

Effect of *Hibiscus rosa sinensis* L. basic leaf extract fraction on type-1 diabetic animal model

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Abstract

Type 1 diabetes mellitus (T1DM) results when pancreatic β -cells are destroyed or absent, leading to decrease in insulin production and secretion. The objective of the present investigation is to screen one of the isolated fractions of *Hibiscus rosa sinensis* on type-1 diabetic animal model for antidiabetic activity. Experiment was conducted by dissolving basic leaf extract fraction in tween-80 (1%) with two concentrations of 100 and 200 mg/kg body weight and feed orally to Non Obese Diabetic (NOD) mice. After oral feeding of basic leaf fraction there was a significant reduction in serum glucose, glycosylated haemoglobin, triglycerides, cholesterol, blood urea in the diabetic animal model. There was enhancement in HDL and liver glycogen compared to control diabetic animal. Basic leaf fraction has demonstrated significant antidiabetic properties on type-1 animal model by enhancing insulin secretion.

Key words: Cholesterol, Glycosylated haemoglobin, Insulin, Liver glycogen, NOD mice

Introduction

Diabetes mellitus is affecting nearly 170 million people and is expected to double by 2030.¹ The two major types of diabetes (type 1 and type 2) are characterized by chronic hyperglycemia due to loss of insulin secretion and/or defective insulin action. Type 1 diabetes mellitus (T1DM) is an autoimmune disorder resulting from lymphocyte-mediated destruction of insulin producing β cells, whereas type 2 diabetes is a complex metabolic disorder caused by combination of insulin resistance and concomitant impairment in insulin secretion.² Type 1 diabetes affects more than 5.3 million people worldwide.³

Several medicinal plants are having hypoglycemic effects.⁴ The WHO has recommended that the assessment of traditional plant treatments for diabetes mellitus needs further investigation.⁵ Several herbal products were described for the care of diabetes mellitus in ancient literature of Ayurveda in India. Many of the plants used as diet were reported to have antidiabetic property.⁶ Ethnopharmacology surveys indicate that more than 1200 plants are used worldwide in traditional medicine for their alleged hypoglycemic activity.⁷

Hibiscus rosa sinensis is a shrub widely cultivated in tropics as an ornamental plant. It presents several forms with

varying flower colors. Different parts of the plant are used in the preparation of variety of foods.⁸ The leaves are used as a laxative, while the root is used in cough treatment. The flowers are considered to be aphrodisiac, emollient and emmenagogic and are used in bronchial catarrh, diarrhea and fertility control.⁹ Recently few reviews are published on medicinal plants useful for treatment of diabetes.¹⁰ Isolation of plant extracts for antiviral, antidiabetic and antioxidant properties have been reported.¹¹ Sachdewa and Khemani¹² and Sachdewa *et al.*¹³ have reported on hypoglycemic activity of *Hibiscus rosa sinensis* in diabetes induced rats. Vimala *et al.*¹⁴ published the insulin secreting activity of *H. rosa sinensis* in diabetes induced wistar rat.

The non-obese-diabetic (NOD) mouse has served as one of the primary models for type 1 diabetes in which new approaches for immunotherapy have been investigated.¹⁵ The NOD mouse spontaneously develops type 1 diabetes that has many immunological and pathophysiological similarities to human insulin dependent diabetes mellitus (IDDM). The autoimmune nature of diseases is suggested by lymphocytic infiltration of islets of Langerhans which precedes the destruction of insulin producing β -cell. Many studies on diabetes use animal models by injecting streptozotocin or alloxan to induce diabetes whereas the objective of the present investigation is to screen one of the isolated fractions of *H. rosa sinensis* on NOD mouse for antidiabetic activity.

Materials and Methods

Extraction and Fractionation

Healthy disease free leaves of *H. rosa sinensis* were collected from the garden of our University campus. The authenticity of the plant was confirmed by a taxonomist of the Department of Botany University of Mysore, Mysore,

Received on: 12 October, 2014

Accepted on: 18 March 2015

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and preserved in the form of herbarium. Collected leaves were shade dried and ground in warring blender. The ground powder was extracted in soxhlet apparatus using ethanol until the final drop of the extract became colorless. The extract was dried using evaporator. Details of extraction and fractionation of *H. rosa sinensis* is published elsewhere.¹⁶ After fractionation the five fractions were obtained namely ethyl acetate soluble fraction (F₁), ethyl acetate insoluble fraction (F₂), chloroform fraction (F₃), the basic fraction (F₄) and neutral fraction (F₅).

