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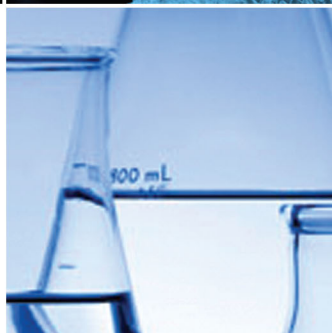
Volume 6



Editors:

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Frontiers in Anti-Infective Drug Discovery

(Volume 6)

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Frontiers in Anti-Infective Drug Discovery

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CONTENTS

PREFACE	i
LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS	iv
CHAPTER 1 ALTERNATIVE ANTI-INFECTIVE/ANTI-INFLAMMATORY THERAPEUTIC OPTIONS FOR FIGHTING ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE	1
<i>Oci f c'POVUqrenk'Gwrj t qu{pk'UDMqwuqwt cnk'T gqi i kqu'MDMc vukr-ku 'Rcxrtqu'T t'O'O {ugtrku O ctkkc'COEj cv{kj qo c'c'pfi 'Cpcwucuk'CORcpw/cnk'</i>	
1. ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE (AD)	2
1.1. Epidemiology	2
1.2. Pathogenesis	3
1.3. Diagnosis	4
1.3.1. <i>Monoclonal Antibodies in the Diagnosis of AD</i>	5
1.4. Treatment	5
2. INFECTION AND INFLAMMATORY RESPONSE	7
3. RELEVANCE OF INFECTION/INFLAMMATION TO AD PATHOGENESIS	8
3.1. The Role of the Innate Immune System in AD Brain	8
3.2. Inflammation in the Brain	9
3.3. Neuro-Inflammation in AD	10
3.4. The Role of Microglia	11
3.5. Oxidative Stress in the Brain	12
3.6. Oxidative Stress and Inflammation	13
3.7. Toll-like Receptors as Major Players in Neurodegeneration	13
3.8. TLRs in AD	14
3.9. Conclusions	15
4. INFECTIVE CAUSES	15
4.1. Bacteria	17
4.1.1. <i>Bacteria and CNS Association</i>	17
4.1.2. <i>Microbial-Generated Amyloids</i>	21
4.1.3. <i>The Amyloid Peptides of AD and Endotoxin-mediated Inflammation</i>	22
4.1.4. <i>Molecular Mimicry</i>	22
4.2. Viruses	26
4.3. Fungi	28
5. INFLAMMATORY FACTORS	30
5.1. LPSs-Induced Neuro-Inflammation	30
5.1.1. <i>LPSs: Structure, Role, Biological Effects</i>	30
5.1.2. <i>LPSs Signal Transduction via Toll-Like Receptor 4 (TLR4)</i>	31
5.1.3. <i>LPS's Effect on the Permeability of the BBB</i>	33
5.1.4. <i>Neuro-Inflammation and Apoptosis Due to LPSs</i>	35
5.1.5. <i>Concluding Remarks - Probable Link to AD</i>	37
6. DIETARY INTERVENTIONS	39
6.1. Nutrition (Overview)	39
6.1.1. <i>Prebiotics</i>	40
6.1.2. <i>Probiotics</i>	47
6.2. Natural Products	53
6.2.1. <i>Phenolic Compounds</i>	53
6.3. Mediterranean Diet (MeDi) and Asian Diet (AsDi)	78
6.3.1. <i>Diet Composition</i>	82
7. THERAPEUTIC/PREVENTIVE INTERVENTIONS	86
7.1. Future Medications	86

7.1.1. Anti-Inflammatory Drugs	86
7.1.2. Anti-Amyloid Treatment	87
8. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS	102
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	103
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	103
REFERENCES	103
CHAPTER 2 THE MENACE OF MALARIA: AN OVERVIEW	154
<i>Ukvwkj 'Ci tcy cn'J chuc'Cj o cf.'Cdj kuj gniCt{c.'Rcpnc'l'Fy kxgf k'c'p' 'CpklMwo ct 'Fy kxgf k</i>	
INTRODUCTION	155
Methods	156
MALARIA “A COMPLEX PARASITIC DISEASE”	157
Life Cycle of the Malaria Parasite	157
Symptoms	158
Pathophysiology	158
Risk Factors	159
PREVENTIVE MEASURES	160
Insecticide-Treated Mosquito Nets	160
<i>Indoor Residual Spraying</i>	161
<i>Larval Control</i>	162
TREATMENT OF MALARIA	162
Breakthrough in Anti-Malarials Agents: History of Cinchona	164
<i>Other Antimalarials from Cinchona</i>	165
Artemisinin Derivatives	166
<i>Mode of Action and Potential Cellular Targets of Artemisinins</i>	166
PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH MALARIA CHEMOTHERAPY	168
Malaria Treatment Failure	169
Antimalarial Drug Resistance	170
<i>Mechanisms of Antimalarial Drug Resistance</i>	170
WHO GUIDELINES FOR THE TREATMENT OF MALARIA	172
Treatment of Uncomplicated P. Falciparum Malaria	173
<i>Treatment of Recurrent Uncomplicated Falciparum Malaria</i>	173
Treatment of Uncomplicated P. Falciparum Malaria in Special Risk Groups	174
Treatment of Uncomplicated Malaria Caused by P. Vivax, P. Ovale, P. Malariae or P. Knowlesi	174
<i>Blood Stage Infection</i>	174
<i>Pregnant and Breast Feeding Women</i>	175
Treatment of Severe Malaria	175
CURRENT LEADS IN MALARIA CHEMOTHERAPY	175
Leads from Synthetic Chemistry	175
Newer Antimalarials from Natural Sources	178
VACCINES FOR THE PREVENTION OF MALARIA	179
Sporozoites and Pre-erythrocytic Vaccines	180
The Erythrocytic Vaccines	181
Transmission-Blocking Vaccines	182
Anti-Disease Vaccination	182
CONTRIBUTION OF CDRI IN ANTIMALARIAL RESEARCH	182
<i>Arteether (ART)</i>	182
<i>α/β Artelinate</i>	184
<i>Bulaquine (CDRI 80/53)</i>	184

<i>CDRI 87/209</i>	185
<i>CDRI 99/411</i>	185
ROLE OF NANO-FORMULATIONS IN MALARIA CHEMOTHERAPY	186
Solid Lipid Nanoparticles (SLN) for Malaria Chemotherapy	187
<i>Applications of SLN in Malaria</i>	188
Silver Nanoparticles for Malaria Chemotherapy	188
<i>AgNPs Applied in the Control of Malaria</i>	189
Nanoemulsions for Malaria Chemotherapy	189
<i>Stability of NEs</i>	190
<i>Advantages of NEs</i>	190
<i>Disadvantages of NEs</i>	191
<i>Applications of NEs in Malaria</i>	191
Self Micro Emulsifying Drug Delivery Systems (SMEDDS)	192
<i>Excipients Selection</i>	193
<i>Evaluation of SMEDDS</i>	193
<i>Applications of SMEDDS in Malaria</i>	194
CONCLUSIONS	194
FUTURE PERSPECTIVES	195
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	196
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	196
REFERENCES	196
CHAPTER 3 CHEMICAL STRUCTURES AND CLASSIFICATION OF ANTI-MICROBIAL DRUGS	214
<i>HO\ gj tc 'MÃ±Ãncl{ 'cpl 'J cucp 'MÃ±Ãncl{</i>	
INTRODUCTION	215
CLASSIFICATION OF ANTIBIOTICS	219
β-Lactam Antibiotics	225
Macrolide Antibiotics	231
Quinolones	234
Tetracyclines	236
Aminoglycosides	239
Beta-Lactam Antibiotics and Inhibitors	242
Macrolides	247
Fluoroquinolones	249
Tetracyclines	251
Aminoglycosides	253
Miscellaneous Anti-Infective Drugs	257
CONCLUDING REMARKS	266
ABBREVIATIONS	267
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	269
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	269
REFERENCES	269
CHAPTER 4 ANTITUBERCULAR AGENTS AND TUBERCULAR VACCINES IN CLINICAL TRIALS	282
<i>Oqj co o gf 'Lcy gf 'Cj ucp</i>	
INTRODUCTION	282
CURRENT THERAPY	283
Classification of Antitubercular Drugs	285
WHO Grouping of Anti-Tubercular Drugs	286
<i>Ethambutol</i>	286

<i>Isoniazid</i>	287
<i>Pyrazinamide</i>	287
<i>Rifamycins</i>	288
<i>Streptomycin</i>	288
<i>Ethionamide</i>	289
<i>Kanamycin</i>	289
<i>Amikacin</i>	290
<i>Viomycin</i>	290
<i>Capreomycin</i>	291
<i>Enviomycin</i>	291
<i>Ciprofloxacin</i>	292
<i>Levofloxacin</i>	292
<i>Moxifloxacin (MXF)</i>	293
<i>Cycloserine</i>	294
<i>p-Amino-salicylic Acid</i>	294
<i>Thiacetazone</i>	295
ANTITUBERCULAR DRUGS IN CLINICAL TRIALS	295
Discovery: Lead Optimization	296
Preclinical Development	296
<i>Early Stage Development</i>	296
<i>TB1166</i>	300
<i>SQ609</i>	301
<i>Toxicity Assessment</i>	301
<i>BTZ043</i>	302
Clinical Development	303
<i>OPC-167832</i>	303
<i>Q203</i>	303
<i>PBTZ169</i>	304
<i>SQ109</i>	305
<i>Nitazoxanide</i>	306
<i>Clofazimine</i>	307
<i>Meprophenem/ Clavulanate</i>	307
<i>Fluoroquinolones</i>	308
<i>Levofloxacin</i>	308
<i>Moxifloxacin</i>	309
<i>Oxazolidinone (PNU-100480)</i>	310
<i>Nitroimidazole (Delamanid and Pretomanid)</i>	312
<i>Pretomanid (PA-824)</i>	312
<i>Delamanid (OPC-67683)</i>	313
<i>Diarylquinoline (Bedaquiline)</i>	315
MODE OF ACTION OF ANTITUBERCULAR DRUGS	316
TUBERCULAR VACCINES IN CLINICAL TRIALS	318
MOLECULAR TUBERCULOSIS DIAGNOSTICS	319
FUTURE PROSPECT	321
CONCLUSION	322
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	323
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	323
ABBREVIATIONS	323
REFERENCES	324

CHAPTER 5 RECENT ADVANCES IN MOLECULAR SCAFFOLDS TOWARDS THE IDENTIFICATION OF NOVEL RECEPTORS IN THE TREATMENT OF HEPATITIS DISEASES	335
<i>Pcuggo 'Cj o gf</i>	
1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION	336
2. HEPATITIS A	336
3. HEPATITIS B	337
3.1. Introduction	337
3.2. HBV Life Cycle	342
3.3. Different Routes of HBV Transmission	342
3.3.1. Acute Hepatitis	343
3.3.2. Chronic Hepatitis	343
3.4. Drugs Targets/Receptors in Cellular Factors	343
3.5. HBV Receptors	344
3.5.1. Cp and cccDNA as Targets	344
3.6. Concerns about Receptor-Based Therapeutic Strategies	346
3.6.1. NTCP-Blocking Agents (Viral Entry Inhibitors)	346
3.6.2. Immunoregulators	346
3.6.3. Interferon (IFN)	346
3.6.4. Thymosin- α 1	347
3.6.5. Cytokines	347
3.6.6. La Protein Inhibitor (HBSC11)	347
3.6.7. Anti-HBV Agents Derived from Natural Products	347
3.6.8. Phyllanthus Extract and Related Active Compounds (Lignans and Phenols)	348
3.6.9. Curcumin	349
3.6.10. Oxymatrine	353
3.6.11. Wogonin and Its Analogues	353
3.6.12. Helioxanthin and Its Analogues	354
3.6.13. Artemisinin and Its Analogues	354
3.6.14. Alisol Analogues	355
3.6.15. Matrine and Its Analogues	356
3.6.16. Acutumidine and Its Analogues	357
3.6.17. Chrysophanol and Its Analogues	357
3.6.18. Dehydrocavidine and Its Analogues	358
3.6.19. Triterpenoid Saponin	358
3.6.20. Protocatechuic Aldehyde	359
3.6.21. Caudatin and Its Analogues	359
3.6.22. Hemslecin A and Its Analogues	360
3.7. Synthetic Compounds	362
3.7.1. 2,2-Bisheterocycles	362
3.7.2. Acrylamide Derivatives	362
3.7.3. Imino Sugars	363
3.7.4. 2,5-Pyridine Dicarboxylic Acid Derivatives	364
3.7.5. Triazoles	364
3.7.6. Benzimidazoles	365
3.7.8. Indoles	367
3.7.9. Quinolin-2-ones and Benzodiazepine-2-ones	367
3.7.10. Quinolines	368
3.7.11. Dihydropyrimidines	369
3.7.12. Qaphthoquinones	370

