PAPER DETAILS

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AUTHORS: Derya EFE, Gökçe KARADAYI, Güleray AGAR, Medine GÜLLÜCE, Ali ASLAN

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Research Paper

Genotoxic, Antigenotoxic and Antioxidant Properties of Methanol Extracts Obtained from Umbilicaria cylindirica and Umbilicaria nylanderiana

Derya Efe¹, Gökçe Karadayı^{2,*}, Güleray Ağar³, Medine Güllüce³, Ali Aslan⁴

¹ Espiye Vocational School, Department of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, Giresun University, Giresun, Turkey
 ² Faculty of Science, Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics, Atatürk University, Erzurum, Turkey
 ³ Faculty of Science, Department of Biology, Atatürk University, Erzurum, Turkey
 ⁴ Faculty of Pharmacy, Department of Pharmaceutical Botany, Van Yüzüncü Yıl University, Van, Turkey

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Abstract

The use of lichens as food, medicine in dyes and perfumes and crude drugs is very common all over the world. It is so important to determine whether their use is safe or not and which doses should be used. In the present study, the genotoxic and antigenotoxic effects of methanol extracts of *Umbilicaria cylindirica* and *Umbilicaria nylanderiana* were investigated by using sister chromatid exchange in human lymphocytes against Aflatoxin B1 (AFB1) and the bacterial reverse mutation assay in *Salmonella typhimurium* TA1535 and TA1537 strains and in *Escherichia coli* WP2 *uvr*A strain against Sodium azide (NaN₃), 9-Aminoacridine (9-AA) and *N*-Methyl-*N*'-nitro-*N*-nitrosoguanidine (MNNG), respectively. Furthermore, in order to evaluate antioxidant effect of the tested materials, the main antioxidant enzymes including superoxide dismutase (SOD), glutathione (GSH) and glutathione peroxidase (GPX) and malondialdehyde (MDA) level were determined. At the end of the study, it was observed that *Umbilicaria cylindirica* and *Umbilicaria nylanderiana* exhibit no mutagenic activity, but significantly antimutagenic activity against all the different doses of mutagens and antioxidative activity against oxidative stress caused by AFB1.

Keywords: Umbilicaria spp.; Antimutagenicity; Antioxidative; Bacterial reverse mutation assay; SCE.

1. Introduction

Natural products used as folk remedy by humankind for ages provide a great source of compounds for potential drugs such as current antibiotics and anticancer drugs [1]. Therefore, it would be useful to search plants that have been used by folk during the ages for discovering new phytomedicines. Since lichens have been for a long time for traditional treatment of many diseases including tuberculosis, hemorrhoids, dysentery etc.), the researchers have recently focused on the lichens and their metabolites [2-3]. The lichens are self-supporting symbiotic forms between a fungus and one or several algal or cyanobacteria. They have been generally considered a type of fungus because of being unique with its fungal constituents dominating the association in that symbiosis [4]. They have evolved particularly

* Correspondance: Gökçe Karadayı, Faculty of Science, Department of Molecular Biology and Genetics, Atatürk University, Erzurum, Turkey E-mail: <u>gokcenardemir@gmail.com</u> during the past 600 million years and existed on more than 10% of terrestrial part of the earth surface [5].

About 300 genera and 18000 species of lichens are presently recognized. Up to the present more than 800 secondary metabolites have been identified from lichens [6]. Some of these lichen metabolites are unique to lichens and produced so as to protect and sustain the symbiotic association from various biotic and abiotic factors. Therefore, much attention has been recently paid to the biological activities of lichen metabolites [7]. As a result of this attention, it is revealed that many lichen species pose various biological activities such as antiviral. antimicrobial. antiallergic. antitumor. anticancer, antioxidative, anti-inflammatory [8]. A wide range of biological activities is attributed to constituents of the lichens such as chloroatranorin, atranorin, (+)-usnic acid, evernic acid, parietin, galactomannan, arabitol, mannitol, galactoside, sucrose, glycolic and aspartic acid gyrophoric acid [9].

