

**UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO PAMPA  
PROGRAMA DE PÓS-GRADUAÇÃO EM BIOQUÍMICA**

**MARIANE MAGALHÃES ZANCHI**

**PAPEL PROTETOR DA INFUSÃO DO CHÁ VERDE SOBRE O DANO INDUZIDO  
PELA CICLOFOSFAMIDA NO SISTEMA REPRODUTOR DE CAMUNDONGOS**

**Uruguiana**

**2014**

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Dissertação apresentada ao programa de Pós-Graduação *Stricto sensu* em Bioquímica da Universidade Federal do Pampa, como requisito parcial para obtenção do Título de Mestre em Bioquímica.

Orientadora: Prof<sup>a</sup>. Dr<sup>a</sup>. Francielli Weber Santos  
Cibin

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Área de concentração: Bioprospecção Molecular

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Dedico esta dissertação aos meus pais, Mauro e Marli, meus maiores incentivadores e responsáveis pela minha caminhada acadêmica.

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**MUITO OBRIGADA!**

## RESUMO

Dissertação de Mestrado  
Programa de Pós-Graduação em Bioquímica  
Universidade Federal do Pampa

### **PAPEL PROTETOR DA INFUSÃO DO CHÁ VERDE SOBRE O DANO INDUZIDO PELA CICLOFOSFAMIDA NO SISTEMA REPRODUTOR DE CAMUNDONGOS**

AUTOR: Mariane Magalhães Zanchi

ORIENTADORA: Francieli Weber Santos Cibin

Data e Local da Defesa: 26 de julho de 2014, Uruguaiiana

A ciclofosfamida (CF) é um agente antineoplásico e imunossupressor, usada no tratamento de diversos tipos de tumores e em algumas doenças auto-imunes. A CF é considerada um pró-fármaco, portanto, precisa sofrer biotransformação hepática para formar seus metabólitos ativos, como a mostarda fosforamida e a acroleína. Seu metabólito terapêutico, a mostarda fosforamida, é responsável pelo efeito citotóxico na célula tumoral, enquanto a acroleína é conhecida por apresentar um efeito tóxico secundário, por aumentar a produção de espécies reativas ao oxigênio, causando estresse oxidativo. Esse, por sua vez, poderia estar diretamente relacionado com a redução da fertilidade causada por esta droga. Diante disso, compostos naturais com atividade antioxidante poderiam ser uma alternativa ao dano causado pela CF. O chá verde, obtido da planta *Camellia sinensis*, tem ação antioxidante e scavenger de radicais livres, devido ao alto conteúdo de polifenóis. O presente estudo avalia o papel protetor da infusão do chá verde sobre o dano oxidativo no sistema reprodutor de camundongos machos, e a sua relação com a fertilidade, após uma administração aguda de CF. Os camundongos foram pré-tratados por gavagem com veículo ou chá verde diariamente, por 14 dias, na dose de 250 mg/kg. A CF foi administrada via intraperitoneal no 14º dia, 1 hora após a administração do chá, na dose de 100 mg/kg. Os camundongos foram eutanasiados horas após a administração da CF, e os testículos e epidídimos foram retirados para posteriores análises bioquímicas e avaliação espermática. O conteúdo de catequinas, principais constituintes do chá verde foi avaliada por HPLC. Epigallocatequina galato (EGCG) está presente em alta concentração na nossa infusão (1340,2 µg/mL), seguido por epicatequina (EC-500,95 µg/mL) e epicatequina galato (ECG-302,84 µg/mL). CF causou estresse oxidativo no sistema reprodutor dos animais, evidenciado neste trabalho por danificar tanto lipídios, como proteínas e DNA. A CF causou um aumento na peroxidação lipídica (níveis de MDA), dano de DNA (ensaio cometa) e atividade da enzima superóxido dismutase (SOD), enquanto diminuiu a atividade da glutationa peroxidase (GPx), glutationa-S-transferase (GST) e 17β-hidroxiesteróide desidrogenase (17β-HSD) em ambos os tecido testados. A atividade da enzima catalase (CAT) e a quantificação de proteína carbonil foram alteradas somente em testículo, mas não em epidídimo. Em relação à avaliação espermática, CF reduziu significativamente apenas a concentração de espermatozóides, comparado ao controle. O pré-tratamento com a infusão do chá verde reduziu significativamente a produção de MDA, carbonilação de proteína, dano de DNA e restaurou a atividade da GPx e GST. Em epidídimo, o chá verde também aumentou a concentração espermática e restaurou a atividade da enzima 17β-HSD. Pode-se concluir que a infusão do chá verde melhora o dano induzido pela CF, no sistema reprodutor de camundongos, e este efeito poderia ser atribuído ao alto conteúdo de catequinas presentes no chá e à sua atividade antioxidante.

Palavras-chaves: Ciclofosfamida, chá verde, estresse oxidativo, antioxidante, sistema reprodutor masculino.

## **ABSTRACT**

Dissertation of Master's Degree  
Program of Post-Graduation in Biochemistry  
Federal University of Pampa

### **PROTECTIVE ROLE OF THE GREEN TEA INFUSION ON DAMAGE CYCLOPHOSPHAMIDE-INDUCED ON REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM OF MICE**

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ADVISOR: Francielli Weber Santos Cibin

Date and Place of Defense: Uruguaiiana, July 26, 2014

Cyclophosphamide (CP) is an antineoplastic and immunosuppressive agent used to treat various types of tumors and in some autoimmune diseases. CP is considered a prodrug, therefore, must undergo hepatic biotransformation to form its active metabolites, such as phosphoramidate mustard and acrolein. Its therapeutic metabolite, phosphoramidate mustard, is responsible for the cytotoxic effect on tumor cells, while acrolein is known to provide a secondary toxic effect by increasing the reactive oxygen species production, causing oxidative stress. This might be directly related to the fertility reduction caused by this drug. Therefore, natural compounds with antioxidant activity could be an alternative to the damage caused by CP. Green tea, obtained from the plant *Camellia sinensis*, has antioxidant and free radical scavenging effect, due to the high content of polyphenols. The present study evaluates the protective role of the green tea infusion on oxidative damage on male mice reproductive system, and their relationship to fertility after an acute administration of CP. The mice were pre-treated by gavage with vehicle or green tea daily for 14 days at dose of 250 mg/kg. CP was administered intraperitoneally on day 14, 1 hour after administration of tea at dose of 100 mg/kg. Mice were euthanized 24 hours after the administration of the CP and testes and epididymis were removed for further biochemical analysis and sperm assessment. The content of catechins, the main constituents of green tea were evaluated by HPLC. Epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) is present in high concentrations in our infusion (1340.2 µg/ml), followed by epicatechin (EC-500.95 µg/ml) and epicatechin gallate (ECG-302.84 µg/mL). CP caused oxidative stress in the reproductive system of animals, evidenced in this work by damaging not only lipids, but also proteins and DNA. CP increased lipid peroxidation (MDA), DNA damage (comet assay) and superoxide dismutase (SOD) activity, while decreased glutathione peroxidase (GPx), glutathione-S-transferase (GST) and 17β-hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase (17β-HSD) activity in both tissues tested. Catalase (CAT) activity and quantification of protein carbonyl were altered only in testes but not in the epididymis. Regarding sperm evaluation, CP significantly decreased only sperm concentration, compared to the control group. Pre-treatment with green tea infusion significantly reduced MDA production, protein carbonylation, DNA damage and restored GPx and GST activity. In epididymis, green tea also increased sperm concentration and restored 17 β-HSD activity. Green tea infusion improves the damage induced by CP in the reproductive system of mice, and this effect is attributed to the high content of catechins in tea and its antioxidant activity.

Key-words: Cyclophosphamide, green tea, oxidative stress, antioxidant, male reproductive system.

## LISTA DE ILUSTRAÇÕES

### Revisão Bibliográfica

<b>Figura 1</b> – Fórmula estrutural da ciclofosfamida.....	14
<b>Figura 2</b> – Resumo esquemático do metabolismo da ciclofosfamida.....	15
<b>Figura 3</b> – Integração dos sistemas de defesa enzimática.....	17
<b>Figura 4</b> – Estrutura das principais catequinas do chá verde.....	19

### Artigo

<b>Figura 1</b> – Effect of cyclophosphamide and green tea pre-treatment on MDA level in testes (A) and epididymis (B).....	39
<b>Figura 2</b> – Effect of cyclophosphamide and green tea pre-treatment on protein carbonyl level in testes (A) and epididymis (B).....	39
<b>Figura 3</b> – Effect of cyclophosphamide and green tea pre-treatment on damage DNA index in testes (A) and epididymis (B).....	39
<b>Figura 4</b> – Effect of cyclophosphamide and green tea pre-treatment on SOD activity in testes (A) and epididymis (B).....	40
<b>Figura 5</b> – Effect of cyclophosphamide and green tea pre-treatment on CAT activity in testes (A) and epididymis (B).....	40
<b>Figura 6</b> – Effect of cyclophosphamide and green tea pre-treatment on GPx activity in testes (A) and epididymis (B).....	40
<b>Figura 7</b> – Effect of cyclophosphamide and green tea pre-treatment on GST activity in testes (A) and epididymis (B).....	41
<b>Figura 8</b> – Effect of cyclophosphamide and green tea pre-treatment on 17 $\beta$ -HSD activity in testes (A) and epididymis (B).....	41
<b>Tabela 1</b> – Effect of cyclophosphamide and green tea infusion on epididymal sperm characteristics.....	41



## LISTA DE ABREVIATURAS E SIGLAS

CAT – Catalase

CF – Ciclofosfamida

CYP – Citocromo P450

EC – (-)-epicatequina

ECG – (-)-epicatequina-3-gallato

EGC – (-)-epigallocatequina

EGCG – (-)-epigallocatequina-3-gallato

EROS – Espécies Reativas de Oxigênio

GPx – Glutationa Peroxidase

GR – Glutationa Redutase

GSH – Glutationa reduzida

GSSG – Glutationa oxidada

GST – Glutationa S-transferase

H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> – Peróxido de hidrogênio

HPLC – Cromatografia Líquida de Alta Eficiência (do inglês High-performance liquid chromatography)