3.8. Future Perspectives	373
4. HEPATITIS C	374
4.1. Introduction	374
4.2. HCV Life Cycle	377
4.3. Different Routes of HCV Transmission	377
4.3.1. <i>Acute Hepatitis</i>	378
4.3.2. <i>Chronic Hepatitis C</i>	379
4.4. Drugs Targets/Receptors in Cellular Factors	379
4.5. Anti-HCV Agents Derived from Natural and Synthetic Products	379
4.6. HCV NS3/4A Protease Inhibitors	379
4.6.1. <i>Natural Products</i>	380
4.6.2. <i>Silymarin/Silibinin</i>	384
4.6.3. <i>(-)-Epigallocatechin-3-gallate (EGCG)</i>	384
4.6.7. <i>Ladanein</i>	385
4.6.8. <i>Naringenin</i>	385
4.6.9. <i>Quercetin</i>	386
4.6.10. <i>Luteolin and Apigenin</i>	386
4.6.11. <i>Honokiol</i>	386
4.6.12. <i>3-Hydroxy Caruilignan C</i>	386
4.6.13. <i>Polyphenols</i>	386
4.7. Synthetic Products	388
4.8. Resistance to NS3/4A Inhibitors	399
4.9. Inhibitors of NS4A Binding	399
4.9.1. <i>Peptidomimetic Protease Inhibitors</i>	399
4.9.2. <i>Non-covalent Peptidomimetic Inhibitors</i>	399
4.9.3. <i>Non-peptidic Protease Inhibitors</i>	400
4.9.4. <i>Covalent Substrate-based Inhibitors</i>	400
4.9.5. <i>Nucleic-acid-based Antiviral Agents</i>	400
4.10. Natural Products	400
4.10.1. <i>RNA Interference Approach to HCV Antivirals</i>	400
4.10.2. <i>Nucleoside Inhibitors</i>	401
4.10.3. <i>Non-nucleoside Inhibitors</i>	402
4.10.4. <i>RNA Aptamers</i>	405
4.10.5. <i>Pyrophosphate Mimics</i>	405
4.11. NSSA Inhibitors	405
4.11.1. <i>Natural Products</i>	405
4.11.2. <i>Synthetic Products</i>	406
4.11.3. <i>Inhibition of NTPase Activity by Allosteric Mechanisms</i>	408
4.11.4. <i>Competitive Inhibition of RNA Binding</i>	408
4.11.5. <i>Inhibition of the Unwinding through Intercalation of Polynucleotide Chain</i> ...	410
4.12. Other Targets	410
4.13. Novel Immunomodulatory Agents	411
4.14. NS4B Inhibitors	411
4.14.1. <i>Synthetic Products</i>	412
4.15. Biological Functions of NS4B in HCV Replication	415
4.15.1. <i>The Pyrazolopyrimidines and other ViroPharma Inc. Compounds</i>	415
4.15.2. <i>The Discovery of Clemizole Hydrochloride</i>	416
4.16. NSSB Inhibitors	417
4.17. Nucleotide Prodrug Inhibitors	422
4.18. Non-Nucleoside Inhibitors (Palm Domain Inhibitors)	426
4.19. Thumb Domain Site I Inhibitors	426

4.20. Thumb Domain Site II Inhibitors	426
4.20.1. Discovery of Benzimidazole 5-carboxylic Acid Scaffold	429
4.21. Adherence Therapy	459
5. FUTURE PERSPECTIVES	459
6. HEPATITIS D	460
7. HEPATITIS E	461
CONCLUSION	462
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	463
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	463
ABBRAVIATIONS	463
REFERENCES	465
CHAPTER 6 ANTIMICROBIAL PEPTIDES AGAINST MICROBIAL BIOFILMS: THEIR STRUCTURES AND MODES OF ACTION	482
<i>Uwf j kt 'M0Uj wmc. 'Fwi guj y ct 'Mctrgf 'cpf 'VOUwddc 'Tcq</i>	
BIOFILMS AND ANTIBIOTICS RESISTANCE	482
BIOLOGICAL ROLES OF AMPS	484
1. Antibacterial Activity (Direct)	485
2. Immune Modulation (Indirect Antibacterial Activity)	486
DIFFICULTIES IN TESTING ANTIBIOFILM PROPERTIES	487
ADVANTAGES OF AMPS OVER CONVENTIONAL ANTIBIOTICS	488
STRUCTURES OF AMPS THAT INFLUENCE ANTIMICROBIAL ACTIVITY	489
1. α -Helical AMP	492
2. β -Sheet AMPs	494
3. Extended AMPs	495
MECHANISM OF ACTION OF AMPS	497
RESISTANCE MECHANISM OF MICROBES TO AMPS	500
A. Passive Resistance	501
1. <i>Electrostatic Shielding/ Anionic Capsule Shielding</i>	501
2. <i>Reduced Negative Charge on Cell Membrane</i>	501
3. <i>Niche-specific Resistance</i>	502
B. Adaptive/Inducible Resistance	503
1. <i>Activation of PhoP/PhoQ regulon in Microbial Response to AMP Stress</i>	504
2. <i>Proteases and Peptidases.</i>	506
3. <i>Extracellular Structural Modification</i>	506
4. <i>Modification of Cytoplasmic Membrane</i>	507
THERAPEUTIC TARGETS OF ANTIMICROBIAL PEPTIDES	507
A. Synergistic Effect on Conventional Antibiotics Efficacy	507
B. Strategic Microbial Response Pathways	508
BIOLOGICAL PRODUCTION OF AMPS	508
A. Over-expression of AMPS in Heterologous Host	509
B. New Synthetic Peptides and Their Function	510
CONCLUSION	510
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	511
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	511
REFERENCES	511
SUBJECT INDEX	744

PREFACE

Infections kill more people than all other diseases combined. Despite the tremendous development in this field, infections are increasingly difficult to treat today because of the development of organisms resistant to antibiotics. Human sufferings because of bacterial, fungal, parasitic, and viral infections are therefore likely to increase many fold in the new future. Emerging antibiotic resistance in all infection-causing microorganisms is making many believe that the era of antibiotics is coming to an end. Recent reports establish that the chances of dying from hospital-acquired pneumonia or septicaemia are much higher from drug-resistant infections. In this context, extensive research, both in academia and in pharmaceutical industries, has begun, covering various aspects of this complex topic, such as infection biology, genomics of resistance, new drug target identification, and search for new antibiotics. It is often difficult, even for a prolific reader, to keep pace with these exciting developments. Thus, the need of a comprehensive book review series is greatly felt. The present series of volumes, partly addresses this need.

The last five volumes of the ebook series “*Frontiers in Anti-Infective Drug Discovery*” have attracted great scientific interest, as a welcome addition to the global literature in this active area of research. The present volume of this internationally recognized books series comprises of six carefully selected reviews on various aspects of infection, etiology, and treatment, contributed by leading experts in this field. Each review is focused on important aspects of anti-infection drug discovery and development, based on various innovative approaches, including relationship between infections and neurological disorders, identification of new molecular targets, outcomes of pre-clinical and clinical studies on new and novel classes of antimicrobial and antiviral drugs, combination therapies, and strategies to overcome emerging antibiotic resistance.

Pantazaki *et al.*, have reviewed some of the most striking recent reports on the relationship of infectious and inflammatory etiology with the on-set of Alzheimer’s diseases (AD). Recent research has shown that many microorganisms, such as bacteria (*Helicobacter pylori*), viruses (*Herpes simplex virus, influenza, CMV, etc.*) and fungi can cause AD. It has been reported that these microorganisms and viruses can cross the blood brain membrane and cause mild to severe infections in the brain. Persistent or acute neuronal and peripheral inflammatory response against these infectious agents lead to accumulation of amyloid protein aggregates which are the major cause of AD. It has also been reported that an alternation in normal gut microbiota can cause the accumulation of functional amyloid proteins which are then transported to the Central Nervous System (CNS) causing neurologic and psychiatric disorders, such as schizophrenia, anxiety, and AD. The review provides an interesting description of the effects of chronic inflammatory responses against immune-reactive proteins as risk factors for nervous system disorders. The authors have also recommended the consumption of natural products and natural diets, such as Mediterranean and Asian diets, which are capable of preventing AD or reducing the risk of AD, and strengthening the body’s ability to confront infections. In brief, this review is a comprehensive commentary based on recent literature on the possible relationship between the infection, microbiota and the on-set of Alzheimer’s diseases. The authors thus support the use of chemotherapeutic and dietary approaches for the prevention of AD.

The review contributed by Dwivedi *et al.*, focuses on the conventional and current treatments of malaria comprising of natural substances and synthetic analogues. The choice of therapeutic agents against malaria depends on the species of parasite, the pattern of resistance, and the seriousness of the infection. Despite major developments in the understanding of the

aetiology of malaria at the molecular level, and the introduction of new drugs, the disease is causing considerable morbidity and mortality in Asia, South America, and Sub-Saharan Africa. According to the WHO, malaria kills more people world-wide than all other parasitic diseases taken together. The emergence and spread of multidrug resistant strains of malarial parasites have further limited the choice of antimalarial chemotherapeutics. This highlights the urgent need of efficient research for developing newer and broad spectrum antimalarial drugs. The development of an effective malaria vaccine has remained a major challenge for scientists, with only limited success achieved so far. This review highlights the importance of the development of new drug delivery systems which maximize the *on-site effect* and minimize the adverse effects of existing antimalarial drugs. Recent development of nanoparticles as carriers for malaria chemotherapy which can minimize the side effects and improve bioavailability and selectivity of the drugs has also been discussed in this review. The authors have emphasized the need for continuous search for antimalarial drugs, giving the example of artemisinin (ART) and bulaquin. The review provides a comprehensive account of challenges and opportunities in malarial chemotherapy, and proposes several directions for future research in this important field.

Zehra Küçükbay and Hasan Küçükbay have contributed a chapter on recent developments in the field of novel antibiotics and antimicrobial agents. Their review presents merits and demerits of various classes of antibiotics, such as β -lactams, macrolides, fluoroquinolones, tetracyclines, and aminoglycosides, in the context of emerging resistance against them. The authors have focused on natural products as possible antimalarial agents which can circumvent the emerging resistance issues while having limited side-effects. By providing examples of fascinating natural products used against infections such as aspirin (willow plant), opioids (opium poppy), atropine (*Atropa belladonna*), and quinine (cinchona), the authors have advocated the need for searching natural chemical diversity as a source of new antimicrobial and resistance-reversal agents against increasingly resistant infections. This review thus provides an in-depth look at the most significant developments in antimalarial drug development and prospects of natural products as sources of new antimalarial drugs.

Tuberculosis or TB is among the most serious infectious diseases that can affect almost any tissue of the body, especially the lungs. Once considered to be a disease of the developing world, TB has recently emerged in the developed world as a co-infection along with HIV, since people with a compromised immune system develop TB very quickly. Many strains of *Mycobacterium* have now developed resistance against the arsenal of available drugs, making the treatment increasingly difficult. TB patients are now required to take several types of medications for long durations to eradicate the infection, prevent relapse, and avoid the development of antibiotic resistance. Recently two drugs, Bedaquiline and Delamanid, have received conditional approvals for the treatment of MDR-TB, for patients where other treatments fail. Jawed Ahsan has reviewed the recent developments in the TB chemotherapy, including new and repurposed antitubercular drugs in advanced phases of clinical trials. He has also commented on various vaccine candidates which are in clinical development. The review also discusses the need of new diagnostics, and anti-TB drugs as well as TB vaccines to control the spread of TB pandemic in the developing and the developed world.

Naseem Ahmed has contributed a review on widespread hepatitis viral infectious disease and its treatment. Hepatitis is wide spread, particularly in the poor regions of the world. Various forms of the hepatitis virus (hepatitis A- E) are wreaking havoc to many the health care systems of the developing world. Among the various forms, hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E are the most common. Over a billion people are estimated to be either patients or carrier of hepatitis. Cases of non-viral, and autoimmune hepatitis are widely reported due to alcohol consumption, use of medications against chronic disorders, and spread of autoimmune

diseases. Current treatment options are often expensive, and beyond the reach of poor patients. However recent developments in this field have been very promising. Interferons alone or pegylated interferons have been used with 35-40% success, and numerous side effects. New medicines which target NS3/4A protease, NS5B polymerase, and NS5A enzymes have been developed with phenomenal success of 70-90%. Several other inhibitors of NS5B and NS5A polymerase targets are in various stages of development. The chapter provides an excellent review of the recent literature on new antiviral drug development, identification of new targets, investigational and novel therapies and most importantly merits and demerits of existing anti-hepatitis medicines.

