

## EVALUATIONS OF FREE RADICAL SCAVENGING AND ANTIPROLIFERATIVE ACTIVITY OF FRUIT PEEL EXTRACT

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### Abstract

Fruit peels are known as waste of restaurant, market, and byproducts of food and beverages industries. They are usually discarded but are currently recognized as important sources for valuable phytochemicals, thus the exploration of its biological activity is encouraged. The fruit peel extract in this study was a combination of dried peels derived from mango; papaya and honeydew. The dried fruit peels were combined and macerated with 95% ethanol at a 50°C using water bath. This study was intended to investigate the scavenging effect of fruit peel extract that was high in phenolic content against DPPH free radical and nitric oxide (NO). The MTT assay was carried out to evaluate the anti-proliferative activity of fruit peel extract on A549 and HepG2 cells which were lung cancer cells and liver cancer cells, respectively. The antiproliferation of the extract towards normal cell lines WRL68; a hepatic human cell line and CRL2522; human foreskin normal were also done. Results indicated that the peel extract was a better DPPH scavenger compared to NO. The extract was found to be rich in phenolic compounds with 416 mg of gallic acid equivalents per g dry weight of extract. However, the extract that rich in phenolic compounds extract was not found attributing towards the antiproliferative assay.

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**Keywords:** fruit peel extract, antiproliferative, nitric oxide, free radical scavenging.

### Introduction

Synthesis of phytochemicals in plants is resulted from a number of pathways in plant metabolism. Such pathways are important in maintaining the functions and confer protections to the plants (Larbat et al. 2014; Dong et al. 2016). Many medicinal plants are known to possess phytochemicals that are biologically active (Shayganni et al. 2016). Phenolic compounds, terpenoids, vitamins, and alkaloids are phytochemicals which have long history associated with health benefits and continues today as medicines. Thus, they are also called as bioactive compounds. The accumulation of bioactive compounds can be found in organs of the plant such as fruit, seed, flower, leaves, bark and root, but different in concentration. As an example, comparative phenolic compound profiles showed that total phenol content in ginseng fruit and leaves was higher than in ginseng roots (Chung et al. 2016).

Fruit peels have been found rich in bioactive compounds (Kabir et al. 2015), nevertheless this waste of restaurant, market, and byproducts of food and beverages industries are being thrown away or being fed to animals. However, noteworthy amount of bioactive component of therapeutic worth was recognized, thus encourages the study to find efficient ways to extract and evaluate the phytochemicals from the fruit peels to use its pharmacological properties (Salfarina 2016). For instance, the pear peel's anti-diabetic prospect of treatment for type II diabetes was proposed (Wang et al. 2015), whereas the development of encapsulated citrus by-product as nutraceutical with metalloproteinases inhibitory activity was reported (Lauro et al., 2015). Other studies reported antioxidant properties of phenolic compounds from fruit peel extracts (Contreras-Calderón et al. 2011; Fu et al, 2014; Sai-Ut et al. 2015). Frequently, the *in vitro* antioxidant assays are employed to evaluate the antioxidant activity of plant extract by evaluating the ability of extract to scavenge free radicals and/or molecules involved in the onset of oxidation process. Antioxidant rich extract was also reported exhibiting antiproliferative activity towards cancer lines (Moongkarndi et al. 2004; Wang et al. 2008).

This study was an initiative to adopt the interest of investigating the biological activity of fruit peel extract. The peels of mango (*Mangifera indica*, honeydew (*Cucumis melo*) and papaya (*Carica papaya*) obtained were the waste from the cafeteria of Universiti Teknologi MARA, Puncak Alam. Based on the reported literatures of fruit peel extract antioxidant activity, the preparation of fruit peel extract that consist of the combination of three different fruit peels was expected to provide a better source of natural antioxidant. Moreover, combinations of herbs are commonly observed among the practitioners of traditional medicine in countries of South East Asia. The objective of this research was to prepare a fruit peel extract by combining three fruit peels and to explore its free radical scavenging and anti-proliferative activities. Its total phenolic content was also measured by Folin–Ciocalteu assay.

## **Methodology :**

### *Chemicals*

Folin–Ciocalteu's phenol reagent, gallic acid, dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO), 2,2-diphenyl-1-picryl-hydrazyl (DPPH), 95% ethanol analytical grade, CRL2522 cell, WRL68, HepG2 cell, human lung adenocarcinoma epithelial cells (A549), MEM medium, RPMI medium, fetal bovine serum (FBS), streptomycin, 3-(4,5-Dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-2,5-Diphenyltetrazolium Bromide(MTT), DMSO, penicillin, phosphate buffer solution (PBS), NaH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>-K<sub>2</sub>HPO<sub>4</sub> buffer, tyrosinase, L-tyrosine, L-DOPA solution, sodium nitroperruside, Griess reagent (sulphanilamide, naphthylethylenediamine dihydrochloride), ferrozine, ethanol, FeCl<sub>2</sub>, EDTA.

