

Physicochemical Relation of the Homoeopathic drug Harpagophytum Procumbens

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Abstract

Harpagophytum Procumbens is one of rarely used drug in homoeopathic system of treatment. The homoeopathic medicine has anti inflammatory and analgesic properties. It has a strong bitter taste which tones up the digestive system and improves the absorption of food. It is used for pain in joints, tendons and muscles, which aggravates with change of weather. It also helps in relieving pain in the lower back, hip and knee.

Keywords: Harpagophytum, harpagoquinone, low back pain

Introduction

Harpagophytum Procumbens is also known as the devil's claw. The botanical name Harpagophytum means 'hook plant' in Greek. It's name was coined from the plant which has hook covered fruits. It is native to Kalahari Savanes and Southern Africa and has been widely used traditionally as a bitter tonic for gastrointestinal disturbances, fever, allergic reactions and to reduce pain.^[1,2] Some clinical studies of varying quality have suggested improvements in discomfort and function in individuals suffering from pain in the lower back, hip and knee.^[3,4,5]

In addition to its traditional uses in herbal medicine, it has gained attention in the field of homoeopathy as a potential remedy. Harpagophytum Procumbens belongs to the family Pedaliaceae. The plant grows on reddish sands and develops in the interval when the natural vegetation is stopped. The characteristic of this plant lies in the fruits in the form of a plate furnished with long claws of 7 to 10 cm growing flatly on the ground. But the therapeutical interest is due to the root which is like a tubercle. ^[2]

Part Used: The Root

There are two parts one is constituted with the root properly called primary and the second is constituted with some growths formed on the lateral roots called secondary roots. These roots are utilised in therapeutic practice. [2]

Active principle with physicochemical relation

The main ingredients are Iridoid glycosides principally harpagoside, Triterpenes, Phytosterols especially beta sitosterol, Flavonoids; kaemferol and lutein and Harpagoquinone. [1]

Devil's claw contains iridoid glycoside constituents primarily harpagoside but it appears that other compounds besides harpagoside contribute to its effect. [6,7] It also contains the phenylethanol derivatives and an oligosaccharide. [7] Traditionally, the devil's claw was used for osteoarthritis and other inflammatory conditions because the iridoid glycoside constituents seem to have an anti-inflammatory effect. [8] Some preliminary research suggests that harpagoside inhibits both the cyclooxygenase (COX) and lipoxygenase inflammatory pathways. [9] Devil's claw seems to inhibit COX-2 (but not COX-1) and nitric oxide synthetase, a modulator of inflammation. [10] Some evidence suggests that the anti-inflammatory effect is due to increased synthesis and release of tumor necrosis factor by compounds other than harpagoside. [7]

Rubrics [11,12]

Mind – INDIFFERENCE, apathetic

Environment-STORMS, during, agg-storms, approach of a storm, agg Environment-WEATHER, change of, agg

Generals -MORNING- agg

Limbs-PAIN, bones-pain, tendons

Muscles- ACHING, pain

Muscles-PAIN, muscles

Muscles-PAIN muscles, pain, tendons

Discussion

Devils claw is an African plant that was used traditionally for digestive diseases and appetite stimulation as well as for arthritis. Its effectiveness in the treatment of both acute and chronic pain has been established through clinical trials. [13,14] Preclinical research suggests that the plant possesses antioxidant and chondroprotective action in addition to anti-inflammatory and analgesic benefits. Devil's claw has been shown in high-quality human clinical trials to be just as effective as NSAIDs for reducing arthritic pain in the hips, knees, and low back. According to comparative studies, devil's claw is just as safe as or even safer than NSAID treatment. [15,16,17]

Conclusion

While evolving the picture of homoeopathic remedies in relation with active principal of them helps us to understand the remedies in a better way. More studies are to be carried out in the future to explore the role of Harpagophytum Procumbens in treatment of various diseases along with it's mental picture.

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