Finally, the review by Shukla *et al.*, is focused on the discovery and development of various classes of natural and synthetic peptides and polypeptides as novel anti-infective agents as well as structure -function relationships. The emergence of resistance has led to the development of non-classical antibiotics, including peptide antibiotics, especially cationic peptides. Several thousands of such peptides have been isolated from natural sources (plants, animals, microbial, *etc*), and many more have been synthesized. However only a few have entered into clinical trials. As antimicrobial peptides (AMPs) kill bacteria quickly by the physical disruption of cell membranes, the emergence of resistance against them is less likely. The authors have also discussed various aspects of uses of AMPs, including their possible use as delivery vectors to transport the cell impermeable drugs to the cell interior. Their diverse and broad spectrum antimicrobial activity has been described in literature. These peptides offer a potentially rich source of novel antimicrobial agents. The authors have presented numerous examples of AMPs along with reports of modifications in the existing peptides, isolation of novel peptides from nature, the introduction of non-natural amino acids in their structures, and their mechanisms of action.

We are pleased to express our gratitude to all the authors of the above cited reviews for their excellent scholarly contributions to the 6th volume of this ebook series. We also appreciate the efforts of the brilliant publication team of Bentham Science Publishers for the efficient processing of the treatise. The skills and efforts of Ms. Fariya Zulfiqar (Assistant Manager Publications) & Mr. Shehzad Naqvi (Manager Publications), and excellent management of Mr. Mahmood Alam (Director Publications) are greatly appreciated. We also hope that like the previous volumes of this internationally recognized book series, the current volume will also receive a wide readership from scientists and research students.

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CHAPTER 1

Alternative Anti-Infective/Anti-Inflammatory Therapeutic Options for Fighting Alzheimer's Disease

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Abstract: Neurodegenerative diseases (NDs) have a serious impact on global health with no effective treatments yet available. Alzheimer's disease (AD) is an incurable, progressive neurodegenerative disorder, considered to be the most common cause of dementia. There is increasing evidence for the infectious/inflammatory etiology of AD. Although brain is assumed to be an immunologically isolated organ, many bacteria (*Helicobacter pylori*), viruses (*Herpes simplex virus*, *influenza*, *CMV* etc.), fungi, toxoplasma, are associated with AD. The presence of immune-related antigens around amyloid plaques, activated complement factors, cytokines and a wide range of related receptors in the brain of AD patients, led to the concept of "neuro-inflammation". Persistent or acute neuronal and peripheral inflammatory response to infectious agents is gradually gaining more attention, as a risk factor for someone to develop sporadic AD. The human microbiome (HM) has a pivotal role in nutrition, health and disease. About 100 trillion bacteria from up to 1000 bacterial species inhabit the gastrointestinal (GI) tract, contributing, at least in part, to what is known as the "human-biochemical" or "genetic-individuality" and resistance to disease. Several pathologies, including AD and inflammatory bowel disease, are associated with alterations in gut microbiome. Microbes of the gut microbiota or of extracorporeal origin possess the ability of producing functional amyloid proteins. These amyloids, *via* lymphatic and systemic transport to the Central Nervous System (CNS), seem to have an important role in the expression of neurologic and psychiatric disorders, such as schizophrenia, anxiety and AD. Cross-seeding of the neurodegenerative disorder proteins may be induced by these amyloids. Moreover, chronic inflammatory response to these immune-reactive proteins can also be an important risk factor for CNS well-being. Therapeutic/preventive options for halting CNS disorders' onset, could include: (a) Anti-inflammatory,

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anti-amyloid drugs (β -sheet breakers and other inhibitors of amyloid fibrillization), monoclonal antibodies, nanoparticles, which target pathological components of AD, or other medical interventions to remove infectious agents or to ameliorate their biochemical influence on GI-CNS tract, (b) Prebiotics to enhance the growth of desired organisms and reduce oxidative stress - a cause that has been implicated with AD, (c) Probiotics to provide both the desired bacteria, which increase the competitive effects with pathogens, and essential metabolic products, and to modulate the host immune system to resist in infection (d) The consumption of natural products, and the dedication to the Mediterranean (MeDi) and Asian (AsDi) Diets, abundant in bioactive compounds, are capable to prevent AD or reduce danger of AD, and strengthen the host's ability to confront infections. The significance of diet diversity leading to the microbiota diversity is a new clinically important concept. Finally, and (e) preventive medical and/or other therapies to alter the amyloids produced by bacteria, to decrease their production or stimulate their removal. This chapter is addressed to, and urges the excellent cooperation between experts of neurology/psychiatry, microbiology, biochemistry, dietary and nutritional sciences, in order to confront AD.

Keywords: Alzheimer's disease, Infection, Inflammation, Dietary interventions, Natural products, Mediterranean Diet (MeDi), Asian Diet (AsDi), Anti-amyloid treatment, Monoclonal antibodies, AD diagnosis, AD treatment.

1. ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE (AD)

1.1. Epidemiology

AD is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder affecting millions of people worldwide.

Due to an increasingly aging population, AD represents a crucial issue for the healthcare system because of its widespread prevalence and the burden of its care needs. It is one of the most devastating diseases for the older population, and has become a major healthcare burden in the increasingly aging society worldwide. Currently, there are still only symptomatic treatments available, just to manage the symptoms and slow down disease progression. It is a progressive brain disorder that minimizes memory ability and other cognitive functions associated with intellectual and social skills. It has become a colossal medical and socio-economic challenge in the growing elderly population. As the most common dementia known, AD affects 5.4 million Americans, 10 million Europeans and nearly 47 million people worldwide [1]. The number of dementia cases is anticipated to triple by 2050 [2]. Two forms of AD are known: sporadic and familial AD. Sporadic AD affects people mostly after age 60 and makes up about 97% of all cases. Familial AD occurs at an earlier age between 30-50 and results when one parent passes a mutated gene associated with this dementia to their offspring. Each child of an individual with familial AD has a 50% chance of

inheriting the mutated gene and developing this dementia. There is an amyloid precursor protein (APP) mutation [alanine-673-->valine-673 (A673V)] that causes disease only in the homozygous state, whereas heterozygous carriers were unaffected, consistent with a recessive Mendelian trait of inheritance. The A673V mutation affected APP processing, resulting in enhanced beta-amyloid (A β) production and formation of amyloid fibrils *in vitro* [3].

It is a considerable and galloping public health anxiety, with significant augmentation reflected in the future, especially in low-to-middle income countries [4]. Moreover, there is at present unanimity that a considerable analogy of cases are potentially preventable [5]. Preventing or delaying the clinical onset of dementia would have a substantial effect on disease numbers [6]. It has been suggested that approximately a third of AD cases could be attributed to seven potentially modifiable risk factors: diabetes, midlife hypertension, obesity, smoking, depression, cognitive inactivity, and low educational attainment [7].

1.2. Pathogenesis

Several hypotheses have been proposed for the pathogenesis of AD, but none of them is satisfactory enough to elucidate its full spectrum. Most possibly this is why the current therapeutic strategies have shown limited – if any – effectiveness [8]. In the last two decades, more evidence has supported a role for neuro-inflammation and immune system dys-regulation in AD [9 - 11]. It remains unclear whether astrocytes, microglia and immune cells influence disease onset, progression or both. A β peptides that aggregate extra-cellularly in the typical neuritic plaques generate a constant inflammatory environment. This engenders a protracted activation of microglial and astroglial cells that excite neuronal injury and provoke the alteration of the blood brain barrier (BBB), damaging the permeability of blood vessels. Recent data support the role of the BBB as a link between neuro-inflammation, the immune system and AD [12 - 14]. Hence, a thorough investigation of the neuro-inflammatory and immune system routes that affect neurodegeneration and unusual enthralling findings like microglia-originated micro-vesicles, particulate as inflammasomes and signalosomes will ultimately contribute to the elucidation of the pathological process. Finally, we should advance with attention in order to define whether the role of neuro-inflammation in AD is “causal or sequential”, but rather focalize on the identification of its precise pathological participation [15].

Two basic discoveries spurred research into inflammation as a driving force in the pathogenesis of AD. The first was the identification of activated microglia in association with the lesions [16]. The second was the discovery that patients with rheumatoid arthritis, who regularly consume anti-inflammatory agents, were

The Menace of Malaria: An Overview

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Abstract: Malaria remains one of the most dreadful diseases affecting millions of people across the world. It is an infectious disease spread through the (female anopheles) mosquito caused by the parasitic protozoans belonging to genus *Plasmodium*. The most lethal species is *Plasmodium falciparum* which if left untreated, may cause organ failures (severe malaria) or may accumulate in brain (cerebral malaria) causing coma and finally leading to the death. The disease is mostly prevalent in Sub-Saharan Africa. Children under the age of 5 years, pregnant women and travellers to the malaria prone area are particularly at higher risk of getting malaria. It is typically diagnosed by microscopic examination of blood using blood film or antigen-based rapid diagnostic tests. The treatment of malaria comprises various synthetic, natural analogues administered orally or parenterally. The choice of therapeutic agents depends on the species of parasite, pattern of resistance and the seriousness of the infection.

Emergence and spread of the multidrug resistant strains of the causative organisms has extremely limited the choice of antimalarial chemotherapeutics. Only limited treatment options are currently available due to the resistant species highlighting the need of efficient research for developing newer broad spectrum antimalarial drugs. The discovery of potent vaccine against malaria still remains a major challenge amongst scientific community, with only limited success achieved till now.

The choice of the delivery system plays a vital role in determining fate of the drug as it's not only important for delivering the right drug at the right site, but also it can minimize the untoward effects of drugs. Nano-carriers or nanosystems are useful tools that are particularly gaining distinctive attention in malaria chemotherapy because of their ability to minimize the side effects, improve bioavailability and the selectivity of the drugs by altering the biopharmaceutics and pharmacokinetic property of the drug molecules.

Discovery of potent drugs like Arteether (ART) and Bulaquin have been some major breakthroughs in antimalarial research. However, the major challenge in management

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of malaria in the current scenario is to combat drug resistance and to develop new potent drugs in order to completely irradiate this fatal disease. This chapter is intended to highlight on some basic aspects of malaria, challenges in current chemotherapy, current investigations towards malaria chemotherapy and vaccine, and the use of nanotechnology as a promising strategy for malaria treatment.

Keywords: Malaria, *P. falciparum*, *P. vivax*, Artemisinin, Cinchona, Drug-resistance, Malaria vaccine, Nanotechnology, Parasite.

INTRODUCTION

Malaria is one of the most predominant ubiquitous parasitic diseases throughout the globe. The cause of the disease is an apicomplexan protozoan of *Plasmodium* (*P.*) genus. *P. falciparum* and *P. vivax*, are the major causative organisms. Malarial infection can be found all over the world but it is more common in tropical countries. In 2013, malaria was prevalent in more than 100 countries [1] over hundred million episodes of malaria have been estimated in 2012; in which more than 80% of these cases were reported in Africa, resulting over millions of deaths [2]. This is the statistics, when there was a drop of 50% or more malaria burden in 11 African and 32 of 56 malaria endemic countries outside Africa [3]. In 2015, the number of people infected from malaria have witnessed 21% decline with approximately 212 million malaria cases compared to 2010 because of the increased access to the disease-cutting tools to the needed populations. Approximately 4,29,000 death occurred in 2015 of which 92% deaths occurred in WHO African Region [4]. Among the cases occurring outside Africa, majority of cases were reported in Asian countries including India [1, 4]. The recent figures although show positive trends, there is a lot more to achieve for getting malaria free world.

Among several deaths which occur due to malaria every year, the majority are of children below 5 years of age. The occurrence of malarial infection is so high that most of the children without having acquired adequate immunity went through this infection in the initial years of their lifespan [1, 2, 5, 6]. WHO (World Health Organization) has started several programs to overcome these mortal malarial infections throughout the world, but still there is a lot of need for research and development as the current status of research is not considered being sufficient and there is a need for new therapies and vaccines.

Available malaria chemotherapy has been helpful but not in a significant manner, as these are associated with recurring failures [7]. The unique nature of the disease in relation to its transmission conditions, becomes a significant factor as it is more complex to manage its transmission throughout tropical areas [8]. The complex life cycle of the parasite and development of resistance to the drug are attributed

as the principal challenging factors in new drug discovery [9] and causing higher mortality. An alarmingly high incidence of immune-compromised patients suffering from co-infections of malaria and HIV happens to be another crucial factor in new drug discovery [10, 11]. These infections together; account for more than millions of life per year. Moreover, the complex recommended regimen based on combination therapy increases the cost of treatment and brings down patient compliance, due to the associated side effects [7]. Tools and methodologies adopted to detain the prevalent dissemination of malaria include effective disease prevention by abolition of mosquitoes by means of insecticidal spray and providing treatment based on artemisinin combination therapy. The sporadic prophylactic treatment with antimalarial drugs has been used as a last option in case of pregnancy, to lower and reduce the deleterious effects of malaria infection on the fetus. Treatment protocols and regimens for malaria directly correlate to resistance developed by the parasite for the drug, as well as governed by government approach for prevention and control of mortality rate [12]. Taking into consideration the fact that fewer numbers of new antimalarials have been approved since 1990, the search for novel efficient and less toxic antimalarials accomplished with nano-delivery systems assumes significance

The present chapter is aimed to take the brief account of important aspects of malaria including its biology, current malaria chemotherapeutics and the associated problems with them, the current research in the field of antimalarial drug discovery with special focus on nanotechnology. The chapter also covers the role of Central Drug Research Institute (CSIR-CDRI) in the discovery and development of antimalarial drugs.

