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Anti-*Trichomonas vaginalis* Activity of Saponins from *Ilex paraguariensis* ("Mate") Fruits

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SUMMARY. This study evaluates the *in vitro* anti-trichomonads activity of a saponin enriched fraction (MSF) obtained from the fruits of *Ilex paraguariensis* A. St. Hil. (Aquifoliaceae). The MSF showed better anti-trichomonads activity than polysorbate and tyloxapol. A similar activity was obtained for quillaja saponins, but this fraction presented the highest cytotoxicity to mammalian cells as follows: quillaja > tyloxapol > polysorbate 80 > MSF. Neither the co-addition of MSF and metronidazole (MTZ) nor the pre-treatment of the trophozoites with MSF prior to the addition of MTZ elicited a significant effect on MTZ activity.

KEY WORDS: Cytotoxicity, *Ilex paraguariensis,* Metronidazole, Quillaja, Saponins.

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