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## A DESCRIPTIVE REVIEW ON *RAPHANUS SATIVUS* LINN.

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**ABSTRACT:** *Raphanus sativus* (radish), a member of the Brassicaceae family, is a widely cultivated and consumed root vegetable across the globe. Its nutritional and medicinal significance has been extensively documented through various studies. Traditionally, extracts from both aerial and underground parts of radishes have been employed in folk medicine to manage a range of ailments, including digestive disorders, urinary infections, hepatic inflammation, cardiovascular complications, and ulcers. The therapeutic potential of radish is primarily attributed to its rich composition of bioactive secondary metabolites, such as glucosinolates, polyphenols, flavonoids, and isothiocyanates, which confer antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antidiabetic, hepatoprotective, and anticancer activities. This review emphasizes the impact of radish extract administration in pathological conditions, including cancer, diabetes, liver dysfunction, and oxidative stress. Additionally, it provides a detailed analysis of the molecular mechanisms by which radish-derived compounds regulate critical drug targets associated with various cancers and metabolic disorders. By modulating signaling pathways, apoptotic proteins, and detoxification enzymes, these bioactive constituents demonstrate considerable potential in preventing and managing chronic diseases, highlighting radish as a promising candidate for both functional foods and therapeutic applications in modern medicine.

**INTRODUCTION:** *Raphanus sativus* linn, the scientific name for radish, is a member of the Brassicaceae family. Mooli is the popular name for this annual plant that is eaten as a vegetable. In numerous states, radish is referred to by a variety of names, including Mullangi, Moolika, and Mooli. Originally from Europe and Asia, *Raphanus sativus* L<sup>1</sup>. It grows between 190 to 1240 meters above sea level in temperate areas. Its roots are thick, varied in size, shape, and colour, and it stands between 30 and 90 cm tall.

They have a strong flavour and are edible. In essence, one of the classic Japanese delicacies is the takuan, or salted radish roots, which are consumed in Japan in quantities of over 500,000 tonnes annually. The distinctive yellow hue of the salted radish roots develops during preservation. This species is often used to treat respiratory and hepatic conditions<sup>2</sup>.

The efficacy of its extracts in treating microbial illness, as stated in traditional medicine, is validated by their antibiotic activity and temporal persistence. *Salmonella thyphosa*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, and *Bacillus subtilis* were all susceptible to the antibacterial action of the root's juice. The aqueous and ethanolic extracts demonstrated efficacy against *Candida albicans* and *Streptococcus mutans*. The whole plant's aqueous extract has antimicrobial action against



*Staphylococcus epidermidis* and *Sarcinia lutea* <sup>2</sup>. The metabolites that *R. sativus* produces are included in this review based on their structural classifications <sup>3</sup>.

#### Taxonomical Classification <sup>4</sup>:

**Kingdom:** Plantae-plantes, Planta, Vegetal, plants

**Subkingdom:** Viridiplantae-Green plants

**Infrakingdom:** Streptophyta-land plants

**Super division:** Embryophyta

**Division:** Tracheophyta vascular plants, tracheophytes

**Subdivision:** Spermatophytina-spermatophytes, seed plants, phanérogames

**Class:** Magnoliopsida

**Superorder:** Rosanae

**Order:** Brassicales

**Family:** Brassicaceae

**Genus:** Raphanus L.-*R. sativus*

**Species:** *Raphanus sativus* L

#### Vernacular Name:

**Hindi:** (Mūlī)

**English:** Radish

**Sanskrit:** (Mūlaka)

**Bengali:** (Mulo)

**Tamil:** (Mullangi)

**Telugu:** (Mullangi)

**Kannada:** (Moolangi)

**Malayalam:** (Mullangi)

**Marathi:** (Mula)

**Gujarati:** (Mūlā)

**Punjabi:** (Mūlī)

**Urdu:** (Mooli)

**Odia:** (Mūlā)

**Assamese:** (Mula)

**Nepali:** (Mula)

**Botanical Characterization:** A few distinctive physical traits of *R. sativus* may aid in the plant/fruit's identification. Radish, or *R. sativus*, is a member of the Brassicaceae family. Radish plants increase every year or every two years, especially during the winter. It may be found all across the world and is often cultivated in the highlands from March to August. Radish plants' exterior characteristics include differences in fruit type, flower petal colour, floral symmetry, and leaf type and arrangement <sup>5</sup>.

