

Serbian Biochemical Society Eighth Conference

with international participation

University of Novi Sad – Rectorate Hall
16.11.2018. Novi Sad, Serbia

“Coordination in Biochemistry and Life”

PROGRAMME

- 10:00-10:15 Opening ceremony
- 10:15-10:45 Tantos Ágnes
Institute of Enzymology, Research Center for Natural Sciences, HAS,
Budapest, Hungary
**Intrinsically disordered proteins: Giving new shapes to cellular
networks**
(FEBS3+ Lecture)
- 10:45-11:15 Miloš Filipović
Institut de Biochimie et Génétique Cellulaires, Université de
Bordeaux, Bordeaux, France
Sulfaging: live longer with H₂S
(Diaspora Lecture)
- 11:15-11:35 Dimitar S. Jakimov
Faculty of Medicine, University of Novi Sad; Oncology Institute of
Vojvodina, Sremska Kamenica
Modified steroid compounds with antitumor activity
- 11:35-11:45 Natascha Brinskelle-Schmal
Thermo Fisher Scientific, Vienna, Austria
**eBioscience novel approaches in biomedical analysis –
ProQuantum immunoassays (the next generation in protein
quantification, ELISA & qPCR) and Luminex technology:
ProcartaPlex multiplex immunoassays, QuantiGene multiplex
gene expression assays**
(Sponsor's Lecture)
- 11:45-12:30 Coffee break

12:30-12:50 Milica R. Milenković
 Department of General and Inorganic Chemistry, Faculty of Chemistry, University of Belgrade
Antitumor and antimicrobial properties of isothiocyanato pentagonal-bipyramidal d metal complexes with dihydrazone of 2,6-diacetylpyridine and Girard's T reagent

12:50-13:10 Jelena Katanić
 Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Science, University of Kragujevac
Phytotherapy of cisplatin side effects: A case of two *Filipendula* species

13:10-13:30 Ana Miltojević
 Faculty of Occupational Safety, University of Niš
Polypharmacologically active esters of N-methylanthranilic acid from Mexican orange (*Choisya ternata* Kunth): from the discovery to panacea-like properties

13.30-14.30 Poster session

14.00-15.00 Cocktail / Lunch break

15:00-15:20 Goran Miljuš
 INEP-Institute for the Application of Nuclear Energy, University of Belgrade
Transferrin/IGFBP-3 complex: Crossroad for the IGF system and iron metabolism

15:20-15:40 Marina Stanić
 Department of Life Sciences, Institute for Multidisciplinary Research, University of Belgrade
Transport and metabolism of vanadium in filamentous fungi with emphasis on fungus *Phycomyces blakesleeanus*

15:40-16:00 Dragana Nikolić
 Institute of Molecular Genetics and Genetic Engineering, University of Belgrade
Unraveling mechanisms of Si action: modulation of gene expression in plants under abiotic stresses

16:00-16:20 Danijela Savić
 Department of Neurobiology, Institute for Biological Research "Siniša Stanković", University of Belgrade
Distribution and role of metals in sclerotic hippocampi of patients with mesial temporal lobe epilepsy

16:20-17:00 Coffee break

17:00-17:15 Poster awards and closing ceremony

Phytotherapy of cisplatin side effects: A case of two *Filipendula* species

Jelena Katanić*

Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Science, University of Kragujevac, Kragujevac, Serbia

