Potential toxicity effects of *Anastatica hierochuntica* aqueous extract on prenatal development of Sprague-Dawley rats

Siti Rosmani Md Zin\textsuperscript{a}, Normadijah M. Kassim\textsuperscript{a,c}, Zahirun Mohamed\textsuperscript{c}, Abdulmannan H. Fateh\textsuperscript{a}, Mohammed A. Alshuwish\textsuperscript{b}

\textsuperscript{a} Department of Anatomy, Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
\textsuperscript{b} Department of Pharmacology, Faculty of Medicine, University of Malaya, 50603 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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**ABSTRACT**

Ethnopharmacological relevance: *Anastatica hierochuntica* (A. hierochuntica) is a plant consumed in folk medicine for the treatment of reproductive system related problems and metabolic disorders. It is of concern that the herb is commonly consumed by pregnant women towards the end of pregnancy to ease the process of labour, despite the lack of studies evaluating its safety.

Aim of this study: This study aimed to investigate the potential toxicity effects of *A. hierochuntica* in pregnant Sprague-Dawley rats and their developing fetuses.

Materials and methods: Experiments were conducted in accordance to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development guideline 414. Animals were randomly divided into four groups (n = 10 females per group): negative control (received the vehicle only), experimental animals received 250, 500, and 1000 mg/kg *A. hierochuntica* aqueous extracts (AIAE), respectively. Treatment was administered daily by oral gavage from gestational day (GD) 6-20, and evacuation section performed on GD21.