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Extracellular Matrix-Remodeling Enzymes as Targets for Natural Antiangiogenic Compounds

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Abstract Angiogenesis, or new blood vessels formation, comprises a series of tight regulated and coordinated steps guided by the balance between proangiogenic and antiangiogenic signals. Although physiological angiogenesis occurs in some context such as embryogenesis or wound healing, it is a very restricted process in adults, therefore, it is associated to several pathologies as cancer, arthritis or age-related macular degeneration. For this purpose, plenty of compounds from natural sources have been studied and their antiangiogenic potential has been demonstrated. Most of them are isolated from plants, such as the major catechin found in green tea epigallocatechin-3-gallate (EGCG) or the isoflavonoid genistein. Nevertheless, compounds with antiangiogenic potential can be found in several species of animals, fungi, algae or bacteria, for instance, aeroplysinin-1, AD0157, carrageenan derivatives and rapamycin, respectively. The extracellular matrix (ECM) remodeling plays a key role in the formation of new blood vessels. The degradation of the ECM components not only provides a structural scaffold for the nascent vessels, but it is also strongly involved in endothelial cell signaling, promoting or inhibiting this complex process. In this regard, targeting the ECM components entails an interesting therapeutic strategy for the treatment of angiogenesis-related diseases. This book chapter is an updated overview of natural compounds with an antiangiogenic effect with the capability to target one or more EMC components.

Keywords Angiogenesis, Extracellular matrix, Natural antiangiogenic compounds

1. The extracellular matrix and its role in angiogenesis

The extracellular matrix (ECM) term refers to the non-cellular component present within all tissues and organs that provides physical, adhesive and mechanical support for the cells. The ECM participates in crucial biochemical and biophysical processes for tissue morphogenesis, differentiation, homeostasis, and storage and release of bioactive molecules (Theocharis et al. 2019). Although each tissue has an ECM with a unique topology and composition, which is defined during tissue development, the ECM is generally composed of laminin, nidogens, type IV collagen, and heparan sulphate proteoglycans (HSPG), that separate cells from the interstitial matrix (Walker et al. 2018). In the space limited by the basement membranes, named as extracellular/pericellular space, a complex molecular network created by interactions of matrix components and interactions with non-matrix molecules establish the dialogue between the cellular components and their microenvironment, further defining cell behavior and function (Muncie and Weaver 2018). In fact, the crosstalk between the ECM components and the proteases, growth factors, cytokines and chemokines that bind to the ECM plays a pivotal role in physiological but also in pathological processes, ultimately orchestrating complex signaling cascades and the cell response to extracellular stimuli. It is worth mentioning that the ECM is a dynamic structure since its composition and structural organization change during embryogenesis, adult physiological conditions and pathological contexts such as cancer, inflammation and wound healing (Yamada et al. 2019; Walma and Yamada, 2020; Winkler et al. 2020). These variations include the presence of specific proteins typical of embryogenesis or associated with tissue remodeling.

One of the physiological processes that take place in the ECM environment is angiogenesis or the blood vessel growth from the existing vasculature. The new blood vessel is composed of two interacting cell types, endothelial cells, which form the inner lining of the vessel wall, and perivascular cells, also known as pericytes, vascular smooth muscle cells or mural cells, that envelop the surface of the vascular tube (Carmeliet and Jain 2011). It has been largely described how in the angiogenic process the ECM is not a mere physical scaffolding for the endothelial cells but regulates each step of the cascade. The multiple stages that make up angiogenesis are finely coordinated and occur in a sequential and interdependent manner. For the formation of new blood vessels through the process of angiogenesis, pro-angiogenic factors signal the quiescent endothelial cells that conform the capillaries, promoting the activated state in these cells and the differentiation into stalk or proliferating cells and tip or migrating cells. This activation includes a cascade of events that promotes the detachment of mural cells from the vessel, the degradation of the underlying basement membrane, the migration and proliferation of endothelial cells and the formation of an immature capillary structure (Vaeyens et al. 2020). Once the new capillary is formed, takes place its remodeling, the recruitment of mural

cells and the deposition of a new basement membrane to complete vessel maturation. In all these events endothelial cells interact with the matrix producing proteases necessary for the ECM degradation and molecules for the formation of the new basement membrane (Ma et al. 2020) (Fig 1).

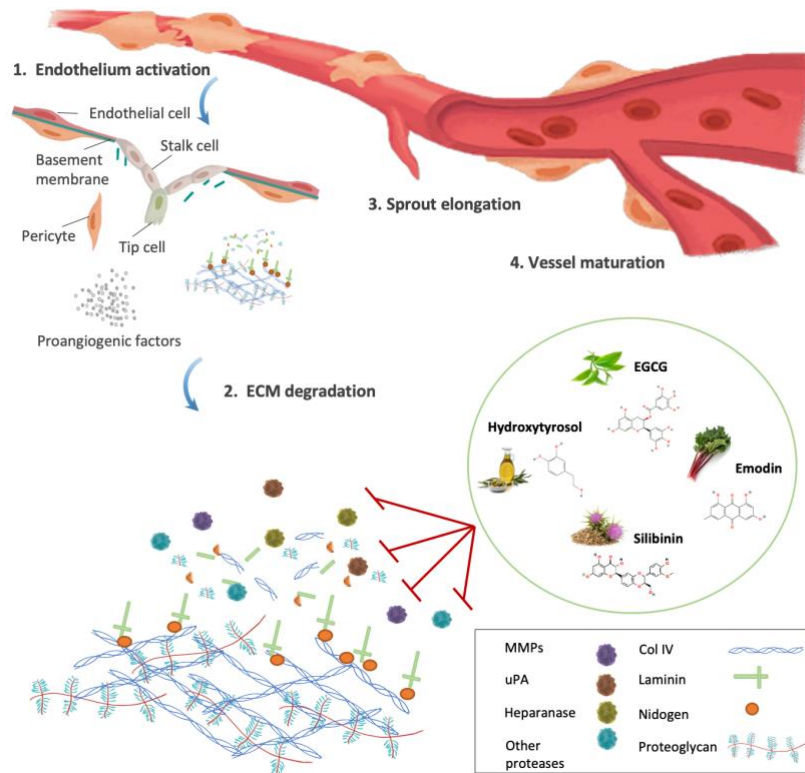


Fig 1. The angiogenic process and families of compounds targeting ECM enzymes. The scheme illustrates the 4 main steps of the angiogenic processes: 1) Endothelium activation, characterized by the binding of proangiogenic factors to their respective receptors on endothelial cells and the subsequent differentiation into tip and stalk cells, parallel to the mural cells detachment; 2) ECM degradation, in which the activated endothelium releases proteolytic enzymes in order to degrade the basement membrane and the surrounding ECM. Several natural compounds have a pleiotropic effect and target different ECM enzymes resulting in the inhibition of the angiogenic process. Some examples are ECGC, emodin, hydroxytyrosol or silibinin, which can simultaneously inhibit various ECM proteases; 3) sprout elongation, when the activated endothelial cells proliferate and migrate across the ECM; and 4) vessel maturation, final step in which the elongation

stops. Finally, basement membrane is restored, and mural cells are recruited giving rise to a mature vessel.

