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Article

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Structures, Antioxidant and Intestinal Disaccharidase Inhibitory Activities of A-type Proanthocyanidins from Peanut Skin

Huiwen Zhang,[†,‡] Rigui Ye,[†] Yumei Yang,[‡] and Chaomei Ma*[,†]

[†]School of Life Sciences, Inner Mongolian University, Huhhot, China

[‡] Baotou Medical College, Baotou, Inner Mongolia, China

Corresponding Author

*Telephone: +86 471 4992435. Fax: +86 471 4992435. E-mail: cmma@imu.edu.cn

ABSTRACT: Nine compounds including a new A-type proanthocyanidin trimer, epicatechin-(2*β*→O→7,4*β*→8)-[catechin-(6→4*β*)]-epicatechin (**8**), and a known trimer, epicatechin-(4*β*→8)-epicatechin-(2*β*→O→7,4*β*→8)-catechin (**9**), being reported for peanut skin for the first time, were isolated and purified. Their structures were determined by spectroscopic methods and by degradation reactions with L-cysteine in acidic conditions. The DPPH radical scavenging activity and the inhibitory activity on maltase and sucrase of the isolated compounds were investigated. All compounds showed strong DPPH scavenging activities (EC_{50} < 20 *μ*g/ml). Compound **8** showed the strongest inhibitory activity on maltase with an IC_{50} value of 0.088 mg/ml, while compound **9** exhibited the strongest inhibition on sucrase with an IC_{50} value of 0.091 mg/ml.

Keywords: peanut skin, condensed tannin, proanthocyanidin trimer, inhibition on intestinal disaccharidases

INTRODUCTION

Peanut (*Arachis hypogaea* L. Fabaceae), the fourth oleaginous plant in the world, is known to be one of the most important economical crop owing to its wide distribution, nutritional characteristics and its great application in the food industry for centuries. China, being the largest producer and exporter of peanut, has a production of 14,385,000 tons every year and almost 60% of the peanut is consumed as feedstock for oil, which is one of the main vegetal oils in Chinese daily life. However, over the years, the skin of peanut is generally neglected and considered as useless byproduct and, for the yearly generated peanut skin, only small part of it is used in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) to treat illness such as chronic hemorrhage and bronchitis,etc.[1] Early investigations have shown that the most important chemical constituents of peanut skin are proanthocyanidins, particularly the A-type, in which the subunits are connected by a 4→8 or 4→6 carbon bond and a 2→O→7 ether bond.[2-3]

Proanthocyanidins in general have shown notable potentials of health benefits, e.g., antioxidant[4-5] and insulin action potentiation[6] activities. Moreover, consumption of plant extract containing A-type proanthocyanidins has been shown to increase sugar tolerance in type II diabetes patients.[7] Disaccharidase (or α-glucosidase) inhibitors could control postprandial hyperglycemia by delaying the absorption of intestinal carbohydrates as does the prototype clinically used anti-diabetic α-glucosidase inhibitor drug, acarbose.[8]

In our further systematic search for proanthocyanidins, 9 compounds were isolated

from the water-soluble fraction of peanut skin, including a novel trimer (compound **8)** and another trimer (compound **9)** which is being reported from peanut skin for the first time. Bioassays were carried out to test the antioxidant and intestinal disaccharidase inhibitory activities of the 9 compounds from peanut skin. This paper describes the isolation, structure elucidation, antioxidant activity and intestinal disaccharidase inhibitory activity of these proanthocyanidins to provide scientifically valuable information for better utilization of peanut skin.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials and Apparatus. Solvents used for the extraction and isolation were of analytical grade. L-Cysteine hydrochloride was pursed from Sigm-Aldrich Corporation (St. Louis, MO, USA). High performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) grade solvents used for UPLC were purchased from Fisher scientific company (New Jersey, USA). The sources of other materials are: octadecylsilane (ODS, 38-63μm, wako Pure Chemcial Industries, td., Osaka, Japan), Sephadex LH-20 (GE Healthcare Bio-Sciences AB, Uppsala, Sweden) and high porous polymer from Mitsubishi Chemical Corporation (MCI CHP 20, Mitsubishi Chemical Corporation, Tokyo, Japan). TLC was performed on silica gel plates (GF254, 0.2mm, Rushan Taiyang Desiccant co., Itd, China). NMR spectra were obtained from a Bruker Avance III 500 spectrometer with tetramethylsilane as internal standard. UPLC-DAD-ESI-MS experiments were carried out on an Agilent 1290 infinity UPLC-DAD system [Agilent Technologies Singapore (International) Pte. Ltd., Singapore] with an auto-sampler and a photo-diode array detector (DAD) coupled with an Agilent 6340 triple Quad MS.