Animals

Animals-NOD mice were originally obtained from Center for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB, CSIR), Hyderabad and maintained under standard environmental conditions of 12:12 h L: D cycle. Mice were fed with standard diet supplied by Ambruth Feeds Pvt. Ltd. Bangalore and water *ad libitum*. Healthy adult (30 weeks old) NOD mice of either sex weighing 25-30 g were selected for the study from the Central Animal Facility of the Department. All the selected animals showed the fasting blood glucose values of ≥ 242 mg/100ml indicating hyperglycemia, the diabetic status. Experimental protocols were approved from Institutional Animal Ethics Committee (IAEC).

Experimental Protocols

The pilot experiment was conducted to test the hypoglycemic properties of the five fractions obtained. Since F₂ did not dissolve in tween-80 (1%) remaining fractions F₁, F₃, F₄ and F₅ were dissolved in tween- 80 (1%) and fed orally with two concentration of 100 and 200 mg/kg body weight to NOD mice. F₁ did not show hypoglycemia whereas fractions F₃, F₄ and F₅ showed hypoglycemia at the termination of experiment (unpublished data) Since fraction-4 was not obtained in sufficient quantity, detailed investigation for antidiabetic properties of fractions F₃ and F₅ were published earlier.¹⁶ Subsequently extraction procedure was repeated to obtain F₄ in adequate quantity and then it is subjected for detailed investigation for antidiabetic activity on NOD mice in the present investigation. The experiment was conducted by dissolving F₄ in tween- 80 (1%) and fed orally with two concentrations of 100 and 200 mg/kg body weight to NOD mice. NOD mice were randomly divided in to following groups with eight animals in each.

Group- I Control- NOD mice treated with vehicle alone.

Group- II NOD mice treated with insulin (1 ml of Biphasic isophane insulin purchased from pharmaceutical company dissolved in 100 ml saline and 0.1 ml/mouse / day was injected (intra peritoneal).

Group- III NOD mice fed orally with 100 mg/kg body weight of F₄.

Group- IV NOD mice fed orally with 200 mg/kg body weight of F₄.

Since diabetes is a chronic disorder requiring long term therapy, there is a need to assess the effect of different extracts for antidiabetic activity for a longer duration. Hence the experiment was conducted for four weeks.

Biochemical analysis

Serum glucose level was estimated using a glucometer (EZ Omnitest) every week to ascertain the states of diabetes in different groups of mice; similarly body weight was recorded once in a week in every group. After 30 days animals were allowed to fast overnight with a free access to water and autopsied under light either anesthesia. The blood was collected from the carotid artery at the time of autopsy¹⁷ and centrifuged at 4°C, at 10000 rpm for 10 min; the separated serum was used for bio-chemical analysis.

Serum glucose level was estimated by Trinder's method¹⁸ using GOD/POD Enzymatic kit. Glycosylated hemoglobin was determined according to the ion exchange resin method.¹⁹ Triglycerides were measured by enzyme-colorimetric method.²⁰ HDL- cholesterol was assayed by the method of Burstein *et al.*²¹ LDL-cholesterol and VLDL-cholesterol were measured by using the formula of Friedweld *et al.*²² Blood urea was estimated by urea-glutamate dehydrogenase (GLDH) method. Plasma insulin levels were determined in duplicate using insulin RIA Kit (Linco, St. Charles MO) with rat insulin as a standard.²³

To measure the liver glycogen 200 mg of the liver sample was finely ground with 20 ml of 5% TCA in a homogenizer. The precipitate of proteins is filtered off and the clear filtrate was used for measuring glycogen content by Anthrone method.²⁴

All above parameter were recorded at the termination of experiment.

