

1 **Identification of alkylsalicylic acids in Lentisk oil (*Pistacia lentiscus***  
2 **L.) and cytotoxicity on Human Normal Dermal Fibroblasts.**

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15

16 **ABSTRACT :**

17 *Pistacia lentiscus* L. (Anacardiaceae) is widely distributed in the Mediterranean basin. Its fruit oil  
18 is used in traditional medicine to treat burns, skin impairments as well as inflammatory diseases  
19 as soothing massage or internal use. An increased interest is spotted lately with several  
20 commercial brands are spun portraying the benefits of this oil but with no stringent regulations to  
21 ascertain its safe use as an edible or cosmeceutical product. This work concerned the  
22 investigation of secondary metabolites presents in *Pistacia lentiscus* fruits oil using both GC-MS  
23 and HPLC-DAD-MS technics, and the evaluation of cytotoxicity on human normal dermal  
24 fibroblasts to assess safety of use as cosmetic ingredient. This study stands as the first one to  
25 report the identification of alkylsalicylic acids in fruits oil and unsaponifiable fraction of *Pistacia*  
26 *lentiscus* fruit oil which calls for therefore, quantification of alkylsalicylic acids, known as skin  
27 irritants, in *Pistacia lentiscus* oil, used as nutraceuticals or cosmeceuticals by manufacturers.

28 **KEYWORDS:** *Pistacia lentiscus* L., Anacardiaceae, ginkgolic acid, alkylsalicylic acid,. Cytotoxicity.

29

## 30 INTRODUCTION

31 Lentisk, *Pistacia lentiscus* L is an evergreen shrub or tree from Anacardiaceae family, largely known  
32 as Darou, dherou or Drou in North Africa, Listincu or Chessa in Sardinia; or Mastiha tree in Greece.  
33 Its repartition covers all the Mediterranean area, from the Iberic peninsula to the Middle East. Mastic  
34 is the oleoresin obtained from the tree after incision of its trunk and is produced in abundance by the  
35 *Chia* variety occurring in the Greek Chios island. Despite the large use of mastic for medicinal or  
36 dietary purpose (Pachi et al, 2020), the application of vegetal oil obtained from fruits is still less  
37 known.

38 An archaeological study from the eastern Mediterranean brought evidence of fruit oil production via  
39 fruits' squeezing in Roman and high medieval sites in Sardinia island and Corsica. The same  
40 processing method exists also traditionally in eastern Algeria and Tunisia, but not described in the  
41 western part of Mediterranean, which may indicate the probable influence of Roman empire  
42 colonization. Lentisk oil was mainly used for lighting, treating burns and wounds, and as food  
43 dressing (Lanfranchi et al, 1999; Lanfranchi and Bui, 1998). Several reports indicated the limited  
44 geographical distribution of lentisk oil users with predominance use is linked to traditional  
45 pharmacopoeia of eastern and central parts of Algeria and Tunisia for the treatment of skin,  
46 respiratory conditions and rheumatism. According to Djerrou et al. study, the use of *Pistacia lentiscus*  
47 fixed oil reduced the inflammatory phase, stimulated wound contraction and reduced the  
48 epithelization period to those treated with pharmaceutical grade oitment Madecassol® (Dierrou et al,  
49 2007). Mammeri at al. combined it with honey and confirmed its superiority to accelerate wound  
50 healing via contraction compared to a commercial skin protector cicatryl© (Maameri et al, 2012).

51 Chemical composition of *Pistacia lentiscus* oil has been mainly focusing on saponifiable fraction of  
52 the oil including fatty acids, phytosterols and tocopherols (Charef et al, 2008; Mezni et al, 2012;  
53 Trabelsi et al, 2012). However, an increased interest is spotted lately with several commercial brands  
54 are spun portraying the benefits of this oil but with no stringent regulations are in force to ascertain its  
55 safe use as an edible or cosmeceutical product. This emerging popularity calls for the establishment  
56 of quality indicators to ensure quality of marketed oils, reduce the risks of adulteration and/or misuse  
57 and ascertain its safe use.

58 Thus, in this study, we focused in Lentisk oil with an objective of two folds, the first one consists to  
59 compare fourteen oil samples in order to depict quality indicators by spotting differences in secondary  
60 metabolites profiles using both GC-MS and HPLC-DAD-MS technics, the second one was to assess  
61 cytotoxicity on human normal fibroblast to elaborate its potential safe use in dermatological  
62 applications.