Fast atom bombardment mass spectrometry (FAB-MS) were measured with a Xevo G2 Q-TOF mass spectrometer (Waters). Circular dichroism (CD) was recorded with JASCO-J-18 spectro-polarimeter (Waters). UV and IR. Spectra were taken using a Shimadzu UV 240 spectrophotometer and a Shimadzu IR spectrophotometer, respectively.

Plant Materials. Peanut skin used in this research was purchased from Weikang drug store, Huhhot, Inner Mongolia, China and identified by the authors to be the seed skin of *Arachis hypogaea* L. Fabaceae.

Extraction and Purification. Peanut skin (2kg) was soaked with 70% acetone (32L) for 24h, and extracted with ultrasonication for 30 minutes. After filtration, the residue was extracted once again by repeating the above procedure. The solvent was evaporated under reduced pressure and the ensuing extract (276 g) fractionated by chromatography over Sephadex LH-20 with ethanol (7500 ml) to give 8 fractions (E1-E8). TLC and LC-MS analysis revealed that E2 contained proanthocyanidin monomers, while E3 and E5 contained dimeric and trimeric proanthocyanidins respectively. E2 was subjected to further chromatography on ODS, eluted with a 0-100% methanol/water gradient to give compounds **1** (122 mg) and **2** (63 mg**)**. Similarly E3 (27 g) was subjected to further chromatography on ODS, eluted with a 0-100% methanol/water gradient. The 20%-30% gradient fraction contained polyphenols as indicated by TLC, and was further purified by repeated chromatography on MCI gel (CHP20/P120) and Sephadex LH-20 with methanol/water gradients to afford compounds **3**-**6**. Compound **3** (780 mg) was

recrystallized from water as colorless needles, while **4** (56 mg), **5** (25 mg) and **6** (68 mg) were obtained as amorphous powders. Furthermore, E5 (20 g) was purified in the same way as described for E3 to obtain compounds **7** (145 mg), **8** (54 mg) and **9** (72 mg) as amorphous powders.

Compound **1-2**: amorphous powder, MS (ESI) *m/z* 289 ([M-H]$^-$, 100). Compound **3-6**: colorless needles (**3**) or amorphous powder (**4-6**), MS (ESI) *m/z* 575 ([M-H]$^-$, 100), NMR see supporting material. Compound **7-9**: amorphous powder, MS (ESI) *m/z* 863 ([M-H]$^-$, 100), NMR see supporting material.

Degradation of Proanthocyanidin Trimers. L-cysteine-induced degradations of the trimeric proanthocyanidins were carried out according to the reported methods[9,10] with modification. The trimer and cysteine•HCl (1:2) were dissolved in methanol in a centrifuge tube. The tube was tightly sealed and heated at 65 ºC for 24 h. The reaction mixture was filtered though a 0.22 μm microfilter and analyzed by UPLC-DAD-EIS-MS in comparison with standard **3** (procyanidins A1), and standards catechin-cystein and epicatechin-cystein which were recently prepared in our earlier work.[11]

DPPH Radical Scavenging Assay. We examined the DPPH radical scavenging activity with the method described by Ma et al.[12] The antioxidant activities were examined at four different concentration (2.5, 5, 10 and 20 μg/ml) in 96-well plates. 10 μl of a compound solution (in DMSO) and 190 μl of DPPH solution (1,1-diphenyl-2- picrylhydrazyl radical in ethanol, 0.1 mM) were added to each well. For the color control, 10 μl of compound solution and 190 μl of ethanol were mixed in each well. In the control wells, 10 μL DMSO and 190 μL DPPH were added. After 20 min at room temperature in the dark, the absorbance (A) was measured at 520 nm, and

the activity was calculated as follow:

$$\text{Effect } \% = 100 \times [A_{control} - (A_{compound} - A_{color})] / A_{control}$$

IC_{50}, the concentration of a sample that scavenged 50% of DPPH radical was obtained from a curve of effect % versus sample concentration.

Determination of Inhibitory Activity against Maltase and Sucrase. To determine the maltase and sucrase inhibitory activities of samples, we prepared the stocking intestinal disaccharidases as reported before.[11] The assay was carried out as following: 3 μl of sample (dissolved by DMSO), 7μl of disaccharidase [the stocking enzyme was diluted 10 times by phosphate buffer (pH 7)] and 20 μl maltose solution (2 mg/ml) were added in each well of a 96-well plate to test the inhibition activity on maltase. 3 μl DMSO was added instead of samples in the control wells. After 20 minutes of incubation at 37 ºC, 10 μl of DMSO and the glucose detecting reagents of an assay kit from Nanjing Jiancheng Bio Company (Nan Jing, China) were added and the absorbances (A) were measured at 520 nm with a plate reader. The activity was calculated as follows:

$$\text{Inhibition } \% = 100 \times [(A_{control} - A_{sample})] / A_{control}$$