Statistical analysis

Data were statically evaluated by using one way ANOVA. Wherever the ANOVA values were found to be significant Duncan's new multiple range test (DMRT) was applied (SPSS computer software). The values were considered significant when $p < 0.05$.

Results

Bodyweight

Table 1 shows the body weight of experimental animals. Body weight of group I animals remained constant without any gain whereas there was a significant increase in body weight of the animals of group II - IV at the termination of the experiment. Table 2 shows the effect of F₄ on different parameter at the termination of the experiment.

Serum glucose level in group I (NOD mice) exhibited hyperglycemia on the day of commencement of experiments (287 mg/dl) and remained in the diabetic state throughout the experiment (Figure 1). Group II animals exhibited hyperglycemia (242.4 mg/100 ml) on the day of commencement of experiment but after intraperitoneal daily injection of insulin-resulted in bringing the blood sugar level to non-diabetic status (103.4 mg/100 ml). Animals in groups III and IV exhibited hyperglycemia with the fasting blood glucose values of 258.22 and 264.48 mg/100 ml respectively on the day of commencement of experiment. After oral feeding of F₄ (100 and 200 mg/kg body weight) serum glucose level was brought to 119.01 and 108.58 experiment (Figure 1).

Table 1: Effect of *H. rosa sinensis* (HLE) basic leaf extract fraction (F₄) on body weight of experimental groups.

Parameters	Initial Body weight	Final. Body weight
Group I (NOD mice control)	27.8±0.254 ^a	27.1±0.187 ^a
Group II (Insulin injected NOD Mice)	30.14±0.403 ^a	31.74±0.402 ^b
Group III (HLE.F ₄ 100 mg/kg bw)	29.26±0.290 ^a	30.92±0.086 ^b
Group IV (HLE.F ₄ 200 mg/kg bw)	29.36±0.395 ^a	31.14±0.33 ^b

All values of final body weight are significant at P<0.05 except in Group I vs initial body weight. Values expressed in g are mean ±SE from 8 animals in each group.

Table 2: Effects of *H. rosa sinensis* basic leaf extract fraction (F₄) on glycosylated haemoglobin, Insulin, triglyceride, cholesterol, Liver glycogen and blood urea levels of control and experimental groups

Parameters/ group	Glycosylated Haemoglobin (HbA1c%)	Insulin (μu/l)	Triglycerides (mg/dl)	Cholesterol (mg/dl)	Liver glycogen (mg/g)	Blood urea (mg/dl)
Group I NOD mice control	9.54± 0.18 ^a	0.14±0.51 ^a	80.8±0.37 ^a	78.2±0.583 ^a	3.67±0.17 ^a	61.4±0.01 ^a
Group II Insulin injected NOD mice	6.44±0.12 ^b	0.336±1.00 ^b	98.4±2.57 ^b	76.8±2.03 ^a	5.34±0.16 ^b	38±0.01 ^b
Group III HLE.F ₄ 100 mg/kg bw	5.38±0.14 ^c	0.256±1.39 ^c	60.18±0.78 ^c	56.75±0.74 ^b	12.69±0.13 ^c	44.2±0.01 ^c
Group IV HLE.F ₄ 200 mg/kg bw	5.64±0.25 ^c	0.274±1.14 ^c	55.22±0.81 ^d	46.36±0.48 ^b	23.36±0.15 ^d	36±0.01 ^b
F value df (3,16)	110	41.74	194.43	184.44	3315.93	118.39
	sig p<0.05	sig p<0.05	sig p<0.05	sig p<0.05	sig p<0.05	sig p<0.05

Values are mean ±SE from 8 animals in each group. All values are significant at P<0.05 vs diabetic control (Gr. I)

Table 2 shows the levels of different biochemical parameters at the termination of experiment.

Blood glycosylated haemoglobin (HbA1c) level

Control group showed maximum levels of fasting glycosylated haemoglobin whereas there was significant decrease in fasting glycosylated haemoglobin in insulin injected group. Oral administration of F₄ for 30 days at two different doses (100 and 200 mg/kg body weight) resulted in significant decrease on fasting glycosylated haemoglobin in the groups III - IV. (Table 2)

Serum insulin

Serum insulin level remained minimum in control group. Insulin level was enhanced significantly in the remaining groups. However the insulin level was not on par with group II, in groups III and IV animals (Table 2).

