



Chapter

Antiparasitic, Antibacterial and Antifungal Properties of Essential Oils Obtained from Medicinal Plants Available in the Southeast Asian Region

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ABSTRACT

According to several reports, the annual deaths recorded worldwide due to infection caused by resistant bacteria, fungi and parasite were > 0.75-, > 1.5- and > 9.0-million deaths, respectively, which seems to indicate their significant impact on human health. These could be attributed to the rising resistance-, undesirable side effects-, limited availability- and high costs-of antimicrobial or antiparasitic drugs. These have triggered scientists to look for new antimicrobial and antiparasitic substitutions from various sources including medicinal plants. Taking into consideration that the Southeast Asia region contain one of the greatest biodiversity in the world with enormous diversity of its flora, it could act as a vast reservoir for plant-derived drug discovery. Interestingly, essential oils, which consist of volatile and liquid aroma compounds, are plant-derived products that have been used traditionally as medicine in this region to treat various types of illnesses since time immemorial and are scientifically proven to possess therapeutic values. In conclusion, this chapter has provided an insight into the current progress on research related to the application of essential oils as antimicrobial agents (i.e., antiparasitic, antibacterial, and antifungal activities) within the Southeast Asian region for future drug development.