*e-mail: jkatanic@kg.ac.rs

Cisplatin (CP), an inorganic complex of platinum, has been effectively used as a potent chemotherapeutic agent against various malignancies, but it causes a number of side effects, e.g., digestive tract disorders, vomiting, and toxic effects on different organs, particularly on kidneys. Besides that, CP use in cancer chemotherapy may be responsible for secondary malignancies. Therefore, a number of scientific studies are focused on ameliorating potential of medicinal plant products (phytotherapeutics) on reducing or preventing the negative effects of anticancer drugs, namely cisplatin. Especially polyphenolic compounds from plant origin (flavonoids, phenolic acids, tannins, terpenes, etc.) showed significant activity towards modulation of cisplatin-induced toxicity. Genus *Filipendula* Mill. consists of over 20 plant species, two of which are growing in Serbia, *Filipendula ulmaria* (L.) Maxim. and *F. vulgaris* Moench. Both plants are in use in traditional medicine based on their antirheumatic, astringent, diuretic, and anti-inflammatory properties and potential to treat kidney problems. Hence, the effects of aerial parts and roots methanolic extracts of *F. ulmaria* and *F. vulgaris* were investigated against cisplatin-induced kidney and liver injuries in rats along with the determination of their phytochemical composition. The obtained results showed that tested extracts, rich in polyphenolic compounds, attenuate cisplatin-induced liver and kidney oxidative stress, reduce tissue damage, and enhance the antioxidative status of experimental animals during cisplatin application. Therefore, *F. ulmaria* and *F. vulgaris* extracts may be used as supportive agents for the prevention and amelioration of cisplatin side effects.

Cisplatin: activity and toxicity

Cisplatin (cis-[Pt(NH₃)₂Cl₂] (cis-diamminedichloroplatinum(II)) is an inorganic complex with a square planar geometry, which consists of an atom of platinum surrounded with two ammonia groups and two chlorine atoms in *cis* position. This inorganic complex has been in clinical usage for cancer treatments, since 1978 when it was approved by the American Food and Drug Administration¹, and today it is on the World Health Organization's List of Essential Medicines². Cisplatin was first synthesized and described by the Italian chemist Michele Peyrone as early as in 1845, but in 1965 American biophysicist Barnett Rosenberg

managed to characterize the powerful antiproliferative effects of this complex³⁻⁵. For 40 years cisplatin has been effectively used as a potent and one of the most common chemotherapeutic agents against various malignancies, mainly for testicular, ovarian, head and neck, bladder, cervical, esophageal as well as small cell lung cancer^{6,7}, but also for breast, stomach, prostate cancers, Hodgkin's and non-Hodgkin's lymphomas, neuroblastoma, sarcomas, multiple myeloma, melanoma and mesothelioma⁴.

The mechanism of cisplatin action is based on targeting cancer cell DNA (Figure 1). Upon entering a cell, cisplatin become hydrated, after the dissociation of two chlorides, and a reactive complex is formed and it is then able to interact with nucleophilic molecules within the cell, including DNA, RNA, and proteins. When this positively charged molecule interacts with deoxyribonucleic acids it causes interstrand and intrastrand covalent crosslinking with local denaturation of the DNA chain^{8,9}. This process primarily occurs due to the favoring crosslinking between N7 and O6 atoms of the adjacent imidazole ring of the purine base guanine, and to a minor extent via N7 and N1 of the adenine molecules or via N3 atom of the cytosine. The main product responsible for the anticancer activity of cisplatin is intrastrand crosslink 1,2-(guanine deoxydinucleotide) (1,2-GpG, about 65%), where platinum is coordinated to N(7) of two guanine molecules from one DNA strand⁹⁻¹¹. The final cellular outcome is generally apoptotic cell death, although the pathway(s) from platinum-DNA binding to apoptosis remains incompletely elucidated. The platinum-DNA adducts can impede cellular processes, such as replication and transcription, but also signal-transduction pathways, that control growth, differentiation and stress responses, have also been implicated⁵.

