Review on Pharmacology and Phytochemistry of *Cyperus rotundus* L.

Muneesh Kumar, Manisha Rani, Bibekananda Meher

ABSTRACT

Nowadays there is increasing interest of researchers to explore herbal drugs for health benefits of human as well as animals. Drugs which are obtained from natural sources are pharmacologically potent and have low or no side effects for use in preventive medicine. *Cyperus rotundus* L. is commonly known as nagarmotha, motha in local languages. It is available all over the country. *Cyperus rotundus* is having some reported activities like antidiabetic, hypolipidemic, hepatoprotective and antimicrobial properties. It contains flavonoids, tannins, glycosides, monoterpenes, sesquiterpenes, sitosterol, alkaloids saponins, terpenoids, essential oils, starch, carbohydrates, protein, separated amino acids and different secondary metabolites. Considering the growing interest in the field of plant drugs assessing different pharmacological activities. In this review we are discussing about the therapeutic potential and chemical constituents of *Cyperus rotundus*.

**Key Words:** *Cyperus rotundus*, flavonoids, tannins, antidiabetic, hypolipidemic.

1. INTRODUCTION

Most of the people all over the world use plant drugs for treatment of different diseases. It always plays a key role in the treatment of different ailments of human and animals all over the world. In developing country more researchers are working on plant and plant product so recognition of natural product is growing. Herbal drugs play a major role in both traditional and modern system of medicine.¹ Nagarmotha (*Cyperus rotundus*) (figure 1 and 2) commonly known as Nagarmotha is found throughout India. It belongs to the family Cyperaceae. The genus name *Cyperus* is derived from *Cypeiros*, which was the ancient Greek name for the genus, *rotundus* is Latin word for round and refers to the tuber.²

*Cyperus rotundus* is commonly known as Nagarmotha belonging to (family- *Cyperaceae*) is widely used in traditional medicine around the world for the treatment of various diseases. This plant is also known as Purple nutsedge or nutgrass, motha, musta and are used in anti-inflammatory, antidiabetic, antidiarrhoeal and antipyretic.³ Roots are useful for developing memory. It also shows protective action on liver, spleen, and pancreas. It also possess different Pharmacological actions like anthelmintic, anti-fungal, anti-parasitic, anti-rheumatic, antispasmodic, aphrodisiac and astringent.⁴ Traditional practitioner used this plant from thousands of years especially in Chinese traditional medicine. All parts of the *Cyperus rotundus* are useful.⁵ Tubers of *Cyperus rotundus* and its extracts have been used for alluring fish during harvesting in India. It shows higher enzymatic activity with the higher growth rate in fish.⁶
Considering the growing interest in the field of plant drugs assessing different Pharmacological activity. In this review we have discussed about the therapeutic potential and chemical constituents of *Cyperus rotundus*.

1. **Vernacular name**

   Hindi - Motha, Nagamotha  
   Gujarati - Nagarmothaya  
   English - Nutgrass, purple nutsedge  
   Kanada - Koranari-gadde  
   Assamese - Keyabon  
   Malayalam - Korakizanna,  
   Marathi - Barik motha, Bimbal  
   Sanksrit - Muthakasu, Musta, Varida

2. **Taxonomical classification**

   Kingdom - Plantae  
   Order - Poales (Cyperales)  
   Family - Cyperacae  
   Genus - Cyperus  
   Species - rotundus

2. **CHEMICAL CONSTITUENT & TRADITIONAL USES**

   The major chemical constituent in the extract of *Cyperus rotundus* rhizomes consist of essential oil and terpenoids, flavonoids, sesquiterpenes, monoterpenes, sitosterol and glycosides alpha-rotunol, betacyperone, beta-selinene, camphene, calcium, cyperene, cyperenon, cyperol, cyperolon selinenene, cyperotundone, D-copadiene, linolenic acid, linoleic acid, oleic acid, rotundene, rotundenol, rotundone, polyphenols, pectin, stearic acid, calcium, camphene, sugeonol, sugetrio.

   The plant of *Cyperus rotundus* is traditionally used as carminative, astringent, diuretic, anti-inflammatory, hepatoprotective, antipyretic, nerve tonic, anti-emetic, increased production of melanin. It was also used in food poisoning, indigestion and irritation of bowel syndrome, malaria, cough, bronchitis, renal and vesical calculi, amenorrhoea, dysmenorrhoea, deficient lactation, loss of memory, insect bites, dysuria, bronchitis, infertility, cervical cancer and menstrual disorders. According to the Ayurveda, *Cyperus rotundus* rhizomes were considered astringent, diaphoretic, diuretic, analgesic, antispasmodic, aromatic, carminative, antitussive, emmenagogue, litholytic, sedative, stimulant, stomachic, vermifuge, tonic and antibacterial.