In a physiological scenario, the above-mentioned steps of angiogenesis are finely coordinated by a delicate balance between pro-angiogenic and anti-angiogenic signals, being the ECM network a key player in the maintenance of this balance. In fact, a plethora of angiogenesis regulatory factors, both stimulators and inhibitors, are either matrix molecules or fragments derived from the ECM. The number of endogenous inhibitors of angiogenesis that are produced by the ECM protease-mediated cleavage is continuously growing. Some of the, such as endostatin, vastatin, and restin, among others, are being explored for the design of antiangiogenic therapies for neoplastic and non-neoplastic angiogenesis-related diseases (Ma et al. 2020).

Finally, the mechanical properties of the ECM, determined by their composition, can profoundly affect cell behavior (Marchand et al. 2019). The ECM stiffness and spatial dimensionality establish tensile forces that act through the tubulin and the actin cytoskeleton providing traction, directionality and orientation for the migrating cells in the nascent vessel (Marchand et al. 2019). Thus, stimulated endothelial cells directly influence the physico-mechanical properties of the surrounding ECM to support vessel formation through changes in protein synthesis, polymerization and fibril formation (Nia et al. 2020; Vaeyens et al. 2020). Figure 1 summarizes the angiogenic process and different compounds targeting more than one ECM enzymes.

2. Pharmacological targeting of ECM by natural compounds in pathological angiogenesis

Judah Folkman's studies promoted a fundamental change in the concept of angiogenesis, which went from being understood as a physiological process mainly associated with embryonic development and wound healing, to being considered a potent pharmacological target with great possibilities for the treatment of diseases that courses with impaired regulation of the process (Quesada et al. 2010; Ribatti, 2021). The basis for antiangiogenic therapy in cancer and other angiogenesis-dependent diseases was then established. However, the apparent simplicity of the model of activation and inactivation of the "angiogenic switch" as a pharmacological strategy against the onset and development of certain diseases, is in contrast with the complexity of the process itself (Quesada et al. 2007). Precisely, this inherent complexity is the basis of most of the observed complications related to the use of anti-angiogenic therapies, since different drawback, such as development of compensatory mechanisms, redundancy in the activation pathways and multiplicity in the effectors, have been described in relation to the use of

angiogenic inhibitors in clinics and disease models (Medina et al., 2007; Jászai and Schmidt 2019). For example, as a consequence of these events, the initial optimism about the VEGF-targeting therapy in the treatment of cancer, was rapidly discarded (Vasudev and Reynolds 2014). Currently, the pharmacological modulation of angiogenesis is mostly conceived as a multi-target strategy, and research in this field is focused to the identification of new targets for the pharmacological modulation of this process and the finding and evaluation of potential anti-angiogenic drugs with high effectiveness for the treatment of angiogenesis-dependent diseases, either as monotherapy or in a combinatory approach (Quesada et al. 2006; Lopes-Coelho et al. 2021).

In the search of new potential modulators of angiogenesis, bioactive compounds derived from natural products, including terrestrial and marine plants, fungus, microorganisms, sponges, and even foods (fruits, vegetables, spices, seeds, oils...), are gaining increasing attention as drug candidates or lead structures for drug design, due to their unusual chemical features. In fact, the use of therapeutic compounds derived from plants for the inhibition of pathological angiogenesis may render a series of advantages, such as general availability, low price of products, multiple pharmacological activities, and a good profile of ADME and tolerability (Khalid et al. 2016; Lu et al. 2016; Ribeiro et al. 2018). In line with the concept of multi-target strategy in the therapeutic intervention of angiogenesis, the ECM represent a complex network of molecules that could be potential pharmacological anti-angiogenic targets. Among these molecules, those enzymes that participate in the remodeling of the ECM, revised in the next section, have received a special interest in biomedical and pharmacological research (Su et al. 2016; Liu and Khalil 2017; Fields 2019; Mohan et al. 2019).

Table 1 includes an updated compilation of natural antiangiogenic compounds that have been reported to target different enzymes involved in ECM remodeling. For many compounds included in Table 1, it has been described a pleiotropic function, acting on different ECM remodeling enzymes (see also Figure 1). This is the case of compounds such as curcumin, hydroxytyrosol, genistein, luteoin or epigallocatechin-3-gallate (EGCG). It is also worth mentioning that many of these compounds show other bioactivities, exhibiting antioxidative and anti-inflammatory potential.

In addition, Figure 2 shows the distribution of the compounds listed in Table 1 into the different kingdoms (Figure 2A) and the ECM molecular targets of these compounds (Figure 2B).

Table 1. Natural antiangiogenic compounds targeting ECM enzymes

Natural product	Source	Kingdom	Molecular Target	Reference
(+)-Catechin	Several plants	Plants	Elastase Collagenase	Wittenauer et al. 2015
12-O-(2'E,4'E-decadienyl)-4-hydroxyphorbol-13-acetyl	<i>Daphne genkwa</i>	Plants	MMP-3	Wang et al. 2018
20(R)-Ginsenoside Rg3	<i>Panax ginseng</i> (root)	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9	Yue et al. 2006
3-Hydroxyflavone	Several plants	Plants	MMP-1 MT1-MMP MMP-2 TIMP-1 TIMP-2 uPA PAI-1	Kim 2003
3'-Hydroxygenkwain	<i>Daphne genkwa</i>	Plants	MMP-3	Zhou et al. 2021
4-Methylumbelliferone	Apiaceae family	Plants	MMP-2	García-Vilas et al. 2013
7-Epiclusianone	<i>Garcinia brasiliensis</i>	Plants	Cathepsin B and G	Murata et al. 2010
Acacetin	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i> & <i>Turnera diffusa</i>	Plants	MMP-2	Bhat et al. 2013
Acidic mucopolysaccharide	<i>Holothuria leucospilota</i>	Animals	MMP-2 MMP-9	Zhang et al. 2009
AD0157	<i>Paraconiothyrium sp.</i>	Fungi	MMP-2	García-Caballero et al. 2014
Aeropylsinin-1	<i>Aplysina aerophoba</i> (and other species of Verongida order)	Animals	MMP-2 uPA PAI-1	Martínez-Poveda et al. 2013 Rodríguez-Nieto et al. 2002
AITC (Allyl isothiocyanate)	<i>Brassica nigra</i> , <i>Lepidum sativum</i> , <i>Wasabia japonica</i> , <i>Raphanus sativus</i> & <i>Sinapis species</i>	Plants	TIMP-1	Thejass and Kuttan 2007a
Alitretinoin	Several foods of animal origin	Animals	MMP-2	Kvestad et al. 2014
Aloe-emodin	<i>Aloe vera</i> and others	Plants	MMP-2 uPA	Cárdenas et al. 2006
Andrographolide	<i>Andrographis paniculata</i>	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9	Pratheeshkumar and Kuttan 2011
Apigenin	<i>Matricaria recutita</i> , <i>Daphne genkwa</i> & <i>Chamaemelum nobile</i>	Plants	MMP1 MT1-MMP MMP-2 MMP-3 TIMP-1 TIMP-2 uPA	Lamy et al. 2012 Kim 2003 Zhou et al. 2021

