

Advanced Structured Materials

**Dilipkumar Pal**  
Amit Kumar Nayak *Editors*

# Bioactive Natural Products for Pharmaceutical Applications

 Springer

*Editors*

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ISSN 1869-8433

Advanced Structured Materials

ISBN 978-3-030-54026-5

<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-54027-2>

ISSN 1869-8441 (electronic)

ISBN 978-3-030-54027-2 (eBook)

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# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Elicitor Signal Transduction Leading to the Production of Plant Secondary Metabolites</b> . . . . .	<b>1</b>
	Supriyo Saha and Dilipkumar Pal	
1.1	Introduction . . . . .	2
1.2	Types of Plant Metabolites . . . . .	3
1.3	Elicitor and Its Type . . . . .	5
1.4	Application of Elicitors on the Production of Secondary Metabolites . . . . .	6
1.4.1	Production of Secondary Metabolites Using Abiotic Elicitors . . . . .	6
1.4.2	Production of Secondary Metabolites Using Biotic Elicitors . . . . .	16
1.4.3	Production of Secondary Metabolites Using Abiotic-Biotic Dual Elicitors . . . . .	24
1.5	Conclusion . . . . .	31
	References . . . . .	36
<b>2</b>	<b>An Introduction to Bioactive Natural Products and General Applications</b> . . . . .	<b>41</b>
	Tijjani Ahmadu and Khairulmazmi Ahmad	
2.1	Introduction . . . . .	42
2.2	Bioactive Natural Compounds: Distribution and Geographical Sources . . . . .	44
2.3	Phytochemistry of Bioactive Natural Compounds . . . . .	64
2.4	General Applications of Bioactive Natural Products . . . . .	71
2.4.1	Traditional Medicine . . . . .	71
2.4.2	Plant Based Pesticides and Agrochemical Industry . . . . .	72
2.4.3	Pharmacological Applications in Drugs Development . . . . .	74
2.4.4	Cosmetics . . . . .	75

2.5	Delivery Technology for Bioactive Natural Products . . . . .	76
2.5.1	Components of Nanoemulsion . . . . .	77
2.6	Conclusions . . . . .	78
	References . . . . .	78
<b>3</b>	<b>Plant Polysaccharides in Pharmaceutical Applications . . . . .</b>	<b>93</b>
	Amit Kumar Nayak, Md Saquib Hasnain, Amal Kumar Dhara, and Dilipkumar Pal	
3.1	Introduction . . . . .	94
3.2	Classifications and Sources of Plant Polysaccharides . . . . .	95
3.2.1	Plant Gums . . . . .	95
3.2.2	Plant Mucilages . . . . .	95
3.2.3	Plant Starches . . . . .	97
3.3	Applications of Plant Polysaccharides in Pharmaceutical Dosage Forms . . . . .	98
3.3.1	Emulsions . . . . .	98
3.3.2	Suspensions . . . . .	100
3.3.3	Tablets . . . . .	101
3.3.4	Capsules . . . . .	104
3.3.5	Beads . . . . .	104
3.3.6	Microparticles . . . . .	108
3.3.7	Nanoparticles . . . . .	110
3.3.8	Liposomes . . . . .	112
3.3.9	Transdermal Formulations . . . . .	112
3.3.10	Buccal Formulations . . . . .	113
3.3.11	Nasal Formulations . . . . .	115
3.3.12	Ophthalmic Formulations . . . . .	116
3.3.13	Colon-Targeting Formulations . . . . .	116
3.3.14	Dental Formulations . . . . .	117
3.4	Conclusion . . . . .	118
	References . . . . .	118
<b>4</b>	<b>The Role of Phytochemicals in Cancer Prevention and Cure . . . . .</b>	<b>127</b>
	Braganza Cilwyn, Soundararajan Vijayarathna, Shanmugapriya, Rameshwar Naidu Jegathambigai, Subramaniam Sreeramanan, Yeng Chen, and Sreenivasan Sasidharan	
4.1	Introduction . . . . .	128
4.2	Role of Phytochemicals in Cancer Prevention via Antioxidant Activity . . . . .	129
4.3	Role of Phytochemicals in Cancer Prevention Via Pro-Oxidant Activity . . . . .	130
4.4	Role of Phytochemicals in Cancer Cure Via Apoptosis Induction . . . . .	132
4.5	Role of Phytochemicals in Cancer Cure Via Necrosis Induction . . . . .	135