It has been noted that *R. sativus* blooms were formerly symmetrical. The petals of *R. sativus* flowers are pink, white, and pale red in colour. Leaves come in two varieties. A leaf that is lobed or unlobed but not divided into leaflets is referred to as a simple leaf, whereas a compound leaf is composed of two or more distinct leaflets. One leaf per node along the stem was once the alternate leaf configuration. There are lobes and a feature resembling teeth on the leaf blade's edge. When mature, the fruit of *R. sativus* does not break into pieces, although it was once dry and weighed between 10 and 250 mm. The farmers usually cultivate the radish in the season of winter as it needs a clear sunlight and low temperature for better growth <sup>6</sup>.



FIG. 1: LEAVES, ROOT AND SEEDS OF *RAPHANUS SATIVUS*

**Habit and Habitat:** The plant's habitat is between 190 to 1240 meters above sea level, and it is primarily found in temperate regions. Sowing takes place from March to July in mountainous areas and from September to March in the northern plains. The stems can be simple or branching, and the fleshy, enlarged tap roots come in a variety of sizes, shapes, and colours <sup>1,3,8</sup>.

**Distribution:** It began to spread from southern China to other parts of Japan and other Asian nations. It is an essential food crop found to be widely grown in Korea, South east Asia, Japan, etc. It has been discovered to have a number of therapeutic uses, including the treatment of gynaecological diseases, jaundice, and urinary tract infections <sup>9</sup>. Brazil produces around 9,000 t of radish annually <sup>10</sup>. In parts of the United States and Canada, oil seed cultivars are readily available. They are derived from wild and farmed species variants <sup>8</sup>.

**History:** During pre-roman times, it was domesticated in European countries. Since ancient times, this plant has been regarded as a significant food source in Egypt. The species' older varieties are often biennials, meaning they need to be vernalised or treated with cold for a while before they may begin to produce seeds and bloom. The same is true for bigger species, such as daikon, winter radishes, and black Spanish. Modern variants are spherical and icicle-shaped, and they come in pink, red, white, and violet hues. A minimum number of cold treatments are needed to develop them from seeds, and it takes 30 to 40 days for a fully grown radish to mature <sup>11, 12, 13</sup>.

**Traditional Uses:** *Raphanus sativus* (*R. sativus*) is a multi-purpose plant with significant nutritional and medicinal uses.

1. It is an edible plant; the leaves and fruits are generally cooked and sometimes eaten raw.
2. *R. sativus* possesses astringent and diuretic properties, which is why it is traditionally used to increase bile flow.
3. Radish juice has long been used as a home remedy for cough, rheumatic arthritis, and gallbladder stones <sup>12</sup>.
4. Raw radishes are commonly consumed in salads, especially in European diets, and are also used in various traditional dishes.
5. In the Middle East, radish juice is consumed for its perceived health benefits.
6. In Unani, Greeko-Arab, and Indian folk medicine, *R. sativus* is used to treat:
  - Jaundice
  - Gallstones
  - Liver disorders
  - Rectal disorders
  - Indigestion and other gastric pains
7. The leaves, often discarded, contain 10 times more vitamin C than the roots, providing higher antioxidant activity.
8. In Yemenite folk medicine, radish juice is used to help eliminate kidney stones <sup>13</sup>.
9. The leaves and roots are used in the treatment of:
  - Asthma
  - Chest tightness
  - Intestinal parasitic infections
  - The root exhibits multiple pharmacological properties, including:
    - Antiscorbutic
    - Antispasmodic
    - Astringent
    - Cholagogue
    - Digestive effects
10. *R. sativus* contains raphanin, a compound with antibacterial and antifungal properties.
11. Raphanin inhibits the growth of pathogens such as:
  - *Staphylococcus aureus*
  - *Escherichia coli*
  - *Streptococci*
  - *Pneumococci*
12. The plant has demonstrated anti-tumor activity.
13. Consumption of *R. sativus* enhances adiponectin production, a hormone that helps protect against insulin resistance.

