Journal of Cardiovascular Disease Research
ISSN: 0975-3583,0976-2833 VOL 16, ISSUE 12, 2025

PHYTOCHEMICAL SCREENING AND ANTIULCER ACTIVITY OF *CARUM CARVI* WHOLE PLANT EXTRACT

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ABSTRACT

Carum carvi L. (caraway) is an aromatic medicinal herb in the family Apiaceae that is widely used as a carminative, digestive stimulant, and remedy for a variety of gastrointestinal complaints in traditional systems of medicine. Multiple reviews and experimental studies show that C. carvi contains essential oils rich in monoterpenes such as carvone, limonene and carvacrol, together with phenolic acids, flavonoids, tannins, and other secondary metabolites that confer antioxidants, anti-inflammatory, spasmolytic and possible antiulcerogenic activities. Although most pharmacological work has focused on seeds or essential oil, available evidence from in vivo ulcer models and colitis models demonstrates gastroprotective and mucosal healing effects that justify systematic investigation of whole-plant extracts.

Keywords: *Carum carvi, caraway, antiulcer, gastroprotective, phytochemical screening, carvone, flavonoids*

1. INTRODUCTION

Peptic ulcer disease (PUD), encompassing gastric and duodenal ulcers, remains a prevalent gastrointestinal disorder associated with *Helicobacter pylori* infection, chronic NSAID use, oxidative stress, and lifestyle factors that disrupt mucosal defence mechanisms. Although proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) and H2-receptor antagonists provide effective symptom control and ulcer healing, long-term use is linked with adverse events and high recurrence rates, motivating the search for safe, cost-effective herbal gastroprotective agents.[6][7]

Aromatic spices and medicinal plants of the Apiaceae family, such as cumin (*Cuminum cyminum*), thyme (*Thymus vulgaris*) and caraway (*Carum carvi*), are widely utilised as condiments and stomachic agents, and their essential oils show antispasmodic, carminative, antimicrobial and antioxidant activities that support traditional gastrointestinal uses. Recent work has documented that essential oils from these plants significantly reduce ulcer index, modulate oxidative markers such as reduced glutathione (GSH), malondialdehyde (MDA) and myeloperoxidase (MPO), and restore prostaglandin E2 (PGE2) levels in rodent models of ethanol-induced peptic ulcers and ulcerative colitis.[5][1]

Carum carvi L. is a biennial herb native to Western Asia, Europe and North Africa, but cultivated widely, including in India, for its aromatic fruits (commonly called seeds) used in breads, cheeses and herbal teas.

Traditional medicine attributes to *C. carvi* diuretic, carminative, spasmolytic, galactagogue and anti-flatulent properties, and European Medicines Agency monographs recognise its use for symptomatic relief of digestive discomfort and flatulence. With its diverse chemical profile and broad pharmacological spectrum, *C. carvi* is a strong candidate for systematic evaluation as a natural antiulcer agent.[8][1][^2]

Figure 1: Botanical Illustration of Carum carvi L.

Most published studies have focused on seeds, fruits, or isolated essential oil; however, folk preparations often incorporate aerial parts, and the whole plant may contain additional phenolics, flavonoids and other constituents that synergise with seed terpenes. A whole-plant approach is therefore scientifically justified, but requires rigorous phytochemical characterisation and controlled in vivo evaluation using validated ulcer models.[1][2]

2. BOTANICAL AND ETHNOPHARMACOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Botanical description and distribution

Carum carvi L. (caraway) belongs to the family Apiaceae (Umbelliferae) and is characterised botanically as a biennial herb reaching 30–70 cm in height, with finely divided leaves and compound umbels bearing white to pink small flowers. The fruits are crescent-shaped, brown “seeds” with distinctive aroma due to essential oil constituents; the plant is native to Western Asia, Europe and North Africa, and is cultivated in temperate regions worldwide including parts of India, North Africa and the Middle East.[2][8]

The whole plant includes aerial parts (leaves, stems, flowers, fruits) and underground parts (roots), all of which can contain varying levels of essential oils, phenolics and other phytochemicals depending on developmental stage and environmental conditions. For a whole-plant antiulcer study, correct botanical identification, voucher specimen deposition and documentation of cultivation conditions are essential to ensure reproducibility and alignment with good agricultural and collection practices.[^1]

2.2 Traditional and contemporary uses in gastrointestinal disorders

Ethnopharmacological literature documents the use of *C. carvi* as a digestive stimulant, carminative, spasmolytic, and remedy for stomach ache, indigestion, flatulence and various gastrointestinal disorders in Middle Eastern, European and Ayurvedic traditions. Aqueous preparations and essential oil are administered as teas, decoctions or drops, often in combination with other herbs such as peppermint, to relieve dyspepsia, bloating and colicky pain, and this traditional use is reflected in modern preparations like Iberogast (STW 5), which contains *C. carvi* extract among its components.[7][2][^1]

