

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

**Inhibition of Xanthine Oxidase Activity by Ethanolic Extract of *Peperomia pellucida* L., *Acacypha indica* L. and *Momordica charantia* L.**Parawansah<sup>1,\*</sup>, Nuralifah<sup>2</sup>, Gemini Alam<sup>3</sup>, Rosdiana Natzir<sup>4</sup><sup>1</sup>Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, Halu Oleo University, Kampus Hijau Bumi Tridharma, Jl. H.E.A. Mokodompit, Kendari, Indonesia<sup>2</sup>Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Pharmacy, Halu Oleo University, Kampus Hijau Bumi Tridharma, Jl. H.E.A. Mokodompit, Kendari, Indonesia<sup>3</sup>Faculty of Pharmacy, Hasanuddin University, Jl. Perintis Kemerdekaan Km.10, Makassar, Indonesia<sup>4</sup>Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Medicine Hasanuddin University, Jl. Perintis Kemerdekaan Km.10, Makassar, Indonesia

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## Abstract

**BACKGROUND:** Uric acid is a final result of purine catabolism, the enzymatic reactions in the body cells from amino acids or ribonucleotide dinucleotide. *Peperomia pellucida* L. (*P. pellucida*), *Acalypha indica* L. (*A. indica*) and *Momordica charantia* L. (*M. charantia*) are plants which have efficacy to reduce levels of uric acid excess. The aim of this research is to find out the effect of ethanol extract of *P. pellucida*, *A. indica* and *M. charantia* in preventing the formation of uric acid excess by inhibiting the action of the enzyme xanthine oxidase and comparing the inhibition activity of xanthine oxidase on treatments.

**METHODS:** The study design is experimental and conducted using the enzyme xanthine oxidase, xanthine (substrate), pH 7.5 phosphate buffer, samples (*P. pellucida*, *A. indica* and *M. charantia* ethanol extracts) and HCL as reaction breaker. Inhibition of xanthine oxidase was

determined enzymatically and unreacted xanthine was measured by UV spectrophotometer at 290 nm. The data were expressed as percent inhibition and the inhibitory concentration (IC)<sub>50</sub> were determined using linear regression of inhibition activity vs. concentration.

**RESULTS:** The IC<sub>50</sub> of *P. pellucida*, *A. indica* and *M. charantia* ethanol extracts in inhibiting xanthine oxidase were 19.5 ppm, 77.6 ppm and 17.8 ppm, respectively. IC<sub>50</sub> of allopurinol was 1.99 µg/mL, and negative control (combination of enzyme and substrate) has absorbance value of 0.75026.

**CONCLUSION:** Ethanol extract of *M. charantia* showed the most potent inhibition toward xanthine oxidase compared to the other two extracts.

**KEYWORDS:** xanthine oxidase, *Peperomia pellucida* L., *Acalypha indica* L., *Momordica charantia* L.

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## Introduction

Uric acid is a final result of catabolism purines, the enzymatic reactions in the body cells from amino acids

or ribonucleotide dinucleotide.(1,2) The occurrence of hyperuricemia, or excessive increase of uric acid in the blood, will cause gout disease.(3,4) Xanthine catalyzed by the enzyme xanthine oxidase will form uric acid. Xanthine oxidase, which plays an important role in the purines catabolism, is found in liver and muscle cells, but can not

be found in the blood.(5) The normal value of uric acid level is 3.5 to 7.0 mg/dL for man and 2.5 to 6.0 mg/dL for women.

The intake of foods containing high purines will increase uric acid levels. The use of *Peperomia pellucida* L. (*P. pellucida*), *Acalypha indica* L. (*A. indica*) and *Momordica charantia* L. (*M. charantia*) in lowering uric acid levels is very beneficial. Purine and pyrimidine nucleotides synthesized *in vivo* at a pace that is consistent with physiological needs. The purine bases are then oxidized to uric acid, which may be absorbed and excreted in the urine. While little or no dietary purine or pyrimidine is incorporated into tissue nucleic acids. There are three processes that have roles in the biosynthesis of purine nucleotides. These three processes, sorted from the most important, are the synthesis of intermediates amphibolic (synthesis *de novo*), phosphorylation of purine and phosphorylation of purine nucleoside.