Umbilicaria Hoffm. is a well-known genus of umbilicate, foliose, lichen-forming fungi comprising c. 90 currently accepted species. These species exhibit a worldwide distribution appearing mostly on siliceous

rocks in the polar, alpine and high-alpine biomes. 31 species of Umbilicaria in Europe; 26 species in the continental part of Mediterranean region and 21 species in the Carpathians have been defined [10]. The previous studies demonstrated that some species of Umbrilicaria synthesize a great variety of secondary metabolites and have significant antioxidative activity. However, there is no satisfying literature about biological activities of Umbilicaria species. In the light of the foregoing, it was aimed to evaluate antigenotoxic properties of Umbilicaria cylindirica and Umbilicaria nylanderiana against strong mutagens including Sodium azide (NaN₃), 9-Aminoacridine (9-AA), N-Methyl-N'-nitro-N-nitrosoguanidine (MNNG) and Aflatoxin B1 (AFB₁), respectively. In addition, the genotoxic properties of the lichens were tested to make sure whether their use is safe or not through using sister chromatid exchange (SCE) and bacterial reverse mutation assays. We also evaluated dose-dependent oxidative effects in human blood by determining main antioxidant enzymes activities including superoxide dismutase (SOD), glutathione (GSH) and glutathione peroxidase (GPx) and also MDA level. The present study showed that U. cylindirica and U. nylanderiana have significant antioxidative and antimutagenic effects but no mutagenic effect. In the consequence of this study, it could be concluded that researched lichens could supply a great resource to discover new phytomedicinal agents exhibiting antioxidative and antimutagenic properties.

2. Material and Methods

2.1. Preparation of lichen materials

Umbilicaria cylindirica and Umbilicaria nylanderiana samples were collected from Oltu/Erzurum, in spring. The taxonomic identification of the tested materials was carried out by Dr. Ali Aslan from the lichenology laboratory in Biology Department of Ataturk University, Erzurum-Turkey. The voucher specimens have been stored at the Herbarium of Kazım Karabekir Education Faculty, Ataturk University, and Erzurum. The collected plant materials were dried in the shade, then, grounded in a grinder with a 2 mm in diameter mesh. Dried and powdered lichen samples (20 gr) were extracted by using 200 ml methanol in room temperature for four hours via Soxhlet extractor (Isopad, Heidelberg, Germany). Then, the extracts were filtered through Whatman filter paper (no.1), concentrated at 40 °C in a rotary evaporator (Buchi Labortechnic AG, Flawil, Switzerland), lyophilized and kept in dark at +4 °C for further studies.

2.2. Bacterial strains

S. typhimurium TA1535 (ATCC[®] Number: 29629), *S. typhimurium* TA1537 (ATCC[®] Number: 29630) strains were provided by The American Type Culture Collection - Bacteria Department of Georgetown University, Washington, USA and *E.coli* WP2*uvrA* (ATCC[®] Number: 49979) strain was provided by LGC

standarts Middlesex, UK. All strains were stored at -80 °C. These cultures were prepared by inoculation with the frozen cultures in nutrient broth, followed by an overnight incubation at 37 °C with gentle agitation [11].

2.3. Viability assays and determination of test concentrations

Toxic levels of the test materials for *S. typhimurium* TA1535, 1537 and *E. coli* WP2*uvrA* strains were determined as described in detail elsewhere [12]. These tests confirmed that there was normal growth of the background lawn, spontaneous colony numbers within the regular range, and no significant reduction in cell survival. Thus, for the concentrations and conditions reported here, no toxicity or other adverse effects were observed.

