtzia* flowers and leaves are used to alleviate colds and fevers. In Northeastern India, *Elsholtzia* (locally known as “Lomba”) is employed as a carminative, astringent, and general tonic, as well as a culinary spice. Such traditional uses underscore the genus’s significance as a source of natural remedies and justify further pharmacological investigations.

### ***Distribution***

*Elsholtzia* species are prevalent in temperate and tropical regions of Asia. They flourish in a variety of habitats, including forests, thickets, valleys, waste areas, rocky crevices, and grasslands. Altitude plays a significant role in their distribution [12]:

- *Mid-altitude species*: The majority of *Elsholtzia* species thrive at elevations of 1000–3000 m.

## Phytochemical and Pharmacological Insights on *Tinospora* Species

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**Abstract:** This chapter offers a comprehensive review of the phytochemical constituents and pharmacological potential of *Tinospora* species. The lianas and small trees of the *Tinospora* genus are currently utilized in Ayurveda and traditional medicine for various applications. This review aims to examine the chemical constituents of *Tinospora*, isolation techniques, and pharmacological and therapeutic relevance, with a focus on bioactive compounds and diverse pharmacological activities. The key bioactive classes identified in *Tinospora* possess significant medicinal value. The present work emphasizes the techniques used to isolate and chemically characterize these compounds through chromatographic (e.g., HPLC, GC-MS) or spectroscopic (e.g., NMR, IR) methods. It also provides comprehensive information on pharmacological functions, such as anti-inflammatory, immunomodulatory, antidiabetic, antioxidant, and hepatoprotective effects. Additionally, this review discusses the current and prospective clinical uses, toxicity profiles, and potential future investigations of *Tinospora*-derived drugs. This review endeavors to present an extensive literature review of existing *Tinospora* research, aiming to bridge traditional ethnomedicinal knowledge with modern pharmacological validation and explore its pharmacological importance and potency based on existing scientific literature.

**Keywords:** Alkaloids, Antidiabetic activity, Immunomodulatory effects, Hepatoprotective properties.

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## INTRODUCTION

Tinospora is a family of deciduous twining shrubs containing some of the most esteemed medicinal plants in traditional medicine, especially *Tinospora cordifolia*, called Guduchi or Giloy in India [1]. This plant is a major part of Ayurveda and is regarded as a Rasayana, a herb thought to enhance longevity, vitality, and even immunity. The term 'Amrita' embodies the traditional perception of Tinospora as a life-enhancing herb. Historically, it has been used as an antipyretic, hepatoprotective, antidiabetic, stomachic, and depurative agent and in the treatment of skin diseases. Additionally, its immunomodulatory and adaptogenic properties bolster the body's resistance to stress and illness [2]. Siddha, Unani medicines, and Southeast Asian and African traditional medicines use Tinospora fleshy fruit for treating fever, inflammation, gastrointestinal disorders, malaria, and rheumatism. In traditional Chinese medicine, it is utilized as a detoxifier and immune system enhancer. Tinospora is a rich source of bioactive compounds, including alkaloids, diterpenoid lactones, glycosides, steroids, and phenolic glycolates, which contribute to its multifaceted pharmaceutical properties [3, 4]. Various methods have been employed to extract and characterize these constituents of the essential oils. Tinospora exhibits pharmacological properties, such as anti-inflammatory, immunomodulatory, antidiabetic, antioxidant, hepatoprotective, and antimicrobial effects. Understanding the molecular and cellular mechanisms underlying these effects is crucial for determining their therapeutic actions and synergistic potential. Additionally, it is essential to assess its safety and toxicology while also focusing on regulatory aspects and quality assurance practices, which are vital for the standardization of herbal medicines. The historical and widespread use of Tinospora globally, coupled with contemporary pharmacological studies, underscores its relevance in current medical practice and highlights its significance as a subject for scientific research [5, 6].

## PHYTOCHEMISTRY OF *TINOSPORA*

### Alkaloids

Alkaloids are another widespread bioactive compound in Tinospora that determines the plant's wide range of pharmacological effects. These nitrogen-containing compounds are primarily obtained from the stems, roots, and leaves of *Tinospora cordifolia*. The most abundant alkaloids in berberine are jatrorrhizine, palatine, and magnoflorine. Berberine's ability to fight germs, reduce inflammation, and lower blood sugar shows how effective it is, and it is important for Tinospora's effectiveness [7]. Jatrorrhizine and palatine exhibited hepatoprotective and antioxidant activities, whereas Magno Florine showed

immunomodulatory activity (Table 1). Recent advances in chromatographic and spectrometric technologies have facilitated the isolation and structural determination of alkaloids, vindicating their pharmacological importance [8, 9].

**Table 1. Key bioactive compounds in *Tinospora* and their therapeutic roles.**

Bioactive Compound	Class	Therapeutic Role	Key Reference	Reference
Berberine	Alkaloid	Antidiabetic, Antimicrobial	Modern Pharmacological Study	[14]
Tinosporide	Diterpenoid lactone	Anti-inflammatory, Antioxidant	Traditional Texts and Research	[15]
Tinosporin	Glycoside	Immune modulation	Clinical Studies	[16]
$\beta$ -Sitosterol	Steroid	Hepatoprotective, Cardiovascular health	Phytochemical Review	[17]
Quercetin	Phenolic compound	Antioxidant, Neuroprotective	Antioxidant Research	[18]

### Diterpenoid Lactones

Diterpenoid lactones revealed that the *Tinospora* CRM-enriched fraction contains many active compounds that are important for treatment, and the compounds, mainly composed of diterpenoid lactones, are crucial for *Tinospora*'s healing effects. *Tinospora* lactone, Furanolactones, and clerodane derivatives can be illustrated here. *Tinospora* lactone can help the immune system and reduce inflammation by lowering the levels of substances that cause it and increasing the activity of macrophages. Furanolactones are helpful in treating diabetes because they influence glucose homeostasis and insulin receptor sensitivity (Table 1). The characterization of these lactones, such as their structural elucidation through NMR coupled with MS, has been informative in understanding their biological activity and developing their therapeutic uses [10].

### Glycosides

Plant glycosides in *Tinospora* are recognized for their heart-protecting and stress-relieving benefits on plant materials, such as syringes and cardioids, which are sugar-based forms that help stabilize cell functions (Table 1). Syringing increases immune responses and has antipyretic effects, whereas cardioid is implicated in cardiovascular function. The process of extracting glycosides may require hydroalcoholic solvents, and HPLC methods are used to determine their concentration. The process of extracting glycosides may require hydroalcoholic solvents, while HPLC methods are used to determine their concentration. These

## CHAPTER 7

## Chemistry and Biology of *Curcuma longa* L.: A Comprehensive Approach

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**Abstract:** Human health is a fundamental priority of scientific research, and medicinal plants continue to play a vital role in the discovery and development of novel therapeutic agents. *Curcuma longa* L. (turmeric), belonging to the Zingiberaceae family, is widely recognised as an important spice, functional food ingredient, nutraceutical, and a valuable source of bioactive compounds. So far, more than 17,000 publications and several patents have been reported, and its global market share has reached USD 3 billion with a CAGR of 18%. This chapter covers over 360 natural products reported from various extracts and essential oils of *C. longa*. This chapter describes their chemical structures, traditional uses, and reported nutraceutical and pharmacological properties. Furthermore, the chapter summarises recent advances in the chemical synthesis of curcumin and its analogs. By detailing the phytochemistry, pharmacology, and synthetic strategies of *C. longa* compounds, this chapter provides valuable insights to guide the development of novel molecular therapeutics and nutraceutical applications.