Adenosine first undergoes deamination into inosine by the help of adenosine deaminase enzyme.(6) Hypoxanthine and xanthine guanine subsequently formed in a reaction catalyzed by enzyme xanthine oxidase and guanase, respectively. The oxidized xanthine is turned into uric acid in the second reaction catalyzed by the enzyme xanthine oxidase. Thus, xanthine oxidase is an essential place for pharmacological intervention in patients with hyperuricemia and gout.(7,8)

These days, many number of plants have been proved empirically or by scientific testing and used as alternative treatments.(9) Some plants have been proved to be effective in lowering the level of uric acid excess, those are *P. pellucida*, *A. indica* and *M. charantia*.

Other efficacy of *P. pellucida* is its ability to cope with headache, abdominal pain, abscesses, ulcers, kidney disorders, acne, dermatitis, minor burns and pain in rheumatoid arthritis.(10,11) Extract of *P. pellucida* 1g/kg bw/day in rats induced potassium oxonate three hours before treatment, suggesting that *P. pellucida* can be used as an alternative medicine for uric acid.(12)

Beside it effects as an anti-uric acid, *A. indica* also has efficacy as an anti-inflammatory, diuretic, laxative and hemostasis. Extract of *A. indica* 2.7g/200g bw/day can effectively lower uric acid level in rats, which induced potassium oxonate one hour before treatment.(13)

Another plant that is often used in the treatment of uric acid is *M. charantia*.(14) Therefore, this study was done

to find out the *in vitro* effects of *P. pellucida*, *A. indica* and *M. charantia* ethanol extract in inhibiting uric acid formation.

## Methods

An experimental study with post-test group design was conducted in three treatment groups with three times repetition. For blanks solution, 2.8 mL potassium phosphate buffer pH 7.5 was inserted then 0.1 mL xanthine was added. Potassium phosphate buffer at pH 7.5 was prepared at 25°C, by mixing 0.68045 g  $\text{KH}_2\text{PO}_4 \cdot 3\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (Sigma, St. Louis, USA) and 4.352 g of  $\text{K}_2\text{HPO}_4 \cdot 3\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (Sigma) in 500 mL deionized water. For control sample (allopurinol), 2.9 mL potassium phosphate buffer at pH 7.5 and 0.1 mL sample were inserted. Meanwhile, for negative control, 2.7 mL of potassium phosphate buffer pH 7.5, 0.1 mL xanthine and 0.1 mL xanthine oxidase were inserted. As for the samples, 2.6 mL potassium phosphate buffer at pH 7.5, 0.1 mL xanthine, 0.1 mL xanthine oxidase and 0.1 mL sample were inserted. All solutions were inserted into cuvettes and incubated for 10 minutes. Then, 0.1 mL HCl was added to stop enzyme reaction. The absorbance measurement was performed using a spectrophotometer at a wavelength of 290 nm.

### Preparation of Extract

Initially, the leaves of *P. pellucida*, *A. indica* and *M. charantia*, obtained in Makassar, were cleaned, washed with water, and cut into small pieces. The herbs were dried and placed in an open space with good circulation without direct sunlight exposure. The dried herbs were then extracted by maceration method. Briefly, the dried herbs were soaked in 96% ethanol for 24 hours, filtered and re-soaked in 96% ethanol so that the extraction were perfectly performed. Solvent containing herbs extract was evaporated in a rotary evaporator to obtain a thick extract.

