



**BİYOLOJİ ALANINDA  
BİLİMSEL ARAŞTIRMALAR**

**Editör: Prof.Dr. Ebru YÜCE**

**yaz**  
yayınları

# **Biyoloji Alanında Bilimsel Arařtırmalar**

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2026

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*"Bu kitapta yer alan bölümlerde kullanılan kaynakların, görüşlerin, bulguların, sonuçların, tablo, şekil, resim ve her türlü içeriğin sorumluluğu yazar veya yazarlarına ait olup ulusal ve uluslararası telif haklarına konu olabilecek mali ve hukuki sorumluluk da yazarlara aittir."*

# PREKLİNİK İLAÇ GELİŐTİRMEDE HÜCRE KÜLTÜRÜ VE KÖK HÜCRE UYGULAMALARI

**Berrin ÜSTÜNDAĞ<sup>1</sup>**

## 1. GİRİŐ

İnsanlarda fizyolojik veya patolojik süreçleri düzenlemek, hastalıkların önlenmesi, tanısı ya da tedavisini sağlamak veya biyolojik fonksiyonları deęiőtirmek amacıyla kullanılan; farmakolojik olarak aktif bir veya birden fazla etkin madde ile bu maddelerin stabilitesini, biyoyararlanımını ve uygulanabilirliğini destekleyen yardımcı bileşenlerden oluşan, belirli kalite, güvenilirlik ve etkililik kriterlerine göre üretilmiş farmasötik üründür (Gülsün et al., 2024). Bir maddenin “ilaç” olarak kabul edilebilmesi için etkinliğinin deneysel olarak kanıtlanmış olması, toksik özelliklerinin tanımlanması ve klinik yarar–risk dengesinin kanıta dayalı biçimde ortaya konması şarttır. Farmasötik açıdan ilaç yalnızca kimyasal bir bileşik deęil; moleküler hedeflerle özgül etkileşim gösteren, farmakokinetik ve farmakodinamik özellikleri tanımlanmış, klinik olarak doğrulanmış ve düzenleyici otoriteler tarafından onaylanmış biyolojik bir tedavi ajanıdır. (Visioli, 2022). İlaç formülünün tasarlanması, birlikte kullanılacak yardımcı maddelerin ve miktarlarının belirlenmesi, vücutta bulunması ve yararlı hale gelmesi, vücuttan atılım süresi, saklama koşulları, üretim metotları, üretim sırasında başvuru olan tüm yöntem ve işlemlerin deęerlendirilmesi, üretimi, depolanma koşulları, dağıtımı, dağıtım sonrası takibi gibi tüm işlemler ilaç üretim teknolojisinin temel prensipleridir. Ayrıca üretimde görev

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yapan tm personelin gerekli nitelikte olması, gerekli eđitimi alması, retim alanlarının gerekli zellikleri tařması, malzeme ve hammaddelerin temin edildiđi kuruluřların standartlara uygunluđu da ila teknolojisine kapsamına girmektedir (Garnier et al., 2023).

Biyokimyasal srelerin ve ilaların etkilediđi biyolojik sistemlerin daha iyi anlaşılmasıyla birlikte, modern yaklařım bir ilacın keřfedilmesinden ok onun tasarlanması řeklinde bir ilacın keřfinden ya da tasarlanmasından piyasaya verilmesine kadar geen sre olduka uzun ve masraflıdır. Laboratuvarla tasarlanan ila olmaya aday yaklařık 10,000 bileřikten yalnızca 5 tanesi insanlarda denebilecek ařamaya gelebilir. Bu 5 bileřiđin dıřında kalanlar, toksisite ya da hcre kltrlerinde ve hayvanlarda etkisiz olmaları nedeniyle elenirler. Klinik alıřmaların tamamlanmasından sonra ise bu 5 bileřiđin yalnızca bir tanesi ila olarak piyasaya verilebilmektedir (Arora et al., 2021)

Belli bařlı klinik gereklilikleri karřılayabilecek yeniliki atılımlar yapmak ařađıdaki zelliklerde ilaların geliřtirilmesine bađlıdır:

- Bilinen tedavilerin daha gvenli ve daha etkili varyantları.
- Yeni farmakolojik ya da biyokimyasal mekanizmalarla etki eden ilalar.

## **2. KLİNİK ÖNCESİ (PREKLİNİK) ALIřMALAR**

Klinik ncesi ařama; aday ilacın insana uygulanmadan nce laboratuvar kořullarında ve deney hayvanlarında incelendiđi dnemdir. Bu ařamada stabilite, farmakokinetik/farmakodinamik zellikler ve toksikolojik profil ayrıntılı řekilde deđerlendirilir. Tarama testleri, aday molekln beklenen biyolojik etkiyi

gösterip göstermediğini (veya beklenmeyen etkilerinin olup olmadığını) saptamak için uygulanır. İzole organ sistemleri, reseptör/enzim açısından zengin hücre preparatları ve hücre temelli modeller sık kullanılan yöntemlerdir. Ayrıca otomasyon destekli yüksek kapasiteli tarama sistemleri sayesinde çok sayıda aday kısa sürede değerlendirilebilir. Yapısal modelleme olanakları varsa, bilgisayar destekli (in silico) yaklaşımlar da aday seçimini hızlandırır (Bajusz & Keserü, 2022).

Bir ilacın klinik başarısı yalnızca etkiye değil, aynı zamanda güvenlilik sınırlarına bağlıdır. Klinik öncesi dönemde toksisite değerlendirmeleri; farklı dozlarda tekli ve çoklu uygulamalarla yürütülür, hayvanların genel durumu izlenir ve biyokimyasal/hematolojik analizler yapılır. Süreç sonunda doku/organ düzeyinde histopatolojik incelemelerle organ toksisiteleri araştırılır. Geçmişte yaşanan ciddi farmakovijilans olayları sonrasında üreme toksisitesi ve mutajenite gibi alanlar da klinik öncesi değerlendirme paketinin standart unsurları haline gelmiştir (Sakat et al., 2022).

Tarama ve toksisite aşamasını geçen adaylar; hayvan modellerinde ayrıntılı etki profiline tabi tutulur. Doza bağlı etkiler, hedef dışı sistemlere yansımalar ve özellikle yaşam için kritik sistemlere (kardiyovasküler, solunum, renal, santral sinir sistemi vb.) olası etkiler değerlendirilir.

Farmakokinetik incelemelerde; emilim, dağılım, metabolizma ve atılım süreçleri; plazma proteinlerine bağlanma ve klirens gibi parametreler ele alınır. Oral biyoyararlanım yetersizse, aday molekül kimi zaman etkili görünse bile geliştirme dışına itilebilir (Rudrapal, 2023).

Klinikte kullanılacak dozaj formunun seçimi; biyoyararlanım ve stabilizeyi doğrudan etkilediği için klinik öncesi dönemin temel başlıklarındandır. Yardımcı maddeler, etkin maddenin çözünürlüğünü, emilimini ve raf ömrünü

deęiřtirebilir. Ürün geliřtirme sürecinde farklı sıcaklık ve nem kořullarında stabilite testleri yapılır ve ürünün terapötik etkinlięini ne kadar süre koruduęu ortaya konur (Mohan et al., 2022).

### **3. KLİNİK ARAŐTIRMA FAZLARI**

Klinik arařtırmalar, aday ilacın insanlar üzerindeki güvenilirlięini, farmakokinetięini, farmakodinamięini ve terapötik etkinlięini sistematik biçimde deęerlendirmek amacıyla kendi iinde ayrılan fazları ierir. Bu yapılandırılmıř süreç, preklinik bulguların klinik faydaya dnüřtürölmesini hedefler ve uluslararası rehberlerle standardize edilmiřtir (özellikle International Council for Harmonisation tarafından yayımlanan GCP ve klinik geliřtirme kılavuzları).