Although cisplatin has this very important role in cancer treatment and has had a major clinical impact, it causes a number of side effects, such as vomiting, gastrointestinal tract disorders, and toxic effects on different organs¹. Cisplatin frequently causes notorious kidney damage (nephrotoxicity) because it is mainly excreted via the kidneys (27-45%). Cisplatin-induced nephrotoxicity can also lead to acute renal failure^{4,8,12}. Besides nephrotoxicity, also ototoxicity (adult: 23-50%; children: >50%) and peripheral neurotoxicity (adult: 30-86%, children: ~10%) are considered to be the most serious toxicities associated with cisplatin treatment⁹. Moreover, cisplatin can provoke less frequent toxic effects like hepato- and cardiotoxicity¹. Since the target of cisplatin is DNA, its use in cancer chemotherapy may be responsible for secondary malignancies. After application of cisplatin, DNA damage may lead to mutagenesis, carcinogenesis, and to apoptotic cell death¹³. Generally, toxic side effects of cisplatin arise because this complex has a high affinity for sulfur-containing compounds like glutathione, and these newly formed compounds are highly reactive and generally responsible for toxic effects in the organism^{10,11}. Besides binding of cisplatin to various cytoplasmic molecules, some of the suggested mechanisms of cisplatin-induced toxicity are a generation of reactive oxygen species and inhibition of antioxidant enzymes (superoxide dismutase, glutathione peroxidase, and glutathione S-transferase). Taking this into consideration, oxidative stress plays a significant role in cisplatin-induced toxicity¹⁴.

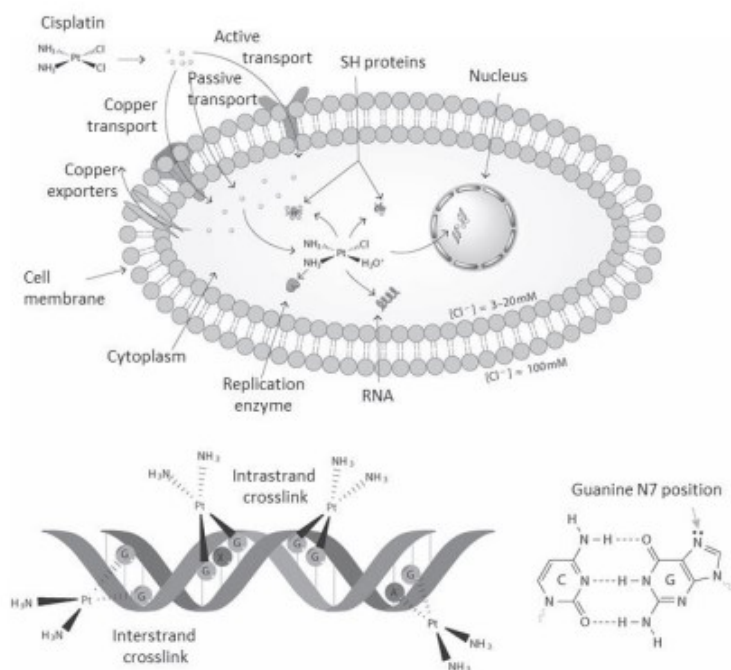


Figure 1. Schematic overview of the mechanism of cisplatin transport/export and targets in the cell and DNA adduct formation with cisplatin moiety. Adapted from Kelland⁵ and Gómez-Ruiz et al.⁶.

Furthermore, one of the problems associated with cisplatin therapy is tumor resistance to cisplatin, which can develop as a result of decreased influx or increased efflux of drug, glutathione or metallothionein conjugation, drug detoxification, DNA repair, or skipping lesions during DNA replication^{3,5,9,15}. Since the 1970s, thousands of platinum analogs have been synthesized and tested to identify other antineoplastic compounds with reduced side effects while retaining tumor toxicity (*i.e.*, carboplatin, oxaliplatin, satraplatin, picoplatin, nedaplatin, heptaplatin, etc.)⁵, but cisplatin still holds primacy as the therapy of choice in most tumors⁶. Many current research efforts are focused on the discovery of a drug that provides the excellent anticancer effect, with little or no harmful effect on the organism, but also to find new compounds or formulations which could reduce or prevent the negative effects of anticancer drugs, especially cisplatin side effects.

Phytotherapy of cisplatin side effects

Despite the fact that cisplatin has been used for 40 years as part of the treatment of various solid malignancies its side effects are still unavoidable. Today, besides many synthesized drugs, numerous traditional medicinal plants, dietary vegetables, and fruits, as well as their constituents, still play a key role in the prevention and treatment of different diseases, including the protective role against oxidative stress in the organism¹⁶. Most of the medicinal plants' constituents, *i.e.*, polyphenolics, alkaloids, carotenoids, vitamins, are known by their significant antioxidant potential¹⁷.