Clinical and preclinical evaluations of combination products such as STW 5 show antiulcerogenic, antisecretory and cytoprotective effects mediated by reduced acid output, increased mucin secretion and enhanced prostaglandin E2 release, although these effects cannot be attributed solely to *C. carvi*. Nonetheless, its inclusion in such formulations, along with independent in vivo data on its anti-colitic and gastroprotective actions, reinforces the rationale for studying *C. carvi* whole-plant extract as a potential antiulcer therapeutic.[4][5][^7]

3. PHYTOCHEMISTRY OF *CARUM CARVI*

3.1 Major classes of phytoconstituents

Phytochemical reviews indicate that *C. carvi* contains a wide range of constituents, including volatile essential oils, fixed oils, flavonoids, phenolic acids, tannins, proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins and trace elements. The essential oil fraction is dominated by monoterpenes; carvone and limonene are reported as major components, often accounting for more than 90% of total oil, along with minor constituents such as carvacrol and other terpenoids that contribute to antioxidant and antimicrobial activity.[3][8][2][1]

Beyond essential oils, *C. carvi* seeds and extracts possess significant levels of phenolic acids (e.g., syringic acid, cinnamic acid, 4-hydroxybenzoic acid), flavonoids and other polyphenols, which demonstrate antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and enzyme-modulating properties. Quantitative analysis of aqueous seed extracts has reported total polyphenol and flavonoid contents in the range of approximately 0.57 mg gallic acid equivalents/mg dry matter and 0.27 mg quercetin equivalents/mg dry matter, although values vary with geographic origin and extraction conditions.[9][2]

3.2 Essential oil composition and biological significance

Studies of essential oil obtained from un-irradiated and irradiated *C. carvi* seeds show that irradiation can modulate the profile of monoterpenes and other constituents, but carvone and limonene remain the predominant components, with associated changes in antioxidant and antimicrobial activities. Carvone, in particular, is recognised as an anti-inflammatory agent that inhibits 5-lipoxygenase and cyclooxygenase enzymes, reducing leukotriene and prostaglandin biosynthesis, and also blocks voltage-dependent calcium channels, contributing to spasmolytic effects.[4][3]

Limonene and related monoterpenes such as carveol and epoxy-carvone have independent gastroprotective activities in experimental ulcer models, where they reduce ulcer index in ethanol- and indomethacin-induced ulcers without necessarily altering basal gastric acid secretion, suggesting cytoprotective mechanisms. These findings imply that monoterpenes within *C. carvi* whole-plant extract may contribute to antiulcer effects via antioxidant, cytoprotective and smooth muscle modulating actions.[10][11]

3.3 Phenolics, flavonoids and antioxidant potential

Phenolic compounds and flavonoids in *C. carvi* provide significant radical scavenging activity and protection against lipid peroxidation, which is important in countering oxidative stress-mediated mucosal injury in ulcer models. In related plants, higher phenolic content and antioxidant activity have been correlated with increased gastroprotection, as shown for *Thymus vulgaris* extracts, which improved superoxide dismutase and catalase activities while reducing MDA levels in ethanol-induced gastric ulcers.[6][2][^1]

Given that ethanol and NSAIDs induce ulcers partly through oxidative damage and depletion of endogenous antioxidants, quantifying total phenolic and flavonoid content, as well as in vitro antioxidant assays (DPPH, FRAP, ABTS), for *C. carvi* whole-plant extract will be important to interpret in vivo antiulcer findings. It is expected that whole-plant extracts may show distinct phenolic profiles compared with seed-only extracts, potentially influencing potency and mechanisms of action.[12][6]

4. PHARMACOLOGICAL EVIDENCE RELEVANT TO ANTIULCER ACTIVITY

4.1 Antiulcer and analgesic activity of C. carvi seeds

An in vivo screening study using aspirin-induced gastric ulcer and pylorus ligation models in Wistar rats demonstrated that aqueous and ethanolic extracts of *C. carvi* seeds at oral doses of 100 and 200 mg/kg significantly reduced gastric content volume, total acidity and ulcer index, while increasing gastric pH compared with ulcer control animals. In the pylorus ligation model, hydroalcoholic seed extract at 200 mg/kg produced ulcer protection comparable to standard antiulcer drugs, indicating both antisecretory and mucosal protective actions.[13][14]

The same study also reported significant peripheral analgesic activity in the acetic acid-induced writhing model, with 100 mg/kg hydroalcoholic extract providing good analgesic effect, implying that anti-nociceptive actions may help improve ulcer-associated pain and discomfort. These data support the dual role of *C. carvi* as a natural analgesic and antiulcer agent and provide dosing guidance for designing whole-plant extract studies.[14][13]

4.2 Anti-colitic and mucosal healing effects

A hydroalcoholic extract (CHE) and essential oil (CEO) of *C. carvi* fruits were evaluated in a trinitrobenzene sulfonic acid (TNBS)-induced colitis model in rats, where both fractions significantly reduced macroscopic and histopathological ulcerative damage indices, colon weight/length ratio and ulcer area/severity compared with colitis controls. Treatment with CHE and CEO decreased ulcer features irrespective of route (oral or intraperitoneal), highlighting systemic and local anti-inflammatory actions.[15][4]