The inhibition activity on sucrase was tested in the same procedure as above, except that 20 μl of sucrose instead of maltose was used as the substrate and the concentration of the working enzyme solution was trice of that for the maltase assay.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Proanthocyanidins in Peanut Skin. Peanut skin was extracted with 70 % (v/v) acetone and the extract was fractionated with Sephadex LH-20 column chromatogaphy. The fraction obtained from 95% ethanol eluted part was then subjected to repeated chromatography on ODS and MCI eluted with aqueous

methanol. Compounds **1**-**9** were obtained and their structures were determined by interpretation of their spectral data and by L-cysteine-induced degradations (Figure 1)**.**

Compounds **1** and **2** were identified as catechin and epicatechin by comparison with authentic standards in UPLC-DAD-ESI-MS. Compounds **3**~**6** were identified as procyanidins A1, A2, epicatechin-(2*β*→O→7,4*β*→8)-ent-epicatechin, and epicatechin-(2*β*→O→7,4*β*→6)-catechin by comparison of their spectral data with those reported in literature.[3]

Structural Elucidation of Compound 7. Compound **7** [circular dichroism (CD): $\Delta\varepsilon_{272.6}$ -3.93, $\Delta\varepsilon_{231}$ +21.57] was obtained as a white amorphous powderIt showed a molecular formula of $C_{45}H_{36}O_{18}$ from the negative FAB-MS (m/z $[M-1]^-$ 863.1823, which revealed that **7** was a trimeric proanthocyanidin. Degradation of **7** (Scheme 1) produced catechin and another compound with the poseudo-molecular weight of 694 in negative ESIMS, suggesting it is composed by an A-type procyanidins and a catechin. By comparison of its ^1H and ^{13}C NMR spectral data with those preciously reported, [10-11] compound **7** was confirmed as cinnamtannin D-1.[14]

Structural Elucidation of Compound 8. Compound **8** [UV (MeOH) λmax (log ε): 280 (4.13) nm; IR (ν, KBr, cm^{-1}): 3350, 1610, 1520, 1450, 1290, 1150, 1100; CD:$\Delta\varepsilon_{273.8}$ -2.58, $\Delta\varepsilon_{239.4}$ +16.07] was obtained as a white amorphous powder. It showed a molecular formula of $C_{45}H_{36}O_{18}$ from the negative HRFAB-MS (m/z $[M-1]^-$ 863.1823), which revealed that **8** was a trimeric proanthocyanidin. The presence of three flavanyl units was also indicated by ^{13}C resonances at δ 100.88 (C-2), 67.49 (C-3), 29.46 (C-4), 84.21 (C-2′), 68.02 (C-3′), 28.58 (C-4′), 77.21

(C-2″), 67.49 (C-3″), 37.06 (C-4″) (Table 1), arising from the heterocyclic rings (rings C, I and F). The existence of an A-type proanthocyanidin unit was supported by the downfielded C-2 signal at δ 100.88 (Table 1) and an isolated AB coupling system at δ 4.20 (br.s, H-3) and 4.35 (br.s, H-4) (C-ring) in ^{1}H NMR spectrum. The two flavan-3-ol units of the A-type entity in **8** were deduced to be linked through C4 (C ring) and C-8′ (D ring) based on the long-range correlations of H-4 (C-ring) at δ 4.35 with C-7′ at δ 150.1, C-8′ at δ 107.33, and C-9′ at δ 154.44 in the Heteronuclear multiple-bond correlation (HMBC) spectrum. The long-range correlations of H-4″ (I-ring) at δ 4.63 with C-5′ at δ 149.29 , C-6′ at δ 120.08, and C-7′ at δ 150.1 in the HMBC indicated the C-4″→C-6′ linkage (Figure 2). The C-4″→C-6′ linkage was further confirmed by its complex NMR spectra arisen from conformational isomers due to the steric hindrance for the free rotation of the epicatechin unit.

The terminal flavanol unit was determined to be 2,3-cis (I ring) from the singlet at δ 5.33 (1H, s, H-2″) and the corresponding carbon at δ 77.21(C-2″), [4] while the middle unit (the doubly-substituted terminal unit) was deduced to have a 2,3-trans configuration (F ring) from the proton signal at δ 4.79 (1H, d, J=6.5, H-2′) and the corresponding carbon at δ 84.21 (C-2′) in ^{13}C NMR.[4]

Treatment of **8** with cysteine•HCl in methanol (Scheme 2) yielded compound **3**, which was identified to be procyanidin A1 by direct comparison of its ^{1}H and ^{13}C NMR spectral data with those preciously reported.[4] The cystein conjugate derived from the upper flavan-3-ol unit in the degradation of **8**, was identified as epicatechin-cystein by direct comparison by UHPLC-MS with a standard compound

which had been prepared and reported in our laboratory recently[11] (Figure 3).

