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MEDICINAL CHEMISTRY - II

UNIT 1

TOPIC :

- **Plant products : Etoposide, Vinblastinsulphate, Vincristin sulphate**



Plant Products as Antineoplastic Agents

Plant-derived compounds, also known as **phytochemicals**, are important **anticancer agents**. They can **inhibit or prevent the growth of cancer cells** by interfering with processes such as **cell division, DNA replication, and tumor blood supply**.

Advantages

- Often **fewer side effects** compared to synthetic drugs.
- Target rapidly dividing cancer cells effectively.

Drugs to study

- **Vinblastine sulfate**
- **Vincristine sulfate**
- **Etoposide**

Mechanism of Action

Plant-derived antineoplastic agents work through **multiple mechanisms**:

1. Microtubule Inhibition

- **Vinblastine and Vincristine inhibit tubulin polymerization into microtubules.**
- This **disrupts mitotic spindle formation**, blocking **cell division** and leading to **cell cycle arrest**.

2. Topoisomerase II Inhibition

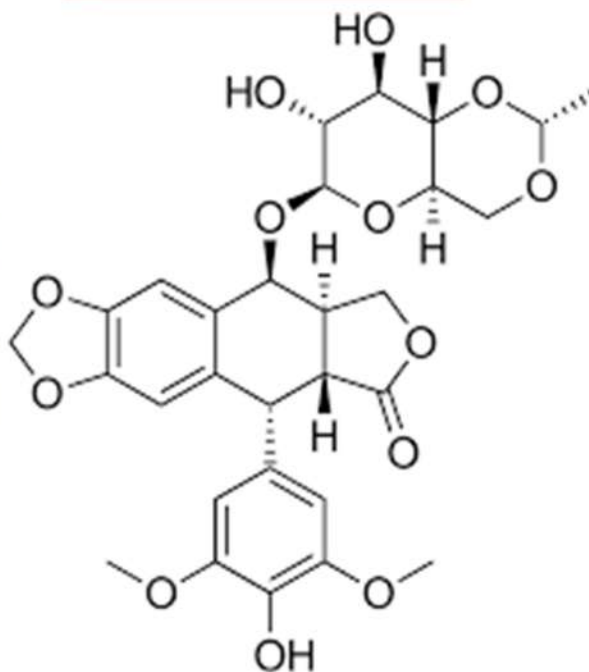
- **Etoposide inhibits topoisomerase II**, an enzyme crucial for **DNA unwinding and repair**.
- Inhibition causes **DNA strand breakage**, preventing replication and transcription, which induces **apoptosis**.

Etoposide

- Etoposide is a **semisynthetic derivative of podophyllotoxin**, classified as a **topoisomerase II inhibitor**.
- It is used as a **cytotoxic chemotherapeutic agent** for **lung cancer, testicular cancer, lymphomas, and leukemias**.
- Administered **intravenously or orally**, with oral bioavailability ~50%.

Chemical Structure

- **IUPAC Name:** 4'-Demethylepipodophyllotoxin 9-[4,6-O-(R)-ethylidene-β-D-glucopyranoside]
- **Molecular Formula:** C₂₉H₃₂O₁₃
- **Molecular Weight:** 588.56 g/mol
- **Structure**



Mechanism of Action

- **Topoisomerase II Inhibition:**
 - Etoposide binds to **DNA-topoisomerase II complex** → prevents religation of DNA strands after cleavage.
- **DNA Damage:**
 - Accumulation of double-stranded DNA breaks → triggers **apoptosis** in rapidly dividing cells.
- **Cell Cycle Effect:**
 - **S and G₂-phase specific**, affecting DNA replication and repair.
- **Cytotoxicity:**
 - Leads to **cell death** due to **DNA damage and failed repair**.

Synthesis of Etoposide

1. Starting Material:

- **Podophyllotoxin**, a natural lignan obtained from **Podophyllum**
- **+species** (roots/rhizomes).

2. Chemical Modifications:

- Epimerization at C₄'
- Glycosylation at C₉ with **glucose derivative**
- Protecting group strategies to enhance solubility and stability

3. Purification:

- Chromatography to obtain **clinical-grade etoposide**.

Uses

1. Solid tumors:

- Small cell lung cancer, testicular cancer, ovarian cancer.

2. Hematologic malignancies:

- Lymphomas, acute leukemias.

3. Combination therapy:

- Frequently used in **combination regimens** (e.g., BEP, EP).

4. Side Effects:

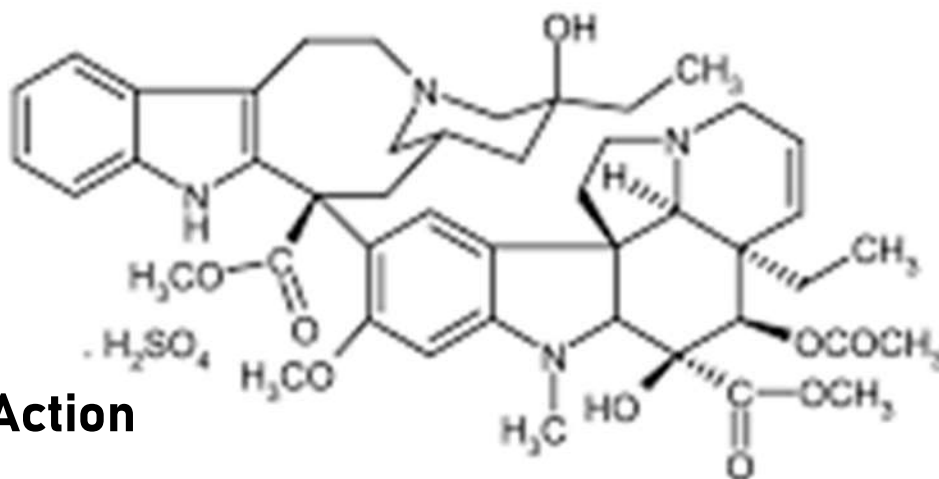
- Myelosuppression (dose-limiting), alopecia, nausea, vomiting, hypotension (IV), and risk of secondary leukemia with prolonged use.