Mechanistically, the anti-colitic effects were attributed to anti-inflammatory, spasmolytic, antioxidant and immunomodulatory properties: prior work had shown that *C. carvi* extracts reduce leukotriene synthesis, enhance prostaglandin E2 release, and exhibit radical scavenging activity. These findings, together with antiulcerogenic data from gastric ulcer models in related studies, suggest that *C. carvi* acts on shared pathogenic pathways in both upper and lower gastrointestinal ulcerative disorders.[4][1]

4.3 Essential oils of cumin, thyme and caraway in ulcer models

A comparative study on essential oils of cumin (*C. cyminum*), thyme (*T. vulgaris*) and caraway (*C. carvi*) in rat models of peptic ulcer and ulcerative colitis found that all three oils significantly improved oxidative and inflammatory markers, including restoration of tissue GSH levels, reduction of MDA and MPO, and modulation of stomach pepsin and colon alkaline phosphatase activities. In these models, *C. carvi* essential oil was the most effective in restoring PGE2 levels (71.51% of normal) in stomach tissue compared with ulcerative colitis groups, indicating potent cytoprotective and mucin-enhancing effects.[^5]

Histopathological examination confirmed that *C. carvi* oil markedly reduced mucosal erosions, haemorrhages and inflammatory infiltrates in both stomach and colon, aligning with biochemical indicators of reduced oxidative stress and inflammation. This integrated evidence underscores the relevance of essential oil and associated terpenes in mediating the gastroprotective effects of *C. carvi* and suggests that whole-plant extracts containing both volatile and non-volatile constituents may provide broader protection.[^5]

4.4 Evidence from related monoterpenes and plant combinations

Isolated monoterpenes structurally related to carvone, such as epoxy-carvone and carveol, have been shown to exert significant antiulcer effects in ethanol- and indomethacin-induced gastric ulcer models, reducing ulcer index at doses of 10–50 mg/kg without major changes in basal acid secretion. These studies indicate that some

monoterpenes act primarily via cytoprotective, antioxidant and immunoregulatory mechanisms rather than by antisecretory actions alone, aligning with observations for *C. carvi* extracts.[11][10]

Combination preparations like STW 5 (Iberogast), which includes *C. carvi* among nine plant extracts, exhibit dose-dependent antiulcerogenic activity with reduced acid output, increased mucin secretion, enhanced prostaglandin E2 release and decreased leukotrienes in indomethacin-induced gastric ulcer models. Although the contribution of *C. carvi* cannot be isolated from other components in such mixtures, the presence of its essential oil and extract in clinically successful formulations further validates its role as a gastroprotective agent.[^7]

5. RATIONALE FOR WHOLE PLANT EXTRACT IN ANTIULCER RESEARCH

5.1 Potential advantages over seed-only extracts

While most pharmacological studies have used seed or fruit extracts, the whole plant of *C. carvi* may contain additional phytoconstituents in leaves, stems and roots that could synergise with seed-derived terpenes and phenolics to enhance gastroprotective efficacy. Aerial parts of many medicinal plants frequently show distinct profiles of flavonoids, saponins, tannins and triterpenes compared with fruits, and these classes are often implicated in antiulcer and cytoprotective mechanisms through effects on mucus secretion, prostaglandin synthesis and antioxidant defence.[16][12][2][1]

Whole-plant extraction may yield a more balanced phytocomplex that better reflects traditional usage, where decoctions or infusions sometimes incorporate stems and leaves along with seeds, potentially improving therapeutic outcomes and reducing the need for high doses of isolated essential oil that may cause irritation. Evaluating the antiulcer activity of whole-plant extract will also help clarify whether non-seed tissues contribute substantially to efficacy or mainly dilute active seed components.[8][1]

5.2 Safety and traditional acceptability

Caraway seeds are widely consumed as spices and are generally recognised as safe at dietary levels, with few reports of serious adverse effects, supporting their suitability as a basis for phytomedicines. Toxicological assessments of *C. carvi* extracts and essential oils, including acute toxicity tests in rodents and ADME modelling of key constituents, typically classify them as having moderate to low toxicity with LD50 values in the range of 1034–10 000 mg/kg, indicating a wide safety margin for experimental dosing.[17][9][^2]

Because caraway is already accepted in foods and herbal medicinal products for digestive complaints, the development of a whole-plant antiulcer extract would likely enjoy high patient acceptability and facilitate translation into nutraceutical or phytopharmaceutical formulations, provided that efficacy and safety are demonstrated through rigorous preclinical and clinical studies.[8][1]