63

## 64 1. MATERIALS AND METHODS

65

### 66 1.1. Oil samples and reagents

67 Artisanal samples were obtained from rural families located in the area of Jijel (Sidi  
68 abdelaziz, Settara, Ouled rabe), Blida and Elkala (Eltaref) (Supporting informations). Artisanal  
69 production consists in crushing of mature fruits collected during the period of end of autumn-  
70 beginning of winter, then submitted for maceration in cold water. In certain cases, the mixture  
71 may be heated to increase oil's yield. After filtration, the oil is separated from water by  
72 decantation to afford a yellow green viscous liquid. The obtained yields ranged between 16%  
73 and 19% (Lanfranchi and Bui, 1998). In parallel, semi-artisanal samples were obtained from two  
74 cooperatives: Ladjoudane (Akbou) and Bouannani (Jijel). These oils are prepared following the  
75 same process described earlier but extraction is realized using a hydraulic press equipped with  
76 fibre disks called "scourtins". In another part, six commercial samples were purchased in the  
77 same areas (Table 1 and 2). Methanol (MeOH) HPLC grade, dimethylsulfoxide (DMSO), ethanol  
78 (EtOH), gallic acid, quercetin, Folin-Ciocalteu reagent,  $\text{AlCl}_3 \cdot 6\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ,  $\text{Na}_2\text{CO}_3$ ,  $\text{CH}_3\text{COONa}$ ,  $\text{BF}_3$   
79 (4%)-methanol, hexane, were purchased from Sigma Aldrich (St. Louis, USA).

80

### 81 1.2. *Pistacia lentiscus* L. oil composition

82

83 Fatty acids are analyzed after transesterification using  $\text{BF}_3$  into their corresponding methyl-  
84 esters (Charef et al, 2008; Mezni et al, 2012; Trabelsi et al, 2012). Briefly, 50 mg of oil are  
85 diluted in 1 mL hexane, to which 0.5 mL of  $\text{BF}_3$  (14%)-methanol is added. The mixture is kept at  
86 60°C during 30 minutes after which 1 mL of water added. Then, the organic phase containing  
87 the FAME mixture is separated for GC-MS and GC-FID analysis. Analyses are performed using  
88 GCMS-QP2010 Ultra (Shimadzu Co. Kyoto. Japan) equipped with a fused silica capillary  
89 column (Rtx-5MS; 30 m × 0.25 mm inner diameter, film thickness 0.25  $\mu\text{m}$ , Thames Restek.  
90 UK), and an Agilent 5973N MS detector. GC-FID was performed with a Master GC-Dani,  
91 France, equipped with a HP5 column (5% Phenyl-Hexyl, 100 m, internal diameter 0.25 mm,  
92 thickness 0.2  $\mu\text{m}$ ) and a FID detector.

93 The following analytical conditions are used : oven temperature is programmed to start at  
94 140°C, hold for 1 min, then increased to 200°C at a rate of 5°C/min, then hold for 3 min, then  
95 increased to 215°C (rate 5°C/min, hold for 5 min), then increased to 240°C at a rate of

96 10°C/min, and finally hold for 10.5 min. Injector temperature is set at 270 °C; carrier gas: helium,  
97 flow, 0.95 mL/min; splitting ratio 1:20; injection volume: 1 µL; interface temperature: 240 °C;  
98 while for the mass spectrometry interface, the MS source temperature is set at 220 °C with an  
99 ionization energy of 70 eV. For other volatiles analysis, the oven temperature is programmed at  
100 70°C, hold for 5 min, then increased to 120°C (rate 5°C/min, hold for 2 min), then increased to  
101 180°C (rate 30°C/min, hold on 12 min), and finally increased to 270°C (rate 30°C/min, and kept  
102 for 2 min. Fatty acids were identified by comparison of their recorded mass spectra with the  
103 NIST14 library and the calculated retention indices (RI) of corresponding FAME fatty acid  
104 methyl esters.