4.6	Role of Phytochemicals in Cancer Cure Via Autophagy Induction . . . . .	138
4.7	Role of Phytochemicals in Cancer Cure Via Regulation of miRNA . . . . .	139
4.8	Conclusions . . . . .	144
	References . . . . .	144
<b>5</b>	<b>Role of Stress and Defense in Plant Secondary Metabolites Production . . . . .</b>	<b>151</b>
	Humberto Aguirre-Becerra, Ma Cristina Vazquez-Hernandez, Diana Saenz de la O, Aurora Alvarado-Mariana, Ramon G. Guevara-Gonzalez, Juan Fernando Garcia-Trejo, and Ana Angélica Feregrino-Perez	
5.1	Introduction . . . . .	152
5.2	Abiotic Stress . . . . .	153
5.2.1	Electromagnetic Sources . . . . .	154
5.2.2	Acoustic Emissions . . . . .	160
5.2.3	Nanoparticles . . . . .	166
5.2.4	Metals and Salt Metals . . . . .	172
5.2.5	Volatile Organic Compounds . . . . .	173
5.2.6	Nutrient Deficiency . . . . .	174
5.3	Biotic Stress . . . . .	176
5.3.1	Bacteria and Viruses . . . . .	176
5.3.2	Fungi . . . . .	177
5.3.3	Phytohormones . . . . .	179
5.3.4	miRNA . . . . .	179
5.4	Future Perspectives . . . . .	182
	References . . . . .	184
	<b>Natural Compounds Extracted from Medicinal Plants and Their Immunomodulatory Activities . . . . .</b>	<b>197</b>
	Vinod Kumar Gurjar and Dilipkumar Pal	
6.1	Introduction . . . . .	199
6.2	Immunomodulators . . . . .	200
6.2.1	Plant-Derived Bioactive as Immunomodulators . . . . .	214
6.2.2	Classification of Immunomodulators . . . . .	220
6.2.3	Low Molecular Weight Immunomodulators . . . . .	222
6.2.4	High Molecular Weight Immunomodulators . . . . .	223
6.2.5	High Throughput Screening (HTS) for Plants and Bioactive Compounds . . . . .	226
6.3	Immunomodulatory Plants . . . . .	235
6.3.1	<i>Acacia Catechu/Senegalia Catechu</i> (Family: (Fabaceae)) . . . . .	235
6.3.2	<i>Acorus Calamus</i> (Family: Acoraceae) . . . . .	236

6.3.3	<i>Allium Sativum</i> (Family: Amaryllidaceae) . . . . .	237
6.3.4	<i>Andrographis Paniculate</i> (Family: Acanthaceae) . . . . .	238
6.3.5	<i>Azadirachta Indica</i> (Family: Meliaceae) . . . . .	239
6.3.6	<i>Boerhavia Diffusa</i> (Family: Nyctaginaceae) . . . . .	240
6.3.7	<i>Clerodendrum Splendens</i> (Family: Lamiaceae) . . . . .	241
6.3.8	<i>Curcuma Longa</i> (Family: Zingiberaceae) . . . . .	241
6.3.9	<i>Cynodon Dactylon</i> (Family: Poaceae) . . . . .	242
6.3.10	<i>Ficus Benghalensis</i> (Family: Moraceae) . . . . .	242
6.3.11	<i>Glycyrrhiza Uralensis</i> Fisch (Family: Fabaceae) . . . . .	242
6.3.12	<i>Murraya Koenigii</i> (Family: Rutaceae) . . . . .	243
6.3.13	<i>Ocimum Sanctum</i> (Family: Lamiaceae) . . . . .	243
6.3.14	<i>Panax Ginseng</i> (Family: Araliaceae) . . . . .	244
6.3.15	<i>Picrorhiza Scrophulariiflora</i> (Family: Scrophulariaceae) . . . . .	245
6.3.16	<i>Syzygium Aromaticum</i> (Family: Myrtaceae) . . . . .	246
6.3.17	<i>Terminalia Arjuna</i> (Family: Combretaceae) . . . . .	246
6.3.18	<i>Tinospora Cordifolia</i> (Family: Menispermaceae) . . . . .	247
6.4	Conclusion and Future Perspective . . . . .	247
	References . . . . .	248
<b>7</b>	<b>Antibacterial and Antifungal Plant Metabolites from the Tropical Medicinal Plants</b> . . . . .	<b>263</b>
	Luiz Everson da Silva, Camila Confortin, and Mallappa Kumara Swamy	
7.1	Introduction . . . . .	264
7.2	Target for Antimicrobial Agents and Resistance Mechanisms . . . . .	265
7.3	Tropical Plants with Relevant Antibacterial Activities . . . . .	269
7.4	Synergisms of Phytochemicals and Conventional Antimicrobial Drugs . . . . .	270
7.5	Antibiotic Resistance—Combination Therapy (Antibiotic + Phytochemical/Plant Extract) . . . . .	273
7.6	Essential Oils with Antimicrobial Activity from Tropical Medicinal Plants . . . . .	275
7.7	Plant-Derived Natural Products with Antifungal Activity . . . . .	276
7.8	Fungal Resistance and Modulatory Potential of Extracts, Fractions and Essential Oil from Tropical Medicinal Species . . . . .	278
7.9	Conclusions and Future Prospects . . . . .	280
	References . . . . .	281