**Keywords:** *Curcuma longa*, Curcuminoids, Essential Oil, Natural products, Pharmacology, Synthesis.

### INTRODUCTION

Humans have relied on plants for food and medicine for centuries. The use of plants as pharmaceuticals and nutraceuticals can be traced back to ancient times, notably to the Greek physician Hippocrates, who stated, “Let food be thy medicine” (400 BC) [1]. Medicinal plants serve as key reservoirs of therapeutic

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compounds with typically fewer side effects and continue to play a crucial role in both healthcare and economic development. Approximately 80% of the global population depends on medicinal plants and their bioactive constituents for primary healthcare needs. The global herbal medicine market was valued at USD 216.40 billion in 2023 and is projected to reach USD 371.45 billion by 2030, growing at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 8.02% [2]. Additionally, an estimated USD 110 billion is spent globally on research and development related to drug discovery from medicinal plants [3]. The nutraceutical sector has also grown rapidly in recent decades, driven by rising consumer awareness of the health benefits of natural food products. As of 2023, the global nutraceutical market is valued at USD 538.88 billion and is expected to reach USD 1007.48 billion by 2033, with a CAGR of 6.45% [4].

The Zingiberaceae family, comprising over 53 genera and 1200 species, is distributed across tropical regions of Africa, Asia, and the Americas. This family has several medicinally important species, such as *Zingiber officinale* Roscoe (ginger) and *Curcuma longa* L. (turmeric), which are renowned for their rich phytochemistry and diverse therapeutic roles, particularly due to their essential oils and oleoresins [5, 6]. The genus *Curcuma* is of notable cultural, economic, and medicinal significance [7]. Its taxonomic classification is as follows: Kingdom: Plantae; Class: Liliopsida; Subclass: Commelinids; Order: Zingiberales; Family: Zingiberaceae; Genus: *Curcuma* [8]. Comprising over 100 rhizomatous species, this genus is native to tropical and subtropical regions, including Pakistan, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Australia, India, and Latin America [9, 10]. *Curcuma longa* has been used for over 4000 years in South Asia for culinary, medicinal, and religious purposes. During the Vedic period, it served as both a spice and a healing agent. In Ayurveda, a 3,000-year-old traditional Indian medicine system, turmeric is valued for its antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant effects [11, 12]. Its therapeutic use is also documented in ancient Chinese medicine, particularly in “Materia Medica,” compiled during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 CE) [13, 14]. Turmeric spread across the Middle East, Europe, and Africa *via* trade routes in the medieval era [15]. Historically, it has been used to treat a variety of ailments, including jaundice, indigestion, skin infections, and liver disorders. Today, turmeric remains widely used in food, herbal medicine, nutraceuticals, skincare, and pharmaceuticals. Modern research supports its pharmacological potential, identifying anti-inflammatory, anti-diabetic, anti-cancer, anti-microbial, and hepatoprotective activities [16, 17]. The global market for turmeric was valued at USD 4.42 billion in 2023 and is growing at a CAGR of 5.5%. Meanwhile, the market for curcumin alone reached USD 80.63 billion in 2023 and is projected to rise to USD 206.45 billion by 2033, with a CAGR of 9.86% [18].

Extensive research has explored the phytochemistry and pharmacological potential of the *Curcuma* genus. Each species contributes unique secondary metabolites with diverse biological activities. Researchers have reported a total of 368 natural products from *C. longa* alone. Among these, *Curcuminoids*, such as curcumin, demethoxycurcumin, and bisdemethoxycurcumin are the most studied, particularly for their anti-inflammatory, neuroprotective, cardiovascular, and dermatological applications [19 - 21].

This chapter provides an updated, comprehensive overview of natural products, pharmacological activities, and curcumin synthesis strategies related to *C. longa*. It covers both traditional medicinal uses and emerging applications in modern pharmaceutical science. The chapter serves as a foundational resource for future research and development. Literature was gathered using up-to-date scientific databases, including PubMed, SciFinder, and Google Scholar.

## **PHYTOCHEMISTRY OF *CURCUMA LONGA***

The genus *Curcuma* is renowned for its rich phytochemical diversity, attributed to various classes of secondary metabolites with distinctive chemical structures and biological activities. Among its species, *Curcuma longa* (syn. *Curcuma domestica* Valetton), commonly known as turmeric, has received significant scientific attention due to its broad pharmacological potential. It contains a complex mixture of bioactive compounds, including curcuminoids, essential oils, sesquiterpenes, and polysaccharides, which are produced through diverse biosynthetic pathways. These compounds exert modulatory effects on multiple biological processes, including anti-inflammatory and antioxidant responses, immune system regulation, antimicrobial activity, modulation of lipid and glucose metabolism, neuroprotective effects, and cytoprotective actions against cellular stress and apoptosis. Notably, curcumin, the principal curcuminoid, has been extensively studied for its anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antimicrobial, and anticancer properties, making turmeric a promising candidate for the treatment of chronic diseases [22, 23]. Its constituents are classified into 5 main groups, including diphenylalkanooids, terpenoids, alkaloids, phenolic compounds, and miscellaneous compounds.

### **Diphenylalkanooids**

Diphenylalkanooids are the most widely explored diverse class of chemical compounds characterized by two phenyl groups connected by an alkyl chain of five (diphenylpentanooids) or seven (diphenylheptanooids) carbon atoms. Structural variations on the alkyl chain and phenyl rings confer diverse physicochemical properties, underlying a broad range of biological activities, including antioxidant,

## CHAPTER 8

# *Salvia rosmarinus* (Rosemary) Phytochemicals and their Pharmacological Effects

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**Abstract:** Rosemary, *Salvia rosmarinus*, an herbaceous member of the Lamiaceae family, native to the Mediterranean region, is grown worldwide. Rosemary is widely used in cooking as a seasoning and is also valued for its role in food preservation. Besides this, it contains many phytochemicals like caffeic acid, carnosic acid, rosmarinic acid, ursolic acid, alpha-pinene, camphor, carnosol, eucalyptol, rosmadial, and many more, which are reported to have several pharmacological effects. Several pharmacological effects of its phytochemicals include antioxidant, anti-infectious, anti-inflammatory, analgesic, neuroprotective, and cholinergic, anti-tumour activities. Furthermore, these phytochemicals found in rosemary are believed to offer protective benefits against several neurological conditions, including stroke, epilepsy, dementia, Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, and migraines. This chapter provides an updated overview of the phytochemical profile and pharmacological properties of rosemary.

