

Potential of MK615, an extract from heat-concentrate of *Prunus mume*, as a medicinal material

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Abstract

Japanese apricot (*Prunus mume* Siebold et Zuccarini) is known as ume in Japan, where it has been used extensively for centuries as a traditional food and folk medicine. "MK615," an extract from the heat concentrate of ume juice, contains several ume-derived triterpenoids, such as oleanolic acid and ursolic acid, and its potential as a medicinal material is being investigated. It has been reported that MK615 inhibits cell growth and induces cell death on several tumor cell lines (*in vitro*). It has also been shown that MK615 suppresses the production of proinflammatory cytokines (such as TNF- α and IL-6) from LPS-stimulated macrophage-like cells and that it also has anti-inflammatory properties. Recently, the clinical effect with regard to the hepatoprotective activity of MK615 has been reported. In this review, we summarize the biological activities of MK615, focusing on its anti-tumor, anti-inflammatory, and hepatoprotective activities, and discuss its potential as a medicinal material.

Key words : MK615, Japanese apricot, anti-tumor/anti-cancer, anti-inflammation, hepatoprotection, triterpenoid