

## INVESTIGATION OF *IN VITRO* ANTIOXIDANT ACTIVITY AND *IN SILICO* BIOLOGICAL ACTIVITY OF FLAVONOIDS FROM *LIMONIUM CASPIUM* GROWING IN AZERBAIJAN

Pashayeva S.A.<sup>1\*</sup>, Nasirli I.U.<sup>1</sup>, Aliyeva Sh.B.<sup>1</sup>, Ahmadov E.L.<sup>1</sup>, Rasulov N.Sh.<sup>1</sup>, Guliyev F.A.<sup>1</sup>, Badalova K.K.<sup>1</sup>, Garayev E.E.<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

The antioxidant properties of the flavonoids myricetin (M1), myricitrin (M2) and myricetin-3'-O-sulfate (M3), isolated from the roots of *Limonium caspium* (Willd.) P.Fourn (Plumbaginaceae) native to the flora of Azerbaijan were comparatively assessed in vitro, while their biological activity assessed in silico (PASS Online, SwissADME, SwissTarget and ADMETlab 3.0). In addition, ligand–macromolecule interactions were investigated through molecular docking analysis. The antioxidant activity of the compounds was determined using the DPPH radical scavenging assay, and the IC<sub>50</sub> values (µg/mL) were calculated as follows: M1 (7.81), M2 (6.34), and M3 (6.20). In silico predictions indicated that M1 exhibits pronounced antitumor activity (92.4%), whereas M2 (99.0%) and M3 (99.1%) demonstrated strong hemostatic potential.

Molecular docking studies were performed using AutoDock Vina 4.2 software. Compound M3 was selected as the ligand, and xanthine dehydrogenase was chosen as the target protein. The M3 molecule was found to interact with the active site of xanthine dehydrogenase through multiple interaction mechanisms. The overall interaction profile indicates strong and specific binding of M3 to the enzyme, suggesting its potential role as a bioactive inhibitor.

**Keywords:** *Limonium caspium* (Willd.) P. Fourn., myricetin, myricitrin, myricetin-3'-O-sulfate, antioxidant activity, in silico, molecular docking, in vitro

## EXPERIMENTAL SECTION

### INTRODUCTION

Plants of the genus *Limonium* are rich in biologically active phenolic compounds,

and the species *Limonium caspium* (Willd.) P. Fourn. (*Plumbaginaceae*) has widely grown in the flora of Azerbaijan [1].

Antioxidants are compounds capable of neutralizing the harmful effects of free radicals and protecting cells from oxidative stress. Free radicals can damage cellular membranes, DNA, and proteins, thereby contributing to the development of cancer, cardiovascular diseases, neurodegenerative disorders, and other chronic pathologies. Phenolic compounds

#### Yazışma üçün əlaqə:

Pashayeva S.A.<sup>1\*</sup>, Nasirli I.U.<sup>1</sup>, Aliyeva Sh.B.<sup>1</sup>, Ahmadov E.L.<sup>1</sup>, Rasulov N.Sh.<sup>1</sup>, Guliyev F.A.<sup>1</sup>, Badalova K.K.<sup>1</sup>, Garayev E.E.<sup>2</sup>  
\*Azerbaijan Medical University, Department of pharmaceutical toxicology and chemistry, Baku, Azerbaijan \*E-mail: sarapasayeva@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>Aix-Marseille Univ., CNRS 7263, IRD 237, Avignon Univ. IMBE, 27 bd Jean Moulin, Service, Pharmacognosy-Ethnopharmacology, Faculty of Pharmacy, 13385 Marseille, France; E-mail: elnur.garayev@univ-amu.fr



© ATUJ and The Author(s) 2026. **Open Access** This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence, and indicate if changes were made. The images or other third party material in this article are included in the article's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the article's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

of plant origin, particularly flavonoids usually considered potent natural antioxidants. They exert their antioxidant effects both by scavenging free radicals through hydroxyl groups and by chelating metal ions. The antioxidant activity of flavonoids is commonly assessed *in vitro* using DPPH, ABTS, FRAP, and CUPRAC assays. Numerous studies have demonstrated that flavonoids isolated from *L. caspium* (Willd.) P. Fourn. exhibit pronounced antioxidant properties, highlighting their potential medical and pharmacological relevance [2].

*In silico* studies encompass the analysis of biological processes and molecular interactions through computer-based modeling and bioinformatics tools.

The aim of the present study is to investigate the antioxidant properties of flavonoids *in vitro*, as well as to perform a comparative *in silico* assessment of their biological activity, physicochemical properties, solubility, bioavailability, and pharmacokinetic parameters, along with molecular docking analysis of myricetin (**M1**), myricitrin (**M2**), and myricetin-3'-O-sulfate (**M3**) isolated from *L. caspium*.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### *In vitro* determination of antioxidant activity

The DPPH (2,2-diphenyl-1-picrylhydrazyl) assay was performed according to the method described by Blois et al. and adapted for a 96-well microplate format [3]. This method assesses the effect of antioxidant-active compounds on the DPPH radical solution. The unpaired electron of DPPH accepts a hydrogen atom from the tested compound, resulting in the formation of the corresponding hydrazine. The antioxidant activity index, IC<sub>50</sub>, represents the concentration of a compound required to inhibit 50% of DPPH radical absorbance

at a wavelength of 517 nm; lower IC<sub>50</sub> values indicate stronger antioxidant activity. Compounds **M1**, **M2**, and **M3** were initially dissolved in methanol, and serial dilutions at different concentrations (1–20 µg/mL) were prepared to determine optimized IC<sub>50</sub> values.

Gallic acid (Sigma Aldrich, batch SLCN 0435) was used as a positive control, dissolved in methanol and six analytical solutions were prepared within the concentration range of 0.5–5.0 µg/mL.

A fresh DPPH solution at a concentration of 0.060 mg/mL was prepared daily by dissolving 6 mg of DPPH (Sigma Aldrich, D9132-5G, batch 0000187174) in 100 mL of methanol and allowing the solution to keep in the dark at room temperature for 1–3 hours before the analysis.

