**Advances in Bioresearch** Adv. Biores., Vol 15 (4) July 2024:280-290 ©2024 Society of Education, India Print ISSN 0976-4585; Online ISSN 2277-1573 Journal's URL:<http://www.soeagra.com/abr.html> CODEN: ABRDC3 DOI: 10.15515/abr.0976-4585.15.4.280290

# **REVIEW ARTICLE**

# **Review on Lemon Balm Plant**

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# **ABSTRACT**

*Biologically active chemicals abound in Lemon Balm, a medicinal plant recognized for its therapeutic properties around the world. The major ingredient in lemon balm is rosmarinic acid. Dry leaves of lemon balm contain 6% of rosmarinic acid. Lemon balm contains a high concentration of flavonoids, which may have anti-oxidant properties. It involves terpenes, tannins, eugenol, (+)-citronellal, 3-octanol, caffeic acid, caryophyllene, catechin, geranial, geraniol, iso-geranial and rosmarinic acid. Because of its anxiolytic, neuroprotective, hepatoprotective, and anti-inflammatory qualities, RA has been shown to have several positive health effects. Lemon balm is formally recommended for the therapy of mild anxiety problems. RA may be considered a good chemical in pharmacological development for treating depression. Melissa officinalis, sometimes recognized as lemon balm, has being utilized both historically and currently to modulate mood and cognitive function. When taken as capsules, coated tablets, or topically, lemon balm has been shown to have anxiolytic effects. These assessed the impact of a standardized plant formulation given in appetising forms such as yoghurt as well as beverage on mood and cognitive function. Lemon balm contains a high concentration of flavonoids, which may have antioxidant properties. Anxiolytic, neuroprotective, antidepressant, antidiabetic, antimicrobial, and antioxidant properties are all present in lemon balm.*

*Keywords: Anxiolytic, Lemon balm, Melissa officinalis L, Rosmarinic Acid.*



### **INTRODUCTION**

Due to all biologically active elements, lemon balm is a medicinal herb which is utilized all over the world for therapy. One of the medicinal herbs high in Rosmarinic Acid is lemon balm, with dry leaves with have up to 6% Rosmarinic Acid [1]. Because lemon balm has a host of physiologically active ingredients flavonoids, tannins, triterpenes, hydroxycinnamic acid derivatives, essential oil, and flavonoids—it has been utilized for millennia in traditional remedy in the direction of treating an array of illnesses [2]. The bulk of medications and nutraceuticals with lemon balm aim to treat insomnia or improve sleep. Lemon balm and its extracts' soothing and anxiolytic properties contribute with their most well-known health advantages [3-4]. In addition to food supplements, the European Union has designated set herbal constituents or extracts from the plant leaves as outmoded herbal medicinal yields for the management of mild gastrointestinal grievances such as swelling and pomposity, as well as the relief of mild mental stress symptoms and sleep aids [5]. To that aim, the European Pharmacopoeia requires that dried lemon balm leaves used in herbal medicines include at least 1% RA [6], whereas dry extracts derived from Melissa leaves must contain at least 2% RA [7]. Several health advantages exhibited by RA including anxiolytic, neuroprotective [8], hepatoprotective [9], and anti-inflammatory properties [10-11]. For instance, in human adipocytes, it causes adipocyte basal lipolysis [12] and inhibits several diabetes-related enzymes as well as white adipogenic development [13]. By lowering lipid peroxidation, and fibrosis severity, and generally enhancing liver biochemical markers, RA demonstrated hepatoprotective qualities [14]. Patients with osteoarthritis saw a considerable reduction in pain upon administration of extracts containing RA, owing to their potent anti-inflammatory activity. Along with other inflammation-related illnesses it also had an advantageous impact on skin inflammation and colitis such as atypical dermatitis [15-16]. Moreover, RA-containing extracts did not have any negative effects on the kidneys, liver, or other organs [17]. This is the reason that a lot of food supplements and preparations containing RA are sold

with promises about their health. Numerous studies show that RA is a more effective reactive oxygen species scavenger than artificial antioxidants like BHT and BHA [18]. It also exhibits strong pro-oxidant ion chelating capabilities and a greater lowering capability when compared to vitamin C [19]. Owing to its antibacterial characteristics and capacity to prevent lipid peroxidation, RA is being carefully studied for its possible application as a natural supernumerary for artificial antioxidants and preservatives in the food sector [20-21]. RA-containing extracts have been utilized to prolong the shelf life of bread [22], stabilize maize oil [23], and serve as a natural preservative in cupcakes [24] and non-alcoholic beverages. Additionally, RA had a substantial co-pigmentation effect on the anthocyanins in black chokeberries, hence enhancing their stability and intensity of colour [25]. Currently, in the European Union rosemary extract (E392) is the only plant extract containing RA that has been approved for use as a preservative in food [26].

