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Boswellia serrata

An Overall Assessment of *In Vitro*, Preclinical, Pharmacokinetic and Clinical Data

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Abstract

Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID) intake is associated with high prevalence of gastrointestinal or cardiovascular adverse effects. All efforts to develop NSAIDs that spare the gastrointestinal tract and the cardiovascular system are still far from achieving a breakthrough. In the last two decades, preparations of the gum resin of *Boswellia serrata* (a traditional ayurvedic medicine) and of other *Boswellia* species have experienced increasing popularity in Western countries. Animal studies and pilot clinical trials support the potential of *B. serrata* gum resin extract (BSE) for the treatment of a variety of inflammatory diseases like inflammatory bowel disease, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis and asthma. Moreover, in 2002 the European Medicines Agency classified BSE as an ‘orphan drug’ for the treatment of peritumoral brain oedema. Compared to NSAIDs, it is expected that the administration of BSE is associated with better tolerability, which needs to be confirmed in further clinical trials.

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