



# QUALITY IMPROVEMENT IN DENTAL AND MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE, RESEARCH, SKILLS AND ETHICS FACING GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Edited by

Armelia Sari Widyarman, Muhammad Ihsan Rizal,  
Moehammad Orliando Roeslan & Carolina Damayanti Marpaung



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Armelia Sari Widyarman, Muhammad Ihsan Rizal,  
Moehammad Orliando Roeslan and Carolina  
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*Universitas Trisakti, Indonesia*



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## Preface

Faculty of Dentistry Universitas Trisakti (Usakti) presents FORIL XIII 2022 Scientific Forum Usakti conjunction with International Conference on Technology of Dental and Medical Sciences (ICTDMS) on December 8th–10th 2022. The theme of the conference is “Quality Improvement in Dental and Medical Knowledge, Research, Skills and Ethics Facing Global Challenges”.

The triennial conference has served as a meeting place for technical and clinical studies on health, ethical, and social issues in field medical and dentistry. It is organized around 12 major themes, including behavioral, epidemiologic, and health services, conservative dentistry, dental materials, dento-maxillofacial radiology, medical sciences and technology, oral and maxillofacial surgery, oral biology, oral medicine and pathology, orthodontics, pediatrics dentistry, periodontology, and prosthodontics.

The most recent findings in fundamental and clinical sciences related to medical and dental research will be presented in the conference that will be published as part of the conference proceeding. This proceeding will be useful for keeping dental and medical professionals up to date on the latest scientific developments.

Dr. Aryadi Subrata  
Chairman FORIL XIII conjunction with ICTDMS

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## Potential anticancer properties of *Apium graveolens* Linn. against oral cancer

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**ABSTRACT:** Background(s): Cancer represents one of the major healthcare issues worldwide with a rapid increase in cases but with limited cure. Oral cancer contributes about 3% of total cancer, with oral squamous cell carcinoma largely representing about 90% of all oral cancer. Given the high morbidity and mortality, finding effective ways that come with minimized side effects to treat cancer continues to be of great importance in the medical field. Plants, for instance, *Apium graveolens* Linn., are a rich source of novel chemical entities, which provide a promising line for research on cancer treatment. Objective(s): This review aimed to take an investigative approach to the possibility of future research on oral cancer using *A. graveolens*. Method(s): References for this review were identified through searches of PubMed, Google Scholar, and official reports and websites of global health organizations with the search terms “oral cancer”, “anticancer”, “*Apium graveolens*”, and “apoptosis” from 2004 to 2022. References published in English and Indonesian language were considered for this review. Main finding(s): *A. graveolens* is widely cultivated for consumption and its uses in traditional medicine. Its pharmacological activities range from anticancer, antioxidant, antidiabetic, anti-inflammatory, hepatoprotective, and anti-hypercholesterolemia to antihypertensive. It is reported to possess many bioactive compounds with anticancer properties. Previous studies had shown the ability of *A. graveolens* to reduce the viability and induce apoptosis of several types of cancer such as prostate, rhabdomyosarcoma, and stomach cancer. Currently, there are no studies against oral cancer being reported. Conclusion(s): The current findings firmly support *A. graveolens* as a rich source of bioactive compounds and illustrate the importance of its pharmacological profile as an anticancer agent. Future research on the anticancer activity of *A. graveolens* against oral cancer should be encouraged.

### 1 INTRODUCTION

The rapid population growth has a significant impact on the existing healthcare system. With other possible risk factors accompanying the increasing and aging population, the

burden of cancer has also notably grown worldwide (Sung et al. 2021). The Global Cancer Observatory reported more than 19 million new cases and nearly 10 million deaths in 2020 (Globcan 2020-2021). The global cancer burden is projected to rise to more than 28 million cases in 2040, a substantial increase of 47% compared to 2020 (Sung et al. 2021). With significant morbidity and mortality, cancer cure remains a very difficult task in the medical field. The challenges include achieving the correct diagnosis at the early stage along with finding the most effective treatment to cure cancer (Al-Azri 2016).