MDA – Malondialdeído

NF-κβ – Fator nuclear kappa β

O<sub>2</sub><sup>•-</sup> – Ânion superóxido

OH<sup>•</sup> – Radical hidroxila

SOD – Superóxido dismutase

TBARS – Espécies reativas ao ácido tiobarbitúrico

17 β-HSD – 17 β-hidroxiesteróide desidrogenase

δ-ALA-D - δ-Aminolevulinato desidratase

## SUMÁRIO

<u>RESUMO.....</u>	<u>VI</u>
<u>ABSTRACT .....</u>	<u>VII</u>
<u>LISTA DE ILUSTRAÇÕES .....</u>	<u>VIII</u>
<u>LISTA DE ABREVIATURAS E SIGLAS .....</u>	<u>IX</u>
<u>1. INTRODUÇÃO .....</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>2. OBJETIVOS.....</u>	<u>13</u>
<b>2.1 Objetivo geral .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>2.2 Objetivos específicos .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<u>3 REVISÃO BIBLOGRÁFICA.....</u>	<u>14</u>
<b>3.1 Ciclofosfamida (CF).....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>3.2 Metabolismo da ciclofosfamida.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>3.3 Estresse oxidativo e defesas antioxidantes .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3.4 Ciclofosfamida (CF) e estresse oxidativo.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>3.5 Chá Verde (<i>Camellia sinensis</i>).....</b>	<b>18</b>
<u>4 ARTIGO CIENTÍFICO .....</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>5 CONCLUSOES.....</u>	<u>42</u>
<u>6 PERSPECTIVAS .....</u>	<u>43</u>
<u>REFERÊNCIAS BIBLIOGRÁFICAS.....</u>	<u>44</u>
<u>APÊNDICE A – ESQUEMA REPRESENTATIVO DOS RESULTADOS .....</u>	<u>49</u>

## 1 INTRODUÇÃO

A ciclofosfamida (CF) é um agente alquilante, que possui atividade antineoplásica e imunossupressora, usado no tratamento de diversos tipos de tumores, no tratamento de algumas doenças auto-imunes, como lupus eritematoso sistêmico e artrite reumatóide, e para evitar a rejeição em transplante de órgãos (TRIPATHI; JENA, 2009).

A CF pertence à classe das oxazafosforinas, sendo considerada uma pró-droga e assim como outros quimioterápicos dessa classe, precisa sofrer bioativação através do citocromo P450 (WANG; WANG, 2012). Dentre os metabólitos ativos formados podemos citar a mostarda fosforamida e a acroleína. A mostarda fosforamida está relacionada com o efeito citotóxico da CF sobre as células tumorais através de alquilação do DNA, enquanto a acroleína com o efeito tóxico nas células normais em reprodução através do aumento na produção de espécies reativas e estresse oxidativo (KERN; KEHRER, 2002; KORKMAZ; TOPAL; OBTER, 2007).

Apesar de ainda ser muito utilizada na clínica, umas das principais preocupações da terapia com a CF é sua toxicidade reprodutiva, que pode levar à infertilidade, tanto em homens quanto em mulheres. Sendo assim, este é um fato crítico que deve ser discutido com o paciente antes de se submeter ao tratamento. Estudos já demonstraram que, pacientes do sexo masculino tratados com CF apresentam um aumento na incidência de oligospermia e azoospermia (KENNEY et al., 2001), além disso, podem apresentar um distúrbio na secreção de gonadotrofinas associado com redução de testosterona sérica (HOORWEG-NIJMAN et al., 1992). Em mulheres, sabe-se que a CF pode levar ao desenvolvimento de insuficiência ovariana prematura, por destruir os folículos ovarianos através da redução dos níveis de glutathiona (GSH) (DIRVEN; VAN OMMEN; VAN BLADEREN, 1994; HOWELL; SHALET, 1998).

Alguns antioxidantes, em especial os compostos naturais, tem sido estudados para aliviar os efeitos tóxicos ocasionados pela CF e outras drogas anticancerígenas. Gürgen et al (2013) sugerem a utilização de compostos antioxidantes como o ácido ascórbico, o  $\alpha$ -tocoferol e o selênio na redução dos efeitos tóxicos degenerativos do tecido ovariano normal, ocasionados pela CF. O ácido cinâmico, um dos principais constituintes da planta oriental *Cinnamomum cassia*, possui atividade antioxidante e foi capaz de prevenir a mielosupressão e o estresse oxidativo induzido pela CF em camundongos (PATRA et al, 2012).

O chá verde, um tipo de chá não fermentado, obtido das folhas da planta *Camellia sinensis*, tem atividade antioxidante e *scavenger* de radicais livres, e esse efeito parece ser

atribuído aos seus componentes polifenólicos (FREI; HIGDON, 2003). O chá está entre as bebidas mais consumidas do mundo e, além disso, seu consumo parece ser relativamente seguro. Um estudo demonstrou que o extrato do chá verde não causa toxicidade em camundongos até a concentração de 2500 mg/kg/dia, quando administrado via oral por 28 dias consecutivos (HSU et al., 2011).

Epigallocatequina-3-gallato (EGCG), um dos principais componentes ativo do chá verde, além de atividade antioxidante, também apresenta efeito anti-inflamatório (KATIYAR et al., 1999) antiangiogênico e protetor sobre a carcinogênese (KATIYAR et al., 2007). Daham et al (2010) demonstrou que o extrato aquoso de catequinas do chá melhora alguns parâmetros espermáticos, como aumento da motilidade e redução na % de espermatozoides anormais e mortos, que foram afetados após o tratamento com metotrexato. O extrato do chá verde também atenua as desordens espermatogênicas induzidas pela doxorubicina, um agente anticancerígeno que também gera produção de radicais livres (SATO et al., 2010).

Considerando que os efeitos tóxicos da CF limitam seu uso, e que esses efeitos estão relacionados com o aumento na produção de espécies reativas e estresse oxidativo, este trabalho visa buscar uma alternativa com terapia natural antioxidante, para tentar reduzir os malefícios causados pelo quimioterápico. Considerando também, que o estresse oxidativo está diretamente relacionado com a redução da fertilidade, este trabalho irá analisar a atividade das principais enzimas antioxidantes no sistema reprodutor masculino, além da avaliação espermática, e o possível papel protetor da infusão do chá verde.

## 2 OBJETIVOS

### 2.1. Objetivo Geral:

Este trabalho propõe avaliar a toxicidade induzida pela CF sobre o sistema reprodutor de camundongos, e o possível papel protetor de uma terapia antioxidante natural, a infusão do chá verde.

### 2.2 Objetivos específicos:

Considerando os aspectos já mencionados, a fim de avaliar o dano provocado pelo quimioterápico em testículo e epidídimo de camundongos, bem como o papel protetor da terapia, este trabalho terá como objetivos específicos:

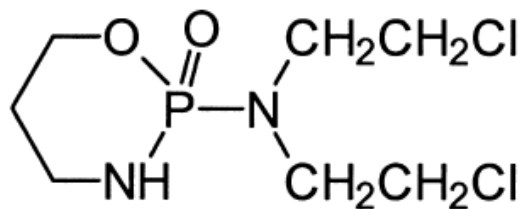
- a) Quantificar as principais catequinas presentes na infusão de chá verde: (-)-epigallocatequina-3-gallato (EGCG); (-)-epigallocatequina (EGC) e (-)-epicatequina (EC), através de HPLC;
- b) Verificar o efeito de uma única administração de CF sobre o dano oxidativo em membranas lipídicas (TBARS), proteínas (carbonil) e DNA (ensaio cometa) em testículo e epidídimo, bem como o papel protetor da infusão do chá verde;
- c) Verificar o efeito de uma única administração de CF sobre a atividade das principais enzimas antioxidantes, superóxido dismutase (SOD), glutatona peroxidase (GPx), catalase (CAT), glutatona-S-transferase (GST) em testículo e epidídimo, e o papel protetor da infusão do chá verde;
- d) Verificar o efeito de uma única administração de CF sobre a atividade da enzima 17  $\beta$ -HSD, responsável pela conversão da androstenodiona em testosterona, em testículo e epidídimo, e o papel protetor da infusão do chá verde;
- e) Avaliação espermática, em sêmen do epidídimo, através de parâmetros como motilidade, vigor, concentração e integridade, após única administração de CF, e o possível papel protetor da infusão do chá verde.

### 3 REVISÃO BIBLIOGRÁFICA

#### 3.1 Ciclofosfamida

A ciclofosfamida (CF) é um composto nitrogenado que pertence à classe das oxazafosforinas, com ação antineoplásica e imunossupressora (Figura 1). É considerado um agente alquilante, comumente usado no tratamento de diversos tipos de tumores, linfomas malignos, leucemias, neuroblastoma e retinoblastoma (BODDY; YULE, 2000), além de ser usado no tratamento de algumas doenças autoimunes (TRIPATHI; JENA, 2009).

**Figura 1.** Fórmula estrutural da ciclofosfamida.



Fonte: Modificado de Germanas; Pandya (2002).