14. *R. sativus* is rich in antioxidants and minerals, particularly calcium and potassium.

15. These nutrients help to:

- Lower high blood pressure
- Reduce the risk of heart disease
- *R. sativus* is a good source of natural nitrates, which improve blood circulation.

16. The plant contains glucosinolates (sulfur-containing compounds) that:

- Protect cells from genetic mutations
- Inhibit tumor cell growth
- Reduce the risk of cancer development<sup>13, 14</sup>

**Chemical Constituents:** In Asian nations, particularly China, Japan, and Korea, *Raphanus sativus* is a staple vegetable<sup>15</sup>. Alkaloids and nitrogen compounds, coumarins, enzymes, gibberellins, glucosinolates, oil seed compounds, organic acids, phenolic compounds, sulphur compounds, flavonoids, saponins, carbohydrates, proteins, amino acids, tannins, brassinosteroids, and polyphenols are the main chemical components of *Raphanus sativus*<sup>16, 17</sup>. With a biological value of 76.6 and a digestibility coefficient of 73.5%,

*Raphanus sativus* leaves are a great source of protein. Their origin is mentioned below

- Biochemical substances such as methins, saponins, levon
- Enzymes such as phosphatase, catalase
- Histaminergic component and a weak spasmolytic
- Amino acids such as lysine, methionin *etc.*
- Polyphenolics such as protocatechuic acid, vanillic acid
- Antibacterial substances such as Sulphoraphene and raphanin
- Free radical scavengers *etc*<sup>18</sup>.

Factors such as climate, soil type, genotype, seasonal variation, processing methods, extraction, and quantification techniques significantly influence enzyme activity and stability, thereby affecting the hydrolysis of glucosinolates. *Raphanus sativus* seeds and leaves contain raphanin, an important bioactive constituent. The plant also contains glucoraphanin, glucobrassicin, methoxyglucobrassicin, and glucoraphasatin, which are distributed in both the skin and flesh of the vegetable<sup>19-21</sup>.