### 105 **1.3. Analysis of unsaponifiable fraction**

106  
107 The recovery of unsaponifiable fraction for artisanal samples 2, 7, and 8 is conducted following  
108 the procedure described in AFNOR NF T 60-206. Briefly, 50 mL of 2N ethanolic solution of KOH  
109 are added to 5 g of oil. The mixture is then refluxed for one hour. After evaporation, 50 mL of  
110 water is added, the suspension is extracted three times with 100mL diethyl ether (3x100 mL),  
111 washed with aqueous KOH (0.5 N) followed by water, then dried on anhydrous Na<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> and  
112 evaporated under vacuum. Then, derivatization into silyl esters is performed. Briefly, 5 mg of  
113 unsaponifiable fraction are placed with 0.5 mL of pyridine in a 2 mL vial. Then, 0.1 mL of  
114 hexamethyldisilazane (HMDS) and 0.04 mL of trimethylchlorosilane (TMCS) are added and the  
115 reaction mixture is mixed using a vortex then centrifuged. From the supernatant of the silylated  
116 mixture, 1 µL is directly submitted to GC-MS analysis. In this case, carrier gas is H<sub>2</sub> with a  
117 flowrate of 1 mL/min and a split 1:20, oven is programmed increasing from 180°C to 270°C at  
118 8°C/min with a hold at initial and final temperatures of 1 and 65 min respectively (Jasmica,  
119 2001). MS Interface temperature is set at 240 °C while MS source temperature is set at 220 °C  
120 with an ionization energy of 70 eV. The injection volume was 1 µL.

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### 122 **1.4. HPLC-DAD-MS identification of alkylsalicylic acids in Pistacia lentiscus oil.**

123  
124 Oil samples are analyzed on a HPLC-DAD-MS Thermo Scientific Dionex U3000 (Thermo-  
125 Dionex, Les Ulis, France) consisted of a quaternary pump (LPG-3400 SD), a thermostated  
126 autosampler (WPS-3000TSL), a thermostated column (TCC-3000SD), and a diode array  
127 detector (DAD-3000) on line with a quadrupole mass spectrometer (Surveyor MSQ plus System

128 (Thermo-Dionex, Les Ulis, France). All oil samples were diluted in methanol (10 mg/mL).  
129 Solutions are filtered before injection on UptiDisc 0.45 M nylon filters (Interchim, Montluçon,  
130 France). 20 µL of each solution are injected and chromatograms are recorded at 210, 280, and  
131 320 nm. Oven temperature is set at 30°C and the analysis is performed using a gradient elution:  
132 A (H<sub>2</sub>O, 0.5% formic acid) and B (ACN, 0.5% formic acid) as follows: 5% of B (0–10 min,  
133 isocratic), 5% to 100% of B (10-40 min, linear gradient), 100% of B (40-60 min, isocratic), 100%  
134 to 5% of B (60-70 min, linear gradient), 5% of B (70-75 isocratic) the flow rate is fixed at 0.5  
135 mL/min.

### 136 **1.5. Alamar blue cell viability assay on Normal Human Dermal Fibroblasts**

137  
138 Normal Human Dermal Fibroblasts (NHDF) are cultured in Dulbecco's modified Eagle medium  
139 (Sigma, UK) supplemented with 10% fetal calf serum (Biowest Ltd., UK), 2% l-glutamine  
140 (Sigma), 100 U/ml penicillin, (Sigma), and 100 g/ml streptomycin (Sigma). After counting the  
141 number of cells in a particle counter (Euro Diagnostics, Krefeld, Germany), NHDF are seeded in  
142 96-well plates at a density of 8,000 cells/well and incubated at 37°C with 5% CO<sub>2</sub> overnight.  
143 Cells are treated by 0.1, 1, 5, 10, 25, 50 and 100 µg/ml, of the extracts in 100 µL of media. Cells  
144 are incubated with sodium fluoride (NaF, 250 µg/mL), to induce cell death as the positive  
145 control, or with DMSO only (negative control). The experiment is conducted in quadruplicates.  
146 After 24 hours of incubation, 10 µL AlamarBlue® (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA, USA)  
147 is added to each well. After 2 hours, the fluorescence is measured with a fluorescence  
148 spectrophotometer (Polarstar, BMG, Offenbug) using 544EX nm/590EM nm filter settings. The  
149 amount of fluorescence is proportional to the number of living cells and corresponds to the cells'  
150 metabolic activity. Damaged and nonviable cells have lower innate metabolic activity and thus  
151 generate a proportionally lower signal than healthy cells. The active ingredient of AlamarBlue®  
152 (resazurin) is a nontoxic, cell permeable compound that is blue in color and virtually  
153 nonfluorescent. Upon entering cells, resazurin is reduced to resorufin, which produces very  
154 bright red fluorescence. Viable cells continuously convert resazurin to resorufin, thereby  
155 generating a quantitative measure of viability and cytotoxicity (Rampersad, 2012).