<b>8</b>	<b>Capillary Electrophoresis: A New Evolutionary Platform of Plant Secondary Metabolites</b> .....	287
	Dilipkumar Pal and Souvik Mukherjee	
8.1	Introduction .....	288
8.1.1	Principle of the Technique .....	289
8.1.2	Nature of $S_{pt}$ .....	290
8.2	Factors Effecting $S_{pt}$ .....	291
8.2.1	I.P .....	291
8.2.2	Esp .....	292
8.3	Instrumentation .....	292
8.4	Difference Between C.e and Others $S_{pt}$ Technique .....	293
8.5	Application .....	293
8.5.1	Quaternary Alkaloidal Compounds .....	295
8.5.2	Flavonoid .....	295
8.5.3	Terpenoids .....	297
8.5.4	Coumarin Derivatives .....	299
8.5.5	Quinones .....	301
8.5.6	Polyamine .....	302
8.6	Capillary Electrophoresis Non Aquas (C.e <sub>N</sub> ) for Bioactive Compound .....	303
8.7	Online C.e Concentration .....	303
8.8	C.e Versus C.e <sub>MS</sub> .....	303
8.9	Conclusion .....	304
	References .....	305
<b>9</b>	<b>Camptothecin: Occurrence, Chemistry and Mode of Action</b> .....	311
	Mallappa Kumara Swamy, Boregowda Purushotham, and Uma Rani Sinniah	
9.1	Introduction .....	311
9.2	Camptothecin Discovery and Its Chemistry .....	313
9.3	Natural Sources of Camptothecin .....	316
9.3.1	Camptothecin from Plants .....	316
9.3.2	Camptothecin from Endophytes .....	317
9.4	Mode of Action of Camptothecin .....	320
9.5	Conclusions .....	322
	References .....	322
<b>10</b>	<b>Secondary Metabolites from Plant Sources</b> .....	329
	Chandi Charan Kandar	
10.1	Introduction .....	330
10.1.1	Comparison of Secondary Metabolites with Primary Metabolites .....	332
10.2	Alkaloids .....	333
10.3	Saponins .....	336

10.4	Phenolic Compounds . . . . .	34
10.4.1	Simple Phenolics . . . . .	34
10.4.2	Coumarins . . . . .	34
10.4.3	Flavonoids . . . . .	34
10.4.4	Chromones and Xanthenes . . . . .	34
10.4.5	Tannins . . . . .	34
10.4.6	Stilbenes . . . . .	35
10.4.7	Lignans . . . . .	35
10.5	Terpenes and Terpenoids . . . . .	35
10.5.1	Hemiterpenes . . . . .	35
10.5.2	Monoterpenes . . . . .	35
10.5.3	Sesquiterpenes . . . . .	35
10.5.4	Diterpenes . . . . .	35
10.5.5	Sesterterpenes . . . . .	35
10.5.6	Triterpenes . . . . .	36
10.5.7	Sesquaterpenes . . . . .	36
10.5.8	Tetraterpenes . . . . .	36
10.5.9	Polyterpenes . . . . .	36
10.6	Carbohydrates . . . . .	36
10.7	Lipids (Fixed Oil, Fats, Waxes and Phospholipids) . . . . .	36
10.7.1	Fixed Oils . . . . .	36
10.7.2	Waxes . . . . .	36
10.7.3	Phospholipids . . . . .	36
10.7.4	Fatty Acids . . . . .	37
10.8	Glycosides . . . . .	37
10.9	Conclusion . . . . .	37
	References . . . . .	37
<b>11</b>	<b>Pharmaceutical and Therapeutic Applications of Fenugreek Gum . . . . .</b>	<b>379</b>
	Purusottam Mishra, Amit Kumar Srivastava, Tara Chand Yadav, Vikas Pruthi, and Ramasare Prasad	
11.1	Introduction . . . . .	379
11.1.1	Natural Gums . . . . .	380
11.1.2	Fenugreek Gum . . . . .	381
11.1.3	Chemical Composition of Fenugreek Seed . . . . .	382
11.2	Galactomannan: The Chief Constituent of Fenugreek Gum . . . . .	383
11.2.1	Structural Properties . . . . .	383
11.2.2	Physicochemical Properties . . . . .	383
11.2.3	Biosafety and Toxicological Studies . . . . .	386
11.3	Drug Delivery Applications of Fenugreek Gum . . . . .	387
11.3.1	Ophthalmic Drug Delivery . . . . .	387
11.3.2	Gastroretentive Drug Delivery . . . . .	388