#### **3.1. Faz I (First-in-Human, FIH)**

Faz I alıřmaları, ilacın ilk kez insanlarda kullanıldıęı ařamadır. Grup sayısı olarak 20–100 arasında saęlıklı gönüllü insanlar üzerinde alıřılır. Onkoloji gibi alanlarda ise doęrudan hasta popölasyonu üzerinde denemeler yapılır. Bu fazın temel amacı:

1. Güvenlilik ve tolerabilitenin deęerlendirilmesi,
2. Maksimum tolere edilen dozun (MTD) belirlenmesi,
3. Farmakokinetik (emilim, daęılım, metabolizma, eliminasyon) ve farmakodinamik profillerin ortaya konmasıdır.

Son yıllarda Faz I tasarımlarında adaptif protokoller, mikrodozlama yaklařımları ve biyobelirte destekli karar mekanizmaları giderek yaygınlařmıřtır. Bu sayede erken ařamada bařarısız olma olasılıęı yüksek adaylar elenebilmekte,

geliřtirme süresi ve maliyeti azaltılabilmektedir (Vanderbeek et al., 2023).

### **3.2. Faz II**

Faz II alıřmaları (genellikle 100–300 hasta), ilacın hedef hastalık grubundaki ön etkililik sinyallerini ve kısa dönem güvenilirliğini deęerlendirmek amacıyla uygulanmaktadır. Bu ařamada:

Doz–yanıt iliřkisi analiz edilir,

Optimal terapötik doz aralıęı belirlenir,

Klinik sonlanım noktaları (endpoint) standardize edilir.

Faz II, klinik geliřtirme sürecinin en kritik karar noktalarından biridir. Burada elde edilen veriler, Faz III'e geilip geilmeyeceęini belirleyen temel bilimsel dayanaęı oluřturur (Torres-Saavedra & Winter, 2021).

### **3.3. Faz III**

Faz III alıřmaları, yüzlerce hatta binlerce hastayı içeren, çoęunlukla çok merkezli ve randomize kontrollü denemelerden oluřmaktadır. Bu kısımda ama ilacın standart tedavi veya plaseboya karřı üstünlüęünü ya da eřdeęerlięini göstermek ve güvenilirlik profilini geniř popülasyonda doęrulamaktır.

Bu fazdan elde edilen veriler, ruhsat bařvurusunun temel dayanaęını ortaya çıkarır. Faz III, istatistiksel gü, hasta çeřitlilięi ve gerek klinik kořullara yakınlık aısından düzenleyici otoriteler için en belirleyici ařama olarak görülmektedir (Spall et al., 2024).

### **3.4. Faz IV (Ruhsat Sonrası alıřmalar)**

Faz IV, ilacın pazara sunulmasının ardından yürütölen gözlemsel veya giriřimsel alıřmaları içermektedir. Bu ařamada; nadir advers etkiler, uzun dönem güvenilirlik, gerek yařam

verileri (real-world evidence) bir araya getirilmektedir. Faz IV aynı zamanda yeni endikasyon arařtırmaları ve farmakoekonomik deęerlendirmeler için de önemli bir altyapı oluřturmaktadır.

Klinik geliřtirme sürecinin tüm ařamalarında risk–yarar dengesi dinamik olarak yeniden deęerlendirmeye alınmaktadır. Devam ya da sonlandırma kararları yalnızca klinik verilere deęil; üretilebilirlik, maliyet-etkinlik, rekabetçi tedaviler ve pazar eriřimi gibi stratejik parametrelerin tümünü göz önüne alarak verilmektedir (Zhang et al., 2024).

### **3.5. Ruhsatlandırma Süreci**

Faz I–III çalıřmalarından elde edilen bütüncül veriler, kapsamlı bir ruhsat dosyası (Common Technical Document, CTD formatı) halinde düzenleyici otoritelere sunulur. Bu dosya üç ana başlık altında toplanır;

**Kalite** (CMC – Chemistry, Manufacturing and Controls): Etkin madde ve bitmiş ürünün üretim süreçleri, stabilite verileri, saflık profilleri.

**Güvenlilik:** Preklinik toksikoloji, klinik advers olaylar, özel popülasyon analizleri.

**Etkililik:** Faz II–III klinik sonuçları, istatistiksel analizler ve klinik anlamlılık deęerlendirmeleri (Dong, 2022).

Dünyada başlıca düzenleyici otoriteler olarak U.S. Food and Drug Administration, European Medicines Agency ve Türkiye’de Türkiye İlaç ve Tıbbi Cihaz Kurumu sayılmaktadır. Bu kurumlar, başvuruları bilimsel komiteler aracılığıyla çok katmanlı bir inceleme yürüterek gerçekleřtirmektedir.

Deęerlendirme süreci; fayda-risk analizleri, üretim tesislerinin denetimi, klinik veri bütünlüğü ve farmakovijilans planlarının gözden geçirilmesi gibi ařamalara göre onaylanmaktadır. Geliřtirici firmadan, onay sonrası Risk

Yönetim Planı (RMP) ve sürekli güvenilirlik raporlaması gibi talepleri karşılaması beklenmektedir.

Son yıllarda özellikle onkoloji ve nadir hastalık alanlarında klinik ihtiyaca hızlı yanıt verebilmek amacıyla; hızlandırılmış onay, koşullu ruhsat ve öncelikli inceleme gibi mekanizmalar yaygınlaşmıştır. Bununla birlikte, bu yaklaşımlar dahi Faz IV kapsamında ek veri üretme yükümlülüğünü ortadan kaldırmamaktadır (Vallano et al., 2023).

## **4. HÜCRE KÜLTÜRÜ**

### **4.1. Hücre kültürünün ortaya çıkışı**

Hücre kültürü çalışmaları 20. yüzyılın başlarında dokuların laboratuvar ortamında incelenmesiyle başlamış; farklı doku tiplerinde denemelerle hızla yaygınlaşmıştır. 1940'lı yıllarda viroloji alanında kullanımı artmış ve aşı geliştirme çalışmalarına güçlü katkılar sağlamıştır. İnsan kaynaklı en bilinen hücre hatlarından biri olan HeLa, 1950'li yıllarda elde edilmiş ve günümüzde de çok sayıda biyomedikal arařtırmada model sistem olarak kullanılmaya devam etmiştir (Nessar et al., 2025). Hücre hatlarının standardize edilebilir olması, farklı laboratuvarların karşılaştırılabilir sonuçlar üretmesini kolaylaştırmıştır.

Hücre kültürü; doku veya organdan izole edilen hücrelerin, vücut dışı (in vitro) koşullarda yaşatılması, çoğaltılması ve sürdürülebilir biçimde devam ettirilmesidir. Hücreler; doku parçasından yüzeye göç ederek çoğalabileceği gibi, mekanik/enzimatik ayrıştırma yoluyla süspansiyon haline getirilip de kültüre alınabilir. Kültür koşulları uygun olduğunda hücreler yalnızca canlı kalmakla kalmaz; ihtiyaç duyulan miktarda çoğaltılabilir, seçici besiyerleriyle ayrıştırılabilir, klonlanabilir ve uzun süreli saklama için dondurulabilir (Parisi et al., 2021).

#### **4.2. Hücre kültürünün yaygın kullanım alanları**

- Kanser arařtırmaları ve in vitro toksisite çalıřmaları
- Sitogenetik ve moleküler analizler
- Doku/deri mühendislięi uygulamaları
- Ařı ve biyofarmasötik üretimi
- Kök hücre arařtırmaları
- Üreme biyolojisi ve yardımcı üreme teknikleri (Ballav et al., 2021).

#### **4.3. Hücre Kültüründe Temel Ařamalar**

1. Besiyerinin hazırlanması (filtre sterilizasyonu; kullanım öncesi uygun sıcaklıęa getirme)
2. Kültür kabına/flaska hücre ekimi
3. İnkübasyonda büyütme ve mikroskopik izlem
4. Pasajlama (çoęalan hücrelerin ayrılıp yeni kaplara aktarılması)
5. Kriyoprezervasyon (uygun kriyoprotektanlarla -196°C'de saklama)
6. Çözme ve yeniden kültüre alma (kriyoprotektanın uzaklařtırılması ve büyütmeye devam)

Besleme, pasajlama, dondurma ve çözme; hücre tipine (adherent/süspanse) göre farklı teknik ayrıntılar içerir. Pasajlama genellikle besin tüketimi artıp büyüme yavaşlamadan önce yapılır; böylece hücreler aşırı yoğunluęa baęlı stres yaşamaz (Çil & Soysal, 2024).

