Acta Farm. Bonaerense **17** (2): 131-4 (1998)
Recibido el 21 de agosto de 1997
Aceptado el 12 de febrero de 1998

Diuretic Activity of *Artemisia annua* L. Extracts

Luis BRUNO BLANCH [1]*, Mónica BROS [1],
Osvaldo BALDINI [1] y Etile SPEGAZZINI [2]

[1] *Area Diseño de Fármacos,* [2] *Area Farmacobotánica, División Farmacia,*
Depto. de Ciencias Biológicas, Facultad de Ciencias Exactas,
Universidad Nacional de La Plata, C.C. 243 , 1900 La Plata, Argentina.

SUMMARY. Different *Artemisia annua* L. extracts were evaluated and tested in rats as diuretics and saluretics. The methanolic extract caused an increase in the urine volume and a selective saluretic effect. Basic and neutral fractions produced a significant increase of the urine volume and of its electrolytes content, while the total methanol extract show diuretic and saluretic activity, acting as potassium economizer.
RESUMEN. "Actividad Diuretica de Extractos de *Artemisia annua* L.". Diferentes extractos metanólicos obtenidos de *Artemisia annua* L., fraccionados según su comportamiento ácido, básico o neutro, fueron evaluados y testeados en ratas como diuréticos y saluréticos. Las fracciones básica y neutra producen un significativo aumento de la diurésis y en el contenido de electrolitos urinarios, mientras que el extracto metanólico total presenta actividad diurética y salurética, actuando como economizador de potasio respecto a las otras dos fracciones activas.

INTRODUCTION

Synthetic drugs, used at present as diuretic agents, frequently produce several collateral effects such as, for instance, hyperglycemia [1], ototoxicity [2], and hypokalemia [3]. These limitations, not yet resolved, open a perspective to the introduction of new chemical structures that may surpass, therapeutically, those existing now. On the basis of these considerations, we have decided to study some species belonging to the flora of South America in order to find new diuretic agents. We have chosen *Artemisia annua* L. as the first specie to be studied.

The genus *Artemisia* includes a great number of species [4], some of them used in traditional medicine. Sesquiterpene lactones [5,6] and other compounds as flavonoids [7], alkaloids, tannins and volatile oils [8], are found among their constituents.

Artemisia annua L. is a herb that belongs to the Compositae family which, originally belonging to Asia (known as Quinghao), is nowadays spread to Europe and America [9]. It has been used for centuries in the traditional Chinese medicine

KEY WORDS: Artemisia annua, Diuretic, Potassium economizer, Saluretic,.
PALABRAS CLAVE: Artemisia annua, Diurético, Economizador de potasio, Salurético.

* To whom correspondence should be addressed.