11.3.3	Colon Drug Delivery .....	389
11.3.4	Vaginal Drug Delivery .....	389
11.3.5	Aerogels .....	390
11.4	Fenugreek Gum as a Pharmaceutical Excipient .....	391
11.4.1	Retarding Agent .....	391
11.4.2	Super-disintegrating Agent .....	391
11.4.3	Mucoadhesive and Bioadhesive Agent .....	392
11.4.4	Matrix Forming Agent .....	393
11.4.5	Bioavailability Enhancer .....	394
11.4.6	Microencapsulation of Probiotic .....	394
11.5	Therapeutic Applications of Fenugreek Gum .....	395
11.5.1	Antidiabetic Property .....	395
11.5.2	Hypolipidemic Potential and Role in Fat Accumulation .....	399
11.5.3	Anti-inflammatory Potential .....	400
11.5.4	Anticancer Potential .....	400
11.5.5	Hepatoprotective Potential .....	401
11.6	Conclusion and Future Perspectives .....	401
	References .....	402
<b>12</b>	<b>Antimicrobial Application Potential of Phytoconstituents from Turmeric and Garlic .....</b>	<b>409</b>
	Shiv Kumar Prajapati, Gaurav Mishra, Akanksha Malaiya, Ankit Jain, Nishi Mody, and Ashok M. Raichur	
12.1	Introduction .....	410
12.2	Turmeric .....	411
12.2.1	Phytochemistry of Turmeric .....	412
12.2.2	Antimicrobial Mechanism of Curcuminoids .....	412
12.3	Garlic .....	414
12.3.1	Phytochemistry of Garlic .....	415
12.3.2	Antimicrobial Mechanism of Phytochemicals of Garlic .....	416
12.4	Applications .....	418
12.4.1	Antimicrobial Applications of Phytoconstituents from Turmeric .....	418
12.4.2	Antimicrobial Applications of Phytoconstituents of Garlic .....	419
12.4.3	Nanoformulation Based Applications .....	421
12.4.4	Nanoparticles .....	422
12.5	Conclusion .....	428
	References .....	429

<b>13 Carvacrol (<i>Origanum vulgare</i>): Therapeutic Properties and Molecular Mechanisms</b> . . . . .	437
Arijit Mondal, Sankhadip Bose, Kamalika Mazumder, and Ritu Khanra	
13.1 Introduction . . . . .	438
13.2 Literature Search Methodology . . . . .	439
13.3 Extraction and Isolation of Carvacrol . . . . .	439
13.4 Biosynthesis of Carvacrol . . . . .	440
13.5 Physical Properties . . . . .	441
13.6 Metabolism and Excretion of Carvacrol . . . . .	441
13.7 Acute Toxicity of Carvacrol . . . . .	443
13.8 Antioxidant Activity . . . . .	444
13.9 Antimicrobial Effect . . . . .	445
13.10 Anticancer Effect of Carvacrol and the Related Mechanism of Actions . . . . .	447
13.11 Carvacrol Derivatives with Pharmacological Activities . . . . .	452
13.12 Conclusion and Future Perspectives . . . . .	455
References . . . . .	456
<b>14 Pharmaceutical Application of Bio-actives from <i>Alstonia</i> Genus: Current Findings and Future Directions</b> . . . . .	463
Atish T. Paul, Ginson George, Nisha Yadav, Arjun Jeswani, and Prashant S. Auti	
14.1 Introduction . . . . .	464
14.2 Botanical Description . . . . .	466
14.3 Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities . . . . .	466
14.3.1 Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Scholaris</i> . . . . .	466
14.3.2 Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Macrophylla</i> . . . . .	489
14.3.3 Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Angustifolia</i> . . . . .	498
14.3.4 Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Boonei</i> . . . . .	501
14.3.5 Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Venenata</i> . . . . .	505
14.3.6 Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Yunnanensis</i> . . . . .	508
14.3.7 Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Spatulata</i> . . . . .	511
14.3.8 Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Rupestris</i> . . . . .	513
14.3.9 Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Rostrata</i> . . . . .	515