Methods

The authors made use of search engines and databases such as ScieFinder and Pub-Med and relevant guidelines from World Health Organization, (WHO) for data collection. Data was collected on current global status, statistics, biology and the detailed pathophysiology of malaria. Details about the risk factors, preventive measures, treatment regimens, and the problems associated with the malaria chemotherapy were collected. Detailed information about current antimalarial leads (from both synthetic and natural sources), research on malaria vaccine, role of CSIR-CDRI in antimalarial research, and the role of nano-formulations in malaria treatment was obtained. The detailed information regarding each topic was collected by narrowing the search by using 2 or more key words. The assimilated data was studied and interpreted, compiled and arranged under different headings covered in this chapter to create a comprehensive insight into the topic and to produce a detailed overview.

Chemical Structures and Classification of Anti-microbial Drugs

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Abstract: This chapter aims to review the literature on anti-infective (also known as antimicrobial) drugs among the anti-infections drugs, and to highlight recent developments relating to novel antibiotics and their classification. Antibiotic classification is determined according to their structure and mechanism of action; the main groups include β -lactams, macrolides, fluoroquinolones, tetracyclines, and aminoglycosides. Despite significant progress in anti-infective therapies, infectious diseases caused by bacteria and fungi remain a major worldwide health problem due to the rapid development of resistance to existing drugs. This resistance increasingly limits the effectiveness of current anti-infective drugs. To overcome this problem, scientists are searching for novel therapeutic agents that are efficacious against microorganisms and cause limited side-effects. Naturally occurring compounds in plants have previously been used successfully to treat many types of infection and illness. For this reason, it is quite important to understand the chemical composition of natural products and their mechanisms of action, in order to synthesize semi-synthetic or synthetic anti-infective drugs. Indeed, many chemically synthesized drugs originated from natural sources, e.g. aspirin (willow plant), opioids such as morphine (opium poppy), atropine (*Atropa belladonna*), and quinine (cinchona). Therefore, nature is a very fruitful source for pharmacy, medicine, biology and chemistry students.

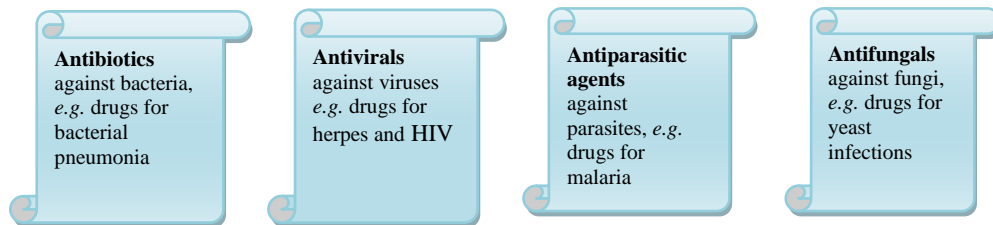
Keywords: Anti-bacterial drugs, Aminoglycosides, Anti-fungal drugs, Anti-infective agents, Antibiotic, Cephalosporins, Chloramphenicol, Classification of antibiotics, Drug research, Drug resistance, Fluoroquinolones, Infectious diseases, Macrolides, Microorganisms, Natural products, Penicillin, Penicillium species, Synthesis, Tetracyclines, β -lactams.

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INTRODUCTION

Infectious diseases are responsible for more deaths worldwide than any other single cause. Their pathology is attributed to microorganisms such as bacteria, viruses, fungi, or parasites that are virulent and can spread between individuals.

Anti-infection Agents



Antibiotics are an important subset of antimicrobial chemotherapeutics. An antibiotic is any therapeutic agent that kills or prevents the reproduction of bacteria in the body. An antimicrobial is a substance composed of natural, semi-synthetic, or synthetic, a broad term for compounds that kill or inhibit the growth of microorganisms but cause little or no damage to the host. Antibiotics are a subset of antimicrobials that specifically treat bacterial infections.



Microorganisms are ubiquitous; they can be found in the air, water, soil, and rocks; many microorganisms also live inside and on the surface of our bodies [1].

Most of the microbes living in our bodies are symbiotic and assist normal bodily function. Many of the drugs available today are derived from compounds first found in microorganisms. However, under certain conditions, some microorganisms become virulent and cause harmful infections in humans, animals, and plants. Infectious microorganisms can be passed directly between people or indirectly from an infected person to the environment (for example door handles, bedding, toilets, *etc.*) and then to another person who comes in contact with the contaminated source. Some are transmitted by bites from insects or animals, while others are acquired by consuming contaminated food or water. The symptoms and

signs of infection vary depending on which part of the body and which type of organism is involved. The first signs of infection are often inflammatory symptoms (fever, pain, swelling, redness, and purulence). Mild infections may respond to rest and home remedies, while life-threatening infections may require hospitalization. The main form of treatment is usually antimicrobial medication. There are several types of anti-infective drugs, depending on the type of organism targeted (such as antibiotics for bacterial infections, antiviral drugs for a limited number of viruses, antifungal medications for fungal infections, and anthelmintic drugs for worms) [2]. The treatment of bacterial infections with antibiotics is one of the most important developments of the twentieth century. Penicillin, a β -lactam antibiotic developed in the 1940s, has been at the forefront of antibacterial drug treatment [3]. Since then, several new antibiotics have been developed, either semi-synthetically or synthetically by chemical modifications (Fig. 1) [4].

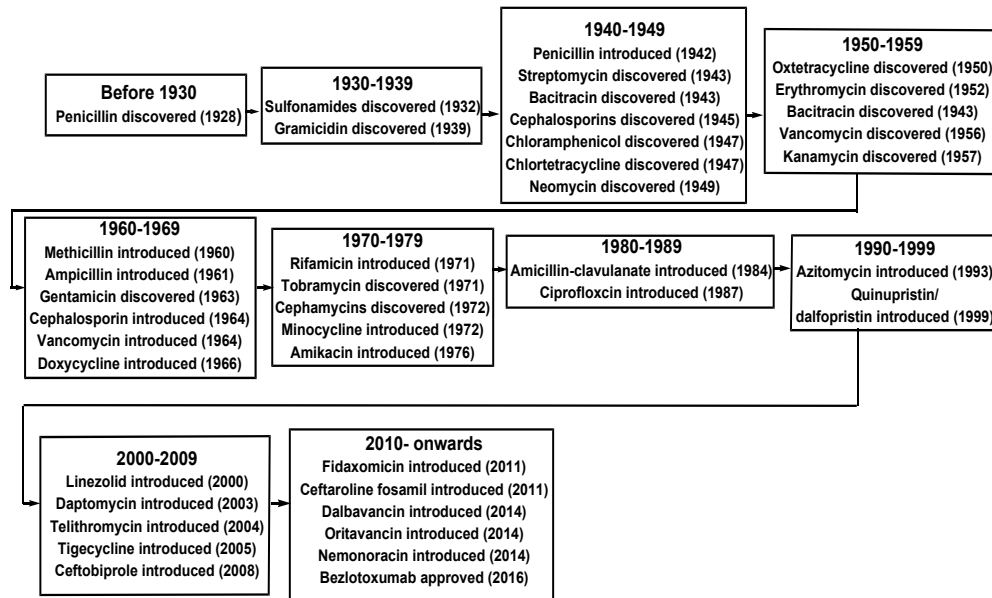


Fig. (1). A timeline of important historical antibiotic discoveries [4].

There was no effective treatment method for infections such as pneumonia, gonorrhea, or rheumatic fever before penicillin. However, the use of antimicrobial agents is known to have been a common practice for at least two millennia. Many ancient Egyptians and Greeks used various molds and plant extracts to fight bacterial infections [5]. Furthermore, ancient Egyptians applied moldy bread to infected wounds for its antibiotic effects. Much later, it was determined that the characteristic blue-green discoloration seen on moldy bread was the useful antibiotic-producing *Penicillium chrysogenum* mold. In 1928, the active

Antitubercular Agents and Tubercular Vaccines in Clinical Trials

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Abstract: In 2015, an estimated 10.4 million people were infected with and 1.8 million people were killed by tuberculosis (TB). Multi-drug resistant (MDR) and extensively drug resistant (XDR) TB were other reported complications in the treatment of TB. Almost 3.3% of new TB cases and 20% of previously treated cases have multi-drug resistance (MDR) TB while 9.7% of people with MDR-TB have XDR-TB. Recently, two chemical entities, namely bedaquiline and delamanid were granted conditional approval for the treatment of MDR-TB, and are recommended only to those patients for whom other treatments fail to cure. The diagnostic platform, including GeneXpert Omni® and Xpert Ultra® is in development. There are seven new compounds and eight approved or repurposed antitubercular drugs in advanced phases of clinical trials, while thirteen vaccine candidates are in clinical trials. New diagnostics, anti-tubercular drugs and tubercular vaccines will be needed to achieve the targets set in the End TB strategy. This chapter explores the medicinal chemistry of anti-tubercular agents in various phases of clinical trials. The present chapter also deals with various diagnostic technologies for early detection of tuberculosis, as well as the tubercular vaccines in various phases of clinical trials.

Keywords: Anti-tubercular agents, Delamanid, Diagnostics, TMC207, Tubercular, Tuberculosis vaccines.

INTRODUCTION

Tuberculosis, (TB) a dreadful disease, mainly caused by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, (MTB), is one of the major health problems worldwide. It primarily affects the lungs (pulmonary TB) and can also affect other sites as well (extra pulmonary TB). In 2015, there were an estimated 10.4 million new cases of TB and 1.8 million people died from TB, including almost 1.4 million deaths among HIV-negative individuals and 0.4 million among HIV-positive individuals.

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Globally, there were an estimated 580,000 people who have developed the multidrug resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) in 2015. An estimated 49 million lives have been saved through TB diagnostic and treatment between 2000 and 2015 [1]. Nearly 10 percent of infected people usually develop active TB in their lifetime [2]. A research led by the scientists at Stanford University revealed that the MTB can persist in the hostile intracellular microenvironment, evading immune cells and drug treatment. They isolated MTB from bone marrow, derived CD271+/CD45-mesenchymal stem cells [3]. Tubercular bacteria are spread through the air by active TB patients and most commonly affect the lungs. The directly observed treatment short-course (DOTS), and a multidrug therapy program developed by WHO, is one of the most efficient artilleries against the global plague with success rate of 85% among all new TB cases and 87% among new cases of sputum smear-positive pulmonary TB in 2010. Unfortunately, the first-line treatments can fail due to poor compliance and lead to the emergence of multi-drug resistant (MDR) strains of TB. The drug resistant TB is classified into two categories, such as multi drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) that is resistant to isoniazid and rifampicin, and extensively drug resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB) that is resistant to isoniazid and rifampicin, plus the fluoroquinolones and any one of the three injectable second line drugs (kanamycin, capreomycin, or amikacin). In 2016, US\$ 6.6 billion were available for TB care and prevention in low and medium-income countries [1].

Today we have comparatively sufficient number of antitubercular agents in preclinical, as well as, clinical stages of development. In this chapter, we emphasize the chemical entities currently in the clinical trials, the new tubercular vaccines in the developmental pipeline, and the new diagnostic tests either endorsed by WHO, or commercialized. After four decades since the discovery of rifampicin, two new chemical entities bedaquiline (Sirturo) and delamanid (Delyba) were granted approval for the treatment of MDR-TB. However, both of the drugs induce arrhythmia, and are recommended only in patients for whom other treatments fail [4 - 7].

CURRENT THERAPY

Antitubercular agents are drugs used in the treatment of TB. WHO has recommended Directly Observed Treatment Short-course (DOTS) for the treatment of TB. DOTS, for the treatment of TB is nothing, but a combination of antitubercular drugs including isoniazid (INH), rifampin RIF, ethambutol (EB) and pyrazinamide (PZA) for a 6 months therapy. WHO has also recommended the use of second-line drugs, which include aminoglycosides (kanamycin, amikacin), capreomycin, cycloserin, *p*-aminosalicylic acid, thioamides (ethionamide (ETH), prothionamide), and fluoroquinolones (ciprofloxacin, ofloxacin, levofloxacin,

etc.) for the treatment of MDR-TB. Bedaquiline (Sirturo) and delamanid (Delytba) were also included in the treatment of MDR-TB. Both of the drugs induce arrhythmia and are recommended only when other treatments fail to cure the patients.