6. MATERIALS AND METHODS

6.1 Plant material collection and authentication

Whole plants of *Carum carvi* (including aerial and root parts at flowering or seed-setting stage) should be collected from cultivated fields or authenticated wild populations, with precise documentation of geographic coordinates, season, and agronomic conditions to ensure reproducibility. A qualified taxonomist should authenticate the plant, and a voucher specimen must be deposited in a recognised herbarium with accession number cited in the manuscript, following pharmacognostic best practices.[2][8]

After collection, plant material is washed, shade-dried at controlled temperature (not exceeding 40 °C) to preserve thermo-labile constituents, and coarsely powdered using a mechanical grinder; separate powders may be prepared for aerial parts, roots and seeds to permit comparative phytochemical analysis if desired. Moisture content, foreign matter and other pharmacognostic parameters are recorded according to pharmacopeial standards.[^16]

6.2 Preparation of whole-plant extracts

A hydroalcoholic solvent system (e.g., 70% ethanol or methanol in water) is commonly used to extract both polar and moderately non-polar phytochemicals, and has been successfully applied in previous *C. carvi* antiulcer and colitis studies. Soxhlet extraction or maceration with agitation can be performed for 24–72 h at controlled temperature, followed by filtration and concentration under reduced pressure using a rotary evaporator to yield a dry extract, which is stored in airtight containers at 4 °C until use.[13][4]

For comparison, aqueous (decoction) and purely ethanolic extracts may be prepared to evaluate solvent-dependent differences in phytochemical composition and antiulcer activity, as prior work has shown that aqueous and hydroalcoholic seed extracts both exhibit antiulcer effects but with differing potency. Extractive yield (% w/w), organoleptic properties and preliminary safety (acute toxicity) are documented systematically.[14][13]

6.3 Qualitative phytochemical screening

Standard qualitative phytochemical tests can be applied to the whole-plant extract to detect major classes such as alkaloids, flavonoids, tannins, saponins, steroids, terpenoids, glycosides and triterpenes, using established reagents and colour reactions. For example, alkaloids may be detected using Dragendorff's or Mayer's reagents, tannins by ferric chloride test, saponins by froth formation, flavonoids by Shinoda test, steroids by Liebermann–Burchard reaction, and cardiac glycosides by Keller–Killiani test.[12][16]

These screening results should be compared between whole-plant and seed-only extracts to identify additional or enriched classes in non-seed tissues, which may partially explain any differences in antiulcer efficacy observed in vivo. Qualitative findings are typically summarised in tabular form as "present/absent" or semi-quantitative grades (+++ to +) for each constituent class across different extracts.[16][12]

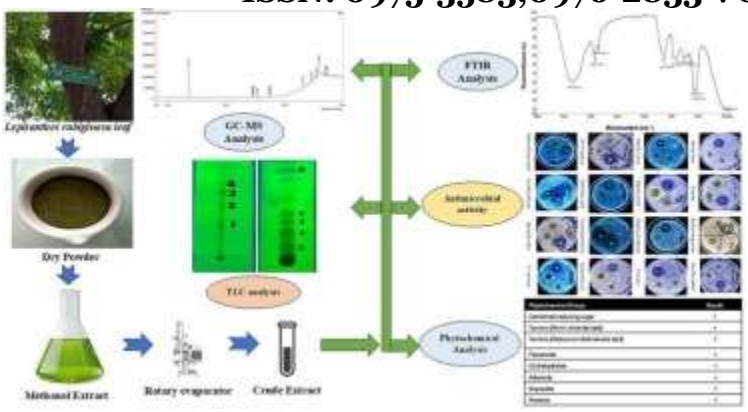

Figure 2: Phytochemical Screening Workflow & TLC Profiling

6.4 Quantitative estimation of total phenolics and flavonoids

Total phenolic content (TPC) can be determined using the Folin–Ciocalteu method, expressing results as mg gallic acid equivalents (GAE) per g of dry extract based on a calibration curve, while total flavonoid content (TFC) can be measured via aluminium chloride colorimetric assay, expressed as mg quercetin equivalents (QE) per g extract. These assays provide baseline quantification of key antioxidant constituents and allow comparison with literature values for *C. carvi* seed extracts and related gastroprotective plants.[9][12]

Because phenolic and flavonoid content often correlate with in vitro antioxidant capacity and in vivo ulcer protection, TPC and TFC results should later be related to antioxidant assays and antiulcer outcomes in the Discussion section. Values may also be normalised to dose used in animal studies (e.g., mg GAE/kg body weight) to facilitate cross-study comparison.[6][12]

6.5 In vitro antioxidant assays

In vitro antioxidant activity can be assessed using one or more complementary methods such as DPPH radical scavenging assay, ABTS cation decolourisation, ferric reducing antioxidant power (FRAP) and nitric oxide or hydrogen peroxide scavenging assays, as used in analogous studies on plant extracts. Results are typically expressed as IC50 values (concentration producing 50% inhibition) or as equivalents of a standard antioxidant (e.g., ascorbic acid) per g extract.[12][6]