14.3.10	Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Pneumatophora</i> .....	516
14.3.11	Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Penangiana</i> .....	518
14.3.12	Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Mairei</i> .....	519
14.3.13	Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Congensis</i> .....	519
14.3.14	Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Angustiloba</i> .....	519
14.3.15	Phytochemistry and Pharmacological Activities of <i>A. Actinophylla</i> .....	522
14.4	Pharmacokinetics and Metabolite Identification .....	522
14.5	Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Values of <i>Alstonia</i> Genus .....	524
14.6	Conclusion and Future Perspective .....	528
	References .....	529
<b>15</b>	<b>Role of Natural Bio-active Compounds as Antidiabetic Agents</b> .....	<b>535</b>
	Sandra N. Jimenez-Garcia, Lina Garcia-Mier, Moises A. Vazquez-Cruz, Xochitl S. Ramirez-Gomez, Ramon G. Guevara-Gonzalez, Juan Fernando Garcia-Trejo, and Ana Angélica Feregrino-Perez	
15.1	Introduction .....	536
15.2	Mechanisms of Action of Antidiabetic Substances .....	537
15.3	$\alpha$ -Amilase Inhibitors .....	538
15.4	$\alpha$ -Glucosidase Inhibition .....	541
15.5	Activation of Glucose Transporters .....	545
15.6	Activation of Insulin Secretion .....	547
15.7	Future Perspective and Conclusion .....	553
	References .....	553
<b>16</b>	<b>An Overview of the Bioactivities of Gedunin</b> .....	<b>563</b>
	Yong Sze Ong, Kooi Yeong Khaw, Loh Teng-Hern Tan, Peng-Nian Yew, Kai-Boon Tan, Wei Hsum Yap, Siah Ying Tang, Liang Ee Low, Learn-Han Lee, and Bey-Hing Goh	
16.1	Introduction .....	564
16.2	Bioactivities of Gedunin .....	565
16.2.1	Anti-Cancer Properties of Gedunin .....	565
16.2.2	Anti-neurological Disorders and Cryoprotective Effects of Gedunin .....	577
16.2.3	Anti-inflammatory Effects of Gedunin .....	578
16.2.4	Anti-parasitic Effects of Gedunin and Derivatives .....	579

16.2.5	Antimicrobial Effects of Gedunin and Derivatives . . .	580
16.2.6	Insect Growth Inhibition Effects of Gedunin and Derivatives . . . . .	580
16.3	Commercial Potential of Gedunin . . . . .	581
16.4	Conclusion and Gaps of Knowledge . . . . .	581
	References . . . . .	582
<b>17</b>	<b>Biological Activities of Marine Products and Nutritional Importance . . . . .</b>	<b>587</b>
	Dilipkumar Pal and Khushboo Raj	
17.1	Introduction . . . . .	588
17.2	Marine Organisms: Source of Nutrition . . . . .	588
17.2.1	Proteins . . . . .	588
17.2.2	Lipids and Fatty Acids . . . . .	589
17.2.3	Sterols . . . . .	591
17.2.4	Carbohydrates . . . . .	594
17.2.5	Antioxidants . . . . .	596
17.2.6	Vitamins and Minerals . . . . .	597
17.3	Marine Sources for Pharmacological Effect . . . . .	598
17.3.1	Anti-cancer . . . . .	598
17.3.2	Anti-Cardiovascular Effect . . . . .	603
17.3.3	Anti-coagulant Activity . . . . .	604
17.3.4	Anti-obesity . . . . .	604
17.3.5	Bone Growth and Healing . . . . .	606
17.3.6	Anti-inflammatory Activities . . . . .	607
17.3.7	Neuroprotective Agents . . . . .	608
17.4	Summary . . . . .	609
17.5	Conclusion . . . . .	610
	References . . . . .	611
<b>18</b>	<b>Cardiac Tissue Engineering: A Role for Natural Biomaterials . . . .</b>	<b>617</b>
	Pallavi Pushp and Mukesh Kumar Gupta	
18.1	Introduction . . . . .	618
18.2	Approaches for CTE Using Natural Biomaterials, Cell-Sheet and Decellularized Tissues . . . . .	619
18.3	Natural Biomaterials Used in 'Classical' CTE . . . . .	620
18.3.1	Collagen I . . . . .	621
18.3.2	Gelatin . . . . .	623
18.3.3	Fibrin . . . . .	624
18.3.4	Alginate . . . . .	624
18.3.5	Chitosan . . . . .	625
18.3.6	Fibroin/Silk Fibroin . . . . .	625
18.3.7	Decellularized ECM . . . . .	627
18.3.8	Other Natural Biomaterials . . . . .	627

