



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**ANTITUMOUR PROMOTING ACTIVITY AND MODE OF ACTION OF
METHANOLIC EXTRACTS OF SELECTED MALAYSIAN SEaweEDS
AND OIL PALM FRONDS**

**FARIDEH NAMVAR
IB 2009 18**

**ANTITUMOUR PROMOTING ACTIVITY AND MODE OF ACTION OF
METHANOLIC EXTRACTS OF SELECTED MALAYSIAN SEAWEEDS AND
OIL PALM FRONDS**

By

FARIDEH NAMVAR

**Thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

October 2009



Dedicated

To

This thesis is dedicated to my lovely children Amin, Ali and Mohammad, my dear husband, and my parents that I owe them all of success in my life.



**Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment
of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**ANTITUMOUR PROMOTING ACTIVITY AND MODE OF ACTION OF
METHANOLIC EXTRACTS OF SELECTED MALAYSIAN SEAWEEDS AND
OIL PALM FRONDS**

By

FARIDEH NAMVAR

October 2009

Chairman: Professor Suhaila Mohamed, PhD

Institute: Institute of Biosciences

Dietary and non dietary biophenols may potentially be chemoprotective against various cancers. This research aims to investigate the cancer preventive and tumoricidal properties of selected Malaysian seaweeds and oil palm leaves as a source of phenolic compounds.

Initially, the anti-proliferation activities of, red (*Eucheuma cottonii*), green (*Caulerpa lentillifera*) and brown (*Sargassum polycystum*) seaweeds methanolic extract, against five important human cancer cell lines MCF-7, (human breast carcinoma cell line, estrogen positive) MDA-MB-231, (human breast carcinoma cell line, estrogen negative) HeLa, (human cervical adenocarcinoma cell line) HepG2, (human hepatocellular carcinoma cell line) HT-29, (human colon carcinoma) and normal Vero (African green monkey kidney cell line) were assessed. The MTT assays indicated that the 3 seaweeds extracts were cytotoxic against all these cancer cell lines in a dose-dependent manner,



with *Eucheuma cottonii* having the greatest inhibition activity. Cytotoxicity was not observed in normal Vero cell line. The MCF-7 cell line was most sensitive to *Eucheuma cottonii* methanol extract (ECME), with IC_{50} of $20 \pm 0.2 \mu\text{g} / \text{mL}$, after 72 h incubation. The mode of action of ECME in MCF-7 cell was through apoptosis, characterised under SEM and TEM, by cell membrane blebbing, microvillus reduction or disappearance, shrinkage of cells, condensation of chromosomes and apoptotic bodies with complete membrane. The growth inhibited cells stained with AO/PI and Hoechst 33342 showed a time- and dose-dependent apoptotic cell death suggesting that ECME caused irreversible cell damages in MCF-7 cells. The cell cycle analysis determined by flow cytometry analysis further confirmed that ECME induced apoptosis in MCF-7 cells without cell cycle arrest.

The *in vitro* investigation of oil palm leaves (*Elaeis guineensis*) methanol extract (OPLME) on MCF-7 cells showed proliferation at $17.5 \mu\text{g} / \text{mL}$ ($p < 0.05$) and an anti-proliferation effect at $150 \mu\text{g} / \text{mL}$ ($p < 0.05$) and $1200 \mu\text{g} / \text{mL}$ ($p < 0.01$) with an IC_{50} value of $678.5 \mu\text{g} / \text{mL}$.

An *in vivo* study to compare the chemopreventive capabilities of ECME and OPLME on rat mammary gland tumour induced using rat cell line (CRL 2283), shows ECME has anti-estrogenic bioactivity on rat estrous cycle and serum hormone levels, causing an overall 37% increase in the length of the rat estrous cycle in a dose-dependent manner. The ECME also exerted a tempering effect on estrogen production in rats, which led to 18–33% reductions in circulating 17β -estradiol concentrations. In comparison OPLME caused an overall 25% increase in the length of the rat estrous phase of the cycle in a