# **Plant profile**

*Melissa officinalis* plants in the Lamiaceae family grow bushy and straight, attainment a maximum height of 100 cm (39 inches). The 2- 8cm (0.79 to 3.50) long, heart-shaped leaves with a rough vein surface. They smell faintly like lemon and are hairy, velvety, and have scalloped edges. Little white or light pink flowers appear throughout the summer. Its citrus aroma is ideal when paired with aromatic teas. The perennial herbaceous plant known as lemon balm, a member of the mint family, is native to Iran, Central Asia, and south-central Europe, and has since spread throughout these regions. The herb was used by apothecaries, who supplied herbal cures directly to their clients, hence the second name, "officinalis." Lemon balm was brought to Great Britain by the Romans and quickly gained popularity as a plant for cottage gardens [27].

### **Historical use**

The Plant belongs to mint family and originated in North Africa, Southern Europe, Western Asia and Mediterranean region. Now a day it is worldwide cultivated. It is utilized for the management of depression and sleep ailments. It may decrease anger and anxiety in new girls and women, and it can increase attention and energy levels. Typically, 20-50 g of dehydrated leaves is immersed in 1.0 L of heated water for 5-15 min. 3-4 cups of this tea are consumed every-day [27]. The necessary oil of plant, used in aromatherapy, is in charge for its therapeutic properties. However, phenolics, particularly RA, are similarly thought towards contribute in the direction of the healing capability of mentioned plant. Lemon balm has a modest essential oil level (0.02%-0.30%), compared to other Lamiaceae plants [27]. *Melissa officinalis* is a persistent grows that grows through a lemon fragrance. Lemon balm has been used therapeutically for over 2000 years. Paracelsus (1493-1541) suggested that described plant be used for "all complaints supposed to proceed from a disordered state of the nervous system" as well as that it could completely restore a man. This practice has been documented for over 2,000 years. Numerous herbalists have suggested that the plant has a wide range of beneficial benefits on the brain, including memory improvement. With anxiolytic effects after capsule, coated tablet, and topical application, it has been utilized in history. These assessed the impact of a standardized plants formulation given in appetising forms such as yoghurt and beverage on mood and cognitive function. The self-rated mood characteristics of a cohort of young adults in good health were assessed before and during the administration of a multi-tasking framework (MTF) 1-3 hours after 1 of 4 managements in each research.

## **Chemistry**

High levels of flavonoids, which may have antioxidant effects, are present in lemon balm. It contains a combination of terpenes, tannins, and eugenol, as well as (+)-citronellal, 3-octanol, caffeic acid, caryophyllene, catechin, geranial, geraniol, iso-geranial, and rosmarinic acid. Vitamins B and C vitamins, Minerals: Iron, potassium, sodium, magnesium, and calcium. Potassium is beneficial to the heart of the active ingredients found in leaves; rosmarinic acid seems to be the most significant, containing 36.5 +/- 0.8 mg per gramme [27].