**Keywords:** Alzheimer's disease, Anti-inflammatory, Antioxidants, Anti-tumor, Neurological, Parkinson's disease, Pharmacological, Phytochemicals.

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## INTRODUCTION

*Salvia rosmarinus*, formerly known as *Rosmarinus officinalis* Linn., widely known as rosemary, is a versatile plant from the Lamiaceae family, valued for its medicinal, ornamental, and aromatic properties (Table 1). Native to the Mediterranean region, rosemary is celebrated for its distinctive aroma and widespread culinary applications [1]. The name “rosemary” comes from the Latin terms *ros* (dew) and *marinus* (sea), meaning “dew of the sea” [2]. With widespread cultivation, rosemary has been known with various common names such as mi die xiang in China, asmerino in Ethiopia, romero in Spain, rosmarin in Germany, and mehendi in India. Rosemary can be propagated from seeds, cuttings, or by dividing the roots. Rosemary can be characterized by its perennial nature, sharp needle-like leaves, and flowers of various shades like blue, purple, pink, and white. The leaves are typically harvested three to four times a year. Rosemary plants exhibit diverse growth habits, from upright to trailing forms, with the upright varieties reaching heights of up to 1.5 meters (5 feet) and occasionally up to 2 meters (6 feet 7 inches). The evergreen leaves of rosemary can have a length varying from 2-4 cm and a width from 0.2-0.5 cm. The leaves are green on the upper side with a white shade beneath, with the presence of dense and woolly hairs [3]. The blooming season for rosemary has been known for the spring and summer season; however, in the northern hemisphere, rosemary can bloom outside its usual season with the initiation of early flowering in mid-February or late flowering in the first fortnight of December. The economically important parts of rosemary may vary as per the usage, which can be fresh or dried leaves, stems, or other plant parts for oil extraction [4]. As a result, rosemary is often cultivated for its needle-like leaves, which are processed into both solid and liquid forms through various value-added methods.

**Table 1. Scientific taxonomy or classification of rosemary.**

Kingdom	Plantae
Division	Magnoliophyta
Class	Magnoliopsida
Order	Lamiales
Family	Lamiaceae
Genus	<i>Salvia</i>
Species	<i>rosmarinus</i>

Source: Chatterjee *et al.* [5]

Rosemary has a distinctive flavor, often described as a combination of lemony and pine-like notes, with hints of mint, sage, and pepper. Its potent taste means

that it is used sparingly in cooking, as a small amount goes a long way [5]. Among the various plant parts, the leaves of rosemary contain the highest concentration of essential oil [6].

Spain, Tunisia, and Morocco are the leading global producers and exporters of rosemary essential oil, benefiting from favorable climates that allow for the cultivation of high-quality rosemary, crucial for both the culinary and the pharmaceutical industries [7]. While rosemary has traditionally been valued for its culinary applications, it has also long been appreciated for its medicinal properties, with indigenous populations using the herb for various therapeutic purposes.

Although rosemary holds cultural and historical significance in India, it has limited prevalence as an important crop. Introduction of rosemary in India can be attributed to Europeans, who valued it for its fragrant leaves as a garden herb.

Historically, rosemary has been recognized for its potential health benefits. In ancient Greece and Rome, it was believed to improve memory, earning the title “herb of remembrance and fidelity.” In ancient and medieval times, rosemary was used as a common remedy for liver disease and prescribed by renowned figures such as Hippocrates, Galen, and Dioscorides.

In 2001, the International Herb Association officially named rosemary the “Herb of the Year”. It remains a popular culinary herb in Britain and Italy. Despite its limited presence in traditional Indian medicine, rosemary's broader applications in the pharmaceutical, food, and cosmetic industries underscore its global importance.

Rosemary is rich in essential oils with notable pharmacological properties such as anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, antibacterial, antinociceptive, antifungal, antidiabetic, and antithrombotic effects [8]. The pharmacological interest in rosemary lies in its complex chemical composition, which includes triterpenoids, diterpenoids, flavonoids, and phenolic acids. Additionally, rosemary extracts are used in a range of products, including food items, pest control products, traditional medicines, and cosmetics [9].

The composition and bioactivity of rosemary's constituents can vary depending on factors such as developmental stage, plant variety, harvest season, and extraction methods. Herbal medicine, with its reliance on plant parts to treat various ailments, remains a significant aspect of traditional healthcare practices. In India, which boasts a rich repository of medicinal herbs, approximately 25,000 plant-based formulations are documented in traditional texts, and at least 25% of modern drugs are derived from plant sources [10].

## Phytochemistry and Medicinal Roles of *Boerhaavia diffusa*: A Comprehensive Overview

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**Abstract:** *Boerhaavia diffusa*, a perennial creeper herb, belongs to the *Nyctaginaceae* family. Punarnava is frequently translated as “regaining life”. *Boerhaavia diffusa* has a range of phytoconstituent classes, comprising lignins, lipids, proteins, carbohydrates, alkaloids, triterpenoids, flavonoids, and glycoproteins. The plant also contains boerhavin, boerhaavic acid, punarnavine, boeravinone, and punarnavoside.  $\beta$ -Sitosterol,  $\alpha$ -2-sitosterol, and arachidic acid. The highest possible alkaloid concentration (2%) is found in the roots of mature plants that are typically four years old. Lipids and proteins are prevalent in the herb and roots. The plant contains 15 amino acids, six of which are essential amino acids. The root of the plant also contains 14 amino acids, out of which 7 are essential amino acids. Numerous pharmacological activities, including antibacterial, hepatoprotective, hypoglycemic, anti-proliferative, anti-estrogenic, anti-inflammatory, anti-convulsant, anti-nociceptive, anti-stress, and anti-metastatic properties, have been documented on punarnava due to its wide range of bioactive phytoconstituents. The herb is also used to alleviate jaundice, inflammation, abdominal pain, stress, and dyspepsia. The study provides an extensive discussion of the pharmacological and phytochemical characteristics of *Boerhaavia diffusa*, offering valuable insights for students, academicians, and future research.

**Keywords:** Alkaloids, Amino acids, Analgesic, Anti-oxidant, Anti-diabetic, Anti-lymphoproliferative, *Boerhaavia diffusa*, Bioactive constituents, Flavonoids, Glycosides, Immunomodulatory, Immunosuppressive, Phenolic compounds, Punarnava, Saponins, Tannins, Terpenoids.

### INTRODUCTION

Herbal remedies are increasingly favored in primary healthcare services across both developed and developing nations, because of their diverse biological and therapeutic properties [1].