156

## 157 **2. RESULTS**

158

### 159 **2.1. Fatty acid and volatile compounds from *Pistacia lentiscus* L. fruits oil**

160 *Pistacia lentiscus* fruits oils from artisanal and commercial samples are mainly constituted by oleic  
161 acid (18:1), palmitic acid (16:0), linoleic acid (18:2), and palmitoleic acid (16:1) with a 3/2/1/0.1 *ratio*,  
162 being the four main fatty acids presenting more than 90% of fatty acids in these oils (Tab 1 and 2).  
163 These results are in accordance with data reported in the literature for Tunisian and Algerian  
164 samples (Charef et al, 2008; Mezni et al, 2012; Trabelsi et al, 2012). However, two commercial  
165 samples show very different fatty acid profiles with inversed ratio of linoleic and oleic acids, revealing  
166 probable adulteration of these two commercial products, as higher ratio of linoleic acid can be a  
167 consequence of linoleic rich oil addition such a sunflower oil (Christopoulou, 2004). The results  
168 indicate that *Pistacia lentiscus* oils present a medium UFA/SFA *ratio* between 1.54 and 2.57. Mezni  
169 et al. reported higher UFA/SFA ratio ranging between 2.33 and 2.84 (Mezni et al, 2012). In addition,  
170 other reports showed similar higher ratios as well (Charef et al, 2012; Trabelsi et al. 2012). These  
171 differences can be explained by differences in oil extraction protocols and systems. In fact, Charef et  
172 al. used Soxhlet extraction using hexane and Trabelsi et al. used petroleum ether by means of a  
173 Soxhlet extraction; whereas artisanal samples from this study were produced using traditional  
174 mechanical oil extraction methods.

175 In order to identify specific markers of *Pistacia lentiscus* oil using GC-MS, identification of other  
176 volatiles after derivatization are also examined. Monoterpenes are identified from retention times  
177  $R_t=5$  min to  $R_t=15$  min (Tab. 3). Major monoterpenes are identified as  $\alpha$ -pinene, myrcene, and  $\beta$ -  
178 limonene, largely reported in *Pistacia lentiscus* fruits and oil (Mecharara-Ijdjeli et al, 2008; Wylli et al,  
179 2006). Myrcene is the most abundant monoterpene representing more than 50% of detected  
180 monoterpenes. Monoterpenes' fraction may represent from 2.37 to 20.43% of all the identified  
181 volatiles compounds in the artisanal samples. Regarding artisanal samples (1 - 8), sample 7 (*El*  
182 *Kala*) presented the highest monoterpene fraction representing 20.43% of the detected compounds,  
183 *versus* only 2.36% for sample 2 (*Akbou 2015*) (Tab. 3). For commercial samples 9 (*El Wafia*) and 10  
184 (*Zazia*), the monoterpenes fraction is nearly absent or not significant (0,26%), which confirms  
185 eventual adulteration of the samples, whereas other commercial samples (11-14) have a  
186 monoterpene fraction similar to those of artisanal samples which confirm their authenticity. It is  
187 interesting to note that from  $R_t=15$  min to  $R_t=20$  min, some sesquiterpenes could be identified by in  
188 small amount.

189 After 34 min, traces of alkylphenols are identified using NIST library. The major MS fragments  $m/z$   
190 value were 108 and 120. The literature report that GC/MS-based identification of cardanols from  
191 *Rhus* species describe the hydroxytropilium ion with a  $m/z$  value of 108 as a common fragment for  
192 all the identified alkylphenols (Frankie et al, 2001) (Tab. 3). Alkyl side chains for identified

193 compounds vary from 13 to 17 carbons and may present a probable unsaturation (Fig. 1).  
194 Occurrence of alkylphenols is considered a critical finding because of the irritating potential of these  
195 compounds in Anacardiaceae and Ginkgoaceae species.

## 196 **2.2. *Pistacia lentiscus* L. fruits oil unsaponifiable composition**

197  
198 Unsaponifiable extraction was considered for artisanal samples 2, 7, and 8 following AFNOR NF T  
199 60-206. Composition of unsaponifiable fractions is analyzed using GC-MS after derivatization into  
200 silyl esters. Phytosterols and alkylsalicylic derivatives are identified using NIST library (Wang et al,  
201 2014; Song et al, 2000). Five alkylsalicylic acids were identified between 11.5 and 14 min as C15:1,  
202 C15:0 and C17:1 derivatives. In this case, the diagnosis MS fragments was 180 (Tab. 4). In respect  
203 to phytosterols, identified between 26 and 36 minutes,  $\beta$ -sitosterol is the main identified phytosterol,  
204 stigmasterol and campesterol are also identified but in smaller proportions.

