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BIOLOGICAL ACTIVITY OF AVERRHOA BILIMBI

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ABSTRACT:

Averrhoa bilimbi Linn. is essentially developed for therapeutic purposes in numerous tropical and subtropical nations of the world. The aim of this study was to give a collective information of this herb as hypotensive, antioxidant, anti-diabetic, hypolipidemic agent and as an anti-cancer agent. The main purpose of this review is to collect and organise the literature based on traditional claims and compare it with current data on the use of *Averrhoa bilimbi* for the treatment of various diseases.

KEYWORDS:

Averrhoa bilimbi, Antidiabetic, Antioxidant, Antihyperlipidaemic

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INTRODUCTION:

Averrhoa bilimbi (bilimbi) is used as a traditional remedy for many symptoms. It is used as an antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, astringent. Postpartum pills. It is also used for treatment of fever, mumps, acne, rectal inflammation and diabetes, itching, ulcers, rheumatism, syphilis, biliary colic, whooping cough, high blood pressure, indigestion, aphthous ulcers, and as a cooling drink.

The fruit of *Averrhoa bilimbi* has medicinal properties to effectively treat a number of human diseases. Different parts of the plant are used in different conditions. The fruits are used as a remedy for cough. The syrup from this fruit is used not only to treat fever and inflammation but also to stop rectal bleeding and relieve internal haemorrhoids. Malaysians use fresh or fermented leaves to treat sexually transmitted diseases. The infusion is a cough suppressant and is taken as a tonic after childbirth. A decoction of the leaves helps relieve inflammation of the rectum. The infusion of flowers is believed to be effective for coughs and mouth ulcers.In Java, the fruits combined with pepper are eaten to cause sweating when people are feeling "under the weather". Rubbing the pickled bilimbi paste all over your body will speed up your recovery from fever.Very acidic fruits are employed to clean the blade of a kris (dagger), and they serve as mordants in the preparation of an orange dye for silk fabrics. Because of its oxalic acid content, fruit juice is useful for bleaching stains from the hands and rust from white cloth, and also tarnishes from brass.¹⁻⁷

Kingdom:	Plantae
Family	Oxalidaceae
Genus:	Averrhoa
Species	bilimbi
Binomial NAME	Averrhoa bilimbi

SCIENTIFIC CLASSIFICATION⁸

Table 1

COMMON NAMES:

- English: Bilimbi, Cucumber tree, tree sorrel
- Spanish: Bilimbi, Limon chino, Mimbro largo
- French: Carambolier bilimbi
- Chinese: San lian
- Other names
- Averrhoa obtusangula stokes, Belimbingasam, Belimbingbuluh, Belimbingwuluh, Kamias, kalamias, Iba, kolonanas, Ta-ling-pring.⁹

DESCRIPTION:

The tree is attractive, has a long-life span and can reach 5-10 m in height. It has short stems, which immediately split into several erect branches. Very similar to the othakhith gooseberry, the leaves that accumulate mainly at the ends of the branches are alternating incompatible, 30 to 60 cm long, 11 to 37 alternating or incompatible leaves (figure no:4), ovoid or oval, with a rounded bottom and pointed ends. soft; Medium green at the top, pale at the bottom; 2-10 cm long, 1.2-25 cm wide. Small fragrant flowers (figure no:1) with five petals, yellow-green or purple and dark purple, come from the thickest stems and the oldest twigs, a few twigs, small hairy buds protruding directly from strange clusters of fruits(figure no:2 and 3). When ripe, crispy fruits change colour from light green to yellow-green, ivory or nearly white when ripe, and fall to the ground. The skin is shiny, very thin, soft, the flesh is green, gelatinous, juicy and very sour.Bilimbi begins to bloom around February and continues to bloom and bear fruit until December.