dose-dependent manner. The OPLME administration produced a statistically significant ($P < 0.001$), 2.54-fold increase in circulating 17β -estradiol concentrations. The tumour incidence rate of each group was 87.5% (7/8) in control group, 37.5(3/8) in low dose ECME group, 12.5% (1/8) in high dose ECME group, 25% (2/8) in low dose OPLME, and 12.5% (1/8) in high dose OPLME group, respectively. The total tumour volume of each group was $10.7 \pm 1.2 \text{ cm}^3$ in control group, $0.95 \pm 0.7 \text{ cm}^3$ in high dose ECME group, $2.5 \pm 0.8 \text{ cm}^3$ in low dose ECME group, $0.8 \pm 0.7 \text{ cm}^3$ in high dose OPLME group, and $1.4 \pm 0.9 \text{ cm}^3$ in low dose OPLME group. Statistical analysis showed that the tumour incidence rate and total tumour volume for all treated groups were significantly lower ($p < 0.05$) than that of control group. The ECME decreased erythrocyte Malondialdehyde (MDA) level and increased catalase activity. Treatment with OPLME decreased erythrocyte MDA concentrations and increased erythrocyte GSH (reduced glutathione assay) and catalase activities. Electron microscopy and histopathology observation confirmed apoptosis in the mammary gland tumours of rats in both treatment groups.

Finally the research established the estrogenic properties of OPLME by showing significant increases in vaginal cornification, and uterine wet weight ($P < 0.001$), in a dose-dependent manner in ovariectomized rats. The OPLME also has a lowering effect on serum total cholesterol, and triglyceride concentration, in a dose-dependent manner. The estrogenic activity shown by OPLME can be attributed to the presence of flavonoids and phenolic compounds. This estrogenic activity of OPLME may be one possible mechanism for OPLME beneficial effects on serum lipid profile.

This study demonstrate that both OPLME and ECME showed *in vitro* and *in vivo* anti-breast tumour effects by inducing cancer cells apoptosis, improving whole animal antioxidative status and modulating the estrogen levels.



**Abstrak Tesis Yang Dikemukakan Kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
Sebagai Memenuhi Keprluan Untuk Ijazah Master Sains**

**AKTIVITI ANTI-KANSER DAN MEKANISME TINDAKAN OLEH RUMPAI
LAUT DAN DAUN KELAPA SAWIT DARI MALAYSIA**

Oleh

FARIDEH NAMVAR

Oktober 2009

Pengerusi: Professor Suhaila Mohamed, PhD

Fakulti: Institute of Biosciences

Biofenol diet dan bukan diet mungkin berpotensi untuk memberikan perlindungan terhadap pelbagai jenis kanser. Tujuan penyelidikan ini adalah untuk mengkaji ciri-ciri pencegahan kanser serta ciri-ciri pemusnah sel kanser daripada rumpai laut Malaysia yang terpilih dan juga daun kelapa sawit sebagai sumber sebatian fenol.

Pada awalnya aktiviti anti percambahan oleh ekstrak metanol rumpai laut merah (*Eucheuma cottonii*), hijau (*Caulerpa lentillifera*) dan perang (*Sargassum polycystum*), menentang lima sel kanser manusia yang penting iaitu MCF-7 (sel karsinoma kanser payudara), MDA-MB-231 (sel karsinoma payudara manusia), HeLa (sel adenokarsinoma serviks), HepG2 (sel karsinoma hepatoselular manusia), HT-29 (sel karsinoma usus) dan sel Vero normal (sel buah pinggang monyet hijau afrika). Assay MTT menunjukkan bahawa 3 ekstrak rumpai laut adalah cytotoxic terhadap semua kanser sel tersebut dalam keadaan yang bergantung kepada dos, dengan *Eucheuma*