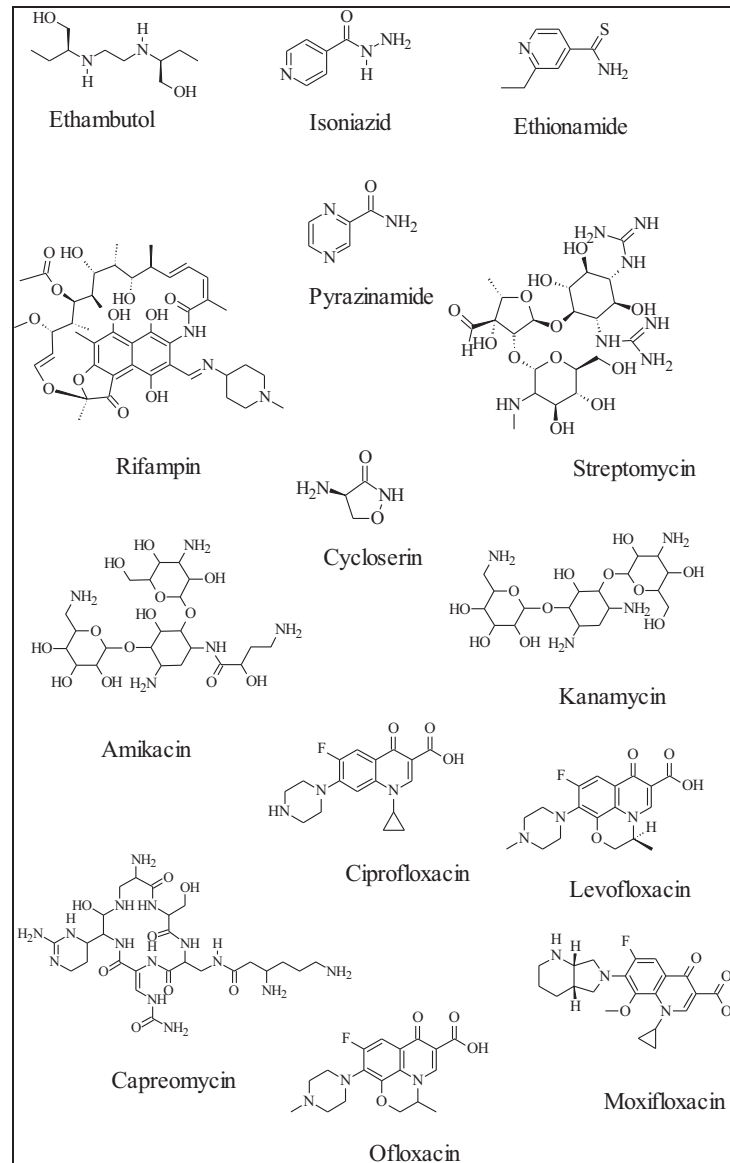


Fig. (1). Some of the anti-tubercular drugs in current therapy.

Recent Advances in Molecular Scaffolds towards the Identification of Novel Receptors in the Treatment of Hepatitis Diseases

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Abstract: Widespread outbreak of numerous infectious diseases across the globe has created awareness in chemists for the novel design and synthesis of lead molecules. Like hepatitis is one of the viral infectious disease, damages the liver function and therefore causes major complications, even leads to death in many cases. More than one third population of the world is affected by hepatitis. Different viral hepatitis are Hepatitis A (HAV), B(HBV), C(HCV), D(HDV) and E(HEV), depending upon the infecting virus type. Hepatitis A and E viruses are usually contacted after eating and drinking contaminated food and water. While, HBV, HCV and HDV are transmitted through contaminated blood. Hepatitis B and C are typically chronic, but HDV may be acute or chronic in nature. Non-viral hepatitis are also reported either due to alcohol consumption or metabolic disorder medications, which causes the liver stress or inflammation.

The treatment options of hepatitis vary depending upon what form you have and what caused the infection. Until recently, the treatment of hepatitis B has been reported with interferons alone or pegylated interferons while hepatitis C with interferons only or pegylated interferon (PEG-IFN) and ribavirin in combination, both are less successful (35-40%) and have side effects. Thus, a virus-specific, efficient and drug resistant free, anti-HBV and anti-HCV therapeutics are needed. Since 2011, the use of new drugs in targeting NS3/4A protease, NS5B polymerase and NS5A enzymes have enhanced treatment rates (70-90%) but still showed some side effects. Furthermore, inhibitors are at diverse stages of clinical development for NS5B and NS5A polymerase targets. Future design and synthesis of novel drugs must address genetic difference in HBV and HCV with least drug resistance. Also, for the genetic over-expression in HCV, a number of investigational techniques have developed which led to the comprehensive analysis of different aspects of viral life-cycle and interactions between virus and host (human). Thus, a rising list of targets for therapeutic involvement has been revealed. The directly acting anti-virals (DAAs) is another therapy method which helps in exploring novel and highly developed combinations of drugs.

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In this chapter, we discuss the synthetic advances of receptor based anti-viral scaffolds in hepatitis, which afforded significant numbers of agents such as drugs or drug leads, their mechanisms of action (MOAs), structure-activity relationships (SARs) and future structural perspectives as drug candidates.

Keywords: Antiviral agents, Combination therapy, Direct acting anti-virals (DAAs), Drug resistance, Hepatitis, Receptor inhibitors, Structure-activity relationships (SARs).

1. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

More than one third of the world's population is affected by hepatitis diseases. It damages the liver and causes major complications, even leading to death in many cases. The viral hepatitis has been sub-divided into Hepatitis A (HAV), B(HBV), C(HCV), D(HDV) and E(HEV), depending upon the infecting virus. HAV and HEV are usually transmitted after eating and drinking contaminated food and water. While, HBV, HCV and HDV are transmitted through contaminated blood. Hepatitis B and C are chronic in nature, but HDV may be acute or chronic in nature. The non-viral hepatitis has also been reported either due to alcohol consumption or metabolic disorder medications that causes the liver stress or inflammation [1].

A number of anti-viral hepatitis inhibitors are obtained from plants or prepared by synthetic and semi-synthetic methods. Many of them have the drug-resistance because of different reasons and are used in combinations. In future, the design and the development of new molecules need greater attentions. This chapter reports research, recent development of drugs and directional trends in the past, present and near future for the hepatitis infections [2].

2. HEPATITIS A

Annually, about 1.4 million hepatitis A (HAV) infection arises worldwide either periodically or epidemically. In the developing and tropical countries, the virus is generally spread *via* the fecal-oral route due to low hygienic conditions [3] and in the industrialized countries may be due to travel to countries endemic of HAV infection or linked to frozen berries or imported pomegranate arils [4]. The infection is restricted to humans only which shows initial symptoms fever, vomiting, nausea, anorexia, weakness, abdominal discomfort and right upper quadrant pain. In advance stages, patients develop jaundice, darkened urine and uncolored stool and approximately 8% cases are associated with acute kidney injury [5].

This virus belongs to the hepadnavirus genus of *Picornaviridae* family. Genetically, HAV resembles typical picornavirus and insect picorna-like viruses which have a 27 nm long single-stranded, non-enveloped and icosahedral RNA, shown by immune electron microscopy in 1973. A rodent origin HAV is also suggested based on more than 200 small mammal species screening for hepatoviruses [6]. The host cell exosome membranes are used by virus as an envelope to protect itself from antibody mediated effects and facilitates detection of HAV by plasma cytotid dendritic cells for type-I interferon in infection [7]. Out of seven pathogenic HAV genotypes, four are able to infect humans. A limited type I interferon response is found in acute hepatitis A cases due to break down of vital adaptor proteins by HAV protease and polymerase precursor. The CD4+T cells play a major role in terminating HAV infection, has been shown in HAV-infected chimpanzees. Similarly, HAV-specific CD8+T cells have been reported a potential contributor to the infection in humans [8]. Anti-HAV IgM antibodies and/or HAV RNA is detected in acute HAV infection after vaccination and IgM antibodies persisting for at least 2-3 decades [9]. For the treatment of hepatitis A, drugs are not available. Recently, it was found that cyclosporine A and silibinin products inhibit HAV replication *in vitro* [10].

3. HEPATITIS B

3.1. Introduction

About 350-400 million people are surfacing HBV antigen (HBsAg) carriers and around one million people die annually due to HBV infections. The high mortality rate is found in HBsAg-positive patients due to chronic liver disease, non-Hodgkin lymphoma and hepatocellular carcinoma [11]. Since the discovery of HBV in 1965 by Blumberg, much development has been made in the vaccines and the advancement of potent anti-viral agents. However, the global burden of disease is still substantial. In chronic HBV therapy, the aim is either to inhibit the viral replication or to enhance immunological responses against virus or both. R-Interferon (R-IFN, Intron A) has been used effectively in 30-40% cases of chronic HBV infections. Thymosin-R1 (Zadaxin), interleukin-12 and therapeutic vaccines have been also used as immunotherapy regimens with limited success. Interferon- α and pegylated interferon- α -2a are used as immunomodulatory agents with poor response and adverse side effects [12].

Many Ape and African old world monkey species have been detected with HBV infection in the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and pattern recognition receptors (PRR) screening [13]. Genetically, it is a lipid enveloped DNA virus with icosahedral core called Dane particles (the organizing framework of the virion) [14]. The lipid envelope is studded with surface protein (HBsAg) and

Antimicrobial Peptides against Microbial Biofilms: their Structures and Modes of Action

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Abstract: The formation of biofilms contributes significantly to bacterial resistance to antibiotics, innate host defences and in persistent infections. In this era of multidrug-resistant bacterial infections, the discovery of novel antibacterial agents is required to treat infections that kill these organisms *via* novel mechanisms of action. Antimicrobial peptides, also known as host-defence peptides are short polypeptides (<40 amino acids) and are an integral part of the innate immune system that protects a host from bacterial infection. This chapter discusses the potential of anti-microbial peptides as an anti-infective agent, its advantages, disadvantages, their structures and mechanisms of action. A perception of the bacteriostatic and bactericidal mechanism of antimicrobial peptides is required to facilitate the rational design of novel antimicrobial agents. Thus a deeper understanding of the mechanism of natural AMPs will also aid in developing new antibacterial agents. Furthermore, the chapter also considers the possibility of the use of synthetic antimicrobial peptides containing both natural and unnatural amino acids as anti-infective agents. Apart from the antibacterial property, AMPs are also being used as drug delivery vectors to transport the cell impermeable drugs to the cell interior. The diversity and broad spectrum antimicrobial activity of AMPs along with its multidimensional properties could be exploited as a potential and promising drug candidate.

Keywords: Antimicrobial peptides, Human β -defensin, Indolicidin, Synthetic peptide, biofilms, host defences, host-defence peptides, unnatural amino acids, β -peptides.

BIOFILMS AND ANTIBIOTICS RESISTANCE

The breakthrough in antibiotics production is one of the paramount achievements in the history of medicine. Antibiotics are used in the treatment of small to life-threatening infections, in organ transplantation, in oncology to give higher doses

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of chemotherapy for cancer treatment. However, the emergence of antibiotic resistant bacteria is alarming, which are undoing all the earlier advances and forcing a return to the pre-antibiotic era [1]. In the recent years, antibiotic-resistant bacteria have emerged as a biggest challenge for the medical community. The major reason behind enhanced antibiotic resistance was the persistent biofilm formation, which was previously neglected during the development phase of new antibiotics. Bio-molecular matrix enclosed microbial biomasses that stick on to biological or non-biological surfaces are called biofilms. Microbial biofilms protect the bacterial communities present inside antagonistic environment [2]. The production of biofilms and enhanced antibiotic resistance are linked each other. Most of the antibiotics are tested against the bacterial community growing in planktonic growth. Microbial communities growing inside biofilms need 1000 times higher dose of antibiotics to kill them. This demonstrates the striking difference in nature of planktonic life and biofilm-associated bacteria [3]. Bacterial communities residing in biofilm matrix are highly complex to treat with conventional antibiotics [4]. In hospitals, major antibiotic-resistant bacteria develop due to poor practice of handling antimicrobial drugs and the emerging resistant bacteria [5]. The problem of antibiotic resistance can be minimized by preventing unnecessary usages of antibiotics, which is the major reason behind the development of antibiotic resistance among bacteria [6]. The phenomenon of “persistence” also affects antibiotics action against bacterial communities. Persister cells are a small sub-population of microbes that survive the lethal effects of a drug and after the effect of the drug is minimized, they start growing again. The phenomenon of survival of persistent cells against antibiotics is illustrated in Fig. (1). When the antibiotic treatment is applied it kills a majority of cells but fails to eradicate a small subset of the population known as persister cells. When the presence of antibiotic is removed, persister cells resume growth and cause the recurrent infection. The persister cells are slightly different from resistant cells. Antibiotic resistant cells can grow even in the presence of antibiotics, but persister cells cannot. The persister cells can survive and grow after the release of antibiotics pressure. Unlike resistance, persistence is not an inherited phenotype, which is shown by the fact that once the organisms resume normal growth they remain drug sensitive similar to the initial population. In this context, persistent *Mycobacterium* infection is well studied and the results showed that such infections need a longer course of treatment, which is comprised of various antibiotics combinations. Infections with these are real challenges in medical science [7]. In the present scenario, there is a need to find out a new alternative antimicrobial drug which can work equally against bacterial community residing inside and outside the biofilm matrix.

