EXPLORING THE UNDERLYING MECHANISMS OF AN HERBAL PREPARATION ON GASTRIC MOTILITY IN FUNCTIONAL DYSPEPSIA

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A study of Amara oral drops, a nine-herb extract preparation, found it relaxed guinea-pig gastric fundus muscle strips ex vivo, most likely by modulating muscarinic M2 and opioid μ receptors, suggesting potential utility in functional dyspepsia with impaired gastric accommodation.

KEY POINTS

- The ethanol-free whole extract caused significant relaxation of guinea-pig fundus muscle strips at the highest concentrations tested (3.5 to 1,000 μg/mL) compared to vehicle ($p < 0.001$).
- In vitro assays showed the whole extract inhibited intracellular cAMP release at muscarinic M2 and opioid μ (OP1) receptors (IC50 219 and 304 μg/mL, respectively), while serotonin and M3 receptors were not affected.
- Individual herbal extracts (Juniperus, Salvia, Imperatoria, Gentiana, Artemisia, Cichorium) showed receptor-specific activity, with IC50 values ranging from 20 to 104 μg/mL at M2 or OP1 receptors.
- The authors suggest the individual extracts may act together to increase overall efficacy and that Amara oral drops could be an efficient treatment for functional dyspepsia patients with impaired gastric accommodation.
- All authors are employees of Weleda AG, the manufacturer of Amara oral drops.

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