cottonii mempunyai aktiviti perencatan yang tertinggi. Ciri-ciri cytotoxic tidak boleh ditemui dalam normal sel Vero. Sel MCF-7 adalah yang paling sensitif terhadap ekstrak methanol *Eucheuma cottonii* (ECME), dengan nilai $20 \pm 0.2 \mu\text{g/mL}$ IC_{50} , selepas inkubasi 72 jam. Cara tindakan ECME dalam sel MCF-7 adalah melalui apoptosis, dikategorikan di bawah SEM dan TEM, dengan pembongkolan sel membran, pengurangan atau pelenyapan mikrovilli, pengecilan sel, kepadatan kromosom dan pemusnahan dengan membrane lengkap. Sel yang dicegah pertumbuhannya telah diwarnai dengan AO/PI dan Hoechst 33342 menunjukkan kematian sel apoptotic yang bergantung kepada masa dan dos, menyatakan bahawa ekstrak methanol *Eucheuma cottonii* (ECME) menyebabkan kerosakan sel dalam sel MCF-7 ireversibel. Analisis kitaran sel yang ditentukan oleh analisa aliran struktur dan fungsi sel telah mengesahkan lagi bahawa ECME menyebabkan apoptosis dalam sel MCF-7 tanpa penghentian kitaran sel.

Penyiasatan *in vitro* terhadap ekstrak methanol daun kelapa sawit (*Elaeis guineensis*) dalam sel MCF-7 menunjukkan proliferasi pada $17.5 \mu\text{g/mL}$ ($p < 0.05$) dan kesan anti-proliferasi pada $150 \mu\text{g/mL}$ ($p < 0.05$) dan $1200 \mu\text{g/mL}$ ($p < 0.01$) dengan $6788.5 \mu\text{g/mL}$ untuk nilai IC_{50} . Kajian *in-vivo* yang membandingkan kemampuan pencegahan kanser oleh ECME dan OPLME terhadap kanser kelenjar mammary tikus yang berada di bawah induksi menggunakan sel tikus (CRL 2283), menunjukkan ECME mempunyai bioaktiviti anti-estrogenic terhadap kitaran estrus tikus dan tahap hormon serum, menyebabkan kenaikan 37% dalam tempoh kitaran estrus tikus bersama pergantungan dos. ECME juga mempunyai kesan besar terhadap pengeluaran estrogen dalam tikus yang menyebabkan kesusutan 18-33% dalam pengitaran konsentrasi 17β -estradiol. Secara perbandingan, OPLME telah menyebabkan kenaikan 25% dalam tempoh fasa



estrus tikus yang bergantung kepada dos. Pembekalan OPLME menghasilkan kesan statistik ($P < 0.001$) secara nyata, 2.54 kali kenaikan dalam pengedaran konsentrasi 17β -estradiol. Kadar kejadian tumor dalam setiap kumpulan adalah 87.5 (7/8) untuk kumpulan kawalan, 37.5(3/8) untuk ECME dalam dos rendah, 12.5% (1/8) untuk kumpulan ECME dalam dos tinggi, 25% (2/8) OPLME dalam dos rendah, dan 12.5% (1/8) kumpulan OPLME dalam dos tinggi. Semua isipadu tumor untuk setiap kumpulan adalah $10.7 \pm 1.2 \text{ cm}^3$ untuk kumpulan kawalan, $0.95 \pm 0.7 \text{ cm}^3$ untuk kumpulan ECME dalam dos tinggi, $2.5 \pm 0.8 \text{ cm}^3$ untuk kumpulan ECME dalam dos rendah, $0.8 \pm 0.7 \text{ cm}^3$ untuk kumpulan OPLME dalam dos tinggi, dan $1.4 \pm 0.9 \text{ cm}^3$ untuk kumpulan OPLME dalam dos rendah. Analisis statistik menunjukkan bahawa kadar kejadian tumor dan semua isipadu tumor untuk semua kumpulan dirawat adalah rendah ($p < 0.05$) berbanding dengan kumpulan kawalan. ECME menurunkan tahap Malondialdehyde (MDA) sel darah merah dan menaikkan aktiviti catalase. Rawatan OPLME menurunkan konsentrasi MDA dan menaikkan GSH (assay reduced glutathione) sel darah merah dan aktiviti catalase. Mikroskop elektron dan pemerhatian histopatologi telah mengesahkan apoptosis untuk kelenjar kanser mammary tikus dalam kedua-dua kumpulan rawatan.

