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## Anti-tumor effect of *Cordyceps militaris* in HCV-infected human hepatocarcinoma 7.5 cells

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### Abstract

Cordyceps extract has been reported to have various pharmacological activities including an anti-cancer effect. We investigated the inhibitory effect of *Cordyceps militaris* on hepatitis C virus-infected human hepatocarcinoma 7.5 cells (J6/JFH1-huh 7.5 cells). The huh7.5 cells with or without HCV infection were treated with various concentrations of ethanol extract of *Cordyceps militaris* (CME) for 48 h and the cytotoxicity was measured by CCK-8 assay. Both J6/JFH1-huh7.5 cells and huh7.5 cells were highly susceptible to CME. To examine the molecular mechanisms of the inhibitory effect on huh7.5 cells, the effect of CME on cell apoptosis was measured using flow cytometry and the expressions of p53, Bim, Bax, PARP, (cleaved) caspase-9, and (cleaved) caspase-3 in huh 7.5 cells were detected by western blot assays. CME significantly increased early apoptosis and up-regulated the expression of Bim, Bax, cleaved PARP, cleaved caspase 9 and cleaved caspase-3. We also found the decrease of HCV Core or NS3 protein by CME in HCV-infected huh 7.5 cells.

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