Baccharis dracunculifolia decreases nociception, depressive-like behaviour and supraspinal activated microglia in rats with experimental monoarthritis

I Laranjeira
CITAB-Centre for the Research and Technology of Agro-Environmental and Biological Sciences, Department of Biology, University of Minho, Campus de Gualtar, 4710 – 057 Braga, Portugal, Braga, Portugal

E Apolinário
CITAB-Centre for the Research and Technology of Agro-Environmental and Biological Sciences, Department of Biology, University of Minho, Campus de Gualtar, 4710 – 057 Braga, Portugal, Braga, Portugal

D Amorim
Life and Health Sciences Research Institute (ICVS), School of Medicine, Campus de Gualtar, University of Minho, 4710 – 057 Braga, Portugal, Braga, Portugal ICVS/3B's – PT Government Associate Laboratory, Braga/Guimarães, Portugal, Braga, Portugal

A Silva-Filho
Faculdade de Farmácia e Bioquímica, Departamento Farmacêutico, Universidade Federal de Juiz de Fora, Juiz de Fora, MG – Brasil, Braga, Portugal

F Pinto-Ribeiro
Life and Health Sciences Research Institute (ICVS), School of Medicine, Campus de Gualtar, University of Minho, 4710 – 057 Braga, Portugal, Braga, Portugal ICVS/3B's – PT Government Associate Laboratory, Braga/Guimarães, Portugal, Braga, Portugal

A Dias
CITAB-Centre for the Research and Technology of Agro-Environmental and Biological Sciences, Department of Biology, University of Minho, Campus de Gualtar, 4710 – 057 Braga, Portugal, Braga, Portugal

Further Information

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- Congress Abstract
- Full Text

In arthritic disorders both inflammation and the progressive degeneration of joints persistently activate nociceptors, in periaarticular structures, leading to the development of persistent pain and comorbid emotional impairments. Arthritis-induced peripheral sensitization leads to increased release of nociceptive molecules by primary afferents that activate neurones and glial cells in the spinal cord and supraspinal pain modulatory areas such as the amygdala (AMY) and the periaqueductal grey matter (PAG).

Baccharis dracunculifolia DC (Asteraceae) (Bd) is a medicinal shrub from the brazilian flora, popularly known as “Aleurin do Campo”, considered to be an important source of active anti-inflammatory and antinociceptive compounds. Adult 8 weeks old ovariectomized female rats (Rattus norvegicus, vr. Albinus, Wistar) weighting 210 ± 17 g were divided in four groups (n = 6 per group): (i) SHAM, (ii) ARTH, (iii)
ARTH treated with B. dracunculifolia (50 mg/kg), and (iv) ARTH treated with B. dracunculifolia (100 mg/kg).

Mechanical hyperalgesia in ARTH animals was assessed using the pressure application measurement apparatus, anhedonia using the sucrose preference test and learned helplessness using the forced swimming test. Activated microglia was stained with IBA-I and quantified in a subset of brain slides containing the target areas, the amygdala and the periaqueductal gray matter.

A three-week oral treatment with Bd extract reversed ARTH-induced mechanical hyperalgesia and partly reserved depressive-like behaviour. Concomitantly, Bd treatment decreased the number of activated microglia in the AMY and PAG of ARTH animals.

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