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*Boerhaavia diffusa* has established itself as a significant curative plant widely utilized in Ayurveda, Unani medication, and diverse traditional therapies around the world. In Ayurveda, the plant Shothagni (also known as Rakta Punarnava) is commonly referred to as Punarnava. This is due to the fact that it dies off during the hot summer months and then produces fresh shoots after the rainfall [2]. The name Punarnava comes from the Sanskrit phrase “Punahpunarnavabhawatiiti,” which translates to “that which becomes fresh again and over.” It likely reflects the plant's perennial nature, enduring the summer in a state of dormancy and blooming. Additionally, it is associated with the phrase “Karotisharirampunarnavam”, meaning “that which rejuvenates the body” [3].

The steamy, subtropical, and warmest regions of the planet are home to an array of species in the genus *Boerhaavia*. About 40 species are available among these six, which originated from India: *Boerhaavia diffusa*, *Boerhaavia chinensis*, *Boerhaavia erecta*, *Boerhaavia repens*, *Boerhaavia rependa*, and *Boerhaavia rubicunda* [4]. The plant thrives well in wasteland and fields, particularly after the monsoon.

#### SYNONYMS

In the Indian context, *Boerhaavia diffusa* is known by various names in different languages [5].

**Assamese:** Punarnabha Ranga

**Bengali:** Rakta Punarnava

**Hindi:** Gadapurna, Snathikari.

**Sanskrit:** Punarnava, Raktakanda

**Kannada:** Sanadika, Kommeberu, Komma

**Kashmiri:** Vanjula Punarnava

**Malayalam:** ChuvannaTazhutawa

**Marathi:** Tambadivasu;

**Oriya:** Lalapuiruni, Nalipuruni;

**Punjabi:** Itcit (Ial), Khattan;

**Tamil:** Mukurattai (Shihappu);

**Telugu:** Atikamamidi, Erra galijeru

*Boerhaavia diffusa* has the potential to reach a length of one metre. It thrives in the monsoon, with mature seeds forming in October and November [6]. The plant has the capacity to grow to a length of one metre. The leaves are ovate-oblong to round in shape, with smooth upper surfaces, while hairy on the underside. Leaves are generally  $5.5 \times 3.3$  cm<sup>2</sup> in size [7]. Flowers are 1.5 mm long and can be pink, white, or pinkish-red, arranged in clusters. The tubular perianth features five small lobes and two or three stamens, while the fruit is a detachable achene. The tuberous taproot is conical to cylindrical, thick, meaty, usually pale yellow to brown, and extremely bitter [8]. Tissue culture has been used in some research to investigate plant regeneration.

The entire plant, including its specific parts, such as leaves, stem, and roots, is recognized for its healing properties and has extended use among native and tribal communities in India [9]. Its therapeutic value in treating various human ailments is documented in traditional texts like Ayurveda, the Charaka Samhita, and the Sushruta Samhita [10].

## PHYTOCHEMISTRY

*Boerhaavia diffusa* was extracted utilising various solvents, including ethanol, ethyl acetate, chloroform, aqueous solutions, and methanol. The study found a wide variety of phytopharmaceuticals in the plant such as Proteins, amino acids, phenols, quinones, sterols, furanoids, alkaloids, glycosides, triterpenoids, flavonoids, proteins, amino acids and tannins [11]. Among these flavonoids, phenolic substances, saponins, glycosides, alkaloids, tannins, terpenoids, and steroids were observed in root extracts [12, 13]. The Boeravinone B (type of flavonoid) extracted from the hydroalcoholic and methanolic extracts of the complete *Boerhaavia diffusa* plant was identified and quantified using TLC and reverse-phase HPLC, respectively [14, 15].

A variety of phenolic compounds isolated from *Boerhaavia diffusa* and identified through HPLC-PAD-MS/MS, such as kaempferol 3-O-(2-rhamnosyl)-robinobioside, quercetin 3-O-rhamnosyl (1-6) galactoside 3-O-galactosyl (1→2) glucoside, eupalitin 3-O-galactoside, caffeoyl tartaric acid, quercetin-3-O-(2-rhamnosyl)-robinobioside, and kaempferol 3-O-robinobioside. The primary phenolic components detected in the leaves and roots were quercetin 3-O-(2-rhamnosyl)-robinobioside and caffeoyl tartaric acid, respectively [16, 17]. According to reports, *Boerhaavia diffusa* is an excellent source of dietary

## SUBJECT INDEX

### A

- Absorption 3, 13, 16, 20, 22, 26, 51, 107, 185, 186, 274
- Accumulation 26, 44, 95, 264  
 diet-induced lipid 273  
 enhanced cellular 274  
 excessive fat 176  
 hepatocyte fat 272  
 interfacial 4, 16  
 metal 99  
 reduced neutrophil 269  
 reducing waste 82  
 triglyceride 273
- ACE inhibition 148
- Acetophenone 134, 136, 149  
 p-Methyl 220
- Acetylcholinesterase 108, 271, 323, 328
- Acnes 51, 150, 152, 251, 260
- Activation 42, 153, 179, 252, 253, 256, 258, 263, 264, 265, 271  
 astrocyte 271  
 coagulation 257  
 immune cell 272  
 macrophage 177, 178, 357  
 microglia 271
- Acyclic monoterpenoids 197, 206
- Adaptogenic effects 108, 155, 181  
 produced 151
- Adjunct therapy 175
- Adrenal  
 hyperstress 353  
 hypofatigue 353
- Advanced extraction techniques 158
- Aeromonas hydrophilla* 351
- Aggregation 6, 12, 95, 96
- Agriculture 63, 326  
 enabling precision 86  
 sustainable 79
- Ailments 41, 50, 117, 118, 119, 145, 175, 192, 317, 322  
 hepatic 50  
 human 342  
 reducing 184
- Akt/mTOR signaling 254
- Alcoholic extract 97, 345, 348, 351
- Alkaloids 62, 97, 98, 106, 107, 136, 171, 172, 173, 174, 176, 179, 214, 340, 342, 345  
 main 184  
 plant-derived 321  
 rotenoid 357  
 sesquiterpene 96, 98  
 steroid 98
- Allium sativum* 269
- Alpinia galanga* 268
- Alzheimer's disease 41, 44, 51, 95, 101, 106, 107, 108, 270, 315, 325
- Amino acids 23, 60, 241, 340, 342, 343  
 essential 340
- Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis 44
- Analgesic 96, 97, 145, 150, 151, 195, 197, 205, 315, 323, 324  
 common non-steroidal 151
- Angiogenesis 184, 253, 258, 263
- Anopheles stephensi* 23
- Anthraquinones 45
- Anti-cancer activity 6, 7, 9, 17, 18, 20, 24, 50, 106, 150, 151
- Anti-inflammatory 194, 197, 200, 201, 202, 204, 205, 216, 217, 220, 221
- Antibacterial activity 13, 152, 176, 258, 259, 269, 323
- Antimicrobial 135, 136, 148, 149, 150, 192, 197, 198, 199, 200, 205, 216, 217, 220, 326
- Antioxidant activity 7, 9, 23, 47, 48, 50, 171, 173, 175, 177, 255, 256, 257, 323, 324
- Anxiolytic 221, 326
- Aqueous extract 98, 345, 346, 347, 348, 351  
 dried root powder 352  
 twig 347
- Arabidopsis thaliana* 229, 238
- Armoracia rusticana* 62, 67, 70
- Aroma 18, 40, 45, 52, 123, 137, 206, 319