### **Therapeutic potential**

#### *Anxiolytic activity*

33.7% of the population are affected by common mental illness including anxiety disorders. Remarkably, compared to the elderly population, young individuals have a higher prevalence of anxiety disorders. Despite notable advancements in the fields of psychotherapy and medication for anxiety disorders in recent times, anxiety disorders continue to have a large negative influence on society and come at a high cost. These factors make treating and preventing anxiety disorders the most important medical endeavour of the twenty-first century [28]. Tricyclic antidepressants, Benzodiazepines, Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRI), monoamine oxidase inhibitors are among the numerous medications available to treat anxiety disorders. Drugs were highly successful in treating anxiety problems when used. Nevertheless, according to certain investigations, there could be a wide range of adverse consequences. The largest problem at the moment is that most people choose to neglect their mental illnesses and not seek help; this could be because of social stigma, a lack of general information, or a lack of understanding of available treatment options. As a result, symptoms linked to the body and/or the mind grew worse over time, resulting in longer hospital admissions and financial hardship. Given the social stigma associated with anxiety, patients find it much simpler to adopt alternative therapies like the use of ethnomedicinal. According to the findings of one of our earlier studies, over 40% of Serbian patients with various non-psychotic diseases treat their symptoms using various herbal medications. Melissa officinalis was listed as one of the most often used plant species. One common medicinal plant used to treat depression, anxiety, sleeplessness, anxiety-induced palpitations, and stress is lemon balm. Folk herbal medicine made from it is practiced in West Asia, the Mediterranean area, and central and southern Europe. It is noteworthy to add that Austrian folk has long utilized MO Essential Oil (MOEO) to cure a variety of illnesses, including those about the CNS. Clinical research on the CNS validated the taxon's pharmacological significance as well as the anxiolytic and neuroprotective properties of the MO extracts. Owing to the above-mentioned effects, MO is formally advised for the management of minor anxiety symptoms. The existence of rosmarinic acid has been linked to the plant's neurological effects, even if the key bioactive chemicals are yet unknown. Additionally, the extract of MO aerial portions contains a few additional water-soluble components such as metrilic acid, chlorogenic acid, and caffeic acids. Remarkably, at the time of the inquiry, there were very few papers addressing the anxiolytic effects of the volatile elements that make up the MOEO, according to a SciFinder search of the Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) database [29].

# *Antidepressant activity*

The effects of RA at dosages of 0, 3, 10, or 30 mg/kg were examined in female C57BL/6 mice sixty minutes previously injections of pentylenetetrazol (60 mg/kg). The dose effects of RA on mice were evaluated using rotarod, forced swim tests, novel item identification, and behaviour in the open environment. In the PTZ paradigm, RA enhanced comprehensive seizures as well as the inexpression towards myoclonic jerks in a dose-dependent routine as well as enhanced through pilocarpine. RA (30 mg/kg) improved the crossing quantity, the immobility duration, and the time spent in the open field's centre during the forced swim test [30]. Thus, RA may be viewed as an excellent molecule in pharmaceutical research for treating depression and causing modifications to BDNF stages and ERK11/2 signaling. In PC 12 cells, RA significantly improved cholinergic function and neurotrophic effects to the ERK1/2 signalling way as well as MAPK. Furthermore, pyruvate carboxylase (PC) and tyrosine hydroxylase (TH), which are convoluted in the regulation of serotonergic, GABAergic, as well as dopaminergic paths, were significantly up-regulated in response to RA. Moreover, TH shields neural cells from corticosterone's harmful effects [31].

# *Nephroprotective Action*

Presently, the furthermost widely utilized antibacterial medications cause severe kidney impairment in 60% of attained contagions in hospitals through detectable morbidity rates [32]. Aminoglycosides are the ones that have been utilized the most to treat bacterial infections. Since it is less expensive and has a lower prevalence of antibiotic-acquired resistance, gentamicin is the most often used aminoglycoside; nonetheless, when administered therapeutically for longer than seven days at a dosage of 80 mg/kg/day, around 30% of patients have nephrotoxicity [33]. Acute renal toxicity is defined as the abrupt loss of kidney function caused by waste product accumulation, such as urea and creatinine. Since gentamicininduced nephrotoxicity is associated with elevated levels of oxidative stress, this might play a major part in kidney injury [34]. Increased creatinine concentration and serum blood urea nitrogen in Sprague Dawley rats led to a decrease in myeloperoxidase and MDA levels. Actually, there were less event injuries in the group receiving RA. Moreover, RA dramatically reduced Bowman's capsule dilatation, tubular epithelium necrosis and dilatation, tubular epithelium degeneration, and localised glomerular necrosis [35]. Blood urea nitrogen and serum creatinine levels showed substantial upsurge due to RA at a dosage of 1, 2 and 5 mg/kg. Furthermore, RA reduced oxidative stress brought on by CP while increasing the expression of renal 4-hydroxynonenal, HO-1, and cytochrome P450 2E1 (CYP2E1). Furthermore, RA inhibited inflammation and decreased the expression of NF-κB and TNF-α. Moreover, RA reduced the expression of active caspase-3, phosphorylated p53, and p53 in the kidney by demonstrating an antiapoptotic effect [36]. RA dramatically decrease tubular necrosis, MDA, creatinine levels and urea in addition to markedly increasing renal SOD, GSH, GPS, CAT volume density PCT and creatinine clearance [37]. Finally, RA may provide defence against the neurotoxicity brought on by 6-hydroxydopamine because of its antioxidant properties [38].

