Radical Scavenging Activities of Phenolic Compounds Isolated from Mulberry (*Morus* spp.) Cake

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Abstract

A methanol extract of mulberry cake prepared from mulberry fruits (Morus spp.) was shown to have strong scavenging activities against DPPH, superoxide and hydroxyl radicals. Eleven phenolic compounds were isolated from the mulberry cake by a combination of Diaion HP-20, silica gel (or polyamide), Sephadex LH-20 column chromatographies, preparative HPLC and TLC. Their chemical structures were characterized as procatechuic acid (PCA), caffeic acid (CA), cyanidin 3-O- β -D-glucopyranoside (CyG) and cyanidin 3-O- β -D-rutinoside (CyR), rutin (RT), isoquercitrin (IQT), astragalin (AG), quercetin (QT), morin (MR), dihydroquercetin (DHQ), and 4-prenylmoracin (PM) by spectral analysis and the published data. Most of the phenolic constituents were effective scavengers of DPPH, superoxide and hydroxyl radicals, and especially caffeic acid and 4-prenylmoracin showed potent superoxide and hydroxyl radical scavenging activity, in which their activities were higher than that of the well-known antioxidant, BHT (p<0.05). Dehydroquercetin and quercetin also exhibited strong superoxide and hydroxyl radical scavenging activities. These results suggest that mulberry cake containing antioxidant phenolic compounds may be useful as natural antioxidants in functional foods and cosmetics.

Key words: mulberry (Morus sp.) cake, radical scavenging activity, phenolic compounds

INTRODUCTION

Much attention has recently been focused on natural antioxidants capable of inhibiting reactive oxygen radical-mediated lipid peroxidation which is closely associated with several pathological disorders such as cancer, atherosclerosis, and aging (1,2). Natural polyphenolic compounds are of particularly great interest as nutraceutical ingredients for prevention of several degenerated diseases caused by reactive oxygen species, such as singlet oxygen, superoxide and hydroxyl radicals (3,4).

Mulberry (*Morus* spp.) fruit, "Sangsimja", has been used as folk medicine for treatment of diabetes, baldness, hangover, hypertension and inflammation, etc. (5,6). Recently, mulberry fruit has been recognized to possess a variety of biological effects such as antidiabetic (7,8), antioxidant (9-11), anti-inflammatory (10), and antihyperlipidemic (12) activities. Anthocyanins, flavonoids, polyhydroxy-alkaloids and γ -aminobenzoic acid (GABA) are major active compounds responsible for the physiological activities of mulberry fruits (8,13). However, systematic studies screening for phenolic antioxidants from mulberry fruit are still not carried out.

Levels of several phytochemical constituents in mul-

berry fruits could be affected by maturity, cultivar and processing (14-16). Particularly, because mulberry fruits possess large amounts of anthocyanin pigment which is heat labile, a non-thermal minimally processed mulberry juice using a membrane filteration or filter aids needs to be developed (17). Mulberry cake, a byproduct of minimally processed mulberry juice, possessed high amounts of phenolics with radical scavenging activity stronger than mulberry juice (18).

The objective of this study was to isolate and identify phenolic compounds from mulberry cake, and to evaluate their radical scavenging activity against DPPH, superoxide and hydroxy radicals using *in vitro* assays.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials

Mulberry fruits of the Chongilppong (M. alba L.) tree were directly harvested in the middle of June, 2004 from a farm in Yeongcheon, Gyeongbuk, Korea. The mulberry fruits were freeze-dried and stored at -18°C until used.

Chemicals

1,1-Diphenyl-2-picrylhydrazyl (DPPH), xanthine oxidase (EC 1.2.3.2), xanthine, nitrobluetetrazolium chlo-

ride (NBT), thiobarbituric acid (TBA), H_2O_2 , bovine serum albumin (BSA), trifluoroacetic acid (TFA), dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) and NMR solvents were obtained from Sigma Chemical Co. (St. Louis, MO, USA). Butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT) and FeSO₄ \cdot 7H₂O were purchased from Wako Pure Chemical Ind. (Osaka, Japan). Sodium phosphate dibasic 12 hydrate and potassium phosphate monobasic were obtained from Kanto Chemical Co., Inc. (Tokyo, Japan). All solvents and reagents used in this study were of the first analytical grade.