Since the oxidative and nitrosative stresses are main mechanisms involved in cisplatin toxicity^{1,8}, numerous recent studies are dealing with the beneficial effects of different plant extracts administration on the alleviation of cisplatin-induced toxicity. In particular, plant extracts rich in polyphenols, such as *Zingiber officinale* rhizome extract¹⁸, *Matricaria chamomilla* aerial part extract¹⁹, *Hypericum perforatum* aerial part extract²⁰, *Stevia rebaudiana* extract²¹, as well as standardized extracts like silymarin²² and ginseng extract²³, showed ameliorating effects on hepato-, oto-, and/or nephrotoxicity caused by cisplatin *in vivo*. The protective activities of these extracts involve, among others, antioxidant and anti-inflammatory mechanisms.

A wide range of pure compounds from plant origin was also tested *in vivo* for the amelioration of cisplatin side effects. Different polyphenolic compounds, *e.g.*, ellagic acid, caffeic acid, rosmarinic acid, ferulic acid, quercetin, rutin, curcumin, resveratrol, chrysin, hesperidin, luteolin, naringenin, epigallocatechin-3-*O*-gallate, cyanidin, genistein, gingerol, terpenes: ginsenosides β -caryophyllene, and artemisinin; alkaloids: berberine, capsaicin, and noscapine; and vitamins C and E showed significant alleviation of oxidative stress parameters during the cisplatin treatment and modulation of cisplatin-induced toxicity on various levels²⁴⁻²⁹.

The comprehensive analysis of literature suggests that phytotherapy using herbal medicines and/or plant-derived natural products (phytochemicals) can be widely implemented to prevent the cisplatin-induced toxicity. It is evident that phytomedicines exhibited potentially effective nephro-, oto- and hepato-protection in preclinical studies, primarily based on their antioxidative properties. Substantially, these antioxidant compounds not only target oxidative stress but also other events involved in cisplatin pathology, such as inflammation, mitochondrial damage and endoplasmic reticulum stress²⁵. Furthermore, phytomedicines have been widely documented to directly or indirectly target multiple signaling pathways and networks in cancer cells, so a combination of anticancer drugs and polypharmacological plant-derived extracts or compounds may offer a significant advantage in the efficacy of monotherapy and overcoming drug-induced resistance in cancer patients²⁴.

A case of two *Filipendula* species

Genus *Filipendula* Mill. (fam. *Rosaceae*) is consisted of around 20 plant species that are predominantly widespread the Northern hemisphere. Plants of this genus are growing in

Europe, North America, Siberia, and Asia³⁰. The genus name derives from two Latin words: “*filium*” - a thread or a string and “*pendulus*” - hanging, referring to the root of some species that are consisted of rhizomes associated with thin strings³¹. Genus *Filipendula* in the territory of Serbia, as well as on the entire European continent, is represented by two species: *Filipendula ulmaria* (L.) Maxim. (syn. *Spiraea ulmaria* L.) и *Filipendula vulgaris* Moench (syn. *Filipendula hexapetala* Gilib., *Spiraea filipendula* L.)³²⁻³⁴.

F. ulmaria (meadowsweet, queen of the meadow) is a perennial herb with creamy-white flowers, a short, pink rhizome and stems 50–120 cm high. *F. ulmaria* is used in traditional European medicine for treatment of various ailments due to its antipyretic, astringent, diuretic, antacid, stomachic, antiseptic, analgesic, antirheumatic, and anti-inflammatory properties³⁵⁻³⁸. Dried flowering tops are used for the treatment of common cold, minor painful articular conditions, and to facilitate renal and digestive elimination functions^{35,39}. Based on traditional use and proven pharmacological effects, the herb (aerial parts) of *F. ulmaria* was registered in European Pharmacopoeia 5th Edition (PhEur 5.0) as *Filipendulae ulmariae herba*⁴⁰, and now it is an integral part of the latest 9th Edition (PhEur 9.0) from 2017. *F. vulgaris* (dropwort) is up to 80 cm high plant, with pinkish-white flowers and characteristic rhizomes with tuberous roots³². *F. vulgaris* is also used in traditional medicine of most European countries⁴¹, and sometimes, it is used as a substitute for *F. ulmaria* due to their similar bioactive effects, in particular, anti-inflammatory properties³⁸.