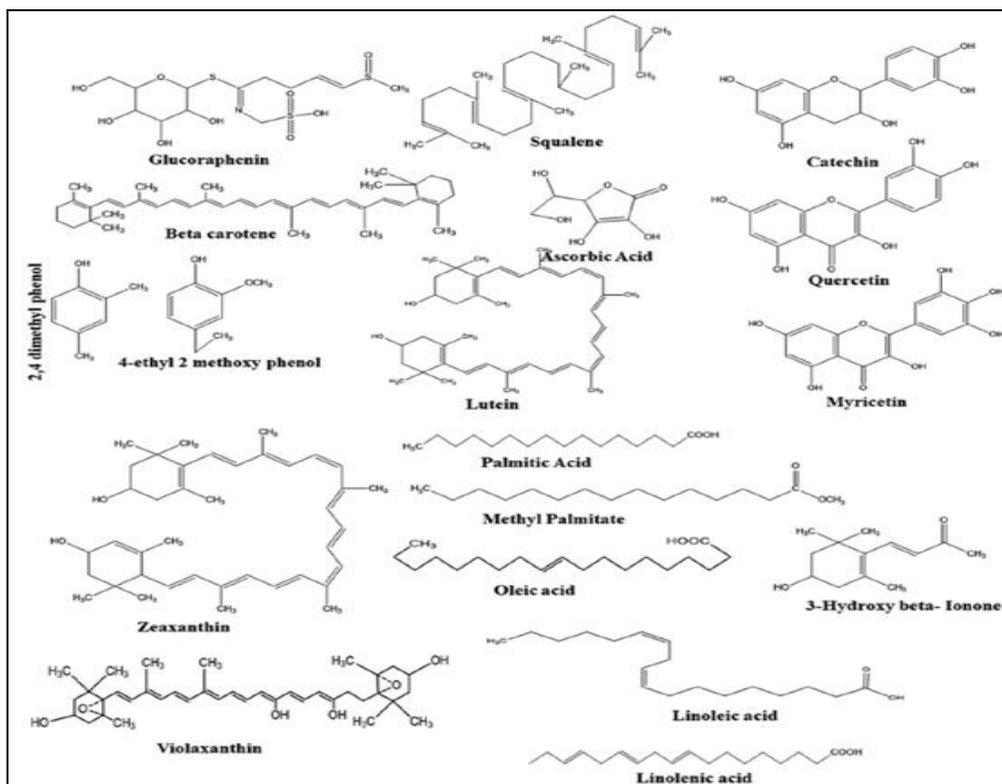


FIG. 2: LIST OF CHEMICAL CONSTITUENTS

The peels of *Raphanus sativus* L. var. niger contain numerous important phytoconstituents, including tannins, saponins, flavonoids, phlobatannins, anthraquinones, carbohydrates, reducing sugars, steroids, phytosterols, alkaloids, amino acids, terpenoids, cardiac glycosides, and chalcones, which contribute to their medicinal value<sup>22</sup>. Taste-determining factors such as glucosinolate content, soluble carbohydrates, and myrosinase activity are also present. Additionally, the vegetable contains proximate nutrients like protein, dietary fiber, carbohydrates, and antioxidants<sup>22</sup>. Compounds such as isothiocyanates and dithiolthiones help reduce cancer risk<sup>24</sup>. Medicinal plants serve as valuable resources for drug development, cultural practices, nutrition, and therapeutic applications worldwide<sup>25</sup>.

### Pharmacological Activity:

**Antioxidant Effects of Radishes:** The roots and leaves of radish possess significant nutritional value and diverse secondary metabolites with strong antioxidant properties. Compared to roots, leaves contain higher levels of protein, calcium, and ascorbic acid, while total phenolic content is nearly two-fold higher, correlating with enhanced free radical scavenging activity<sup>26</sup>. Distinct polyphenols are distributed in different tissues; roots are rich in pyrogallol (free form) and vanillic acid (bound form), whereas leaves contain epicatechin (free form) and coumaric acid (bound form). Notably, flavonoid levels in leaves are four times higher than in roots. Flavonoids, major polyphenolic compounds with multiple hydroxyl groups, exhibit strong free radical scavenging potential<sup>27</sup>. Consequently, radish leaves represent an excellent source of bioactive antioxidant compounds. In vitro studies by Wang *et al.*<sup>28</sup> demonstrated both antioxidant and prooxidant activities of red radish extracts rich in anthocyanins, particularly acylated pelargonidin derivatives. These compounds showed concentration-dependent scavenging of ABTS<sup>+</sup> radicals and strong reducing power. Ferric ion-reducing and metal-chelation assays further confirmed antioxidant potential. Prooxidant activity, assessed via plasmid DNA damage assays, depended on concentration and reaction conditions. Anthocyanins also exhibit chemoprotective effects by activating phase II enzymes and promoting apoptosis<sup>29-36</sup>.

**Anticancer Effects of *R. sativus*:** According to Rampal *et al.*<sup>37</sup>, isothiocyanates demonstrate strong anticancer potential through multiple mechanisms of pharmaceutical importance. These include modulation of phase I and phase II detoxification enzymes, induction of programmed cell death (apoptosis), and inhibition of uncontrolled cell cycle progression in cancer cells. Radish extracts, rich in isothiocyanates, have therefore gained attention for their protective and therapeutic roles against various cancers, highlighting their relevance in cancer prevention and complementary treatment strategies.