PAI-1				
Apigenin-7-O- β -D-glucoside	<i>Daphne genkwa</i>	Plants	MMP-3	Zhou et al. 2021
Aplidine (Dehydrodidemnin B)	<i>Aplidium albicans</i>	Animals	MMP-2 MMP-9	Taraboletti et al. 2004
Arctigenin	<i>Arctium lappa</i> (seed)	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 Heparanase	Lou et al. 2017
Baicalein	<i>Scutellaria baicalensis</i>	Plants	MMP-2 Elastase	Liu et al. 2003 Sartor et al. 2002
Baicalin	<i>Scutellaria baicalensis</i>	Plants	MMP-2	Liu et al. 2003
Bestatin	<i>Streptomyces olivoreticuli</i>	Monera	Heparanase MMP-9	Hossain et al. 2016
BITC (Benzyl Isothiocyanate)	Brassicaceae family	Plants	MMP-2	Boreddy et al. 2011
C3G (Cyanidin-3-O-glucoside)	Several plants and food	Plants	MMP-2	Anwar et al. 2014
Carnosic acid	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> (leaves)	Plants	MMP-2	López-Jiménez et al. 2013
Carnosol	<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> (leaves)	Plants	MMP-2	López-Jiménez et al. 2013
κ and λ -carragenaans	Red algae	Protist	Heparanase	Niu et al. 2015 Ishai-Michaeli et al. 1990
Celastrol	<i>Trypterigium wilfordii</i>	Plants	MMP-1 MMP-9	Li et al. 2012
Chymostatin	<i>Streptomyces sp</i>	Monera	Cathepsins A, B, D, K	Vidal-Albalat and González 2016 Umezawa et al. 1970
Cryptotanshinone	<i>Salvia miltiorrhiza</i>	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 TIMP-1 TIMP-2	Zhang et al. 2018
CS5931	<i>Ciona savignyi</i>	Animals	MMP-2 MMP-9	Liu et al. 2014
Cucurbitacin E	Cucurbitaceae family	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9	Sinha et al. 2016
Curcumin	<i>Curcuma longa</i> (rhizome)	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 MT1-MMP TIMP-2 uPA Elastase	Yodkeeree et al. 2009 Thaloor et al. 1998 Liu et al. 2003 Sartor et al. 2002
DADS (Diallyl disulfide)	<i>Allium sativum</i>	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 TIMP-1	Meyer et al. 2004 Thejass and Kuttan 2007b
Damnacanthal	<i>Morinda citrifolia</i> (root)	Plants	MMP-1 MMP-2 TIMP-1 TIMP-4 uPA	García-Vilas et al. 2017a

PAI-1				
Danshensu	<i>Radix Salviae Miltiorrhizae</i>	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9	Zhang et al. 2010a
Daphnetin	<i>Changbai daphne</i>	Plants	MMP-2	Kumar et al. 2016
Daphnodorin G	<i>Daphne genkwa</i>	Plants	MMP-3	Zhou et al. 2021
DATS (Diallyl trisulfide)	<i>Allium sativum</i>	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-7 MMP-9 uPA	Lai et al. 2015
Defibrotide	Porcine mucosal DNA	Animals	Heparanase	Barash et al. 2018
Demethoxycurcumin	<i>Curcuma aromatica</i> (rhizome)	Plants	MMP-9	Kim et al. 2002
Dihydroartemisinin	<i>Artemisia annua</i>	Plants	MMP-9	Wang et al. 2011
ECAP (Epicatechin 3-O- β -D-allopyranoside)	<i>Davallia bilabiata</i>	Plants	MMP-2 TIMP-2 MMP-14	Liu et al. 2017
EGCG (Epigallocatechin-3-gallate)	<i>Camellia sinensis</i> (leaves)	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 MT1-MMP uPA Elastase Collagenase PAI-1	Oku et al. 2003 Yamakawa et al. 2004 Cale et al. 2010 Jankun et al. 1997 Madhan et al. 2007 Wittenauer et al. 2015 Donà et al. 2003 Sartor et al. 2002
Elaiophylin	<i>Streptomyces melanosporus</i> 17JA11	Monera	MMP-2 MMP-9	Lim et al. 2018
Ellagic Acid	<i>Phyllanthus urinaria</i>	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9	Wang et al. 2012 Huang et al. 2011b Huang et al. 2011a
Embelin	<i>Embelia ribes</i> (fruit)	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 PAI-1	Lin et al. 2013 Huang et al. 2014
Emodin	<i>Rheum palmatum</i> (root and rhizome)	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 uPA Trypsin	Kwak et al. 2006 Jedinak et al. 2006a Shi and Zhou 2018
Esculetin	<i>Artemisia scoparia</i>	Plants	MMP-2	Park et al. 2016
Farnesiferol C	<i>Ferula assafoetida</i>	Plants	MMP-2	Lee et al. 2010

Ferulic acid	<i>Cimicifuga heracleifolia</i> , <i>Angelica sinensis</i> & <i>Lignsticum chuangxiong</i>	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9	Yang et al. 2015
Formononetin	<i>Astragalus membranaceus</i> (dried root)	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9	Wu et al. 2015
Gallic acid	<i>Toona sinensis</i> (leaf)	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9	Hseu et al. 2011
Genistein	Soybeans	Plants	MMP-1 MMP-2 MMP-9 MT1-MMP TIMP-1 TIMP-2 uPA PAI-1	Yu et al. 2012 Kim 2003 Fajardo et al. 1999
Genkwanin	<i>Daphne genkwa</i>	Plants	MMP-3	Zhou et al. 2021
Ginsenoside compound K	<i>Panax ginseng</i>	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9	Shin et al. 2014
Halofuginone	<i>Dichroa febrifuga</i>	Plants	MMP-2	Elkin et al. 2000
Harmine	<i>Peganum harmala</i> (seed)	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 TIMP-1	Hamsa and Kuttan 2010
HBA (4-Hydroxybenzyl alcohol)	<i>Gastrodia elata</i>	Plants	MMP-9	Laschke et al. 2011
Homocysteine	Methionine	Animals Plants Fungi Monera Protist	MMP-2 uPA PAI-1	Rodríguez-Nieto et al. 2002 Midorikawa et al. 2000
Hydrangenol	<i>Hydrangea macrophylla</i>	Plants	MMP-2	Gho et al. 2019
Hydroxygenkwanin-5- O-β-D-glucoside	<i>Daphne genkwa</i>	Plants	MMP-3	Zhou et al. 2021
Hydroxytyrosol	<i>Olea europaea</i> (virgin olive oil)	Plants	MMP-1 MMP-2 MMP-9 TIMP-1 TIMP-2 TIMP-4	García-Vilas et al. 2017b Scoditti et al. 2012 Fortes et al. 2012