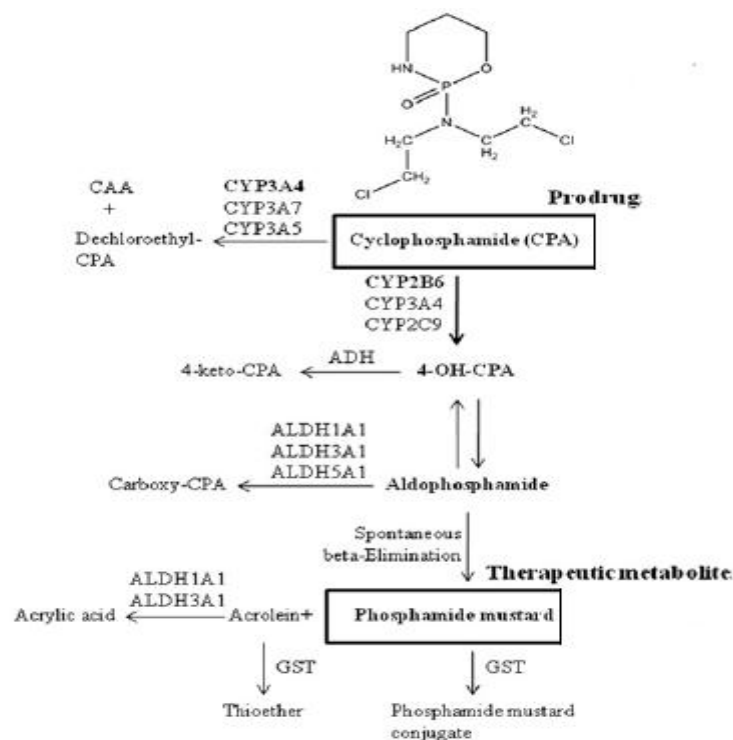
Os agentes alquilantes possuem efeito citotóxico através da habilidade em tornar-se compostos eletrofílicos fortes, formando ligações covalentes com outras moléculas, como o DNA (GERMANAS; PANDYA, 2002). Este efeito citotóxico, porém, pode atingir outras células em divisão, que não as células cancerígenas, tornando o sistema reprodutor um órgão-alvo. Entre os principais efeitos adversos desta droga está a toxicidade reprodutiva (ELANGO VAN et al., 2006). Já foi demonstrado que o uso de CF no tratamento de câncer em pacientes do sexo masculino aumenta a incidência de oligospermia e azoospermia, e pode resultar em infertilidade (KENNEY et al., 2001). Além destes, outros efeitos adversos da droga incluem leucopenia, náuseas, vômitos, carcinogênese e teratogênese (JONGE et al., 2005).

Vários estudos demonstram o efeito teratogênico da CF. Uma exposição à droga durante o desenvolvimento embrionário pode levar ao retardamento do crescimento do embrião, várias anomalias e malformações fetais, que incluem exencefalia, ectrodactilia, acrania, entre outros (MIRKES et al, 1984; OLIVEIRA et al, 2009; PARK et al, 2009).

### 3.2 Metabolismo da Ciclofosfamida

Considerada uma pró-droga, a CF precisa ser metabolizada para ter o seu efeito terapêutico. Após administração, CF sofre oxidação hepática para formar o metabólito intermediário 4-hidroxiciclofosfamida, o qual existe em equilíbrio com seu tautômero, aldofosfamida. Essa hidroxilação é a etapa limitante da bioativação da CF e envolve a participação de várias isoenzimas da família do citocromo P450, incluindo a CYP2B6, CYP3A4 e CYP2C9. A CF também pode ser diretamente detoxificada por oxidação da cadeia lateral, mediada pela CYP3A4, CYP3A7 e CYP3A5, formando o metabólito inativo 2-descloroetilciclofosfamida. 4-hidroxiciclofosfamida tem elevada instabilidade e pode ser decomposta, por  $\beta$ -eliminação à acroleína e mostarda fosforamida, sendo este último o metabólito com atividade terapêutica. Alternativamente, aldofosfamida pode ser convertida em carboxifosfamida, uma reação de detoxificação catalisada pela aldeído desidrogenase. Os metabólitos mostarda fosforamida e acroleína também podem sofrer detoxificação via conjugação intracelular com a glutatona, mediada pela enzima glutatona-S-transferase (GST) (WANG; WANG, 2012) (Figura 2).

**Figura 2.** Resumo esquemático do metabolismo da ciclofosfamida.



Fonte: Modificado de Wang et al.

A atividade terapêutica da CF envolve a alquilação do DNA da célula tumoral. Entretanto, um dos seus metabólitos, a acroleína, é responsável por induzir estresse oxidativo, através da ativação de EROS e produção de óxido nítrico, danificando DNA, lipídios e proteínas de células normais (KORKMAZ; TOPAL; OBTER, 2007). O efeito tóxico da acroleína nas células também envolve morte celular, apoptose e necrose (KERN; KEHRER, 2002).

### 3.3 Estresse oxidativo e defesas antioxidantes

Espécies reativas de oxigênio (EROS), incluindo ânion superóxido ( $O_2^{\bullet-}$ ), peróxido de hidrogênio ( $H_2O_2$ ) e radical hidroxila ( $OH^{\bullet}$ ), são normalmente produzidas nas células aeróbicas. Estes são produzidos em pequenas quantidades durante a atividade mitocondrial e podem desempenhar um papel fisiológico como moléculas sinalizadoras, agem por exemplo, na cascata de sinalização da inflamação. O radical  $OH^{\bullet}$  é capaz de ativar o fator NF- $\kappa$ B, envolvido na resposta inflamatória (SAEIDNIA; ABDOLLAHI, 2013). O  $H_2O_2$  também age controlando a sinalização e a proliferação celular, porém, quando produzido em altas concentrações pode dar início a apoptose, e até necrose celular (ABDOLLAHI; SHETABBOUSHEHRI, 2012).

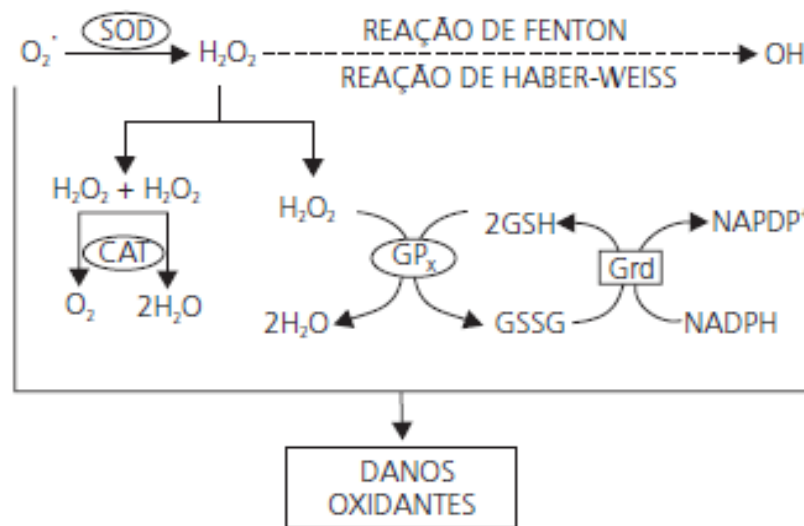
É importante manter um equilíbrio entre a produção de EROS e as defesas antioxidantes. Quando este equilíbrio é afetado, temos um quadro de estresse oxidativo, que pode estar presente durante o processo de envelhecimento, ou ainda ser causa ou consequência de algumas patologias (BURTON; JAUNIAUX, 2011; SAEIDNIA; ABDOLLAHI, 2013).

Fisiologicamente, o organismo apresenta algumas defesas antioxidantes enzimáticas, que incluem a enzima superóxido dismutase (SOD), glutathiona peroxidase (GPx) e catalase (CAT), e outras não enzimáticas, como a glutathiona (GSH). A enzima SOD é a primeira a combater os radicais livres, ela age dismutando o ânion superóxido a  $H_2O_2$ . As enzimas CAT e GPx se integram para impedir o acúmulo de  $H_2O_2$ , que possibilita, por meio das reações de *Fenton* e *Haber-Weiss*, a geração do radical hidroxila ( $OH^{\bullet}$ ), contra o qual não existe defesa enzimática. A GPx reduz o  $H_2O_2$  à água, no entanto o faz à custa da conversão da glutathiona reduzida (GSH) em oxidada (GSSG). Assim, é fundamental a ação da glutathiona redutase (GR), responsável pela recuperação da GSH, possibilitando a manutenção da integralidade do



ciclo redox da glutatona e, conseqüentemente, do equilíbrio adequado entre os sistemas de defesa enzimático (ROVER et al, 2001) (Figura 3).

Figura 3. Integração dos sistemas de defesa enzimática.



Fonte: Barbosa et al. (2010, p. 634).

### 3.4 Ciclofosfamida (CF) e estresse oxidativo

Estudos anteriores já demonstraram que a CF induz estresse oxidativo em vários tecidos. Oboh e Ogunraku (2010) demonstraram que CF na dose de 75 mg/kg aumenta a produção de malondialdeído (MDA) em cérebro de ratos. Wei et al (2012) demonstraram que CF (100 mg/kg) induz estresse oxidativo através do aumento de MDA e de óxido nítrico, e diminuição da atividade da CAT e da SOD em soro, timo e baço de camundongos. CF também induz cardiotoxicidade, urotoxicidade e genotoxicidade em camundongos, reduz a atividade das enzimas SOD, CAT, GPx, GST e diminuiu o nível de glutatona, além de induzir aberrações cromossômicas (ŞEKEROĞLU V.; AYDIN; ŞEKEROĞLU Z, 2011).

O sistema reprodutor masculino também acaba sendo alvo desses radicais livres, uma vez que o testículo, o epidídimo e até mesmo a membrana dos espermatozoides é rica em ácidos graxos poliinsaturados e contém baixa concentração de enzimas antioxidantes, tornando-se vulnerável à peroxidação lipídica e morte celular (MISRO et al., 2004; MANEESH; JAYALEKSHMI 2006). Além disso, o processo de espermatogênese que ocorre

nos testículos fisiologicamente envolve uma alta produção de radicais livres. Um desequilíbrio na produção de EROS e defesas antioxidantes durante esse processo de divisão celular pode reduzir a produção e a qualidade dos espermatozoides, resultando em infertilidade (BOONSORN et al. 2010).