Isolation and identification of phenolic compounds

The freeze-dried mulberry fruit (100 g) was homogenized twice with 0.5% TFA in D-H₂O (200 mL) and filtered with cheesecloth. The residue was washed continuously with 0.5% TFA in D-H₂O to remove anthocyanin pigment, and squeezed to yield mulberry cake. The mulberry cake was extracted twice with MeOH (1 L) under reflux at $70 \sim 80^{\circ}$ C for 2 hr, filtered and evaporated under reduced pressure. The MeOH extract (10.55 g) was solubilized in 0.1% TFA in 10% aq. MeOH (300 mL) and loaded onto a Diaion HP-20 (Mitsubishi Chem. Co., Tokyo, Japan) column (5.5 × 50 cm) pre-equilibrated with 10% aq. MeOH. The column was eluted successively with 20% (2 L), 40% (2 L), 60% (1.5 L), 80% (1 L) and 100% MeOH (1 L), and each fraction was then concentrated to yield 20% MeOH fr. (3.13 g), 40% MeOH fr. (1.76 g), 60% MeOH fr. (1.54 g), 80% MeOH fr. (1.21 g) and a 100% MeOH fr. (0.83 g). The 20% MeOH fr. (3.13 g) was chromatographed on silica gel (70~230 mesh, Merck, Damstadt, Germany) column (5.5 \times 30 cm) with CHCl₃-MeOH-H₂O (50:50:10, v/v) as an eluent, to afford five fractions; Fr. 1 (0.89 g), Fr. 2 (0.21 g), Fr. 3 (0.11 g), Fr. 4 (0.29 g) and Fr. 5 (0.45 g). The Fr. 2 and Fr. 4 were further chromatographed on a Sephadex LH-20 (Parmacia Biotech., Uppsala, Sweden) column (2.5 × 80 cm) with 80% ag. MeOH, to give pure compound 1 (Comp. 1, 48 mg) and compound 2 (Comp. 2, 40 mg), respectively. The 40% MeOH fr. (1.76 g), a predominantly anthocyanincontaining fraction, was successively fractionated by Polyamide C-200 (75~150 µm, Wako Pure Chem. Ind. Ltd., Osaka, Japan) column (4.0×50 cm) chromatography and prep-HPLC (Waters Delta Prep-4000, Waters, USA) (16), and thereby isolating two anthocyanin pigments (Comp. 3, 68 mg; Comp. 4, 18 mg). The 60% MeOH fr. (1.54 g) was chromatographed on silica gel column with CHCl₃-MeOH-H₂O (65:35:10, v/v) as an eluent, to give five fractions; Fr. 1 (21 mg), Fr. 2 (78 mg), Fr. 3 (101 mg), Fr. 4 (152 mg) and Fr. 5 (20 mg). The Fr. 2-Fr. 4 were further chromatographed on a preprative silica gel TLC (Merck, Damstadt, Germany)

with CHCl₃-MeOH-H₂O (65:35:10, v/v), and separated pure compound 5 (Comp. 5, 14 mg), compound 6 (Comp. 6, 28 mg), and compound 7 (Comp. 7, 64 mg), respectively. The 80% MeOH fraction (1.21 g) was also subjected to silica gel column and prep-TLC with CHCl₃-MeOH-HOAc (30:10:0.1, v/v), and isolated as pure compound 8 (Comp. 8, 18 mg), compound 9 (Comp. 9, 46 mg), and compound 10 (Comp. 10, 17 mg). Finally, the 100% MeOH fr. (0.83 g) was chromatographed on a silica gel column with CHCl3-MeOH-HOAc (50:10: 0.1, v/v) as an eluent, to yield four fractions; Fr. 1 (12 mg), Fr. 2 (98 mg), Fr. 3 (50 mg) and Fr. 4 (13 mg). Fr. 2 was further chromatographed on a Sephadex LH-20 column with MeOH to separate a pure compound 11 (Comp. 11, 28 mg). The schematic procedure for extraction and isolation of eleven different phenolic compounds from mulberry cake is shown in Fig. 1.

