

## Antibacterial activity of some natural pigments in Egypt

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**ABSTRACT:** Crude phenolic-extracts were taken from the peels of different plants, including *Solanum melongena* (eggplant), *Beta vulgaris* (red beet), *Punica granatum* (Pomegranate), *Capsicum annum* (paprika), *Daucus carota* (carrot), *Citrus reticulata* (tangerine), *Ipomoea batatas* (sweet potato) and *Actinidia deliciosa* (kiwi). These extracts showed remarkable antibacterial activities against *Salmonella typhi*, *Escherichia coli*, *Bacillus cereus*, and *Staphylococcus aureus*. The highest inhibition was observed with *Daucus carota* and *Solanum melongena* extracts. The pathogenic microorganisms showed avariable susceptibility to different antibiotics. Ciprofloxacin (cip) was the most effective one among the other tested antibiotics. The bactericidal effect of carrot extract and eggplant extract in combination with cip against *Staphylococcus aureus* P59 (VISA P59) and *Escherichia coli* O157 ATCC51659 was recognized by disc diffusion assay. The results demonstrated a considerable antibacterial effect when plant extracts and antibiotics were used to combat the tested microorganisms. When mixed with cip, the extract from *Solanum melongena* showed larger inhibitory zones than those of *Daucus carota*.

**KEYWORDS:** Pigment; *Solanum melongena*; *Daucus carota*; Antibiotic.

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### I. INTRODUCTION

In the previous fifty years, there was an increase in the frequency of newly emerging infectious diseases (Allen *et al.*, 2017). Changes in lifestyle, such as rising migration, increasing antibiotherapy-resistant infections, expanding numbers of patients with immunosuppression, and a possible bioterrorism threats, all play a role in this (Silva *et al.*, 2012). The emergence of antibiotic-resistant microorganisms reduces the medicinal effectiveness of the medication in managing infections which are life-threatening in addition to increasing the total cost of therapeutic approaches (Yang *et al.*, 2021).

In recent years, different attempts have been made to find natural antimicrobials that can stop bacterial and fungal growth in order to improve food quality and shelf life (Gyawali and Ibrahim, 2014). Recently, the interest in using plant extracts as green antimicrobials and environmentally acceptable alternatives to prevent adhesion and destroying biofilm has been increased (Sadekuzzaman *et al.*, 2015). Herbs and spices have most of the antimicrobials derived from plants (Tajkarimi *et al.*, 2010; Cueva *et al.*, 2010 and Negi, 2012). Fruit phytochemicals, are widely employed for their therapeutic benefits. They are mixtures of many components and can be sorted into principal categories according to their chemical constitution, such as organic acids, terpenes, and polyphenols (Barbieri *et al.*, 2017).

Phenolic compounds originating from plants have been found to possess a range of antibacterial activities (Bouarab Chibane *et al.*, 2019; Efenberger-Szmechtyk *et al.*, 2021; El Moussaoui *et al.*, 2019; Lima *et al.*, 2019 and Muniyandi *et al.*, 2019). Plant pigments are made up of several groups of constituents, such as betalains, carotenoids, anthocyanins, and chlorophylls (Gandia-Herrero *et al.*, 2010; Jensen *et al.*, 2011). Pigments are thought to be natural, secure and may have antioxidant properties. They can be used as a culinary coloring ingredient (Sagar *et al.*, 2018).

Carotenoids pigments can be derived from a variety of vegetable and fruit waste products. For instance, paprika waste (lutein, 232.60 lg/g) (Kang *et al.*, 2016), tomato peel (carotenoids, 253.5 lg/g) (de Andrade Lima *et al.*, 2019), carrot peel (carotenoids, 82.66 lg/g) (Tiwari *et al.*, 2019). Several kinds of carotenoids also have antibacterial activity (Ibrahim, 2012; Karpiński and Adamczak, 2019). In the food sector, *Daucus carota* (*D. carota*) is commonly employed to stop the growth of spoilage microorganisms and thus increase the shelf life of foods because of its strong antioxidant and antibacterial activities (Kiros *et al.*, 2016; Hayashi *et al.*, 2012).