**Breast Cancer:** The aerial extract of radish has been shown to induce significant cytotoxicity in the breast cancer cell line MDA-MB-231 by modulating the ErbB–Akt signaling pathway<sup>38</sup>. Epidermal growth factor receptor (EGFR), a key oncogene in breast cancer, consists of ErbB1–ErbB4 proteins, and their overexpression is strongly associated with tumor progression<sup>39, 40</sup>. Ligand binding to EGFR promotes receptor dimerization and tyrosine kinase autophosphorylation, activating downstream signaling pathways responsible for cell proliferation and survival<sup>41, 42</sup>. Treatment with radish aerial extract significantly downregulated the mRNA and protein expression of ErbB2 and ErbB3, thereby inhibiting EGFR-mediated signaling<sup>38</sup>. Furthermore, EGFR activation stimulates the PI3K/Akt pathway, which enhances tumorigenesis by promoting cell survival and inhibiting apoptosis<sup>43-46</sup>. Radish extract reduced Akt expression in a dose-dependent manner, increasing antitumor activity<sup>38</sup>. Additionally, sulforaphane, an active isothiocyanate from radish, reduced SKBR-3 cell viability, induced G2/M arrest, disrupted cytoskeletal organization, and triggered apoptosis with minimal toxicity to normal cells.

**Colon Cancer:** In general, cancer cells exhibit elevated basal levels of reactive oxygen species (ROS), making them more susceptible to ROS-targeted therapeutic strategies with higher selectivity. Administration of sulforaphane and sulforaphane selectively induced cancer cell death while sparing normal cells, likely due to efficient antioxidant defense mechanisms in healthy cells. Sulforaphane activates both intrinsic and extrinsic

apoptotic pathways; in the intrinsic pathway, it modulates mitochondrial membrane proteins, increases proapoptotic protein expression, reduces antiapoptotic proteins, and triggers caspase cascade activation<sup>50</sup>. In the extrinsic pathway, sulforaphane enhances apoptosis through induction of TNF-related apoptosis-inducing ligand (TRAIL) and suppression of ERK and Akt signaling<sup>51-53</sup>. Sulforaphane exhibits stronger antimutagenic effects than sulforaphane<sup>54</sup>. Both compounds possess electrophilic centers that interact with nucleophilic cellular targets such as glutathione and Keap1 cysteine residues, leading to Nrf2 stabilization<sup>55</sup>. Additionally, these bioactive compounds stimulate phase II detoxifying enzymes, enhancing carcinogen elimination.

**Cervical, Lung and Prostate Cancer:** The chemopreventive effects of radish extracts have been evaluated in cervical (HeLa), lung (A549), prostate (PC-3), and breast (MCF-7) cancer cell lines by Beevi *et al.*<sup>56</sup>, revealing the molecular mechanisms of radish-mediated apoptosis. Hexane extracts from radish roots contain isothiocyanates (ITCs) such as MTBITC, erucin, 4-methylpentyl isothiocyanate, 4-pentenyl isothiocyanate, and sulforaphane, which induced apoptosis in both p53-deficient and proficient cells, indicating p53-independent signaling. Apoptosis involved Bcl-2 family regulation and caspase-3 activation, selectively targeting cancer cells while sparing normal cells<sup>57</sup>. Radish extract treatment caused cell detachment, inhibition of elongation, shrinkage, and DNA fragmentation. Gene expression analysis confirmed modulation of apoptotic pathways across diverse cancer cell types. *In-vivo*, sulforaphane inhibited tumor growth in Balb/C mice with lung cancer by suppressing PI3K–Akt signaling, reducing PTEN expression, and blocking Akt phosphorylation<sup>58</sup>. These findings highlight the anticancer potential of radish-derived isothiocyanates in both cellular and animal models.