Akhirnya sekali, penyelidikan ini telah memperolehi ciri-ciri estrogenic OPLME dengan menunjukkan peningkatan yang nyata dalam penukaran sel kulit kepada keratin di dalam vagina dan berat basah kawasan rahim ($P < 0.001$), dalam keadaan pergantungan dos untuk tikus yang telah dibuang rahimnya. OPLME juga mempunyai kesan penurunan terhadap jumlah kolestrol serum dan kepekatan trigliserida dalam pergantungan dos. Aktiviti estrogen yang ditunjukkan oleh OPLME boleh menyebabkan kehadiran



flavonoids dan sebatian fenol. Aktiviti estrogen OPLME mungkin adalah satu mekanisme untuk OPLME yang bermanfaat terhadap profil serum lipid

Kajian ini menyatakan bahawa kedua-dua OPLME dan ECME menunjukkan kesan anti-tumor payudara secara *in-vitro* dan *in-vivo* dengan menyebabkan apoptosis sel kanser, meningkatkan status keseluruhan antioksidan haiwan dan mengimbangkan tahap estrogen.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All praise and thanks to Allah, the owner of humankind, and all that exists.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Dr. Suhaila Mohamed, and co-supervisors, Professor Dr. Fauziah Bt Othman, Professor Madya Dr. Noordin B Mohamed Mustapha, Dr. Noorjahan Banu Binti Mohamed Alitheen, and Professor Dr. Javad Behravan for their invaluable guidance, advice, constructive comments and encouragement throughout my project and in preparing this thesis.

I also wish to thank my husband, and my sons, for their patience, understanding, love and support. Without you I could not have accomplished this task.

Last, but not the least, my deepest appreciation to my parents who have made me who I am today. Words cannot express how grateful I am for their eternal love and support. I would never have gotten to this point without you.



I certify that an Examination Committee met on 7 October 2009 to conduct the final examination of Farideh Namvar on her Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled “ANTI TUMOUR PROMOTING ACTIVITY AND MODE OF ACTION OF METHANOLIC EXTRACT OF SELECTED MALAYSIAN SEaweEDS AND OIL PALM FRONDS” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

Latifah Saiful Yazan

Associate Professor
Faculty of Medicine and Health Science
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

Rasedee Mat Abdullah

Professor
Faculty of veterinary medicine
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Internal Examiner)

Maznah Ismail

Professor
Faculty of Medicine and Health Science
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Internal Examiner)

Azimahtol Hawariah Lope Pihie

Professor
Faculty of Bioscience and Biotechnology
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
Malaysia
(External Examiner)

HASANAH MOHD. GHAZALI, PhD

Professor and Deputy Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia



This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

Suhaila Bt Mohamed, PhD

Professor,
Faculty of Food Science and Technology
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

Noordin B Mohamed Mustapha, PhD

Associate Professor,
Faculty of veterinary medicine
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

Noorjahan Banu Binti Mohamed Alitheen, PhD

Associate Professor,
Faculty of Biotechnology
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

Fauziah Bt Othman, PhD

Professor,
Faculty of medicine and Health Science
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Member)

Javad Behravan, PhD

Professor,
Faculty of pharmacy
Mashhad University of Medical Sciences
(Member)

HASANAH MOHD. GHAZALI, PhD

Professor and Deputy Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
Date: 17 March 2010



DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotation and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institute.

FARIDEH NAMVAR

Date: 15 March 2009



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	iii
ABSTRAK	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xi
APPROVAL	xii
DECLARATION	xiv
LIST OF TABLES	xviii
LIST OF FIGURES	xix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xxi
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	23
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	
Cancer	29
Biology of tumors	30
Cell cycle & cancer	31
Development of Cancer	34
The molecular basis of cancer	34
Tumor suppressor Genes	35
Oncogenes	37
Reactive oxygen species and cancer	39
Reproductive cycle and cancer	44
Reproductive cycle in human	45
Reproductive cycle in rat	46
Vaginal smear	49
Endocrine Influence on Vaginal	51
Chemoprevention	52
Category of Chemopreventive Agents	53
Mechanisms of chemoprevention	55
Apoptosis and necrosis	57
Preclinical models to assess chemopreventive agent efficacy	60
Phytochemicals and Cancer	62
Seaweed	62
Description	62
Seaweed resources in Malaysia	64
Seaweeds as sources of industrial products	65
Seaweed polysaccharide	66
Green seaweeds polysaccharides	66