The DPPH assay was carried out in a 96-well microplate. The first row served as a blank row and contained methanol only, while the second row represented the negative control containing methanol and the DPPH reagent. In the subsequent rows, analytical solutions of each sample were added in triplicate, along with an additional row containing only the sample solution without DPPH.

The composition of each well was as follows:

**Blank wells:** 250µL methanol (MeOH)

**Negative control wells:** 50 µL MeOH + 200µL DPPH solution in MeOH

**Sample or positive control wells:** 50µL sample or positive control + 200 µL DPPH solution.

**Sample blank wells:** 50µL sample + 200 µL MeOH

The 96-well microplate was covered with a lid and incubated in a spectrophotometer (Agilent BioTek Epoch, USA) for 1 hour. Absorbance measurements were recorded at 517 nm. Antioxidant activity and IC<sub>50</sub>

values (defined, as the concentration required inhibiting 50% of DPPH radicals) were calculated using established equations [4].

### ***In silico* assessment of biological activity.**

For the comparative *in silico* assessment of the biological activity of flavonoids **M1**, **M2**, and **M3**, the PASS Online, SwissADME, SwissTargetPrediction, and ADMETlab 3.0 platforms were employed. Molecular docking simulations of ligand–macromolecule interactions were conducted using AutoDock 4.2.

Compound **M3** was selected as the ligand, while xanthine dehydrogenase was chosen as the target macromolecule. The crystal structures of the target proteins were retrieved from the Protein Data Bank (<https://www.rcsb.org>; PDB IDs: 1BML, 1JRO). The PDB format of the ligand (compound **M3**) was generated using MarvinSketch software (<https://chemaxon.com/marvin>).

Protein preparation: the downloaded crystal structure of xanthine dehydrogenase was prepared prior to molecular docking simulations. Initially, all non-essential molecules, including co-crystallized ligands, solvent molecules, and water

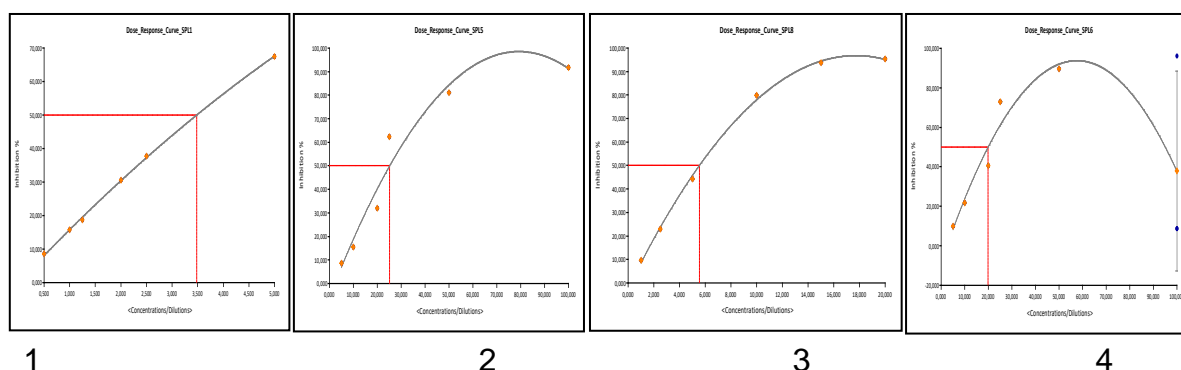
residues, were removed using Discovery Studio Visualizer software (<https://discover.3ds.com/discovery-studio-visualizer-download>). Subsequently, the cleaned protein structures were processed in AutoDock Tools version 1.4.5. During this step, polar hydrogen atoms were added to the protein structures, and Kollman partial charges were assigned to all atoms to ensure accurate representation of electrostatic interactions. The prepared protein structures were then saved in PDBQT format, which is required for molecular docking calculations, and were used as receptor models in subsequent docking studies.

Grid box parameters were set to dimensions of 80 × 80 × 80 Å. Molecular docking simulations were performed using AutoDock 4.2 via the command-line interface [5].

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.**

### ***In vitro* antioxidant activity**

The antioxidant activity of methanolic solutions of **M1**, **M2**, and **M3** at various concentrations was assessed using the DPPH assay. The resulting dose–response curves are presented in Figures 1 and 2.