Anthocyanins are extensively and abundantly present in grains, vegetables, and fruit skins, and they are in charge of giving fruits, flowers, and vegetables their various hues (Mazza *et al.*, 2004). Anthocyanins exhibit antimicrobial activity via a variety of methods, including the induction of cell injury through the degradation of the intercellular matrix, membrane, and cell wall (Pojer *et al.*, 2013). Antimicrobial activity of *Solanum melongena* (*S. melongena*) against different pathogenic bacteria and fungi has been documented (AL-Janabi *et al.*, 2010). The eggplant possesses antibacterial activity that is sustained due to the presence of substances such as nasunin, chlorogenic acid, and caffeic acid (Salamatullah *et al.*, 2021).

The aim of the present work was to determine the antimicrobial activity of pigment extracted from natural sources as a potential role in food and pharmaceutical industry.

## II. Materials and methods

**Plant material:** *Solanum melongena*, *Beta vulgaris*, *Punica granatum*, red *Capsicum annum*, *Daucus carota*, *Citrus reticulata*, *Ipomoea batatas* and *Actinidia deliciosa* totally ripe fruits were bought at the Egyptian local market.

**Microorganisms:** Gram-positive pathogenic bacteria *Staphylococcus aureus* P59 (VISA P59) (*S. aureus*) and *Bacillus cereus* ATCC 36621 (*B. cereus*) were used. Also, Gram-negative pathogenic bacteria including *Escherichia coli* O157 ATCC51659 (*E. coli*) and *Salmonella* overexpressed ramA serovar typhi (*S. typhi*) were used. The sources of all bacteria was the Botany and Microbiology Department, Faculty of Science, Zagazig University, Zagazig, Egypt. Stock bacterial cultures were preserved at 20 °C in glass beads and were sub-cultured and multiplied in Nutrient agar (Monica, 1985).

### Sample preparation and pigments extraction:

The peels of plant species were cleaned then let to dry at room temperature. The Mettler AE 200 blender was used to grind the dried materials. Until needed, the dry powder was stored in the freezer. Each plant species was extracted using a magnetic stirring method that involved agitating 5 g of dry powder in 100 mL of ethanol with 5% HCl for a full day. A vacuum rotary evaporator operating at 30°C was used to evaporate the ethanol extract after it had been pre-filtered using Whatman No. 4 filter paper.

### Antibacterial activity of the plant pigments against Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria:

Using a disk diffusion assay, the antibacterial activity of the plant pigments was evaluated against the pathogenic microorganisms under test, as detailed by (Bauer *et al.*, 1966 and Ehinmidu, 2003).

The studied bacteria cultures were spread out over nutrient agar media (NA) for the night. Subsequently, 6-mm-diameter sterilized paper disks were immersed in solutions containing extracted pigments (3000 µg/mL) and placed on top of nutritional agar medium. After 24 hours of incubation at 37°C, the diameter (mm) of the clear zones on the nutrient agar plates was measured.

### Quantitative inhibition of pathogenic bacteria by *S. melongena* and *D. carota* extracted pigments, and antibiotic-extracted pigments combinations (disc diffusion assay):

Ready antibiotic discs of ciprofloxacin (Cip 5 µg), Cefotaxime (CAZ 30 µg), Cefsulodin (CES 105 µg), Cefoxitin (Fox 30 µg) and Piperacillin (PRL 100 µg) were placed on the surface of nutrient agar medium that had been seeded with all of the tested bacteria, with the proper spacing between them. After 24 hours of incubation at 37°C on nutrient agar plates, the widths of the inhibitory zones (mm) were determined as previously mentioned. Antibiotic sensitivity results were obtained in compliance with NCCLS (1999) guidelines.