## Subject Index

beautiful 49  
characteristic 197  
distinctive 316  
Arthritis 50, 51, 52, 102, 174, 178, 181, 251,  
252, 255, 260, 261, 262  
collagen-induced 262  
psoriatic 262  
rheumatoid 51, 102, 106, 179, 182, 261, 325  
treating 262  
Arthropod Pesticide Resistance Database  
(APRD) 327  
Atherosclerosis 41, 264, 265  
experimental 265  
nicotine-induced 326  
Autoimmune diseases 175, 177, 179, 182  
Ayurveda 28, 51, 94, 95, 96, 171, 181, 192,  
341, 342, 359  
*Azadirachta indica* 64, 66, 69, 73, 74, 78, 79,  
83, 84

## B

*Bacillus cereus* 351  
*Bacillus megaterium* 351  
*Bacillus subtilis* 229, 351  
Berberine 24, 62, 67, 171, 172, 174, 175, 176,  
178, 179, 180, 184  
Bioactive compounds 3, 50, 51, 74, 75, 76, 77,  
97, 98, 100, 101, 106, 107, 108, 349  
Biocompatibility 6, 15, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 81,  
82, 83, 86  
excellent 17, 82  
good 20  
high 19  
Biosynthesis 208  
inhibiting ergosterol 103  
longa inhibit melanin 260  
regulating 256  
rich 251  
Biotic stresses 328  
Bipolar disorder 101  
Bisabocurcumin 203

## The Chemistry Inside Spices & Herbs, Vol. 7 367

Blood glucose levels 266, 325  
lower 266  
normalized 267  
regulating 349  
*Boerhaavia diffusa*  
Bradykinesia 270  
**C**  
Caffeic acid 19, 47, 129, 135, 215, 236, 315,  
319  
*Callosobruchus maculatus* 327, 328  
*Camellia sinensis* 62, 69, 72, 75, 77, 80, 82,  
84, 100  
Cancer treatment 154, 184, 248, 324, 350  
Carbodiimide hydrochloride 235  
Carbon Nanotubes (CNTs) 69, 86, 249  
Carnitine palmitoyltransferase 272, 273  
Carnosic acid 315, 320, 322, 323, 324, 325,  
326, 330  
Carnosic acid and carnosol 323  
Cell cycle arrest 103, 152  
Cell death 103, 357  
programmed 42  
Cell differentiation 177  
Cerebral Ischemia 271  
Cerebral ischemiareperfusion injury 6  
Chemokines 252, 253, 254, 258, 261, 272  
Cholangiocellular tumorigenesis 44  
Chromatography 73  
Cigarette smoke condensate (CSC) 269  
Ciliata 126, 127, 130, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136,  
137, 145, 146, 147, 150, 151, 153  
Claisen-Schmidt condensation reaction 239  
Clinical trials 51, 106, 179, 180, 181, 260,  
261, 262, 264, 265, 266, 270, 271, 273,  
274  
human 53  
large-scale 186  
robust 275  
small-scale 185  
systematic 163  
*Cocos nucifera* 100

Cognitive dysfunction 95, 101  
Collagen synthesis 259  
Column chromatography 27, 229  
Concentration 48, 53, 81, 84, 150, 153, 155,  
160, 172, 347, 351, 353, 354  
alkaloid 340  
anticipated 160  
chloride 347  
compound 75, 84  
effective 2, 24  
elevated 48  
Condensation 207, 225, 226, 238  
Conjunctivitis 356  
Contaminants 79, 80, 86, 183  
Contraception 354, 359  
Contraindications 182  
Curcumin synthesis 225, 226, 227, 228, 229,  
243, 244, 248  
Curcuminoids 191, 193, 194, 236, 253, 255,  
260, 261, 262, 266, 274  
selenomethionine-substituted 235  
unsymmetrical 240  
Cytotoxicity 7, 151, 249, 264, 321  
observed 264  
selective 103, 155

**D**

Dalton's lymphoma cells 264  
Decarboxylation 225  
Decoction 345, 351, 355  
Deep eutectic solvents 222  
Dendrimers 23, 24, 245  
Dextran sulphate 14  
Diabetes management 103, 178, 266, 267  
Diabetic complications 103, 266  
Diacylglycerol acyltransferase (DGAT) 325  
Diarrhea 118, 119, 145, 251, 274  
Disintegrin 261  
Diterpenoid lactones 171, 172, 173, 174, 175,  
176, 178, 179, 181, 184, 186  
Double emulsion technique 15, 16

Downregulation 178, 253, 261, 263, 265, 268,  
271, 272, 273  
Drug discovery 118, 163, 192, 250, 274, 318  
*Dysdercus cingulatus* 356  
Dysentery 119, 145, 251  
Dyspepsia 96, 340

## E

Edema 145, 254, 359  
carrageenan-induced 345  
ear 150  
induced 325  
Efficacy 26, 28, 29, 108, 162, 163, 173, 174,  
261, 262, 263, 264, 268, 269, 270  
considerable 179  
disease-preventing 51  
excellent anti-viral 352  
health-promoting 51, 52  
human 106  
increased treatment 186  
limited 255  
significant antibacterial 102  
unmatched 1  
Electrocardiogram 152  
Electrochemical transduction 65  
Electrode modification 69  
Electron transport chain 42  
Electrospun nanofibers 258  
*Elsholtzia ciliata* 134, 139, 140, 145, 149,  
150, 152, 153  
Elsholtzia extracts 144, 151, 154, 155, 156,  
160  
*Emblica officinalis* 100, 266  
Encapsulation 6, 15, 21, 22, 23, 61, 72, 85,  
Environmental monitoring 60, 62, 63, 64, 65,  
67, 70, 74, 75, 77, 79, 83, 86, 87  
Enzymes 45, 48, 60, 61, 62, 65, 66, 67, 178,  
180, 253, 256, 261, 264, 267  
Epididymis 355  
Epigallocatechin 126  
Epigenetic modifications 261

## Subject Index

Epilepsy 94, 95, 96, 251, 315  
Epiprocumeneol 204, 213  
Epirosmanol 320, 322, 323  
Epoxide moieties 66  
Equisetopsida 121  
*Escherichia coli* 180, 351  
Essential oils 47, 49, 50, 136, 137, 149, 150,  
152, 153, 161, 191, 223, 317, 318, 319,  
320, 322, 323, 327, 328  
Ethnopharmacology 96, 250  
Ethyl acetate 226, 235, 248, 342, 350, 352  
Eucalyptol 223, 224, 315  
Eugenol 45, 49, 50, 64, 81, 224, 326  
Extraction methods 75, 84, 157, 173, 184,  
317, 318, 322, 328  
Extraction Technique 75, 161, 222, 223, 224,  
225  
Eye disorders 356