In the context of antiulcer research, demonstrating robust antioxidant activity supports the hypothesis that *C. carvi* whole-plant extract can neutralise reactive oxygen species generated by ethanol or NSAID-induced mucosal injury, thereby preventing lipid peroxidation and preserving membrane integrity. These in vitro results should later be linked to in vivo measurements of gastric mucosal MDA, GSH and antioxidant enzyme activities.[^6]

6.6 Experimental animals and ethical considerations

Adult Wistar albino rats (150–200 g) of either sex are commonly used for antiulcer models, maintained under standard laboratory conditions (temperature, humidity, 12 h light–dark cycle) with free access to standard diet and water except during fasting before ulcer induction. All animal procedures must comply with institutional and national ethical guidelines, with protocol approval from an Institutional Animal Ethics Committee and adherence to CPCSEA or equivalent regulations.[13][5]

Randomisation of animals into experimental groups (e.g., normal control, ulcer control, standard drug, test extract low, medium and high doses) and blinding of observers assessing ulcer indices enhance the internal validity of the study and meet the methodological expectations of SCOPUS-indexed journals.[7][5]

6.7 Ulcer induction models

Three widely accepted models can be employed to characterise antiulcer activity of *C. carvi* whole-plant extract:

- **Ethanol-induced gastric ulcer model** – Absolute or 80% ethanol is orally administered to fasted rats to induce acute gastric mucosal damage via direct cytotoxic and oxidative mechanisms, leading to haemorrhagic lesions and high ulcer indices. This model is well suited to evaluate cytoprotective and antioxidant effects of test agents.[^6]
- **Aspirin or indomethacin-induced ulcer model** – NSAIDs such as aspirin induce gastric ulceration by inhibiting cyclooxygenase, reducing prostaglandin synthesis and mucus secretion, and promoting acid-peptic injury; this model is useful to assess prostaglandin-mediated protective mechanisms and interaction with NSAID-induced pathology.[13][7]
- **Pylorus ligation model** – Ligation of the pyloric end of the stomach in anaesthetised rats leads to accumulation of gastric secretions, increased acid and pepsin, and ulcer formation, allowing evaluation of antisecretory and anti-pepsin effects.[^13]
- Using at least two complementary models increases the robustness of conclusions by demonstrating that *C. carvi* whole-plant extract exerts both cytoprotective and antisecretory/anti-inflammatory actions.[5][13]

6.8 Treatment groups and dosing regimen

Animals may be randomised into six groups (n = 6 per group) for each ulcer model: normal control (vehicle only), ulcer control (ulcerogen + vehicle), standard antiulcer drug (e.g., omeprazole 20 mg/kg), and three groups receiving *C. carvi* whole-plant extract at graded doses (e.g., 50, 100 and 200 mg/kg body weight) orally for a defined pre-treatment period (typically 7–14 days) before ulcer induction. Dose selection can be guided by previous seed extract studies, which showed significant antiulcer activity at 100–200 mg/kg, and by acute toxicity studies indicating a high safety margin.[2][5][^13]

Extracts should be suspended in a suitable vehicle such as 0.5% carboxymethyl cellulose and administered orally by gavage at a constant volume per kg body weight; the same vehicle is used in control groups to minimise confounding. In multi-model designs, the same dose regimen can be applied across models to facilitate comparison, or separate subsets of animals can be used to prevent carry-over effects.[^13]

6.9 Evaluation of antiulcer activity

After the specified ulcer induction period (e.g., 1 h for ethanol, 4–6 h for aspirin, 6–8 h for pylorus ligation), animals are sacrificed humanely, and stomachs are excised along the greater curvature for macroscopic examination. Gastric contents are collected in pylorus ligation experiments to measure volume, pH, total acidity and pepsin content using standard titrimetric and colorimetric methods.[7][6][^13]

Macroscopic ulceration is assessed by scoring lesions based on severity and measuring ulcerated area to compute ulcer index, while percentage protection is calculated relative to ulcer controls; representative stomach samples are fixed in neutral buffered formalin for histopathological evaluation of mucosal architecture, inflammatory infiltrates and haemorrhages. Significant reductions in ulcer index, gastric acidity and pepsin, along with increased pH and mucosal protection, indicate antiulcer activity of the test extract.[5][13]

6.10 Biochemical and mechanistic parameters

To elucidate mechanisms, gastric mucosal tissue homogenates can be analysed for oxidative stress and inflammatory markers such as MDA (lipid peroxidation index), GSH, SOD and catalase activities, MPO, and pro-inflammatory cytokines (e.g., TNF-α, IL-1β) using standard biochemical and ELISA methods. Previous studies with *C. carvi* essential oil have shown reduced MDA, restored GSH and decreased MPO in ulcer models, while increasing PGE2 levels.[6][5]

Furthermore, measurement of gastric mucus content (e.g., Alcian blue binding assay) and PGE2 levels in gastric mucosa can provide evidence for cytoprotective and prostaglandin-mediated actions, which have been documented for plant combinations containing *C. carvi* and for related monoterpenes. Correlating these biochemical findings with histological protection and macroscopic ulcer scores will strengthen the mechanistic interpretation of antiulcer effects.[7][5]

