CALENDULA OFFICINALIS

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Calendula officinalis L. (Marigold) is globally known for its medicinal importance containing various phyto-chemicals including carbohydrates, amino acids, lipids, fatty acids, carotenoids, terpenoids, flavonoids, quinones, coumarins and other constituents, showing some important biological activities like wound healing, immuno-stimulant, spasmogenic and spasmolytic, hepatoprotective, genotoxic and antigenotoxic, anti-amylase, anti-inflammatory, anti-oedematous, anti-bacterial and anti-fungal, antioxidant, antidiabetic, anti-HIV and anti-cancerous, nephron-protective, prevention of oropharyngeal mucositis, hypoglycemic and gastroprotective activities with no toxic effect. In this review, a detailed account of different phytochemicals and their medicinal properties of C. officinalis have been addressed.

Keywords: Calendula officinalis; Asteraceae; Marigold; Phytochemicals

Introduction In India, over 6,000 plants are used in herbal, folk and traditional medicine. Approximately, amongst1500 identified medicinal plants 500 are commonly in use (Chidambaram et al., 2014). Calendula officinalis L. (pot marigold) is one of the commonly used medicinal plantsin India, China, Europe and US (Muley et al., 2009). Calendula was known as "gold's" in old English was associated with Virgin Mary and Queen Mary, hence the name marigold (Grieve 1931; Kemper 1999; Mills 1991). The name of this plant comes from a Latin word 'Calend' meaning the first day of each month, because of the long flowering period of plant. As flowers move in the direction of the sun's radiation, it has become an astronomical sun sign "Leo" (Dinda and Craker, 1998). Calendula is an annual herb growing about 80 cm tall, having corymbosely branched stem; a long tap root with numerous secondary roots; hispid, acute, oblanceolate, alternate and sessile leaves; flower head inflorescence (surrounded by two rows of hairy bracts). The plant has yellow to orange ûowers with female ray ûorets and hermaphrodite, tridentate, tubular, disc florets; and curved, sickle-shaped and ringed achenes (Bisset, 1994) (Fig. 1). The plant species has been reported to contain a variety of phyto-chemicals, including carbohydrates, phenolic compounds, lipids, steroids, tocopherols, terpenoids, quinones and carotenoids (Kishimoto et al., 2005; Re et al., 2009; Shahrbabaki et al., 2013; Wojciak-Kosior et al., 2003) with different health benefits (Miliauskas et al., 2004; Muley et al., 2009; Vodnar, 2012). The major active constituents of plant include triterpendiol esters, saponins, and flavonoids including rutin and hyperoside. The orange flower contains a high content of carotenoids including auroxanthin and flavoxanthin (Braun and Cohen, 2005; Neukiron et al., 2004; Roopashree et al., 2008).

The pot marigold extracts possess a wide range of pharmacological effects (Pintea et al., 2003) and are used as antiseptic, stimulant, diaphoretic, antispasmodic and anti-pyretic agents (Kirtikar and Basu, 1993; Weiner, 1990). The flower extracts of the plant have anti-viral effects on HIV (Kalvatchev et al., 1997). In-vitro, Calendula officinalis (CO) plantextracts show anti-cancerous activity on various tumor cell lines derived from

leukemias, fibrosacomas, melanomas, breast, cervix, prostate, pancreas and lung (Medina et al., 2006). It has also been internally used for the treatment of gastritis, colitis and bleeding of duodenal ulcers (Bone et al., 2003).

Due to significant biological activity of C. officinalis and its constituents it is imperative that the plant be given attention and developed as a medicine. Important Phytochemicals Various phyto-chemical studies have revealed the presence of different chemical compounds including carbohydrates, amino acids, lipids, carotenoids, terpenoids, flavonoids, volatile oil, quinines, coumarins and other constituents.

Carbohydrates The water soluble polysaccharides of C. officinalis inflorescence contain 9.25 % moisture, 25.77 % acidic sugar, 29.25 % ash, 31.25 % reducing sugars and 84.58 % pectic substances and various monosaccharides including glucose, arabinose, rhamnose, xylose, galactose and galacturonic acid (Lim, 2013).