## F

Fabaceae family 48  
Fabrication 5, 20, 21, 76, 83, 86  
better 23  
standardizing 63  
Facile manipulation 227  
Farnesene sesquiterpenoids 200, 208  
Farnesyl diphosphate 208  
Fenton reaction 42  
Ferric reducing antioxidant power (FRAP) 49,  
148, 357  
Ferulic acids 47, 173, 175, 216, 217, 236  
Fibroblast-like synoviocytes (FLS) 261  
Flame ionization detector (FID) 161  
Flavonoids 40, 62, 70, 72, 98, 107, 125, 144,  
152, 154, 157, 158, 162, 218, 340, 342,  
347  
Flight mass spectrometry 318  
Flow cytometry 25, 26  
Fluorescence quenching method 78  
Food safety 60, 63, 74, 77, 83, 85, 86

## The Chemistry Inside Spices & Herbs, Vol. 7 369

Formulation 2, 5, 10, 13, 15, 16, 22, 23, 25,  
28, 183, 185  
Fractions 82, 348, 352  
alkaloidal 348, 349  
non-volatile 136  
Free radicals 40, 41, 42, 50, 62, 65, 75, 77, 79,  
324, 350, 351, 352, 354  
diverse 73  
nitrogen-based 50  
reactive 42  
toxic 215  
Freeze-drying 248  
Freeze-thaw method 12  
FT-IR spectroscopy 27

## G

Gambogic acid 21  
Gametogenesis 349  
Gas chromatographic-mass spectrometry 136  
Gastrointestinal 22, 96  
issues 96  
mucosa 22  
wall 22  
Gastroprotective agents 207  
Gel chromatography-mass spectrometry 173  
Gel-liquid interface 353  
Genetic 50, 99 268  
changes 50  
dispositions 268  
predisposition 99  
Gingivitis 23  
*Gingko biloba* 100  
Glandular trichomes 97, 138, 139, 140, 141,  
145, 147, 148  
Glial fibrillary acidic protein (GFAP) 272  
Glutamate-cysteine ligase (GCLC) 256  
Glutaric anhydride 243, 245  
Glutathione peroxidase 46, 47, 102, 175, 256  
Glycoprotein 340, 352, 359  
Glycosides 8, 125, 126, 171, 172, 173, 176,  
178, 186, 340, 342

- cardiac 45
  - cyanogenic 118, 119, 125, 133, 144, 162
  - triterpene 136
  - Griffithii extraction 155
  - Growth regulation 328
  - Gut microflora 8, 9
- H**
- Hazardous waste 63
  - Hazelnut extract 19
  - HbA1C levels 175, 179, 267
  - HBsAg production 274
  - Health benefits 47, 50, 51, 52, 53, 176, 178, 192, 257
  - Healthcare 63, 74, 77, 81, 83, 192, 318
    - help change 186
    - modern 26, 118
    - personalized 86
    - preventive 80
    - primary 192
  - Hedera helix extract 13
  - Helicoverpa armigera* 327
  - Hepatic carcinoma 20
  - Hepatitis 119, 176, 272, 273
  - Hepatoprotective activity 9, 192, 212, 272, 273, 346, 347
  - Hepatotoxicity 106, 182, 273, 274
    - drug-induced 180
    - generated carbon tetrachloride 346
    - lead-induced 273
    - rifampicin-induced 346
  - Herb-based biosensors 60, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 74, 77, 79, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86
    - advantages of 63, 83
    - fabrication of 74, 77
    - performance of 63, 84, 85
  - Herb-based biosensors highlight 81
  - Herb-based biosensors measure 81
  - Herb-derived elements 69
  - Herb-derived pigments 68
  - Herb material 75
  - Herb of the year 317
  - Herb Selection 74
  - Herbaceous 47
  - Herbaceous ancestors 118
  - Herbaceous origins 118
  - Herbal 1, 18, 20, 25, 26, 27, 81, 186, 340
  - Herbal antiarrhythmic agents 153
  - Herbal bioactive standards 25
  - Herbal bioactives 3, 7, 9, 10, 12, 14, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 29, 30
    - delicate 72
    - merging 7
  - Herbal bioactivity 22
  - Herbal biosensing 68
  - Herbal chemicals 61
  - Herbal chemistry 74
  - Herbal Component 6, 7, 9, 21, 72
    - choline-bound 8
  - Herbal Compound/Phytoconstituent 13, 14
  - Herbal compounds 2, 3, 9, 10, 22, 25, 26, 29, 30, 60, 64, 76, 82
    - delivery of 9, 19
    - encapsulating 76
    - entrapping 69
    - functionalizing 72, 76
    - hydrophilic 11
    - immobilizing 69
    - immunoactive 26
    - redox-active 69
  - Herbal compounds interact 80
  - Herbal constituents 8
  - Herbal drug delivery 1, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 17, 23
  - Herbal drugs 4, 30
  - Herbal extracts 2, 3, 8, 12, 16, 17, 70, 73, 75, 83, 84, 85, 353
    - active 73
    - anti-inflammatory 151
    - immobilized 82
    - water-soluble 8
  - Herbal medicines 1, 2, 5, 27, 28, 29, 30, 53, 182, 192, 251
    - integration of 26, 29

## **Subject Index**

nanotechnology-based 27  
traditional 250  
High-performance thin-layer chromatography 27  
Horner-wadsworth-emmons reaction 240  
Horseradish peroxidase 62, 65, 67, 70  
Hydrazine moiety 232  
Hydrodistillation 222, 223, 224, 225  
Hydrogels 258  
    curcumin-based 258  
    hydrogel/microparticle-based 242  
    polyvinyl alcohol 259  
Hydrogen peroxide 42, 62, 65, 67, 70, 96  
Hyperpigmentation 152  
Hypoxia-inducible factor-2a 261

## **I**

Immune responses 82, 172, 175, 176, 180, 269  
    cellular 254  
    enhancing 349  
    humoral 50  
    targeted 178  
Immunomodulatory 170, 171, 173, 184, 186,  
    254, 326, 340, 357, 358, 359  
Indomethacin 262  
Inducible nitric oxide synthase 253, 256  
Inflammation 50, 101, 102, 106, 171, 174,  
    176, 177, 178, 252, 254, 261, 262, 268,  
    324  
Inflammatory pathways 102, 252, 253, 260,  
    261, 265  
    multiple 265  
Inflammatory response 51, 102, 252, 253,  
    260, 267, 271, 272  
    induced 136  
Inhibition 150, 252, 254, 258, 263, 265, 266,  
    270, 271, 273, 353, 354, 357  
    acetylcholinesterase 108  
    cytokine 178  
    dose-dependent 254  
    significant 351