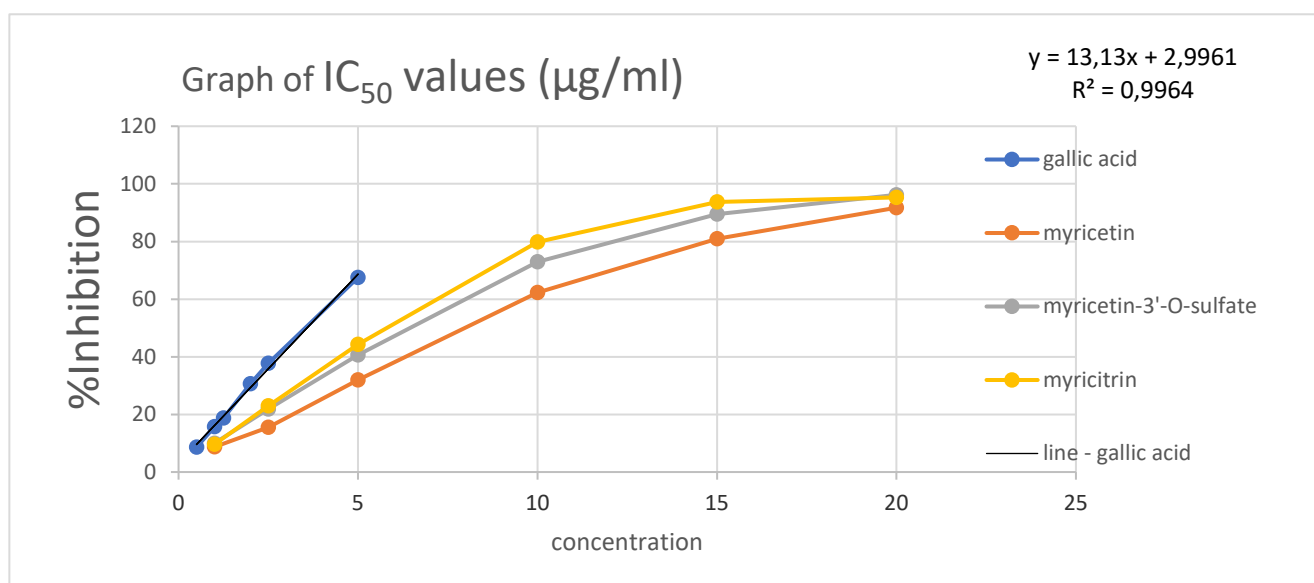


**Fig 1.** Graphical representation of the DPPH assay results (1 – gallic acid, 2 – **M1**, 3 – **M2**, 4 – **M3**).

The  $IC_{50}$  values of the DPPH assay for the flavonoids (**M1**, **M2**, and **M3**) isolated from methanolic extracts of *L. caspium* roots were calculated using the polynomial equation  $Y = C \cdot X^2 + B \cdot X + A$ , where  $Y = 50$  (Table 1).

**TABLE 1.**  $IC_{50}$  values representing the antioxidant activity of flavonoids isolated from *Limonium caspium*.

| Curve name  | A      | B    | C      | R <sup>2</sup> | X    |
|-------------|--------|------|--------|----------------|------|
| Gallic acid | 0.103  | 16.3 | -0.553 | 0.999          | 3.48 |
| <b>M1</b>   | -1.16  | 7.76 | -0.155 | 0.998          | 7.81 |
| <b>M2</b>   | -2.35  | 11.2 | -0.316 | 0.999          | 6.34 |
| <b>M3</b>   | -0.103 | 9.55 | -0.237 | 0.999          | 6.2  |



**Fig 2.** Dependence of the percentage of inhibition on the concentration of the tested compounds.

***In silico*** assesment of the biological activity of the compounds using computational tools.

**The biological activity of compounds M1, M2, and M3 was investigated in silico using the PASS Online software** (Tables 2–4).

**TABLE 2. Predicted biological activity of compound M1.M1 (canonical structure):**

: OC1=CC(O)=C2C(OC(=C(O)C2=O)C2=CC(O)=C(O)C(O)=C2)=C1

| Pa    | Pi    | Biological activity | Pa    | Pi    | Biological activity             |
|-------|-------|---------------------|-------|-------|---------------------------------|
| 0,924 | 0,005 | Antineoplastic      | 0,792 | 0,011 | Membrane permeability inhibitor |
| 0,913 | 0,005 | HIF1A inhibitor     | 0,783 | 0,004 | Antimutagenic                   |

|       |       |   |       |       |  |
|-------|-------|---|-------|-------|--|
| 0,889 | 0,006 | Chlordecone reductase inhibitor         | 0,769 | 0,006 | Peroxidase inhibitor                       |
| 0,894 | 0,013 | Membrane integrity agonist              | 0,795 | 0,034 | Ubiquinol-cytochrome-c reductase inhibitor |
| 0,868 | 0,003 | Prostate cancer treatment               | 0,763 | 0,004 | HMOX1 expression enhancer                  |
| 0,847 | 0,004 | Kinase inhibitor                        | 0,750 | 0,005 | UGT1A9 substrate                           |
| 0,794 | 0,008 | 2-Dehydropantoate-2-reductase inhibitor | 0,759 | 0,016 | TP53 expression enhancer                   |

According to the program predictions, compound **M1** exhibits pronounced antitumor activity (92.4%), anticancer

activity against prostate cancer (86.8%), antimutagenic activity (78.3%), as well as other biological activities.

TABLE 3. **Predicted biological activity of compound M2.M2 (canonical structure):**  
C[C@@H]1O[C@@H](OC2=C(OC3=CC(O)=CC(O)=C3C2=O)C2=CC(O)=C(O)C(O)=C2)[C@H](O)[C@H](O)[C@H]1O

| Pa    | Pi    | Biological activity                | Pa    | Pi    | Biological activity                   |
|-------|-------|------------------------------------|-------|-------|---------------------------------------|
| 0,990 | 0,001 | Hemostatic                         | 0,972 | 0,000 | Morphine 6-dehydrogenase inhibitor    |
| 0,985 | 0,001 | Membrane permeability inhibitor    | 0,972 | 0,002 | Lipid peroxidase inhibitor            |
| 0,985 | 0,001 | Membrane integrity agonist         | 0,967 | 0,000 | Iodide peroxidase inhibitor           |
| 0,983 | 0,001 | Cardioprotectant                   | 0,964 | 0,002 | UDP-glucuronosyltransferase substrate |
| 0,979 | 0,001 | Monophenol monooxygenase inhibitor | 0,962 | 0,001 | Vasoprotector                         |
| 0,978 | 0,001 | Free radical scavenger             | 0,955 | 0,001 | Anticarcinogenic                      |
| 0,977 | 0,001 | CYP1A inducer                      | 0,954 | 0,002 | Anaphylatoxin receptor antagonist     |

According to the prediction results, compound **M2** demonstrates strong hemostatic (99.0%), cardioprotective (98.3%), vasoprotective (96.2%), and other biological properties.