Outros estudos indicam que o estresse oxidativo é fator contribuinte para o dano teratogênico induzido pela CF, e por isso, compostos antioxidantes, como a glutathione e  $\beta$ -ionone, poderiam atenuar essas malformações congênitas (HALES, 1981; SLOTT, HALES, 1987; GOMES-CARNEIRO, 2003). Contradizendo estas informações, Park et al (2009) publicou um trabalho em que mostra que o extrato do chá verde pode aumentar a teratogenicidade induzida pela CF. Isto ocorre porque o chá verde pode modular a expressão do citocromo P-450, aumentando a atividade da CYP2B responsável pela conversão da CF à mostarda fosforamida e acroleína, e reduzindo a atividade da CYP3A, responsável pelo detoxificação da droga.

Apesar disto, sabe-se que antioxidantes exógenos desempenham um papel fundamental para manter o equilíbrio redox no organismo. Compostos naturais e sintéticos, que apresentam efeito antioxidante ou ainda pró-oxidante, dependente da dose administrada, estão sendo estudados. Em especial as plantas, ricas em polifenóis, taninos, flavonóides, carotenóides e outras substâncias, principalmente por apresentar menos toxicidade quando comparada aos compostos sintéticos. Os polifenóis, principais constituintes do chá verde (*Camellia sinensis*), já foram identificados como antioxidantes potentes, que agem regulando a síntese de glutathione e atividade da GPx e conseqüentemente, atenuam o estresse oxidativo mitocondrial (MOSKAUG JØ et al., 2005).

### **3.5 Chá verde (*Camellia sinensis*)**

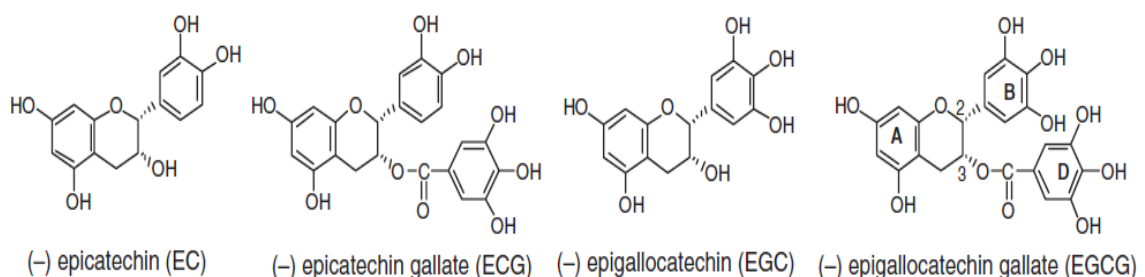
Originário da China, o chá é consumido em muitos países pelas suas características de aroma, sabor e propriedades medicinais. Os chás derivados da planta *Camellia sinensis* podem ser classificados em três tipos básico: preto, verde e oolong. O que os diferencia é o cultivo e o processamento das folhas, sendo o chá preto e o oolong os tipos fermentados, e o chá verde o tipo não fermentado, onde suas folhas são apenas escaldadas e fervidas para garantir a preservação da cor. Durante a fermentação das folhas frescas de chá, algumas catequinas são oxidadas ou condensadas para moléculas polifenólicas maiores (ALMAJANO,

2008). Dentre os três tipos, considera-se o chá verde o mais rico em compostos com atividades funcionais (CHENG, 2006).

A popularidade do consumo do chá tem aumentado devido aos seus efeitos biológicos benéficos variados e a sua baixa toxicidade. Dentre seus efeitos benéficos, podemos citar sua capacidade antioxidante, anti-mutagênica, cardioprotetora e neuroprotetora (SHIN; KIM; JANG, 2007; SINGAL et al., 2005). O consumo de chá verde tem sido inversamente associado com o risco de desenvolver câncer de estômago, câncer de ovário, câncer de mama e câncer da próstata (YUAN et al., 2005; YU et al., 1995; NAGLE et al., 2010; YANG; MALIAKAL; MENG, 2002). Frank et al. (2009) demonstrou que o consumo diário de chá verde é seguro e não tem efeitos adversos sobre a saúde humana. Além disso, estudos têm demonstrado que o chá brasileiro apresenta maior quantidade de compostos fenólicos quando comparado com chás de outros países e tal fato é atribuído às características do clima e do solo (SAITO et al., 2007).

As catequinas são os principais flavonóides presentes no chá verde. As quatro principais catequinas são (-)-epigallocatequina-3-gallato (EGCG), que representa aproximadamente 59% das catequinas totais; (-)-epigallocatequina (EGC) (19% aproximadamente); (-)-epicatequina-3-gallato (ECG) (13,6% aproximadamente); e (-)-epicatequina (EC) (6,4% aproximadamente) (MCKAY; BLUMBERG, 2002) (Figura 4). Outros compostos que podem ser encontrados no chá, porém em menor quantidade, são ácido gálico, cumárico e caféico, bem como os alcalóides de purinas, teobromina e cafeína (RUSAK et al., 2008).

**Figura 4.** Estrutura das principais catequinas do chá verde.



Fonte: N.T. Zaveri, 2006.

Soares et al (2013) fez uma comparação com diferentes tipos de chás obtidos da planta *Camellia sinensis* sobre a inibição da enzima  $\delta$ -aminolevulinato-desidratase ( $\delta$ -ALA-D)

(enzima marcadora de intoxicação por metais e outras substâncias oxidantes) induzida por cádmio *in vitro*, e observou que o chá verde tem o melhor efeito em restaurar a atividade desta enzima, além de apresentar o maior conteúdo de fenóis totais e catequinas, comparado ao chá branco e ao chá vermelho. O autor também verificou neste mesmo estudo, que as catequinas isoladas do chá não apresentam o mesmo efeito que a infusão.

Embora o mecanismo exato dos polifenóis do chá verde não esteja bem esclarecido, sabe-se que estas substâncias possuem capacidade scavenger de EROS e agem sobre os radicais hidroxila e peroxil. Sato et al. (2010) demonstrou que o extrato do chá verde atenua as desordens espermatozoides em testículo de camundongos, induzida pela doxorubicina, um agente anticancerígeno que também gera produção de radicais livres.

Outro estudo, com pacientes obesos que apresentavam síndrome metabólica, demonstrou que a suplementação com chá verde aumenta a glutatona e a atividade antioxidante plasmática (BASU et al, 2013). Também já foi demonstrado que o chá verde regula positivamente a atividade antioxidante de enzimas como a SOD e a CAT, e sobre o sistema glutatona, em modelo de animais induzidos quimicamente ao estresse oxidativo (SRIRAM; KALAYARASAN; SUDHANDIRAN, 2008; SINHA; ROY S; ROY M, 2010; CHANDRA MOHAN et al., 2006).

#### 4 ARTIGO CIENTÍFICO

Os resultados que fazem parte desta dissertação serão apresentados sob a forma de artigo científico. As seções *Materiais e Métodos*, *Resultados*, *Discussão dos Resultados* e *Referências Bibliográficas* encontram-se no próprio manuscrito. O manuscrito está apresentado da mesma forma que foi submetido para publicação no periódico ***Food and Chemical Toxicology***.

Green tea infusion improves cyclophosphamide-induced damage on male mice reproductive system

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## ABSTRACT

Green tea presents catechins as its major components and it has a potential antioxidant activity. Cyclophosphamide (CP) is an antineoplastic and immunosuppressive agent, known to reduce fertility. In the present study, we evaluated the effect of green tea infusion on cyclophosphamide-induced damage in male mice reproductive system. Mice received green tea infusion (250 mg/kg) or vehicle by gavage for 14 days. Saline or CP were injected intraperitoneally at a single dose (100 mg/kg) at the 14th day. Animals were euthanized 24h after CP administration and testes and epididymis were removed for biochemical analysis and sperm evaluation. Catechins concentration in green tea infusion was evaluated by HPLC. Lipid peroxidation (TBARS), protein carbonylation, DNA damage (comet assay), epididymal sperm characteristics, superoxide dismutase (SOD), catalase (CAT), glutathione peroxidase (GPx), glutathione S-transferase (GST) and 17  $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase (17  $\beta$ -HSD) enzyme activities were analyzed. CP increased lipid peroxidation, DNA damage and SOD activity whereas sperm concentration, GPx, GST and 17  $\beta$ -HSD activities were reduced in both tissues tested. CAT activity and protein carbonyl levels were changed only in testes, after CP administration. Green tea pre-treatment reduced significantly lipid peroxidation, protein carbonylation, DNA damage and restored GPx and GST activity in testes. In epididymis, therapy significantly increased sperm concentration and restored GPx and 17  $\beta$ -HSD activity. Green tea infusion improves CP-induced damage in reproductive system, and its effect is probably due to their high catechins concentration and antioxidant activity.

**Key Words:** Cyclophosphamide, green tea, oxidative stress, antioxidant, male reproductive system.

## 1. Introduction

Cyclophosphamide (CP) is an antineoplastic agent and immunosuppressive. It is a drug used in the treatment of various types of tumors, organ transplant rejection, as well as in treatment of autoimmune diseases such as systemic lupus erythematosus, rheumatoid arthritis and multiple sclerosis (1). CP is a pro drug which undergoes a metabolic activation by hepatic microsomal cytochrome P450, primarily being oxidized to 4-hydroxycyclophosphamide. This metabolite enters cells and spontaneously decomposes to phosphoramidate-mustard and acrolein (2; 3). The therapeutic activity of CP involves alkylation of tumor cell and its cytotoxic effect is due to phosphoramidate-mustard metabolite. On the other hand, acrolein is reported to cause toxic effects on normal cells, it activates reactive oxygen species (ROS) and nitric oxide production, leading to peroxynitrite formation which ultimately damages the lipids, proteins and DNA inside the cell (4).