Blood triglycerides

The triglycerides levels significantly decreased in groups III - IV compared to group I animals (Table 2). Interestingly the levels were enhanced significantly in insulin treated mice compared to that of control group.

Cholesterol

There was no significant variation in cholesterol in control group and insulin injected group. After oral treatment with F₄ at two different doses (100 and 200 mg/kg body weight) the cholesterol level of group III - IV showed significant reduction compared to that of control group (Table 2)

Liver glycogen

Liver glycogen in different groups of experimental animals is shown in Table 2. Liver glycogen increased to (145.5%) of the control value in group II and the glycogen increased to (345.8%) and (629.7%) in groups III and IV respectively.

Blood urea

The blood urea in control group showed higher values where as it remained significantly lower in all the remaining groups of animals (Table 2).

LDL value remained higher in group I animals. LDL value decreased significantly in group II and IV animals whereas there was no significant variation in group III animals (Figure 2). The levels of VLDL in different groups of experimental animals at the termination of experiment are shown in Figure 2. The VLDL value was enhanced in group- II animals whereas there was no significant variation in group III and IV animals compared to that of control animals. Figure 2 also shows the levels of HDL in different groups of experimental animals at the termination of the experiment. HDL level remained higher significantly in all the groups compared to that of group I animals.

Discussion

It is evident from Figure 1 that basic leaf extract fraction of *H. rosa sinensis* reduced the serum glucose level significantly. Loss of body weight due to defect in glucose metabolism and excessive breakdown of tissue protein is a

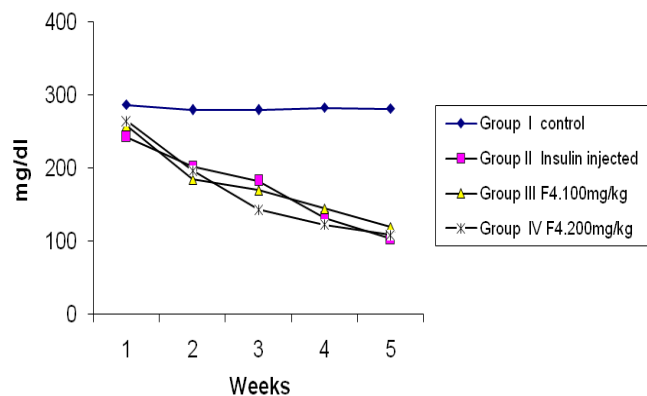


Figure 1: Effect of *H. rosa sinensis* (HLE) basic leaf extract fraction (F4) on serum glucose level (mg/dl).

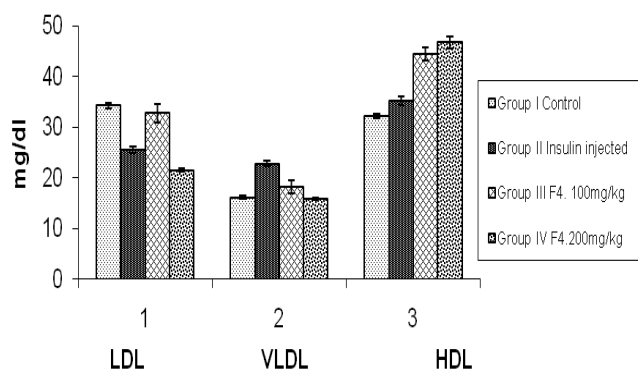


Figure 2: Effect of *H. rosa sinensis* (HLE) basic leaf extract fraction (F4) on LDL, VLDL, HDL (mg/dl)

characteristic condition in type 1 diabetes.²⁵ In the present investigation there was no body weight gain in control NOD mice. There was a significant body weight gain in insulin injected NOD mice whereas after oral feeding with F₄ with different concentrations there was also significant increase in body weight and this was associated with reduced serum glucose level throughout the experiment (Figure 1).