## *Anti-diabetic Activity*

RA sped up the rate of glucose rise, reduced serine IRS-1 phosphorylation, and accelerated the transfer of glucose by the glucose transporter type 4 (GLUT4) [39-40]. RA demonstrated a discernible hypoglycemic impact in rats caused by streptozotocin (STZ), whereas it enhanced insulin sensitivity in addition to enhanced glucose utilization in rats fed a more-fat diet (HFD). The effects due to HFD and STZ on GLUT4 expression in skeletal muscle as well as phosphoenolpyruvate carboxykinase expression in the liver were reversed by RA supplementation. In addition to improving production of hypoglycemic effect and insulin sensitivity, RA also decreases PEPCK expression and increases GLUT4 expression [41]. Furthermore, it prevents hyperglycaemia, improves cognition in healthy rat and strengthens the antioxidant defence system to restore memory and lipid peroxidation and learning deficits [42]. Rats with STZ-induced diabetes showed reduced levels of TBARS in their kidney and liver when treated RA at a dosage of 10 mg/kg. Its capacity to SOD activity as well as CAT was the primary factor in this result [43]. In diabetic rats, RA treatment also improved urine and water intake as well as oxidative stress indicators. It was therefore suggested that RA lessens the negative impact of free radicals on the tissues of rats, thereby mitigating the diabetes symptoms caused by STZ [44. Dose of 100 mg/kg, RA markedly enhance insulin index sensitivity and decreased levels of NF-κB, p-JNK, TNFα, IL-1β, HbA1c and blood glucose. Additionally, it dramatically lowered the levels of protein carbonyls, lipid peroxides, serum cholesterol, AOPPs, free fatty acids (FFA), and triglycerides in the pancreas and plasma of diabetic rats. The treatment of RA dramatically recovered the lowered actions of SOD, CAT, glutathione peroxidase and glutathione Stransferases as well as the abridged stages of vitamins E, C, GSH and ceruloplasmin in the plasma of diabetic rats [45-46]. Retinalactin moreover decreased the incidence of diabetes [47]. Treatment with RA dose of 10 mg/kg markedly decreased the amounts of lipid peroxidation in the diabetic rats' striatum (47%), cortex (38%), and hippocampal regions (28%) [48]. In STZ-induced diabetic Wistar rats, RA taken by mouth at 50 mg/kg for 10 weeks reduced endothelium-dependent relaxation along with upregulation of endothelin converting enzyme 1 and IL-1β, TNF-α, and preproendothelin-1 [49]. Additionally, it protects aortic endothelial function from damage brought on by diabetes [50].

# *Antimicrobial activity*

Concerning RA's, it demonstrated antibacterial effects on strains of Staphylococcus aureus. The lowest blocking concentrations in contrast to *S. aureus* and MRSA were determined to be 0.8 and 10 mg/mL, respectively [51]. Conversely, the injection of RA exhibited a concentration- and time-dependent reduction in biofilm formation, indicating its potential utility as an efficient antibacterial agent for eliminating planktonic cell activity and lowering biofilm formation during the early stages of growth. By decreasing the number besides count of cells, RA similarly hinders the growing of Escherichia coli K-12 and Staphylococcus carnosus LTH150 [52]. RA interacted with nitrite ions in an acidic environment towards produce 6,6-nitro and 6-dinitrorosmarinic acids. Inhibiting viral replication in MT-4 cells, these substances acted as sub-molecular HIV-1 integrase inhibitors. The antiviral and anti-integrase inhibitory activities of RA nitration A were significantly enhanced without raising the levels of cellular toxicity [53]. Additionally, lactic acid bacteria, yeast, mould, Enterobacteriaceae species, Pseudomonas species, psychoactive counts, and Listeria monocytogenes inoculated in chicken foods were all susceptible to the antimicrobial actions of RA [54].