3. **PHARMACOLOGICAL ACTIONS**

   3.1 **Antidiarrhoeal actions**

   The methanolic extract of *Cyperus rotundus* rhizomes were shown antidiarrhoeal activity at the doses of 250 and 500 mg/kg in castor oil induced diarrhoea in mice. Das et al. studied that aqueous extract of *Cyperus rotundus* tubers shows anti-giardial activity against infectious diarrhea. It was also shown anti-diarrhoeal action against adherence to enteropathogenic *Escherichia coli* and invasion of enteroinvasive *E. coli* and *Shigella flexneri* to Human epithelial type 2 (HEP-2) cells. Enterotoxins such as enterotoxigenic *E. coli*, heat labile toxin (HLT), heat stable toxin (HST), and cholera toxin (CT) was also assessed. It was found that the decoction reduces bacterial adherence to and invasion of HEP-2 cells. The production of HLT increased and binding with ganglioside monosialic acid receptor (GM₁) was decreased. The CT production was decreased and no effect on binding to GM₁.
3.2 Anti-inflammatory activity

Gupta M et al., studied that methanolic and chloroform extract of Cyperus rotundus rhizomes shown the anti-inflammatory activity at dose of 400-600 mg/kg carrageenan-induced paw oedema in Wister rats.12 Ahamad M et al. studied that drug extract was shown the anti-inflammatory activity at the dose of 300-500mg/kg/oral.13

3.3 Antibacterial activity

Prasad MP et al., studied that Cyperus rotundus was shown antibacterial activity.14 It was also found that Cyperus rotundus oil was shown antimicrobial action against microbes like: Staphylococcus aureus, Klebsiella pneumoniae, Proteus vulgaris, Staphylococcus pyogenes, Escherichia coli. The oil of Cyperus rotundus was shown a remarkable activity against Gram-positive bacteria less antibacterial activity was found against Gram-negative bacteria and no activity was observed with the oil against Pseudomonas aeruginosa and Proteus vulgaris.15

3.4 Antipyretic activity

Singh N et al. also found that the alcoholic extract of Cyperus rotundus shown antipyretic activity.6 It was also observed that alcoholic extract of Cyperus rotundus shown highly significant (P<0.001) antipyretic action against pyrexia produced in albino rats by the subcutaneous injection of suspension of dried Brewer’s yeast in gum acacia in normal saline.17

3.5 Anti-oxidant activity

Sayed HM et al studied the antioxidant and α-amylase inhibitory activities of some of the isolated phenolic compound of aerial parts of Cyperus rotundus.18 Sirivastav S et al, it was found that in vitro antioxidant activity methanol extracts of Cyperus rotundus more than that of ethanol extract due to its high flavonoids content. Inhibition of DPPH free radical and reducing power higher in methanolic extract as compared to ethanolic extract.19

3.6 Hypolipidemic activity

In a study, Okwu et al observed that the bioactive compounds present in Cyperus rotundus rhizome responsible for hypolipidemic potentials.20 According to Chandrate et al alcoholic extract of Cyperus rotundus at the dose level of 70mg/kg/day, 140 mg/kg/day, 280mg/kg/day shown more improvement in lipid profile after 15 days of treatment.21

3.7 Insecticidal and plasmodicidal activity

It was also observed that C. rotundus shown ovicidal and larvicidal activities against Aedes albopictus.22 Singh et al in 2009 reported that the hexane extract of Cyperus rotundus shown repellent activity against different species of mosquito. It was also found that Cyperus rotundus shown comparatively better action than that of DEET (N, N diethyl- 3-methylbenzamide). Therefore, the extract can be an effective and safe for personal protective measure against mosquito bite.23 The hexane extract of C. rotundus rhizomes also exhibited high potency against Plasmodium falciparum, a malarial parasite. Qualitative assessment of the antimalarial activity in vitro was determined by means of microculture radioisotope technique.24

3.8 Anti-amoebic activity

It was also observed that in vitro studies the whole plant of Cyperus rotundus was shown better anti-amoebic activity against Entamoeba histolytica trophozoites. In another study it was also found that, the ethanol extract Cyperus rotundus (whole plant) shown 100% inhibition at a concentration 500 µg/ml after 96 h.25

3.9 Analgesic activity

Hydro-alcoholic extract of Cyperus rotundus shown analgesic activity at the dose of 50, 100 and 200mg/kg, have investigated for the anti-nociceptive activity of in mice. A dose of 200 mg/kg showed the maximum inhibition percentage of licking in early (61.60%) and late phase87.41%).26

3.10 Anti-ulcer activity

In histamine induced gastric ulcer method, the tuber powder of Cyperus rotundus at the dose of 1.25 gm/kg shown significant reduction of the ulcer index.27 From this study we can conclude that it also posses anti-ulcer activity.

4. CONCLUSION

It is a perennial plant and is one of the most invasive weeds known, having spread out to a world-wide distribution in tropical and temperate regions. The plant is mentioned in the ancient Ayurvedic literature like Charaka Samhita.

This review gives broad information about different bioactive components and ethnopharmacology along with the scientifically claimed medicinal uses of Cyperus rotundus. It also possess large number of medicinal applications in treatment of different human ailments.

Different plant constituents like: carbohydrates, proteins, quinones, β-cyanins, terpenoids and caumarins have been reported.
to be present in different parts of *Cyperus rotundus*. The plant possesses various pharmacological actions like: hypolipidemic, anti-ulcer, analgesic, insecticidal, plasmodicidal, anti-pyretic, antioxidant properties. It contain many secondary metabolites such as sesquiterpenes (with diverse skeletons such as patchouline, rotundane, eudesmane, guaiane, cadinane and Caryophyllene types), quinones, flavonoids (visnagin, khellin, ammiol, isorhamnetin, and tricin), saponins, alkaloids, phenolic acids (salicylic acid, protocatechuic acid, caffeic acid and p-coumaric acid), coumarins and steroids (steroidal glycoside, sitosteryl(6-hentriacontanoyl)-β-d-galactopyranoside). Therefore, there is need for investigation and quantification of different phyto-constituents present and its pharmacological profile.

REFERENCES

17. Gupta MB, Palit TK, Singh N, Bhargava KP. Pharmacological studies to isolate the active constituents from *Cyperus rotundas* possessing antiinflammatory, anti-pyretic and analgesic activities. IJMR.1971; 59:76–82.

