

Effects of extracts from *toona sinensis* and *zanthoxylum ailantoides* on female cancer cells.

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ABSTRACT

Cancer is the first cause of death in Taiwan since 1982. In recent years, the increases of both incidences and death rates of the three female cancers including breast, ovary and cervical cancers are found. Recently, many potential anti-cancer chemicals that can induce death of cancer cells by apoptosis were reported. Since there are many side-effects for drugs used in chemo therapy of cancers, Chinese herbals or even foods that have low side-effects or without any toxicity now become popular topics of studies for developing as anti-cancer drugs. The major aim of this study is to evaluate anti-cancer effects of extracts from *Toona sinensis* (TS) and *Zanthoxylum ailanthoides* (ZA), that are edible plants used in Chinese herbal medicine. Their roots, stems, leaves, tips and cortex were used to obtain extracts by 50% ethanol. Totally, 9 kinds of plant extracts were obtained. Two final concentrations for 0.05 and 0.02 mg/mL of these extracts were used to treat breast (MCF-7), cervical (HeLa) and ovarian (PA-1) cancer cells for 24 and 48 hours, respectively. The survival of cancer cells were analyzed by trypan blue exclusion assays. Viabilities of cancer cells were analyzed by 3-(4,5-dimethylthiazol-2-yl) -2,5-diphenyl tetrazolium bromide (MTT) assays. We found that the TS and ZA extracts induced death of these 3 female cancer cells by a dose- and time-dependent manner. Base on the results of MTT assays, extracts from *Toona sinensis* stem (TSS), *Toona sinensis* leaf (TSL), *Zanthoxylum ailanthoides* root (ZAR) and *Zanthoxylum ailanthoides* stem (ZAS) had the strongest effects to decrease the viabilities of cancer cells. Treatment of these extracts on cancer cells resulted in Sub-G1 cell cycle arrests by flow cytometry analysis. Results of Annexin V/Propidium iodine double staining indicated that discover apoptosis. Furthermore, we found increased levels of apoptotic BAX proteins by western blotting in treated cells. From these results, we conclude that extracts of TS and ZA could induce apoptosis and cell cycle arrest of three tested female cancer cell lines (MCF-7, HeLa, PA-1). Therefore, extracts of TS and ZA may have potential to develop anti-cancer drugs. Further researchs are needed to investigate the anti-cancer effects of TS and ZA extracts against three female cancer cell lines in vitro and in vivo.

Keywords : apoptosis、anti-cancer study、breast cancer、cervical cancer、ovarian cancer、*Toona sinensis*、*Zanthoxylum ailanthoides*

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