2.4. The bacterial reverse mutation assay for mutagenicity and antimutagenicity

The bacterial mutagenicity and antimutagenicity assays were carried out using the method reported before [13]. The used mutagens NaN3 (in distilled water - 1 µg/plate) for S. typhimurium TA1535, 9-AA (in methanol - 10 µg/plate) for S. typhimurium TA1537 and MNNG (in 10% DMSO - 1 µg/plate) for E. coli WP2uvrA were used as positive controls and 10% DMSO was used as negative control in these researches. In the mutagenicity test performed with TA1535 and TA1537 strains of S. typhimurium and E. coli WP2 100 µl of the overnight bacterial culture, 50µl test compounds at different concentrations (20, 40, 60, 80, 100 µg/plate in 10% DMSO), and 500 µl phosphate buffer were added to 2 ml of the top agar containing 0.5 mM histidine/biotin for TA1535 and TA1537 strains of S. typhimurium and the same solution containing tryptophan (0.05 mM) instead of histidine for E. coli WP2. The mixture was poured onto minimal glucose plates. Histidine and tryptophan independent revertant colonies and viable cells were scored on plates after incubation at 37 °C for 48 or 72 h. In the antimutagenicity test, 100 µl of the overnight bacterial cultures, 50 µl mutagen, 50 µl test compounds at different concentrations (0.05, 0.5, 5 µg/plate in 10% DMSO), and 500 µl phosphate buffer were added to 2 ml of the top agar containing 0.5 mM histidine/biotin or tryptophan (0.05 mM). The mixture was poured onto minimal glucose plates. Histidine and tryptophan independent revertant colonies and viable cells were scored on plates after incubation at 37 °C for 48 or 72 h [14]. For the mutagenicity assays, the mutagenic index was calculated for each concentration, which is the average number of revertants per plate divided by the average number of revertants per plate with the negative (solvent) control. A sample was considered as mutagenic when a dose-response relationship and a two-fold increase in the number of revertants with at least one concentration were observed [14]. For the anti-mutagenicity assays, the inhibition rate of mutagenicity was calculated by using the following equation (M: number of revertants/plate induced by

mutagen alone, S0: number of spontaneous revertants, S1: number of revertants/plate induced by the extract plus the mutagen): %Inhibition = $1-[(M-S1)/(M-S0)]\times100.25-40\%$ inhibition was defined as moderate anti-mutagenicity; 40% or more inhibition as strong anti-mutagenicity and 25% inhibition as no anti-mutagenicity. The data were further analyzed for statistical significance using analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the difference among the means was compared by high-range statistical domain using Tukey's test. A level of probability <0.05 was taken as indicating statistical significance [15].

2.5. SCE assay for cytogenetic analysis

Peripheral blood lymphocytes were obtained from four (age: 28, 26) nonsmoking healthy individuals between the ages of 22 and 25. Lymphocyte cultures were maintained by adding 0.5mL of heparinized whole blood to RPMI-1640 chromosome medium containing 15% heat-inactivated fetal calf serum, 100 IU/mL streptomycin, 100 IU/mL penicillin, and 1% Lglutamine. Lymphocytes were induced to divide by adding 1% phytohemaglutinin. The well-known mutagen AFB₁ (5 µM) was used for positive control, peripheral blood lymphocytes without any treatments was used for negative control in the study. In antimutagenicity assay was carried out according to SCE assay. Different concentrations of the tested materials (5 µg/ml, 10 µg/ml) were used as test groups against AFB1 (5 µM). AFB1 (5 µM), and the tested materials UCME and UNME (in concentrations of 5 and 10 µg/ml) were added to the cultures just before incubation. After addition of 5-bromo 2-deoxyuridine (8 mg/mL), all the cultures were incubated at 37°C for 72 h with no light. 0.1 mg/mL of colcemide was added for arresting the cells at metaphase before harvesting. Then, the cultures were centrifuged at 800 g for 10 min. The supernatants were saved to use for enzyme analysis. Cells were harvested and treated for 30 min with hypotonic solution (0.075 M KCl) and fixed in a (v/v) mixture of acetic acid/methanol. 1:3 Bromodeoxyuridine incorporated metaphase chromosomes were stained with fluorescence plus Giemsa technique as described by Speit and Haupter [16]. In order to evaluate SCE, 20 satisfactory metaphases were analyzed. For each treatment condition, well-spread second division metaphases containing 42-46 chromosomes in each cell were scored, and the values obtained were calculated as SCEs per cell. Each test assays were repeated three times.

2.6. Biochemical analysis for antioxidative effect determination

2.6.1. Preparation of the cell homogenates

The cell homogenates were diluted in 10 mM potassium phosphate buffer (pH 7.4) as 1:10 (w/v). Samples were centrifuged at 3000 rpm for 10 min at 4 °C. The supernatants were collected and immediately

assayed for enzyme activities. Cu, Zn-SOD and GPx activities and MDA levels in the cell culture supernatant were measured by the method of Paglia and Valentina, Ohkawa et al. and Sun et al. [17-19] respectively. All samples were measured in six times.