TABLE 4. **Predicted biological activity of compound M3. M3 (canonical structure):**  
OC1=CC(O)=C2C(=O)C(OS(O)(=O)=O)=C(OC2=C1)C1=CC(O)=C(O)C(O)=C1

| Pa    | Pi    | Biological activity                          | Pa    | Pi    | Biological activity        |
|-------|-------|--|-------|-------|----------------------------|
| 0,991 | 0,001 | Hemostatic                                   | 0,929 | 0,001 | SULT1A3 substrate          |
| 0,958 | 0,001 | Beta-carotene 15,15'-monooxygenase inhibitor | 0,928 | 0,004 | HIF1A expression inhibitor |
| 0,959 | 0,003 | CYP2C12 substrate                            | 0,919 | 0,002 | Kinase inhibitor           |

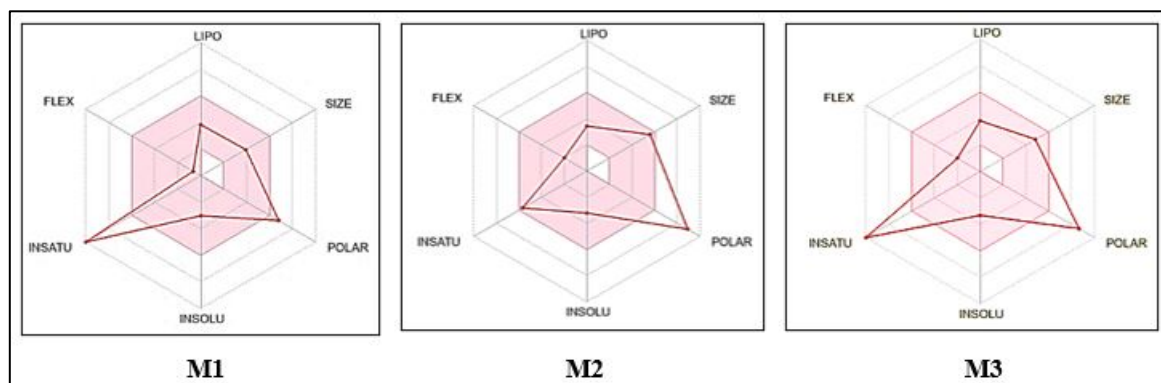
|       |       |                                 |       |       |  |
|-------|-------|---------------------------------|-------|-------|--|
| 0,955 | 0,002 | Benzoate-CoA ligase inhibitor   | 0,916 | 0,003 | Membrane permeability inhibitor                |
| 0,944 | 0,003 | Chlordecone reductase inhibitor | 0,913 | 0,003 | UDP-glucuronosyltransferase substrate          |
| 0,943 | 0,002 | Sulfotransferase substrate      | 0,878 | 0,001 | Coenzyme-B sulfoethylthiotransferase inhibitor |
| 0,931 | 0,002 | Peroxidase inhibitor            | 0,876 | 0,004 | 2-Dehydropantoate 2-reductase inhibitor        |

According to the program predictions, compound **M3** exhibits pronounced hemostatic activity (99.1%) along with other biological activities [5].

#### **Investigation of M1, M2, and M3 using the SwissADME program**

Figure 3 presents the bioavailability radar diagrams for compounds **M1**, **M2**, and **M3**. The radar plots illustrate the main physicochemical parameters affecting oral bioavailability, including LIPO (lipophilicity), SIZE (molecular size), POLAR (polarity),

INSOLU (solubility), INSATU (degree of saturation), and FLEX (molecular flexibility). Localization of the red polygon within the pink optimal area indicates a higher likelihood of drug-like properties. The distribution of these parameters differs among **M1**, **M2**, and **M3**, suggesting variations in their bioavailability potential. Overall, the radar diagrams provided by the SwissADME program allow a comparative assessment of the compounds from an ADME perspective.



**Fig 3.** Investigation of compounds **M1**, **M2**, and **M3** using the SwissADME program.

Physicochemical properties, water solubility, pharmacokinetics, lipophilicity, drug-likeness, and medicinal chemistry

parameters were predicted using the SwissADME software (Tables 5–9).

**TABLE 5. Physicochemical properties M1, M2 and M3**

| Physicochemical Properties | Substances   |              |              |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|                            | M1           | M2           | M3           |
| Molecular weight           | 318.24 g/mol | 464.38 g/mol | 398.30 g/mol |
| Num. heavy atoms           | 23           | 33           | 27           |

|                        |                       |                       |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Num. arom. heavy atoms | 16                    | 16                    | 16                    |
| Fraction Csp3          | 0.00                  | 0.29                  | 0.00                  |
| Num. rotatable bonds   | 1                     | 3                     | 3                     |
| Num. H-bond acceptors  | 8                     | 12                    | 11                    |
| Num. H-bond donors     | 6                     | 8                     | 6                     |
| Molar Refractivity     | 80.06                 | 111.02                | 90.26                 |
| TPSA                   | 151.50 Å <sup>2</sup> | 210.51 Å <sup>2</sup> | 203.34 Å <sup>2</sup> |

TABLE 6. Solubility M1, M2 and M3 in water

|                   | Substances                        |                                   |                                   |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|                   | M1                                | M2                                | M3                                |
| Log S(ESOL)       | -3.01                             | -3.20                             | -3.32                             |
| Solubility        | 3.14e-01 mg/ml;<br>9.88e-04 mol/l | 2.92e-01 mg/ml;<br>6.29e-04 mol/l | 1.91e-01 mg/ml;<br>4.80e-04 mol/l |
| Class             | Soluble                           | Soluble                           | Soluble                           |
| Log S (Ali)       | -3.96                             | -4.50                             | -5.09                             |
| Solubility        | 3.50e-02 mg/ml;<br>1.10e-04 mol/l | 1.46e-02 mg/ml;<br>3.15e-05 mol/l | 3.26e-03 mg/ml;<br>8.18e-06 mol/l |
| Class             | Soluble                           | Moderately soluble                | Moderately soluble                |
| Log S(SILICOS-IT) | -2.66                             | -1.49                             | -2.27                             |
| Solubility        | 6.98e-01 mg/ml;<br>2.19e-03 mol/l | 1.49e+01 mg/ml;<br>3.21e-02 mol/l | 2.14e+00 mg/ml;<br>5.38e-03 mol/l |
| Class             | Soluble                           | Soluble                           | Soluble                           |