Based on the literature data it can be concluded that mentioned *Filipendula* species are characterized by the presence of the three main classes of phenolic compounds: phenolic acids and their derivatives (gallic acid, ellagic acid, salicylic acid, methyl salicylate, salicylaldehyde), flavonoid aglycones and glycosides (quercetin, kaempferol, catechin, epicatechin, rutoside, hyperoside, spiraeoside, quercitrin, apigenin, astragalin), and tannins (mainly tellimagrandins and rugosins)^{36,42-45}.

Our previous investigations of *F. ulmaria* and *F. vulgaris* aerial part and root methanolic extracts showed that they possessed high antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activity *in vitro*, low genotoxicity, antigenotoxic activity, moderate antimicrobial activity, and good stability at different pH values and thermal conditions⁴⁶⁻⁴⁹. The extracts were also subjected to a wide range of spectrophotometric and chromatographic methods (TLC, HPTLC, HPLC, LC-DAD-MSⁿ) in order to elucidate their phytochemical composition. The results showed that all four extracts had a high content of phenolic compounds, mainly flavonoids (particularly quercetin and its derivatives, e.g., spiraeoside, rutin, hyperoside, quercitrin, isoquercitrin, Figure 2) and phenolic acids in aerial part extracts, along with hydrolyzable tannins in root extracts^{46,48-52}.

With regard to reported biological activities and traditional uses of *Filipendula* spp., their phytochemical composition, and our previous studies which confirmed potent antioxidant activity of the methanolic extracts of aerial parts and roots of *F. ulmaria* and *F. vulgaris*, we aimed to further investigate those extracts for their potential in amelioration cisplatin-induced toxicity *in vivo*, using albino Wistar rats. All animal procedures were in

compliance with the EEC Directive (86/609/EEC) on the protection of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes. The study was designed as follows (Figure 3): I - negative control group where animals were treated with normal saline; II - positive control/cisplatin group where toxicity was induced with cisplatin; III-V groups treated with *F. ulmaria* and *F. vulgaris* aerial part extracts (FUA or FVA) *per os* (*p.o.*) at three different concentrations 100, 200, and 400 mg/kg body weight (b.w.); VI-VII groups treated with *F. ulmaria* and *F. vulgaris* root extracts (FUR or FVR) at 100, 200, and 400 mg/kg b.w.; and two last groups were treated only with extracts at the highest concentration (400 mg/kg b.w.). The extracts were administered for 10 days and in groups II-VIII toxicity was induced on the 5th day of treatment by intraperitoneal (*i.p.*) administration of a single dose of CP dissolved in normal saline (7.5 mg/kg b.w.)^{50,51}.

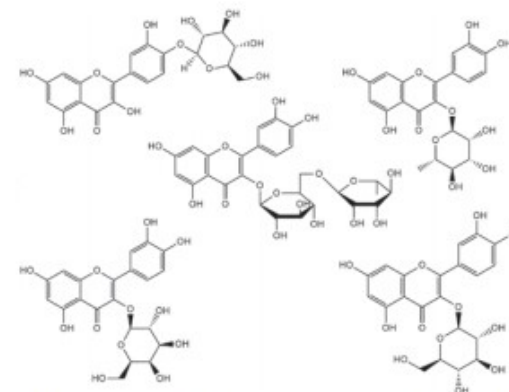


Figure 2. Flavonoid glycosides (derivatives of quercetin) identified in *F. ulmaria* and *F. vulgaris* extracts^{36,44-46,50-52}: Spiraeoside (quercetin-4'-O-β-D-glucopyranoside); Quercitrin (quercetin-3-O-α-L-rhamnoside); Rutin (quercetin-3-O-rutinoside); Hyperoside (quercetin-3-O-galactoside); Isoquercitrin (quercetin-3-O-β-D-glucopyranoside)

The examined parameters and the degree of protective activity of tested extracts on *in vivo* cisplatin-induced hepatorenal toxicity are illustratively shown in Figure 3.