Of the three trimeric proanthocyanidins (**7**-**9**) with the same molecular weight (864), the ^{1}HNMR spectrum of **8** was observed to be relatively complicated compared to those of **7** and **9**. This relative complication is alludable to the presence of conformers in **8**, due to hindered free rotation across its 4″→6′ linkage, which the structures of **7** and **9** conspicuously lack.

The diagnostic high amplitude positive cotton effect at 239 nm wavelength of the CD spectrum of **8** informed the β-orientation assignment of the interflavonoid bonds.[15] Consequently, the structure of **8** was determined to be epicatechin-(2*β*→O→7,4*β*→8)-[catechin-(6→4*β*)]-epicatechin. This is a branched A-type proanthocyanidin with C4-C6, C4-C8 linkages to the same A ring of a flavanyl unit.

Structural Elucidation of Compound 9. Compound **9** (CD: $\Delta\varepsilon_{277.8}$ -4.67, $\Delta\varepsilon_{240}$ +5.39, $\Delta\varepsilon_{228.2}$ +2.86) was obtained as a white amorphous powder. It showed a molecular formula of $C_{45}H_{36}O_{18}$ from the negative FAB-MS (m/z $[M-1]^-$ 863.1823, which revealed that **9** was a trimeric proanthocyanidin. Treatment of **9** with cysteine•HCl in methanol yielded procyanidin A1 and epicatechin-cystein (Scheme 3, Figure 3), the same results as for the degradation of compound **8.** The result indicated that compound **9** also composed of proanthocynidin A1 and epicatechin with epicatechin being its upper flavan-3-ol unit. It was thus deduced that compounds **8** and **9** possess different linking positions between procyanidin A1 and epicatechin. The epicatechin was determined to be linked through C4→C8 with proanthocynidin A1, by direct comparison of the ^{1}H and ^{13}C NMR spectral data of **9** with references.[16-17]

The high amplitude positive Cotton effect at a wavelength of 240 nm in the CD spectrum of **9** confirmed its β-orientated interflavonoid bond. Compound **9** was thus identified as epicatechin-(4β→8)-epicatechin-(2β→O→7,4β→8)-catechin, which is reported from peanut skin for the first time.

Antioxidant activity. As shown in Table 2, all the isolated compounds, **1**−**9** demonstrated strong antioxidant activities. They scavenged 50% of the DPPH radical at a concentration less than or near to10 μg/ml. The dimeric and trimeric proanthocyanidins showed radical scavenging activity with the potencies similar to those of the monomers, catechin and epicatechin, which are well known potent anti-oxidants.

Inhibitory Activity Against Maltase and Sucrase. As shown in Table 3, five compounds showed maltase inhibitory activity (>50% inhibition), and four compounds showed sucrase inhibitory activity at concentrations of 1 mg/ml. Compound **8**, epicatechin-(2β→O→7,4β→8)-[catechin-(6→4β)]-epicatechin, showed the strongest inhibition against maltase, with an IC_{50} value of 0.088 mg/ml. The lowest IC_{50} value (0.091 mg/ml) observed in the sucrase inhibition experiment was exhibited by **9**, epicatechin-(4β→8)-epicatechin-(2β→O→7,4β→8)-catechin, making it the strongest sucrase inhibitor of all the samples. It can be deduced from the results that **8** and **9** have notable degrees of specificity for maltase and sucrase respectively. As the component units of **8** and **9** are essentially the same, the variation in their biological activities as by their observed differing enzyme specificities is alludable to their different unit-connectivity, impacting chirality (though of same configuration) at

different positions. All the 3 trimeric proanthocyanidins showed inhibitory activities on maltase and sucrase. Their inhibitory activities were greater than those of their component dimeric proanthocyanidins. Further investigations are required to elucidate the detail structure-activity relationships of A-type proanthocyanidins on intestinal disaccharidases.

Degradation of the trimeric proanthocyanidins was carried out with a mild reagent, L-cysteine, which also is relatively safe compared to the conventionally used thiolytic degradation reagent, benzyl mercaptan with a strong irritating smell. LC-MS analysis of the products of L-cysteine-induced degradation clearly indicated the component units and their linking order in the structures of pranthocyanidin polymers. Some L-cysteine conjugates of catechin/epicatechin and low-molecular-weight B-type proanthocyanidins have been reported to have antioxidant,[10] glucosidase inhibitory,[11] and neuroprotective activities.[18] However, no literature could be found for any A-type proanthocyanidin-cysteine conjugate. In the present research, we detected an A-type proanthocyanidin-cysteine conjugate for the first time from the degradation product of cinnamtannin D-1 (**7**). Preparation, purification and bioactivity evaluation of novel A-type proanthocyanidin-cysteine conjugates are planed to be carried out in our group in the near future.