			uPA uPAR	
Hyperforin	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	Plants	MMP-2 uPA	Martínez-Poveda et al. 2005a
Hypericin	<i>Hypericum sp</i>	Plants	MT1-MMP uPA Trypsin	Jedinák et al. 2006a Lavie et al. 2005 Martínez-Poveda et al. 2005b
Hyperoside	Hypericum & Crataegus Genera	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-7 uPA	Jedinák et al. 2006a Wu et al. 2020 Liu et al. 2016
Imperatorin	<i>Angelica dahurica</i> & <i>Angelica archangelica</i>	Plants	MMP-2	Li et al. 2021
Ipobscurine-A	<i>Ipomoea obscura</i>	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 TIMP-1	Hamsa and Kuttan 2011
Isoliquiritigenin	<i>Glycyrrhiza uralensis</i> (root)	Plants	MMP-2 MT1-MMP TIMP-2	Kang et al. 2010 Wang et al. 2013
Kahweol	<i>Coffea Arabica</i> (coffee bean)	Plants	MMP-2 uPA	Cárdenas et al. 2011
Leupeptin	<i>Streptomyces exfoliatus</i>	Monera	Cathepsins A, B, D, K	Baici and Gyger-Marazzi 1982 Vidal-Albalat and González 2016
Lupeol	Several plants	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 Elastase	Mitaine-Offer et al. 2002 Vijay Avin et al. 2014
Luteolin	Several plants	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 ADAMTS-4/5 Elastase	Pratheeshkumar et al. 2012 Lamy et al. 2012 Moncada-Pazos et al. 2011 Siedle et al. 2007
Luteolin-5-O-β-D-glucopyranoside	<i>Daphne genkwa</i>	Plants	MMP-3	Zhou et al. 2021
Lycopene	<i>Solanum lycopersicum</i>	Plants	MMP-2 TIMP-2 uPA	Chen et al. 2012

Melatonin	Several species	Plants Animals Monera Fungi Protist	MMP-2 MMP-9	Yan et al. 2021
Nobiletin	<i>Citrus depressa</i> & <i>Citrus reticulata</i> (fruit)	Plants	MMP-2 uPA	Kunimasa et al. 2010
Novobiocin	<i>Streptomyces niveus</i>	Monera	MMP-2	Yang et al. 2003
Oleanolic acid	Several plants	Plants	Elastase	Kim et al. 2009
Oleuropein	<i>Olea europaea</i> (virgin olive oil)	Plants	MMP-9	Scoditti et al. 2012
Panduratin A	<i>Boesenbergia rotunda</i>	Plants	MMP-2	Lai et al. 2012
PG (Piceatannol-3-O- β -D- glucopyranoside)	<i>Rheum undulatum</i> (rhizome)	Plants Fungi	MMP-9	Kim and Ma 2019
Phloretin	Several plants	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-3 Cathepsin S Elastase	Leu et al. 2006 Hsiao et al. 2019
Picroside II	<i>Picrorhiza kurroa</i>	Plants	MMP-9	Lou et al. 2019
Piperlongumine	<i>Piper longum</i> (fruit)	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9	Kumar and Agnihotri 2021
PITC (phenyl isothiocyanate)	<i>Brassica nigra</i> , <i>Lepidum sativum</i> , <i>Wasabia japonica</i> , <i>Raphanus sativus</i> & <i>Sinapis species</i>	Plants	TIMP-1	Thejass and Kuttan 2007a
Protocatechuic acid	<i>Pleurotus tuber- regium</i> & <i>Agrocybe aegerita</i> (sclerotium)	Fungi	MMP-2	Hu et al. 2018
Punarnavine	<i>Boerhaavia diffusa</i>	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 TIMP-2	Saraswati et al. 2013a
Quercetin	Several plants	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 Trypsin Thrombin uPA Elastase	Tan et al. 2003 Scoditti et al. 2012 Pilátová et al. 2010

				Jedinák et al. 2006a Kanashiro et al. 2007 Sartor et al. 2002
Rapamycin	<i>Streptomyces hygroscopicus</i>	Monera	ADAM10	Zhang et al. 2010b
Resveratrol	Several Plants	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9	Zhang et al. 2010b Scoditti et al. 2012 Cao et al. 2005
Rhaponticin	<i>Rheum undulatum</i>	Plants	MMP-9	Kim and Ma 2018
Rhein	<i>Rheum palmatum</i> , <i>Cassia tora</i> , <i>Polygonum multiflorum</i> and <i>Aloe barbadensis</i>	Plants	Trypsin uPA	Jedinák et al. 2006a
Salicin	Genus <i>Salix</i> (willow bark)	Plants	Thrombin	Jedinák et al. 2006a
Silibinin	<i>Silybum marianum</i> (fruits)	Plants	MMP-2 uPA Trypsin Thrombin	Singh et al. 2005 Jedinák et al. 2006a Jiang et al. 2000
Sulforaphane	Brassicaceae family	Plants	MMP-2 TIMP-2	Bertl et al. 2006
Sulodexide	Porcine intestinal mucosa	Animals	Heparanase MMP-9	Masola et al. 2012
Syringic acid	<i>Pleurotus tuber- regium</i> & <i>Agrocybe aegerita</i> (sclerotium)	Fungi	MMP-2	Hu et al. 2018
Tannic acid	Several plants	Plants	PAI-1	Cale et al. 2010
Tanshinone IIA	<i>Salvia miltiorrhiza</i> (dried root and rhizome)	Plants	MMP-2 TIMP-2	Tsai et al. 2011
Theaflavin-3,3'- digallate	<i>Camellia sinensis</i> (black tea)	Plants	PAI-1	Jankun 2011
Theaflavin-3'-gallate	<i>Camellia sinensis</i> (black tea)	Plants	PAI-1	Jankun 2011

TICMs (Trypsin inhibitor from extract of <i>C. melo</i> seeds)	<i>Cucumis melo</i> (seeds)	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9	Rasouli et al. 2017
Toluquinol	<i>Penicillium sp.</i>	Fungi	MMP-2	García-Caballero et al. 2013
Triptolide	<i>Tripterygium wilfordii</i>	Plants	ADAM10	Soundararajan et al. 2009
Tylophorine	<i>Tylophora indica</i>	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9	Saraswati et al. 2013b
Ursolic acide	Several plants	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 TIMP-1 uPA Cathepsin B Elastase	Kanjoormana and Kuttan 2010 Cárdenas et al. 2004 Ying et al. 1991 Jedinák et al. 2006b Mitaine-Offer et al. 2002
Zerumbone	<i>Zingiber zerumbet</i> (rhizome)	Plants	MMP-9	Samad et al. 2018
β-Carotene	Several plants and food	Plants	MMP-2 MMP-9 TIMP-1 TIMP-2	Guruvayoorappa n and Kuttan 2007
γ-tocotrienol	Several plants and food	Plants Animals	MMP-9	Li et al. 2011