## 206 **2.3. Alkylsalicylic acids from *Pistacia lentiscus* L. fruits oil**

207  
208 As this is the first report demonstrating the occurrence of alkylphenols or alkylsalicylic acids in  
209 *Pistacia lentiscus* L. oil, HPLC-DAD-MS analysis was envisaged with comparison of oil samples 1-14  
210 to the 3-(heptadec-8-en-1-yl)-salicylic acid standard from PLFE1 fruit fraction. PLFE1 is a non-  
211 polar fraction rich in alkylsalicylic acids, is isolated from fruits of Algerian *Pistacia lentiscus* and  
212 characterized in a previous work (Tahrioui et al, 2020). PLFE1 contains 3-(heptadec-8-en-1-yl)-  
213 salicylic acid, also known as ginkgolic acid (C17:1), together with hydroginkgolic acid (C15:0). The  
214 structure of  $\Delta^8$  ginkgolic acid (C17:1) have been confirmed after isolation from the PLFE1 extract  
215 using NMR analysis, whereas the double bound position was confirmed by ozonolysis (Tahrioui et  
216 al, 2020).

217 From HPLC-UV/DAD-MS analysis, similarity with UV spectra and m/z values in negative mode  
218 confirmed the identification of previously isolated alkylsalicylic acids in the non-polar fruit extract  
219 PLFE1. Figure 2 shows that alkylsalicylic acids derivatives are detected in oil samples between 44  
220 and 60 minutes with the same distribution profile for 4 main compounds. Among the four detected  
221 derivatives, the main compounds were ginkgolic acid (C17:1) with a m/z value of 373 in negative  
222 mode, together with ginkgolic acid (C15:1) (m/z 345). The C17:2 derivative and the minor C13:0  
223 derivative are also identified (m/z respectively 370.9 and 319) with similar typical UV spectra with  
224 two characteristic  $\lambda_{max}$  at 247 and 314 nm (Fig.2).

## 226 **2.4. Cytotoxic assessment on Normal Human Dermal Fibroblasts (NHDF)**



227 Cell viability assay performed in NHDF cells revealed only a low cellular toxicity of the oil samples  
228 in all concentrations tested (0.1 to 100µg/mL), however, we detected a loss of cell viability for all  
229 unsaponifiable samples at concentrations higher than 50 µg/mL. At 100 µg/mL, cell viability for all  
230 unsaponifiable tested samples were below 50% (Fig. 3). These results may be linked to the  
231 presence of identified metabolites in the unsaponifiable. Regarding the different identified  
232 metabolites (phytosterols, alkylsalicylic acids, carotenoids), alkyl phenols and alkylsalicylic may be  
233 the highest contributors to this cytotoxicity as dermal toxicity of these class of compounds has  
234 already been described, such as contact dermatitis.

235

### 236 3. DISCUSSION

237

238 Studied artisanal and commercial samples of *Pistacia lentiscus* oils were quite homogeneous in  
239 terms of fatty acids composition with oleic acid (18:1), palmitic acid (16:0), linoleic acid (18:2), and  
240 palmitoleic acid (16:1) profiling a 3/2/1/0.1 ratio, although two of the seven commercial samples are  
241 found to be adulterated (Tab.1 and 2). Differences in trace secondary metabolites helped us identify  
242 alkylphenols derivatives as quality markers for *Pistacia lentiscus* fruit oils. HPLC-UV-DAD-MS  
243 confirmed that these alkylphenols are in fact alkylsalicylic acids after comparison with purified  
244 standards (Fig. 2). The 17:1 alkyl salicylic acid derivative is found to be the major derivative together  
245 with the 15:1 derivative. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study to report the occurrence  
246 of alkylsalicylic acids (ASAs) in *Pistacia lentiscus* fruit oil. Previous identification of ASA in *Pistacia*  
247 *lentiscus* included previous authors findings of these ASAs in the non-polar fraction of the fruits  
248 particularly the 3-(heptadec-8-en-1-yl)-salicylic acid also known as ginkgolic acid ( $\Delta 8$  C17:1) where  
249 the position of the double bound is determined using ozonolysis (Tahrioui et al, 2020). This class of  
250 secondary metabolites is reported in other Anacardiaceae species, such as *Anacardium occidentale*,  
251 but also in Ginkgoaceae species. Identification of alkylsalicylic acids by LC-MS and GC-MS is mainly  
252 described for *Ginkgo biloba* as quality requirements of phytopharmaceutical products requires  
253 limited amounts of ginkgolic acids (Abate-Pella, 2017). Alkylsalicylic acids could be identified in  
254 *Ginkgo biloba* leaves by GC-MS thanks to the characteristic fragmentation pattern with a typical  
255 fragment with m/z value of 180 described by Wang et al. for methyl esters derivatives (Wang et al,  
256 2014). Alkylsalicylic acids' profile in *Ginkgo biloba* leaves are quite different as the 15:1 ginkgolic  
257 acid, either  $\Delta 8$  or  $\Delta 10$ , is the major derivative. Wang et al. determined the  $\Delta 8/\Delta 10$  ratio using  
258 commercial standards on a HP-88 high polarity column, as the  $\Delta 8$  compound retention time is  
259 slightly lower. In this study, GC-MS is performed with a RTX-5 non polar column. Indeed, two  
260 isomers of the 15:1 and 17:1 alkylsalicylic derivatives could be identified, without clear identification