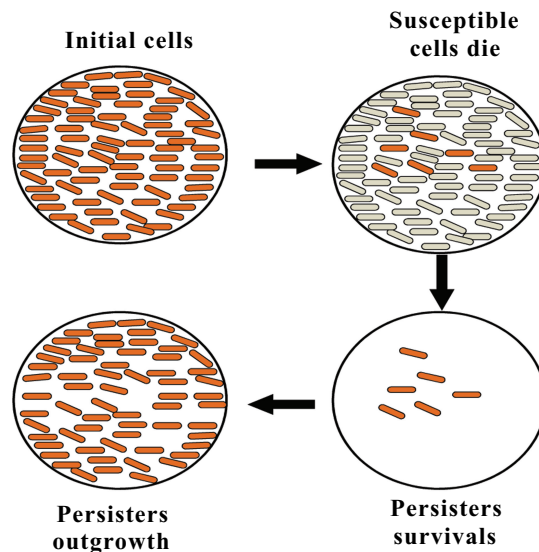


Fig. (1). Illustration showing the survival of persistent cells against antibiotics.

In the past 30 years, no new class of antibiotics had come in the market and a major reason is the increase in resistivity. In 1994, the WHO Scientific Group dealing with antibiotic resistance and surveillance stated that resistance to antibacterial agents is already a serious public health problem [8]. Therefore, the current interest is antimicrobial peptides [9] which is mainly due to their ability to kill bacteria quickly by compromising the cell membrane integrity, hence they do not face the problem of resistance development against AMPs. AMPs are an intrinsic factor of the host's innate immune system in higher organisms [9]. AMPs are produced in response to various bacterial infections. AMPs are showing promising action to deal with antibiotic resistant bacteria in the present scenario [10]. AMPs which are distributed plentifully in nature can be a potential substitute to current anti-microbial drugs. The effectiveness of AMPs is broad-spectrum as they can act on a variety of bacteria, fungi, viruses, and parasites, and even cancerous cells [11]. Due to their ability to exert direct and/or indirect antimicrobial action, they are also termed as host-defence peptides [12].

BIOLOGICAL ROLES OF AMPS

Antimicrobial peptides belong to a diverse group with multi-dimensional properties and functional roles, that can't be denied. Apart from having antimicrobial activity, AMPs are also involved in the various intracellular processes such as angiogenesis, wound-healing, inflammatory response, and cell signalling. Different AMPs can perform differently as signalling molecules,

SUBJECT INDEX

A

- A β 24, 27, 39, 55, 56, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 82, 92, 96, 97
 aggregation 66, 67, 69, 92
 deposition 24, 27, 55, 56, 65, 67, 82
 plaques 39, 68, 92, 96, 97
 AchE activity in brain 54
 Actinomycetes 217, 239, 294
 Activity 12, 28, 34, 40, 41, 42, 46, 53, 54, 55, 56, 60, 64, 67, 72, 75, 165, 167, 175, 176, 184, 189, 192, 229, 230, 231, 233, 234, 235, 245, 255, 256, 259, 261, 289, 291, 296, 298, 299, 300, 304, 305, 308, 311, 312, 313, 315, 347, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 360, 362, 364, 365, 367, 368, 372, 381, 402, 405, 412, 416, 422, 439, 448, 450, 461, 486, 489, 491, 494, 495, 496, 506
 highest 189
 improved 192, 233, 235, 354, 364, 422
 membrane 495
 replicons 412
 tuberculocidal 296, 298
 Acute hepatitis 337, 343, 378, 379
 Acyclovir 27, 372, 373
 AD 2, 5, 49, 56, 93, 97
 diagnosis 2, 5
 treatment 2, 49, 56, 93, 97
 Aducanumab 6, 92, 95, 96
 Aetiopathology 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 26, 29
 Allosteric inhibitors, thiophene carboxylate 444, 445
 Alzheimer's disease 1, 2, 48
 Ameliorate 2, 38, 40, 49, 52, 62, 69, 70
 Amikacin 225, 240, 241, 253, 283, 285, 286, 290
 Amino acids 89, 99, 263, 379, 381, 482, 488, 490, 491, 495, 511
 Aminoglycosides 214, 218, 219, 221, 223, 224, 225, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 253, 255, 256, 257, 266, 283, 285, 289
 Amodiaquine 163, 171, 173, 174, 176
 Amoxicillin 223, 224, 227, 228, 229, 245, 257
 Amphipathicity 490, 492, 493, 499
 Ampicillin 223, 224, 227, 229, 243, 252
 AMPs 482, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511
 β -Sheet 494
 development of 510
 effective 511
 exposure to 500, 504, 506, 508
 expression of 509
 human 491
 membrane-active 498
 natural 482, 491, 498
 AMPs 487, 489, 490, 497, 498, 499, 504, 506, 509, 510
 action 489, 490, 497, 498, 499, 504, 506
 action mode of 489, 490, 498
 efficacy 487, 510
 production 490, 509
 structure 490, 497, 499, 510
 Amyloids 1, 2, 3, 22, 23, 36, 46, 49, 63, 65, 87, 88, 95, 96
 precursor protein (APP) 3, 36, 46, 49, 63, 65
 related imaging abnormalities (ARIA) 95, 96
 Anthocyanins 71, 72, 77
 Anti-amyloidogenic 63, 67, 75, 76
 Anti-amyloid treatment 2, 87, 102
 Antibacterial 214, 240, 248, 250, 260, 301, 485, 497, 500
 activity 240, 248, 250, 260, 301, 485, 497, 500
 drugs 214
 Antibiotic resistance 218, 241, 262, 483, 484
 enhanced 483
 bacteria 262, 483
 Antibiotics 216, 218, 221, 223, 224, 225, 229, 230, 231, 236, 237, 239, 241, 252, 253, 288, 483, 488, 489, 502, 507, 508, 510
 aminoglycoside 239, 241, 288
 antibiotic 224, 225
 bacteriostatic 221
 cephalosporin 229, 230, 231

conventional 483, 488, 489, 502, 507, 508, 510
 first-generation 236
 new 216, 218, 223, 237, 483
 release of 252, 253
 resistance to 218
 Anti-disease vaccination 182
 Anti-fungal drugs 214
 Anti-HBV activity 343, 347, 348, 355, 356, 357, 359, 360, 361, 362, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 370, 371, 372, 373
 Anti-HCV activity 384, 386, 402, 412, 434, 449, 452, 454, 458
 Anti-infective 214, 216, 242, 266, 482, 486, 488, 508, 510
 agents 214, 266, 482, 488, 508, 510
 infective drugs 216, 242, 266, 486
 Antimalarials 154, 156, 158, 162, 164, 165, 166, 169, 171, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 182, 183, 184, 186, 188, 192, 194, 195, 354
 activity 164, 166, 167, 176, 177, 188, 194
 activity exhibited 177, 179
 activity of PQ 192
 drugs 156, 162, 165, 171, 175, 176, 177, 178, 183, 195
 new 178, 179
 research 154, 156, 182, 192
 Antimicrobial activities 234, 237, 249, 252, 255, 256, 257, 258, 260, 262, 484, 486, 490, 491, 492, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 501
 Antimycobacterial activity 300, 304
 Anti-oxidant 55, 63, 76, 77, 78, 85, 349
 Anti-TB drugs 295, 391, 321, 322
 first-line 319, 321
 second-line 319, 321
 Antitubercular 282, 283, 285, 289, 295, 299, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 312, 313, 315, 316, 318, 322
 activity 304, 305, 308, 312, 313
 drugs 283, 285, 289, 295, 299, 302, 303, 307, 308, 312, 315, 316, 318
 drugs new 322
 drugs repurposed 282, 306, 307, 308, 322
 Anti-viral 188, 336, 347, 354, 357, 360, 362, 363, 365, 371, 400, 422, 426, 429, 439, 452, 453, 461

activity 188, 354, 357, 360, 362, 363, 365, 422, 426, 439, 452, 453, 461
 agents 336, 371, 400, 429
 protein (AVP) 347
 Apolipoprotein 5, 27, 94, 100, 375
 Apoptosis 9, 14, 35, 37, 59, 61, 62, 70, 159, 250
 Artemisinin 162, 166, 167, 168, 169, 171, 172, 175, 185
 derivatives 162, 166, 167, 168, 169, 175, 185
 resistance 171, 172
 Artesunate 163, 166, 173, 174, 175, 354, 355
 Aspergillomarasmine A (AMA) 245
 Astrocytes 3, 8, 9, 35, 63, 69
 Autoimmune diseases 20, 61, 101
 Azithromycin 184, 223, 225, 232, 233, 260

B

Bacillus subtilis 52, 55, 257
 Bacteria, soil 217
 Bacterial 19, 23, 24, 25, 30, 31, 37, 87, 91, 215, 216, 219, 226, 237, 238, 240, 242, 244, 261, 299, 301, 312, 318, 482, 483, 484, 485, 489, 504, 510
 cells 30, 31, 219, 238, 244, 504
 communities 483
 infections 23, 24, 37, 215, 216, 226, 237, 240, 242, 261, 312, 482, 484, 485, 489, 510
 LPSs 71
 products 19, 23, 25, 87, 91
 respiratory chain 299, 301, 318
 Bactericidal 221, 235, 260, 287, 288, 289, 292, 293, 302, 305, 306, 315, 496, 505
 action 287, 289, 292, 293, 305, 315
 activity 235, 288, 302, 306, 496, 505
 antibiotics 221
 Bacteriostatic 221, 286, 288, 289, 294, 295, 482, 495
 action 286, 294, 295
 BDNF 50, 54, 55
 and CREB expression 54
 expression 50, 55
 Bedaquiline 282, 284, 286, 295, 299, 303, 315, 316, 322

- Benzimidazoles 264, 365, 366, 400m 403, 404, 408, 416, 430, 435
 core 365, 366, 435
 derivatives 365, 400, 403, 404
 Bifidobacteria 41, 42, 46, 48, 51
 Bifidum 48, 49, 52
 Biofilm matrix 483, 487, 510, 511
 Biofilms 22, 87, 482, 483, 487, 507, 510, 511
 Biological activities 59, 75, 176, 234, 239, 247, 251, 262, 377, 404, 445, 486
 Blood brain barrier (BBB) 3, 10, 12, 17, 22, 23, 24, 33, 34, 35, 38, 39, 55, 59, 63, 64, 66, 68, 86, 101
 Blood cells, white 347
 Bloodstream 31, 33, 68
 Bovine viral, diarrhea virus (BVDV) 453
 Brain 9, 14, 15, 20, 28, 49, 50, 51, 55, 59, 60, 61, 68, 100
 apoE 100
 -derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) 20, 49, 50, 51, 55, 59, 60, 61, 68
 inflammation 9, 20
 tissue 14, 15, 28
- C**
- cAMP response element binding (CREB) 49, 55, 59, 60
 Capreomycin 283, 285, 286, 291
 Cationic AMPs 501, 502, 505, 506
 Cell membrane 489, 492, 493, 497, 499, 501, 502
 bacterial 493
 Cells 9, 11, 12, 14, 16, 19, 23, 24, 25, 28, 31, 33, 34, 35, 39, 45, 55, 61, 62, 63, 64, 69, 87, 89, 98, 101, 102, 159, 187, 189, 250, 262, 264, 265, 298, 306, 318, 319, 320, 337, 342, 344, 347, 371, 372, 373, 375, 387, 411, 438, 457, 460, 482, 483, 485, 487, 492, 494, 495, 497, 498, 504, 508
 cancer 250
 dendritic 19, 23, 25, 337, 373, 411
 encapsulated 101, 102
 endothelial 31, 33, 34, 35, 39, 159, 347
 mammalian 497, 508
 myeloid 24
 neuronal 23, 28, 62, 64, 89
 persister 483
 planktonic 487
 resistant 483
 wall synthesis 306, 318, 495, 498
 Central nervous system (CNS) 1, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 19, 20, 21, 26, 28, 29, 33, 34, 35, 38, 55, 64, 86, 294
 Cephalixin 223, 224, 228, 230
 Cephalosporins 214, 218, 219, 221, 223, 224, 225, 226, 229, 230, 231, 242, 243, 245
 fourth-generation 219, 230, 231
 Chemokines 10, 11, 23, 32, 33, 38, 345
 Chloramphenicol 214, 217
 Chlortetracycline 237, 238
 Chronic 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 79, 80, 100, 255, 305, 337, 338, 339, 343, 346, 347, 353, 373, 379, 462, 463
 bacterial prostatitis (CBP) 255
 diseases 7, 79, 80
 HBV infection 337, 343, 346, 347, 353
 hepatitis 338, 339, 343, 346, 347, 373, 379, 462, 463
 hepatitis treatment of 338, 339
 hepatitis B (CHB) 338, 339, 343, 346, 347, 373
 neuro-inflammation 8, 9, 10, 11
 TB infection 305
 traumatic encephalopathy (CTE) 100
 Cinchona 155, 164, 165, 214
 Ciprofloxacin 225, 235, 236, 249, 283, 285, 292, 308, 312, 316
 Clarithromycin 225, 232, 260, 286
 Clindamycin 163, 165, 173, 174
 Clofazimine 286, 295, 300, 307, 318
 Cognition 44, 45, 46, 48, 50, 51, 53, 56, 81, 83, 85
 Cognitive 2, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 55, 81, 98
 function 2, 41, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 49, 50, 52, 53, 55, 81, 98
 performance 43, 48, 50
 reactivity 52
 Combination therapy 156, 172, 173, 185, 336, 349, 406, 420, 453, 462
 Compounds 58, 67, 87, 88, 217, 247, 260, 263, 348, 353, 374, 386, 448
 active 260, 348, 353, 374