Proanthocyanidins are rich in hydrophobic aromatic rings and hydrophilic hydroxyl groups, which could interact with biological molecules, especially proteins. It is generally believed that the activity of proanthocyanidins becomes stronger as the number of flavanol units increases. The result of our study confirmed that

proanthocyanidins have strong antioxidant activities, which could provide protection against oxidative stress and thereby prevent a variety of human diseases so associated.[19-21]

In summary, we have isolated nine compounds, including one novel trimeric A-type proanthocyanidin (**8**), and a known trimeric A-type proanthocyanidin (**9**) that was reported for the first time for peanut skin. All these compounds showed antioxidant activity and the 2 trimeric A-type proanthocyanidins, **8** and **9** showed considerable inhibitory activities on the intestinal disaccharidases, maltase and sucrase.

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ASSOCIATED CONTENT

Supporting information

Additional figures. This material is available free of charge via the Internet at http://pubs.acs.org.

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Figure Captions

Figure 1. Structures of compounds **1**−**9** from peanut skin.

Scheme 1. Degradation of compound **7** with L-cysteine HCl.

Figure 2. Key correlations observed in the HMBC and ^{1}H-^{1}H COSY spectra of **8**. HMBC ( ) ^{1}H-^{1}H COSY ( )

Scheme 2. Degradation of compound **8** with L-cysteine HCl.

Scheme 3. Degradation of compound **9** with L-cysteine HCl.

Figure 3. Extracted ion chromatograms of the LC-MS of cysteine-induced degradation of **7** (A), **8** (B), and **9** (C), in comparison with catechin (D), procyanidin A1 (E) and epicatechin-cysteine (F).

Table 1. NMR spectral Data of Compound **8** in CD_3OD.

Table 2. DPPH Radical Scavenging Activities of Proanthocyanidins from Peanut Skin.

Table 3. The Maltase and Sucrase Inhibitory Activities of Compounds from Peanut Skin.