Figure no:1 Flower



Figure no:2Fruit





Figure no:3 Fruit



DISTRIBUTION:

Bilimbi probably originated from Maluku and grew up throughout Indonesia. It has been cultivated and raised wild throughout the Philippines. Distributed in Ceylon and Burma. It is very common in Thailand, Malaya and Singapore. Often in the gardens of the Indian Plains. It was introduced in Queensland around 1896 and could be easily integrated and distributed into production networks ductive.³

ETHNOMEDICINAL USES

Averrhoa bilimbi used in traditional medicine for treatment of various diseases. The infusion and decoction of the leaves are used as antibacterial, antiscorbutic, astringent, postpartum protectant in the treatment of fever, inflammation of the rectum and diabetes. Paste of leaves are used to treat itching, boils, rashes, poisonous bites, rheumatism, coughs, colds, mumps, and syphilis. Grated fruit with a little salt is added applied to the face to treat acne. The fruit juice is used to treat scurvy, biliary colic, whooping cough, high blood pressure, obesity, and diabetes.¹⁰⁻¹⁴

PHYTOCHEMICAL CONSTITUENTS:

Fruit's:

Analysis of the Malaysian A. *bilimbi* fruit revealed 53 different ingredients as volatile. The main ingredients are palmitic acid (20.4%) 2-furaldehyde (19.1%), and (Z)-9-octadecenoic acid (10.2%)

The 12 identified compounds were esters, of which butyl nicotinate and hexyl nicotinate were present in large quantities.

Fruit extracts contain flavonoids, saponins and triterpenoids. It also contains Amino acids, Citric acids, Cyanidin-3-O-h-D-glucoside Phenolics, Potassium ion, Sugars, Vitamins.

Leaves:

Phytochemical screening of leaf extracts showed the presence of alkaloids, tannins, saponins, flavonoids, cardiac glycosides, glycosides, triterpenes, phenols, and carbohydrates.¹⁶

Gunawan*et al.*, investigated the isolation of seven constituent from the leaves extract of *A. bilimbi*. These include squalene, 3-(6,10,14-trimethylpentadecan-2-yl) furan-2 (5H)-one, 2,3-bis(2,6,10-trimethylundeca-1,5,9-trienyl) oxirane, phytol, 3,4-Dihydroxyhexanedioic acid, malonic acid, and 4,5-Dihydroxy-2-methylenehydroxybenzaldehyde¹⁷

Nutrition value:¹⁵

Rich in vitamin C. In addition to vitamins and minerals, fruits contain fiber, ash, protein, moisture and minerals.

Riboflavin(Vitamin B2)	0.026 mg
Vitamin B1(thiamine)	0.010 mg
Niacin	0.302 mg
Ascorbic Acid	15.6 mg
Carotene	0.035 mg
Vitamin A	0.036 mg

Vitamin per 100mg:

Table 2: Vitamin composition of bilimbi fruit

Minerals per 100 g

Phosphorus	11.1 mg
Calcium	3.4 mg
Iron	1 mg

Table 3: Mineral composition of bilimbi fruit

Antioxidant activity:

Antioxidants are compounds that protect cells from damage by interacting with free radicals and neutralizing them. In recent years, much attention has been paid to the therapeutic potential of antioxidants in diseases associated with oxidative stress. The result obtained revealed that A. bilimbi leaves extracts (0.02% w/v) displayed moderate antioxidant activity in ferric thiocyanate and thiobarbituric acid methods while it was found to be inactive in 2,2-Diphenyl-1-(2,4,6-trinitrophenyl hydrazyl (DPPH) assay.¹⁹⁻²¹

Abas *et al.*, Investigated the antioxidant characteristics and the impact on nitric oxide generation in lipopolysacchride -activated macrophages of A. bilimbi and 11 different customary vegetables. The finding uncovered that *A.bilimbi* leave extracts (0.02% w/v) showed moderate antioxidant action in ferric thiocyanate and thiobarbituric acid techniques while itwas discovered to be inactive in 2,2-diphenyl-1-(2,4,6-trinitrophenyl) hydrazyl (DPPH) assay.¹⁸

Antidiabetic activity:

DM affects hundreds of millions of people around the world. Diabetes mellitus is a complex metabolic disorder caused by insulin deficiency or dysfunction of insulin. It is a serious public health problem that affects over 400 million people worldwide.