Oral cancer accounts for about three percent of all diagnosed cancer. The majority of oral cancers are oral squamous cell carcinoma (OSCC), accounting for more than 90% of all oral cancers (Oral Cancer 2022). OSCC has high morbidity and mortality rates, and the overall survival rate of OSCC patients remains unfavorable because of delay in early detection, poor prognosis, absence of specific biomarkers, and high costs of alternative therapies (Montero & Patel 2015). The long-term survival rate of OSCC is 50% despite having new treatment modalities (Gharat et al. 2016).

Treatment options for OSCC include surgery, target therapy, chemotherapy, and radiotherapy (Gharat et al. 2016). Chemotherapy is often used as a treatment for OSCC, but it has been reported to cause several side effects (Greenwell & Rahman 2015; Yu et al. 2011). Remission patients also have the risk of developing a second primary tumor, which makes it a continuous challenge to treat OSCC (Desai et al. 2008). Chemoprevention, which is the administration of medication to reduce the risk of cancer and its reoccurrence, becomes an increasingly important therapy in an effort to alleviate the cancer burden and reduce the morbidity and mortality rate of OSCC (Montero & Patel 2015).

Different molecular targets relevant to cancer therapy, such as the induction of apoptosis, can be exploited with chemoprevention. Plants offer a promising line of bioactive compounds reported to have the ability to modulate these molecular targets (Mroueh et al. 2020). Therapies using plant-derived substances for cancer treatment are reported to have minimal side effects (Greenwell & Rahman 2015; Yu et al. 2011). Indonesia is a country that boasts a high level of biodiversity and has more than 9,600 plant species that have medicinal properties (Aggarwal et al. 2004; Bahtiar et al. 2017). As a country with many potential medicinal plants, Indonesia has a good prospect in developing various types of medicine of natural origin (Aggarwal et al. 2004). Although several *in vitro* studies had reported many plant products with anticancer activity, only a few are used for cancer therapy (Greenwell & Rahman 2015).

*Apium graveolens* Linn., also known as celery, is one of the plants that had been previously identified for its anticancer property against various types of cancer. Studies have highlighted the anticancer properties of *A. graveolens*, indicating that it should be subject to further research as a promising chemopreventive agent (Al-Jumaily 2010; Bahtiar et al. 2017; Gao et al. 2011; Köken et al. 2016). Further research is needed to find out about the ability of *A. graveolens* as a chemopreventive agent for other cancer types (Al-Asmari et al. 2017), especially against oral cancer for which the effect of *A. graveolens* has never been reported.

## 2 METHODS

References for this review were identified through searches of PubMed, Google Scholar, and official reports and websites of global health organizations with the search terms "oral cancer," "anticancer," "*Apium graveolens*," and "apoptosis" from 2004 to 2022. References published in English and Indonesian language were considered for this review.



### 3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Oral cancer: Oral squamous cell carcinoma

More than 200 types of different cancers have been discovered to this day. Each has its own character, marker, and treatment modality. While there is no one perfect marker that could be used to accurately identify the occurrence and/or recurrence of a particular type of cancer, there are multigene markers found in different cancers. Oral cancers in particular do not have a specific marker but do share some markers with other cancers such as p53 mutations (Rajguru et al. 2020).

OSCC histologically arises from the squamous cells, while the other types of oral cancer may originate from the epithelium, connective tissue, minor salivary glands, lymphoid tissue, and melanocytes or metastasize from a distant tumor (Tashakori-Sabzevar et al. 2016). The tongue, floor of the mouth, and lower lip are the most common sites of OSCC (Gharat et al. 2016).

There is a high correlation between OSCC and the lifestyle of a person (D'souza & Addepalli 2018; Tashakori-Sabzevar et al. 2016). The International Agency for Research on Cancer had reported on the constant use of carcinogenic substances being tantamount to high-risk lifestyles, which increase the risk of OSCC. These carcinogenic substances include both smoked or smokeless tobacco, alcohol, and betel nut with or without tobacco (Cancer 2010; Humans et al. 2004; Humans & Cancer 2007; International Agency for Research on Cancer 2020). Other risk factors of OSCC include dietary deficiencies, poor oral hygiene, socioeconomic status, and host factors (Oral Cancer 2022).