2.6.2. SOD assay

Cu, Zn-SOD activity of the cell culture supernatant was carried out according to Sun et al. [19] 100 μ L of the sample was added in to 2.45 mL of assay reagent [0.3 mM xanthine, 0.6 mM Na₂EDTA, 0.15 mM nitro blue tetrazolium (NBT), 0.4 M Na₂CO₃, 1 g/L bovine serum albumin]. Furthermore, Xanthine oxidase (50 μ L, 167 U/L was added into the mixture to initiate the reaction. The reduction of NBT by superoxide anion radicals produced by xanthine-xanthine oxidase system was spectrophotometrically determined by measuring at 560 nm. One unit activity of Cu, Zn-SOD was defined as the amounts of enzyme that inhibited the rate of NBT by 50% under the assay conditions described above.

2.6.3. GSH assay

GSH activity of the cell culture supernatant was carried out using the method of Anderson et al. [20] The final volume of the reaction mixture was 3 ml containing 750 μL 10 mM 5-5'-dithio-bis-2-nitrobenzoic acid (DTNB) solution, 100 mM KH₂PO₄, 5 mM Na₂EDTA (pH 7.5), 625 U/L GSH-RD and 100 mL sample. After incubation at room temperature for 3 min, 150 µL of 1.47 mM β -NADPH was added into the reaction mixture and mixed rapidly by inversion. The rate of 5thio-2-nitrobenzoic formation acid meaning proportional to the amount of reduced and oxidized GSH was spectrophotometrically measured at 412 nm. The blank sample contained equal concentrations of DTNB and NADPH without sample. The values were presented as umol per gram protein.

2.6.4. GPx assay

GPx activity in the cell culture supernatant was measured by the method of Paglia and Valentine [17]. The reaction mixture was generated with $100 \ \mu\text{L} 8 \ \text{mM}$ NADPH, 100 µL 150 mM reduced GSH, 20 µL glutathione reductase (30 units/mL), 20 µL 0.12 M sodium azide solution, 2.65 mL 50 mM potassium phosphate buffer (pH 7.0, 5 mM EDTA) and also 50 µL sample and incubated at 37°C for 30 min. To initiate the reaction, 100 µL 2 mM H₂O₂ solution was added and rapidly mixed by inversion. Then, the conversion of NADPH to NADP was measured spectrophotometrically at 340 nm. The enzyme activity was defined as units per g protein using an extinction coefficient for NADPH at 340 nm of 6.22×10^{-6} .

2.6.5. MDA assay

MDA levels in the cell culture supernatant were determined spectrophotometrically according to the method described by Ohkawa et al. [18] The final volume of the reaction mixture was 4 ml containing 8.1% sodium dodecyl sulphate, 20% acetic acid, 0.9%

thiobarbituric acid and 200 μ L of the tested samples. After incubation of the mixture at 95 °C for 1 h, the tubes were left to cool under cold water. 1 mL distilled water with 5 mL *n*-butanol/pyridine (15:1, v/v) was added into the mixture and mixed up. Then, the samples were centrifuged at 4000 × g for 10 min and the absorbances of the supernatants were measured at 532 nm against a blank by using the standard graph created by 1,1,3,3-Tetraethoxypropane. Lipid peroxide levels were defined as μ mol/l MDA. Protein concentrations in the cell culture supernatant were determined by Bradford method [21]. All of the spectrophotometric measurements were performed with a DU 530 spectrophotometer (Beckman Instruments, Fullerton, California, USA) in a quartz cuvette.

2.7. Statistical analysis

The results were presented as the average and standard error of three experiments with triplicate application. The analysis of SCE rates and biochemical parameters were performed through Mann-Whitney U-Test of SPSS software of version 15.0 (SPSS Inc, Chicago, Illinois, USA). A level of probability <0.05 was taken as indicating statistical significance.

