

PHARMACOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF FERULA COMMUNIS L

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Abstract:

Traditional medical books such as Dioscorides report numerous beneficial uses for this plant. They are both widely used in traditional medicine to treat a wide range of ailments. A large number of chemical compounds have been isolated from this plant, including sesquiterpene coumarins and polysulfides. Fresh plant materials, crude extracts and isolated components of *F. persica* have demonstrated a wide range of pharmacological properties, including anti-pigment properties of *Serratia marcescens.*, cytotoxic, antibacterial, antifungal, antileishmanial, chemoprophylactic against cancer, elimination of multidrug resistance, anti-inflammatory and inhibitory effects on lipoxygenase.

Keywords: *Ferula communis* L., biologically active additives, ferutin, sesquiterpene coumarins.

INTRODUCTION

The genus *Ferula* L. includes perennial flowering plants and is a rich source of biologically active phytochemicals such as sulfur derivatives, coumarins, sesquiterpenes, sesquiterpene lactones, sesquiterpene coumarins, glucuronic acid, galactose, arabinose, rhamnose, and daucan esters. In the last decade, much attention has been paid to the biological activity of these compounds; it is assumed that the most striking biological features of the genus *Ferula* are their cytotoxic effects. This article discusses the cytotoxic activity of the genus *Ferula* and their important compounds [7].

The genus *Ferula* L. belongs to the family dycotiledonus of plants Apiaceae, which includes more than 400 genera and about 3700 species. This genus includes about 170 species, which mainly grow in the Mediterranean, North Africa and Central Asia. Three species are described in Italy, i.e. *Ferula communis* L., *Ferula glauca* L. and *Ferula arrigonii* Bocchieri [1].

Ferula communis L. subsp. *communis* (giant fennel) is a latex-containing perennial plant 1–2.5 m high, fragrant, with dense roots. Its cylindrical leg is green, striated, with mucous exudate. Branches 8-10 cm long alternate (lower) or opposite (upper). The leaves are glabrous, with a large sheath. The lower leaves are 3-4-pinnate, triangular, variable in size, soft, glabrous, green on both sides and usually with a well-marked base. The lamina is finely divided into linear and filiform lobes. The latter do not have a distinct rounded edge and are up to 50 mm long, but not more than 1 mm long. wide.

The upper fertile leaves of the inflorescence are gradually reduced to a noticeable integumentary base. Bracts are absent, and bracts are few or absent. The stem is very strong, wide (3–7 cm in diameter), full, finely striped, can reach 2–3 m in height. The upper fertile

umbrella is large and consists of 20-40 rays. The inflorescence is attached to the terminal part of the peduncle. The flower is bright yellow. The fruit (mericap) is elliptical or oblong-elliptical in shape, strongly compressed from above; length varies from 7 to 15 mm. The plant, despite the name, is not a variety of fennel itself, belonging to another genus *Foeniculum*. The name of the phenolic compound ferulic acid, which can be isolated from giant dill, comes from the Latin name of the plant [2,3].

They are both widely used in traditional medicine to treat a wide range of ailments. A large number of chemical compounds have been isolated from this plant, including sesquiterpene coumarins and polysulfides. Fresh plant materials, crude extracts and isolated components of *F. persica* have demonstrated a wide range of pharmacological properties, including anti-pigment properties of *Serratia marcescens.*, cytotoxic, antibacterial, antifungal, antileishmanial, chemoprophylactic against cancer, elimination of multidrug resistance, anti-inflammatory and inhibitory effects on lipoxygenase [8].

Traditional medical books such as Dioscorides report numerous beneficial uses for this plant. For example, the administration of mashed fresh kernels is useful for expelling bloody fluid from the mouth and for treating abdominal pain with diarrhea. Also recommended for the treatment of snake bites. Preparation of crushed plants in the form of a wick for filling a bleeding organ. The introduction of the seeds of the plant relieves spasms, and when the mixture of pureed seeds with oil is rubbed into the skin, it causes sweating [4].

The traditional use of the non-poisonous *F. communis* as a phytohormone is due to ferutinin, an aromatic ester of daucan alcohol. This plant has been reported to act as a possible source of daucan-type phytoestrogens. In Morocco, *F. communis* has traditionally been used as a hypoglycemic medicinal plant, but its use has been limited due to its toxicity [5].

Ferutinin is a sesquiterpene extracted from roots, leaves and rhizomes. Various mechanisms are known by which several compounds isolated from many *Ferula* L. species exert their inhibitory activity on cell growth. Among the compounds isolated from many *Ferula* species, ferutinin obtained from the plants *Ferula ovina* Boiss., *Ferula communis* L., *Ferula hermonis* Boiss. and other *Ferula* species, is known for various activities that act in a dose-dependent manner both in vitro and in vivo. In particular, ferutinin has shown estrogenic, anti-inflammatory, antiproliferative, cytotoxic, antifungal, and antimicrobial activity; cytotoxic activity is a key role of its action, which should lead to the use of this molecule in antitumor therapy [6].