TABLE 7. Pharmacokinetics M1, M2 and M3

| Pharmacokinetics                     | Substances |            |            |
|--------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                                      | M1         | M2         | M3         |
| GI absorption                        | Low        | Low        | Low        |
| BBB permeant                         | No         | No         | No         |
| P-gp substrate                       | No         | No         | Yes        |
| CYP1A2 inhibitor                     | Yes        | No         | Yes        |
| CYP2C19 inhibitor                    | No         | No         | No         |
| CYP2C9 inhibitor                     | No         | No         | No         |
| CYP2D6 inhibitor                     | No         | No         | No         |
| CYP3A4 inhibitor                     | Yes        | No         | No         |
| Log K <sub>p</sub> (skin permeation) | -7.40 cm/s | -8.77 cm/s | -7.86 cm/s |

TABLE 8. Lipophilicity M1, M2 and M3

| Substances | Lipophilicity              |                              |                             |                             |                                  | Consensus Log P <sub>ow</sub> |
|------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|            | Log P <sub>ow</sub> (LOGP) | Log P <sub>ow</sub> (XLOGP3) | Log P <sub>ow</sub> (WLOGP) | Log P <sub>ow</sub> (MLOGP) | Log P <sub>ow</sub> (SILICOS-IT) |                               |
| <b>M1</b>  | 1.08                       | 1.18                         | 1.69                        | -1.08                       | 1.06                             | 0.79                          |
| <b>M2</b>  | 1.71                       | 0.51                         | 0.19                        | -2.32                       | -0.46                            | -0.07                         |
| <b>M3</b>  | -0.43                      | 1.22                         | 2.25                        | -1.50                       | -0.52                            | 0.20                          |

TABLE 9. Medicinal chemistry prediction results M1, M2, and M3

| Substances | Medicinal Chemistry |                                     |                         |                         |
|------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
|            | PAINS               | Brenk                               | Leadlikeness            | Synthetic accessibility |
| <b>M1</b>  | 1 alert: catechol_A | 1 alert: catechol                   | Yes                     | 3.27                    |
| <b>M2</b>  | 1 alert: catechol_A | 1 alert: catechol                   | No; 1 violation: MW>350 | 5.32                    |
| <b>M3</b>  | 1 alert: catechol_A | 2 alerts: catechol, sulfonic_acid_2 | No; 1 violation: MW>350 | 3.58                    |

### Research of M1, M2 and M3 using the SwissTarget program

The SwissTarget program allows predicting macromolecular targets of a substance (Fig. 4).

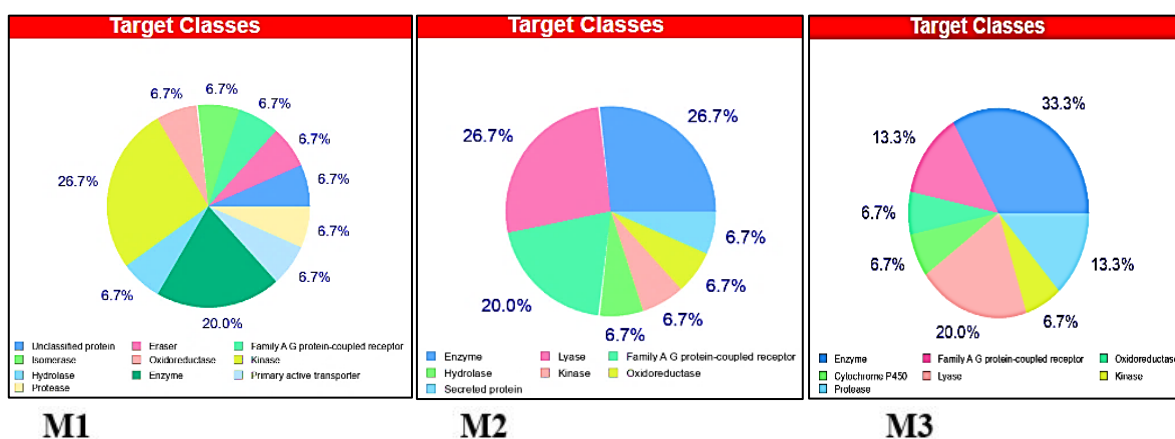


Fig.4. Macromolecular enzyme targets

Thus, it was determined that the macromolecules with which **M1** is most likely to interact are kinase (26.7%) and enzyme (20%). The macromolecules most likely to bind with **M2** are lyase (26.7%),

enzyme (26.7%), and G protein-coupled receptor family A (20%).

Considering the high antioxidant activity and the rare occurrence of compound **M3** compared to **M1** and **M2** (Table 1), special

attention was given to this compound. The macromolecule with which **M3** is most likely to bind and exhibit antioxidant properties was identified as xanthine dehydrogenase, belonging to the oxidoreductase class. Under pathological conditions such as ischemia, xanthine dehydrogenase converts into xanthine oxidase, which actively produces free radicals. It is hypothesized that **M3**, by binding to

xanthine dehydrogenase in the body, prevents the conversion of the enzyme into xanthine oxidase.

**Comparative study of M1, M2, and M3 using ADMETlab 3.0.**

This program predicted several parameters that differ from those determined by SwissADME regarding physicochemical properties (Table 10).