261 of each isomer. The availability of the purified standard fraction PLFE1 allowed us the identification  
262 of  $\Delta 8$  17:1 derivative as the major alkyl salicylic acid compound present in *Pistacia lentiscus* fruit oil.

263 Alkylsalicylic acids, such as ginkgolic or anacardic acids, have been described as toxic  
264 compounds responsible for cutaneous irritation or allergy (Kajiyama et al, 2002; Njoko et al, 2000).  
265 However, this cutaneous toxicity observed after consumption of *Ginkgo biloba*, is still under scrutiny.  
266 Indeed, alkyl resorcinols, such as ginkgols and cardanols, or catechol derivatives, such as urushiols  
267 from Anacardiaceae species, are highly toxic as the resorcinol and catechol moiety might be  
268 transformed into quinones responsible of severe contact dermatitis (Duthil, 2005; Aguilar-Ortigoza,  
269 2003; Knight et al, 1996). Alkylphenols and alkylresorcinols have also been identified in *Ginkgo*  
270 *biloba* leaves and may be responsible for the observed toxicity. Regarding alkylsalicylic acids  
271 derivatives, with a single phenol function, it is not clear yet whether transformation into quinones  
272 might occur after metabolization or not. Baron Ruppert and Luepke gave some evidence of  
273 cytotoxicity of a ginkgolic acids (GA) rich fraction (16% GA only) using the hen's egg test. The low  
274 level of GA in the tested fraction is still not sufficient to explain the toxicity of GA (Lomonaco et al,  
275 2013). However, more recently, hepatotoxicity of pure ginkgolic acids have been reported in mice  
276 and rat models (Baron-Ruppert et al, 2001). In the present work, evaluation of cytotoxicity on normal  
277 human dermal fibroblasts (NHDF) revealed that the unsaponifiable fraction can affect cell viability in  
278 fibroblasts, but this effect is not recorded for the oil (Fig. 3). While unsaponifiable fraction is rich in  
279 phyosterols and alkylsalicylic acids, toxicity assessment of phtosterols in cosmetics revealed that  
280 they are usually not toxic (Jiang et al, 2017). Nevertheless, GA is considered a promising antitumor  
281 compound via the inhibition of the small ubiquitin-related modifiers SUMO-1 (Belsito et al, 2013) and  
282 as an antibacterial agent by inhibiting virulence factors such as biofilm formation or membrane  
283 stiffness (Tahrioui et al, 2020).

#### 284 **4. CONCLUSION**

285 This work concerned the investigation of quality standards for *Pistacia lentiscus* fruits oil in  
286 commercial and artisanal samples lead to the identification of alkylsalicylic acids in fruits oil and  
287 unsaponifiable fraction of *Pistacia lentiscus* fruit oil. This is the first report of occurrence of  
288 alkylsalicylic acids in *Pistacia lentiscus* fruits oil. As alkylsalicylic acids are skin irritating agents,  
289 cytotoxicity evaluation on normal dermal human fibroblasts indicated that the oil is not toxic even at  
290 high concentrations, whereas unsaponifiable fraction containing higher amounts of alkylsalicylic  
291 derivatives are found to be toxic at concentrations above 50  $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$ . As quality standards required for  
292 *Ginkgo biloba* phytopharmaceutical products is fixed by a limit of 5 ppm for alkylsalicylic acids is set;

293 therefore, quantification of alkylsalicylic acids in *Pistacia lentiscus* oil both for nutraceutical or  
294 cosmeceutical use should be envisaged by manufacturers.

