Research Article

Antidepressant Activity of *Juglans regia* L. Fruit Extract

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Received 23 May 2009; received in revised form 24 July 2009; accepted 10 September 2009

Available online 19 September 2009

**ABSTRACT**

In the present study the effect of *Juglans regia* fruit extract has been reported in animal models of depression. Forced swimming test and tail suspension test were used for assessing antidepressant activity. The extract was administered in doses of 100 and 150 mg/kg body weight. Both the doses significantly decreased duration of immobility in both models of depression. The effect of extract was less significant than standard drug fluoxetine. *Juglans regia* fruit may exert antidepressant activity due to the presence of omega 3 fatty acid in extract.

**Keywords:** *Juglans regia* L., antidepressant effect, tail suspension test, forced swimming test

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**Introduction** - *Juglans regia* L. is a very popular nut fruit in India. It is traditionally cultivated both for fruit and high quality timber production. It is native in a region stretching from the Balkans eastward to the Himalayas and southwest China. Among dietary plants used worldwide, *Juglans regia* L were ranked second only to *Rosa canina* in their antioxidant activity [1]. Phytochemical investigations on *Juglans regia* revealed the presence of naphthalene, naphthaquinol, glycoside, naphthaquinone, juglone, bisjoglone, regiolone [2,3]. *Juglans regia* is a rich source of Omega-3 fatty acid. Omega-3 fatty acids may have beneficial effects on many diseases such as heart disorders, cancer, diabetes, and neurological disorders. People at special stages in the lifecycle, such as pregnant/lactating women, infants, and children, may also benefit from consuming omega-3 fatty acids in adequate amounts.

Depression is an extremely complex and heterogeneous condition. The pharmacological approach to the treatment of depression includes a long-term employment of antidepressants, either in the form of monotherapy or as a combination of several antidepressants with various mechanisms of action. While much attention has been given to genetics and life stressors, only a small group of international researchers have focused on nutritional influences on depressive symptoms. Collectively, the results of this relatively small body of research indicate that nutritional influences on depression are currently underestimated [4]. Omega-3 fatty acids in particular represent an exciting area of research [5]. Detailed reviews of the possible neurobehavioral mechanisms of omega-3 fatty acids have been previously published [6, 7]. In the present study we therefore evaluated antidepressant activity using forced swim test and tail suspension test in rats.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

**Extraction**

*Juglans regia* fruits were collected locally from Bhubaneswar. Fruits were crushed and kept at room temperature. Crushed fruits were macerated with n-hexane for 8 days at room temperature with regular stirring. Extract was evaporated under vacuum and placed in well closed air tight container. Extract was dissolved in DMSO for further studies.

**Animals**

Male Wistar rats (300-450 gm, 14 weeks old) were obtained from animal house of Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology, Bhubaneswar, Orissa and were housed in group of 5 per cage in standard metal cages at 22 ± 2°C on 10:14 h light - dark cycle. All animals were given access to standard food pellet and water ad libitum. All conditions were maintained as per CPCSEA guidelines.

**Drugs**

Fluoxetine was used as standard drug. DMSO was used as solvent. From preliminary study, the doses of extract were selected as 100 mg/kg and 150 mg/kg body weight intraperitoneally (i.p.).

**Experimental protocol**

All rats were randomly divided into 4 groups. Each group contained 6 rats. The first group was control group treated with DMSO only which was used as vehicle. The second group was treated with the extract at dose of 100 mg/kg body weight i.p. The third group was treated with the extract at dose of 150 mg/kg body weight i.p.. The doses used in

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**RESULTS**

Effect on immobility in forced swim test – Mean duration of immobility in control group was found to be 188.3 ± 2.16 s, whereas for the group treated with fluoxetine it was 151.16 ± 2.56 s. The decrease in immobility was found to be significant (P<0.05). In the groups treated with extract decrease in immobility was also found significant (P<0.05) for both dose. The total duration of immobility was found to be 160.66 ± 3.76 s and 154.83 ± 4.32 s respectively for 100 mg/kg and 150 mg/kg body weight (Graph 1).

Effect on immobility in tail suspension test - In control group mean duration of immobility was found to be 193.33 ± 1.96 s, whereas in the group treated with fluoxetine it was 147.16 ± 2.48 s. The decrease in immobility was found to be significant (P<0.05). The total duration of immobility was found to be 168 ± 8.39 s for 100 mg/kg body weight and 148.66 ± 1.75 s for 150 mg/kg body weight (Graph 1). In the groups treated with extract decrease in immobility was also found significant (P<0.05) for both dose as compared to that of vehicle treated group.

**DISCUSSION**

In this study, hexane extract of *Juglans regia* fruit was evaluated by forced swimming and tail suspension test. Extract produced significant antidepressant activity at both doses of 100 mg/kg and 150 mg/kg body weight. The observations are in congruence with previous reports [8, 9]. A number of studies have found decreased omega-3 content in the blood of depressed patients [11-14]. Current research supports the theory that omega-3 fatty acid supplementation may be useful as an adjunct to current antidepressant therapy or alone [15]. Fruits of *Juglans regia* were reported to have omega-3-fatty acids. The possible explanation of antidepressant activity *Juglans regia* fruit extract may be due to presence of omega-3-fatty acid. Further research is necessary to understand the mechanism of antidepressant activity.

**REFERENCES**


