

Effect of Watermelon (*Citrullus lanatus*) Flesh Extract on Sexual Behavior of Male Rats

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ABSTRACT

*The effects of red watermelon (*Citrullus lanatus*) flesh extract on male sexual behavior as well as its adverse effects were investigated using animal models. The suspension of the flesh extract was administered orally at doses of 100, 500 and 1000 mg/kg to different groups of male rats (n = 5) daily for 22 days. The receptive female rats were prepared by hormonal treatment. The mating behavior was investigated and compared with the standard reference drug, sildenafil citrate. The adverse effects of the plant extract were also evaluated by observing at least once daily for any sign of toxicity, water and food intake, stress and changes in behavior. The animal procedures were conducted in accordance with the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, Ubon Ratchathani Rajabhat University, Thailand. The results indicated that oral administration of watermelon flesh extract caused a significant increase in Mounting Frequency, Intromission Frequency and Ejaculatory Latency in first and second series and caused a significant decrease in the Mounting Latency and Intromission Latency ($P < 0.05$). The extract at a dose of 1000 mg/kg did not produce clinical signs of toxicity or mortality in any of animals during the treatment duration. The weight of body and reproductive organs showed no significant difference in the flesh extract groups compared to the control group ($P > 0.05$). Based on the aphrodisiac property of watermelon in animal models observed in this present study, this plant may be useful for men with erectile dysfunction. In addition, watermelon flesh extract did not produce undesirable effects on male rats, indicating that its short-term use is apparently safe. Thus, our findings support the use of watermelon flesh for increasing potency in males.*

Keywords: *Citrullus lanatus*, Watermelon, Sexual behavior, Aphrodisiac, Male rats