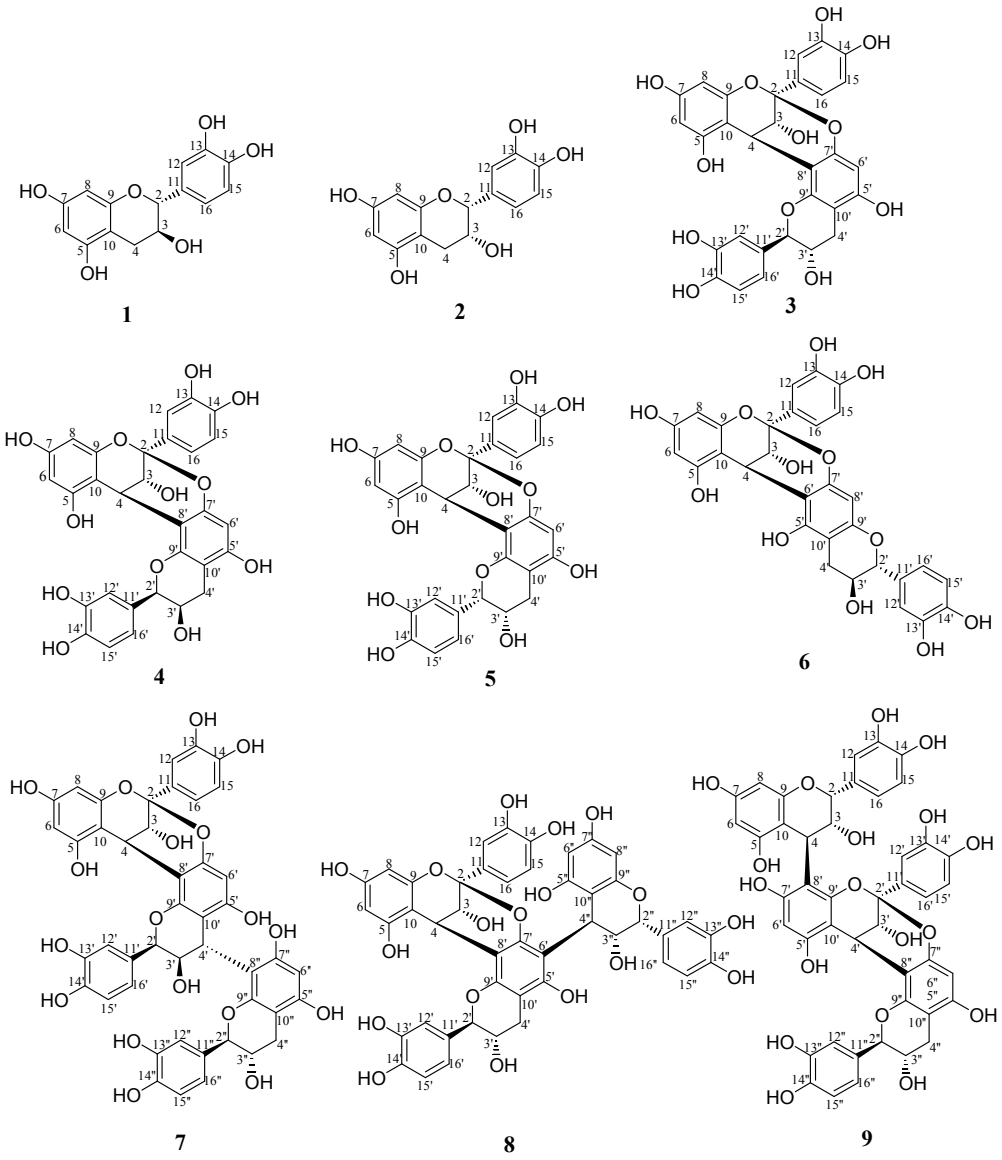
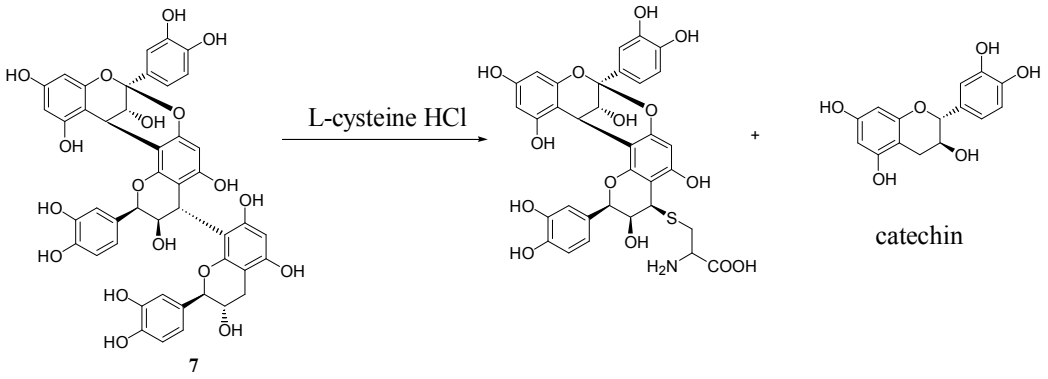


Figure 1. Structures of compounds **1-9** from peanut skin.

367



368 **Scheme 1.** Degradation of compound **7** with L-cysteine HCl.

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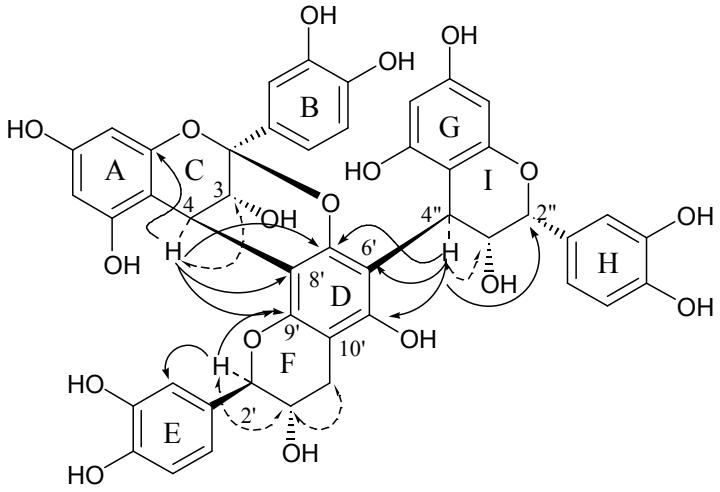

Figure 2. Key correlations observed in the HMBC and ^{1}H-^{1}H COSY spectra of **8**.