Identification of phenolic compounds

UV-vis spectra of phenolic acids, flavonoids (in MeOH), and anthocyanins (0.1% HCl in MeOH) were determined with a photodiode array UV-vis spectrophotometer (Sinco, S-1100, Seoul, Korea). H-NMR (500 MHz) and G-NMR (125 MHz) spectra of phenolic compounds were measured in each solvent (phenolic acids, CD₃OD; anthocyanins, 1% CF₃COOD in CD₃OD; flavonoids, DMSO-d6; 2-arylbenzofuran derivative, CD₃OD) on a spectrometer (Unity Plus 500, Varian, California, USA), and chemical shifts are given as δ value with tetramethylsilane (TMS) as an internal standard. Fast-atom bombardment mass spectrometer (FABMS) was recorded on a mass spectrometer (JEOL JMS-700, Tokyo, Japan, ion source, Xe atom beam; accelerating voltage, 10 kV) with glycerol as a mounting matrix.

DPPH, superoxide and hydroxyl radical scavenging activity

Radical scavenging activities of phenolic compounds against DPPH, superoxide and hydroxyl radical were determined (18,19). In the DPPH radical scavenging assay, each phenolic compound was added to 100 μ M DPPH in methanol and incubated at 25°C. Their reactivity with DPPH was determined spectrophotometrically at 516 nm.

In the superoxide radical scavenging assay, the reaction mixture (3.0 mL) of 0.05 M Na₂CO₃ buffer (pH 10.2) containing 3 mM xanthine, 3 mM EDTA, BSA, 0.75 mM NBT, and 5.0 U/mL xanthine oxidase, and 6 mM CuCl₂ was incubated at 25°C for 20 min, and the formazan formed by the superoxide radical generated in the reaction mixture was measured spectrophotometrically at 560 nm.

In the hydroxyl radical scavenging assay, the reaction

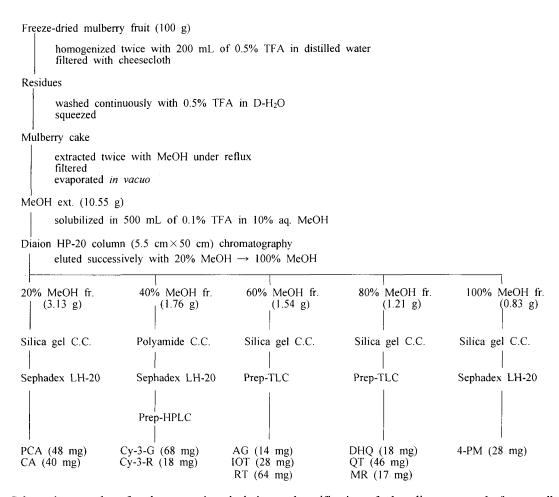


Fig. 1. Schematic procedure for the extraction, isolation and purification of phenolic compounds from mulberry cake.

mixture (2.0 mL) of 0.5 mg/mL of rat liver microsomal protein in 50 mM potassium phosphate buffer (pH 7.4), 30 mM H₂O₂, and 3.3 mM FeSO₄, was incubated at 37°C for 20 min. The thiobarbituric acid reactive substance (TBARS) level was determined after terminating the reaction by the addition of TBA reagent according to the method of Ohkawa et al. (20). IC₅₀ values against three radical scavenging activities were determined by regression analysis at three different concentrations of the sample.

Statistical analysis

All experiments were performed in three replicates. Statistical analysis was performed using ANOVA with Duncan's multiple range test at p < 0.05 (21).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Identification of phenolic compounds

The MeOH extract from mulberry cake was successively subjected to a Diaion HP-20 (or polyamide), silica gel, Sephadex LH-20 and Prep-TLC (or Prep-HPLC), to give eleven phenolic compounds in pure states. Among

them, two anthocyanins (Comp. 3, cyanidin-3-*O*-β-D-glucoside; Comp. 4, cyanidin-3-*O*-β-D-rutinoside), three flavonoid glycosides (Comp. 5, astragalin; Comp. 6, isoquercitrin; Comp. 7, rutin), and three flavonoid aglycones (Comp. 8, dihydroquercetin; Comp. 9, quercetin; Comp. 10, morin) had already been isolated and identified from mulberry fruits (16) and trees (22). The structures of two phenolic acids (Comp. 1 and Comp. 2) and one 2-arylbenzofuran derivative (Comp. 11) from mulberry fruits were first identified in this study.