### *in vitro* Xanthine Oxidase Inhibition Test

Inhibition test of *P. pellucida*, *A. indica* and *M. charantia* ethanol extracts was performed at the optimum condition according to the Sigma product sheet. The optimum condition was indicated as 10 minutes incubation time at 25°C, pH 7.5, 290 nm wavelength, 0.1 unit/mL xanthine

and 0.15 mM xanthine. Total of 2.6 mL phosphate buffer was put in a test tube, followed by 0.1 mL extract. Then 0.1 mL of 0.15 mM xanthine and 0.1 mL of 0.1 unit/mL xanthine oxidase was added to the mixture and incubated at 25°C for 10 minutes. After the incubation, the mixture was immediately added with 0.1 mL of 1 M HCl to stop the reaction.

The mixture was measured using UV absorption at a wavelength of 290 nm to measure unreacted xanthine in the test sample. Obtained inhibition test result was compared to allopurinol result. Pharmaceutical Chemistry Laboratory, Hasanuddin University.

## Results

Table 1 shows xanthine oxidase inhibitory activity results of *P. pellucida*, *A. indica*, *M. charantia* ethanol extracts and allopurinol (as positive control). Concentration, log concentration, inhibition percentage, probit and inhibitory concentration (IC)<sub>50</sub> value of each extract and the positive control are shown. IC<sub>50</sub> values from each extract were obtained to determine the effect of enzyme xanthine oxidase inhibitory activity. IC<sub>50</sub> values were 19.5 µg/mL, 77.6 µg/mL, 17.8 µg/mL and 1.9 µg/mL for *P. pellucida*, *A. indica*, *M. charantia* and allopurinol, respectively.

## Discussion

Plants used in this research were *P. pellucida*, *A. indica* and *M. charantia*. The plants were extracted by maceration method. Maceration process was done by soaking the sample in a container using extraction liquid of 96% ethanol for 3x24 hours with occasional stirring, then filtered. During the soaking, extraction liquid would penetrate the cell wall and enter the cell. Maceration method was chosen to avoid damage of chemical constituents due to the heat treatment, therefore good and selective extract can be obtained.

The primary data of xanthine oxidase inhibition assay results was obtained from the treatment group and a control group. Data were analyzed to determine the

percentage of inhibition values, followed by linear regression statistical test and the determination of the inhibitory activity of enzyme xanthine oxidase samples to determine the IC<sub>50</sub> value.

Purine bases converted into hypoxanthine by xanthine oxidase are converted into xanthine and uric acid. Uric acid is formed and then discharged through urine, gastrointestinal tract and partially backfilled in tissue in the form of monosodium uric (MSU) crystals, which over time will accumulate and form microtophy. While the inflammatory process that occurs due to the deposition of uric acid crystals in the tissues around the joints, gout is also a term used for a group of metabolic disorders characterized by an increased concentration of uric acid, or also called hyperuricemia.

Enzymes can not work without the substrate, so does enzyme xanthine oxidase that will only work on an appropriate substrate, which is xanthine.

Xanthine oxidase catalyzes xanthine by addition of distilled water and oxygen into uric acid and hydrogen peroxide. Hydrogen peroxide has the ability to diffuse into and penetrate the cell membrane that can cause damage to cells located far from where hydrogen peroxide was formed.

Measurement of xanthine oxidase inhibitory activity was performed according to the Bergmeyer "Method in Enzymology". The samples were measured using spectrophotometer based on the decrease in absorption at 290 nm. Measurement of the activity of xanthine oxidase was done at pH 7.5, because if the atmosphere is too acidic or alkaline, it can cause loss of xanthine oxidase activity.

*In vitro* testing was conducted to observe the activity of the enzyme xanthine oxidase on the formation of urate crystals. A decrease in the activity of xanthine oxidase in the ethanol extract of *P. pellucida*, *A. indica* and *M. charantia* will reduce or prevent the formation of urate crystal and hydrogen peroxide. This test was done to determine the extent of the effects that have been caused by the extracts.