CP therapy leads to gonadal toxicity as a side effect of the drug and the possible resultant infertility can have great physical and emotional impact on both men and women. Patients treated with CP exhibited an increased incidence of oligospermia and azoospermia (5). In other study, CP treatment at its therapeutic dose in rat resulted in inhibition of gonadal steroidogenesis (6).

Recently, it was shown that a single dose of CP (100 mg/kg, i.p) induced oxidative stress in liver of Swiss mice, evidenced by increased levels of malondialdehyde (MDA) and reduced antioxidant defenses (1). In order to overcome the toxic side effect of anti-cancer drugs, some antioxidant agents are considered useful to alleviate oxidative stress. Several studies show the beneficial effects of antioxidants on cyclophosphamide induced damage (1; 7; 8). Green tea is obtained from the *Camellia sinensis* plant, and has antioxidant activity and free radical-scavenging ability mainly related to polyphenol components (9). The high concentration of polyphenols in green tea is responsible for the cancer preventive effects. Green tea consumption is inversely associated with the cancer risk including stomach cancer, ovarian cancer and breast cancer (10; 11; 12).

Studies have suggested that green tea polyphenols can act as direct antioxidants by scavenging ROS, or indirectly, by up-regulating phase II antioxidant enzymes (13). Regarding its therapeutic safety, it was showed that green tea extract does not cause toxicity in mice up to a dose of 2500 mg/kg body weight/day administered by gavage for 28 days (14). Recently, it was shown that green tea infusion at a dose of 250 mg/kg restores the  $\delta$ -aminolevulinate dehydratase ( $\delta$ -ALA-D) enzyme activity inhibited by cadmium exposure in mice ovary (15).



This enzyme participates in heme biosynthesis pathway, and more recently is considered a marker of oxidative stress.

In this study, we investigated if green tea infusion could be effective in protecting male reproductive system from CP-induced toxicity.

## 2. Materials and Methods

### 2.1 Chemicals

Cyclophosphamide, glutathione reductase, b-nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate reduced tetrasodium salt (NADPH), 5,50-dithio-bis (2-nitrobenzoic acid) (DTNB), reduced glutathione (GSH) and glutathione disulfide (GSSG) were purchased from Sigma-Aldrich (St. Louis, MO, USA). 1-Chloro-2,4-dinitrobenzene (CDNB) was purchased from Aldrich Chemical Co. (USA).

### 2.2 Infusion preparation

Green tea (Madrugada Alimentos Ltda, Venâncio Aires, RS, Brazil) was purchased from a local supermarket. The infusion was prepared immediately before each administration using double distilled-deionized water (95–100°C). After 10 min the infusion was filtered through filter paper and administered in mice (250 mg/kg per day).

### 2.3 HPLC analysis of catechins

The chromatographic assay was conducted using a reversed phase technique. The analyses of tea infusions and standards were performed in a gradient elution mode with a 1.0 mL/min flow, using a mobile phase of either 5% (v/v) acetonitrile (solvent A) or 50% (v/v) acetonitrile (solvent B) containing 0.05% (v/v) phosphoric acid (85%) (16). A calibration curve, with concentrations ranging from 25 to 250 µg/mL, was built from a standard solution containing a mixture of three catechins: (–)-epicatechin (EC), (–)-epicatechin gallate (ECG) and (–)-epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG). Tea infusion was properly diluted to fit the calibration curve. The presence of these compounds in tea solutions were identified by comparison to those authentic standards, evaluating the chromatographic profile and UV absorption. All measurements and analysis were carried out in triplicate.

## 2.4 Animals and treatments

Male adult Swiss albino mice (25-30g) were used for this experiment. The animals were kept in appropriate animal cabinet with forced air ventilation, in a 12 hours light/dark cycle, at a controlled room temperature of 22 °C, with food (Puro Trato, RS, Brazil) and water *ad libitum*. The animals were used according to the guidelines of the Committee on Care and Use of Experimental Animal Resources (Federal University of Santa Maria, Santa Maria, Brazil) and all efforts were made to reduce the number of animals used and their suffering. This study was approved by the Ethics Committee on the Use of Animals of Federal University of Pampa (Protocol n° 016/2013).

Animals were separated in three groups: Control, CP, CP + Green tea. Infusion of green tea was given daily, for fourteen days, at the dose of 250 mg/kg b.w. via oral (14, 15); saline or CP (100 mg/kg b.w.) were administrated intraperitoneally only once, 1 hour after the last administration of green tea (14<sup>th</sup> day). The dose of CP was selected based on earlier reports (1; 8; 17). Animals were euthanized with pentobarbital (100 mg/kg b.w) 24h after CP administration and testes and epididymis were removed and homogenized in 50 mM Tris-HCl, pH 7.4 (1/10, w/v). A fraction of homogenized was used for comet assay and the remainder was centrifuged at 2400 g for 15 min. The supernatant (S1) obtained was used for TBARS, carbonyl protein, antioxidant enzymes activity and 17-βHSD activity analysis.

## 2.5 Non-enzymatic assay

### 2.5.1 Lipid peroxidation (TBARS)

Lipid peroxidation was determined by formation of the thiobarbituric acid reactive species (TBARS) as described by Ohkawa et al. (1979), in which the malondialdehyde (MDA), one of the end products of fatty acids peroxidation, reacts with thiobarbituric acid (TBA) to form a colored complex. MDA values are determined with the absorbance coefficient of MDA-TBA complex at 532 nm =  $1.56 \times 10^5$  cm/mmol (18).

### 2.5.2 Carbonyl groups determination

The formation of carbonyl groups, a parameter of oxidative damage to proteins, was measured based on the reaction of these groups with dinitrophenylhydrazine (DNPH), as previously described by Levine, et al 1990 (19). Samples were incubated at laboratory temperature in the dark for 30 min, stirring at 15-min intervals. After centrifugation, the samples were washed three times with 1 mL of ethanol-ethyl acetate (1:1; v/v) to remove the residual DNPH reagent. The final precipitates were dissolved in buffer SDS 2% and placed in

a water bath at 37°C for 10 min. The reaction product absorbation was measured in a spectrophotometer at 370 nm. Results were expressed as nmol carbonyl/mg protein.

### 2.5.3 Single cell gel electrophoresis (comet assay)

The alkaline comet assay was performed as described by Singh, et al 1988 (20) in accordance with general guidelines for use of the comet assay (21, 22, 23). Homogenized testes and epididymis were suspended in agarose and spread into a glass microscope slide pre-coated with agarose. Agarose was allowed to set at 4 °C for 5 min. Slides were incubated in ice-cold lysis solution (2.5 M NaCl, 100 mM EDTA, 10 mM Tris, pH 10.0, and 1% triton X-100 with 10% DMSO) to remove cell proteins, leaving DNA as ‘nucleoids’. After the lysis procedure, slides were placed on a horizontal electrophoresis unit, covered with a fresh solution (300 mM NaOH and 1 mM EDTA, pH > 13) for 20 min at 4 °C to allow DNA unwinding and the expression of alkali-labile sites. Electrophoresis was performed for 20 min (25 V; 300 mA; 0.9 V/cm). Slides were then neutralized, washed in bidistilled water and stained using a silver staining protocol (24, 25). After drying at room temperature overnight, gels were analyzed using an optical microscope. One hundred cells (50 cells from each of the two replicate slides) were selected and analyzed. Cells were visually scored according to tail length and receive scores from 0 (no migration) to 4 (maximal migration) according to tail intensity. Therefore, the damage index (DI) for cells ranged from 0 (all cells with no migration) to 400 (all cells with maximal migration). The slides were analyzed under blind conditions at least by two different individuals. Median values of the scores were presented.

### 2.5.4 Epididymal sperm characteristics

The criteria used in the evaluation of sperm viability were motility, vigor, concentration and membrane integrity. An estimation of the percentage of progressively motile cells was performed at 100× magnification. These evaluations were performed by the same observer. For measuring their concentration, the semen samples were diluted (1:10) in 90 µL of formaldehyde solution. The counting was performed in a hemacytometric Neubauer chamber under 400× magnification. Spermatozoa in 10 of the 25 squares were counted, with each square measuring 0.04 mm<sup>2</sup> (volume = 0.004 mm<sup>3</sup>, with a height of 0.1 mm). The results were converted to a concentration in sperm per mL by multiplying the number of sperm counted in five squares by  $0.5 \times 10^6$ .

The functional integrity of the sperm membrane was determined using the hypoosmotic-swelling test (HOS) as described by Lomeo and Giamberso, 1991. The assay

was performed by mixing 10  $\mu\text{L}$  of semen with 50  $\mu\text{L}$  of hypoosmotic solution (100 mosm) and incubating this mixture at 37°C for 45 min. A total of 100 cells were evaluated in at least five different fields under 400 $\times$ magnification. Spermatozoa with changes were denoted as swelled or HOS positive (HOS+) (26).

## 2.6 Antioxidant enzymes

### 2.6.1 Superoxide Dismutase (SOD) activity

The activity of SOD was determined as described by Misra e Fridovich (1972). This method is based on the ability of SOD to inhibit the auto-oxidation of adrenaline to adrenochrome. The color reaction is measured at 480 nm. One unit of enzyme (1 IU) is defined as the amount of enzyme required to inhibit the rate of auto-oxidation of adrenaline to 50% at 26 °C (27).

### 2.6.2 Catalase (CAT) activity

The CAT activity was determined spectrophotometrically according to the method of Aebi (1984), which involves monitoring the consumption of  $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$  in the presence of the sample (S1) (20  $\mu\text{L}$ ) at 240 nm. Enzyme activity is expressed in units (1U decomposes 1  $\mu\text{mol}$   $\text{H}_2\text{O}_2$ /min at pH 7 and 25 °C) (28).

### 2.6.3 Glutathione Peroxidase (GPx) activity

GPx activity was analyzed spectrophotometrically by the method of Paglia and Valentine (1967). GPx analysis was made by adding GSH, GR, NADPH and a peroxide to begin the reaction, monitored at 340 nm as NADPH is converted to  $\text{NADP}^+$  (29).