linear 448
 organic 87, 88
 polyphenolic 58, 386
 synthesized 247, 263
 therapeutic 67, 217
 Conformational changes 99, 405, 408
 Cooperative Study-Activities 95
 COX-2 activity 54
 CQ resistance 171, 174
 CREB expression 54
 Crenezumab 6, 97, 98
 Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) 26
 Curcumin 61, 62, 63, 67, 68, 70, 76, 77, 90, 349
 Cytokines 1, 9, 10, 11, 13, 17, 23, 24, 25, 29, 32, 35, 37, 38, 338, 347
 Cytotoxic activities 264, 266
 Cytotoxicity 59, 67, 68, 90, 187, 221, 262, 360, 362, 365, 367, 368, 374, 492, 497
D
 DAAs drugs 375
 Delamanid 282, 283, 284, 286, 295, 312, 313
 Dementia 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 25, 27, 37, 39, 53, 61, 62, 66, 70, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 101, 102
 Dextran sodium sulfate (DSS) 48, 53
 Diagnostic technologies 282, 319, 322
 Dietary interventions 2, 39, 71
 Dihydroartemisinin 166, 172, 175
 Direct-acting antivirals (DAAs) 335, 336, 343, 348, 396, 405, 414, 444, 459, 463
 DNA gyrase 292, 293, 308, 316
 Doxycycline 164, 165, 173, 225, 237, 238, 260
 Drugs 39, 56, 62, 66, 69, 70, 86, 92, 93, 95, 96, 154, 155, 156, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 175, 177, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 192, 193, 194, 214, 215, 242, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 296, 300, 302, 308, 309, 311, 313, 316, 322, 335, 336, 337, 339, 346, 348, 379, 391, 414, 459, 460, 483, 487, 488, 510
 anti-tubercular 282, 284, 286, 301

163, 164
 disease-modifying 93, 95, 96
 lipophilic 193
 partner 173
 second-line 283, 286

E

Early stage development 295, 296, 299
Escherichia coli (*E. coli*) 21, 57, 249, 251, 252, 253, 254, 256, 257, 258, 504, 506, 509
 Environment, membranous 492, 496
 Erythromycin 223, 225, 232, 260
 Ethambutol 283, 285, 286, 288, 314
 Ethionamide 283, 285, 286, 289
 Ethyl ester 287, 293, 294

F

First-in-human (FIH) 94
 Flavonoids 40, 54, 58, 384, 434
 Fluoroquinolone(s) 214, 219, 221, 223, 224, 225, 234, 235, 236, 242, 249, 250, 255, 265, 283, 286, 292, 293, 303, 308, 309, 316, 321
 derivatives 249, 250
 Fungal infections 28, 29, 216

G

Gantenerumab 6, 92, 97, 98
 Genotype 343, 348, 375, 380, 389, 415, 416, 435, 439, 444, 446, 461, 462
 Gentamicin 223, 225, 239, 240
 Gentamicin C1 240, 241, 256
 GI microbiota 19, 20, 22, 23
 Glial cells 9, 14, 19, 37
 Gonorrhea 216, 224, 225
 Gram 14, 22, 30, 71, 219, 225, 229, 230, 231, 232, 236, 245, 502, 506, 510
 -negative bacteria 14, 22, 30, 71, 219, 225, 229, 230, 231, 232, 245, 502, 506, 510
 -positive bacteria 14, 230, 231, 236, 510
 Green tea 74, 76, 78, 79, 178

Gut microbiota 1, 16, 18, 20, 22, 25, 26, 44, 45, 61, 68

H

HBsAg secretion 348, 353, 354, 357, 359, 360, 367

HBV 337, 338, 339, 342, 343, 345, 346, 348, 349, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 367, 368, 370, 373, 374, 461

DNA replication 359, 360, 361, 362, 367, 368, 370

-infected patients 345

infections 337, 338, 339, 343, 345, 346, 363, 373, 461

life-cycle 343, 345, 346, 374

polymerase 339, 342, 348, 349, 362, 364

replication 338, 339, 342, 348, 362, 369

transcription 348, 349, 360

HCV 367, 374, 375, 377, 379, 380, 386, 399, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 411, 415, 416, 420, 424, 426, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 441, 442, 443, 446, 449, 450, 452, 453, 455, 456, 459

genotypes 374, 375, 380, 407, 420, 426, 437, 438, 441, 442, 450

helicase 408, 409

infections 367, 377, 379, 386, 401, 406, 411, 449, 450, 456

inhibitors 407, 416, 452, 453

NS5B polymerase 434, 435, 436, 438, 443, 446

NS5B polymerase inhibitors 435, 440, 443, 446

polymerase 403, 404, 405, 420

replication 399, 402, 405, 406, 411, 415, 424, 449, 455, 456, 459

Hemolytic activity 48, 495, 497

Hepatitis A (HAV) 335, 336, 337, 459, 462

Hepatitis C virus (HCV) 335, 336, 343, 345, 348, 349, 367, 372, 374, 375, 377, 378, 379, 396, 400, 407, 413, 415, 416, 424, 426, 435, 443, 444, 450, 451, 452, 456, 457, 458, 459

Hepatitis delta 335, 336, 460, 461

virus (HDV) 335, 336, 460, 461

Hexapeptide 380, 381, 399

High-density lipoprotein (HDL) 31

Hippocampus 35, 36, 39, 43, 49, 50, 54, 68, 69, 71, 74, 102

HIV infections 295, 373

HMG-CoA reductase inhibitor 296, 298

Host cells 158, 346, 375, 490, 499, 509, 510, 511

Host defence peptides (HDPs) 486

Human β -defensin 482, 492

Human microbiome (HM) 1, 16, 17

project (HMP) 16, 17

Huntington's disease (HD) 61, 64, 101

Hydrophobic 22, 30, 248, 404, 490, 492, 493, 496, 498

Hydroxymethyl 311, 372, 373

I

Imidazo 260, 436, 452, 453, 454

Immune cells 8, 10, 23, 25, 30, 34, 38, 283, 346, 347, 411

Immune responses 7, 8, 14, 19, 22, 35, 68, 84, 179, 180, 186, 319, 338, 339, 346, 463, 508

adaptive 8, 14, 35, 338

Immune system 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 31, 35, 37, 38, 347, 373, 484, 484

innate 8, 9, 10, 17, 19, 25, 31, 35, 37, 482, 484

Immunotherapy 93, 318, 320

Indole core 429, 430, 435, 439

Indolicidin 482, 492, 496

Indoor residual spraying (IRS) 161, 194

Infections 2, 7, 10, 15, 16, 19, 27, 28, 29, 31, 33, 34, 35, 37, 39, 154, 155, 156, 158, 159, 163, 165, 173, 183, 184, 194, 214, 215, 216, 224, 225, 242, 253, 259, 290, 335, 336, 337, 338, 346, 374, 375, 380, 384, 459, 461, 462, 463, 482, 483, 485, 488, 489, 499, 507, 510

bone 224, 225

skin 224, 225

staph 224, 225

viral 27, 28, 338, 346, 463, 485, 488, 489

vivax 158, 165

Infectious 1, 2, 12, 19, 22, 28, 34, 84, 92, 154, 179, 214, 215, 231, 335
 agents 1, 2, 12, 28, 34, 84, 92
 diseases 28, 154, 179, 214, 215, 231, 335
 factors 19, 22
 Inflammatory 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 30, 31, 36, 37, 38, 69, 73, 484
 markers 7, 30, 37
 mediators 10, 11, 13, 31
 reactions 15, 36, 38
 response 7, 10, 12, 13, 16, 31, 69, 73, 484
 Inhibitors 12, 56, 64, 72, 88, 89, 92, 242, 244, 298, 335, 339, 344, 347, 364, 365, 368, 370, 372, 375, 380, 383, 386, 387, 389, 394, 395, 399, 400, 403, 404, 405, 407, 408, 409, 424, 426, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 435, 436, 438, 446, 460, 462
 competitive 383, 399, 400, 409
 hexapeptide 395, 399
 macrocyclic 380, 387, 389
 of HBV 347, 364, 365, 368, 370
 peptidomimetic 399
 Inhibitory 64, 232, 236, 243, 244, 357, 362, 367, 372, 374, 402, 408, 438, 442, 449, 455
 activities 64, 232, 236, 243, 244, 357, 362, 367, 372, 402, 408, 438, 442, 449, 455
 effects, better 374
 Inulin-type fructans (ITF) 41, 42
 Isoflavones 46, 59, 76, 79
 Isoniazid 265, 283, 285, 286, 287, 288, 298, 312, 314, 321

K

Kanamycin 225, 240, 241, 242, 243, 252, 255, 283, 285, 286, 289, 290

L

Lactobacillus pentosus 49, 54, 55
 Lactone 232, 233, 354
 Lamivudine 338, 339, 353, 354, 362, 363, 365, 368, 370, 372, 373, 461
 Levofloxacin 223, 225, 235, 236, 283, 285, 286, 292, 293, 295, 303, 308, 316
 Line probe assays (LPAs) 319, 321

Linezolid 286, 295, 303, 310, 311, 316, 436
 Lipid(s) 52, 55, 59, 84, 187, 188, 498, 499
 bilayer 84, 498, 499
 peroxidation 52, 55, 59
 solid 187, 188
 Low density lipoproteins (LDL) 377
 LPSs binding protein (LBP) 31
 Lymphocytes 11, 25, 35, 36, 347

M

Macrolide(s) 214, 217, 218, 223, 224, 225, 231, 232, 233, 234, 242, 247, 248, 249, 266, 298
 antibiotics 231, 232, 249
 Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) 81, 96
 Malaria 154, 159, 160, 162, 164, 165, 169, 173, 174, 184, 185, 186
 cerebral 154, 159, 184, 186
 resistant 164, 185
 risk of 160, 162
 uncomplicated 159, 165, 169, 173, 174, 186
 chemotherapy 154, 155, 156, 168, 175, 178, 186, 187, 188, 189
 transmission 160, 161
 treatment 154, 155, 156, 160, 161, 162, 164, 165, 168, 172, 175, 179, 180, 194, 195
 vaccine 155, 156, 195
 vaccine effective 179, 180
 vectors 160, 161, 194
 Malarial infection 155
 Malonaldehyde dimethyl acetal (MDA) 43, 55
 MDR malaria 168
 Medical implants 488
 Mediterranean Diet 2, 78
 Membranes 55, 89, 169, 238, 316, 405, 488, 490, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 511
 bacterial 238, 494, 497, 498, 511
 cytoplasmic 316, 488, 497, 500, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507
 Merozoites 158, 179, 181
 Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* 218, 231, 256

- Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) 218, 231, 256, 259, 262, 265
- Microbes 1, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 23, 47, 215, 218, 266, 338, 483, 496, 497, 498, 500
- Microbiota 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 45
- Microglial cells 9, 14, 21, 22, 36
- Microglia 3, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 19, 21, 24, 25, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 69, 72, 97, 98
activated 3, 11, 13, 33, 36
- Mini-mental state examination (MMSE) 95, 96
- Minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) 250, 253, 261, 263, 265, 306, 314
- Minocycline 223, 225, 237, 238
- Mitogen-activated protein kinase (MAPK) 33
- Monoclonal antibodies 2, 5, 6, 92, 95, 102, 405
- Moxifloxacin 235, 236, 285, 286, 293, 295, 303, 308, 309, 310, 312, 313, 316
- Multi-drug resistant (MDR) 168, 177, 182, 282, 283, 298, 303, 305, 313, 314, 321
- Multiple sclerosis (MS) 20, 51, 92, 101
- Mycobacteria 240, 287, 291, 295
- Mycobacterium 239, 240, 260, 261, 265, 282, 292, 293, 316, 321
avium complex (MAC) 260
tuberculosis 239, 240, 261, 265, 282, 321
- Myeloid suppressor cells (MSCs) 9
- Myricetin 88, 90, 91
- N**
- Nalidixic acid 223, 234, 236, 308
- Nano-particles (NPs) 101, 188, 265
- Natural products 2, 53, 57, 67, 90, 102, 214, 222, 227, 237, 238, 239, 248, 255, 266, 347, 348, 349, 380, 400, 405, 460
- Neomycin 223, 225, 240, 243, 252
- Nephrotoxicity 288, 289, 290, 291
- Neurodegeneration 3, 10, 13, 15, 24, 25, 33, 38, 40, 44, 50, 51, 61, 73, 93, 97
- Neurodegenerative diseases (NDs) 1, 8, 9, 10, 13, 26, 38, 45, 56, 61, 62, 64, 65, 66, 73, 79, 84, 92, 98, 101, 102
- Neurons 9, 12, 14, 19, 20, 28, 36, 37, 38, 55, 99
- Neuroprotective activities 54, 66, 76, 102
- New compounds, promising 217
- Nitazoxanide 295, 303, 306, 307, 407
- Nitroimidazo 313, 314, 315
- N*-methylated peptides 89, 90
- Non-nucleoside inhibitors (NNIs) 402, 403, 419, 420, 426, 435, 437, 460
- Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) 4, 72
- Non-tuberculous mycobacterial (NTM) 290
- Norfloxacin 225, 235, 236, 312
- Novel targets 296, 298, 322, 463
- NS3 protease 379, 382, 383, 386, 387, 389, 395, 410, 454
- NS4B 411, 412, 414
Inhibitors 411, 412, 414
protein 412
- NS5A 380, 405, 406, 407
resistant 405
inhibitors 380, 405, 406, 407
- NS5B 335, 375, 384, 386, 402, 405, 407, 417, 419, 420, 422, 423, 426, 428, 429, 430, 432, 435, 436, 438, 439, 441, 443, 444, 445, 460
inhibitors 417, 419, 422, 423, 426, 432, 435, 436, 444
polymerase 335, 375, 386, 402, 407, 426, 438, 441, 443, 445, 460
polymerase inhibitors 417, 460
thumb site 428, 429, 430, 438
- NTCP functions 345, 346
- Nucleos 343, 373, 374
- Nucleoside(s) 339, 347, 354, 357, 370, 402, 404, 419, 422, 423, 424, 443, 445, 453, 461
analogues (NAs) 339, 354, 419, 420, 445, 449, 453
- Nucleotide inhibitors (NIs) 419, 424, 453
- O**
- Ofloxacin 225, 235, 236, 283
- Oleocanthal 72, 73, 74, 78
- Oligomers 4, 21, 25, 44, 88, 98
- Oligosaccharides 30, 42, 44, 45, 46
- Olive oil 70, 72, 73, 77, 78, 79
extra virgin 73, 77, 78
- Open reading frames (ORFs) 461, 462
- Operation, cognitive 56, 74, 82, 85

- Ototoxicity 288, 289, 290, 291
 Outer membrane 30, 87, 231, 299, 301, 502, 503, 506, 507
 Oxazolidinones 223, 303, 310, 311, 312, 316, 322
 Oxidative stress 2, 9, 12, 13, 20, 25, 50, 55, 56, 57, 58, 61, 62, 63, 64, 66, 67, 70, 71, 73, 75, 167, 168
 Oxidative stress and inflammation 12, 13, 75
- P**
- PAD exposure 99
 Parasitemia 165, 194
 Parasite populations 171, 172
 Parasites 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 161, 166, 167, 168, 170, 171, 172, 173, 176, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 196, 215, 411, 484
 resistant 166, 171, 176, 185
 Parkinson's disease (PD) 7, 20, 24, 25, 56, 61, 62, 64, 92, 101, 257
 Pathogen-associated molecular patterns (PAMPs) 19, 22, 23, 25, 31, 33, 38, 338
 Pathogenesis 3, 4, 6, 8, 13, 45, 49, 59, 61, 62, 64, 65, 69, 101, 322, 507
 Pathogenic bacteria 242, 500, 501, 502, 503, 508
 Pathogens 2, 8, 13, 18, 19, 24, 38, 84, 217, 233, 236, 265, 411, 488, 490, 498, 501, 502, 504, 506, 508, 510
 bacterial 501, 502, 506, 508
 macrolide-resistant 233
 Pattern recognition receptors (PRRs) 19, 337, 338, 339
P. berghei 176, 177, 182, 185, 188, 192, 194
P. cynomolgi 183, 184, 185
 Penicillins 214, 216, 217, 219, 221, 222, 223, 224, 226, 227, 228, 229, 237, 240, 242, 243, 245, 259
 semi-synthetic 228
 Penicillins and cephalosporins 219, 226, 243
 Penicillium species 214, 217
 Peptides 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 58, 60, 62, 70, 71, 89, 90, 343, 374, 394, 482, 484, 485, 486, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 509, 510
 action 503, 504, 506
 β -hairpin 494
 resistance 501, 503, 505
 host-defence 482, 484
 Perceived stress scale (PSS) 51
P. falciparum 155, 157, 158, 159, 162, 163, 165, 166, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 176, 177, 179, 180, 181, 182, 184
 infections 158, 165, 166, 184
 malaria 170, 173, 174
 Pipeline 296, 297, 322
 Plantarum C29 49, 54, 55
 Plant crocous 75
 Plasma 35, 36, 58, 64, 65, 353
 Pneumonia 216, 224, 225, 247, 258
 Polymerase 342, 375, 401, 419, 426
 proteins 342
 Polymyxins 30, 219, 223, 505, 507, 510
 Polypeptides 223, 285, 290, 291
 Polyphenols 58, 61, 62, 65, 73, 74, 79, 80, 90, 384, 386
 Polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) 66, 82, 84
 Positron emission tomography (PET) 95, 96, 97
 Post infection 318, 320
 Potent 154, 235, 243, 298, 358, 362, 368, 369, 371, 373, 374, 406, 408, 433, 441, 452, 455
 allosteric inhibitors 433
 anti-HBV activities 362, 368, 374
 anti-HCV activity 452, 455
 drugs 154, 235
 inhibitors 243, 298, 358, 369, 371, 373, 406, 408, 441, 452
 Prebiotics 2, 40, 41, 45, 46, 47
 activity 45, 47
 Pre-dementia syndromes 80, 83
 Pretomanid 295, 303, 309, 312
 Probiotic(s) 2, 19, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53
 supplements, mixed 50, 52
 Pro-drugs, phosphoramidate 422, 438
 Prolepsis 61, 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 79, 80, 81, 82, 102
 Protease(s) 5, 335, 375, 379, 380, 381, 383, 388, 389, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 398,

399, 400, 407, 410, 417, 442, 453, 454, 456, 458, 460, 489, 504, 506
 inhibitor (PI) 379, 380, 381, 383, 388, 389, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 398, 399, 400, 442, 453, 454, 456, 458, 460
 inhibitors, potent NS3 380, 383
 Proteins 11, 12, 21, 26, 28, 31, 39, 40, 41, 43, 54, 59, 60, 64, 88, 89, 90, 99, 101, 171, 179, 219, 288, 289, 290, 316, 319, 320, 343, 344, 347, 374, 375, 379, 405, 450, 457, 493, 497, 498, 499, 509, 511
 carbonyls 43, 54
 expression 54, 60, 171
 amyloidogenic 88, 89
 Protein synthesis 237, 238, 291, 310, 494, 498
 inhibiting 237, 238, 310
Pseudomonas aeruginosa 235, 251, 253, 256, 257
 Pyrazinamide 283, 285, 286, 287, 288, 296, 298, 309, 313, 314
 Pyridine 260, 364, 436

Q

QTc prolongation 293, 315
 Quantitative structure-activity relationships (QSAR) 460
 Quinoline derivatives 162, 368, 439
 Quinolones 219, 221, 223, 234, 235, 236, 243, 285, 293, 438, 441

R

Rapid visual information-processing (RVIP) 51
 Reactive oxygen species (ROS) 12, 13, 55, 59, 63, 71, 167, 250
 Receptor inhibitors 336
 Replicon assays 386, 439, 443, 456, 457
 Resistance 1, 41, 154, 155, 156, 160, 161, 165, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 175, 176, 182, 185, 194, 195, 214, 218, 226, 237, 238, 266, 319, 321, 339, 374, 399, 420, 426, 483, 484, 489, 500, 501, 502, 504, 505, 507, 510
 antimalarial drug 169, 170
 emergence of 160, 170, 175, 176, 194

inducible 500, 504
 passive 501
 pyrethroid 161
 rifampicin 321
 Resistance 46, 154, 163, 168, 169, 171, 176, 177, 178, 195, 218, 253, 258, 266, 311, 315, 353, 460, 483, 484, 488, 489, 496, 500, 508, 510
 development 168, 169, 171, 195, 353, 460, 484, 489, 496
 mechanisms 266, 489, 500, 508
 bacteria 218, 253, 258, 483, 484, 510
 Starch (RS) 46, 315
 strains 154, 163, 176, 177, 178, 311, 488, 496
 Reverse transcriptase (RT) 339, 342, 373
 Ribavirin 335, 375, 404, 405, 408, 459, 461, 462
 Ribosomes 251, 288, 289, 290, 291, 459, 508
 Rifabutin 285, 286, 288
 Rifampicin(s) 219, 265, 283, 285, 286, 288, 295, 296, 298, 303, 314, 321
 Rifapentine 285, 286, 288, 295
 RNA 373, 400, 401, 406, 419, 420, 494
 interference (RNAi) 373, 400, 401, 406
 synthesis 419, 420, 494
 Rosmarinic acid (RA) 57, 58, 66, 75

S

SAR analysis 300, 302, 304, 305, 308, 311, 313, 314, 315
 of nitroimidazo 313, 314, 315
 Self micro emulsifying drug delivery systems (SMEDDS) 192, 193, 194
 Semi-synthetic derivatives 228, 231, 238, 239
 Severe malaria 154, 166, 173, 174, 175
 Silver nanoparticles, synthesized 251
 Sofosbuvir 375, 426, 443, 445, 462
 Solanezumab 6, 92, 93, 95, 102
 Solid lipid nanoparticles (SLN) 59, 187, 188
 Soybeans 45, 46, 76, 79
 Sparfloxacin 225, 235, 236
 Spectrum, antibacterial 234, 235, 241
 Sporozoites 158, 179, 180, 182, 184
 Standard uptake value ratio (SUVr) 96

Streptomycin 217, 223, 225, 237, 240, 252, 285, 286, 288, 289, 306, 312
 Structure activity relationship (SAR) 167, 300, 301, 304, 308, 315, 322, 336, 354, 355, 356, 357, 360, 362, 363, 364, 365, 367, 368, 369, 370, 373, 389, 398, 399, 402, 404, 406, 408, 435, 439, 440, 446, 447, 452, 455, 456, 457, 458, 463, 490
Substantia nigra (SN) 36
 Sulfonamides 219, 223, 417
 Systems 10, 16, 102, 176, 190, 191, 194, 402, 508, 509
 bacterial expression 508, 509

T

Target cells 367, 499
 Tauopathies 98, 99, 100
 Tau 6, 27, 69, 92, 98, 99
 pathology 27, 98, 99
 protein 6, 69, 92, 98, 99
 TB 261, 282, 283, 285, 291, 296, 307, 308, 313, 318, 319, 321, 322
 treatment of 282, 283, 285, 291, 296, 307
 TB drug development 298, 302, 322
 TB vaccines 318, 319, 322
 Tenofovir disoproxil fumarate (TDF) 339, 373
 Terminal protein (TP) 342
 Tetracyclines 165, 173, 214, 217, 219, 221, 223, 224, 225, 236, 237, 238, 239, 242, 243, 251, 252, 253, 266
 Therapeutic effect 72, 73, 301
 Thiazolidines 367, 370, 457
 Third-generation 219, 236, 237, 238
 Thumb pocket 434, 435, 436, 444, 445, 446
 Tolerability 94, 96, 235, 303, 309, 313, 345, 373

Toll-like receptors (TLRs) 13, 14, 15, 23, 24, 38, 338, 345, 411
 Transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs) 26, 101
 Traumatic brain injury (TBI) 56, 66, 100
 Treatment of MDR-TB 282, 283, 284, 307, 308, 322
 TRIF-related adaptor molecule (TRAM) 32
 Trimester 165, 173, 174
 Trovafloxacin 225, 235, 236
 Tuberculosis 217, 261, 282, 283, 295, 305
 resistant 283, 295
 Tuberculosis 282, 296
 drugs, global 296
 vaccines 282
 Type II topoisomerase 292, 293, 316

U

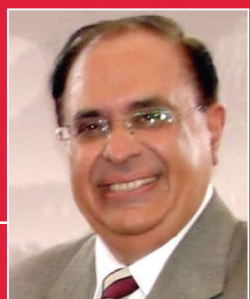
Unnatural amino acids 482, 496
 Urinary tract infections 224, 225, 234

V

Vancomycin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (VRSA) 231
 Very low density lipoproteins (VLDL) 377
 Viral replication 31, 337, 343, 347, 348, 349, 364, 373, 407, 408, 434, 459, 460
 Virulence factors 501, 507, 508

W

Whole blood viscosity (WBV) 51



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