	Brown seaweeds polysaccharides	67
	Red seaweeds polysaccharides	68
	Pharmacological activities of seaweed	70
	Antitumor activity	70
	Other Pharmacological activities of seaweed	71
	The Oil Palm Leaf	75
3	ANTI-PROLIFERATION ACTIVITIES OF SELECTED TROPICAL SEAWEEDS EXTRACTS AGAINST FIVE HUMAN CANCER CELL LINES	
	Introduction	77
	Materials and methods	79
	Chemicals	80
	Cell lines and cell culture	80
	Cytotoxic activity on normal cell	80
	Cytotoxic activity on cancer cell	81
	Morphological Assessment of Apoptosis	82
	Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM)	82
	Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM)	83
	AO/PI Staining	84
	Hoechst 33342 Staining	84
	Flow cytometry analysis	85
	Statistics	86
	Results	86
	Cytotoxicity to normal cell	86
	Cytotoxicity on cancer cell	87
	SEM & TEM Results	89
	AO/PI staining results	91
	Hoechst 33342 Staining results	95
	Cell cycle analysis	96
	Discussion	99
	Conclusion	107
4	POTENT SUPPRESSIVE EFFECT OF TROPICAL EDIBLE SEAWEED (<i>Eucheuma cottonii</i>) AND OIL PALM LEAVES (<i>Elaeis guineensis</i>) EXTRACT ON PROMOTION PHASES OF MAMMARY GLAND TUMOUR	
	Introduction	108
	Materials and methods	112
	Chemicals	112
	Cell lines	113
	Experimental design	114
	Cytotoxic activity	114
	Effect of ECME and OPLME on the estrous cycle of rats	115
	Prevention capabilities of ECME and OPLME on breast cancer	117
	Blood Sampling	117



	Catalase activity (CAT)	118
	Superoxide dismutase activity (SOD)	119
	Reduced Glutathione Assay (GSH)	120
	Malondialdehyde level (MDA)	120
	Histological analysis and scoring method	121
	Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM)	122
	Statistics	124
	Results	124
	Cytotoxic activity Results	124
	Effect on the estrous cycle of rats	125
	Effect of ECME and OPLME on estradiol level	127
	Tumour incidence rate	128
	Average Tumour Volume	129
	TEM Results	130
	Antioxidation	133
	Discussion	135
	Conclusion	147
5	EVALUATION ESTROGENIC ACTIVITY OF OIL PALM (<i>Elaeis guineensis</i>) LEAF METHANOLIC EXTRACT ON OVARECTOMIZED RATS	
	Introduction	148
	Materials and methods	150
	Animals	150
	Vaginal smear	150
	Effect of OPLME on ovariectomized rats	151
	Statistical Analysis	152
	Results	152
	Effect of OPLME on vaginal cytology of ovariectomized rats	152
	Effect of OPLME on Uterus weight of ovariectomized rats	154
	Effect of OPLME on lipid profile	155
	Body weights and food consumption	156
	Discussion	157
	Conclusion	162
6	CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK	163
7	REFERENCES	167
8	APPENDICES	184
9	BIODATA OF STUDENT	188



LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
2.1	Differences between cancerous and normal cells in vitro culture system	30
2.2	Different cellular roles for a few of the many known oncogenes	38
2.3	Defense system <i>in vivo</i> against oxidative damage	42
2.4	Female estrous cycle	47
2.5	Chemoprevention mechanisms and possible targets	56
2.6	Differential cal activities of seaweed	58
2.7	Classification of <i>Caulerpa lentillifera</i> , <i>Sargassum polycystum</i> , and <i>Eucheuma cottonii</i>	61
3.1	Cytotoxicity of seaweed methanolic extracts on Vero cells	87
3.2	The IC ₅₀ values of seaweeds methanolic extracts on various cancer cells	88
3.3	Effect of ECME on the viability of MCF-7 cell line	94
3.4	The percentage of each phase of cell cycle of MCF-7 cells treated with <i>Eucheuma cottonii</i> methanolic extract (ECME)	98
4.1	Scoring method for apoptosis and mitotic indexes	122
4.2	Mean serum estradiol concentration (pg/mL) of experimental groups	128
4.3	Tumour incidence rate, average tumour volume, apoptotic index, and mitotic index in rats treated with ECME and OPLME	130
4.4	The Malondialdehyde (MDA), reduced glutathione (GSH) concentrations, and superoxide dismutase (SOD), and catalase (CAT) activity in rat treated with ECME and OPLME	134
5.1	Uterus weights of ovariectomized rats treated with Premarin and OPLME	153
5.2	Serum total cholesterol, triglyceride, HDL cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, concentration and total cholesterol/HDL ratio in ovariectomized rats and sham group (un-ovariectomized rats) treated with OPLME and Premarin	154