### *Antioxidant activity*

Antioxidants are acknowledged for their noteworthy role in protecting against illnesses stemming from oxidative damage. ROS production might exceed a cell's antioxidant defenses, leading in the direction of oxidative stress. Crucially, it has been connected through DNA mutation, oxidation of proteins, and/or lipid peroxidation to the beginning and progression of several degenerative illnesses. It was discovered that *Melissa officinalis* L essential oils can be employed in foods that contain lipids and have a good potential for antioxidant activity. Antioxidants are abundant in it, especially those belonging to the phenolic chemical group. Its antioxidant properties resemble those of artificial antioxidants like BHA and BHT. Phenolic compounds such as citronellal and neral contribute in the direction of its antioxidant effects. The extracts' ability to inhibit lipid oxidation was evaluated by contrasting it with an extract from tea water. It revealed that there were many bound types of phenolic chemicals, counting flavonoids, hydroxycinnamic acids, caffeic acid and rosmarinic in the Melissa extract [55]. *The plant* presented substantial antioxidant action solitary in the polar fractions [56]. Antioxidant action and highest flavonoid content exhibited by ethyl acetate fraction [57]. Both artificial and natural free radicals can be scavenged by the lemon balm extract [58]. Melissa officinalis demonstrated a notable prevention of deoxyribose breakdown along with substantial reducing power [59]. In another investigation, DPPH, hydroxyl, and lipid peroxyl radical production were inhibited in a dose-dependent routine through H2O extracts of Melissa officinalis L [60]. Melissa officinalis was established towards containing extremely higher quantities of phenolics in 32 plant spices [61]. It had the maximum quantities of flavonoids and phenolics in another investigation [62]. Only four identified substances have been extracted from the desiccated stems and foliage of plant. Quadranoside III, luteolin, rosmarinic acid, and salvianic acid A were found as the known chemicals. The main component, rosmarinic acid, as well as the extracts' antibacterial and free radical-scavenging properties were assessed. The extracts of solid filtrates from supercritical extraction at 10 MPa, 323 K, and 30 min. had the highest value of phenol chemicals [63]. The phenolic profiles of various lemon balm samples were assessed. To comprehend the distinctions between commercial (bags and granulated) samples, in vitro cultured samples, and cultivated samples, the profiles were compared. The most prevalent component was rosmarinic acid [64-65].

### **Marketed product**

Other tea mixes employ lemon balm as an herbal tea (Fig.4). Perfume is made with oil, and winemaking also uses flowers and leaves. Herbal liqueurs have traditionally included lemon balm as an ingredient.

## **Extraction of Lemon Balm**

(Table 1) illustrated different method of extraction of lemon balm

# **Side effects**

No adverse effects have been documented for the herb when applied externally or ingested at recommended dosages (up to 30 days) in generally healthy adults or when consumed in quantities typically found in food. This plant has been designated as Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS) in the United States, with a permitted maximum level of 0.5% in baked goods. However, caution is advised regarding its use during pregnancy or breastfeeding, in children, or in individuals with thyroid issues, as well as when used concurrently with sedatives [66]. The plant extract possesses notable potential in promoting health and treating illnesses due to its volatile organic compounds and active ingredients like terpenoids, flavonoids, quercetin, rutin, quercitrin, gallic acid, and strong antioxidant properties. The essential oil extracted from the plant exhibited significant abilities to inhibit acetylcholinesterase and demonstrated antioxidant effects [55]. Additionally, the plant displayed noteworthy antioxidant properties specifically within its polar fractions. Within this plant, RA was identified as the predominant compound [64-65]. In the DPPH assay, comparisons between cultivated and in vitro cultured samples revealed the least concentrations of phenolic compounds in the former two, while commercial samples exhibited the highest levels [67]. Additionally, various studies, differing in quality, have indicated the radical scavenging and antioxidant capabilities of polar extracts derived from this plant [55]. These properties are attributed to the presence of flavonoids, RA, and benzodioxole. Notably, the antioxidant effects of these compounds are reported to be up to ten times more potent than those of vitamins B and C [64-65]. The findings of this investigation indicate that the majority of research into the therapeutic potential of this plant has been conducted through in vitro studies. Consequently, there is a pressing need for additional complementary studies to explore the diverse therapeutic effects of this plant through clinical trials. Despite existing research on antioxidant properties, further comprehensive examinations regarding toxicity and teratogenicity are warranted. Moreover, while there are various genera of this plant, each containing its distinct chemical compounds, many shares common compounds responsible for their antioxidant effects. Hence, further research is essential to identify new chemical compounds within untested genera of this plant that contribute to its antioxidant activity, ensuring safety within specified dosages [64-65].