371 HMBC ( ) ^{1}H-^{1}H COSY ( )

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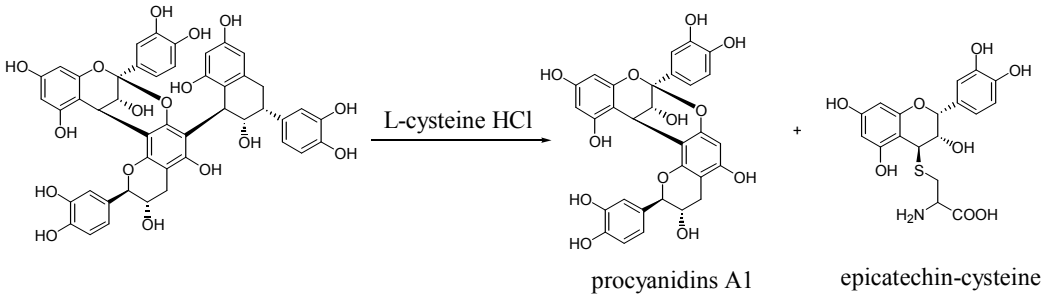

374 **Scheme 2**. Degradation of compound **8** with L-cysteine HCl.

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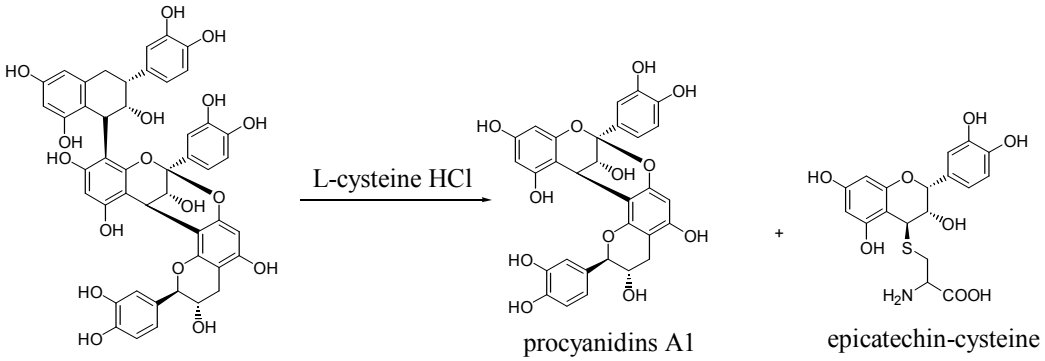

377 **Scheme 3**. Degradation of compound **9** with L-cysteine HCl.

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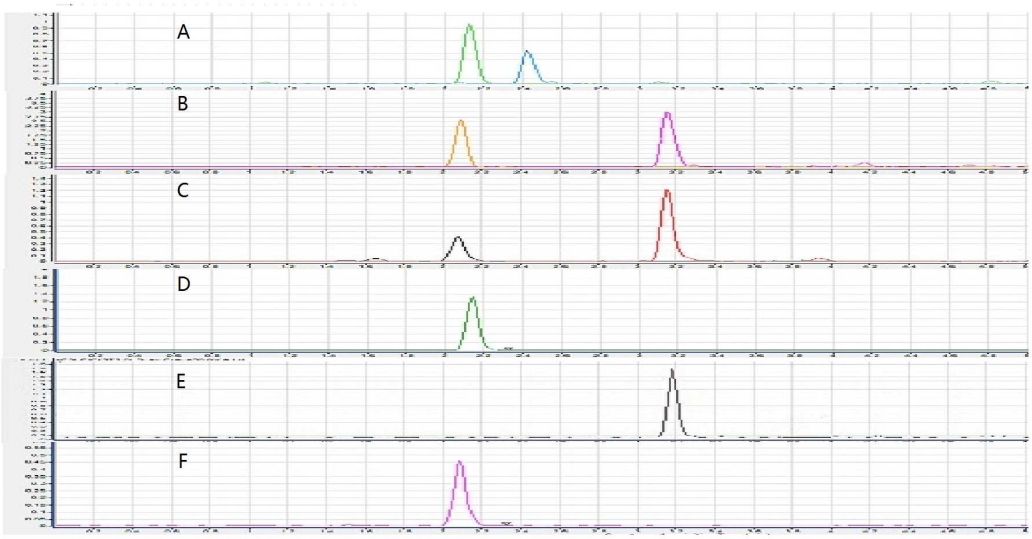

Figure 3. Extracted ion chromatograms of the LC-MS of cysteine-induced degradation of **7** (A), **8** (B), and **9** (C), in comparison with catechin (D), procyanidin A1 (E) and epicatechin-cysteine (F).