3. Results and Discussion

In this study, the antigenotoxic effects of methanol extracts of UC and UN were examined against Nmethyl-N'-nitro-N-nitrosoguanidine (MNNG), sodium azide (NaN₃), 9-aminoacridine (9-AA) and aflatoxin (AFB) mutation agents in the WP2, Ames (TA1535, TA1537) and SCE test systems, respectively. Besides, the genotoxic effects of the lichens were studied to determine whether their use is safe or not and which doses should be used. Our findings obtained from the bacterial reverse mutation assay showed that UCME and UNME had no mutagenic activity either in the strains of S. typhimurium (TA1535 and TA1537) or in the WP2uvRA strain of E. coli at any tested concentration (20, 40, 60, 80, 100 µg/plate in %10 DMSO). On the other hand, it was observed that the tested materials at some concentrations had strong antimutagenic activity in the strains of S. typhimurium (TA1535 and TA1537) and in the E. coli (WP2) against NaN₃, 9-AA and MNNG, respectively. However, the extracts exhibited antimutagenic activity at different levels for all the studied concentrations. UNME applied at 0.05 µg/plate showed inhibition rate of 31,12%; 26,19% was observed at 0.5 µg/plate of UNME for inhibition rate. The results were given in Table 1. 25-40% inhibition was defined as moderate antimutagenicity; 40% or more inhibition as strong antimutagenicity; and inhibition under 25% as no antimutagenicity [22]. These results show that dose adjustments should be done, when lichens are used for phytomedicinal purpose. NaN3 affecting organisms from bacteria to animals, the positive control for TA1535 strain of S. typhimurium, are a very strong mutagenic compound.

Mutagenicity of NaN3 is mediated through the production of an organic metabolite called as Lazidoalanine [23]. In this study, it was observed that UCME and UNME had antimutagenic activity against NaN₃ in most concentrations. The antimutagenic activity against NaN₃ might be mediated through inhibitor activity of the extracts on the production of Lazidoalanine [14]. 9-AA, the positive control for 1537 strain of S. typhimurium, might show its mutagenic effect via frameshift event. In the frameshift mutagenicity, acridines including 9-AA bind to DNA non-covalently by intercalation [24]. The both of lichen extracts exhibited significant increasing antimutagenic effect depending on increasing dose against 9-AA. It was thought that this antimutagenicity was mediated via inhibition potentials of the tested extracts through blocking of 9-AA binding to DNA. MNNG, the positive control for WP2 strain of E. coli, is a compound mediated its mutagenic and lethal effects through the methylation of DNA. The most particular product of MNNG, O⁶- methylguanine, is responsible for mutagenic activity of MNNG [25].

In this study, both extracts showed a great antimutagenic potential ranging from 26.55% to 41.53% at tested concentrations. This antimutagenic activity might be explained through inhibitor activities of the tested materials on the formation of O^6 methylguanine. In addition, E. coli WP2 test system was especially used to determine the antimutagenic activities of antioxidant substances. According to literature, lichen extracts produced by many different methods were highly effective for radical scavenging and inhibition of linoleic acid oxidation which meant having high antioxidant activity [26]. As it was observed, the tested materials had high antimutagenic activity when E. coli WP2 test system was used. It could be explained with direct correlation between the antioxidant capacity and antimutagenic activity of the extracts. However, UCME showed no antimutagenic activity at some concentrations and the antimutagenic activity of UNME showed variable activity against MNNG. These results could be observed due to toxic effect in WP2 strain. The stress caused by extract exposure at high level might disturb the used strain. In addition to Salmonella and E. coli WP2 test system, SCI test system was performed to determine the mutagenic and antimutagenic activity of the studied lichens. According to the results, the tested materials exhibited antimutagenic activity at high level with applications of increasing doses against AFB1 and SCE formations on peripheral lymphocytes. The results were given in Table 2. AFB1, the positive control for SCE test system, is a mycotosin and the mutagenicity of AFB₁ is mediated by stimulating the release of free radical including reactive oxygen species which cause gene mutations, chromosomal aberrations, formation of micronuclei and SCE. Finding new antimutagen agent against AFB₁ is especially an important objective for the researchers focusing on herbal medicine.

