

Bioactive components from *Fcus Racemosa* linn.

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ABSTRACT

Bioactive compounds in plants can be defined as secondary plant metabolites eliciting pharmacological or toxicological effects in man and animals. Secondary metabolites are produced within the plants besides the primary biosynthetic and metabolic routes for compounds associated with plant growth and development, and are regarded as products of biochemical "side tracks" in the plant cells and not needed for the daily functioning of the plant. Several of them are found to hold various types of important functions in the living plants such as protection, attraction or signaling. Most species of plants seem to be capable of producing such compounds. The main chemical groups of bioactive compounds in plants with their main pharmacological or toxicological effects in man as well as the main producing plant family are presented here. *Ficus racemosa* Linn. is a moderate sized avenue tree found throughout India. It is popular in indigenious system of medicine like ayurveda, siddha, unani and homoeopathy. In the traditional system of medicine various plant parts such as bark, root, leaves, fruits and latex are used in dysentery, diarrhoea, diabetes, stomachache, piles and as carminative and astringent and also as antioxidant and anticancer agent.