295

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## 300 **DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST:**

301 Authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that  
302 could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

## 303 **AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS:**

304 Conceptualization, methodology, S.B.; resources, S.B., N.B., S.C., formal analysis, S.B., N.B., A.B.,  
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409 **TABLES**

410

Table 1

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**Fatty acids composition of artisanal *Pistacia lentiscus* L. oil**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Artisanal samples	Bouanani	Akbou 2015	Akbou 2017	Settara	Ouled Rabah	Sidi Abdelaziz	El Kala	Blida	Mean+/-SD
<i>% Fatty acids</i>									
Palmitoleic acid 16 :1	2.38	1.72	2.07	3.03	2.02	2.42	2.1	2.76	2.31+/-0.43
Palmitic acid 16 :0	31.45	23.94	30.34	34.22	27.15	28.09	30.54	37.08	30.35+/-4.10
<i>n</i> - Hexadecanoic acid 16:0	0.19	0.36	0	0	0.17	0.17	0	0	0.11+/-0.13
Linoleic acid 18 :2	15.98	21.33	17.15	15.98	14.52	15.24	16.87	15.98	16.63+/-2.07
Oleic acid 18 :1	39.67	46.33	42.83	43.96	52.84	51.89	48.6	41.12	45.91+/-4.88
Stearic acid 18 :0	6.12	2.73	6.63	2.19	2.2	1.11	1.15	1.87	3.00+/-2.16
Saturated Fatty acids SFA	37.76	27.03	36.97	36.41	29.52	29.37	31.69	38.95	-
Unsaturated Fatty acids UFA	58.03	69.38	62.05	62.97	69.38	69.55	67.57	59.86	-
UFA/SFA	1.54	2.57	1.68	1.73	2.35	2.37	2.13	1.54	-

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Table 2

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**Fatty acids composition of commercial *Pistacia lentiscus* L. oil**

	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Commercial samples	El Wafia	Zazia	Belkis	Zahrat el Atibaa	Al Fourssan	Sultane	Mean+/-SD
<i>% Fatty acids</i>							
Palmitoleic acid 16 :1	0.13	0	2.03	1.69	2.31	1.28	1.24+/-0.97
Palmitic acid 16 :0	16.41	16.25	24.78	31.58	28.42	22.35	23.3+/-6.25
<i>n</i> - Hexadecanoic acid 16:0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Linoleic acid 18 :2	47.46	44.95	15.46	17.37	15.35	20.69	26.88+/-15.11
Oleic acid 18 :1	28.72	31.35	54.62	47.58	50.13	53.5	44.32+/-11.37
Stearic acid 18 :0	5.28	5.16	2.14	1.3	2.15	1.84	2.98+/-1.76
Saturated Fatty acids SFA	21.69	21.41	26.92	32.88	30.57	24.19	-
Unsaturated Fatty acids UFA	76.31	76.3	72.11	66.64	67.79	75.47	-
UFA/SFA	3.52	3.56	2.68	2.03	2.22	3.12	-

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Table 3

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GC-MS identification of monoterpenes and alkylphenols from *Pistacia lentiscus* oil.