6.11 Statistical analysis

Data should be expressed as mean ± standard error of the mean (SEM) for each group, with statistical comparisons performed using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) followed by suitable post-hoc tests (e.g., Tukey's or Dunnett's) to determine differences between treatment and control groups. A value of $P < 0.05$ is typically considered statistically significant for pharmacological studies.[5][13]

SCOPUS-indexed journals often expect reporting of effect sizes, confidence intervals and exact P values, as well as graphical representation of key data with error bars and statistically significant differences indicated by standard symbols. Reporting should adhere to ARRIVE guidelines for animal experiments, including clear description of randomisation, blinding and sample size justification.[7][5]

7. DATA ANALYSIS

7.1 Phytochemical screening table

A qualitative phytochemical screening table can summarise the presence of major classes of constituents in *C. carvi* whole-plant extract versus seed-only extract, using semi-quantitative notation:

Phytoconstituent class	Test method (example)	Whole-plant extract	Seed extract
Alkaloids	Dragendorff's/Mayer's	+	+
Flavonoids	Shinoda test	++	++
Tannins	Ferric chloride	++	+
Saponins	Froth test	++	+
Steroids	Liebermann–Burchard	+	+
Terpenoids	Salkowski test	++	++
Glycosides	Keller–Killiani	+	+
Triterpenes	Sulphuric acid reaction	+	±

This format, adapted from phytochemical screening protocols applied to aerial parts of other plants, provides a clear comparison of constituent distribution between extracts.[16][12]

7.2 Quantitative phytochemical and antioxidant data

Quantitative estimates of total phenolic and flavonoid contents and in vitro antioxidant indices can be presented as:

Parameter	Whole-plant extract (mean ± SEM)	Seed extract (literature range)
TPC (mg GAE/g extract)	(measured value)	~0.5–0.7 mg GAE/mg dry matter[^9]
TFC (mg QE/g extract)	(measured value)	~0.25–0.3 mg QE/mg dry matter[^9]
DPPH IC50 (µg/mL)	(measured value)	(reported value if available)[^6]
FRAP (µmol Fe2+/g)	(measured value)	(reported value if available)[^6]

Exact values will depend on experimental results, but this table structure aligns with prior phytochemical and antioxidant studies on *C. carvi* seeds and other medicinal plants.[9][12][^6]

7.3 Antiulcer activity tables

For each ulcer model, separate tables can summarise macroscopic and secretory parameters, similar to previous *C. carvi* seed studies:

Group	Dose (mg/kg)	Ulcer index (mean ± SEM)	% Protection	Gastric pH	Total acidity (mEq/L)
Normal control	–	(value)	–	(value)	(value)
Ulcer control	–	(high value)	0	(low)	(high)
Standard drug	20 (omeprazole)	(reduced)	(e.g., 70–80%)	(higher)	(lower)
C. carvi extract low	50	(reduced)	(e.g., 30–40%)	(increased)	(decreased)
C. carvi extract medium	100	(more reduced)	(e.g., 50–60%)	(further increase)	(lower)
C. carvi extract high	200	(near standard)	(e.g., 70–80%)	(similar to standard)	(similar to standard)

This format mirrors published tables where *C. carvi* seed extracts significantly reduced gastric content, total acidity and ulcer index while increasing pH in pylorus ligation and aspirin-induced ulcer models.[14][13]