### **DISCUSSION**

The comprehensive analysis of lemon balm (*Melissa officinalis L*.) reveals its significant therapeutic potential and diverse pharmacological activities, primarily attributed to its major component, rosmarinic acid (RA). It has been traditionally utilized for periods in various regions of the world, owing to its wide array of biologically active compounds, including flavonoids, tannins, terpenes, and essential oils. The pharmacological activities of lemon balm encompass anxiolytic, neuroprotective, antidepressant, hepatoprotective, anti-inflammatory, anti-diabetic, antimicrobial, and antioxidant properties. These properties have been extensively studied and validated through numerous preclinical and clinical trials, providing robust evidence for its therapeutic efficacy across multiple health conditions. Anxiety disorders, affecting a significant portion of the population, have been a major focus of research, with lemon balm demonstrating promising anxiolytic effects comparable to conventional medications. Its ability to modulate mood and cognitive function has been well-documented, making it a valuable alternative therapy for individuals suffering from anxiety-related symptoms. Furthermore, lemon balm exhibits antidepressant activity, enhancing serotonin and dopamine levels, and modulating neurotropic factors involved in mood regulation. These effects highlight its potential as a natural remedy for depression and related mood disorders. In addition to its effects on mental health, lemon balm exerts hepatoprotective effects, decreasing liver damage and inflammation, and enhancing liver function markers. This makes it a promising therapeutic agent for liver disorders and conditions associated with hepatic dysfunction. Moreover, lemon balm demonstrates significant anti-diabetic activity, improving insulin sensitivity, reducing blood glucose levels, and protecting against diabetes-induced oxidative stress as well as tissue impairment. Its antioxidant properties, recognized towards its higher sum of phenolic compounds, provide protection against oxidative impairment as well as played a critical part in preventing various degenerative diseases. The antimicrobial action of plant, particularly in contrast to bacterial and viral pathogens, underscores its potential as a natural antimicrobial agent for combating infections and promoting overall health. Overall, lemon balm emerges as a versatile medicinal plant with a wide range of therapeutic applications, supported by its rich phytochemical profile and pharmacological activities. Further research and clinical studies are warranted to elucidate its mechanisms of action, optimize dosage regimens, and explore its potential synergistic effects with conventional therapies, ultimately enhancing its efficacy and clinical utility in modern healthcare practice.



**Fig.2: Lemon Balm Roots & Leaves**



**Fig.3: Lemon Balm Flower (28**)



**Fig.4: Lemon Balm Tea.**



# **CONCLUSION**

*Melissa officinalis L.* is rich in RA and other biologically active compounds, providing a wide array of therapeutic benefits. Its pharmacological activities include anxiolytic, neuroprotective, antidepressant, hepatoprotective, anti-inflammatory, antidiabetic, antimicrobial, and antioxidant properties. These effects have been validated through extensive research, making lemon balm a promising natural remedy for various health conditions. Its potential in treating anxiety, depression, liver disorders, diabetes, and infections highlights its versatility in modern healthcare. Further studies are needed to fully understand its mechanisms and optimize its use in clinical practice.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I would like to thanks my guide Mr. Mukesh Mohite for their guidance and support to complete this review work. I would also like to extend my thanks to the principal Dr. N S Vyawahare for providing me with all the facilities that were required.

#### **AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION**

Investigation, writing and editing is done by KBA. MTM is involved in designing of the article and RDK is involved in the review of data and improvement of the article.

#### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The authors have no conflicts of interest.

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