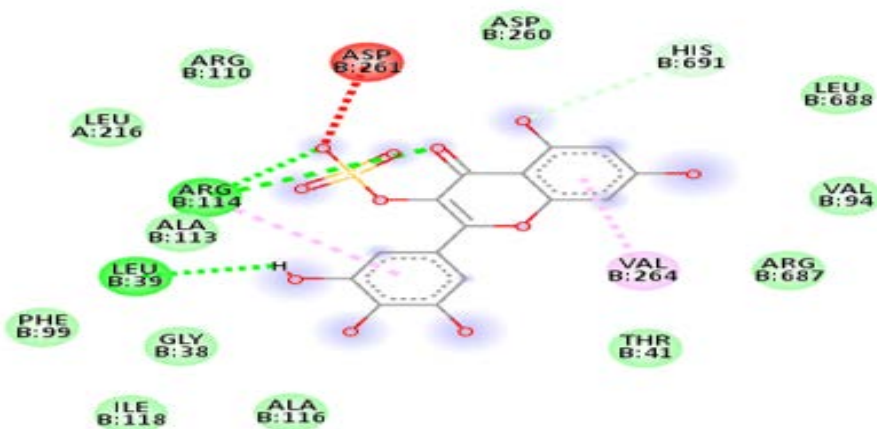
TABLE 10. Comparative physicochemical properties of M1, M2, and M3

| Physicochemical properties |          |          |          |  |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|--|
| Property                   | Value M1 | Value M2 | Value M3 | Comment  |
| nRing                      | 4.0      | 4.0      | 3.0      | Number of rings. Optimal:0~6   |
| MaxRing                    | 10.0     | 10.0     | 10.0     | Number of atoms in the biggest ring. Optimal:0~18  |
| nHet                       | 12.0     | 12.0     | 12.0     | Number of heteroatoms. Optimal:1~15  |
| fChar                      | 0.0      | 0.0      | 0.0      | Formal charge. Optimal:-4 ~4   |
| nRig                       | 24.0     | 24.0     | 20.0     | Number of rigid bonds. Optimal:0~30  |
| Flexibility                | 0.125    | 0.125    | 0.15     | Flexibility = nRot /nRig   |
| Stereo Centers             | 5.0      | 5.0      | 0.0      | Stereo Centers. Optimal: ≤ 2   |
| Melting point              | 230.593  | 230.593  | 299.085  | Melting points below 25°C are classified as liquids, while melting points above 25°C are classified as solids. |
| Boiling point              | 319.71   | 319.71   | 386.217  | A normal boiling point below 25°C is categorized as a gas.   |

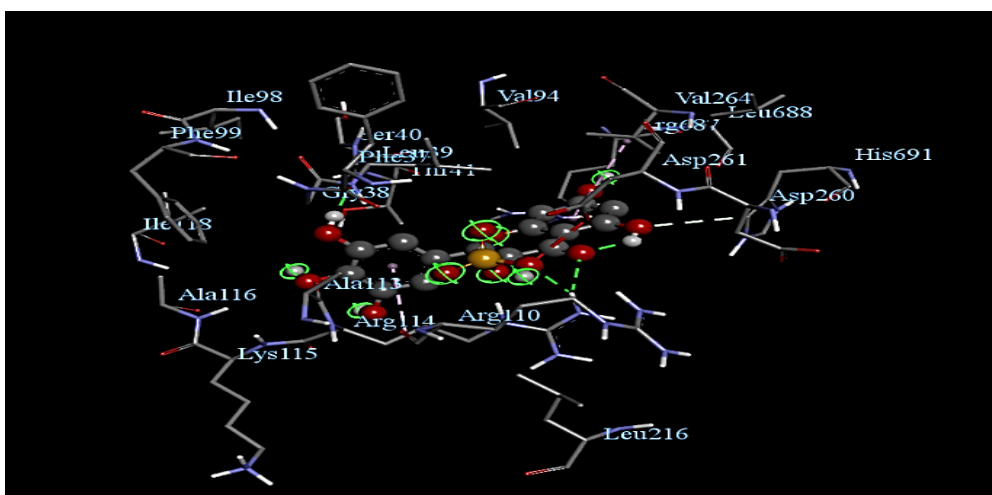
**Molecular docking of compound M3**

The compound **M3** was used as the ligand, while xanthine dehydrogenase was selected as the macromolecular target. The 2D interaction structure is presented in

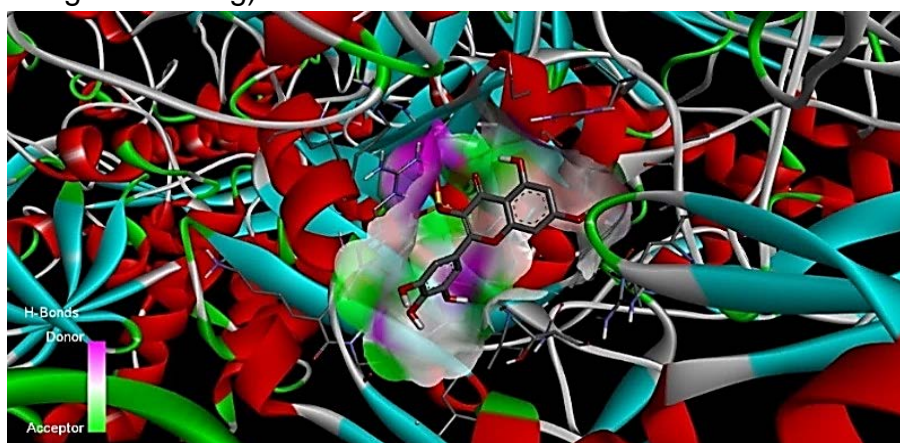
Figure 5, and the 3D structures are shown in Figures 6 and 7. The binding energy of compound **M3** upon interaction with the xanthine dehydrogenase enzyme is provided in Table 11.