#### **4.4. Primer Hücre Kültürü**

Primer kültür; canlıdan yeni alınan doku/organ örneęinden doğrudan elde edilen ilk kültürdür. Doğal özellikleri koruma açısından avantajlı olsa da hazırlanması zahmetli olabilir

ve pasaj sayısı sınırlıdır. Kontaminasyon riski ve örnek gereksinimi, primer kültürün temel sınırlılıkları arasındadır (Killekar et al., 2022).

#### **4.5. Diploid Hücre Kültürü**

Primer kültürün subkültürüyle oluşan, sınırlı bölünme kapasitesine sahip hücreler diploid kültür olarak sınıflandırılabilir. Bu kültürler belirli pasaj sayısından sonra bölünme yeteneğini kaybeder. Bazı insan fibroblast kültürleri bu gruba örnek verilir (Duruel et al., 2021).

#### **4.6. Devamlı (Sürekli) Hücre Hatları**

Sürekli hücre hatları; uzun süre bölünebilen “ölümsüz” özellikte hücrelerden oluşur. Transformasyon süreçleriyle ortaya çıkabilir ve zamanla orijinal dokudan farklı morfolojik/biyokimyasal özellikler gösterebilir. Üreme hızları yüksek, kültüre başlama için gerekli hücre sayısı daha düşük olabilir (Richter et al., 2021).

#### **4.7. Büyüme Dönemleri ve Etkileyen Faktörler**

Kültüre alınan hücreler genellikle ayrılma, yapışma, çoğalma ve dejenerasyon gibi dönemlerden geçer. Gelişimi etkileyen başlıca parametreler:

- Sıcaklık: Çoğu memeli hücresi için ~37°C
- Osmotik basınç: Memeli hücreleri için ~300 mOsm
- pH: Genellikle 7.1–7.5 aralığı optimum kabul edilir
- Tampon sistemleri: HEPES, bikarbonat/CO<sub>2</sub> sistemi vb.
- İyonlar ve metabolitler: Na<sup>+</sup>, K<sup>+</sup>, Ca<sup>2+</sup>, Mg<sup>2+</sup> gibi iyonlar; aminoasitler, vitaminler, protein/peptidler, hormonlar (Klein et al., 2022).

#### **4.8. Besiyerleri ve Çözeltiler**

EMEM, DMEM, RPMI gibi besiyerleri; hücre tipine göre seçilir. Genellikle büyüme desteklemek için %5-10 serum eklenir; daha düşük aktivite koşullarında serum oranı azaltılabilir. Antibiyotik/antimikotik kullanımı kontaminasyon riskini azaltabilir, ancak tek başına yeterli bir güvenlik önlemi değildir (Kang et al., 2024).

### **5. KÖK HÜCRELER: KORDON KANI VE STROMAL HÜCRELERİN FARKLILAřMA YAKLAřIMI**

Kendini yenileme “self-renewal” özelliđi sayesinde uygun biyokimyasal ve fiziksel koşullar altında farklı hücre tiplerine dönüşebilme (farklılaşma) potansiyeline sahip kök hücreler, embriyonik dönemde pluripotent özellikte üç germ yaprađından (ektoderm, mezoderm, endoderm) köken alan tüm hücre tiplerine farklılaşabilmektedir. Doğum sonrası dönemde ise, kök hücre popülasyonları genellikle multipotent özellik göstermektedir ve bu hücreler doku homeostazının sürdürülmesi ile hasar onarımında rol oynamaktadır (Aprile et al., 2024). Benzersiz bir mikroçevreye sahip olan Umbilikal kord ve iliřkili dokular (kordon kanı, Wharton jeli, perivasküler alanlar ve kord epitel dokusu), farklı kök ve stromal hücre popülasyonlarını meydana getirmektedirler. Bu hücrelerin farklılaşma potansiyelinin anlaşılması hem gelişim biyolojisi hem de rejeneratif tıp uygulamaları açısından oldukça önemlidir. Wharton jeli, umbilikal kordun damarlarını çevreleyen jelimsi bađ dokusudur ve embriyonik mezenşimin kalıntısı olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Hyalüronik asit ve proteoglikanlardan zengin bir ekstrasellüler matriks içeren Wharton jeli, hücrelere mekanik koruma sağlamak ve hücre proliferasyonu ve migrasyonunu destekleyen biyokimyasal sinyaller göndermektedir. Wharton

jelinden izole edilen hücreler çoğunlukla mezenkimal stromal/kök hücre (MSH/MKH) davranıřları sergilemektedir. Bu hücreler osteojenik, kondrojenik ve adipojenik farklılařma kapasitesine sahiptirler (Stefańska et al., 2023).

### **5.1. Farklılařmanın Moleküler ve Hücresel Düzenlenmesi**

Kordon kanı ve stromal hücrelerin farklılařması çok katmanlı bir düzenleyici ađ tarafından düzenlenmektedir. Bu süreçte rol oynayan belli bařlı mekanizmalar ařađıdaki gibidir;

Büyüme faktörleri ve sitokinler: TGF- $\beta$ , FGF, VEGF, BMP ve Wnt ailesi proteinleri hücre kaderinin belirlenmesinde kritik rol oynamaktadır.

Transkripsiyon faktörleri: Sox9 (kondrojenik), Runx2 (osteojenik), PPAR- $\gamma$  (adipojenik) gibi dokuya özgü faktörler farklılařmanın yönünü belirlemektedir.

Epigenetik düzenlemeler: DNA metilasyonu, histon modifikasyonları ve mikroRNA'lar gen ekspresyon profilini düzenleyerek hücresel kontrolü ele almaktadırlar.

Hücrel mikroçevre (niř): Hücre dıřı matriks bileřenleri, mekanik kuvvetler ve oksijen düzeyi (hipoksi), farklılařma sürecini önemli ölçüde etkileyen faktörlerdendir.

Özellikle üç boyutlu kültür sistemleri, biyobaskı (bioprinting) teknolojileri ve çeřitli biyomateryallerin kullanılmasıyla hücre-matriks etkileřimlerinin taklit edilmesi, in vitro farklılařma modellerinin dođruluđunu artırmaktadır (Bassi et al., 2021).

### **5.2. Hastalık Modelleme ve İlaç Geliřtirme Süreçlerinde Kullanımı**

Kordon kaynaklı hücrelerin kontrollü biçimde hedef doku benzeri hücrelere farklılařtırılması, prelinik arařtırmalarda

önemli avantajlar sağlamaktadır. Laboratuvar ortamında hepatosit benzeri hücreler, nöral hücreler, kardiyomiyosit benzeri hücreler gibi fenotiplerin elde edilmesi, hastalık modelleme ve ilaç toksisite testleri için alternatif seçenekler oluşturmaktadır. Bu süreçlerde sağladığı temel avantajlar arasında; insan hücrelerine dayalı modelleme sayesinde translasyonel değerin artması, hayvan modellerine bağımlılığın azalması, ilaç güvenilirlik ve etkinlik değerlendirmelerinde erken fazda daha güvenilir veri elde edilmesi sayılabilir. Bu hücrelerin moleküler düzeyde farklılaşma mekanizmalarının ayrıntılı biçimde anlaşılması; gelişim biyolojisi, hastalık patogenezi ve rejeneratif tedavi stratejilerinin geliştirilmesi açısından oldukça önemlidir. Klinik uygulamaların standardizasyonu, uzun dönem güvenilirlik verileri ve düzenleyici çerçevelerin netleştirilmesi, bu hücre temelli yaklaşımların rutin klinik pratiğe entegrasyonu için henüz yeterli düzeye ulaşamamıştır (El-Kadiry et al., 2021).

### **5.3. Kök Hücreler ve Klinik Kullanım Alanları**

Klinik uygulamada en yaygın ve standart kullanım alanı hematopoetik kök hücre naklidir buna ek olarak rejeneratif tıp, doku mühendisliği, hücresel immünoterapi ve hastalık modelleme alanlarında kullanım potansiyelleri son yıllarda giderek artan çalışmalarla geliştirilmektedir.