In a different experiment, a disc containing the most potent antibiotic against the most potent bacteria (*E. coli* and *S. aureus*) was chosen, and several combinations of *D. carota*-antibiotic and *S. melongena*-antibiotic were prepared at their respective minimum inhibitory concentrations as follow: (20µg/mL pigment + 80µg/mL antibiotic), (20 µg/mL pigment + 80 µg/mL antibiotic), (40µg/mL pigment + 60µg/mL antibiotic), (40 µg/mL pigment + 60 µg/mL antibiotic), (50µg/mL pigment + 50µg/mL antibiotic), (50 µg/mL pigment + 50 µg/mL antibiotic), (60µg/mL pigment + 40µg/mL antibiotic), (60 µg/mL pigment + 40 µg/mL antibiotic), (80µg/mL pigment + 20µg/mL antibiotic) and (80 µg/mL *D. carota* + 20 µg/mL antibiotic).

Since *S. aureus* and *E. coli* were the most susceptible to pigments and antibiotics, they were utilized as indicator organisms. The experiment was conducted using the previously mentioned pigment-antibiotic combinations immersed in 6-mm-diameter paper discs.

## III. Results

### Antibacterial activity of natural pigments (3000 µg/ml) against Gram-positive and Gram-negative pathogenic bacteria using disc diffusion assay:

The antibacterial activity of the extracted pigments against pathogenic Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria was evaluated. Table (1) demonstrates that *D. carota* pigment had the biggest inhibition zones against all of the bacteria that were tested, while *Citrus reticulata* (*C. reticulata*) pigment showed the lowest inhibition zones against *S. typhi*.

**Table (1): Antibacterial activity of some plant pigments (3000 µg/ml) against Gram-positive and Gram-negative pathogenic bacteria using disc diffusion assay:**

Extracts of pigment	Gram-positive bacteria		Gram-negative bacteria	
	<i>B. cereus</i>	<i>S. aureus</i>	<i>E. coli</i>	<i>S. typhi</i>
	<b>Inhibition zone (mm)</b>			
<i>Actinidia deliciosa</i>	59.00±1.00 <b>b</b>	53.50±1.32 <b>c</b>	54.50±0.5 <b>b</b>	39.00±2.00 <b>e</b>
<i>Beta vulgaris</i>	44.00±2.00 <b>d</b>	37.00±1.00 <b>f</b>	44.67±1.04 <b>d</b>	39.50±0.50 <b>e</b>
<i>Capsicum annum</i>	55.50±0.50 <b>c</b>	55.50±0.50 <b>bc</b>	53.50±0.50 <b>b</b>	47.50±0.50 <b>c</b>
<i>Citrus reticulata</i> *	44.00±1.00 <b>d</b>	41.50±0.50 <b>e</b>	41.67±1.53 <b>e</b>	34.50±1.32 <b>f</b>
<i>Daucus carota</i> *	65.33±0.58 <b>a</b>	59.00±0.50 <b>a</b>	57.50±0.87 <b>a</b>	56.50±1.00 <b>a</b>
<i>Ipomoea batatas</i>	54.00±1.00 <b>c</b>	54.50±0.50 <b>c</b>	54.50±0.87 <b>b</b>	46.50±0.50 <b>cd</b>
<i>Punica granatum</i>	45.50±1.32 <b>d</b>	48.50±0.87 <b>d</b>	50.50±0.50 <b>c</b>	44.00±1.32 <b>d</b>
<i>Solanum melongena</i> *	59.50±1.00 <b>b</b>	57.50±0.87 <b>ab</b>	55.50±0.50 <b>ab</b>	52.50±0.87 <b>b</b>
<b>P-Value</b>	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001

Means ± SD followed by different letters differ significantly by Tukey's HSD test ( $P < 0.01$ ) at each column.

\**Daucus carota*= Showed the highest inhibition zone against all pathogenic bacteria.

\*\* *Citrus reticulata*= Showed the highest inhibition zone against *S. typhi*.

#### Antibiotic sensitivity test & minimum inhibitory concentrations (MICs) of the most potent antibiotic:

Five antibiotics indicated in (Table 2) were used to conduct antibiotic sensitivity tests for all pathogenic microorganisms. The pathogenic microorganisms utilized varied in their sensitivity. It was discovered that every tested bacterium exhibited resistance against Ceftazidime (CAZ 30). The antibiotic with the highest efficacy was ciprofloxacin (CIP 5).