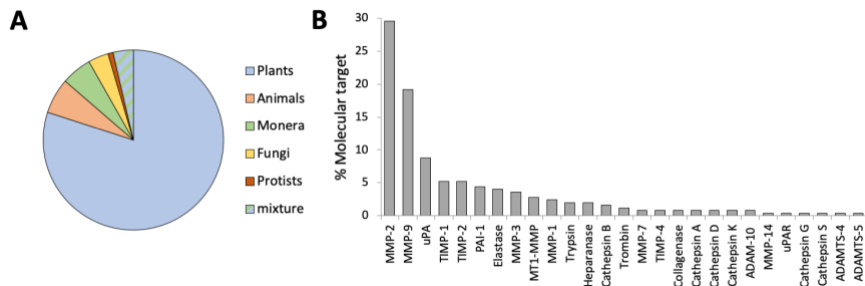


Fig 2. Distribution of natural antiangiogenic compounds according to kingdoms and ECM targets. A) Distribution of natural antiangiogenic compounds into the different kingdoms. Mixture category includes all those compounds that are present in more than one kingdom. B) Graph shows molecular target distribution for the final 110 natural compounds; 27 different enzymes are involved in the ECM remodeling.

3. Matrix remodeling enzymes as therapeutic targets in angiogenesis

The main players involved in the ECM remodeling are presented in this section, with a focus on how they can be potential therapeutic targets in modulating angiogenesis. Matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs) are members of an enzyme family of calcium-dependent endopeptidases that require a zinc ion for their catalytic activity. This family targets molecules including growth factors, matrix components, cytokines, adhesion and signaling molecules (Quintero-Fabián et al. 2019). MMPs, synthesized and secreted as inactive latent enzymes (zymogens) that can be activated after their cleavage by diverse proteases, including other MMPs. MMPs are active at neutral pH catalyzing the normal turnover of various ECM macromolecules. The MMPs can be classified into six different groups: gelatinases, collagenases, matrilysins, stromelysins, membrane-bound MMPs (MT-MMPs), and other MMPs according to their substrate specificity and domain homology (Cui et al. 2017). MT-MMPs are located on the plasma membrane by a transmembrane domain or by a GPI anchor, being active, once furin convertases recognize a specific motif on their core protein. MMPs function is controlled by other proteases, or by binding with matrix components, and inhibited by MMP tissue inhibitors, named as TIMPs (Cui et al. 2017).

Although MMPs are the main ECM remodeling enzymes studied as therapeutic targets in pathological angiogenesis, there are plenty of compounds isolated from natural sources with the capability to inhibit additional ECM remodeling enzymes, such as those which belongs to the PA (plasminogen activator) system, heparanase or cathepsins, and whose antiangiogenic activity had been demonstrated.

ADAMs are families of zinc-dependent transmembrane proteases that contains disintegrin, cysteine-rich, and epidermal growth factor (EGF) domains, and ADAMTSs, are proteases secreted in the ECM that contains the thrombospondin (TSP) type-1 motifs instead of EGF motifs (Zhong and Khalil 2019). In the MMP and ADAMTS families there are more than 20 members and their role in angiogenesis has been largely studied in the context of cancer (Sun et al. 2015; Quintero-Fabián et al. 2019).

Elastases are serine proteases produced by the pancreas which participate in the breakdown of elastin, a protein that offer elasticity to connective tissue. Elastases catalyse the cleavage of carboxyl groups present in small hydrophobic amino acids,

such as glycine, valine and alanine. Around eight genes encode elastase or elastase-like enzymes, four of which are classified as chymotrypsin-like (Heinz 2020).

Other crucial proteases involved in the ECM remodeling during angiogenesis are the serine proteases urokinase plasminogen activator (uPA) and the tissue-type plasminogen activator (tPA), which participate in the plasminogen to active plasmin conversion (Gonias and Zampieri 2020). Plasminogen activators/plasmin cascade can target different matrix elements and molecules and activate MMPs (Breuss and Uhrin 2012; Gonias and Zampieri 2020). Granzymes are serine proteases present in the ECM that, being produced by immune and non-immune cells, can modulate the cell-matrix interactions by degradation of matrix and junctional proteins, as well as by interacting with cell surface receptors (Velotti et al. 2020). Recently, the role of some members of this family has been described in the modulation of angiogenesis (Wroblewski et al. 2017; Li et al. 2021).

Cysteine cathepsins, although present in the intracellular endolysosomal compartments, exert also their functions in the ECM by degrading numerous matrix and adhesion molecules and activating pro-uPA and MMPs. Some cathepsins are secreted in the ECM and are able to function in slight acidic conditions, prevalent in diseases including cancer and osteoarthritis (Vizovišek et al. 2019; Vidak et al. 2019). Aside from proteases, glycosaminoglycan (GAG) degrading enzymes are also implicated in the remodeling of ECM modifying the proteoglycan (PG) structure and the HS size (Smock and Meijers 2018). Six hyaluronic acid (HA)-degrading enzymes [hyaluronidases 1–4 (HYALs-1, -2, -3, and-4), HYALP, and PH20) have been described in humans (Dogné and Flamion 2020). Some of them are active in acidic or/and in neutral pH and they degrade high molecular weight HA to smaller bioactive fragments in the ECM (Dogné and Flamion 2020). They trigger biological events such as angiogenesis, inflammation, and cancer progression (Piperigkou et al. 2021). Another GAG-degrading enzyme with pronounced functions in ECM remodeling is heparanase (Masola et al. 2018). Heparanase is an endoglucuronidase that cleaves HS chains, releasing bioactive HS fragments of 4–7 kDa. It is overexpressed in some diseases and involved in the control of processes such as cancer cell growth, metastasis, and angiogenesis (Masola et al. 2018), by activation of VEGF and FGF pathways through HS cleavage and subsequent release of these proangiogenic factors (Jayatilleke and Hulett 2020).

In the last years numerous studies have shown the important role of these proteolytic and glycolytic enzymes in the modulation of angiogenesis, and their potential as pharmacological targets in the therapeutical inhibition of these process in angiogenesis-dependent diseases, such as cancer. Despite the initial efforts to develop successful pharmacological approaches focused on the inhibition of ECM enzymes, the clinical trials performed in this line have revealed important side effects derived from the blockage of these enzymes, such as the musculoskeletal syndrome observed with nearly all the inhibitors of MMPs tested (Fingleton 2008). After the first discouragement, the better understanding about the roles of the

different members of these families of ECM-enzymes in angiogenesis and related diseases has led to reopen the door to this pharmacological strategy (Winer et al. 2018). Therefore, the discovery and development of new inhibitors, highly selective and potent, that avoid the broad spectrum targeting of different members of the same family of enzymes, may open new avenues for the search of pharmacological alternatives in the treatment of angiogenesis-dependent pathologies. In this context, natural bioactive compounds represent a very attractive source of new putative drugs targeting ECM-related enzymes, and bibliography about their potential activity in these targets is summarized in this chapter.