Two phenolic compounds (Comp. 1 and 2) yielded a protonated molecule $[M+H]^+$ at m/z 155 and 181, respectively, in the positive FAB-MS spectrum. ¹H-NMR (in CD₃OD) spectra of Comp. 1 showed signals characteristic of an aromatic ABX-type protons [6.79 (1H, d, J=8.0 Hz, H-5), 7.42 (1H, dd, J=1.5, 8.0 Hz, H-6), 7.48 (1H, d, J=1.5 Hz, H-2). In contrast, ¹H-NMR spectra of Comp. 2 exhibited aromatic ABX-type proton signals [6.77 (1H, d, J=8.5 Hz, H-5), 6.92 (1H, dd, J=1.5, 8.5 Hz, H-6), 7.03 (1H, d, J=1.5 Hz, H-2), and trans olefin proton signals [6.22 (1H, d, J=15.5 Hz, H-8)], 7.51 (1H, d, J=15.5 Hz, H-7)]. ¹³C-NMR spectral data [Comp. 1:

δ 171.17 (COOH), 151.25 (C-4), 146.0 (C-3), 123.83 (C-1), 122.67 (C-6), 117.78 (C-5), 115.73 (C-2); Comp. 2: δ 171.41 (COOH), 149.43 (C-7), 146.85 (C-4), 146.74 (C-3), 127.95 (C-1), 122.82 (C-6), 116.53 (C-5), 116.05 (C-8), 115.10 (C-2)] of Comp. 1 and 2 coincided well with those of 3,4-dihydroxybenzoic acid and *trans*-3,4-dihydroxycinnamic acid isolated from plants (28). Thus, Comp. 1 and 2 were easily elucidated as 3,4-dihydroxybenzoic acid (procatechuic aid) and *trans*-3,4-dihydroxycinnamic acid (caffeic acid), respectively, which were first isolated from mulberry fruit, although two phenolic acids were already reported in other plants (23,24).

Meanwhile, one 2-arylbenzofuran derivative was elucidated by UV, IR, FABMS and NMR. The UV absorptions of Comp. 11 at λ_{max} 214, 295 (s), 320, 332 (s) nm were indicative of a 2-arylbenzofuran-type compound (25). Its IR spectrum suggested that Comp. 11 was a polyphenol-type compound without a carbonyl moiety. The positive FABMS of Comp. 11 gave a molecule peak at m/z 311 [M+H]⁺, together with two significant fragment ion peaks at m/z 255 [M⁺-C₄H₇] and 241 [M⁺-C₅H₉], indicating the presence of a prenyl substituted 2-arylbenzofuran moiety. The ¹H-NMR spectrum showed that 4,6-disubstituted benzofuran moiety [aromatic AX-type proton signals at δ 7.20 (1H, s, H-7) and 6.86 (1H, d, J=1.0 Hz, H-5), and δ 6.88 (1H, s, H-3)], and 3'5'-disubstituted phenyl group [δ 6.74 (2H, d, J=2.5 Hz, H-2' & H-6') and 6.23 (1H, t, J=2.5 Hz, H-4')], as well as a prenyl group [5.37 (1H, t, J=6.0 Hz, H-2"), 3.34 (2H, brd, J=6.0 Hz, H-1"), 1.76 & 1.74 (each 3H, brs)] were assignable to 4-prenyl substituted a arylbenzofuran moiety (25). The ¹³C-NMR spectrum of Comp. 11 exhibited seventeen carbon signals, including 4-prenyl substituted 2-arylbenzofuran skeleton; 160.06 $(C_{3'} \& C_{5'})$, 155.87 (C_8) , 155.71 (C_6) , 154.77 (C_2) , 134.15 $(C_{1'})$, 132.96 $(C_{3''})$, 126.32 (C_{5}) , 124.56 (C_{9}) , 122.89 $(C_{2''})$, 121.53 (C_4) , 103.96 $(C_{2'} \& C_{6'})$, 103.47 $(C_{4'})$, 102.37 (C_3) , 97.99 (C_7) , 29.65 $(C_{5''})$, 26.12 $(C_{1''})$, 17.97 $(C_{4''})$. Based on these results, Comp. 11 was elucidated to be 4-prenylmoracin, which was first isolated from mulberry tree. even though its derivative was already isolated and identified from mulberry tree (25,26). The ¹H- & ¹³C-NMR and FABMS spectra of 4-prenylmoracin are shown in Fig. $2 \sim 4$.