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387 **Table 1.** NMR spectral Data of Compound **8** in CD_3OD

Ring	No.	^{13}C	^{1}H	Ring	No.	^{13}C	^{1}H	Ring	No.	^{13}C	^{1}H
C	2	100.88	——	F	2′	84.21	4.79, d (6.5)	I	2″	77.21	5.33, br.s
	3	67.14	4.20, br.s		3′	67.49	4.15, m		3″	73.34	4.09, m
	4	29.46	4.35, br.s		4′	28.58	2.76, dd (16.1, 7.5) 2.50, dd (16.1, 7.5)		4″	37.06	4.63, br.s
A	5	156.54	——	D	5′	149.29	——	G	5″	159.21	——
	6	96.05	6.10, br.s		6′	109.35	——		6″	96.45	6.04, br.s
	7	157.82	——		7′	150.1	——		7″	154.55	——
	8	98.35	5.96, br.s		8′	107.33	——		8″	99.18	5.93, br.s
	9	156.54	——		9′	154.44	——		9″	158.18	——
	10	104.07	——		10′	103.93	——		10″	99.18	——
B	11	131.86	——	E	11′	130.43	——	H	11″	132.93	——
	12	116.14	7.18, br.s		12′	115.26	6.87, br.s		12″	115.7	6.94, br.s
	13	146.09	——		13′	145.91	——		13″	145.66	——
	14	146.94	——		14′	146.85	——		14″	146.45	——
	15	116.01	6.82, m		15′	120.59	6.10, br.s		15″	119.22	6.78, m
	16	120.19	7.06, d (7.8)		16′	120.08	6.77, m		16″	120.19	6.74, m

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392 **Table 2.** DPPH Radical Scavenging Activities of Proanthocyanidins from Peanut Skin

sample	Effect %				EC_{50} (μg/ml)
	20 (μg/ml)	10 (μg/ml)	5 (μg/ml)	2.5 (μg/ml)	
1	83.01	61.69	37.42	31.88	8.21
2	94.52	74.33	42.07	34.59	6.12
3	94.02	63.14	29.93	26.28	8.55
4	86.91	58.93	28.80	20.00	9.71
5	79.43	47.29	30.06	15.28	11.36
6	93.39	67.29	47.10	38.61	5.68
7	93.33	54.21	26.79	19.43	9.74
8	84.21	53.01	37.61	34.02	8.61
9	89.37	85.66	48.49	20.56	6.32

393 Catechin (**1**), a known anti-oxidant was used as a positive control.

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396 **Table 3.** The Maltase and Sucrase Inhibitory Activities of Compounds from Peanut

397 Skin

Sample	Inhibition% on Maltase at 1 mg/ml	IC_{50} on Maltase (mg/ml)	Inhibition% on Sucrase at 1 mg/ml	IC_{50} on Sucrase (mg/ml)
1	44	>1	45	>1
2	60	0.088	54	0. 57
3	47	>1	44	>1
4	44	>1	31	>1
5	47	>1	33	>1
6	67	0.61	42	>1
7	62	0.78	55	0.66
8	83	0.088	61	0.41
9	79	0.54	64	0.091
Acarbose*	nt	0.0054	nt	0.0074

398 Acarbose*, a known α–glucosidase inhibitor, was used as a positive control.

399 nt: not tested, as this concentration is too high for the this very potent α–glucosidase

400 inhibitor, acarbose.

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402 **Graphic Abstract**

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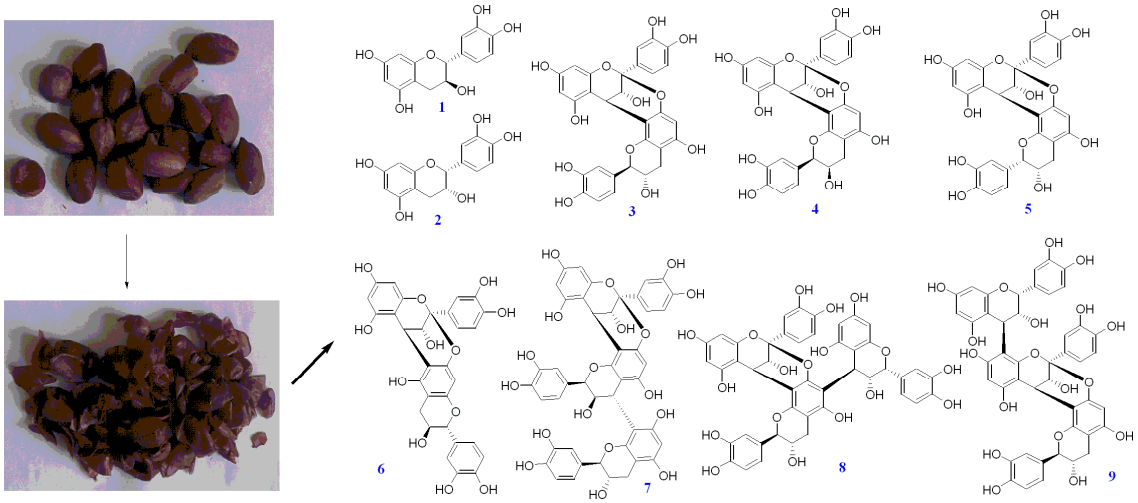

404 **1-9**: antioxidants; **2**, **7-9**: inhibit intestinal disacharidase

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