18.4	Enhancing the Elasticity and Electrical Conductivity of Natural Biomaterials for CTE .....	629
18.5	Enhancing the Mechanical Properties of Natural Polymers for CTE .....	630
18.6	Natural Biomaterials as Coating Materials .....	630
18.7	Types of Scaffolds for CTE from Natural Biomaterials .....	631
18.7.1	Fibrous Scaffolds .....	631
18.7.2	Porous Scaffolds/sponges .....	632
18.7.3	Hydrogels .....	632
18.7.4	Bio-Fabricated/Micro-Fabricated Scaffolds .....	633
18.8	Conclusion and Future Direction .....	634
	References .....	634
<b>19</b>	<b>The Importance of Natural Products in Cosmetics</b> .....	<b>643</b>
	Nagarjuna Reddy Desam and Abdul Jabbar Al-Rajab	
19.1	Introduction .....	644
19.2	Background .....	645
19.3	From Past to Future .....	647
19.4	Source of Natural Products .....	647
19.5	Extraction and Isolation of Natural Products or Essential Oils .....	648
19.6	Plants-Derived Cosmetics and Cosmeceuticals .....	648
19.6.1	Manufacture of Plant-Derived Cosmetics and Cosmeceuticals .....	649
19.6.2	Substances of Plant-Based Cosmetics and Cosmeceuticals .....	651
19.7	Applications of Natural Products in Cosmetics .....	662
19.7.1	Natural Products as Skin Care Agents .....	662
19.7.2	Natural Products as Hair Care Agents .....	667
19.7.3	Essential Oils Used as Cosmetics .....	669
19.8	New Trends in Cosmetics (Plant Origin of By-Products) .....	672
19.8.1	By-Products from Citrus Fruits .....	673
19.8.2	By-Products from Tomato and Olive .....	674
19.8.3	By-Products Processing from Coffee .....	674
19.9	Future Prospects and Conclusions .....	675
	References .....	676
<b>20</b>	<b>Encapsulation of Bioactive Compound and Its Therapeutic Potential</b> .....	<b>687</b>
	Lalduhsanga Pachuau, Laldinchhana, Probin Kumar Roy, James H. Zothantluanga, Supratim Ray, and Sanjib Das	
20.1	Introduction .....	688
20.2	Rationale for Encapsulation of Bioactive Compounds .....	690

20.3	Encapsulation of Bioactive Compounds . . . . .	691
20.3.1	Microencapsulation . . . . .	691
20.3.2	Nano-based Encapsulation Platforms for Bioactive Compounds . . . . .	694
20.4	Conclusion . . . . .	705
	References . . . . .	705
<b>21</b>	<b>Tannins and Polyphenols Extracted from Natural Plants and Their Versatile Application . . . . .</b>	<b>715</b>
	Suvadeep Mal and Dilipkumar Pal	
21.1	Introduction . . . . .	716
21.2	Tannin Occurrence: Plants Containing Tannins . . . . .	717
21.3	Classification of Tannins . . . . .	723
21.3.1	Gallotannins . . . . .	723
21.3.2	Ellagitannins . . . . .	724
21.3.3	Condensed Tannins . . . . .	724
21.3.4	Complex Tannins . . . . .	725
21.4	Biosynthetic Pathways of Tannins . . . . .	726
21.4.1	Biosynthesis of Hydrolysable Tannins . . . . .	727
21.4.2	Biosynthesis of Condensed and Complex Tannins . . . . .	728
21.5	Extraction Process of Tannins . . . . .	731
21.6	Physical and Chemical Properties of Tannins . . . . .	732
21.7	Chemical Tests of Tannins . . . . .	733
21.7.1	Qualitative Tests . . . . .	733
21.7.2	Quantitative Tests . . . . .	735
21.8	Activities of Tannins . . . . .	736
21.8.1	Anti-oxidant Properties . . . . .	736
21.8.2	Anti-microbial Properties . . . . .	738
21.9	Anti-viral Properties . . . . .	738
21.9.1	Cardioprotective Activity . . . . .	739
21.9.2	Anti-histaminic Property . . . . .	740
21.9.3	Cytotoxic and Anticancer Activity . . . . .	740
21.9.4	Anti-diabetic Property . . . . .	743
21.9.5	Anti-obesity Action . . . . .	744
21.9.6	Anti-inflammatory Action . . . . .	744
21.9.7	Anti-aging Properties . . . . .	745
21.9.8	Other Therapeutic Activities of Tannins . . . . .	745
21.10	Tannins in Industry . . . . .	746
21.11	Tannins in Cosmeceuticals . . . . .	746
21.12	Tannins in Nutraceuticals . . . . .	747
21.13	Conclusion . . . . .	748
	References . . . . .	748