Radical scavenging activity of phenolic compounds

The radical scavenging activity of the eleven phenolic compounds isolated from mulberry cake was determined using three *in vitro* assays against the DPPH radical, superoxide anion generated enzymatically in a xanthine-

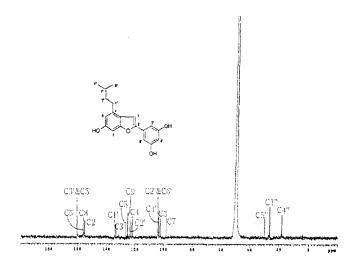


Fig. 2. ¹H-NMR spectrum of 4-prenylmoracin isolated from mulberry cake.

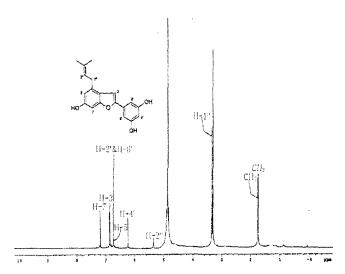


Fig. 3. ¹³C-NMR spectrum of 4-prenylmoracin isolated from mulberry cake.

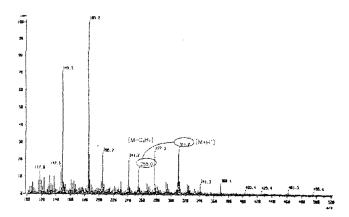


Fig. 4. FABMS spectrum of 4-prenylmoracin isolated from mulberry cake.

xanthine oxidase system, and microsomal lipid peroxidation caused by the hydroxyl radical generated via the

Table 1. Radical scavenging activity (IC₅₀) of phenolic compounds isolated from mulberry cake

Compound	IC ₅₀ (μM) ¹⁾		
	DPPH	Superoxide	Hydroxyl
Procatechuic acid	38.25 ^{c2)}	6.41 ^f	49.45 ^a
Caffeic acid	30.64 ^d	1.84 ^g	45.92°
Cyanidin 3-β-D-glucoside	>100	45.59 ^{cd}	20.56 ^c
Cyanidin 3-β-D-rutinoside	>100	56.84°	20.29^{c}
Rutin	34.21^{d}	14.72 ^e	23.23^{c}
Isoquercitrin	34.08 ^d	14.57 ^e	20.60°
Astragalin	43.87 ^b	15.87 ^e	37.42 ^b
Quercetin	27.38 ^e	50.95°	6.02^{e}
Morin	28.32^{e}	74.36 ^b	20.98 ^c
Dehydroquercetin	28.98^{e}	5.23 ^f	5.65 ^e
4-Prenylmoracin	>100	82.53 ^a	3.75^{f}
BHT	53.82 ^a	3.04 ^f	10.57^{d}

¹⁾IC₅₀ represents the concentration of a sample required for 50% inhibition of the DPPH, superoxide and hydroxyl radicals.

Fenton reaction. As shown in Table 1, most of phenolic compounds except two anthocyanins and 4-prenylmoracin scavenged DPPH radical more effectively than BHT (p < 0.05). Lipid peroxidation is a typical free radical oxidation and proceeds via a cyclic chain reaction (27). Therefore, phenolic compounds in mulberry cake acted as DPPH radical scavengers and could inhibit the lipid peroxidation.

Superoxide anions were generated enzymatically in a xanthine-xanthine oxidase system, and assayed by reduction of nitro blue tetrazolium. All phenolic compounds inhibited the generation of superoxide anion. Among them, caffeic acid was most effective in scavenging enzymatically generated superoxide anion with an IC50 value of 1.84 µM which was stronger than that of BHT (p < 0.05). Moreover, dehydroquercetin and procatechuic acid showed potent superoxide radical scavenging activity with IC₅₀ values of 5.23 and 6.41 µM which was weaker than that of BHT with an IC50 value of 3.04 μM (p < 0.05). Other flavonoids and anthocyanins also exhibited considerable superoxide radical scavenging activities, with IC₅₀ ranges of $15 \sim 75 \mu M$, but 4-prenylmoracin showed the lowest activity. Finally, all phenolic constituents significantly inhibited microsomal lipid peroxidation induced by Fe(II)/H₂O₂. Among them, 4-prenylmoracin exhibited the most potent inhibitory activity with IC₅₀ value of 3.75 µM, and its activity was stronger than that of BHT with an IC50 value of 10.57 μ M (p < 0.05). Dehydroquercetin and quercetin also showed strong activities with an IC₅₀ values of 5.65 and 6.02 µM which were stronger than those of flavonoid glycosides, rutin (IC₅₀=23.23 µM), isoquercitrin (IC₅₀=