### *Raw materials*

The peels of mango, papaya and honeydew were collected from the Cafeteria of Universiti Teknologi MARA, Puncak Alam. The fruit peels were washed with tap water and oven-dried at 50 °C for 14 days. The dried fruit peels were weighed before being pulverized and stored at room temperature.

#### *Preparation of fruit peel extract*

The dried peels of papaya (29.16g), honeydew (97.51g) and mango (348.95g) were combined and macerated with 95% ethanol at 50°C. The solvent in the extract was removed with a rotary evaporator and water bath. The extract yield obtained was weighed and stored at 4°C until it was analyzed.

#### *Determination of free radical scavenging activity*

##### *1,1-diphenyl-2-picrylhydrazyl (DPPH) scavenging activity*

Free radical scavenging activity was evaluated by ability to scavenge DPPH; a stable synthetic free radical. The assay was adopted from (Salfarina et al. 2011) with a modification. Aliquot of 100 µl of 1,1-diphenyl-2-picrylhydrazyl (DPPH) in methanol (200µM) was pipette into 96 well microplate, followed by 100µl of extract prepared in ethanol. The reaction was allowed to incubate in 30 minutes at room temperature. Next, the absorbance was measured at 517 nm using microplate reader. The control was reaction mixture with ethanol substituting the extract. The DPPH radical scavenging activity was calculated by the following equation: Radical scavenging activity (%) = (Absorbance control – Absorbance sample) / Absorbance control x 100. The scavenging activity of extract was expressed as the concentration necessary to scavenge free radical by 50% (IC<sub>50</sub>). Gallic acid and quercetin with same concentrations were employed as positive controls.

##### *Nitric oxide (NO) scavenging activity*

Into a 96 microwell plate, 50µl of extract or control (ultrapure water) will be added into 50 µl of aqueous sodium nitroprusside (5 mM). The mixture will be incubated for 2 hours. Next 100 µl of Griess reagent (0.5% sulphanilamide in ultrapure water, 0.16% naphthylethylenediamine dihydrochloride in 20% acetic acid, 1:1) will be added and will be immediately read at 570nm. The nitric oxide scavenging activity will be calculated as below: Scavenging activity (%) = (Absorbance control – Absorbance sample) / Absorbance control x 100. The concentration of extracts necessary to scavenge 50% of the produced nitric oxide (IC<sub>50</sub>) will be obtained from a graph of scavenging activity (%) against extract concentrations (Salfarina et al. 2011). Gallic acid and quercetin with same concentrations were employed as positive controls.

##### *Determination of total phenolic content*

Quantification of total phenolic content of extract was determined using Folin-Ciocalteu's phenol reagent. Phenolic compounds in the extract will form a blue color complex with Folin Ciocalteu reagent after adjusted with alkali. Briefly, 80µl of extract in methanol was pipette into 96 well microplate, followed by 100µl of 15% Folin Ciocalteu. Distilled water was added to adjust the volume to 200µl. The mixture was left for 5 minutes before addition of 100 µl Na<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> aqueous (0.105 g/ml). The absorbance of extract was measured at 756nm after incubation at 30°C for 60 minutes. All determinations were performed in triplicate. Different concentrations of gallic acid (0.03, 0.06, 0.12, 0.25, 0.5 and 1 mg/ml) were used to prepare a standard curve. The concentration of total phenolic compounds in all extract was expressed as mg of gallic acid equivalents per g dry weight of extract using a linear equation (Salfarina et al. 2011).

### Cell culture

The human lung adenocarcinoma epithelial cells A549, human liver cancer cell line HepG2 and WRL68 were obtained from the Pharmacology and Toxicology Research Laboratory, Faculty of Pharmacy Universiti Teknologi MARA, Puncak Alam. The subculturing was routinely performed when cells reached 80–90% confluency. A549 cell line, HepG2 and WRL68 was routinely sub-cultured in RPMI medium, MEM and DMEM medium, respectively. All cells were supplemented with 10% heat-inactivated fetal bovine serum (FBS), 200 µg/ml streptomycin and 500 µg/ml penicillin (Sigma, USA) at 37 °C in a humidified atmosphere and 5% CO<sub>2</sub> (Salfarina et al. 2015a).