Benny *et al.*, have studied the hypoglycaemic and hypolipidemic activity of semi purified fractions of ethanol extract of *Averrhoa bilimbi* leaves in high fat diet (HFD)-streptozotocin (STZ)-induced diabetic rats. Prolonged administration of the aqueous fraction (HF) at a dose of 125 mg / kg significantly reduces the concentration of glucose in the blood and triglycerides compared to carriers. The glycogen content in the liver was quite high AF-treated mice compared to controls. They have suggested AF as a potential source for the isolation of oral antidiabetic drugs. Another study by Pushparaj*et al.*, investigated the possible mechanisms of the hypoglycaemic action of hexane, ethyl

acetate, butanol, and aqueous fractions of the ethanol extract of *A. bilimbi* leaves in male Sprague-Dawley rats with STZ-diabetes. The hypoglycaemic properties of various fractions were evaluated in mice with STZ-diabetes at a dose of 125 mg/kg body weight. The results showed that administration of an oral aqueous fraction to rats with STZ-induced diabetes significantly increased insulin secretion and glucose tolerance, while simultaneously decreasing the activity of glucose-6phosphatase in the liver. The resulting increase in serum insulin is believed that the possible mechanism of action plant.²²⁻²⁴

Antihyperlipidemic activity:

Ambiliet al., has investigated antihyperlipidemic activity of the fruit *Averrhoa bilimbi* in rats using a model of Triton induced hypercholesterolemia. The fruit and its aqueous extracts exhibit remarkable anti hypercholesterolemic activity. The active fraction exhibiting activity at a low dose of 0.8 mg/kg was purified from the aqueous extract. The active ingredient is separated from the active fraction and exhibits optimal activity at a dose of 0.3 mg/kg. The fruit's efficacy was tested on a chronic high-fat diet fed to hyperlipidaemic rats. Fruit (125 mg/kg) and aqueous extract (50 mg/kg) have been shown to be effective in reducing body fat in high-fat rats. They concluded that this fruit can be used as a food ingredient to prevent and treat hyperlipidaemia. Pusparaj*et al.*, also examined the lipid profile in rats with streptozotocin-induced diabetes and found it to be effective. Ethanol extract of bilimbi fruit significantly increased the antiatherogenic index and the ratio of HDL cholesterol to total cholesterol. It also significantly reduces the rate of lipid peroxidation in the kidney. Their study demonstrated hypotriglyceridaemia, lipid peroxidation, and anti-atherogenic activity in STZ diabetic rats.²⁷

Antihypertensive activity:

High blood pressure is considered a major risk factor for various cardiovascular diseases such as arteries, heart failure, stroke, coronary artery disease, and kidney failure. In recent years, much attention has been paid to the use of herbal preparations as an alternative to the treatment and prevention of cardiovascular complications. Traditionally, *A. bilimbi* berries and leaves have been effectively used as a symptom of blood pressure. Bipat*et al.* used an isolated in vitro organ model to scientifically investigate the ability of aqueous extracts of A. bilimbi and other plant leaves to lower blood pressure. The aqueous extracts of the leaves were found to significantly reduce norepinephrine-stimulated atrial contractility without affecting the heart rate of guinea pigs. The leaf extract has also shown significant antihypertensive effects in in vivo experiments in cats, indicating that the leaf extract may be a potential hypertensive drug.²⁸⁻³¹

Antimicrobial activity:

The development of widespread antibiotic resistance in recent years has created a new demand for new antimicrobial agents for the treatment of infectious diseases. *A.Bilimbi* ethanol extract has significant antimicrobial activity against 6 pathogens against 2 gram-positive bacteria (*Bacillus cereus* and *Bacillus megaterium*), 2 gram-negative bacteria (*Escherichia coli* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*) and 2 fungi (*Cryptococcus Neoformansa* and *Aspergillus ochraceous*) Whole borrowed non-fruit juices and blended dull without juice at 1: 2and 1:4 w/v concentrations, It shows significant activity against *Listeria monocytogenes* Scott A and *Salmonella typhimurium* in an in vitro antimicrobial test. The extracts of fruitwasalso found to reduce the microbial load of *L. monocytogenes* Scott A and *S. typhimurium* on raw shrimp after washing and storage. This shows the possibility that A. bilimbi will be recognized as a natural method for decontaminating shrimp immediately prior to consumption. Another study showed that A. bilimbi fruit and root extract showed positive activity against *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* with a MIC of 1600 µg / ml.³²⁻³⁴

Antifertility:

Studies in mice have shown that bilimbi is a potential source of fertility drugs. It has been shown that the butanol fraction of the ethanol extract reduces fertility. This activity can be caused by one or both of the steroidal glucoside and potassium oxalate components.³⁵

Wound healing:

Several medicinal plants have been shown to have important healing properties. In this context, the use of *Averrhoa bilimbi* for the treatment of oral injuries has also been scientifically studied. Igaa conducted ainvestigation the effect of *A. bilimbi* leaf extract on wound healing.³⁶

Anticancer activity:

Cytotoxicity tests are used to find whether a molecule or extract is toxic to cells. Cytotoxicity tests are routinely used in screening for anti-tumor drugs. When analyzing shrimp mortality, it was found that the ethanol extract of A. bilimbi leaves had moderate cytotoxic activity(LC50, 5.81 μ g/l). In another study, methanol fruit extract and its fractions CCl4 and petroleum ether showed significant cytotoxic potential. (LC50 of 0.005 μ g/ml, 1.198 μ g/ml and 0.781 μ g/ml, respectively,) compared to vincristine sulfate (with LC50 of 0.839 μ g/ml). In another similar study, LC50 values of chloroform and water-soluble fraction were found 5,691 and 6,123 μ g / ml, respectively.^{37,38}

Thrombolytic activity:

Anticoagulant herbs are used as antithrombotic. Anticoagulant herbs are effectively used for angina, hepatitis, coronary artery disease, dysmenorrhea, rheumatoid arthritis, traumatic injuries, tumors, depression, kidney failure, stroke prevention, and post-stroke syndrome. The anticoagulant effect of A. bilimbi has been demonstrated by Daud *et al.* in normal and alloxan-induced diabetic rats. In their experiment, they found that oral administration of ethanol extract from leaves and fruits (250 mg / kg) for 14 days produced a significant anticoagulant effect, as observed with an increase in prothrombin time. In another similar study, crude methanolic extract and separate leaf fraction showed significant thrombolytic activity (17.06-27.72%) in *in vitro* assay.^{39,40}

Toxicity:

*Averrhoa bilimbi*fruit contains excessive quantity of oxalic acid. Excessive consumption of fruit juices can lead to increased serum oxalate levels and a buildup of calcium oxalate crystals in the kidney tubules, which can lead to acute kidney failure.

Savithri*et al.*, has investigated the preliminary general toxicity of *A. bilimbi* fruit. Daily oral ingestion homogenate fruits for 15 days did not cause signs of toxicity up to a dose of 1 g/kg.

Bakul*et al.*, investigated aseries of cases from five hospitals in Kerala state who developed acute kidney failure after drinking fruit juice (100–400 ml/day). All patients had severe renal insufficiency with serum creatinine ranging from 5.5-12.3 mg / dL, and renal biopsy showed acute tubular necrosis with calcium oxalate crystals. Seven out of ten patients required hemodialysis, but fortunately they all recovered after 2-6 weeks of treatment.³² Nair et al. also reported two cases of acute nephropathy with tubular oxalate deposition after consumption of fruit juices.^{41,42}

Conclusion:

Plants are the main source of biologically active compounds for various types of biological activity in humans and animals. Since obesity and diabetes are widespread in our society, research is being done on plants with antidiabetic and antibacterial properties, as recent studies of various plant parts have shown. In order to achieve the optimal effect for the patient, it is necessary to isolate, purify the appropriate components and conduct further clinical studies.

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