Testing IC<sub>50</sub> previously used to extract samples contained some activity, *P. pellucida* extracts showed antioxidant activity (15), inhibitory effects on three cancer cell lines and has a weak suppressor activity in HL-60 cells (16). The methanol extract of *A. indica*, showed anticancer activity against cell-NCIH187 small lung cancer, showed

Table 1. Determination of inhibition percentage and IC<sub>50</sub>\*

Sample	Concentration (ppm)	Log Concentration	Inhibition Percentage (%)	Probit	IC <sub>50</sub> (µg/ml)
<i>P. pellucida</i>	200	2.3	21.01	4.19	19.5
	100	2.0	35.53	4.62	
	50	1.7	43.86	4.84	
	25	1.4	48.61	4.96	
	12.5	1.1	50.44	5.01	
<i>A. indica</i>	200	2.3	60.75	5.27	77.6
	100	2.0	50.52	5.01	
	50	1.7	46.76	4.91	
	25	1.4	40.86	4.77	
	12.5	1.1	29.31	4.46	
	6.25	0.8	7.03	3.52	
<i>M. charantia</i>	100	2.0	23.99	4.29	17.8
	50	1.7	42.44	4.81	
	25	1.4	47.32	4.93	
	12.5	1.1	52.58	5.07	
	6.25	0.8	63.56	5.35	
Allopurinol	5	0.7	39.55	4.74	1.99
	2.5	0.4	45.04	4.87	
	1.25	0.1	51.75	5.04	
	0.625	-0.2	67.98	5.47	
	0.3125	-0.5	77.28	5.75	
	0.15625	-0.8	84.72	6.03	

significant anticancer activity against HT-29 colon cancer cells (17), and the test protein denaturation, 37  $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$  in action proteinase inhibitory and 18  $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$  for anti-hyaluronidase activity (18). As well as the methanol extract of *M. charantia*, dose-dependent inhibit the activity of sucrase most powerful of the intestinal mucosa (19), and has disaccharidase-inhibitory activity on the improvement of blood glucose and serum (20).

Each extract was tested in the same concentration, which was 60 mg. After determining the concentration, measurement of absorbance obtained from each concentration is the value to be incorporated into the linear regression equation to obtain  $\text{IC}_{50}$  value.

The information of  $\text{IC}_{50}$  value in this research is aimed to determine the effect and comparison enzyme xanthine oxidase inhibitory activity of the test sample. It was obtained ethanol extract of *P. pellucida*  $\text{IC}_{50} = 19.5 \mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$ , the ethanol extract of *A. indica*  $\text{IC}_{50} = 77.6 \mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$ , the ethanol extract of *M.charantia*  $\text{IC}_{50} = 17.8 \mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$ , allopurinol (positive control)  $\text{IC}_{50} = 1.99 \mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$  and the negative controls (combination of enzyme and substrate) has absorbance value of 0,75026.  $\text{IC}_{50}$  value was inversely related to the inhibition of xanthine oxidase activity, the smaller the  $\text{IC}_{50}$  value, the greater the inhibition activity of xanthine oxidase (Table 1).

Allopurinol was used as a positive control to determine differences of concentration and absorption produced by extracts and allopurinol. From the test sample, it is known that extract of *M. charantia* provides inhibitory effect on the formation of MSU crystals.

## Conclusion

From this study, it can be concluded that ethanol extract of the *P. pellucida*, *A. indica* and *M. charantia* influence the inhibition of MSU crystals formation. It was found that there is a xanthine oxidase inhibitory activity of the samples tested.

The smaller the  $\text{IC}_{50}$  value means the greater the inhibition of xanthine oxidase activity of that samples.  $\text{IC}_{50}$  values for extracts of *M. charantia*, *P. pellucida* and *A. indica* were 17.8 mg/mL, 19.5 mg/mL and 77.6 mg/mL, respectively.

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