In our study, serum parameters in rats treated with cisplatin only clearly showed impaired liver function and renal dysfunction. Serum transaminases (ALT and AST) and other tested serum parameters (ALP and γGT) connected with normal liver function, were significantly elevated in the serum of rats treated only with cisplatin. Since transaminases are located in the cytoplasm and released into the circulation after cellular damage, they are the most sensitive biomarkers which directly indicate cellular damage and toxicity¹⁴.

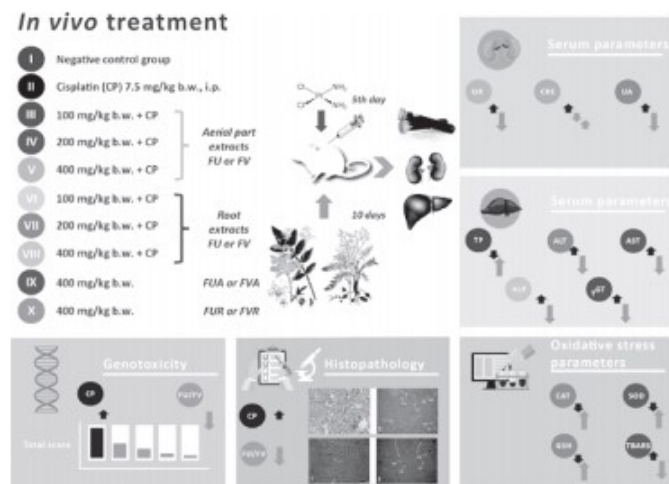


Figure 3. The effects of *in vivo* administration of *F. ulmaria* and *F. vulgaris* aerial part (FUA/FVA) and root (FUR/FVR) extracts along with one dose of cisplatin (CP, 7.5 mg/kg b.w.) on the serum parameters, oxidative stress parameters, histopathological changes, and genotoxicity in renal and hepatic tissues.

The levels of three main serum parameters of kidney function, creatinine (CRE), urea (UR), and uric acid (UA), were significantly increased in rats only treated with cisplatin indicating cisplatin-induced nephrotoxicity, as reported in many recent studies⁵³⁻⁵⁵. Moreover, cisplatin treatment caused significant body weight reduction that may be caused by gastrointestinal dysfunction, dehydration, reduced appetite, enhanced catabolic rate, and renal tubular injury^{55,56}. As stated, one of the most important mechanisms involved in cisplatin toxicity is oxidative stress^{1,14}. Under normal physiological conditions generation and elimination of reactive oxygen species in cells are controlled by an endogenous scavenging system including catalase (CAT), superoxide dismutase (SOD), and reduced glutathione (GSH). On the other hand, under cisplatin-induced oxidative stress CAT and SOD activities can be inhibited and another possible mechanism underlying cisplatin-mediated reduction in the level of antioxidant enzymes is diminishing SOD and CAT gene expression⁵³. Cisplatin conjugation with glutathione lowers GSH levels and leads to mitochondrial oxidative stress which is related to the toxicity of cisplatin^{1,14}. Free radicals generated by cisplatin could react with the membrane lipids resulting in the production of lipid peroxides^{53,55}, so the alleviation of thiobarbituric acid reactive substances (TBARS) levels is a suitable marker of cisplatin toxicity. In the present study, all examined markers of oxidative stress (CAT, SOD, GSH, and TBARS) in renal and hepatic tissues of rats

treated with cisplatin only, indicated that cisplatin-treatment disrupted normal kidney and liver function. As expected, GSH levels in liver and kidneys were markedly decreased.