		Umbilicaria cylindirica Number of revertants							
Test Items	Concentration (µg/plate)								
		E. coli WP2uvrA		S. typhimurium TA1535		S. typhimurium TA1537		E. coli WP2 <i>uvrA</i>	
		MNNG**	1	368.00 ± 09.61					
NaN3**	1			649.00 ± 11.19					
9-AA**	40					306.20 ± 10.42			
DMSO ^{**} (µl/plate)	100	34.00 ± 00.65		18.30 ± 00.94		14.50 ± 00.28		$\begin{array}{c} 23.00 \pm \\ 00.65 \end{array}$	
	2	$\begin{array}{c} 235.26 \pm \\ 03.29 \end{array}$	36.14*	$\begin{array}{c} 436.00 \pm \\ 09.60 \end{array}$	32.81*	$\begin{array}{c} 204.00 \pm \\ 04.41 \end{array}$	33.33	$\begin{array}{c} 328.00 \pm \\ 04.41 \end{array}$	41.53
	4	$\begin{array}{c} 269.00 \pm \\ 04.10 \end{array}$	26.90*	448.25 ± 10.42	30.97*	$\begin{array}{c} 193.50 \pm \\ 03.08 \end{array}$	36.92	$\begin{array}{r} 329.50 \pm \\ 03.06 \end{array}$	41.53
	6	$\begin{array}{r} 339.50 \pm \\ 07.00 \end{array}$	-	$\begin{array}{r} 483.50 \pm \\ 11.60 \end{array}$	25.57*	$\begin{array}{c} 181.00 \pm \\ 04.50 \end{array}$	40.84	$\begin{array}{c} 412.00 \pm \\ 04.53 \end{array}$	26.55
	8	$\begin{array}{c} 339.00 \pm \\ 04.53 \end{array}$	-	$\begin{array}{c} 465.00 \pm \\ 08.09 \end{array}$	28.35	$\begin{array}{c} 156.50 \pm \\ 04.40 \end{array}$	49.01	$\begin{array}{c} 400.50 \pm \\ 04.42 \end{array}$	28.69
	10	$\begin{array}{r} 345.00 \pm \\ 05.84 \end{array}$	-	545.25 ± 07.31	_	128.50 ± 06.39	58.16	424.50 ± 06.30	24.42

Table 1. Antimutagenicity assay results of the methanol extract of *Umbilicaria cylindirica* and *Umbilicaria nylanderiana* for *E. o* TA1537 bacterial test strains

* p<0,05, ** MNNG, NaN₃ and 9-AA were used as positive controls for *E. coli* WP2*uvrA*, S. *typhimurium* TA1535 and TA1537 strains, respect as negative control

		Umbilica	ria cylindirica			
Culture types	Metaphase Range of SCEs		Number of SCE/Cell*** SCEs		Culture types	Metaphase
Control	60	4-7	396	5.32±0.82ª	Control	60
AFB1 5 μM (84ml)		4-10	507	5.96±0.83 ^e	AFB1 5 μM (84ml)	60
UC* (5µg/ml)	60	4-9	429	5.43±0.81°	UN** (5µg/ml)	60
AFB ₁ 5 μM (84ml) + UC (5μg/ml)	60	4-10	474	5.56±0.81 ^d	AFB ₁ 5 μM (84ml) + UN (5μg/ml)	60
AFB ₁ 5 μM (84ml) + UC (10μg/ml)	60	5-11	435	5.44±0.82°	AFB ₁ 5 μM (84ml) + UN (10μg/ml)	60
AFB ₁ 5 μM (84ml) + UC (100μg/ml)	60	3-12	417	5.38±0.81 ^b	AFB ₁ 5 μM (84ml) + UN (100μg/ml)	60

Table 2. Antimutagenic activity against SCE formations on peripheral lymphocytes of U. cylindirica and U. nylanderiana

^{*} UC: *U. cylindirica* methanol extracts, ** UN: *U. nylanderiana* methanol extracts *** $^{a}p<0,001$ compared with control group; $^{b}p<0,05$ compared μ M) group; $^{d}p<0.001$ compared with AFB₁ (10 μ M) group