4. Natural antiangiogenic compounds targeting MMPs

The role of MMPs in angiogenesis and other disease-related processes promoted the search of chemical inhibitors of these enzymes aiming at developing new pharmacological strategies. As mentioned above, although the first inhibitors tested in the clinics failed in the attempt to use them as therapeutic drugs, due to the broad-spectrum inhibition exhibited and the consequent side effects, the interest in the discovery of more selective and potent drug candidates is increasing year to year. The identification of new compounds (natural and synthetic) that target MMPs is still a hot spot in pharmacological research (Lenci et al. 2021).

After analyzing the current literature regarding the natural compounds exhibiting antiangiogenic activity, the conclusion is that a large number of them has been described to affect MMPs production, secretion or activity. Due to the important role of MMPs in angiogenesis, in many cases the inhibition of these key ECM remodeling family of enzymes is included as a part of the mechanism of action of the compounds capable to interfere with the angiogenic process. It is important to remark that MMP activities can be inhibited by TIMPs, which bind to the highly conserved zinc binding site of active MMPs at molar equivalence (Saraswati et al. 2013). The balance between MMPs and TIMPs plays a key role in angiogenesis regulation and is critical for the eventual ECM remodeling (Nagase et al. 2006; Quintero-Fabián et al. 2019).

Curcumin, isolated from the rhizome of *Curcuma longa* plant, is a powerful angiogenesis inhibitor and it has important inhibitory properties in the tumor initiation and growth. Human umbilical vein endothelial cells (HUVECs) treated with curcumin were inhibited to form tubes, although migration and attachment were not affected in the Matrigel assay. Importantly, upon curcumin treatment, HUVECs exhibit a decrease in the gelatinolytic activities of secreted 53-kDa and 72-kDa MMPs and displays an effect at the transcriptional and post-transcriptional level (Thaloor et al. 1998).

Mediterranean diet is an immense source of natural products, many of them with antiangiogenic and antiinflammatory properties. For example, hydroxytyrosol is one of the active compounds of the virgin olive oil and it shows a wide spectrum of

proteins involved in ECM remodeling, such as MMPs. It has been reported that endothelial cells treated with hydroxytyrosol decrease MMP-1 and MMP-2 expression, and increase TIMP-1, TIMP-2 and TIMP-4 levels (García-Vilas et al. 2017b). On the other hand, it has been observed reduced angiogenic response on endothelial cells incubated with some of the Mediterranean diet polyphenolic compounds, due to the inhibition of PMA-induced COX-2 protein expression and prostanoid production, as well as MMP-9 protein release and gelatinolytic activity (Scoditti et al. 2012).

One of the most important isoflavone is the genistein, which increases MMP-2 and MMP-9 secretions and activities by VEGF stimulation. In addition, exposure to genistein decreases activation of JNK and p38, induced by VEGF. This kind of mechanism constitutes a common pathway for many compounds to exert their antiangiogenic activity and their cancer protective function (Yu et al. 2012). Interestingly, genistein blocks VEGF/bFGF stimulation by the TIMP-1 increased and TIMP-2 decreased expression levels (Kim 2003).

Luteolin is a flavonoid found in many plants (medicinal herbs and some fruits), which suppressed VEGF-induced phosphorylation of VEGF receptor 2 and many downstream targets such as ERK, mTOR, MMP-2 and MMP-9, among many others (Pratheeshkumar et al. 2012). Other effects observed in cells treated with luteolin are the modulation of IL-6R α expression levels, the MMP-2 secretion and the expression of SOCS3 (Suppressor of Cytokine Signaling 3). These effects trigger a reduction in the endothelial cell proliferation and migration (Lamy et al. 2012).

Panduratin A, a chalcone isolated from *Boesenbergia rotunda*, suppresses MMP-2 secretion and F-actin stress fiber formation in endothelial cell, affecting cell migration (Lai et al. 2012). Punarnavine shows anti-angiogenic effects *in vitro* and *in vivo* (inhibits endothelial cell migration, invasion and capillary structure formation, suppresses peritoneal angiogenesis in an Ehrlich ascites carcinoma tumor model and decreases the neovascularization in the sponge implant assay). Additionally, it increases TIMP-2 expression in HUVECs (Saraswati et al. 2013). Other natural compounds like Allyl isothiocyanate (AITC) and Phenyl isothiocyanate (PITC) display an *in vitro* antiangiogenic activity in HUVECs by enhancing the production of TIMP-1 (Thejass and Kuttan 2007).

5. Natural antiangiogenic compounds targeting PA system

As indicated before, the PA system participates in the conversion of plasminogen to plasmin, which is an active proteolytic enzyme involved in the fibrinolytic process. This conversion is carried out by uPA or tPA, although there are some other players in this enzymatic system, such as uPA receptor (uPAR), plasminogen activator inhibitors (PAI-1/2) and plasmin inhibitors (α 2-antiplasmin – α 2-AP – and α 2-macroglobulin – α 2-MG –). The PA system does not only regulate angiogenesis through the proteolytic degradation of ECM components, but also by interfering in

intracellular signaling and modulating gene transcription (Stepanova et al. 2016), therefore it is assumed as a suitable antiangiogenic target. A compilation of natural antiangiogenic compounds that target PA system proteins is included in Table 1.

The potential of natural compounds as inhibitors of uPA, together with the identification of their mechanism of action, is very studied. Regarding to uPA-targeting compounds, it should be pointed out the polyphenol EGCG, a flavonoid which is the most abundant catechin in green tea and it is recognized as the main responsible of green tea health benefits (Nagle et al. 2006). EGCG has been described as an antiangiogenic compound both *in vitro* and *in vivo* (Cao and Cao 1999; Xu et al. 2011), mostly in the context of vascular tumors as a chemopreventive or adjuvant setting (Jung and Ellis 2002; Fassina et al. 2004). Interestingly, this compound has been shown to inhibit uPA activity by direct binding to the enzyme, consequently interfering with its ability to recognize its substrates (Jankun et al. 1997). EGCG also inhibits PAI-1 with an IC_{50} of 0.091 μ M (Cale et al. 2010).

Silibinin (silybin) is a flavonoid produced by the herb *Silybum marianum* (milk thistle), representing the major component of the plant extract silymarin. The interest in this compound aroused from its hepatoprotective effects and its potential anti-neoplastic activity (Wing Ying Cheung et al. 2010). Regarding uPA targeting, silibinin shows a potent *in vitro* uPA inhibitory activity with an IC_{50} of 21 μ M (Jedinák et al. 2006a). In the same way, hyperoside, another flavonoid found in traditional medicinal plants of the genera *Hypericum* and *Crataegus*, exhibiting antiangiogenic potential, has also the capability to directly inhibit uPA (IC_{50} 8.3 μ M), (Jedinák et al. 2006a; Liu et al. 2016; Wu et al. 2020). Other flavonoids, such as salicin or quercetin, are thrombin and uPA inhibitors and have been described to exert antiangiogenic effects *in vivo* and *in vitro* (Kong et al. 2014; Zhao et al. 2014; Song et al. 2017).