The ethanolic extract of C. officinalis inflorescence was reported to contain monosacccharides along with polysaccharides, PS-I,-II, -III with $(1\rightarrow 3)$ - β -Dgalactam backbone and a side chain at C-6 consisting of α -L-rhamnan- $(1\rightarrow 3)$ -araban and α -araban- $(1\rightarrow 3)$ -araban form (Varlijen, 1989; Wanger et al., 1985).

Amino Acids The *C.* officinalis flower extract showed the presence of 15 free amino acids including proline, phenylalanine, histidine, lysine, leucine, serine, alanine, valine, arginine, tyrosine, aspargine, threonine, glutamate, methionine and aspartate and amino acid content, being highest in the flower (4.5%) (Abajova, 1994). Lipids and Fatty Acids The fatty acids present in the *C.* officinalis flowersare myristic acid, lauric acid, stearic acid, palmitic acid, oleic acid, linoleic acid and linolenic acid. The lipids present in the seeds of *C.* officinalis are phospholipids, glycolipids and neutral lipids. Seeds also contain 9-hydroxy-18:2(trans-9, cis-11) aciddimorphecolic acid and 18:3 conjugated trienic (trans- 8, trans-10, cis-12) acid (Vlchenko, 1998; Wilkomirski and Kasprzyk, 1979). The seed oil contains D-(+)-9- hydroxy-10, 12-octadecadienoic acid (oxygenated fatty acid) (Badami and Morris, 1965).

CLINICAL BOTTOM LINE/EFFECTIVENESS Brief Background

- Calendula (Calendula officinalis), also known as marigold, has been widely used topically to treat minor skin wounds, skin infections, burns, bee stings, sunburn, warts and cancer. Most scientific evidence regarding its efficacy as a wound-healing agent is based on animal and in vitro studies.
- Preliminary evidence suggesting efficacy of topical calendula ointment in the prevention of dermatitis related to radiation therapy is reported in one open phase III trial (randomized, non-blinded, comparison; no placebo arm), conducted in breast cancer patients.
- Grades reflect the level of available scientific evidence in support of the efficacy of a given therapy for a specific indication.
- Expert opinion and folkloric precedent are not included in this assessment, and are reflected in a separate section of each review ("Strength of Expert Opinion and Historic/Folkloric Precedent").

- Evidence of harm is considered separately; the below grades apply only to evidence of benefit . Historical or Theoretical Indications Which Lack Sufficient Evidence
- Abscesses, acne, amenorrhea, analgesia, anemia, antibacterial, antifungal, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, anti-viral, anxiety, appetite stimulant, atherosclerosis, athlete's foot, bacterial infections, benign prostatic hypertrophy, bladder irritation, blood purification, blood clots, bowel irritation, bruises, burns, cardiac disease, cholera, circulation, colitis, conjunctivitis, constipation, cosmetic, cough, cramps, diaper rash, dizziness, diuresis, dystrophic nervous disturbances, eczema, edema, epididymitis, epistaxis, eye inflammation, fatigue, fever, frostbite, gastrointestinal tract disorders, gastritis, gingivitis, gout, headache, heart disease, hemorrhoids, herpes simplex, herpes keratitis,HIV, indigestion, immunostimulant,influenza, insomnia, jaundice, liver cancer, liver-gallbladder function stimulator, menstrual period abnormalities, metabolic disorders, mouth and throat infections, muscular atrophy, nausea, nosebleed, pain, peptic ulcer disease, periodontal prophylaxis, proctitis, prostatitis, purging agent, skin cancer, sore throat, spasms, spleen disorders, stomach ulcers, stones, syphilis, thrombophlebitis, tinnitus, toothache, tuberculosis, ulcerative colitis, urinary retention, uterine tonic, varicose ulcers, warts, yeast infections. Expert Opinion and Folkloric Precedent
- Traditionally, calendula has been used topically for treating minor wounds, burns and other skin problems. Multiple references are made to calendula as a wound-healing aid and topical anti-infective agent. However, no strong scientific evidence supports these properties.
- Powder from the plant's petals is occasionally used as an inexpensive alternative to saffron for coloring and flavoring foods.

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