Culture types		Umbilic		Un			
	SOD (U/mL)	SOD (U/mL) GPx (U/mL) GSH (µmol/L) MDA (nmol/mL)		MDA (nmol/mL)	Culture types	SOD (U/mL)	GPx (
Control	1,75±0,02	0,95±0,14	3,40±0,12	2,21±0,33	Control	1,60±0,02	0,85=
AFB ₁	0,97±0,11a	0,46±0,16 ^a	1,34±0,01ª	4,69±2,03ª	AFB ₁	0,97±0,11a	0,46±
UC	1,78±0,01b	1,14±0,27 ^{ab}	3,46±0,29 ^b	2,02±0,73 ^{ab}	UN	1,77±0,03b	0,88±
AFB ₁ +UC1	1,71±0,01b	0,65±0,24 ^{abc}	3,24±0,14 ^b	3,32±0,46 ^{abc}	AFB ₁ +UN1	1,73±0,01b	0,90±
AFB ₁ +UC2	1,77±0,02b	1,02±0,64 ^{abd}	3,32±0,23 ^b	2,44±0,12 ^{bd}	AFB ₁ +UN2	1,71±0,02b	0,82±
AFB ₁ +UC3	1,78±0,01b	0,94±0,15 ^{bd}	3,44±0,01 ^b	2,37±0,62 ^{bd}	AFB ₁ +UN3	1,78±0,01b	0,92±

Table 3. The activities of SOD, GPx, GSH, and MDA levels

*UC: *U. cylindirica*, a: p<0.05 compare with control group, b: p<0.05 compare with AFB₁ group, c: p<0.05 compare with UC group, d: p<0.05 compare with AFB₁+UC2 group ** UN: *U. nylanderiana*, a: p<0.05 compare with control group, b: p<0.05 compare with AFB₁ group, c: p<0.05 compare with AFB₁+UN1 group, e: p<0.05 compare with AFB₁+UN2 group

As AFB₁ is the most abundant contaminant in many foods including wheat, barley and milk and also the common mutagenic agent most [27]. The antimutagenic activity observed by SCE test system might result from inhibitor activities of the lichen extracts on the formation of free radicals. In order to determine how the tested materials exhibited the possible antimutagenic effect, the activities of antioxidant enzymes including SOD, GSH and GPx and MDA level were determined in presence and absence of AFB1 and lichen extracts. According to our results, the activities of SOD, GSH and GPx decreased and MDA level increased through AFB₁ application. On the other hand, the application of increasing concentrations of methanol extracts of lichens with AFB1 increased the antioxidant enzymes and reduced the level of MDA. The results were showed in Table 3. SOD, playing the first line defense against oxidative damage catalyzes the dismutation of superoxide to hydrogen peroxide and oxygen. GPx and GSH are important for regulation of intracellular H₂O₂. They scavenge endogenous superoxides and H2O2 and thereby play a significant role in decreasing lipid peroxidation which means a decrease in MDA level [28]. GSH also plays a crucial role in the detoxification of majority of alkylating agents including diethylnitrosamine (DEN) [28]. The decrease of MDA level and increase of antioxidant enzymes can result from antioxidant activity of the tested materials through their utilization in inactivating the free radicals generated by AFB₁. Besides, the antimutagenic activity of the lichens at high level against 9-AA can be explained with activity of GSH in TA1537 strain of S. typhimurium. As previously reported, the genotoxic effect of lichens extracts can be explained through their antioxidant substances including polyphenolic compounds such as epigallocatechin gallate, quercetin, acid, curcumin. eugenol. gallic usnic acid. lichestrerinic polysaccharide Ci-3. acid. protolichesterinic acid and organic acids such as oxalic, fumaric, malic and lactic acids. Therefore, many lichen ingredients were commercially purchased or isolated from lichens species and tested for their biological activities by many researchers [9]. For example, Valencia-Islas et al. [26] carried out a study about determination of the anti-oxidant activity and antiradical power of six phenolics including boninic acid, 2-O-methylsekikaic acid, salazinic acid, chloroatranorin, atranorin and (+)-usnic acid. According to the literature, Umblicaria species possess many compounds such as umbilicaric, ovoic, hiascic, gyrophoric, lecanoric acids varying according to specimens, as well as the quality of other secondary metabolites detected by HPLC method [29]. The results of this study were supported by previous studies.

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, UCME and UNME have significant antioxidative and antigenotoxic potentials against

several mutagen agents. Although important dates were obtained from the performed test systems, further studies should be carried out to fractionate the methanol extracts for identification of the active compounds, to adjust accurate dose. Besides, the results about mutagenic and antimutagenic activities make the methanol extracts of lichens promising candidates for further researches focusing on phytotherapeutic agent discovery and development.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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