Embriyonik Kök Hücreler (EKH): Embriyonik kök hücreler, blastokist evresindeki embriyonun iç hücre kitlesinden elde edilen ve pluripotent özellik gösteren hücrelerdir. Üç germ yaprağından köken alan tüm hücre tiplerine farklılaşabilme davranışı göstermektedirler. Bu hücrelerin yüksek proliferasyon ve geniş farklılaşma potansiyeline rağmen; etik tartışmalar, immünolojik reddetme riski, teratom oluşumu potansiyeli gibi riskli durumları klinik uygulamalarını oldukça kısıtlamaktadır. Günümüzde retinal dejeneratif hastalıklar ve bazı nörolojik

durumlar için erken faz klinik alıřmalar sürdürölmektedir (Hinkle et al., 2021).

Uyarılmıř Pluripotent Kök Hücreler (iPS Hücreler): Somatik hücrelerin belirli transkripsiyon faktörleri (Oct4, Sox2, Klf4, c-Myc) aracılıęıyla yeniden programlanması aracılıęıyla oluřmaktadır. Embriyonik kök hücrelere benzer pluripotent özellik gösterirler ancak embriyonik kaynaęa ihtiyaç duymamaktadırlar.

iPS teknolojisi: Hastaya özgü hücre üretimi, hastalık modelleme, ilaç geliřtirme ve toksisite testleri, gen düzenleme ile kombine tedavi yaklařımları açısından klinikte önemli bir yere sahiptir ancak genomik instabilite, epigenetik hafıza ve tümör potansiyeli gibi konular halen arařtırılmaya devam etmektedir (Dhaiban et al., 2025).

Yetiřkin (Somatik) Kök Hücreler: Farklı dokularda yařam boyu bulunan ve genellikle multipotent özellik gösteren hücreleri tanımlar. Bu grubun en bilinen örneęi hematopoetik kök hücrelerdir. Dięer örnekleri; mezenkimal stromal hücreler, nöral kök hücreler, epidermal kök hücreler, baęırsak kript kök hücreleri gibi çeřitli dokuya özgü kök hücre popölyasyonlarıdır.

Mezenkimal Stromal/Kök Hücreler (MKH): Kemik ilięi, adipöz doku, göbek kordonu ve dięer baę dokulardan izole edilebilen ve osteoblast, kondrosit ve adiposit gibi mezodermal hücre tiplerine farklılařma özellięi gösteren hücrelerdir. Uluslararası Hücresel Tedavi Derneęi (ISCT) kriterlerine göre bu hücreler; plastik yüzeye yapıřma özellięi göstermektedir ve CD73, CD90 ve CD105 yüzey belirteçlerini eksprese eder ancak CD34, CD45 ve HLA-DR gibi hematopoetik belirteçleri eksprese etmezler. MKH'lerin klinik önemini büyük ölçüde immünomodölatör ve parakrin etkileri oluřturmaktadır (Altıkat & Töre, 2024). Graft-versus-host hastalıęı, osteoartrit, inflamatuvar barsak hastalıkları ve bazı otoimmün durumlarda klinik

arařtırmalar sürmektedir. Ancak, hücresel heterojenite, doz standardizasyonu ve uzun dönem güvenilirlik gibi konular henüz tam olarak netleşmemiştir.

**Kanser Kök Hücreleri (KKH):** Bu konu henüz hipotez aşamasında olup, tümör dokusunun hiyerarşik bir organizasyona sahip olduğunu ve belirli bir hücre alt grubunun tümörün sürdürülmesinden sorumlu olduğunu öne sürmektedir. Kanser kök hücrelerinin özellikleri arasında kendini yenileme kapasitesine sahip olmaları, tümörü yeniden oluşturabilmeleri, kemoterapi ve radyoterapiye direnç gösterebilmeleri sayılmaktadır. Wnt/ $\beta$ -katenin, Notch, Hedgehog ve PI3K/Akt/mTOR gibi sinyal yolları kanser kök hücre biyolojisinde önemli rol oynamaktadır. Bu yolları hedefleyen tedavi stratejileri, tedavi direncini azaltma ve nüks oranlarını düşürme amacıyla araştırılmaktadır (Yin et al., 2025). Kanser kök hücrelerinin moleküler ve fonksiyonel özelliklerinin daha iyi anlaşılması, hedefe yönelik ve kişiselleştirilmiş onkolojik tedavi yaklaşımlarının geliştirilmesi açısından kritik öneme sahiptir.

## **6. SONUÇ**

Hücre kültürü temelli çalışmalar, ilaç geliştirme süreçlerinde hem etkinlik hem de güvenilirlik değerlendirmelerini hızlandıran ve standardize eden arařtırmalardır. Bu modeller aday moleküllerin biyolojik etkinliğinin, sitotoksikite profilinin ve mekanistik etkilerinin erken aşamada değerlendirilmesine olanak sağlamaktadır. Ayrıca klinik öncesi aşamada daha rasyonel aday seçimini mümkün kılarak başarısızlık oranlarını azaltmakta ve klinik fazlara geçişte bilimsel temelli karar alma süreçlerini kuvvetlendirmektedir. Özellikle iki ve üç boyutlu hücre kültür sistemleri, ko-kültür modelleri ve organoid platformları, tümör mikrosimülasyonu ve ilaç yanıt heterojenitesinin incelenmesi açısından klasik monolayer kültürlerle kıyasla daha etkili sonuçlar

sergilemektedir (Abuwatfa et al., 2024). Güncel düzenleyici yaklaşımlar, hücre kültürü verilerini klinik öncesi karar süreçlerine entegre eden çerçeveleri giderek daha fazla teşvik etmektedir (Fosse et al., 2023).

Kök hücre biyolojisi ve indüklenmiş pluripotent kök hücre (iPSC) teknolojilerindeki ilerlemeler, yalnızca ilaç tarama platformlarını değil, aynı zamanda hastalığa özgü modelleme, rejeneratif tıp ve kişiselleştirilmiş tedavi yaklaşımlarını da geliştirmektedir. Hastaya özgü hücre hatlarının oluşturulabilmesi, farmakogenomik farklılıkların deneysel olarak test edilmesine olanak sağlamakta; böylece bireyselleştirilmiş doz optimizasyonu ve hedefe yönelik tedavi stratejilerinin geliştirilmesini sağlamaktadır (Feng et al., 2021).

Özellikle onkoloji alanında hücre kültürü tabanlı sistemler, moleküler hedef doğrulama, kombinasyon tedavilerinin ön değerlendirilmesi ve tedavi direncinin mekanistik temellerinin ortaya konması açısından kritik öneme sahiptir. Son yıllarda hücre kültürü çalışmaları, hızlandırılmış klinik geliştirme ve erken ruhsat mekanizmaları kapsamında sunulan verilerin bilimsel altyapısını güçlendiren temel araçlardan biri haline gelmiştir (U.S. Food and Drug Administration; European Medicines Agency).

Sonuç olarak, hücre kültürü temelli yaklaşımlar günümüzde yalnızca yardımcı deneysel araçlar değil; ilaç keşfinden klinik öncesi doğrulamaya, biyobelirteç geliştirmeden kişiselleştirilmiş tedavilere uzanan çeşitli alanlarda stratejik öneme sahip bütüncül bir alana dönüşmüştür. Bu teknolojilerin kök hücre biyolojisi, biyomühendislik ve yapay zekâ destekli analizlerle entegrasyonu, gelecekte daha öngörülebilir, daha etik ve daha etkin ilaç geliştirme çalışmalarının temelini oluşturacaktır.

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# **HIGH-TEMPERATURE STRESS IN PLANTS: ADAPTATION, TOLERANCE, AND DEFENSE MECHANISMS**

**Kamil ÖZTÜRK<sup>1</sup>**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

With global climate change, rising temperatures have become one of the most important abiotic stress factors limiting plant production. High temperature adversely affects plant growth, development, reproduction, and yield processes, thereby threatening agricultural productivity. Therefore, understanding plant responses to high-temperature conditions is of great importance both for food security and for the development of heat-tolerant plant materials (IPCC, 2023; Hasanuzzaman et al., 2013).