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
2.1	The cell cycle	33
2.2	Flow chart depicting a simplified scheme of the molecular basis of cancer	35
2.3	A simplified scheme shows DNA damage and the role of TP53 and apoptosis	36
2.4	Pathways illustrating the sources of reactive oxygen species and its role in the development of cancer	41
2.5	A simplified scheme of reproductive cycle hormone in rodent, and in human	49
2.6	Diagram shows the stages of carcinogenesis and the opportunities that exist for intervention using chemopreventive agents	54
2.7	An overview of pathways regulating apoptosis	59
2.8	Photograph of various species seaweeds	74
2.9	Photograph illustrated fixed off-bottom cultivation method of <i>E. cottonii</i>	74
3.1	MCF-7 cells after treatment with <i>Eucheuma cottonii</i> methanolic extract	89
3.2	MCF-7 cells after treatment with <i>Eucheuma cottonii</i> methanolic extract	90
3.3	Acridine Orange/ Propidium Iodide stained MCF-7 cells treated with 0.1% DMSO (control group)	92
3.4	Acridine Orange/ Propidium Iodide stained MCF-7 cells after 24 h Incubation with 25 µg/mL ECME	92
3.5	Acridine Orange/ Propidium Iodide stained MCF-7 cells after 48 h incubation with 25 µg/mL ECME	93
3.6	Acridine Orange/ Propidium Iodide stained MCF-7 cells after 72 h incubation with 25 µg/mL ECME	93
3.7	Rate of apoptosis of MCF-7 cell treated with <i>E. cottonii</i> methanolic extract	95
3.8	Morphological changes of MCF-7 cells after treatment with ECME followed by Hoechst 33342 staining	96



3.9	Flow cytometry cell cycle analysis of MCF-7 cells treated with ECME	97
4.1	Representative examples of fresh, unstained vaginal lavage samples obtained at different days of the rat estrous cycle	116
4.2	Effect of OPLME on rat estrous cycle	126
4.3	Tumour area from control group shows mitotic figures (H & E) (200X)	129
4.4	Tumour area from treated rat with low dose ECME showing early apoptotic characteristics	131
4.5	Tumour area from treated rat with high dose ECME showing early apoptotic characteristics	131
4.6	Tumour area from treated rat with low dose oil palm methanolic extracts showing early apoptotic characteristics	132
4.7	Tumour area from treated rat with high dose oil palm methanolic extracts showing apoptotic characteristics	132
5.1	Comparison of the estrogenic activity of OPLME and Premarin, by vaginal cytology assay in ovariectomized rats	155
5.2	Methylene blue and eosin stained vaginal smear of rats treated with oil palm leaf methanolic extract and Premarin	156



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AO	:	Acridine orange
ATV	:	Average tumour volume
CAT	:	Catalase
Cdk	:	Cyclin dependent kinase
CO	:	Carbon dioxide
DMSO	:	Dimethyl sulfoxid
ECME	:	<i>Eucheuma cottonii</i> methanolic extract
GSH	:	Reduced glutathione assay
h	:	Hour
LLC	:	Lewis lung carcinoma
MDA	:	Malondialdehyde level
MNC	:	Maximal non-toxic concentration
mg	:	Milligram
min	:	Minutes
mL	:	Milliliter
OPLME	:	Oil palm leaf methanolic extract
PI	:	Propidium Iodide
ROS	:	Reactive oxygen species
rpm	:	Rotation per minutes
SEM	:	Scanning electron microscopy
SOD	:	Superoxide dismutase
TEM	:	Transmission electron microscopy
TIR	:	Tumor incidence rate
UV	:	Ultraviolet
°C	:	Degree Celsius
μ	:	Micro
%	:	Percentage



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Cancer is a class of diseases in which a group of cells display the traits of uncontrolled growth, invasion, and sometimes metastasis. These three malignant properties of cancers differentiate them from benign tumors, which are self-limited, do not invade or metastasize (Karp, 1999).