22	<b>Piperine: Sources, Properties, Applications, and Biotechnological Production</b> .....	759
	Neetu Sachan, Dilipkumar Pal, and Phool Chandra	
22.1	Introduction .....	760
22.2	Biosynthesis of Piperine .....	760
22.3	Extraction Techniques .....	760
22.4	Effect on Heart .....	760
22.5	Effect on Pentobarbitone Sleeping Time .....	762
22.6	Bioavailability of Drugs .....	763
22.7	Effect on Enzymes .....	763
22.8	Effects on Antioxidant Pathways in Tissues from Diabetic Rats .....	764
22.9	Effect on the CNS .....	765
22.10	Effect on Acute Kidney Injury .....	766
22.11	Anticonvulsant Mechanisms of Piperine .....	767
22.12	Immunomodulatory and Antitumor Activity .....	768
22.13	Larvicidal Effects .....	769
22.14	Inhibits B Lymphocyte Activation and Effector Functions .....	769
22.15	The Anti-tumor Effectiveness and Mechanisms Accompanied with the Combination of Docetaxel-Piperine .....	769
22.16	Allergic Encephalomyelitis .....	770
22.17	Memory Enhancer and Restoration of Myelin Damage .....	770
22.18	Effect on Carbamazepine Metabolism .....	770
22.19	Bioenhancer Effects .....	773
22.20	Ayurvedic Formulations .....	773
22.21	Death of Cerebellar Granule Neurons Induced by Piperine is Distinct from that Induced by Low Potassium Medium .....	775
22.22	KV Channel as Therapeutic Target for Prostate Cancer Treatment .....	776
22.23	Piperine Impairs the Migration and T Cell-Activating Function of Dendritic Cells .....	776
22.24	Piperine-Laden Nanoparticles with Increased Dissolving and Improved Bioavailability for Controlling Epilepsy .....	780
22.25	In Vitro Cytotoxic and In Silico Activity .....	782
22.26	Conclusion .....	783
	References .....	784
23	<b>Protein and Enzymes Isolated from Plant Sources and Their Utilization in Pharmaceutical Field</b> .....	793
	Om Prakash Panda, Sitansu Sekhar Nanda, Dong Kee Yi, Dilipkumar Pal, and Souvik Mukherjee	
23.1	Introduction .....	794
23.1.1	Classification of $p^R_t$ .....	794
23.1.2	Elemental Composition of Proteins .....	796

	23.1.3	Classification $A_m^a$ .....	798
	23.1.4	Properties of $p_t^R$ .....	799
23.2		$p_t^R$ Sources: Animals and $P_T^I$ .....	802
23.3		Some Important $p_t^R$ , Their Characteristics and Uses .....	804
	23.3.1	Soybean .....	804
	23.3.2	Wheat .....	805
	23.3.3	Corn Zein .....	805
	23.3.4	Pea $p_t^R$ .....	806
	23.3.5	Rice $p_t^R$ .....	806
	23.3.6	Sunflower $p_t^R$ .....	806
23.4		Isolation of $p_t^R$ .....	807
	23.4.1	Selective Precipitation Methods .....	807
	23.4.2	Isoionic Precipitation .....	807
	23.4.3	Reversed-Phase High-Performance Liquid Chromatography (RP-HPLC) .....	808
	23.4.4	Mass Spectrometry of $p_t^R$ .....	808
23.5		Application of $p_t^R$ .....	809
23.6		Introduction of $E_m^Z$ .....	809
	23.6.1	Nomenclature and Classification of $E_m^Z$ .....	809
	23.6.2	Chemical Nature and Properties of $E_m^Z$ .....	810
	23.6.3	Mechanism of $E_m^Z$ Action .....	811
	23.6.4	Important Industrial $E_m^Z$ and Their Sources .....	811
	23.6.5	$E_m^Z$ Derived from $P_T^I$ Sources .....	813
23.7		Pharmaceutical Applications .....	815
23.8		Conclusion .....	816
		References .....	816
<b>24</b>		<b>Advances and Perspectives of Gamma-Aminobutyric Acid as a Bioactive Compound in Food</b> .....	<b>819</b>
		Priti Jain and Mangesh S. Ghodke	
	24.1	Introduction .....	819
	24.1.1	Why is GABA Important? .....	821
	24.1.2	Alternative Synthetic Methods of GABA .....	821
	24.2	Pharmaceutical Properties of GABA .....	823
	24.2.1	Anti-Hypertensive Effect of GABA .....	823
	24.2.2	GABA as Neuroprotective Compound and for Neurological Disorders .....	824
	24.2.3	GABA as Anti-obesity Agent .....	825
	24.2.4	Antimutagenic and Antimicrobial Activities of $\gamma$ -Aminobutyric Acid .....	825
	24.2.5	GABA as Anti-stress Compound .....	826
	24.2.6	Gamma-Aminobutyric Acid in Thyroid Dysfunction .....	827
	24.2.7	GABA as Renoprotective .....	827