The serum and tissue parameters of oxidative stress and tissue damage in rats treated with three different doses of tested *Filipendula* spp. methanolic extracts for 10 consecutive days, in addition to cisplatin (on the 5th day of treatment), indicate a significant beneficial effect, compared to the group treated with cisplatin alone. The extracts were able to markedly reduce serum parameters, in some cases in a dose-dependent manner. Further, they ameliorated the oxidative status in kidney and liver tissues by increasing CAT and SOD activities and reducing the concentration of TBARS, as well as prevent depletion of GSH by cisplatin treatment in liver tissue. In kidneys, GSH was the most affected element of the antioxidative defense. The induction of hepato- and nephrotoxicity by cisplatin were also confirmed by histological analysis of liver and kidney tissues. It was evident that the extracts exerted tissue-protective effects, with a significant reduction of liver and kidney tissue injury caused by cisplatin administration^{50,51}.

Considering previously reported antioxidant activity and radical scavenging capacity of *F. ulmaria* and *F. vulgaris*^{46,47}, as well as the high content of antioxidant phenolic compounds, our data strongly imply that their extracts potently protect against liver and kidney toxicity induced by cisplatin via antioxidant activity. The results of phytochemical analysis of all extracts confirmed the presence of a wide range of phenolic compounds, which have been shown to act as antioxidants. Procyanidins (condensed tannins) and catechins, that were detected in all extracts, have been demonstrated to possess an array of beneficial health effects⁵⁷⁻⁶⁰. Also, hydrolyzable tannins, detected in aerial parts, have been shown to possess a variety of biological activities, including antioxidant and anticancer effects^{61,62}. Flavonoids and flavonoid derivatives detected in all extracts are also highly bioactive and for many of them hepato- and nephroprotective effects *in vivo* were reported⁶³⁻⁶⁷.

Another potential route of protection against cisplatin-induced oxidative stress is the proven anti-inflammatory activity of both *Filipendula* species^{49,52} since cisplatin-induced oxidative stress leads to the activation of pro-inflammatory mediators¹⁴.

The third mechanism possibly underlying the observed protective effect of tested extracts against cisplatin-induced toxicity may be suppression of DNA damage in normal cells. Cisplatin can react with many structures in the cell, but of course, the most important intracellular target is DNA. DNA damage is a major trigger for cell cycle arrest and apoptosis and cisplatin has demonstrated induction of apoptosis in multiple tissue types¹¹. Although the antineoplastic effect of cisplatin is mediated through the binding to nuclear DNA, cisplatin also induces damage of mitochondrial DNA¹⁴. Results of our study revealed significant cisplatin-induced DNA damage both in the liver and, in particular, kidney cells. Interestingly, the potency of DNA damage reduction in liver and kidneys decreased with increasing concentration of all tested extracts. At lower doses (100 and 200 mg/kg), the extracts were the most effective in reducing cisplatin-induced DNA damage^{50,51}.

Conclusions and future perspectives

Co-treatment with methanolic extracts of aerial parts and roots of *F. ulmaria* and *F. vulgaris* attenuated cisplatin-induced toxicity in kidneys and liver, regulated serum and tissue parameters related to oxidative stress and tissue damage, and helped to maintain tissue architecture, along with reducing genotoxicity caused by cisplatin. Therefore, it can be concluded that *Filipendula* species may be used as a supportive agent in cancer patients under cisplatin therapy to improve the oxidative stress defense of the organism and to diminish toxic side effects of cisplatin. However, further investigations are still required to completely evaluate their protective effect on the side-effects of cisplatin and obtaining the appropriate therapeutic dose, particularly obtaining evidence of extracts' bioavailability in human subjects. Also, the extracts and phytochemical compounds should be thoroughly investigated in preclinical models for further pharmaceutical development. This approach may offer the best chance of clinically meaningful prevention of cisplatin toxicity.

Acknowledgments

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