## **The Chemistry Inside Spices & Herbs, Vol. 7 371**

tyrosinase 152  
Insomnia 94, 96  
Insulin secretion 103, 175, 325  
Integration 30, 60, 74, 81, 85, 86, 87, 118  
    digital 85, 86  
    effective 27, 76  
    simultaneous 174  
Interactions 8, 11, 14, 61, 62, 76, 79, 80, 81,  
    176, 178, 182, 256, 257  
    biochemical 67, 70  
    biological 61  
    chemical 61  
    ecological 163  
    electrostatic 24, 214  
    enzyme-substrate 65  
    herb-drug 28  
    intramolecular 214  
    molecular-level 65  
Internet of Things (IoT) 85, 86, 87  
Isoprocurcumenol 204, 213  
Isoxazole derivatives 240

## **J**

Jaundice 192, 251, 340, 359  
Joint inflammation 102, 260, 261

## **K**

Ketones 153, 162, 234  
Knoevenagel condensation reaction 230  
Kupffer cells 272

## **L**

Lab-to-field transition stage 64  
Laccase residues 242  
Lactic-co-Glycolic Acid 15  
Lactones 172, 176, 178  
Leukotrienes 177, 253

- Limitations 29, 30, 51, 53, 68, 69, 83, 84, 85, 221, 222, 230, 248  
Limonene 45, 49, 149, 199, 207, 224, 319  
Linalool 45, 47, 49, 62, 81, 94, 98, 149, 150, 197, 206  
Lipid peroxidation 44, 263, 266, 270, 273, 323  
Lipophilic 5, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 21  
Liposomes 2, 6, 7, 11, 12, 72, 108, 184  
  compound 9  
  conventional 6, 7  
  curcumin-loaded 250  
Lipoxygenases 177, 253, 256  
Liquid chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry 173  
Liver 105, 176, 178, 180, 192, 272, 359  
  disorders 192, 359  
  functions 105, 180, 272  
  injury 176, 178, 272  
Lung tissue apoptosis 269  
Lycopene 10  
Lymphoma cells 51  
  mouse 355  
Lyophilisation 8
- M**
- Maceration 75, 143, 157, 158, 221  
Macrophage phagocytosis 175  
Magnetic nanoparticles 19, 20, 21  
Magnoflorine 171, 175, 177, 180  
*Malassezia furfur* 260  
Maltol derivatives 136  
Marigold extract 14  
Mass production 76  
Matrix 78, 248  
  biofilm 7  
  extracellular 272  
  polymer-drug 248  
  polymeric 14  
Mayer's reagent 144  
Medical diagnostics 62, 63, 82, 83, 86  
Medicinal properties 51, 52, 162, 197, 317  
Membranes 10, 107, 160  
  alveolar capillary 269  
  biological 9  
  cellular 102, 178  
  neuronal 100  
  plasma 43  
  self-assembled lipid bilayer 6  
Metabolism 26, 41, 103, 177  
  acetaldehyde 272  
  carbohydrate 103, 175  
  fatty acid 272  
  gastric 10  
  regulating steroid 45  
Metastasis 103, 184  
  arrest 263  
  augmenting 44  
  experimental 359  
  melanoma-induced lung 357  
  peritoneal 263  
Methanolic extract 13, 96, 267, 342, 355  
Microemulsion technique 16  
Microscopic analysis 138  
*Microsporum* 260, 351  
  *gypseum* 260, 351  
  *nanum* 351  
Minimal bactericidal concentrations (MBCs) 323  
*Mirabilis jalapa* 20  
Modulation 51, 102, 108, 151, 193, 253, 258, 263, 270, 271, 273  
Monoterpenes 48, 94, 98, 136, 149, 153, 162, 197, 206, 320, 328  
  acyclic 206  
  bicyclic 206, 207  
  menthane-type 206, 207  
*Moringa oleifera* 70  
Musculoskeletal system 101  
*Mycoplasma gallisepticum* 269  
Myocardial infarction 264, 265

**Subject Index**

**N**

- Nanocarriers 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 23, 24, 25, 29, 248, 250
  - hydrogel 184
  - ideal 7
  - liposomal 6
  - traditional 250
- Nanoformulation 21, 30
- Nanoparticles 2, 5, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 26, 61, 63, 248, 258, 259
- Natural products 191, 193, 194, 195, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 215, 264
  - extraction of 221
- Neem 64, 66, 73, 74, 75, 76, 78, 79, 83, 84, 85
- Nervous system 95, 153, 270, 323, 356
- Neurodegenerative diseases 46, 51, 95, 96, 98, 107, 108, 175, 252, 255, 270
- Neuroprotective effects 8, 52, 96, 106, 108, 126, 193, 271, 325
- Neurotransmitters 61, 99, 101, 151, 325

**O**

- Ocimum basilicum* 62, 66, 70, 75, 81
- Octenyl succinic anhydride (OSA) 329
- Oleoresins 22, 52, 192, 197, 221, 256
- Optical density (OD) 229
- Optimization 51, 221, 222
- Oral administration 21, 22, 104, 105, 151, 174, 269, 349, 354
- Oryza sativa* 229
- Oryzaphilus surinamensis* 327
- Oxidation 6, 41, 62, 65, 173, 175, 329
  - catalytic 60
- Oxidative stress 40, 41, 50, 99, 102, 103, 108, 255, 256, 257, 261, 265, 266, 268, 270, 272

**The Chemistry Inside Spices & Herbs, Vol. 7 373**

**P**

- Pabon's method 228, 229
- Pain 51, 106, 119, 151, 179, 260, 324, 325, 346
  - abdominal 340
  - joint 322
  - relieve 50
  - retard 177
- Panax ginseng* 353
- Parkinson's disease 44, 50, 51, 52, 95, 101, 184, 270, 315, 325, 330
- Pathway 2, 96, 151, 176, 177, 179, 252, 253, 271, 357
  - apoptotic 272
  - cellular 107
  - metabolic 103, 267
  - modulating key 252
  - molecular 101, 103
  - p-53-dependent 263
- Pavolini method 226
- Paw edema 254
- Penduliflora 132, 133, 134, 147, 154
- Peripheral blood mononuclear cells (PBMC) 355
- Peroxisome 266, 272, 273
- Pharmacological activities 2, 30, 94, 101, 117, 135, 148, 149, 150, 320, 322
  - diverse 94, 170
  - multiple 97
- Phenolic compounds 40, 41, 47, 176, 179, 215, 217, 218, 219, 319, 322, 340, 342, 347
- Phenylhydrazine 233
- Phenylmethylpolysiloxane 161
- Phenylpropanoids 117, 118, 119, 125, 129, 135, 137, 154, 162, 215, 218
- Phospholipids 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
- Phytochemicals 40, 41, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 53, 65, 66, 94, 95, 143, 144, 159
  - concentration of 53, 345
  - extracted 46