It has been reported that the risk of developing OSCC is thrice more in smokers than nonsmokers (Greenwell & Rahman 2015). Furthermore, the risk of OSCC increased proportionally with the number of years a person uses tobacco. This risk can decrease after tobacco cessation, but it will not be fully diminished (Oral Cancer 2022). Involuntary smokers also face an increased risk of 87% in developing OSCC compared with those who never smoked and have not been exposed. In addition, studies have emphasized the synergistic effect that tobacco and alcohol cause in the development of OSCC (Gharat et al. 2016). The risk of developing OSCC is three to nine times greater in smokers and drinkers and up to 100 times greater in heavy smokers and drinkers/alcoholics (Coletta et al. 2020). However, alcohol consumption and abuse are linked to an increased risk of OSCC even in nonsmokers (Montero & Patel 2015).

Oral carcinogenesis is an extremely complex process involving many different elements. There are numerous elements essential for carcinogenesis to occur, which make up the hallmarks of cancer such as a limitless replicative potential, self-sufficiency in growth signals, lack of sensitivity to anti-growth signals, the ability to evade apoptosis, increased angiogenesis, invasion, and metastasis. The tumor microenvironment (TME) comprising cancer-associated fibroblasts (CAFs), immune cells, and other supporting cells contributes to the development of cancer by making cancer cells more adaptable to their surroundings, enabling survival and proliferation above their normal neighboring cells, leading to their perpetuation. Chronic exposure of normal epithelial cells to all risk factors will lead to an initial impetus for the transformation of these cells, beginning with the disruption of homeostasis and genetic alterations through cytogenic and epigenetic processes that alter cell cycle progression, DNA repair mechanisms, cell differentiation, and apoptosis. The cells consequently escape the normal growth control pattern and undergo malignant neoplastic changes, which can then be inherited by their clones (Gharat et al. 2016).

Early diagnosis and treatment are key to a better prognosis and survival for OSCC patients (Sharan et al. 2012). OSCC is usually treated by one or a combination of treatment modalities depending on the location, size, and stage of the primary tumor (Montero & Patel 2015). Additionally, the patient's comorbidity, history, nutritional status, ability to tolerate treatment, and willingness to face therapy also play a role in treatment choices (Gharat et al.

2016). Initial evaluation using tools such as the Tumor-Lymph Node-Metastasis (TNM) staging system is typically employed to assess and evaluate the primary tumor characteristics. In tumors that can be operated on, surgery is the treatment of choice as it enables accurate pathologic staging, providing information about the status of margins, tumor spread, and histopathologic characteristics, aiding the assessment of the most appropriate method for subsequent management. Reconstructive surgery such as bone grafting and surgical flaps may be necessary to rebuild the structures removed during surgery and restore function (Oral Cancer 2022).

In contrast, for tumors that are not able to be surgically removed, chemotherapy and radiotherapy are usually the treatment option. It has been reported that chemotherapy and radiotherapy (chemoradiotherapy) have a synergistic effect against oral cancer including OSCC when used at the same time (Montero & Patel 2015). However, chemoradiotherapy is reported to cause several side effects and is very toxic to both normal and tumor cells (Nurgali et al. 2018; Pfeffer & Singh 2018; Rhodus et al. 2014).

Apoptosis is a normal physiologic process that constantly takes place in multicellular organisms through the formation of programmed cell death (Ribeiro et al. 2018). Apoptosis is finely regulated at the gene level resulting in the genetically determined elimination of cells. The dysregulation of apoptosis can be seen in many diseases and is deemed one of the hallmarks of cancer. Such deregulation of apoptosis is associated with unchecked cell proliferation, the development and progression of cancer, and cancer resistance to drug therapies (Xu et al. 2019).

### 3.2 *Plant-derived cancer treatment*

Cancer chemoprevention is becoming more common in cancer treatment (Montero & Patel 2015). The goal of chemoprevention is to overturn any premalignant transformations, prevent cancer recurrence, and prevent the occurrence of a second primary tumor (Palmer & Grannum 2011). There are numerous molecular targets of chemoprevention relevant to cancer therapy such as the activation of apoptosis, suppression of growth factor expression or signaling, downregulation of antiapoptotic proteins, and angiogenesis.