Not only polyphenols but also other chemicals found in plants, present both PA system and angiogenic inhibitor effects. This is the case of hypericin, a naphthodianthrone found in *Hypericum* species, which can inhibit uPA activity (Jedinák et al. 2006a) and shows antiangiogenic activity *in vitro* and *in vivo* in dark conditions (Lavie et al. 2005; Martínez-Poveda et al. 2005), or some anthraquinones present in herbs used in traditional medicine, such as rhein or emodin. Rhein (4, 5-dihydroxyanthraquinone-2-carboxylic acid) is extensively found in medicinal herbs and its potential role as hepatoprotective, nephroprotective, antiinflammatory, antioxidant, anticancer, and antimicrobial compound has been suggested (Zhou et al. 2015). The antiangiogenic effect of rhein has been described *in vitro* and *in vivo* (Fernand et al. 2011; He et al. 2011) and this compound also targets uPA, directly inhibiting its activity *in vitro* (Jedinák et al. 2006a). In the same way, emodin has been used in traditional Chinese medicine as antibacterial or antiinflammatory and has demonstrated a great antiangiogenic potential in the context of tumor angiogenesis (Kwak et al. 2006; Lin et al. 2015; Qu et al. 2015; Shi and Zhou 2018; Zou et al. 2020).

The mentioned compounds have been described as direct inhibitors of uPA enzymatic activity, but additionally, several natural antiangiogenic compounds are able to produce an indirect inhibition of these enzymes, for example, by decreasing its expression or by preventing its release from the cell. This is the case of curcumin, a polyphenolic compound extracted from *Curcuma longa* (turmeric), described as an inhibitor of angiogenesis (Bhandarkar and Arbiser 2007), which inhibits uPA secretion in casein zymographies of tumoral HT1080 cells without directly affecting uPA enzymatic activity (Yodkeeree et al. 2009). Hydroxytyrosol, an antiangiogenic phenolic compound present in olive oil, decreases the uPA expression whereas increases the uPAR expression levels in endothelial cells, what has been proposed to contribute to its mechanism of action in the angiogenesis inhibition (García-Vilas et al. 2017b). In the same way, Aeroplysinin-1, a secondary metabolite isolated from a marine sponge, shows antiangiogenic effects with a decrease in uPA and an increase in PAI-1 activity in plasminogen zymographies (Rodríguez-Nieto et al. 2002). Other examples are damnacanthal, a noni anthraquinone characterized as antiangiogenic which produces a decrease in the uPA/PAI-1 ratio in endothelial cells (García-Vilas et al. 2017a), or aloe-emodin, a hydroxyanthraquinone from Aloe vera and other plants, that produces a decrease in uPA production in endothelial and tumor cells (Cárdenas et al. 2006).

Belonging to PA system, PAI are involved in the inhibition of plasminogen activation by uPA. Although uPA and PAI-1 have opposite effects regarding plasminogen activation, both are known to stimulate angiogenesis, depending on the context (Isogai et al. 2001; Devy et al. 2002; Stepanova et al. 2016; Song et al. 2019). Among the natural compound described to inhibit PAI, a number of them show antiangiogenic activity. The polyphenol tannic acid is produced by a wide range of edible plants, so its consumption is highly frequent around the world. Among its therapeutic potential, activities against oxidation, allergy, inflammation, cancer, dysentery, different infections (parasites, bacteria, virus), etc. have been described (Sharma et al. 2019). In addition, this compound has been shown to inhibit angiogenesis *in vitro* (Chen et al. 2003), and to strongly inhibit PAI-1 activity with an IC_{50} of 0.7 nM (Cale et al. 2010).

Other polyphenols, the black tea theaflavins theaflavin-3'-digallate and theaflavin-3,3'-digallate, have been described to inhibit angiogenesis (Gao et al. 2016 a,b). Both theaflavins can inhibit the PAI activity, showing the theaflavin-3'-digallate a more potent activity than the theaflavin-3,3'-digallate (Jankun 2011). Furthermore, the hydroxybenzoquinone embelin, isolated from *Embelia ribes* fruit (vidanga), inhibits PAI-1 activity at low concentrations (IC_{50} 1,62 μ M) and it has also been studied for its antiangiogenic potential (Lin et al. 2013; Coutelle et al. 2014; Narayanaswamy et al. 2014; Rouch et al. 2015).

6. Natural antiangiogenic compounds targeting heparanase

Heparanase is an ECM remodeling enzyme that represent an interesting target in antiangiogenic therapy. The substrates of heparanase are HSPGs which are involved in self-assembly and integrity of both BM and ECM (Elkin et al. 2001) structures which must be degraded to allow the endothelial cell migration and a growth factor availability during angiogenesis. Some natural antiangiogenic compounds that directly target the heparanase enzymatic activity, such as defibrotide and sulodexide, are included in Table 1. Defibrotide is a mixture of single-stranded oligodeoxyribonucleotides isolated from porcine mucosal DNA, with recognized antiangiogenic activity *in vitro* and *in vivo* (Koehl et al. 2007). The direct inhibition of heparanase by this compound has been reported in an *in vitro* model of multiple myeloma (Mitsiades et al. 2009; Mohan et al. 2019). Sulodexide is a highly purified mixture of GAGs isolated from porcine intestinal mucosa which directly targets heparanase enzymatic activity (Masola et al. 2012) and shows antiangiogenic potential *in vitro* (Niderla-Bielińska et al. 2019).

Beside the natural inhibitors of heparanase mentioned above, that show the capability of inhibiting directly the enzymatic activity of this protein, other natural compounds are able to produce an indirect inhibition of heparanase. For example, bestatin, a compound which inhibits heparanase expression and angiogenesis in a diabetic retinopathy model (Hossain et al. 2016). Furthermore, carrageenans are polysulfated polygalactans obtained from red algae that can inhibit the release of heparin-binding growth factors and they are potent inhibitors of endothelial and cancer cell proliferation. Nevertheless, these molecules can result toxic or proinflammatory due to their high molecular weight, so an interesting strategy was the production of low molecular weight depolymerized variants which have shown a great anti-angiogenic activity (Chen et al. 2007; Yao et al. 2014; Niu et al. 2015; Poupard et al. 2017; Mohan et al. 2019).

7. Natural antiangiogenic compounds targeting cathepsins

Cathepsins are proteases involved in both, physiological and pathological angiogenesis and, although they are normally found into cells – inside endosomes and lysosomes –, some of them are at the extracellular space. Among them, cathepsins B, K, L, S are involved in angiogenesis (Vidak et al. 2019), representing potential targets of natural compounds that could be candidates to antiangiogenic drugs. Natural antiangiogenic compounds targeting cathepsins are included in Table 1.