**Table (2): Antibiotic sensitivity test:**

Antibiotics	Amount (µg/disc)	Gram-positive bacteria		Gram-negative bacteria	
		<i>S. aureus</i>	<i>B. cereus</i>	<i>E. coli</i>	<i>S. typhi</i>
		<b>Inhibition zone (mm)</b>			
CIP *	5	31.0±1.0 <b>a</b>	30.0±1.0 <b>a</b>	29.0±1.0 <b>a</b>	31.0±1.7 <b>a</b>
FOX	30	19.0±1.0 <b>c</b>	13.0±2.0 <b>c</b>	0.0±0.0 <b>f</b>	14.0±2.0 <b>c</b>
CES	105	26.0±1.0 <b>b</b>	17.0±1.0 <b>d</b>	13.0±2.0 <b>d</b>	20.0±1.7 <b>b</b>
PRL	100	10.0±1.0 <b>d</b>	12.0±2.0 <b>c</b>	9.0±1.0 <b>e</b>	11.0±1.7 <b>c</b>

\*CIP 5= The highest effective antibiotic against all bacteria.

#### Antibacterial activity of *D. carota*-ciprofloxacin (cip.) and *S. melongena*- ciprofloxacin combinations against *S. aureus* and *E. coli* (the most sensitive bacterium) by disc diffusion assay:

*D. carota* and *S. melongena* demonstrated a stronger antibacterial activity than other pigments, according to the disc diffusion experiment. *S. aureus* and *E. coli* were selected as the indicator organisms to examine the antibacterial activity of the ciprofloxacin antibiotic and pigment combination since they were the most susceptible bacteria.

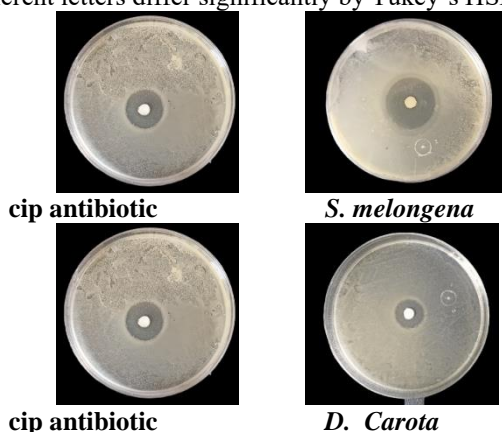
The diameter of the inhibition zones (mm) that *S. melongena* produced against the growth of *S. aureus* and *E. coli* was greater than the diameters produced by the cip. antibiotic alone. The diameter of the inhibitory zones (mm) against the studied bacteria when *S. melongena* was combined with cip at varying concentrations was directly correlated with the concentrations of *S. melongena*. By raising *S. melongena* concentrations and lowering cip concentrations, inhibition zones grew.

The diameter of the inhibition zones against *S. aureus* in bacterial cultures treated with *D. carota* was less than in those treated with cip alone. However, *D. carota* exhibited larger inhibition zones against *E. coli* than did cip alone. When cip was combined with *D. carota*. The diameter of the inhibition zones (mm) against the tested microorganisms was nearly constant throughout a range of doses. The highest inhibition was observed by mixing equal concentrations of pigments and cip. (Table 3).











**Table (3): Antibacterial activity of mixed combinations of *S. melongena*, *D. carota* pigments and ciprofloxacin (cip.) against *S. aureus* and *E. coli* by disc diffusion assay:**

