

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

**THE HYPOGLYCAEMIC EFFECT OF CURRY LEAVES
(MURRAYA KOENIGII SPRENG)**

Dear Sir,

(Received on September 13, 2004)

We have read the article by Dr. Vinuthan and colleagues regarding the effects of **Murraya Koenigii spreng leaves (Curry Leaves) on blood glucose** and plasma insulin levels in alloxan (intraperitoneal injection) induced diabetic rats (1). In this study alloxan monohydrate dose was 200 mg/kg body weight and mortality in the animals has not been given. In the other studies published in this journal the dose of alloxan used to induce diabetes mellitus in rats (Wistar) was 100 mg/kg body weight (2) and 120 mg/kg body weight (3). Dr. Anuradha and Ravikumar have observed a mortality of 75% in rats when the alloxan dose was 100 mg/kg body weight (2). The hypoglycaemic effect of curry leaves has been studied in animal models and non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus (NIDDM) patients (4, 5).

The fresh curry leaves (a green leafy vegetable) contain 2.6% volatile essential

oils (containing sesquiterpenes and monoterpenes-beta caryophylline, beta gurjunene, beta elemene, beta phellandrene, beta thujene, alpha selinene, beta bisabolene, and beta cadinene) (6). The essential oils in the curry leaves are sufficiently soluble in water. The fresh curry leaves contain (per 100 g) : total carotene-21000 µg, beta carotene-7100 µg, total folic acid-93.9 µg, riboflavin-0.21 mg (7). The fresh curry leaves have chlorophyll, terpenes and antioxidants which may also contribute in the hypoglycaemic effect and increased insulin secretion in addition to the substances mentioned. The use of fresh curry leaves would have been considered instead of dry powder. In a study on the curry leaves we have observed that holding of 2 to 4 fresh curry leaves in the mouth for 5 to 7 minutes is helpful in reducing halitosis and this is due to the presence of terpenes, chlorophyll and antioxidants in them (8).

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