

Phytochemical profile and antioxidant potential of methanol extract of *Mucuna pruriens* leaves.

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Introduction: The species *Mucuna pruriens* belongs to the family Fabaceae and is popularly known in Brazil as “café berão” and “pó de mico”. Several parts of this plant have medicinal properties: seeds are used to treat nervous and reproductive system disorders; leaves and roots have anthelmintic and aphrodisiac properties. **Objective:** In order to increase the knowledge about the specie, this study aimed to elucidate the phytochemical profile and the antioxidant activity of the methanol extract of *M. pruriens* leaves. **Methods:** Phytochemical study was conducted through qualitative survey of the constituents, and quantitatively by the determination of total phenols and flavonoids in the extract. The antioxidant potential was assayed by the following methods: free radicals scavenging (DPPH) and iron reducing power. **Results:** The extract presented alkaloids, phenolic compounds, coumarins, flavonoids, triterpenes and saponins as constituents, and phenolics and flavonoids content equivalent to 112 ± 9.40 mg/g of extract equivalent to tannic acid and 18.3 ± 1.87 mg/g extract equivalent to quercetin, respectively. Antioxidant potential of *M. pruriens* leaves showed promising results when compared with the positive control, with IC_{50} of 13.2 ± 1.20 μ g/mL in the DPPH method, while quercetin showed IC_{50} of 2.50 ± 0.60 μ g/mL, and EC_{50} of 47.9 ± 0.01 μ g/mL in reducing power method, while ascorbic acid showed EC_{50} of 2.39 ± 0.05 μ g/mL, respectively. **Conclusion:** The results indicated that *M. pruriens* leaves have antioxidant potential, however, more studies are needed to elucidate action mechanisms for the activity, as well as to isolate and identify the active compounds.

Keywords: *Mucuna pruriens*, natural products, antioxidant activity

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