- heat-sensitive 183
- identifying 66
- oxidative 53
- Phytosomes 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 29, 53
- Pigments 67
  - immobilizing herbal 69
  - natural 82, 98
  - pH-sensitive 75
- Pilocarpus jaborandi* 321
- Plutella xylostella* 327
- Polycaprolactone 244, 329
- Polyethylene glycols 10, 15, 22, 240, 245
- Polyphenols 40, 47, 48, 60, 62, 64, 255, 257, 266, 319, 320
- Preclinical studies 102, 103, 106, 108, 185
- Prevention 6, 8, 9, 15, 17, 18, 50, 254, 256, 261, 262, 265, 266, 270, 271
- Pro-inflammatory cytokines 106, 153, 178, 252, 253, 260, 261, 263, 266
- Proinflammatory cytokines 51, 177, 253, 254, 258, 259, 269
- Protein kinase C (PKC) 253, 256
- Protein phosphorylation 42
- Proteomics 107, 185
- Pseudaletia unipuncta* 327, 329
- Pseudomonas cichorii* 351
- Punarnavine 340, 345, 346, 348, 349, 350, 359
- Pyridine 235, 240
  
- Q**
  
- Quality assurance (QA) 26, 27, 29, 171
- Quality control (QC) 26, 27, 79, 80, 81, 84, 145, 147, 162, 163, 183, 185
- Quinones 342
  - electroactive 66
  
- R**
  
- Radiation 43, 44
  - electromagnetic 183
  - gamma 257
  - ionizing 41
  - ultraviolet 259
  - whole-body 350
- Radiolabelling 26
- Radioprotective activity 23, 350
- Randomized controlled trials (RCTs) 175, 185
- Reaction 225, 226, 227, 230, 231, 232, 233, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 244, 245, 246
  - allergic 28, 82, 182
  - biphasic 350
  - catalytic 60
  - oxidative chain 41
  - redox 44, 60, 62, 65
- Reactive oxygen species 40, 62, 79, 83, 178, 185, 256, 257, 259, 265, 325
- Redox activity 61
- Regulations 27, 28, 29, 85, 96, 102, 108, 182, 325
  - blood clot 354
  - cytokine 185
  - harmonized global 107
  - implemented 328
  - metabolic 177, 185
- Remodeling 258, 268
- Reproducibility 63, 75, 84, 85, 87, 156, 160, 221
- Respiratory disorders 251, 267, 268, 270
- Reticuloendothelial system 14, 15, 17, 348
- Rheumatism 94, 151, 171, 322
- Rhizomes 45, 223, 224, 225, 251, 266
- ROS production 41, 42, 43, 272
  - amplified 44
  - unrestrained 44
- Rosemary
  - activity of 324, 327
  - high-quality 317
  - leaf-based 319

*Subject Index*

**S**

Saffron 49, 50  
*Salmonella typhimurium* 351  
*Salvia officinalis* 100  
Sample 78, 137, 138, 141, 142, 143, 160  
    biological 70, 83, 86  
    commercial 261  
    dried 138, 257  
    polyurethane prepolymer 243  
    urine 346  
SARS-COV-2 194  
Scanning electron microscopy 25  
Scavenging activity 352  
Schiff base reaction 244  
Schizophrenia 101  
Seborrheic dermatitis 260  
Sebum secretion 260  
Secondary metabolites 47, 67, 118, 125, 126,  
    193, 328, 356  
Selenomethionine 235  
Sensors 60, 63, 80, 82, 83, 86  
Sesquiterpenes 48, 131, 136, 161, 162, 193,  
    197, 200, 205, 208, 253  
Sesquiterpenoids 106, 107, 208, 213, 214  
    bisabolene 209  
    cadinane-type 211  
    carabane-type 211, 212  
    oxygenated 223  
Sickle cell anemia 217  
*Solanum lycopersicum* 78  
Solid lipid curcumin particle (SLCP) 52  
Solubility 2, 3, 7, 17, 20, 21, 22, 24, 30, 107,  
    246, 248, 249  
Solvent extraction 155, 221, 223, 229  
Soxhlet extraction 75, 155, 221, 256, 318  
Spices 40, 41, 45, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53,  
    117, 118, 250, 251  
*Staphylococcus aureus* 180, 258, 259, 351,  
    352

*The Chemistry Inside Spices & Herbs, Vol. 7 375*

Supercritical fluid extraction (SFE) 73, 75,  
    158, 173, 174, 183, 186, 222, 318, 320,  
    322  
Superoxide dismutase 43, 46, 47, 48, 52, 256,  
    268  
Synergistic activity 8, 18  
Synthesis 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 240, 241,  
    242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 250  
    catalytic 228  
    chemical 191, 225  
    cytokine 175, 177  
    enzyme-assisted 238, 239  
*Syzygium aromaticum* 45, 64

**T**

Tannins 40, 97, 98, 148, 340, 342, 347  
Terpecurcumin 203, 209, 274  
Terpenes 117, 135, 136, 320, 321, 324  
Terpenoids 60, 62, 64, 97, 117, 118, 119, 152,  
    154, 197, 206, 208, 340, 342  
Terpinolene 45, 49, 198, 223, 224  
*Tetranychus urticae* 327  
Therapeutic agents 106, 264, 266, 269  
    complementary 270  
    credible 184  
    validated 275  
Tinospora 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176,  
    177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184,  
    185, 186  
Toll-like receptors (TLRs) 252  
Toluene 220, 226  
Total flavonoid content (TFC) 126, 157  
Transcription factors 42, 252, 253, 267, 268  
    runt-related 261  
Transcutol 10, 22  
Transdermal patches 184  
Transducers 61, 63, 66, 67  
    efficient 77  
    physical 60  
    thermal 61

*Tribolium castaneum* 327, 328, 356  
*Trichophyton* 260, 351  
*rubrum* 260  
*terrestre* 351

## U

Ultra-high-performance liquid  
chromatography (UHPLC) 318  
Unfolded protein response (UPR) 96  
Unilateral ureteral obstruction (UUO) 153

## V

Vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF)  
258, 261, 263  
Vasoconstriction 264, 265  
Vasodilation 253  
Vasorelaxant 194, 201, 204, 205, 212  
Viral replication 269  
Volatile acids 98  
Volatile oils 25, 49, 52, 117, 125, 137, 145,  
148, 156, 254

## W

*Withania somnifera* 100  
Wound healing 23, 181, 252, 257, 258, 261

## X

Xanthine 42, 256  
dehydrogenase 256  
oxidase 42, 256  
*Xanthium strumarium* 13  
Xanthorrhiza 253, 263  
Xenobiotics 41  
Xylem 140, 141, 146  
primary 141, 146  
secondary 141, 146

## Z

Zingerone 51, 216, 218, 253  
*Zingiber officinale* 45, 64, 268



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