Treatment 1	<i>S. aureus</i>	<i>E. coli</i>	Treatment 2	<i>S. aureus</i>	<i>E. coli</i>
cip (100%)	21.00±1.73 <b>a-c</b>	25.00±1.73 <b>bc</b>	cip (100%)	21.00±1.73 <b>a-c</b>	25.00±1.73 <b>bc</b>
<i>S. melongena</i> (100%)	23.00±1.73 <b>ab</b>	30.00±1.00 <b>a</b>	<i>D. carota</i> (100%)	19.00±1.00 <b>b-c</b>	26.00±1.00 <b>ab</b>
<i>S. melongena</i> (20%) + cip (80%)	18.00±1.00 <b>cd</b>	18.00±1.73 <b>d</b>	<i>D. carota</i> (20%) + cip (80%)	17.00±1.73 <b>d</b>	17.00±1.00 <b>d</b>
<i>S. melongena</i> (40%) + cip (60%)	20.00±1.73 <b>a-c</b>	19.00±1.00 <b>d</b>	<i>D. carota</i> (40%) + cip (60%)	18.00±2.65 <b>cd</b>	19.00±1.73 <b>d</b>
<i>S. melongena</i> (50%) + cip (50%)	24.00±1.00 <b>a</b>	30.00±1.00 <b>a</b>	<i>D. carota</i> (50%) + cip (50%)	21.00±1.00 <b>a-c</b>	26.00±1.73 <b>ab</b>
<i>S. melongena</i> (60%) + cip (40%)	21.00±1.00 <b>a-c</b>	28.00±1.73 <b>ab</b>	<i>D. carota</i> (60%) + cip (40%)	18.00±1.00 <b>cd</b>	19.00±1.73 <b>d</b>
<i>S. melongena</i> (80%) + cip (20%)	22.00±1.73 <b>a-c</b>	29.00±1.73 <b>ab</b>	<i>D. carota</i> (80%) + cip (20%)	20.00±1.73 <b>a-c</b>	21.00±1.00 <b>cd</b>
<b>P-Value</b>	<0.001	<0.001	<b>P-Value</b>	<0.001	<0.001

Means ± SD followed by different letters differ significantly by Tukey’s HSD test ( $P < 0.01$ ) at each column.



**Fig. (1): Antibacterial activity of MICs of *S. melongena* and *D. carota* extracts compared to CIP antibiotic against *S. aureus* by disc diffusion assay.**

Concentrations	A	B
20% pigments + 80% CIP		
40% pigments + 60% CIP		
50% pigments + 50% CIP		
60% pigments + 40% CIP		
80% pigments + 20% CIP		

**Fig. (2):** Antibacterial activity of *D. carota*-cip. and *S. melongena*-cip. Combinations against *S. aureus* by disc diffusion assay where (A) *S. melongena* pigment + cip and (B) *D. carota* pigment + cip.

