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Correspondence

Honey - A nutrient with medicinal property in reflux oesophagitis

Sir,

We read with interest the article by Singh and colleagues[1] which showed that Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolium*) ameliorated experimentally induced reflux oesophagitis (RE) in rats in a dose dependent manner. This study shows that the Ginseng offers protection against experimentally induced RE in rats by subsiding the inflammatory responses and oxidative stress. Honey has been used as a nutrient and a medicine since ages[2,3], and has cytoprotective function and is also used for wound healing. This is likely to be due to its anti-inflammatory activity and stimulation of local wound responses[4]. Honey has phenolic compounds and flavonoids[5], and has been used in chronic sinusitis[6]. Antimicrobial activity of honey is due to its osmotic effect[7]. Honey leads to fast healing in patients with oral mucositis[8] and is used in treating otorhinolaryngeal infections[9].

Oxygen derived free radicals are likely to be mediators in generation of RE[10]. Honey has antioxidant and radical scavenging activity; it reduces intracellular reactive oxygen species (ROS) generation and restores intracellular glutathione[11]. Honey may reduce inflammation by inhibiting nitric oxide and prostaglandin E2 production[12]. Honey has high density, high viscosity, and low surface tension, and therefore, can stay longer in the oesophagus as a coating on the mucus membrane[13-15]. Honey is useful in treatment of RE because of non peroxide antibacterial activity[16]. Honey can be used in treating reflux oesophagitis along with conventional therapy.

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