The peptidyl aldehydes leupeptin and chymostatin, isolated from *Streptomyces exfoliatus* and *Streptomyces sp.* respectively, have been described as cathepsin A, B, D and K inhibitors (Vidal-Albalat and González 2016). These natural molecules show antiangiogenic potential, since leupeptin interferes bFGF-induced angiogenesis in guinea pig cornea (Tamada et al. 2000) and chymostatin inhibits angiogenesis in a hamster sponge angiogenesis model (Muramatsu et al. 2000).

Additionally, 7-epiclusianone, a prenylated benzophenone found in *Garcinia brasiliensis* (bacupari) and used in traditional Brazilian medicine for inflammation (Santa-Cecília, et al. 2011), is a cathepsin B inhibitor (Vidal-Albalat and González 2016) that has shown antiangiogenic potential *in vitro* (Taylor et al. 2019). Finally, ursolic acid is a known natural angiogenesis inhibitor (Cárdenas et al. 2004; Kanjoormana and Kuttan, 2010) found in many plants, fruits, and herbs, and is also able to inhibit cathepsins B, L and D (Jedinák et al. 2006b; Vidal-Albalat and González 2016).

8. Natural antiangiogenic compounds targeting ADAMs and ADAMTS

Like the proteases mentioned above, some natural compounds characterized as antiangiogenic are also known to inhibit some ADAMs and ADAMTS members (Table 1).

Focusing in ADAMs family, ADAM8, ADAM9, ADAM10 ADAM 15 and ADAM17 are members that are specially involved in angiogenesis (Donners et al. 2010; van der Vorst et al. 2012). The natural compounds rapamycin (sirolimus), produced by the soil bacterium *Streptomyces hygroscopicus*, and triptolide, isolated from the medicinal plant *Tripterygium wilfordii* Hook F, exhibit antiangiogenic potential *in vivo* and *in vitro* (He et al. 2010; Wang et al. 2019) and have been described to indirectly inhibit ADAM10 by decreasing its expression in SweAPP N2a cells and leukemia cells respectively (Wetzel et al. 2017). The natural compound luteolin, a common flavonoid produced by several plants (López-Lázaro 2009), inhibits angiogenesis *in vivo* and *in vitro* (Bagli et al. 2004) and controversially, it also has been reported to inhibit ADAMTS 4/5 activity (Moncada-Pazos et al. 2011) which have shown to have an antiangiogenic role (Kumar et al. 2012).

9. Natural antiangiogenic compounds targeting elastases

Human neutrophil elastase (HNE) produces endothelial cell damage, promotes tumor cells intravasation (Grechowa et al. 2017; Deryugina et al. 2020) and is capable to degrade angiogenic factors such VEGF and bFGF (Ai et al. 2007). Despite this apparent antiangiogenic role of HNE, there are some natural antiangiogenic compounds that have also shown an inhibitory effect on HNE, such as the previously mentioned EGCG, which inhibits neutrophil-dependent angiogenesis *in vivo* (Donà et al. 2003) and strongly inhibits HNE enzymatic activity in A459 cells (Xiaokaiti et al. 2015). The above mentioned luteolin, the flavonoid compound found in bee pollen and propolis, phloretin (the major polyphenol compound in apples) and the triterpene compound lupeol have also been described to inhibit HNE and angiogenesis (Bagli et al. 2004; Siedle et al. 2007; Lin

et al. 2008; Nema et al. 2012; Vijay Avin et al. 2014; Kangsamaksin et al. 2017; Hsiao et al. 2019).

Furthermore, there are natural antiangiogenic compounds which have been reported to inhibit other elastases, such as the polyphenolic compound (+)-catechin (present in tea) or the triterpenoid oleanolic acid (present in olive oil), which inhibit porcine pancreatic elastase (PPE) activity (Guruvayoorappan and Kuttan, 2008; Kim et al. 2009; Wittenauer et al. 2015; Li et al. 2016; Yee et al. 2017). The pentacyclic triterpenoid ursolic acid, present in many plants such as *Rosmarinus officinalis* (rosemary) inhibits leukocyte elastase (Ying et al. 1991) and angiogenesis, and all of them inhibits also angiogenesis (Cárdenas et al. 2004; Kanjoormana et al. 2010).

10. Conclusions

The aims of this chapter have been to highlight the important role of the ECM in the vascular remodeling and to revise the current literature to classify the natural compounds that exhibit an antiangiogenic activity and affect the production, secretion or activity of ECM enzymes. The ECM is a rich source of growth factors and enzymes that control and influence vascular morphogenesis and homeostasis by regulation of its composition. In the last years, a plethora of ECM molecules have emerged as promising targets for the treatment of several human diseases, such as cancer, fibrosis and inflammation, among others. Interestingly, some of the natural antiangiogenic compounds mentioned in this chapter are currently in clinical trials for the evaluation of their possible therapeutic role in different pathological context related to aberrant angiogenesis, mainly in cancer (<https://clinicaltrials.gov/>). This is the case of EGCG, which is being studied for the improvement of endothelial function in cardiovascular diseases and several types of cancer, and silibinin or quercetin, which are being tested for the treatment of different cancers. In the context of angiogenesis-dependent ocular pathologies, hydroxytyrosol is being investigated for the treatment of wet macular degeneration, and atarin is in clinical trials for diabetic retinopathy. Of note, much of the compounds compiled in the chapter in base of their antiangiogenic potential and their inhibitory activity on ECM-degrading enzymes have been used (as a part of extracts or herb infusions) for long time in traditional medicine for the treatment of different affections, as is the case of luteolin (Lin et al. 2008), and even some of them are approved for their use in certain clinical settings, as is the case of rapamycin, defibrotide or (+)-catechin.

Although promising, the identification of ECM-based inhibitors of angiogenesis used for clinical applications is still limited and much efforts are needed to unravel their therapeutic potential. Hence, a better understanding on the ECM proteins, their ligands and the molecular interactions between the matrix molecules will help researchers and clinicians to identify new biomarkers and antiangiogenic strategies, further developing novel ECM-based strategies for the treatment of pathological conditions. In this context, nature represents a rich source of new antiangiogenic

molecules with the potential to inhibit ECM-degrading enzymes, representing this activity a feasible part of their mechanism of action in the modulation of angiogenesis. The complexity of the angiogenesis process and the better results achieved by multi-target pharmacological strategies point to the great interest of these natural compounds, which in most of the cases show multiple molecular targets and pleiotropic bioactivities. Future research directions towards the optimization of the existing tools used in the characterization of natural antiangiogenic compounds interfering with the ECM-degrading enzymes will offer a valuable benefit in the design of novel ECM-based strategies in the antiangiogenic therapy.

Conflicts of interest

No potential conflicts of interest were disclosed.

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