**Fig. 5.** 2D Structure of the docking result of compound **M3** with the xanthine dehydrogenase enzyme



**Fig. 6.** 3D Structure of the interaction between compound **M3** and the xanthine dehydrogenase enzyme (protein–ligand binding)



**Fig. 7.** 3D Structure of the docking result of compound **M3** with the xanthine dehydrogenase enzyme

**TABLE 11. Binding energy of the interaction between compound M3 and the xanthine dehydrogenase enzyme (Protein–ligand complex)**

| Mode | Affinity, kcal/mol | Dist from best mode |                   |
|------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
|      |                    | RMSD, Å rmsd l.b.   | RMSD, Å rmsd u.b. |
|      |                    |                     |                   |

|   |      |        |        |
|---|------|--------|--------|
| 1 | -7.7 | 0.000  | 0.000  |
| 2 | -7.4 | 2.344  | 3.817  |
| 3 | -7.3 | 2.487  | 7.184  |
| 4 | -7.2 | 2.440  | 4.079  |
| 5 | -7.2 | 2.024  | 6.603  |
| 6 | -7.1 | 34.574 | 35.835 |
| 7 | -6.7 | 23.384 | 25.440 |
| 8 | -6.7 | 3.128  | 5.012  |
| 9 | -6.7 | 17.218 | 21.753 |

Interaction of molecule **M3** (ligand) with xanthine dehydrogenase enzyme in 2D format. The analysis revealed the following key interactions:

- 1. Van der Waals interactions:** Molecule **M3** forms weak Van der Waals contacts with several amino acid residues, primarily with Leu (A:216, B:688), Val (B:94, B:264), Ile (B:118), Ala (B:116), Gly (B:38), and Phe (B:99). These interactions contribute to the stable binding of the ligand within the enzyme's active site.
- 2. Hydrogen bonds:** Hydrogen bonds are formed between molecule **M3** and the amino acid residues Arg (B:110, B:114). These bonds provide high selectivity for ligand binding at the active site and help stabilize the complex.
- 3. Carbonhydrogen bonds:** The figure illustrates carbon-hydrogen bonds formed between the aromatic and hydroxyl groups of the ligand and the residues Val (B:264) and Thr (B:41).
- 4.  $\pi$ -alkyl interactions:**  $\pi$ -Alkyl interactions occur between the aromatic  $\pi$ -systems and alkyl groups with residues Ala (B:113) and Arg (B:114). These hydrophobic interactions enhance the ligand's firm positioning in the active center.

#### 5. **Negative (unfavorable) interaction:**

It is important to note that a negative interaction is observed with residue Asp (B: 261), which may cause electrostatic repulsion of a part of the ligand molecule and potentially weaken the binding strength.

Overall, molecule **M3** binds to the active site of xanthine dehydrogenase through several different interaction mechanisms. Hydrogen bonds and  $\pi$ -alkyl interactions play a particularly significant role in complex stabilization. Van der Waals and carbon-hydrogen contacts provide additional stabilizing effects. Although the negative interaction may partially affect the binding energy, the overall interaction profile indicates strong and specific binding of **M3** to the enzyme.

#### **CONCLUSION**

In this study has been carried out the comparative *in vitro* investigation of the antioxidant properties, as well as *in silico* assessment of the biological activity, physicochemical properties, solubility, bioavailability, pharmacokinetic parameters, and drug-likeness of flavonoids **M1**, **M2**, and **M3** isolated from *Limonium caspium* species growing along the Caspian Sea coast in Azerbaijan.

*In vitro* antioxidant activity testing.

The antioxidant activities of flavonoids **M1**, **M2**, and **M3** were examined using the DPPH assay. As a result of the analysis, the

IC<sub>50</sub> antioxidant activity values were calculated, and the following results were obtained: **M1** (7.81 µg/ml), **M2** (6.34 µg/ml), and **M3** (6.2 µg/ml), indicating that the substances possess a strong antioxidant effect. Gallic acid was used as a positive control with an IC<sub>50</sub> value of 3.48 µg/mL.

*In silico biological activity study.*

Computational tools including PASS Online, SwissADME, SwissTarget, and ADMETlab 3.0 were applied to predict the biological activities of flavonoids **M1**, **M2**, and **M3**. According to PASS Online predictions, **M1** exhibits significant antitumor activity (92.4%), anticancer activity against prostate cancer (86.8%), antimutagenic activity (78.3%), among other effects. **M2** demonstrated high hemostatic (99.0%), cardioprotective (98.3%), vasoprotective (96.2%), and additional activities. **M3** showed pronounced hemostatic activity (99.1%) along with other notable biological properties. Molecular docking was performed using AutoDock Vina 4.2, where compound **M3** was used as the ligand and xanthine dehydrogenase was selected as the protein target. It is suggested that **M3** may bind to xanthine dehydrogenase in the body, potentially preventing its conversion into xanthine oxidase.

## REFERENCES

1. Flora of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan SSR Academy of Sciences, Baku, Vol. 7, 1952, 317 p.
2. E.A. Qarayev, S.A. Pashayeva, K.F. Huseynquliyeva, I.U. Nesirli. Antioxidant Activity and Assay Methods in Toxicology. Azerbaijan Medical University Journal, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2025, pp. 5–20. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.28942/atuj.v5i1y2025.116>
3. C. Breaud, L. Lallemand, G. Mares, F. Mabrouki, M. Bertolotti, Ch. Simmler, S. Greff, M. Mauduit, G. Herbette, E. Garayev, Ch. Lavergne, M. Cesari, S. Bun-Llopet, B. Béatrice, and E. Garayev. LC-MS Based Phytochemical Profiling Towards the Identification of Antioxidant Markers in Some Endemic Aloe Species from Mascarenelslands. *Antioxidants*, 12(1), 50, 2023DOI:<https://doi.org/10.3390/antiox12010050>
4. I. Gulcin, S.H. Alwasel. DPPH Radical Scavenging Assay. *Processes*, 11(8), 2248, 2023.DOI:<https://doi.org/10.3390/pr11082248>
5. E.A. Qarayev, S.A. Pashayeva, R.A. Jafarova, F.E. Guliyev, N.Sh. Rasulov, E.L. Ahmadov, N.S. Huseynova, Sh.B. Aliyeva. *In Silico* and *In Vivo* Study of Biological Activity of Flavonoids from *Limonium caspium* Willd. of the Azerbaijan Flora. Azerbaijan Medical Journal, 2025, No.4, p p.124-131.DOI: <https://doi.org/10.34921/amj.2025.4.020>

## AZƏRBAYCANDA BİTƏN *LIMONIUM CASPIUM* BİTKİSİNDƏN ALINMIŞ FLAVONOİDLƏRİN *IN VITRO* ANTIOKSİDANT AKTİVLİYİNİN VƏ *IN SILICO* BİOLOJİ AKTİVLİYİNİN TƏDQIQI