20.60 μ M) and astragalin (IC₅₀=37.42 μ M). Other phenolic acids and anthocyanins exerted considerable hydroxyl radical scavenging activities which were weaker than that of BHT (p<0.05). Thus, phenolic compounds in mulberry cake, such as phenolic acids, flavonoids and 4-prenylmoracin, were shown to have considerable DPPH radical scavenging activity and to inhibit superoxide anion production in the xanthin-xanthine oxidase system and the hydroxyl radical-medicated lipid peroxidation of rat liver microsomes.

It is well established that lipid peroxidation is initiated by active oxygen species attacking unsaturated fatty acids and is propagated by a chain reaction cycle involving lipids, peroxy radicals and lipid hydroperoxides (27). Superoxide anion (O₂), hydrogen peroxide (H₂O₂) and hydroxy radical (OH ·), actively participate in the initiation of lipid peroxidation (28). Phenolic acids, anthocyanins and flavonoids are naturally occurring phenolics which are widely distributed in edible plants and foodstuffs derived from plants. Among them, hydroxycinnamic acids, cyanidins and flavonols are predominantly present in plant tissues. Phenolic compounds in plants have been reported to be strong radical scavengers against DPPH, superoxide and hydroxyl radicals (29-31). Several earlier works (31-33) speculated that the DPPH, superoxide and hydroxyl radical scavenging activities of phenolic acids increased with increasing of the number of phenolic hydroxyl groups in their compounds. Furthermore, free catechol groups at the 3'- and 4'-positions of flavonoids were reported to be essential for high superoxide and hydroxyl radical scavenging activity. Additionally, it was previously reported that there are some differences in the superoxide and hydroxyl radical-scavenging activities between flavonol aglycones and glycosides according to in vitro assay systems (33), and the radical scavenging activity of phenolic acids was relatively lower than that of flavonoids with benzopyron nuclei (34), although phenolic acids and flavonoids aglycones and their corresponding glycosides were equally efficient in scavenging DPPH free radical (31,33). Our data mostly supported these previous results, but the extent of radical scavenging activity was somewhat different between flavonoids and phenolic acids. Among phenolic compounds, caffeic acid potently scavenged superoxide, and dehydroquercetin greatly inhibited hydroxyl radical-mediated lipid peroxidation in rat liver microsomes. Meanwhile, 4-prenylmoracin having an arylbenzofuran moiety exhibited potently hydroxyl radical scavenging activity, even though its DPPH and superoxide radical scavenging activities were lower than those of other phenolic compounds. This result supported that the introduction of prenyl lipophilic substitution into

²⁾Values with different superscript letters are significantly different at p < 0.05.

two hydroxyls of a moracin moiety increases its hydrophobicity, which is expected to improve its hydroxyl radical scavenging activity by enhancing its affinity to the microsomal membranes (35). This report first demonstrated that 2-arylbenzofuran derivatives can function as hydroxyl radical scavengers, although they have already been known to act as antidiuretic agents (22,26).

In conclusion, the methanol extract of mulberry cake prepared from mulberry fruits was previously found to have significant scavenging activity against DPPH, superoxide and hydroxyl radicals. The eleven phenolic compounds, including phenolic acids, anthocyanins, flavonoids and 2-arylbenzofuran derivative, were isolated and identified from mulberry cake. Most of phenolic compounds showed considerable scavenging activities, among which caffeic acid, dehydroguercetin and quercetin were most effective in inhibiting the generation of superoxide anion by the xanthine oxidase system and in preventing the microsonal lipid peroxidation induced by Fe(II)/H₂O₂. Other phenolic compounds also exhibited considerable radical scavenging activities, though less than that of BHT. These results suggest that several phenolic compounds could be mainly responsible for the strong radical scavenging activity of the methanol extract from mulberry cake, and furthermore that mulberry cake may be useful as a natural antioxidant which plays important physiological roles in the prevention of several active oxygen radical-mediated pathological conditions, such as cancer, inflammation, atherosclerosis, and aging. Further study is required to investigate the antioxidative activity of 2-arylbenzofuran derivatives in vivo.

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