High-temperature stress is not merely an environmental factor that causes growth retardation in plants; it also leads to multifaceted disruptions at the physiological, biochemical, and molecular levels. Under these conditions, cellular homeostasis may be impaired, the structure and function of proteins may be affected, membrane fluidity may change, and oxidative damage may occur due to the excessive accumulation of reactive oxygen species. As a result, reduced photosynthetic activity, impaired water relations, disruption of metabolic balance, and ultimately decreases in growth and yield may be observed (Sung et al., 2003).

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Plants develop various defense mechanisms based on avoidance, acclimation, and adaptation in order to limit the adverse effects of high temperature (Öztürk, 2018). In addition to morphophysiological responses such as changes in leaf orientation, cooling through transpiration, and early maturation, the accumulation of compatible solutes such as proline, glycine betaine, and soluble sugars also plays an important role in stress tolerance. These compounds help plants maintain vital functions under high-temperature conditions by contributing to the preservation of cellular water balance, the maintenance of protein and membrane stability, and the support of cellular redox balance (Wahid, 2007).

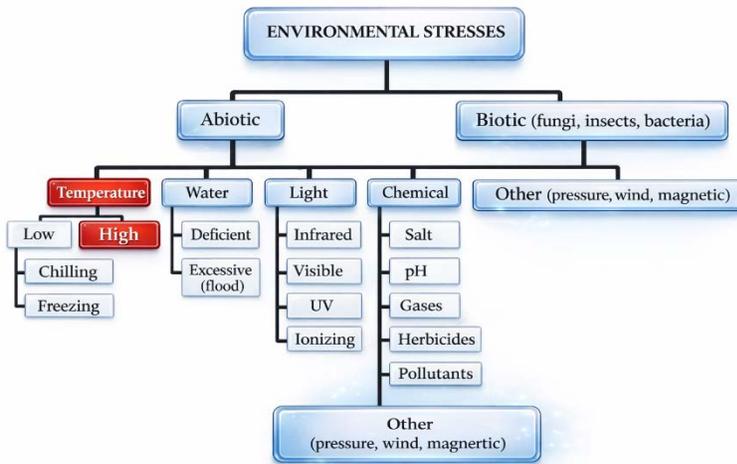
The role of secondary metabolites in responses to high-temperature stress is also noteworthy. Phenolic compounds, flavonoids, and similar protective metabolites play important roles, particularly in reducing oxidative pressure and facilitating adaptation to stress conditions. Indeed, some studies have reported that high temperature increases the accumulation of phenolic compounds and that this accumulation may be considered a protective adaptation mechanism in plants (Rivero et al., 2001). In this context, a comprehensive evaluation of the effects of high-temperature stress on plants and of the physiological and biochemical responses developed against these effects is necessary for understanding thermotolerance and for developing sustainable plant production strategies (Bita & Gerats, 2013).

## **2. STRESS AND TYPES OF STRESS**

Stress can be defined as the general term for environmental conditions that adversely affect normal growth, development, and production processes in plants and disrupt the existing physiological balance of the organism. More broadly,

stress includes external factors that prevent the plant from fully expressing its genetic potential and limit its functioning at the cellular or whole-plant level. Therefore, stress is not limited only to visible growth retardation, but also includes various disturbances at the physiological, biochemical, and metabolic levels (Levitt, 1980).

Throughout their life cycle, plants are exposed to numerous stress factors originating from their environment. These stress factors are generally classified into two main groups: abiotic and biotic. Abiotic stresses arise from non-living environmental factors such as high and low temperature, drought, salinity, excess water, radiation, heavy metals, deficiency or excess of mineral nutrients, and various chemical pollutants. Biotic stresses, on the other hand, result from interactions between plants and other living organisms; pathogens, insects, nematodes, herbivores, and weed competition are among the main factors included in this group (Ahuja et al., 2010).



**Figure 1. Types of environmental stress**

Plants are often not exposed to stress due to a single factor alone; rather, under natural conditions, multiple stress factors

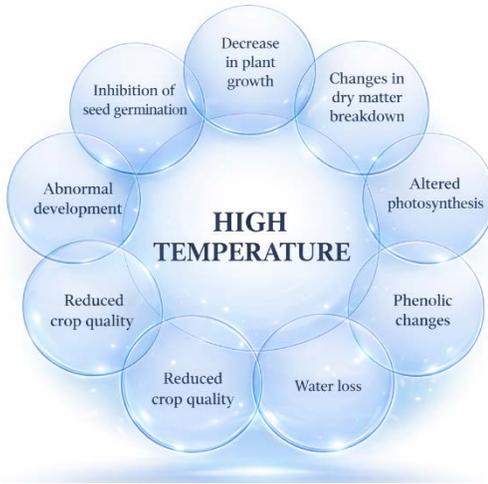
may act simultaneously or sequentially. For example, high temperature often intensifies the effects of drought by increasing water loss; similarly, abiotic pressures may also alter the sensitivity of plants to biotic factors. Therefore, although defining stress types separately is important, it should be taken into account that under real-life conditions, plants generally respond to combinations of multiple stresses (Du et al., 2024).

Plant responses to stress are generally evaluated within the framework of the concepts of escape, avoidance, and tolerance. Escape refers to the completion of the plant life cycle before unfavorable environmental conditions arise; avoidance refers to the development of internal or structural adjustments that reduce the effect of the stress factor; and tolerance refers to the ability of the plant to maintain its vital activities under stress conditions. This conceptual framework provides a fundamental approach for understanding the defense and adaptation strategies developed by plants against environmental pressures (Taiz & Zeiger, 2002).

### **3. HIGH-TEMPERATURE STRESS IN PLANTS AND RESPONSE MECHANISMS**

With global climate change, rising temperatures have become one of the major abiotic stress factors limiting plant production. High-temperature stress adversely affects plant growth, development, germination, reproduction, and yield processes, thereby threatening both agricultural productivity and product quality. The severity of this effect depends not only on the intensity and duration of temperature, but also on plant species, genotype, and developmental stage. Therefore, high-temperature stress is considered not merely a temporary environmental pressure, but a complex stress factor affecting different stages of the plant life cycle.

High temperature can cause multifaceted structural and functional disruptions in plant cells. Under extreme heat conditions, disruption of cellular organization may rapidly lead to cellular damage and even cell death. Rising temperature affects protein structure, membrane integrity, RNA functions, and cytoskeleton-related processes, thereby disturbing metabolic balance. In addition, reduced photosynthetic activity, changes in respiratory balance, increased water loss, and oxidative stress due to the accumulation of reactive oxygen species may also occur. These multilayered effects result in impaired plant development and, ultimately, yield loss.



**Figure 2. Effects of high temperature on plants**

Plants develop various response mechanisms to reduce the harmful effects of high temperature. These mechanisms are generally considered within the framework of avoidance, acclimation, and tolerance development. Morphophysiological responses such as changes in leaf orientation, cooling through transpiration, leaf rolling, and early maturation help limit the direct effects of heat. In addition, the reorganization of membrane lipid composition, the accumulation of osmoprotectants such as proline and soluble sugars, the enhancement of antioxidant

defense systems, and the activation of molecular responses associated with heat shock proteins all play important roles in maintaining cellular stability under high-temperature conditions. Moreover, temperature perception, signal transduction, and transcriptional regulation processes ensure the coordination of these defense responses (Hasanuzzaman et al., 2013).

In conclusion, the response mechanisms developed by plants against high-temperature stress constitute a multilayered defense network in which morphological, physiological, biochemical, and molecular processes complement one another. Understanding these responses is important both for explaining stress physiology and for developing species and genotypes that are more resistant to high temperature. Therefore, a detailed investigation of the effects of high-temperature stress on plants and of the response mechanisms developed against it remains one of the key research areas for sustainable agricultural production.