Ferula assafoetida and others are some of the medicinal plants used for anti-diabetic therapy. The presence of phenolic compounds, flavonoids, terpenoids and coumarins determines the antidiabetic nature of medicinal plants. These components have been shown to lower blood glucose levels. Pycnogenol, acarbose, miglitol, and voglibose are some examples of marketed drugs that are derived from natural sources and are used as anti-diabetic drugs. Plant-derived actives act through a variety of anti-diabetic mechanisms, including inhibition of α -glucosidase, α -amylase and protein tyrosine phosphatase 1B activity. One of the main advantages of herbal preparations is the low level of side effects attributed to these drugs, and this has attracted various researchers to develop new molecules for the treatment of diabetes [9].

The seeds and roots of this plant have long been used in the Middle East as an aphrodisiac and to treat frigidity and impotence in both men and women. The anti-inflammatory properties of the three main esters of daucan, ferutinine (1), teferine (2) and teferidine (3), isolated from the root oil of *Ferula hermonis*, were evaluated in a carrageenan induced edema model in rats. The anti-inflammatory effect of both 1 and 2 was observed at a dose of 100 mg/kg, while compound 3 did not show anti-inflammatory activity [10].

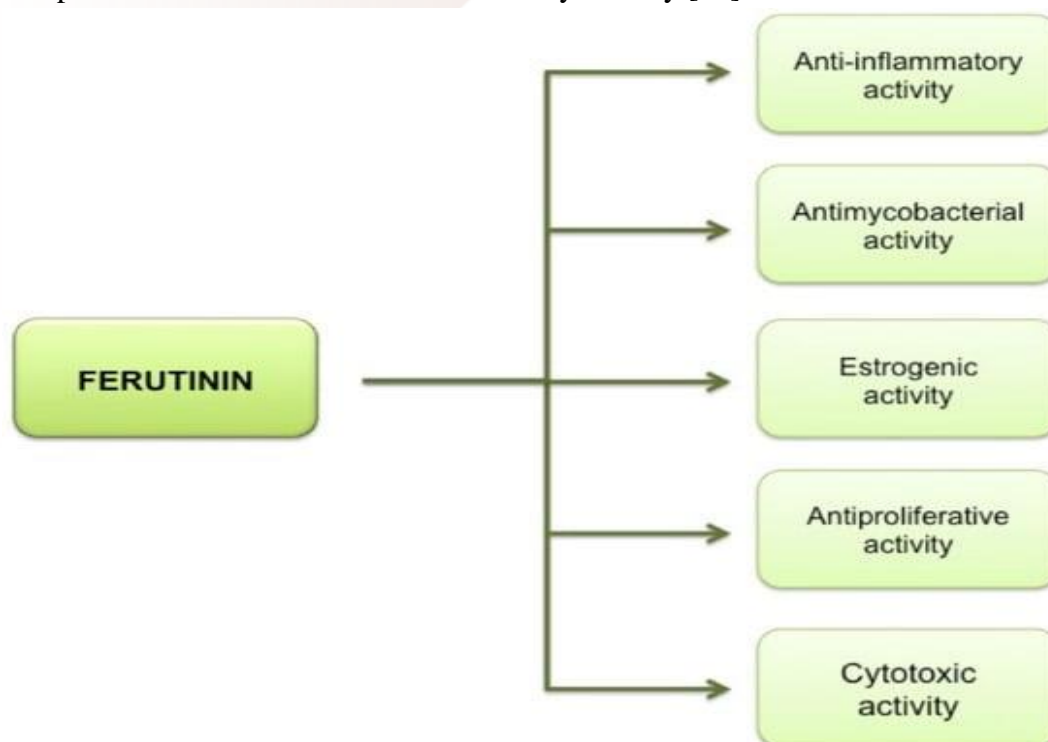


Figure 1. Pleiotropic activity of sesquiterpene ferutinine. Ferutinine exhibits several types of activity in human diseases, having estrogenic, anticancer, anti-inflammatory, and bactericidal properties [6].

The purpose of this mini-review is to highlight traditional and new uses for extracts of this plant and its main sesquiterpene ester, ferutinine. In particular, the phytochemical constituents and pharmacological uses of ferula hermonis crude extract and ferutinine will be discussed.

Conclusion. Thus, based on the data obtained, the bioactive compound ferutinine can be considered as an effective therapeutic agent as an adjuvant or replacement for existing antitumor therapies. More research is needed to evaluate its effects on other cell types and other molecular pathways involved, to compare its activity with that of chemotherapy drugs, to assess the varying degrees of toxicity that a side effect has on healthy cells.

Therefore, the use of these bioactive components with antimicrobial and insecticidal action can not only provide a new strategy for the development of drugs and green pesticides, but also protect endangered plant resources.

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