### Antiproliferative assay

The antiproliferative property of fruit peel extract against the A549, CRL 2522, HepG2 and WRL cells was evaluated by MTT assay. Briefly,  $2 \times 10^4$  cells/cm<sup>2</sup> were seeded into 96-well plates and incubated overnight to ensure attachment of cells before fruit peel extract was added. The following day, cells were treated with 12.5, 25, 50, 100, 200 and 400µg/ml of extract and incubated for 24 h. Gallic acid or quercetin with same concentrations were employed as positive control, whereas DMSO was served as negative control. After indicated times, cells were washed with PBS and MTT solution (0.5 mg/ml, in PBS) was added to each well and incubated for another 4 h at 37 °C. Formazan crystals were dissolved in 100 µl DMSO, and the absorbance was determined at 570 nm using a spectrophotometer. The number of viable cells was then calculated as follows: Number of viable cells (%)= Absorbance of sample/absorbance of control x 100%. The antiproliferation activity of extract was expressed as the concentration necessary to inhibit the proliferation of cells by 50% (IC<sub>50</sub>) (Salfarina et al. 2015a).

### Statistical analysis

All the experiments were carried out in triplicate. The results were expressed as means and evaluated by analysis of variance (ANOVA) followed by Tukey's test. P<0.05 was regarded as statistically significant.

### Results :

From the radical scavenging and antiproliferative assays, it was observed that the extract activities were in a concentration-dependent manner; thus a comparison of the extract, gallic acid or quercetin with all cells was determined from their IC<sub>50</sub>. Table 1 summarizes the antioxidant and antiproliferative activity of fruit peel extract.

**Table 1:** IC<sub>50</sub> of the free radical scavenging and anti-proliferative assays.

	IC <sub>50</sub> (ug/ml)		
	Extract	Gallic acid	Quercetin
Free radical scavenging activity			
i) DPPH	38	2.27	5.81
ii) NO	94.8	79.4	94.5
Antiproliferative activity towards:			
i) HepG2	91.13	21.75	

ii)	WRL68	100.85	20.52	
iii)	A549	57.96		37.5
iv)	CRL2522	108.84		109.92

\*Gallic acid was a positive control for HepG2 and WRL68 cells

\*Quercetin was a positive control for A549 and CRL2522 cells

### Discussion and Conclusion :

The antioxidant effect of the extract was assessed using the DPPH and NO scavenging assays. DPPH is a commercially available free radical that is widely used for a simple estimation of antioxidant activity. It has become a routine assay in determining an extract antioxidant activity. The decreased in absorbance after addition of extract results in a color change from purple to yellow, indicates the DPPH radicals are being scavenged by the extract through the donation of hydrogen to form the a stable DPPH molecule. Some pathological conditions showed that an increased in nitric oxide (NO) levels can result in inflammation and cancer. In this study, nitric oxide was generated from sodium nitroprusside. In aqueous solution at a physiological pH, sodium nitroprusside spontaneously generates nitric oxide which interacts with oxygen to produce nitric ions. The ions can be estimated using Griess reagent. In the assay, scavengers of nitric oxide reduce the production of nitric ions.

Results showed that the extract was preferentially scavenging DPPH than NO (Table 1). The scavenging activity of extract in both free radical scavenging assays was also found lower compared to gallic acid and quercetin. Gallic acid and quercetin are known phenolic compound with free radical scavenging activity. A lower value of IC<sub>50</sub> exhibited by gallic acid and quercetin in DPPH assay indicated that gallic acid and quercetin was a better DPPH scavenger compared to NO. There was no significant difference in the NO scavenging activity of quercetin compared with the extract, both scavenged 50% of the nitric oxide produced by sodium nitroprusside at concentration of 94.5 and 94.8 µg/ml, respectively.

It was reported that mango peel extract exhibited stronger free radical scavenging ability on 1,1-diphenyl-2-picrylhydrazyl (DPPH) and the antiproliferative activity of mango peel extract was correlated with their phenolic and flavonoid content.(Kim et al. 2010) .In this study, the total phenolic compound of the extract was 416 mg of gallic acid equivalents per gram (GAE/g) dry weight of extract. This value was higher with respect to the previous report on extract of mango peel alone. For instance, two solvents were used to prepare a mango peel extract. Acetone extracted maximum amount of polyphenols followed by ethanol from both raw and ripe mango peels. Polyphenol contents in acetone extracts of raw and ripe varied from 55 to 110 mg GAE/g (Ajila et al. 2007). Thus, high total phenolic content obtained in this study was due to the combination of possible extracted phenolic compounds from the all peels used. In this study, the fruit peel extract was prepared by combining the dried honeydew, papaya and mango peels before being extracted with 95% ethanol at temperature 50°C. In addition, this extraction method was selected with an aim to extract more phenolic compounds from the peels (Paulucci et al. 2013).