**Figure 3. Adaptations developed under high-temperature stress**

### **3.1. Plant responses to high-temperature stress**

Plant responses to high-temperature stress are highly complex and depend on several interacting factors, including the

intensity and duration of heat exposure, the developmental stage at which the stress occurs, species- and genotype-specific traits, and other environmental conditions such as water limitation. For this reason, plant responses to heat cannot be explained through a single mechanism, but instead should be considered in an integrated way across morphological, anatomical, developmental, water-related, membrane-based, and metabolic levels. In general, high temperature weakens vegetative growth, disrupts cellular and physiological balance, and causes particularly severe damage during the reproductive stage, making heat stress one of the major environmental constraints affecting plant performance and productivity (Bita & Gerats, 2013).

The responses developed by plants under high-temperature conditions mainly serve two purposes: reducing the direct damage caused by stress and maintaining sufficient physiological balance to sustain growth and reproduction. To achieve this, plants activate a broad range of adaptive strategies, including changes in leaf orientation, transpirational cooling, shortening of the developmental period, stabilization of membrane and protein structures, and increased accumulation of osmoprotectants and antioxidants. However, these defense mechanisms are not equally effective in all plants. Heat sensitivity varies substantially among species and genotypes and becomes especially pronounced in reproductive tissues, where pollen development, fertilization, and fruit or seed set are highly vulnerable to elevated temperatures (Hatfield & Prueger, 2015).

Among the first visible effects of heat stress are morphological changes such as leaf rolling, reduced leaf size, burn-like symptoms, premature senescence, flower and leaf shedding, suppressed shoot and root growth, biomass reduction, and an overall slowdown in development. Some of these changes reflect injury, whereas others represent adaptive strategies that help the plant minimize heat load. For example, changes in leaf

angle may reduce excess radiation, while enhanced transpiration can lower leaf temperature. A shorter developmental cycle may also allow plants to escape prolonged exposure to terminal heat stress. Nevertheless, the morphological consequences of heat stress often translate into reduced growth and lower yield. These losses are especially serious when heat stress occurs during reproduction, because flower bud development, pollen viability, fertilization success, and fruit or seed formation are all highly sensitive to temperature. Accordingly, many studies indicate that the most critical consequences of high temperature emerge during the reproductive phase, where disturbances in pollen development and pollen tube growth directly lead to fertility loss and reduced productivity (Rieu et al., 2017; Resentini et al., 2023).

In addition to visible morphological changes, high temperature also induces important anatomical alterations at tissue, cellular, and subcellular levels. These changes may be observed in stomatal characteristics, leaf surface properties, mesophyll organization, vascular tissues, and chloroplast ultrastructure. The direction and severity of anatomical responses vary depending on plant species, genotype, developmental stage, and stress duration, meaning that they may reflect either adaptive restructuring or direct cellular damage. Studies in different species have shown that high temperature can increase the thickness of certain leaf tissues, alter stomatal behavior, damage mesophyll cells, disturb vascular organization, and impair chloroplast and mitochondrial ultrastructure. In some heat-tolerant genotypes, stomatal regulation, preservation of chloroplast structure, and maintenance of vascular integrity appear to contribute to improved thermotolerance, whereas sensitive genotypes often display more severe plasmolysis and organelle damage. For this reason, anatomical responses are considered valuable indicators in understanding heat tolerance

and should be evaluated together with physiological and biochemical parameters (Zhang et al., 2005).

The developmental impact of heat stress is also strongly stage dependent. Even within the same species, vegetative and reproductive stages differ greatly in their sensitivity to elevated temperature. Therefore, the developmental effects of high temperature should be assessed not only according to the degree of heat exposure, but also according to the duration of stress and the phenological stage of the plant. Heat stress often has its most damaging effects during the reproductive phase, when flower bud formation, anther and pollen development, fertilization, and fruit or seed set are particularly sensitive. For example, short-term heat stress in pea has been shown to increase flower and bud shedding, while in tomato, high temperature reduces pollen number and viability and disrupts carbohydrate balance during anther development. Similar findings in cereals, including barley, confirm that reproductive processes such as meiosis, pollen mitosis, and seed setting are highly vulnerable to heat. On the other hand, in some species and genotypes, early flowering or early heading may function as a developmental escape mechanism, allowing plants to complete sensitive stages before severe terminal heat occurs. Thus, developmental responses to heat involve not only altered growth rates but also the protection of reproductive structures, maintenance of fertility, and adjustment of the life cycle to stressful environments (Callens et al., 2023).

Plant water status represents another major component of the high-temperature response. Under adequate moisture conditions, plants may maintain tissue water balance to some extent, but when water becomes limited, high temperature rapidly intensifies water deficit. Under such conditions, leaf water potential declines, transpirational water loss increases, and overall plant water relations are negatively affected. Heat stress

also influences root hydraulic conductivity, thereby reducing water uptake and internal transport. To counteract this imbalance, plants accumulate osmolytes such as proline, glycine betaine, soluble sugars, and other low-molecular-weight compounds that support osmotic adjustment and cellular water retention. At the same time, membrane systems, which are among the earliest cellular targets of heat stress, undergo substantial changes. High temperature affects membrane fluidity and permeability, disrupting selective transport, ion homeostasis, photosynthesis, and respiration. Plants may partially compensate for these effects by reorganizing membrane lipid composition, especially by modifying the degree of fatty acid saturation. Such adjustments help preserve membrane integrity and improve heat tolerance. Closely related to this is cell membrane stability, a widely used physiological indicator of thermotolerance. Increased electrolyte leakage and reduced membrane thermostability are commonly used to assess heat damage, and numerous studies have shown strong associations between membrane stability and heat resistance in crops such as wheat, soybean, and cowpea. Thus, the maintenance of membrane integrity and stability is a key adaptive component of plant survival under high temperature (Mazorra et al., 2002; Prasertthai et al., 2022; ElBasyoni et al., 2017).

At the metabolic level, high-temperature stress is frequently associated with the accumulation of secondary metabolites such as phenolics, flavonoids, anthocyanins, and certain terpenoids. These compounds are regarded as important components of plant defense because they help limit oxidative stress and protect cellular structures. In several studies, heat stress has been shown to stimulate phenolic synthesis in species such as tomato and watermelon, suggesting that phenolic accumulation plays a protective role during stress. Flavonoids also contribute to antioxidant defense, while anthocyanins may increase in vegetative tissues under certain heat conditions, although their

response appears to vary depending on species and tissue type. In addition, isoprenoids are particularly noteworthy because volatile terpenoids emitted from leaves can protect the photosynthetic apparatus. Plants with greater isoprene emission have been reported to maintain better photosynthetic performance under heat stress, and isoprene itself may help reduce oxidative injury caused by reactive oxygen species. Altogether, these findings indicate that the accumulation of secondary metabolites represents an important biochemical adaptation strategy that complements structural, physiological, and developmental responses to high temperature (Sharkey, 2005).

In summary, plant responses to high-temperature stress involve a coordinated network of changes spanning morphology, anatomy, development, water relations, membrane function, and metabolism. These responses are not isolated events, but interconnected processes that together determine whether a plant can avoid, withstand, or adapt to elevated temperatures. Because heat stress affects growth, reproduction, and productivity through multiple pathways, a comprehensive evaluation of plant responses is essential for understanding thermotolerance. Such an integrated perspective is also crucial for identifying heat-tolerant species and genotypes and for supporting future efforts to improve plant resilience under increasingly warm climatic conditions.

### **3.2. High temperature and signal transduction**

In plants, for responses to high-temperature stress to occur, the stress signal must be perceived and appropriate defense mechanisms must be rapidly activated. In this process, ion transporters, osmoprotectants, free radical scavengers, late embryogenesis abundant proteins, and transcriptional control mechanisms play important roles. One of the first effects of high temperature is observed at the cell membrane; changes in

membrane fluidity contribute to the initiation of the stress signal and the triggering of intracellular responses (Maestri et al., 2002).

Changes in membrane properties associated with increasing temperature may affect  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  influx and the related signaling steps. At this stage, regulatory structures such as mitogen-activated protein kinases and calcium-dependent protein kinases become involved, stimulating responses associated with antioxidant defense, osmotic adjustment, and the synthesis of protective metabolites. At the same time, reactive oxygen species generated in organelles such as chloroplasts and mitochondria may function not only as damaging compounds but also as signaling molecules involved in signal transduction. Thus, the cellular signaling network formed under temperature stress is closely related to the strengthening of antioxidant systems and the development of thermotolerance (Slesak et al., 2007).