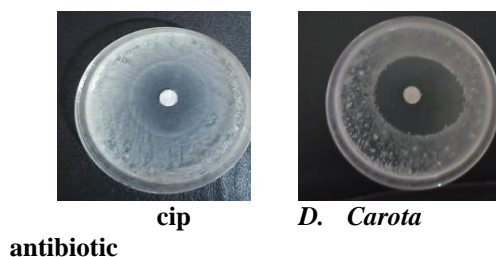


**cip antibiotic**

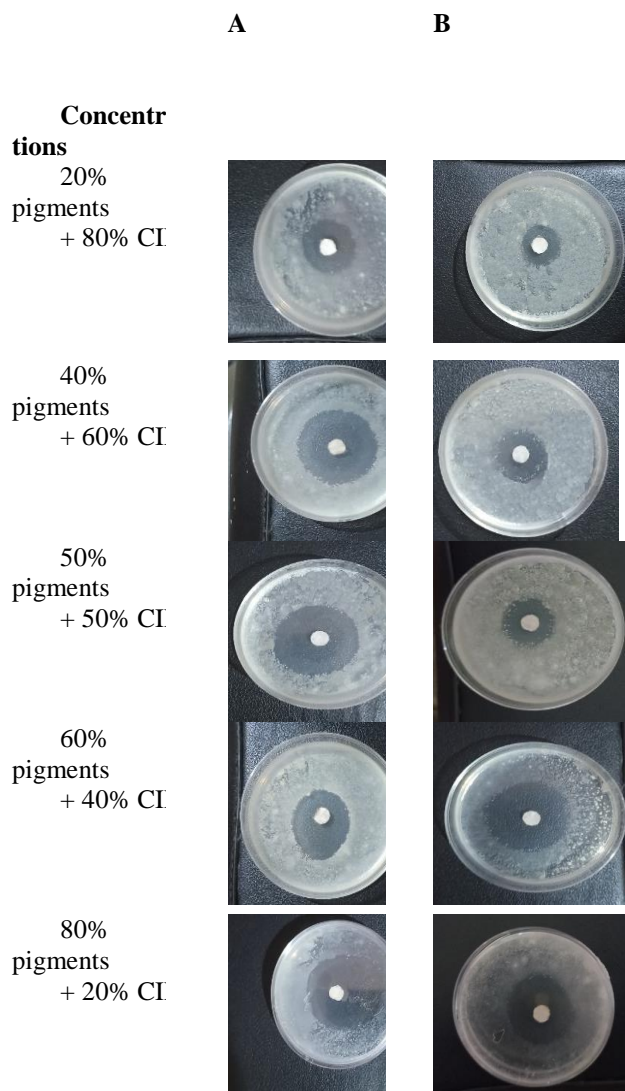


***S. melongena***





**Fig. (3):** Antibacterial activity of MICs of *S. melongena* and *D. carota* extracts compared to CIP antibiotic against *E. coli* by disc diffusion assay.



**Fig. (4):** Antibacterial activity of *D. carota*-cip. And *S. melongena*-cip. Combinations against *E. coli* by disc diffusion assay where (A) *S. melongena* pigment + cip and (B) *D. carota* pigment + cip.

#### IV. Discussion

Natural pigments are mostly found in plants and microorganisms, such as bacteria and fungi (Azman *et al.*, 2018). Due to their carcinogenic precursor products and the environmental implications of their disposal, some synthetic dyes and colorants are restricted from usage (Dufossé 2006). If natural colors are non-toxic, non-allergic, non-carcinogenic, and biodegradable, they are considered safe, there is no longer any environmental threat as a result (Aberoumand, 2011; Wrolstad *et al.*, 2012).

Due to the presence of a significant amount of tannins, *punica granatum* and many natural pigments have been shown to be effective antibacterial agents (Siva, 2007). At doses exceeding 25 mg/mL, a 70% water-ethanol extract of the flavonoid-rich plant *Equisetum arvense* L. showed antibacterial action against Gram-positive cocci, including *S. aureus* ATCC 29213 and clinical isolates of the same pathogen (Pallag et al., 2018).

Strong antibiotic efficacy against both Gram positive and negative bacteria (*S. aureus*, *Bacillus subtilis*, *Salmonella sp.*, and *E. coli*) is exhibited by piperine derived from the Piper species (*Piper nigrum*, *Piper longum*) (Hikal, 2018). *Bacillus cereus* and *Salmonella Typhimurium* were found to be inhibited by the sweet potato leaf extract. This antimicrobial action may be related to the presence of phenolic acids such gallic acid, 3, 4-dihydroxybenzoic acid, and sinapic acid (Costa et al., 2022).

Combination therapy lowers the chance of developing cross-resistance and offers possible adjuvant targets of non-overlapping signaling pathways, making it an appealing and optional treatment (Bozic et al., 2013). Several studies have demonstrated that combination antimicrobial therapy is more effective at preventing infections than using an antibiotic alone (Pletz et al., 2017; Kuo et al., 2020; Dodou et al., 2017 and Subramaniam et al., 2014). Synergistic effects may occur because microbial metabolic pathway may be successively blocked by crude extract and antibiotics or One of two medications may have an impact on the cell membrane, making the second antibiotic more easily absorbed. (Adwan & Mhanna, 2008).

Numerous in vitro investigations have discovered noteworthy synergistic effects when antibiotic interacts with various plant extracts against *S. aureus* strains, resulting in a considerable decrease in the minimum inhibitory concentration (Adwan & Mhanna, 2008; Ahmed et al., 2009; Rakholiya and Chanda, 2011). Many plants have antibacterial components that may work in synergy by making the pathogen more susceptible to the antibiotic (Betoni et al., 2006).

*Punica granatum* rind ethanol extract demonstrated excellent synergistic efficacy with ciprofloxacin, leading to a 34-fold decrease in minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) and subsequent re-sensitization of *Klebsiella pneumoniae* (Rafiq et al., 2017).

## V. Conclusions

The results obtained from this study showed that carrot and eggplant grown in Egypt have antibacterial potential, as well as a synergistic effect with ciprofloxacin.

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