Apoptosis plays an important role in the inherent tumor-suppression mechanism and is subject to an array of research. Many drugs and therapeutic measures are founded on the current understanding of it (Palmer & Grannum 2011; Ribeiro et al. 2018; Xu et al. 2019). Gaining control of or terminating the uncontrolled proliferation of cancer cells by using the cell's own mechanism for death is one strategy to treat cancer. Because apoptosis evasion is a hallmark of cancer, targeting it is useful for many types of cancer. This apoptosis-targeting is the most effective nonsurgical cancer treatment. Many anticancer medications target distinct phases in both the intrinsic and extrinsic apoptotic pathways. Numerous plant-derived substances have also been discovered to be capable of inducing apoptosis in cancer cells and are typically nontoxic to normal cells (Pfeffer & Singh 2018). Due to their pharmacological safety, these substances can either be employed alone to prevent cancer or in conjunction with chemotherapy or radiotherapy to treat cancer (Ribeiro et al. 2018).

### 3.3 *Apium graveolens* Linn.

*A. graveolens* belonging to the family of *Apiaceae* (Agriculture 2021), originates from Southern Europe, Asia, and Africa; it can also be found in North and South America. It is widely cultivated as a popular vegetable for consumption (Al-Asmari et al. 2017). High levels of moisture and low temperature are essential for its growth, hence *A. graveolens* of the highest quality can be easily spotted growing in cold and mild environments (Kooti & Daraei 2017). In Indonesia, *A. graveolens* can be found in large quantities in Cipanas, Pangalengan dan Badungan (Sukohar & Arisandi 2016).

*A. graveolens* has gradually become a popularly cultivated crop not only for consumption but also for medicinal benefits in many parts of the world. Owing to its many benefits, the growing popularity of *A. graveolens* on the markets over the years is undoubtable (Bruznican *et al.* 2020). *A. graveolens* has many different health benefits because it contains various bioactive compounds such as flavonoids, organic acid, organic acid ester, coumarins, furanocoumarins, fatty acids, and phthalides (Al-Asmari *et al.* 2017).

All parts of *A. graveolens* can be consumed (Gupta *et al.* 2019). It has also been used in traditional medicine, and as a diuretic to decrease blood pressure. It reduces glucose, blood lipids, and blood pressure, which play a vital role in a healthy heart (Al-Asmari *et al.* 2017). Its use in medicine is attributed to its pharmacological activities such as anticancer, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, hepatoprotective, antidiabetic, antihypercholesterolemic, and antihypertensive activities (Emad *et al.* 2020; Gao *et al.* 2011; Gupta *et al.* 2019; M.M. *et al.* 2018; Tala'a 2020; Tashakori-Sabzevar *et al.* 2016).

### 3.4 *Apium graveolens* Linn. for cancer

*A. graveolens* has been researched for many types of cancer including prostate cancer, rhabdomyosarcoma, and stomach cancer. Research on prostate cancer was done using lymph node carcinoma of the prostate (LNCaP) cell line, and results showed that the ethanolic extract of *A. graveolens* was able to prevent cell proliferation and expression of vascular endothelial growth factor as well as trigger the induction of apoptosis (Köken *et al.* 2016). Meanwhile, aqueous, ethanolic, and hexane extracts of *A. graveolens* were evaluated against the rhabdomyosarcoma (RD) cell line where these extracts were seen to have significant cytotoxic and inhibitory effects on the growth of the cell line (AL-Jumaily 2010). The celery seed extract was also tested against the human gastric cancer cell line and reported to have reduced the viability of the cancer cells and brought about the induction of apoptosis (Gao *et al.* 2011). With all these benefits for other types of cancer, *A. graveolens* has yet to be researched on its effect on any type of oral cancer. It will be beneficial to study whether *A. graveolens* is beneficial in the treatment of oral cancer, especially OSCC.

## 4 CONCLUSION

A plethora of plants have been found to possess promising anticancer activity. While *A. graveolens* being one of the aforementioned plants is shown to be useful for the treatment of several cancer types, studies on its anticancer activity against oral cancer have not been made available. Because different types of cancer are likely to share similar hallmarks and mechanisms of death, further studies on *A. graveolens* against oral cancer could be pursued to discover more of its uses in the field of cancer therapy.

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