In conclusion, signal transduction under high temperature is an integrated defense system that begins at the membrane level and proceeds through calcium flux, protein kinases, reactive oxygen species, and changes in gene expression. Through this system, plants attempt to maintain cellular balance and regulate protective responses under stress conditions. Heat shock proteins and other molecular chaperones are also important components of this process and support resistance to temperature stress, particularly by contributing to the protection of protein structure (Maestri et al., 2002).

### **3.3. Acquired thermotolerance**

Acquired thermotolerance refers to the ability of plants to gain resistance to higher and normally harmful temperatures after exposure to a non-lethal preliminary heat treatment. In other words, a short-term and mild heat pre-treatment creates a protective preparation against severe heat stress that may be encountered later. This trait may also develop under natural

conditions where temperature rises gradually, allowing plants to suffer less damage from sudden increases in temperature (Vierling, 1991).

Heat shock proteins and other molecular chaperones play a central role in the development of acquired thermotolerance. These proteins contribute to the maintenance of cellular balance by assisting in the refolding of proteins whose structure has been disrupted under high-temperature conditions. In addition, with the perception of the heat signal, the expression levels of certain protective genes increase, thereby making the plant better prepared against heat stress. For this reason, acquired thermotolerance is considered not only a short-term physiological adjustment but also a strong molecular defense response (Sung et al., 2003).

In this process, certain heat shock proteins, particularly HSP101, have been shown to be decisive. Studies conducted on *Arabidopsis* have revealed that changes in HSP101 levels directly affect the plant's resistance to high temperature and that this protein is one of the key components of acquired thermotolerance. Therefore, acquired thermotolerance is one of the most important short-term protective strategies developed by plants against high temperature and is of particular importance in stress physiology and in studies aimed at developing heat-tolerant plants (Queitsch et al., 2000; Hong & Vierling, 2000).

#### **4. BASIC STRESS PARAMETERS**

One of the most fundamental indicators used to determine the level of stress in plants is leaf water potential. Water potential is an important parameter that reflects the water status of the plant and its physiological response to environmental pressure. Especially under conditions of high temperature and water loss, more negative values indicate that the plant's water balance has

been disrupted. Therefore, leaf water potential is widely used for the early and direct monitoring of stress (Nobel, 2005).

Cell membrane stability is also a commonly used criterion in the evaluation of stresses such as heat and drought in plants. Under high-temperature conditions, deterioration of membrane structure leads to increased electrolyte leakage, which is regarded as an indirect indicator of membrane damage. Therefore, cell membrane stability is considered one of the reliable physiological indicators for determining stress tolerance and for comparing different plant materials (Fokar et al., 1998).

Leaf dry weight is another basic parameter that provides information about the structural characteristics of the leaf and the accumulation of matter. The ratio of leaf dry mass to fresh mass is associated with the growth status of the plant as well as features such as leaf thickness, tissue density, and carbon accumulation. Changes in dry matter accumulation under stress conditions contribute to the evaluation of the developmental and physiological responses of the plant to environmental pressure (Syvertsen et al., 1995).

Lipid peroxidation is an important stress indicator used to determine oxidative damage occurring particularly in membrane lipids. This process is generally evaluated through the accumulation of malondialdehyde (MDA) and provides information about the level of cellular damage under stress conditions such as high temperature. Since an increase in MDA reflects the destructive effects of reactive oxygen species on membrane structure, it is widely used to determine the severity of stress in plants (Heath & Packer, 1968).

Hydrogen peroxide is one of the reactive oxygen species that may increase in plants under stress and is considered an important parameter in the evaluation of oxidative status. Although it may function in signal transduction at low levels, its

excessive accumulation can cause damage to cellular components. Therefore, determining H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> levels provides useful information for interpreting the oxidative burden of the plant under stress and its defense capacity (Velikova et al., 2000).

Photosynthetic pigments, particularly chlorophyll and carotenoids, are among the fundamental indicators that directly reflect the physiological status of the plant. Stress conditions may adversely affect chlorophyll synthesis and stability, whereas carotenoids function in defense by protecting photosynthetic structures. Therefore, total chlorophyll and carotenoid levels are used as important parameters for evaluating both photosynthetic efficiency and stress tolerance in plants (Wahid, 2007).

## **5. OTHER STRESS PARAMETERS**

Phenolic compounds are among the important secondary metabolites that contribute to defense and adaptation processes in plants under stress conditions. These compounds help protect cellular structures, particularly by contributing to the neutralization of reactive oxygen species. Therefore, changes in total phenolic content are considered meaningful indicators in the evaluation of the biochemical responses developed by plants against environmental pressures such as high temperature (Sakihama et al., 2002).

Flavonoids are also phenolic compounds that may increase under stress conditions and play important roles in plant defense. Owing to their antioxidant properties, they are reported to limit the toxic effects of reactive oxygen species and to protect plants against unfavorable environmental conditions such as high or low temperature. In this respect, flavonoid accumulation is regarded as one of the biochemical components of stress tolerance in plants (Agati et al., 2012).

Anthocyanins are pigments that can accumulate in roots, stems, and especially leaf tissues in plants, and they perform protective functions under stress conditions. Various abiotic stresses have been reported to stimulate anthocyanin synthesis, and these compounds may act as antioxidants, particularly by reducing the harmful effects of reactive oxygen species such as H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>. Therefore, changes in anthocyanin content are considered important indicators of the defense responses of plants to environmental stress (Hatier & Gould, 2009).

Proline is one of the main osmolytes that accumulates in plants under stress conditions and plays a protective role in many abiotic stresses, particularly high temperature. Proline accumulation contributes to stress tolerance through various mechanisms such as maintaining osmotic adjustment, preserving membrane and protein stability, supporting enzyme function, and scavenging free radicals. Therefore, proline level is one of the most frequently used biochemical parameters in evaluating the stress response in plants (Kadioğlu & Terzi, 2007; Türkan & Demiral, 2009).

Soluble sugars are not only fundamental components of plant metabolism but also important metabolites and signaling molecules involved in stress conditions. Sugars such as glucose, fructose, and sucrose may contribute to the maintenance of osmotic balance and the stabilization of biomolecules and membranes. Therefore, changes in soluble sugar content are among the useful parameters for understanding the metabolic adaptation processes developed by plants under stress (Rolland et al., 2006).

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# **VOLATILE OIL COMPONENTS OF ENDEMIC *Hypericum sorgerae* Robson COLLECTED FROM TURKEY**

**Ebru YÜCE BABACAN<sup>1</sup>**

**Eyüp BAĞCI<sup>2</sup>**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The genus *Hypericum* L. is widely distributed globally, comprising numerous identified species. Beyond their nutritional value, plants within this genus are particularly noteworthy for their significant pharmacological properties.

Belonging to the family Hypericaceae, the genus *Hypericum* Linne is represented by nearly 500 species globally, distributed across 36 distinct sections (Robson, 2006). The genus is represented by approximately 110 species in Turkey, with an endemism rate of nearly 45%, comprising over 50 endemic taxa. *Hypericum sorgerae* Robson is classified within the section *Drosanthe* Robson. This section includes 23 taxa, the majority of which exhibit a distribution range centered in Central Anatolia, Turkey. *H. sorgerae* is one of the endemic taxa in *Hypericum* genus (Davis et al., 1988; Güner et al., 2000, 2012; Yüce Babacan et al., 2017; Duman and Çakır-Dindar, 2020; Fırat and Erođlu, 2023; Özgiři and Ocak, 2021).

*Hypericum* taxa are reported to contain a diverse range of bioactive compounds, including naphthodianthrones,

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phloroglucinols, volatile oils, flavonoids, tannins, amino acids, and xanthenes along with other compounds that display a versatile range of bioactivities (Greenson et al., 2001; Kitanov, 2001; Smelcerovic et al.; 2006 Tanaka and Takaishi, 2006). Members of the genus *Hypericum* are traditionally used in the treatment of wounds, ulcers, and depression, owing to their documented antiseptic, antispasmodic, and antibacterial activities (Smelcerovic et al., 2007; H. Erođlu, 2007; Sevimli, 2006). Anticancer research on *Hypericum* species has become increasingly prevalent in recent years (Agan et al., 2023; Javrushyan et al., 2025; Öner et al., 2025).