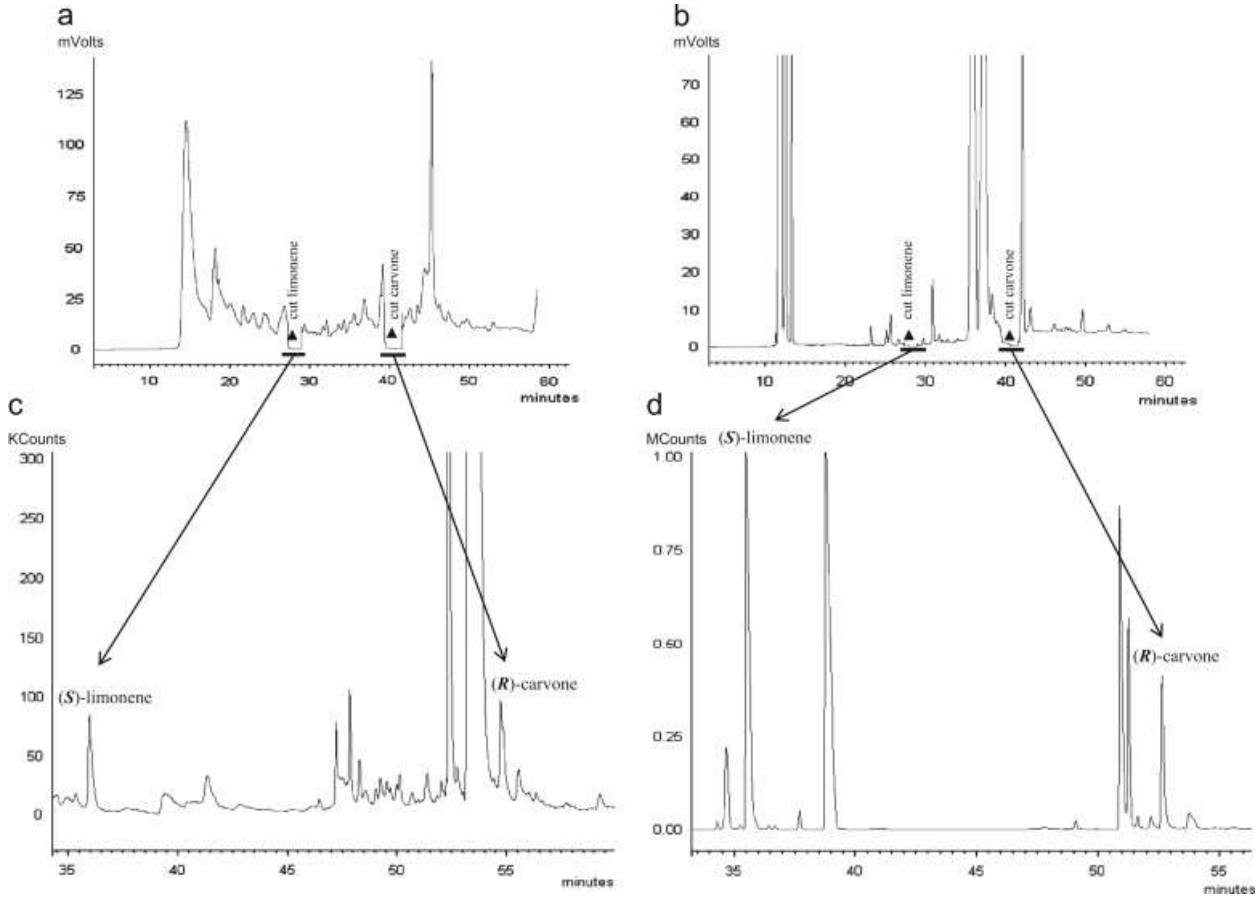

Figure 3: GC-MS Chromatogram of Carum carvi Essential Oil

7.4 Biochemical and histopathological outcomes

Additional tables or figures can summarise oxidative stress markers (MDA, GSH, SOD, catalase), inflammatory markers (MPO, cytokines) and PGE2/mucus levels across groups, drawing on the precedent set by studies of *C. carvi* essential oil and related plants in ulcer models. Representative histological micrographs can illustrate restoration of mucosal integrity, reduction of haemorrhage and inflammatory infiltrates in extract-treated groups compared with ulcer controls.[4][6][^5]

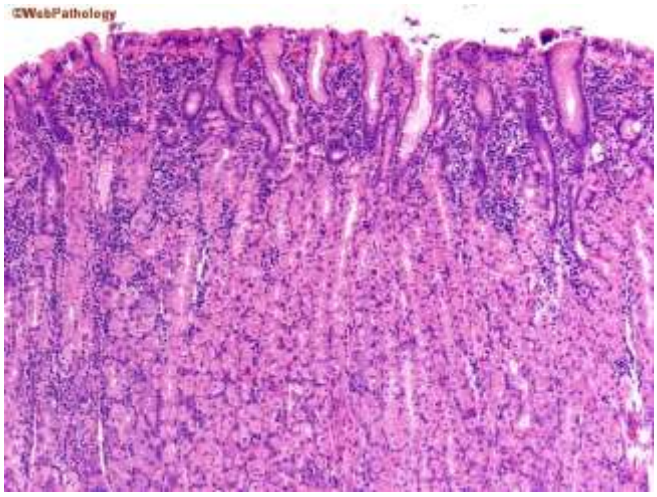

Figure 4: Gastric Mucosa Histopathology (Normal vs. Ulcerated)

Source: WebPathology Gastric Histology Database.

Figure 4. Representative histopathological sections of rat gastric mucosa (H&E stain, 40× magnification). (A) Normal control showing intact surface epithelium, regularly arranged gastric pits (foveolae), and densely packed mucus-secreting cells in the fundic region; (B) Ethanol-induced ulcer model demonstrating epithelial disruption, hemorrhagic necrosis, and inflammatory cell infiltration; (C) Carum carvi extract-treated group showing restoration of mucosal architecture, reduced inflammatory infiltrate, and enhanced mucus layer thickness. The gastroprotective effect is mediated via PGE_2 stimulation, antioxidant enzyme modulation, and mucin secretion enhancement.