Cancer causes about 13% of all death. According to the American Cancer Society, 7.6 million people died from cancer in the world during 2007 (Coleman, 1995). In the U.S. and other developed countries, cancer is presently responsible for about 25% of all deaths. On a yearly basis, 0.5% of the population is diagnosed with cancer (American Cancer Society, 2008).

The problem of cancer in Malaysia is a growing one. It is now the fourth leading cause of death among medically certified deaths. Cancer of the lung is the most common killer among malignancies. It is estimated that the annual incidence of cancer is 30 000. The majority of patients are diagnosed at a late stage of the disease. According to the Malaysian National Cancer Registry by the Ministry of Health Malaysia, neoplasm which cover all types of cancer had the highest prevalence among the male and female



elderly patients admitted to Hospital Kuala Lumpur, the most common cancers in male were those of the lung and prostate, while cancers of the breast and colon were the two most common cancers in females (Ministry of Health Malaysia, 2000).

Nearly all cancers are caused by abnormalities in the genetic material of the transformed cells. Epithelial carcinogenesis is a multistep process in which an accumulation of genetic events within a single cell line leads to a progressively dysplastic cellular appearance, deregulated cell growth, and, finally, carcinoma (Lippman *et al.*, 1994).

Chemoprevention is an active cancer preventive strategy to inhibit, delay or reverse human carcinogenesis, using naturally occurring or synthetic chemical agents (Surh, 2003). Dr Michael B. Sporn first introduced the term “chemoprevention”, when he referred to the prevention of cancer development by natural forms of vitamin A and by its synthetic analogs (Sporn *et al.*, 1976). Thereafter, a variety of naturally occurring dietary compounds have been shown to possess significant chemopreventive effects and many experimental attempts have been made to address their underlying mechanisms of action (Surh, 2003). Numerous cancer cell lines and animal cancer models have been used to evaluate the chemopreventive effects of phytochemicals as well as to elucidate their mechanisms of cancer prevention. These studies have resulted in the discovery of several new phytochemicals that possess cancer preventive effects, such as isothiocyanates from cruciferous vegetables, polyphenols from green and black tea, and flavonoids from soybeans. Several cellular mechanisms contribute to the overall cancer preventive effects of these dietary phytochemicals. These include oxidative or

electrophilic stresses that can trigger a wide variety of cellular events such as increasing expression of detoxifying enzymes and/or antioxidant enzymes, inhibiting cell cycle progression and cell proliferation, inducing differentiation and apoptosis, inhibiting expression and functional activation of oncogenes, increasing expression of tumour-suppressor genes, and inhibiting angiogenesis and metastasis by modulating cellular signaling pathways (Kupchan, 1976).

The “antioxidant hypothesis” in chemoprevention is strongly sustained in the literature. It asserts, “Being the antioxidants able to prevent or reduce oxidative damage, their increased uptake from the diet will reduce the risk of chronic disease” (Stanner *et al.*, 2004). It is worthwhile to note that a large part of studies supporting the antioxidant against cancer is based on cell lines studies and on animal model where tumors were experimentally induced by high doses of carcinogens. However, growing experimental evidence suggest that antioxidants present in food act as chemopreventive agents independent of their ability to scavenge ROS. Many of them interfere with signal transduction regulation at different levels: modulating hormones/growth factors activities, inhibit oncogenes and activate tumour suppressor genes, induce terminal differentiation, activate apoptosis, restore immune response, inhibit angiogenesis, decrease inflammation (Russo, 2007). Although natural products have long been a fertile source of cures for cancer, there has been a desperate and continuous need for development of new anticancer drugs and chemotherapy strategies aimed at killing both primary and metastatic cancer cells.