### 2.6.4 Glutathione S-Transferase (GST) activity

GST activity was analyzed spectrophotometrically at 340 nm, as described by Habig et al. (1974). The reaction mixture contained an aliquot of the homogenized tissue (S1), buffer sodium phosphate 0.1 M pH 7, GSH (100 mM) and 1-chloro-2,4-dinitrobenzene (CDNB) (100 mM), which was used as a substrate. Enzyme activity is expressed as nmol of CDNB conjugated/min/mg protein (30).

## 2.7 17 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase (17 $\beta$ -HSD) activity

17 $\beta$ -HSD activity was assayed according Jarabak et al. (1962). The supernatant fluid (200  $\mu\text{L}$ ) was mixed with 950  $\mu\text{L}$  of 440  $\mu\text{M}$  sodium pyrophosphate buffer (pH 8.9), 250  $\mu\text{L}$  of

bovine serum albumin (25 mg crystalline BSA) and 20  $\mu$ L of 0.3 mM  $17\beta$ -Estradiol. The enzymatic activity was expressed as nmol NADH/min/mg protein (31).

## 2.8 Protein determination

Protein concentration was measured by the method of Bradford (1976), using bovine serum albumin as the standard (32).

## 2.9 Statistical analysis

The data were expressed as Mean  $\pm$  SD (n=6). Statistical analysis was performed using analysis of variance (ANOVA) one-way and differences between the means of experimental and control groups were analyzed statistically by Duncan's test (Statistica Software, 1999). A difference was considered significant at  $P < 0.05$ .

# 3. Results

## 3.1 HPLC analysis of catechins

Catechins are the major flavonoids present in green tea. Concentration of epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), epicatechin (EC) and epicatechin gallate (ECG) were identified in green tea infusion. EGCG was present in higher concentration in our infusion (1340.2  $\mu$ g/mL), followed by EC (500.95  $\mu$ g/mL) and ECG (302.84  $\mu$ g/mL).

## 3.2 Non-enzymatic assay

### 3.2.1 Lipid peroxidation (TBARS)

CP significantly increased MDA levels in testes (34.5% or 1.3 folds) and epididymis (53.3% or 1.5 folds) when compared to the control group. Green tea treatment was effective to prevent this damage in testes, but not in epididymis (Fig 1).

### 3.2.2 Carbonyl groups determination

The protein carbonyl levels in testes were increased in the CP group (234.4% or 3.3 folds) when compared to the control group. Green tea was effective in reducing protein carbonyl levels enhanced by CP exposure, but not at the control level. No alteration was observed in protein carbonyl levels in epididymis (Fig 2).

### 3.2.3 Single cell gel electrophoresis (comet assay)

Comet assay demonstrates the damage caused on DNA strand. Higher DNA strand migration through the electrophoresis gel represents a pronounced DNA fragmentation. The control group presented an average damage index (DI) of  $11.33 \pm 2.08$  for testes and  $10.66 \pm 1.15$  for epididymis. The CP group presented an average damage index (DI) of  $43.0 \pm 1.0$  for testes and  $49.66 \pm 0.58$  for epididymis, showing an increase of 279.5% or 3.8 folds and 365.8% or 4.6 folds, respectively. Pre-treatment with green tea significantly reduced damage index in relation to CP group in testes and epididymis (Fig 3).

### 3.2.4 Sperm viability

The sperm motility, vigor and integrity of the CP group were reduced compared with the control group, but was not significantly different. The sperm concentration was decreased in CP group to 50% and pre-treatment with green tea improved this parameter. (Tab 1).

## 3.3 Antioxidant enzymes

### 3.3.1 Superoxide Dismutase (SOD) activity

Cyclophosphamide treatment increased significantly the SOD activity in testes and epididymis (65.6% or 1.6 folds and 10% or 1.0 folds, respectively), and green tea infusion was not effective to improve this parameter (Fig 4).

### 3.3.2 Catalase (CAT) activity

Treatment with CP reduced CAT activity in testes (19.5%) and green tea therapy was not effective in restoring this parameter. No alteration was observed on CAT activity in epididymis (Fig 5).

### 3.3.3 Glutathione Peroxidase (GPx) activity

Treatment with CP reduced GPx activity in testes and epididymis (45.6% and 36.2%, respectively), and treatment with green tea was effective to restore GPx activity in both tissues (Fig 6).

### 3.3.4 Glutathione S-Transferase (GST) activity

GST activity was decreased in testes and epididymis of mice after CP administration (21.2% and 13.8%, respectively). Green tea therapy was able to protect the enzyme activity in testes, but not in epididymis (Fig 7).

### 3.4 17 $\beta$ -hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase (17 $\beta$ -HSD)

CP reduced the 17 $\beta$ -HSD activity in testes (15%), and its effect was even more pronounced on the epididymis (31.2%). Green tea therapy was effective in restoring this parameter only in epididymis (Fig 8).

## 4. Discussion

The use of cyclophosphamide as chemotherapy drug and immunosuppressive therapy is limited, because of its toxicity to normal tissue, in which infertility is one of the major concerns in the younger patients. CP is an alkylating agent and its cytotoxic effect occurs by inhibiting cell division through DNA damage (1). CP metabolism generates active alkylating compounds such as 4-hydroxycyclophosphamide, aldophosphamide mustard and acrolein. Acrolein, which is highly toxic in nature, generates oxidative stress by increasing reactive species production and by inducing both normal cells apoptosis and necrotic cell death (33). This metabolite can interact with the cellular macromolecules such as proteins, membrane lipids and DNA.

Based on our results we can infer that: (a) the acute CP-exposure cause toxic effects on male reproductive system, which are related to oxidative stress. In fact, CP-exposure enhances lipid peroxidation, protein carbonylation and DNA damage. Epididymis may be less sensitive to CP effects in relation to carbonyl protein when compared with testes. Green tea therapy may have a better effect in preventing these parameters on testicular tissue, since it was not able to prevent lipid peroxidation on epididymis; (b) It is probable that the oxidative effects produced by CP-exposure are related with an over production and/or an accumulation of hydrogen peroxide ( $H_2O_2$ ). It is fomented by enhanced SOD activity as well as a reduction on GPx and CAT activities. SOD is responsible to anion superoxide ( $O_2^-$ ) detoxification, producing  $H_2O_2$ . Thus, an increase on SOD activity could be producing a higher  $H_2O_2$  concentration. CAT and GPx are involved on  $H_2O_2$  detoxification. Considering that these enzymes presented reduced activities, it could be corroborating to  $H_2O_2$  accumulation; (c) Reduced semen concentration could be related to ROS over production which causes an increase on lipid peroxidation and DNA damage. On the other hand, it could be related to hormonal disruption which alter the semen production; 17 $\beta$ -HSD is a enzyme that plays a key role in sex steroid biology and a reduction in its activity implies in decreased production of hormones such as testosterone; (d) Finally, the beneficial effect of green tea infusion could be attributed to antioxidant properties of their constituents, specially to high catechins content, evidenced in preparation.

Corroborating to our study, other studies showed that oxidative stress is involved in CP-induced testicular damage. Selvakumar et al (2005) found that CP increased MDA and hydrogen peroxide levels as well as changed SOD, GPx and GR activities in the mitochondrial fraction of testes (34). Recently, Maremanda et al (2014) demonstrated that CP administration significantly increased the oxidative stress, sperm DNA damage and reduced sperm count and motility (35).

17 $\beta$ -HSD is an enzyme that catalyzes the interconversion of androstenedione to testosterone and a reduction of its activity can decrease spermatid count per testis, sperm count per epididymis, daily sperm production/gram testis, sperm motility, and significantly increased abnormal sperm rates (36). Proteins can also be modified by the free radicals action, including amino acids modification, denaturation and formation of carbonyl compounds (37, 38). CP binds covalently to DNA and induces DNA damage in the form of strand breaks, DNA-DNA cross-links and DNA-protein cross-links (39). Considering that this damage may lead to the secondary tumors in humans, compounds that have the ability to decrease DNA damage, such organo-selenium compound and *Rubus imperialis* extract have been studied (40, 41).

Natural antioxidants have been studied to decrease the damage caused by anticancer drugs. Kenji Sato et al (2010) suggest that green tea extracts exert protective effects against doxorubicin-induced spermatogenic disorders in mice (42). In another study, quercetin and methanolic extract of *Viscum album* attenuates cardiotoxicity, urotoxicity and genotoxicity induced by CP (43). Moreover, vitamin C, vitamin E and glutathione have been demonstrated to help treat male infertility (44, 45).

Tea is among the most highly consumed beverages worldwide, especially green tea, which contains phenolic compounds including the catechins: epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG), epicatechin (EC) and epicatechin gallate (ECG). The antioxidant activity of green tea polyphenols and, more recently, the pro-oxidant effects of these compounds, resulting in indirect antioxidant effects, have also been suggested as potential mechanisms for cancer prevention (46, 47). In the present study, we demonstrated that the reproductive system toxicity in male mice was attenuated by green tea infusion. This is important, since the green tea infusion used seems tea consumption in humans. It is daring to attribute the benefic effect observed with green tea infusion to a specific constituent as catechins.

Taking into account that decreased fertility rate remains one of the challenging tasks to be addressed in younger patients treated with CP, new therapeutic approach to manage its toxicity are necessary. Oxidative stress appears to be directly related to testicular



steroidogenesis and normal function of the male reproductive system. In this way, natural antioxidants have utmost importance in maintaining the integrity of sperm and fertility. This study showed damage caused by CP on male reproductive system, even after a single administration, involving oxidative stress, which could impair the fertility of these animals. The pre-treatment (14 days) with green tea infusion was effective in partially prevent the CP-induced damage, and its effect is probably due to high concentrations of catechins and antioxidant activity. However, more studies are needed to understand the mechanism of green tea in relation to its beneficial effect and possible interaction with anticancer drugs.

#### Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

#### Acknowledgments

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## Legends

Figure 1. Effect of cyclophosphamide (100 mg/kg) and green tea pre-treatment (250 mg/kg) on MDA level in testes (A) and epididymis (B). All the values are expressed as mean  $\pm$  SD (n=6) \*P < 0.01, compared with control group.

Figure 2. Effect of cyclophosphamide (100 mg/kg) and green tea pre-treatment (250 mg/kg) on protein carbonyl level in testes (A) and epididymis (B). All the values are expressed as mean  $\pm$  SD (n=6). \*P < 0.01, compared with control group. #P < 0.01, compared with cyclo group.

Figure 3. Effect of cyclophosphamide (100 mg/kg) and green tea pre-treatment (250 mg/kg) on damage index DNA in testes (A) and epididymis (B). All the values are expressed as mean  $\pm$  SD (n=6). \*P < 0.01, compared with control group. #P < 0.01, compared with cyclo group.

Figure 4. Effect of cyclophosphamide (100 mg/kg) and green tea pre-treatment (250 mg/kg) on SOD activity in testes (A) and epididymis (B). All the values are expressed as mean  $\pm$  SD (n=6). \*P < 0.05, compared with control group. \*\*P < 0.01, compared with control group.

Figure 5. Effect of cyclophosphamide (100 mg/kg) and green tea pre-treatment (250 mg/kg) on CAT activity in testes (A) and epididymis (B). All the values are expressed as mean  $\pm$  SD (n=6). \*P < 0.05, compared with control group.

Figure 6. Effect of cyclophosphamide (100 mg/kg) and green tea pre-treatment (250 mg/kg) on GPx activity in testes (A) and epididymis (B). All the values are expressed as mean  $\pm$  SD (n=6). \*P < 0.01, compared with control group.

Figure 7. Effect of cyclophosphamide (100 mg/kg) and green tea pre-treatment (250 mg/kg) on GST activity in testes (A) and epididymis (B). All the values are expressed as mean  $\pm$  SD (n=6). \*P < 0.05, compared with control group. \*\*P < 0.01, compared with control group.

Figure 8. Effect of cyclophosphamide (100 mg/kg) and green tea pre-treatment (250 mg/kg) on 17 $\beta$ -HSD activity in testes (A) and epididymis (B). All the values are expressed as mean  $\pm$  SD (n=6). \*P < 0.05, compared with control group. \*\*P < 0.01, compared with control group.