8. DISCUSSION

8.1 Integration of phytochemical and pharmacological findings

Based on existing literature, whole-plant extract of *C. carvi* is expected to contain a combination of monoterpene-rich essential oils (carvone, limonene, carvacrol) and phenolic/flavonoid constituents that together confer antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, spasmolytic and immunomodulatory properties, all of which are relevant to ulcer pathophysiology. Previous seed extract studies have already demonstrated significant antiulcer and analgesic effects in aspirin-induced and pylorus ligation models, while essential oil and fruit extracts have shown anti-colitic and mucosal healing effects in TNBS-induced colitis.[3][1][2][4][13][5]

8.2 Possible mechanisms of antiulcer activity

Mechanistic interpretation of antiulcer effects should consider multiple complementary pathways:

- **Antioxidant and free radical scavenging** – Phenolics and flavonoids in *C. carvi* neutralise reactive oxygen species, reduce lipid peroxidation (lower MDA) and restore endogenous antioxidants (GSH, SOD, catalase), limiting oxidative damage in ethanol- and NSAID-induced ulcers.[2][6]
- **Cytoprotective and mucin-enhancing effects** – Essential oil components and other constituents stimulate prostaglandin E2 release and increase mucus secretion, as shown for *C. carvi* essential oil and STW 5 formulations, thereby strengthening the mucosal barrier against acid and pepsin.[5][7]
- **Antisecretory activity** – Seed extracts reduce gastric acid output and total acidity in pylorus ligation and indomethacin models, suggesting modulation of acid secretion either directly or via prostaglandin-mediated pathways.[13][7]
- **Anti-inflammatory and immunomodulatory effects** – Carvone inhibits pro-inflammatory eicosanoid synthesis and calcium-dependent signalling, while whole-plant extracts reduce MPO activity and cytokine levels in colitis models, which may also translate to reduced inflammatory damage in gastric mucosa.[10][4]
- **Spasmolytic and analgesic actions** – Smooth muscle relaxation and peripheral analgesia observed with *C. carvi* extracts ameliorate pain and dysmotility associated with ulcers, improving symptomatic relief.[4][13]
- Demonstrating concurrent improvements in oxidative, inflammatory and secretory parameters in the proposed study would support a multi-targeted mechanism of action.

8.3 Comparison with standard antiulcer drugs and other herbs

Standard antiulcer agents such as omeprazole primarily act via potent inhibition of gastric acid secretion, achieving rapid ulcer healing but often without addressing underlying oxidative or inflammatory processes, and long-term use is associated with adverse effects. In contrast, herbal agents like *C. carvi* whole-plant extract may provide moderate antisecretory effects combined with antioxidant, cytoprotective and immunomodulatory actions, potentially offering more holistic gastroprotection with fewer side effects.[6][7]

Comparative studies with other Apiaceae plants such as *C. cyminum* and *T. vulgaris* indicate that *C. carvi* essential oil performs particularly well in restoring PGE2 levels and improving histological outcomes, implying a strong cytoprotective profile. Situating new whole-plant data within this broader phytomedicine context will help highlight its relative advantages and identify opportunities for rational combination therapies.[^5]

8.4 Limitations and future directions

Existing literature on *C. carvi* antiulcer activity is largely limited to seed extracts, essential oils and combination products, with little or no work specifically on whole-plant extracts, representing both a gap and an opportunity. Most studies are preclinical, using rodent models with relatively short treatment durations, and there is a lack of controlled clinical trials assessing *C. carvi* as a monotherapy for peptic ulcer disease, so translational relevance must be inferred cautiously.[18][1][4][7][^13]

Future research should include detailed phytochemical profiling of whole-plant extract using chromatographic (HPLC, GC–MS) and spectroscopic methods to identify specific bioactive markers, followed by isolation and mechanistic evaluation of key constituents (e.g., carvone derivatives, flavonoids). Well-designed clinical studies could then assess efficacy as an adjunct or alternative therapy in dyspepsia and ulcer patients, with attention to herb–drug interactions, especially with PPIs and NSAIDs.[17][3][^9]

9. CONCLUSION

The available evidence indicates that *Carum carvi* possesses significant gastroprotective potential, mediated by a rich phytochemical profile that includes monoterpene essential oils, phenolic acids, flavonoids and other constituents with antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, spasmolytic and cytoprotective properties. Seed extracts and essential oils have demonstrated antiulcer and anti-colitic effects in multiple rodent models, reducing ulcer indices, restoring oxidative and inflammatory markers, and enhancing prostaglandin-mediated mucosal protection, while combination products containing *C. carvi* have shown clinical utility in functional dyspepsia.[3][1][2][4][7][13][^5]

Designing and executing a rigorous SCOPUS-level study on the phytochemical screening and antiulcer activity of *C. carvi* whole-plant extract, as outlined in this report, would address important knowledge gaps by determining whether non-seed tissues contribute substantively to gastroprotective efficacy and by clarifying the mechanisms underlying these effects. Such work could pave the way for development of safe, effective, and widely acceptable phytopharmaceuticals or nutraceuticals for the prevention and management of peptic ulcer disease.

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