Patients with type 1 diabetes have to take exogenous insulin for survival.²⁶ In the present investigation group II animals were injected with insulin bringing the serum glucose level to non-diabetic status (Figure 1). Critically examining Table 2 it is obvious insulin failed to reduce triglycerides and cholesterol level comparing to control NOD mice. The cholesterol level in fact was enhanced in insulin treated group. F₄ with two different concentrations reduced the glycosylated hemoglobin, triglycerides cholesterol better than the insulin injected group. There was also enhancement of liver glycogen with different concentration of F₄ compared to insulin injected group which is a positive effect in reducing serum glucose level. Blood urea was also reduced significantly after treatment with F₄. Though exogenous insulin reduces the serum glucose level it has a side effect. There was enhancement in the insulin secretion from pancreatic islets after treatment with F₄ compared control NOD mice (Table 2). Though the quantity of insulin

secreted after treatment with F₄ was not on par with exogenous insulin supplied to group II animals, the insulin secreted within had a better effect in regulating glycosylated hemoglobin, triglycerides, cholesterol and liver glycogen level to non-diabetic status than exogenous insulin supplied. Several investigators have recommended that glycosylated hemoglobin be used as an indicator of metabolic control of diabetes since glycohemoglobin levels approach normal values in diabetic after metabolic control.²⁷ Though the F₄ had an encouraging effect on above parameters F₄ could reduce LDL and VLDL only at 200mg/kg body weight (Figure 2) but could enhance HDL comparing to control NOD mice and insulin injected group. There are number of publications in recent years on isolation of plant extracts with different solvents to screen antidiabetic activity.^{28,29,30,31} Babu *et al.*²⁸ published on antidiabetic activity of ethanol extract of *Cassia kleinii* leaf on diabetic rats. The antihyperglycemic activity was found predominantly in the chloroform fraction of alcohol extract. Hypoglycemic effect of *Gentiana olivieri* flowering herbs were studied in diabetes induced rats.²⁹ Methanolic extract was subjected for successive solvent extraction with chloroform, ethyl acetate and n-butanol. Hypoglycemic activity of each extract was studied. Ethyl acetate and n-butanol extracts showed significant hypoglycemic activity in diabetes rats. Further ethyl acetate extract was subjected for column chromatographic separation and identified the compound as isoorientin. They concluded that isoorientin at the dose of 15 mg/kg body weight for 15 days had a remarkable effect on blood glucose cholesterol and triglyceride concentration in diabetes induced rats. It did not enhance insulin secretion.

Prajapati *et al.*³⁰ demonstrated that ethanol and chloroform extracts of *Actinodaphne hookeri* leaf extracts were found to have significant lowering effect on blood glucose, total cholesterol, triglycerides, LDL and VLDL and enhanced HDL in diabetic rats. Jarald *et al.*³¹ reported on aqueous extract and non-polysaccharide fraction of *Cynodon dactylon* of whole plant. Treatment of diabetic rats with these fractions decreased the elevated levels of blood glucose, urea, creatinine, serum cholesterol, serum triglyceride, LDL and glycosylated hemoglobin significantly in diabetic model.

Many studies on type 1 diabetes use animal models by injecting animals with streptozotocin or alloxan to induce diabetes^{14,32} whereas the present investigation reports on NOD mice which spontaneously develop type 1 diabetes and has similar features to those of human type-1 diabetes. However none of the above cited studies reported on insulin secretion after treatment with different fractions. Hypoglycemic plants act through a variety of mechanisms by improving insulin sensitivity or augmenting glucose dependent insulin secretion or decreasing insulin resistance. In the present investigation there is a direct effect on insulin secretion.

Conclusions

In our previous report,¹⁶ it was demonstrated that F₃ and F₅ have insulinotropic effect and also protective effect in NOD mice. F₄ also has insulinotropic effect similar to F₃ and F₅. Isolation of active component/s from these fractions will

reveal whether these fractions have similar compounds or different compounds with different potency. Isolation of active component/s is in progress.

Acknowledgements

The first author thanks Tamar University, Republic of Yemen for awarding fellowship and University of Mysore for the permission and facilities to do the research work. Both authors are thankful to UGC- New Delhi for partial financial assistance from SAP-programme.

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