Previously, the antioxidant and phenolic content of both seed and leaves of papaya were reported due to their application in traditional medicine, but not their peel. Concentration of phenolic compounds such as caffeic, cinnamic, chlorogenic, quinic, coumaric, vanillic, and protocatechuic acids, naringenin, hesperidin, rutin, and kaempferol were higher in young leaves compared to old leaves, whereas total phenolic content of young leaves was also higher than the seed extract (Gogna et al. 2015). Water extract was found effective to extract polyphenols from papaya leaves, however other than phenolic compounds, saponin was also found in papaya leaves, and its concentration was found higher than polyphenol in water, acetone, ethanol and methanol extracts of papaya leaves (Vuong et al. 2013). Therefore, the biological activity of papaya leaves not only could be contributed by polyphenols but also saponin. This study reported the antioxidant and total phenolic content of papaya and honey dew peels in combination with mango peel.

The antiproliferative effects of fruit peel extract on different cancer cell lines (A549, HepG2) along with normal cell line (WRL68, CRL2522) after 24 hours of incubation in the presence of extract, gallic acid or quercetin was evaluated by MTT assay. After the incubation period, the remaining living cells used their mitochondrial dehydrogenase enzyme to reduce MTT to an insoluble purple formazan product. The product can be measured using spectrophotometer to estimate relative cell proliferation. Gallic acid was a positive control for HepG2 and WRL68 cells, whereas quercetin was a positive control for A549 and CRL2522 cell. Both gallic acid and quercetin are phenolic compounds, classified as phenolic acid and flavonoids, respectively. Their antioxidant and antiproliferative properties are known. For instance, gallic acid induced apoptosis of rheumatoid arthritis fibroblast-like synoviocytes (RA FLS) by regulating the expressions of apoptosis-related proteins and inhibits pro-inflammatory gene expressions in RA FLS. It was suggested that gallic acid may offer a novel therapeutic or joint protection approach for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis (Yoon et al. 2013). Quercetin which is the most common flavonoid found in onion, apple and red wine induced morphological changes in MCF7 cells after 24 hour exposure and exhibiting significant antiproliferative compared to other flavonoids; myricetin and epicatechin (Rodgers and Grant 1998).

Among four cancer cell lines tested, the extract exhibited lowest  $IC_{50}$  values in A549 cells (53  $\mu\text{g/ml}$ ), followed by HepG2, WRL68 and CRL2522 cells. Frequently, few types of cell lines were employed to screen the cells that were susceptible to the extract. Moreover, different cells responded differently towards treatment, for instance No effect on the metabolic activity of MCF-7 cells after treatment with quercetin at 24 hour was found. But, 48 hours and 72 hours treatment of quercetin exhibited cytotoxic effect with  $IC_{50}$  values of 43.18  $\mu\text{g/mL}$  and 18.49  $\mu\text{g/mL}$  respectively (Salfarina et al. 2015b). A study established that the antiproliferative activity of an extract was attributed to the presence of phenolic compounds and found that the extract antiproliferative activity was higher compared to the activity of purified phenolic acid alone (Masci et al. 2016). This finding was in accordance with the observed ability of mango peel ethanolic extract in inhibiting proliferation of human cervix adenocarcinoma cells (HeLa), was attributed by the presence of quercetin 3-O-galactoside, mangiferin gallate, isomangiferin gallate, quercetin-3-O-arabinopyranoside, and mangiferin

in the extract (Kim et al. 2012). Nevertheless, it was found in this study that single compound as gallic acid and quercetin gave better IC<sub>50</sub> values in antiproliferative assay than the extract, except for CRL2522 cell line. As an explanation of the superior activity of an extract compared to a single compound, frequently a synergistic effect of combinations of active compound is proposed. However, since quantification and identification of the extract phytochemical was not carried out in this study, it was unable corroborate the synergistic or antagonist effect that was responsible for the antiproliferative and antioxidant activities of the extract.

As a conclusion, a number of researches reported on the antioxidant, antiproliferative and total phenolic content of mango peel extract. However, this study reported for the first time the antioxidant, antiproliferative and total phenolic content of an extract prepared from the combination of dried papaya, honey dew and mango peels. As expected, the extract was found high in total phenolic content. The extract was most effective in inhibiting the proliferation of A549 cells. Nevertheless, the antioxidant and antiproliferative activity of the extract was found lower when compared with the activity of gallic acid and quercetin. The experimental results acquired in this study indicated that further work is needed to standardize and characterize the active principles in the extract. Understanding the inhibition of A549 cell proliferation by the extract will also be examined in the future, so that this unexploited natural resource can be a source of bioactive phenolics for nutraceutical or therapeutic ingredient. Moreover, the combination of dried peel in this study was made based on the availability of the peels. An appropriate proportion of dried peels should be made and the free radical and antiproliferative activities of that combination should be determined to get the best combination for the best activities.

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