## Figures

Figure 1

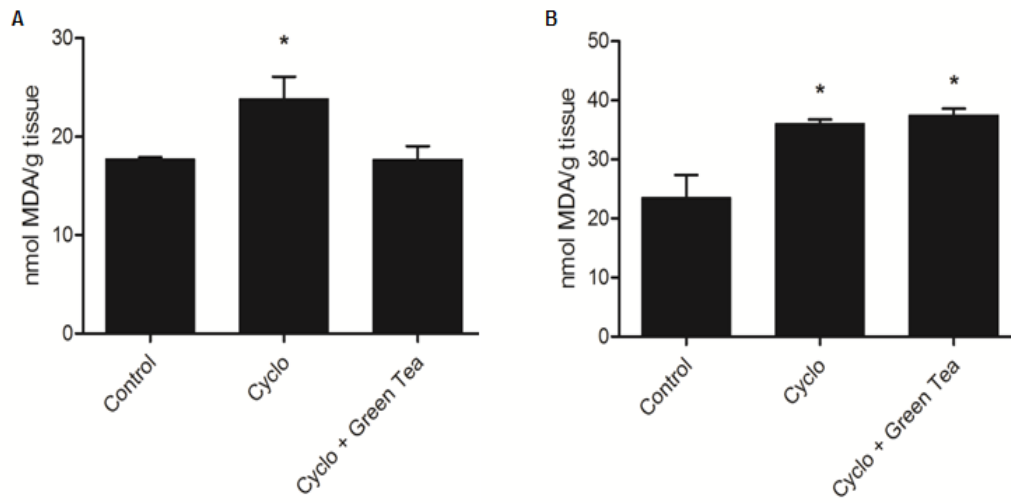


Figure 2

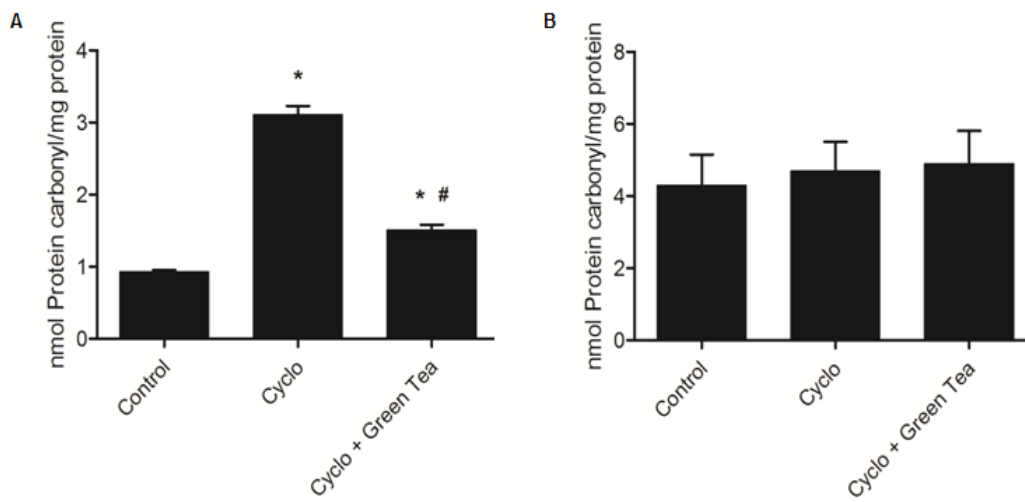


Figure 3

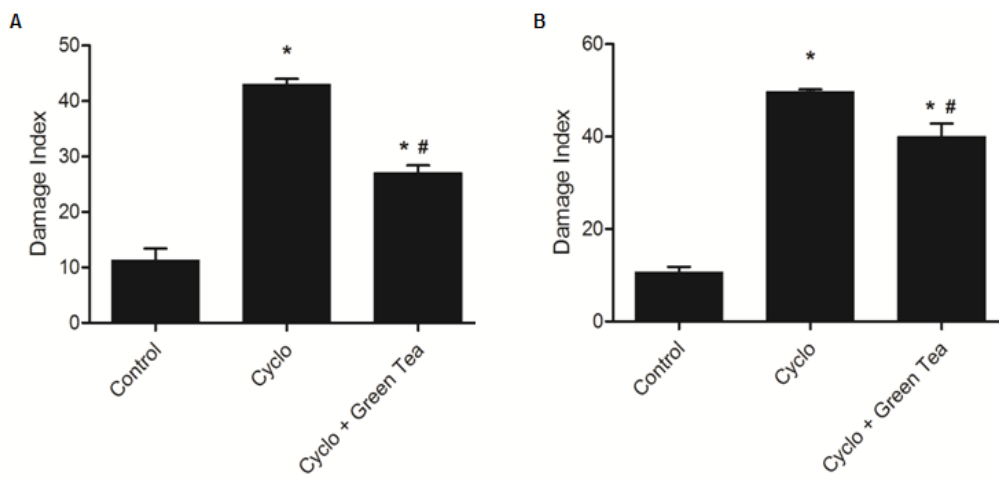


Figure 4

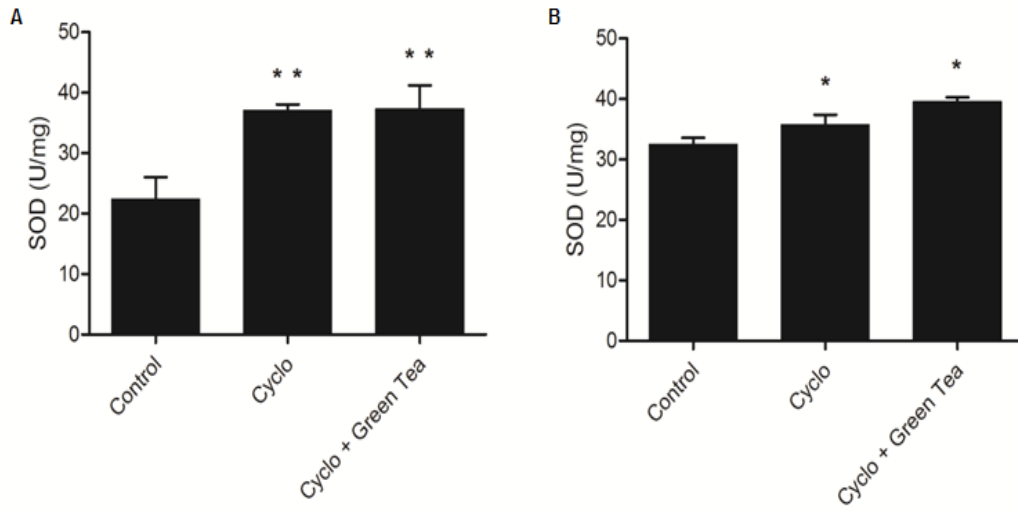


Figure 5

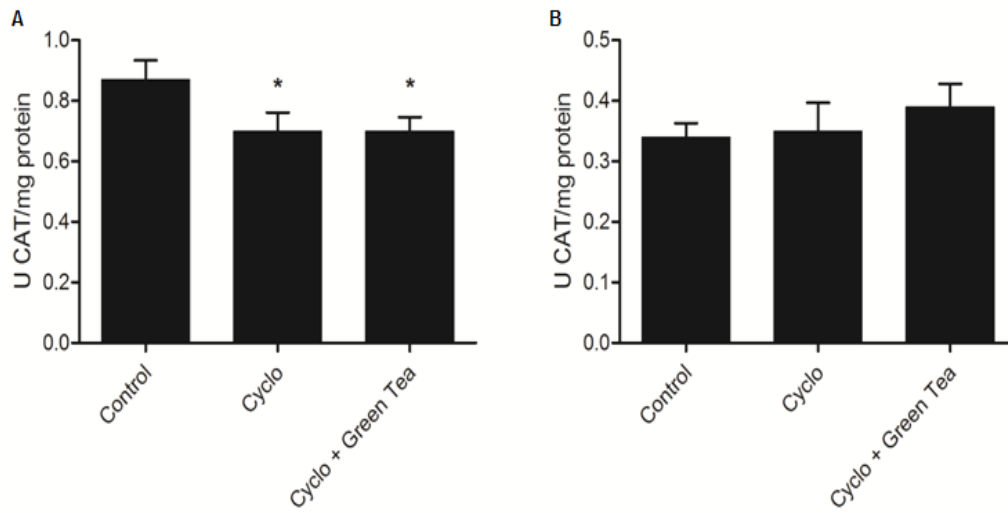


Figure 6

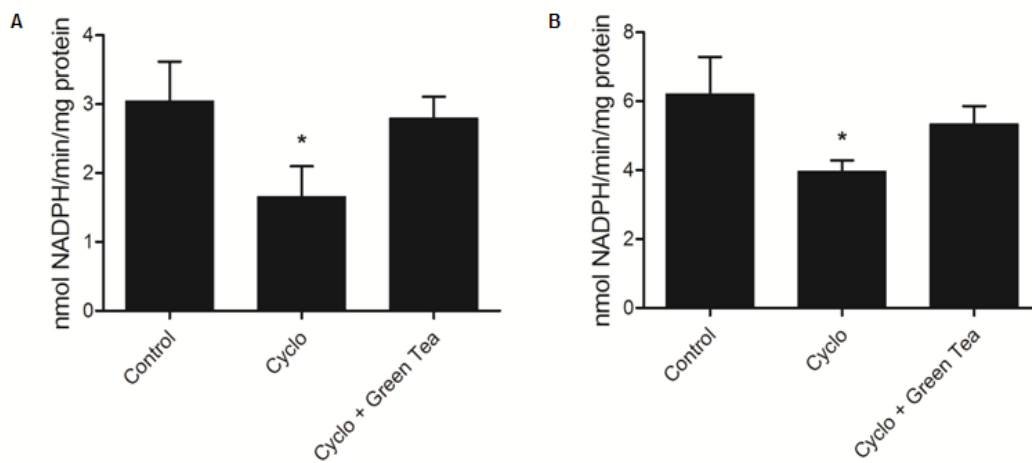




Figure 7

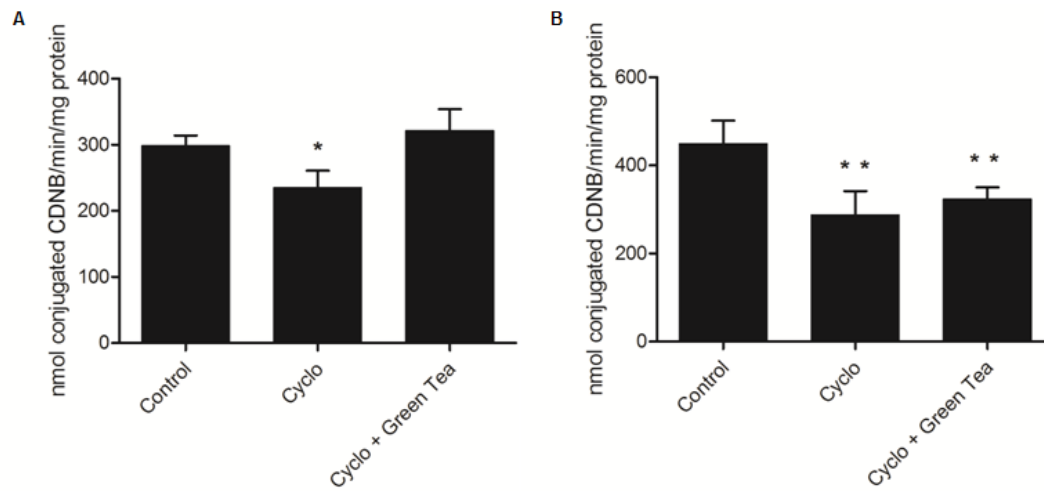
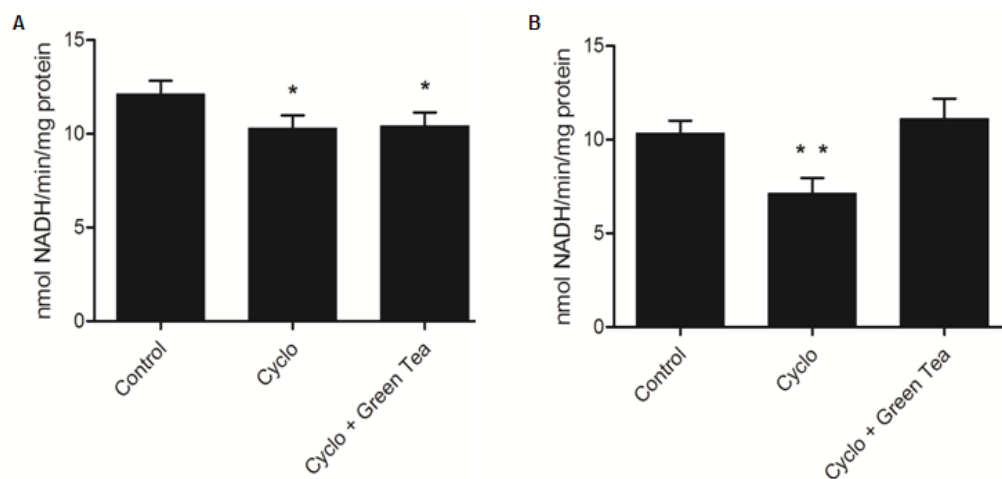


Figure 8



## Tables

Table 1. Effect of cyclophosphamide and green tea infusion on epididymal sperm characteristics.

	Control	Cyclo	Cyclo + Green Tea
Motility (%)	42.5 ± 9.57	31.66 ± 2.88	35.71 ± 9.16
Vigor	2.6 ± 0.81	2.3 ± 1.3	2.12 ± 0.25
Concentration	12.71 ± 2.67	6.35 ± 2.61*	8.88 ± 3.34
Integrity	46.66 ± 5.50	39.33 ± 2.51	43.0 ± 9.84

All the values are expressed as mean ± SD (n=6). \*P < 0.01, compared with control group.

## 5 CONCLUSÃO

De acordo com os resultados apresentados nesta dissertação podemos concluir que:

- A CF, mesmo após única administração, causa estresse oxidativo no sistema reprodutor de machos, que foi evidenciado neste trabalho por um aumento na peroxidação lipídica, carbonilação de proteínas e dano de DNA.
- Os danos oxidativos gerados após exposição aguda de CF parecem estar relacionados com uma super produção de peróxido de hidrogênio ( $H_2O_2$ ), uma vez CF causou um aumento na atividade da enzima SOD, e uma redução na atividade das enzimas GPx e CAT.
- Em relação à avaliação espermática, apenas a concentração esteve diminuída significativamente após exposição à CF, isso pode ser explicado pelo aumento na produção de EROS e também a uma possível alteração hormonal, uma vez que a atividade da enzima 17  $\beta$ -HSD também esteve diminuída.
- A 17  $\beta$ -HSD é uma enzima chave na biologia de hormônios esteróides, e uma redução na sua atividade pode diminuir a produção de hormônios importantes como a testosterona.
- Após análise em HPLC, pode-se verificar que as catequinas estão presentes em altas concentrações na nossa infusão, sendo a EGCG em maior quantidade (1340,2  $\mu$ g/mL), seguido por EC (500,95  $\mu$ g/mL) e ECG (302,84  $\mu$ g/mL).
- O efeito protetor da infusão do chá verde em prevenir o dano nas membranas lipídicas, proteínas e DNA, além de restaurar a atividade das enzimas GPx e GST, pode ser atribuído às propriedades antioxidantes dos seus constituintes, principalmente ao alto conteúdo de catequinas, encontradas nesta preparação.
- Por fim, parece que a infusão do chá verde tem um melhor efeito antioxidante preventivo em testículo, uma vez que não foi capaz de prevenir a peroxidação lipídica em epidídimo.

## 6 PERSPECTIVAS

Tendo em vista os resultados obtidos neste trabalho, as perspectivas para trabalhos posteriores são:

- Determinar os níveis de testosterona sérica, a fim de relacionar o hormônio com a atividade da enzima 17  $\beta$ -HSD, após administração da CF, com ou sem tratamento;
- Avaliar a atividade das enzimas antioxidantes (SOD, GPx, GST) em sêmen de camundongos, bem como determinar os níveis de peroxidação lipídica, oxidação de proteínas e o dano de DNA, após administração da CF, com ou sem tratamento;
- Testar um modelo crônico de exposição à CF, a fim de avaliar os danos ocasionados pela droga no sistema reprodutor, e compará-los à exposição aguda;
- Avaliar o efeito *ex vivo* e *in vitro* da CF e o seu principal metabólito, a acroleína, sobre a atividade da enzima  $\delta$ -aminolevulinato desidratase ( $\delta$ -ALA-D), enzima chave na biossíntese do heme e também marcadora de dano oxidativo;
- Testar modelo agudo e/ou crônico de exposição à CF em camundongas, a fim de avaliar os danos ocasionados pelo quimioterápico sobre o sistema reprodutor feminino, bem como avaliação hormonal (progesterona, hormônio luteinizante, hormônio folículo estimulante), e o possível papel protetor da infusão do chá verde.

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APÊNDICE A – Esquema representativo dos resultados.