This study describes for the first time the volatile oil composition of *H. sorgerae* collected from its natural habitats.

## **2. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

### **2.1. Plant Source**

Plant material consisting of *Hypericum sorgerae* was gathered from Sivas in 2008 (Collector No: Yüce-1088). The authentication of the species was performed, and the voucher specimens are deposited in the Firat University Herbarium (FUH)."

### **2.2. Isolation of the Essential Oils**

The aerial parts of the plant material were air-dried at room temperature in the shade until a constant weight was achieved. The plant material (100 g) were subjected to hydrodistillation for 3 h using a Clevenger-type apparatus, yielding a pale yellow essential oil with a yield of % (v/w).

### **2.3. Gas Chromatographic (GC) Analysis**

The essential oil was analyzed using an HP 6890 GC system equipped with a Flame Ionization Detector (FID) and an

HP-5 MS capillary column (30 m × 0.25 mm i.d., film thickness 0.25 µm). The oven temperature program and analysis conditions were identical to those employed for GC-MS. The relative percentage composition of the essential oil components was calculated from the GC-FID peak areas using electronic integration without response correction factors.

#### **2.4. Gas Chromatography / Mass Spectrometry (GC-MS) Analysis**

GC-MS analysis was performed using a Hewlett Packard 6890 GC system coupled with an Agilent 5973N Mass Selective Detector (MSD) at the Plant Products and Biotechnology Research Laboratory (BUBAL), Firat University. Chromatographic separation was achieved on an HP-5 MS capillary column (30 m × 0.25 mm i.d., film thickness 0.25 µm), with helium as the carrier gas at a flow rate of 1 mL/min. The injector temperature was maintained at 250°C. The GC oven temperature was initially held at 70°C for 2 min, then programmed to rise to 150°C at a rate of 10°C/min, held at 150°C for 15 min, and finally increased to 240°C at a rate of 5°C/min. Relative retention indices (RRI) were calculated using a homologous series of n-alkanes as reference points. Mass spectra were recorded at 70 eV over a mass range of m/z 35–425. Identification of the individual components was carried out by comparing their mass spectra with those stored in the Wiley and NIST electronic libraries. The identified constituents of the essential oils are summarized in Table 1.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

A pale yellowish essential oil was obtained from the aerial parts of *H. sorgerae* by hydrodistillation, with a yield of 0.10% (w/w). The obtained yields are comparable to those observed in other *Hypericum* species investigated in our

laboratory, such as *H. scabrum* and *H. scabroides* (Bagci and Bekci, 2010), *H. thymbrifolium*, *H. pseudolaeve* (Bagci and Yuce, 2010a), *H. salsolifolium* (Bagci and Yuce, 2010b), *H. capitatum* varieties (Bagci and Yuce, 2010c), *H. perforatum* L. and *H. lanuginosum* var. *lanuginosum* Lam. (Yüce, 2016).

The identified constituents, along with their relative retention indices (RRI) and percentage compositions, are summarized in Table 1. Chemical characterization of the essential oils revealed a complex profile dominated by monoterpenes, sesquiterpenes, and various non-terpenoid constituents. In total, 46 components were identified, representing 91.0% of the total oil content.

Monoterpenes were found to be the major group of constituents, occurring at significantly higher concentrations compared to sesquiterpenes. This profile contrasts sharply with the chemical compositions of five *Hypericum* species from Southern Brazil—namely *H. caprifoliatum*, *H. ternum*, *H. carinatum*, *H. polyanthemum*, and *H. myrianthum*—which are reported to be predominantly composed of sesquiterpenes (Ferraz et al., 2004).

A total of fifty-six components were identified in the essential oil of *H. sorgerae*. The most abundant constituents were undecane (17.9%),  $\beta$ -myrcene (11.4%),  $\alpha$ -pinene (5.1%), nonacosane (5.1%),  $\delta$ -cubebene (4.5%) and  $\beta$ -selinene (4.2%). The results showed that the first major compound of *H. sorgerae* were undecane. Undecane is determined as the second major compound in *H. cerastoides* and *H. maculatum* (Erken et al., 2001; Gudzic et al., 2002).

The three most abundant detected components undecane,  $\beta$ -myrcene and  $\alpha$ -pinene, accounting for 34.4% of the oil, have been reported in the essential oils of other

*Hypericum* spp. but undecane and  $\beta$ -myrcene were significantly lower amounts.

The major compound of *H. sorgerae* is  $\alpha$ -pinene, which is a major and characteristic constituent of many *Hypericum* species like *H. thymbrifolium*, *H. pseudolaeve*, (Bagci and Yuce, 2010a) *H. perforatum*, *H. forrestii*, *H. perfoliatum*, *H. triquetrifolium* (Javidnia et al., 2008), *H. hircinum*, *H. hyssopifolium*, and *H. heterophyllum*. In conclusion, this study demonstrates the occurrence of undecane /  $\beta$ -myrcene chemotype of *H. sorgerae* collected from Anatolian origin of Turkey.

The major compound identified in *H. sorgerae* was alpha-pinene, a characteristic constituent prevalent in numerous *Hypericum* species, including *H. thymbrifolium*, *H. pseudolaeve* (Bagci and Yuce, 2010a), *H. perforatum*, *H. forrestii*, *H. perfoliatum*, *H. triquetrifolium* (Javidnia et al., 2008), *H. hircinum*, *H. hyssopifolium*, and *H. heterophyllum*. In conclusion, this study establishes the occurrence of an undecane/beta-myrcene chemotype for *H. sorgerae* collected from Anatolia, Turkey.

**Table 1. Volatile constituents identified in the essential oils of endemic *H. sorgerae***

No	Component	RRI	Content (%)
1	Nonane	996	1.8
2	$\alpha$ -pinene	1021	5.1
3	$\beta$ -pinene	1055	2.7
4	$\beta$ -myrcene	1064	11.4
5	Decane	1072	0.3
6	Limonene	1095	0.8
7	<i>Cis</i> ocimene	1100	1.4
8	$\delta$ -3-carene	1108	2.1
9	Undecane	1148	17.9
10	Nonanal	1151	0.2
11	<i>Trans</i> -pinocarveol	1178	1.5
12	Safranal	1218	0.1
13	Decanal	1222	0.6

14	E-citral	1267	0.3
15	Cyclodecane	1271	0.2
16	2-undecanone	1289	0.1
17	cycloheksaciloxane	1296	0.2
18	2,4-decadienal	1313	0.3
19	$\alpha$ -cubebene	1337	0.3
20	$\alpha$ -longipinene	1340	0.5
21	$\alpha$ -ylangene	1355	0.2
22	$\alpha$ -copaene	1360	1.1
23	$\beta$ -borbonene	1366	0.1
24	İsocaryophyllene	1383	0.9
25	$\beta$ -caryophyllene	1393	2.5
26	$\beta$ -cubebene	1400	0.7
27	Aromadendrene	1406	0.4
28	$\beta$ -farnesene	1416	2.0
29	$\alpha$ -humulene	1418	0.7
30	$\alpha$ -amorphene	1430	2.5
31	Germacren D	1436	3.5
32	$\beta$ -selinene	1441	4.2
33	$\delta$ -cubebene	1446	4.5
34	Naphtalene	1456	1.5
35	$\delta$ -cadinene	1458	2.5
36	Spathulenol	1495	1.5
37	Caryophyllene oxide	1498	2.8
38	$\alpha$ -cadinol	1539	0.8
39	Viridiflorol	1541	2.4
40	Tetradecanoic acide	1592	0.7
41	2-Pentadekanol	1631	0.1
42	1-heptadekanol	1649	0.7
43	n-decanoic acide	1692	0.2
44	Fitol	1794	0.8
45	Tricosane	1903	0.8
46	Nonacosane	1942	5.1
Total			91.0

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**BİYOLOJİ ALANINDA  
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