Paşayeva S.A.<sup>1\*</sup>, Nəsirli İ.Ü.<sup>1</sup>, Əliyeva Ş.B.<sup>1</sup>, Əhmədov E.L.<sup>1</sup>, Rəsulov N.Ş. <sup>1</sup>, Quliyev F.Ə.<sup>1</sup>, Bədəlova K.K.<sup>1</sup>, Qarayev E.E. <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup>Azərbaycan Tibb Universiteti, Əczaçılıq toksikologiyası və kimya kafedrası, Bakı, Azərbaycan \*E-mail: [sarapasayeva@gmail.com](mailto:sarapasayeva@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Eks–Marsel Universiteti, CNRS 7263, IRD 237, Avinyon Universiteti, IMBE, Jan Mulyen bulvarı, 27, Farmakognosiya və etno-farmakologiya şöbəsi, Əczaçılıq fakültəsi, 13385 Marsel, Fransa E-mail: [elnur.garayev@univ-amu.fr](mailto:elnur.garayev@univ-amu.fr)

### Xülasə

Azərbaycan florasından *Limonium caspium* (Willd.) P.Fourn (*Plumbaginaceae*) köklərindən alınmış mirisetin (**M1**), mirisitrin (**M2**) və mirisetin-3'-O-sulfat (**M3**) flavonoidlərinin antioksidant xassələri *in vitro* şəraitdə müqayisəli şəkildə öyrənilmiş, bioloji aktivlikləri isə *in silico* üsullarla (PASS Online, ProTox 3.0, SwissADME, SwissTarget və ADMETlab 3.0) proqnozlaşdırılmışdır. Bundan əlavə, molekulyar dokinq proqramı vasitəsilə ligand–makromolekul qarşılıqlı təsirləri araşdırılmışdır. DPPH testi ilə maddələrin IC<sub>50</sub> antioksidant fəallıqları (mkq/ml) hesablanmışdır: **M1** – 7,81; **M2** – 6,34; **M3** – 6,2. Proqnozlaşdırılmışdır ki, **M1** yüksək şiş əleyhinə aktivliyə (%92,4), **M2** (%99,0) və **M3** (%99,1) isə yüksək hemostatik (qankəsici) xüsusiyyətlərə malikdir.

Molekulyar dokinq AutoDock Vina 4.2 proqramından istifadə edilməklə həyata keçirilmişdir. Tədqiq olunan ligand kimi **M3** birləşməsi, hədəf zülal kimi isə ksantindehidrogenaza seçilmişdir. **M3** molekulu ksantindehidrogenaza fermentinin aktiv mərkəzi ilə müxtəlif qarşılıqlı təsir mexanizmləri vasitəsilə bağlanmışdır və qarşılıqlı təsirlərin ümumi profili **M3**-ün fermentlə güclü və spesifik bağlanması göstərir.

**Açar sözlər:** *Limonium caspium* (Willd.) P.Fourn., mirisetin, mirisitrin, mirisetin 3'-O-sulfat, antioksidantlıq, *in silico*, molekulyar dokinq, *in vitro*

## ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ *IN VITRO* ANTIОКСИДАНТНОЙ АКТИВНОСТИ И *IN SILICO* БИОЛОГИЧЕСКОЙ АКТИВНОСТИ ФЛАВОНОИДОВ *LIMONIUM CASPIUM*, ПРОИЗРАСТАЮЩЕГО В АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНЕ

Пашаева С.А.<sup>1\*</sup>, Насирли И.У.<sup>1</sup>, Алиева Ш.В.<sup>1</sup>, Ахмадов Э.Л.<sup>1</sup>, Расулов Н.Ш.<sup>1</sup>, Гулиев Ф.А.<sup>1</sup>, Бадалова К.К.<sup>1</sup>, Гараев Э.Э.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup>Азербайджанский Медицинский Университет, кафедра фармацевтической токсикологии и химии, Баку, Азербайджан \*E-mail: [sarapasayeva@gmail.com](mailto:sarapasayeva@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Университет Экс-Марсель, CNRS 7263, IRD 237, Университет Авиньона, IMBE, бульвар Жан Мулен, 27, отдел Фармакогнозии и этнофармакологии, Фармацевтический факультет, 13385 Марсель, Франция E-mail: [elnur.garayev@univ-amu.fr](mailto:elnur.garayev@univ-amu.fr)

### Резюме

Антиоксидантные свойства флавоноидов мирицетина (**M1**), мирицитрина (**M2**) и мирицетин-3'-О-сульфата (**M3**), выделенных из корней *Limonium caspium* (Willd.) P.Fourn (*Plumbaginaceae*) из флоры Азербайджана были сравнительно изучены *in vitro*, а биологическая активность *in silico* (PASS Online, ProTox 3.0, SwissADME, SwissTarget и ADMETlab 3.0). Также изучены взаимоотношения лиганд – макромолекула с помощью

программы молекулярного докинга. Методом DPPH рассчитана антиоксидантная активность IC50 веществ (мкг/мл): **M1**(7.81), **M2**(6.34) и **M3**(6.2). Предсказано, что **M1** обладает (%) выраженными противоопухолевыми (92.4), а **M2** (99.0) и **M3** (99.1) кровоостанавливающими свойствами.

Молекулярный докинг был выполнен с использованием программы AutoDock Vina 4.2. В качестве исследуемого лиганда использовалось соединение **M3**, а в качестве белка-мишени была выбрана ксантиндегидрогеназа. Молекула **M3** связывается с активным сайтом фермента ксантиндегидрогеназы посредством нескольких различных механизмов взаимодействия и общий профиль взаимодействий свидетельствует о сильном и специфическом связывании **M3** с ферментом.

**Ключевые слова:** *Limonium caspium* (Willd.) P. Fourn., мирицетин, мирицитрин, мирицетин-3'-О-сульфат, антиоксидантность, *in silico*, молекулярный докинг, *in vitro*.