**Liver Cancer:** The extract of Spanish black radishes significantly inhibited HepG2 cell proliferation by modulating the phase I and phase II detoxification systems<sup>59</sup>. Its anticancer activity is attributed to glucosinolates, particularly glucoraphasatin and 4-methylthio-3-butenyl isothiocyanate. The crude extract enhanced phase II detoxification enzymes, including quinone

reductase, heme oxygenase-1, and thioredoxin reductase-1, while increasing mRNA levels of phase I enzymes such as CYP1A1, CYP1A2, and CYP1B1. Radish extracts activated these enzymes *via* the AhR and Nrf2 pathways. Although phase I activation may generate reactive intermediates, the concurrent induction of phase II enzymes ensures effective detoxification and reduces toxicity<sup>60</sup>.

**Hepatoprotective Effects:** Bioactive compounds in radish roots and sprouts, including indole-3-carbinol, 3-[ethoxy-(methylthio) methyl]-2-pyrrolidinethione, and 3-(E)-(methylthio)-methylene-2-pyrrolidinethione, have been shown to reduce the severity of fatty liver disease in mouse models, while black radish extracts alleviated carbon tetrachloride (CCl<sub>4</sub>)-induced liver injury in rats<sup>61</sup>. Fresh radish juice prevented CCl<sub>4</sub>-induced hepatotoxicity by inhibiting lipid peroxidation, replenishing non-protein sulfhydryl (NP-SH) levels, and enhancing liver detoxification. Phytochemical analysis revealed hepatoprotective sulfur compounds, phenols, and terpenoids. Radish enzyme extracts protected HepG2 cells and rats against tacrine- and CCl<sub>4</sub>-induced hepatotoxicity by maintaining membrane integrity, reducing GOT and GPT leakage, and lowering serum triglycerides and total cholesterol<sup>62</sup>, demonstrating significant hepatoprotective potential.

**Antidiabetic Effects of Radish:** The traditional use of radish extracts for digestive ailments suggests the presence of phytochemicals with antidiabetic properties. Water-soluble radish extracts exhibit hypoglycemic effects due to insulin-like polyphenols or glucose-inhibiting compounds<sup>63,64</sup>. The antidiabetic activity involves regulation of glucose-related hormones, reduction of diabetes-induced oxidative stress, and balancing glucose uptake and absorption. Radish extracts enhance adiponectin synthesis, improving insulin sensitivity, promoting lipid oxidation, and aiding weight management<sup>65,66</sup>. Adiponectin activates its receptors (ADIPOR1/2) and PPAR $\gamma$ , regulating genes involved in inflammation, oxidative stress, gluconeogenesis, and glucose uptake<sup>67,68</sup>. It also phosphorylates ACC2 to increase fatty acid oxidation and modulates antioxidant enzymes such as superoxide dismutase (SOD), mitigating ROS levels<sup>69</sup>. These mechanisms collectively contribute to radish's antidiabetic potential.

**CONCLUSION:** The discussion above clearly highlights the multi-disciplinary properties of *Raphanus sativus* (*R. sativus*), demonstrating its significant nutritional, medicinal, and pharmacological potential. Being a widely available vegetable throughout almost all seasons, *R. sativus* provides accessible health benefits across diverse populations. Every part of the plant, including the roots, leaves, and fruits, contains bioactive phytochemicals such as isothiocyanates, polyphenols, flavonoids, and sulfur-containing compounds, each contributing to its therapeutic properties. These compounds exhibit antioxidant, anticancer, hepatoprotective, antidiabetic, and cardioprotective effects, making *R. sativus* highly potent against various lifestyle-related and chronic diseases. Moreover, its widespread availability and rich phytochemical profile offer an excellent foundation for future research, promoting the development of novel treatments for life-threatening diseases and expanding its application in modern medicine and functional foods.

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