

Background: Depression is the most common of the mood disorders. There are many types of antidepressant drugs which have various unwanted effects and interactions.

Aim of the study: To explore the potential effects of plants in the treatment of depression in comparison to imipramine.

Animals, materials and methods: Twenty eight male Swiss albino mice were divided into four groups (A, B, C, D), each group received distilled water 0.3 ml as a control; imipramine 15 mg/kg; *R. officinalis* 15 mg/kg and *R. officinalis* 30 mg/kg PO, once daily for 5 successive days respectively. On the fifth day and after thirty minutes of the treatment administration the mice were tested by using the forced swimming test (FST) and the immobility and swimming times were measured.

Results: Water extract of *R. officinalis* extract (15 mg/kg and 30 mg/kg) high significantly reduced the immobility time and increased the swimming time in the FST in comparison to untreated group, but when compared to imipramine (15mg/kg) it produced similar results. Therefore, water extract of *R. officinalis* had antidepressant effects which is comparable to that of imipramine in mice.