Vinblastine Sulphate

- Vinblastine is a **Vinca alkaloid**, a natural **antineoplastic agent** derived from the leaves of **Catharanthus roseus** (Madagascar periwinkle).
- Vinblastine Sulphate is the **sulfate salt form**, used clinically for better solubility.
- Used in **Hodgkin's lymphoma, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, testicular cancer, breast cancer, and Kaposi's sarcoma**.
- Administered **intravenously**, as oral absorption is negligible.

Chemical Structure

- **Molecular Formula:** $C_{66}H_{81}N_4O_{16} \cdot H_2SO_4$
- **Molecular Weight:** 884.02 g/mol (free base ~810.96 g/mol)
- **Structure**



Mechanism of Action

- **Microtubule Inhibition:**
 - Vinblastine binds to **tubulin dimers**, preventing their polymerization into microtubules.
- **Mitotic Arrest:**
 - Disruption of microtubules → **arrests cells in metaphase** → prevents chromosome segregation.
- **Cell Cycle Effect:**
 - **M-phase specific**, targeting rapidly dividing cells during mitosis.
- **Cytotoxicity:**

- Leads to **apoptosis** due to failed mitosis and chromosomal missegregation.

Synthesis of Vinblastine

1. Source:

- Naturally derived from **Catharanthus roseus leaves**.

2. Extraction:

- Isolation of **vindoline and catharanthine** alkaloids.

3. Coupling Reaction:

- **Enzymatic or chemical coupling** of vindoline and catharanthine → forms vinblastine.

4. Formation of Sulphate Salt:

- Reaction with **sulfuric acid** → vinblastine sulphate.

Uses

1. Hematologic malignancies:

- Hodgkin's lymphoma, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

2. Solid tumors:

- Testicular cancer, breast cancer, Kaposi's sarcoma.

3. Side Effects:

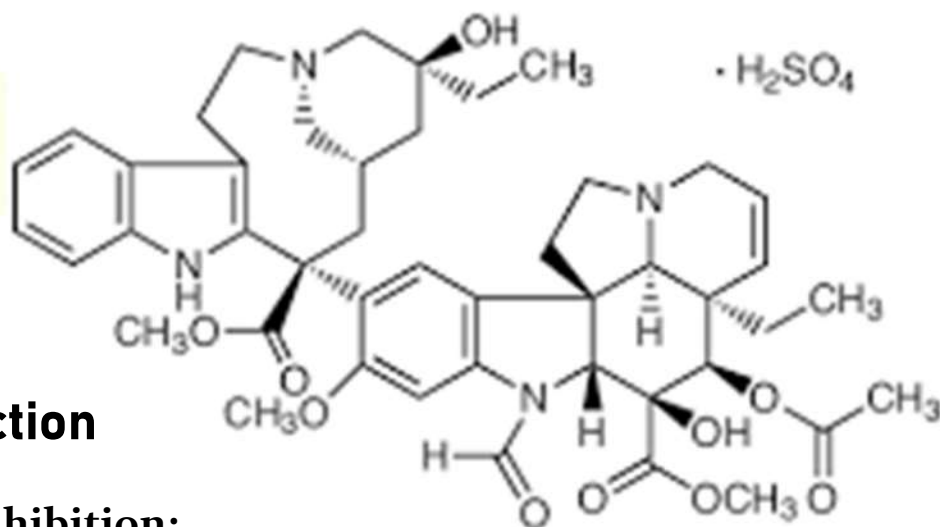
- Myelosuppression (dose-limiting), alopecia, nausea, vomiting, neurotoxicity (less severe than vincristine), and constipation.

Vincristine Sulphate

- Vincristine is a **Vinca alkaloid**, a natural **anticancer agent** derived from the leaves of **Catharanthus roseus** (Madagascar periwinkle).
- Vincristine Sulphate is the **sulfate salt form** for better solubility and clinical use.
- Used in **acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL)**, **Hodgkin's lymphoma**, **non-Hodgkin's lymphoma**, **neuroblastoma**, and **Wilms' tumor**.
- Administered **intravenously**, as oral absorption is negligible.

Chemical Structure

- **Molecular Formula:** $C_{46}H_{56}N_4O_{10} \cdot H_2SO_4$
- **Molecular Weight:** 923.04 g/mol (free base ~824.98 g/mol)
- **Structure**



Mechanism of Action

- **Microtubule Inhibition:**
 - Vincristine binds to **tubulin dimers**, preventing their polymerization into microtubules.
- **Mitotic Arrest:**
 - Disruption of microtubules → **arrests cells in metaphase** → prevents chromosome segregation.
- **Cell Cycle Effect:**
 - **M-phase specific**, targeting rapidly dividing cells during mitosis.
- **Cytotoxicity:**

- Leads to **apoptosis** due to failed mitosis and chromosomal missegregation.

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4. Formation of Sulphate Salt:

- Reaction with **sulfuric acid** → vincristine sulphate.

Uses

1. Hematologic malignancies:

- Acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL), Hodgkin's lymphoma, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

2. Solid tumors:

- Neuroblastoma, Wilms' tumor, rhabdomyosarcoma.

3. Side Effects:

- Neurotoxicity (peripheral neuropathy, constipation), alopecia, mild myelosuppression, SIADH, and rarely hepatotoxicity.