24.3	GABA as Bioactive Compound in Food . . . . .	828
24.3.1	Microorganisms as Sources of GABA/GAD . . . . .	829
24.3.2	Plants as a Source of GABA and GABA Enriched Food . . . . .	829
24.3.3	Dairy Products and Beverages as GABA Sources . . . . .	830
24.3.4	Marine Sources of GABA . . . . .	831
24.4	Techniques for GABA Enrichment and Advances in GABA Production . . . . .	832
24.4.1	GABA Production by LAB . . . . .	832
24.4.2	GABA Production by Other Microorganisms . . . . .	833
24.4.3	Factors Affecting GABA Levels . . . . .	833
24.4.4	Advances in GABA Production Techniques . . . . .	837
24.5	Conclusion . . . . .	839
	References . . . . .	839
<b>25</b>	<b>Medicinal Attribution of Ginsenoside: A Huge Source of Plant Bioactive Compound . . . . .</b>	<b>845</b>
	Dilipkumar Pal, Souvik Mukherjee, Satish Balasaheb Nimse, and K. K. Chandra	
25.1	Introduction . . . . .	846
25.2	Biosynthesis of $G_N^D$ . . . . .	847
25.3	Biotransformation of $G_N^D$ . . . . .	849
25.4	Medicinal and Nutraceutical Applications . . . . .	852
25.4.1	Anti-carcinogenic Effects . . . . .	852
25.4.2	Cytotoxic and Anti $T_U^m$ Activity . . . . .	852
25.4.3	Inhibition of $T_U^m C_e^L$ Invasion and $M_a^T$ . . . . .	854
25.4.4	Inhibition of $T_U^m$ Angiogenesis . . . . .	854
25.4.5	Immunomodulatory Effects . . . . .	855
25.4.6	Anti-inflammatory Activity . . . . .	856
25.4.7	Antistress Activity . . . . .	858
25.4.8	Memory, Learning, and $N_E^{ur}$ Protection . . . . .	858
25.4.9	Anti-diabetic Activity . . . . .	859
25.5	Conclusions . . . . .	859
	References . . . . .	860

17. D Pal A P. Saha

## Chapter 22 Piperine: Sources, Properties, Applications, and Biotechnological Production

Neetu Sachan, Dilipkumar Pal, and Phool Chandra

**Abstract** From ancient times, phytopharmaceuticals have played an important role in the management of human health. Piperine, an alkaloid with the piperidine nucleus was discovered and isolated by Hans Christian Ørsted, from the fruits of *Piper nigrum*. Piperine forms is slightly water soluble and forms monoclinic needles and possess a strong pungent taste. Piperine contains plentiful established health effects and beneficial therapeutic properties. Cells and enzymes are key elements in biotechnological processes to carry out a wide variety of very specific reactions under judicious conditions to produce piperine and their products. Piperine also serves as bio-enhancers in conjunction with drugs to stimulate drug molecules' activity across different routes by improving the drug's bioavailability across the membrane, raising the drug's effect across conformational interaction, and working as a drug receptor. In recent years, there has been significant interest in the use of piperine to treat many illnesses, its health-beneficial effects, and its work as bio-enhancers. Due to their biological activity, piperine has the potential to be used in health and medicine.

**Keywords** Piperine · Alkaloid · *Piper nigrum* · Bio-enhancers · Therapeutics · Phytopharmaceuticals

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© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021  
D. Pal and A. K. Nayak (eds.), *Bioactive Natural Products*  
for *Pharmaceutical Applications*, Advanced Structured Materials 140,  
[https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-54027-2\\_22](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-54027-2_22)

## 22.1 Introduction

Piperine contains numerous pharmacological activities and many health benefits, particularly against chronic conditions such as insulin resistance reduction, anti-inflammatory activity, and correction in hepatic steatosis (Derosa et al. 2016). Piperine was first isolated in 1820 by the Danish chemist Hans Christian Orstedt; it occurs as a yellow crystalline solid (MW = 285.33 g mol<sup>-1</sup>, m.p. = 128–130 °C) poorly soluble in water and presents weak base properties (Chavarria et al. 2016; Koleva et al. 2012).

## 22.2 Biosynthesis of Piperine

Piperine is a secondary metabolite biosynthetically derived from L-lysine and a cinnamoyl-CoA precursor. Decarboxylation of L-lysine by lysine decarboxylase (LDC) yields cadaverine, which undergoes oxidative deamination by copper amine oxidase (CuAO,) originating 5-aminopentanal. This compound is rapidly cyclized into  $\Delta^1$ -piperidine Schiff base and subsequently reduced to form piperidine. In parallel, piperonyl-CoA is generated from a cinnamoyl-CoA precursor; this precursor undergoes chain elongation with malonylCoA in a Claisen-like reaction, generating a keto-ester that is reduced by NADPH and then dehydrated to afford piperonyl-CoA. The piperine unit reacts with piperonyl-CoA affording piperine (Fig. 22.1).

## 22.3 Extraction Techniques

The extraction of piperine from the plants can be made with different techniques and that are present in Fig. 22.2 (Raman and Gaikar 2002; Rathod 2014).

## 22.4 Effect on Heart

Piperine produced both positive chronotropic and inotropic responses in the isolated rat atria but not in the ventricular muscles. A tachyphylaxis to piperine occurred rapidly depending on the dose of preincubation. It has been revealed that piperine diminishes the level of substance P in the rat spinal cord, possibly as a result of an extensive discharge of this neuropeptide. In the heart, it has been shown that capsaicin releases CGRP from NANC nerves and the released CGRP shows positive chronotropic and inotropic effects (Franco-Cereceda and Lundberg 1985; Franco-Cereceda et al. 1988; Miyauchi et al. 1987, 1988). Therefore, the lack of