Compound	Rt (min)	RI (calc)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
			Bouanani	Akbou 2015	Akbou 2017	Settara	Ouled rabah	Sidi Abdelaz	El kala	Blida	El wafia	Zazia	Belkis	Zahrat el atibaa	Al fourssan	Sultan	
<i>Monoterpenes (%)</i>			9.3	2.37	15.29	11.81	6.46	9.71	20.43	13.84	0.26	0	14.27	7.17	15.63	6.12	
$\alpha$ – pinene	5.51	948	1.4	0.3	2.59	1.24	0.89	1.44	2.28	1.4	-	-	1.81	0.93	2.69	1.06	
Camphene	6.01	953	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.55	-	-	-	-	0.09	-	-	
b-myrcene	7.15	976	6.62	1.68	8.64	9.32	4.73	6.66	14.79	9.37	0.26	-	10.13	4.25	10.29	3.56	
1,3,5-cycloheptatriene,3,7,7-trimethyl-	8.31	1010	-	-	0.18	-	-	-	-	0.47	-	-	0.27	0.15	0.29	0.21	
d-limonene	8.47	1018	0.63	0.19	2.24	0.69	0.39	0.86	1.06	0.71	-	-	0.89	0.53	1.09	0.52	
cyclohexene,4-methyl-3-(1-methylethyl)-	8.66	1023	-	-	0.14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
$\alpha$ -terpinolene	9.01	1045	0.34	0.1	0.47	0.33	0.23	0.38	0.57	0.61	-	-	0.49	0.17	0.6	-	
trans-sabinene hydrate	9.42	1090	-	-	0.19	-	-	-	0.65	0.85	--	-	-	0.38	-	0.49	
trans-4-methoxy thujane	13.9	1197	-	-	0.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
4(2-methoxypropan-2-yl)-1-methylcyclohex-1-ene	14.6	1210	0.31	0.1	0.64	0.23	0.22	0.37	0.53	0.43	-	-	0.68	0.64	0.67	0.28	
<i>Alkylphenols (%)</i>			3.21	0.93	11.25	0	2.42	2.28	0	0	0	0.63	2.12	0	1.32	0.44	
Cardanol (17:1)	m/z 120, 108	34.88	2282	1.86	0.23	7.2	0	2.42	1.85	0	0	0	0.63	1.84	0	1.04	0
Cardanol (15 :1)	m/z 120, 108	34.94	2296	1.35	0.7	2.93	0	0	0.43	0	0	0	0	0.28	0	0.28	0.3
Cardanol (13 :0)	m/z 120, 108	35.25	2333	0	0	1.12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.14

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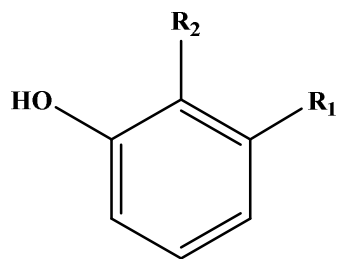
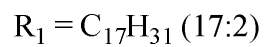
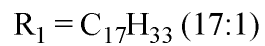
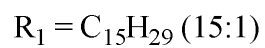
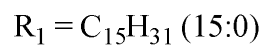
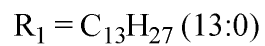
Table 4

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**GC-MS identification of phytosterols and alkylsalicylic acids from unsaponifiable.**

Ret.Time	m/z	Identification	3b Akbou		7b Elkala		8b Blida	
			Area	%	Area	%	Area	%
<i>Alkylsalicylic acids silyl esters</i>								
11.683	374, 207, 193, 180, 165	C15:1	2021536	26.92	2910483	42.86	1416252	32.95
11.787	374, 207, 193, 180, 165	C15:1	298418	3.97	294500	4.34	216470	5.04
11.851	376, 207, 193, 180, 165	C15:0	699594	9.32	472092	6.95	310660	7.23
12.254	192, 143	NI	2071988	27.6	1325905	19.53	1620353	37.7
13.67	402, 180, 165	C17:1	1480699	19.72	1092044	16.08	507068	11.8
13.765	402, 180, 165	C17:1	936268	12.47	695181	10.24	227070	5.28
<i>Phytosterols silyl esters</i>								
26.804	472, 382, 343, 207, 129	Campesterol, TMS	1008566	2.70	2728825	7.37	739221	3.0è
27.174	483, 393, 207	NI	323628	0.87	257251	0.69	0	0
28.025	484, 394, 355, 281, 207	Stigmasterol, TMS	427520	1.14	1885985	5.10	265877	1.10
29.123	483, 393, 281, 207	NI	491899	1.32	381210	1.03	0	0
30.155	484, 394, 355, 281, 207	NI	193489	0.52	174070	0.47	0	0
30.476	486, 396, 381, 357, 255	$\beta$ -Sitosterol, TMS	19841066	53.09	22865500	61.79	16281468	67.57
31.205	386, 281, 207	NI	1625896	4.35	1392926	3.76	834133	3.46
32.744	218, 189	Lupeol TMS	4269839	11.42	2826449	7.64	2239892	9.30
33.253	483, 393, 365, 339	NI	7122113	19.06	2761691	7.46	2148576	8.92
36.330	483, 422, 407, 379, 281	NI	2030622	5.43	1730922	4.68	1584655	6.58

422 **Figure 1.** General structures of alkylphenols and alkylsalicylic acids



423 Alkylphenols  $R_2 = H$ , Alkyl salicylic acids  $R_2 = COOH$

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425 **Figure 2.** HPLC-DAD-MS profiles of *Pistacia lentiscus* oil fractions (44 to 65 minutes) showing the 5 main identified alkylsalicylic acids : C 13:0, C 15:1, C 15:2, C 17:1 and C 17:2.  
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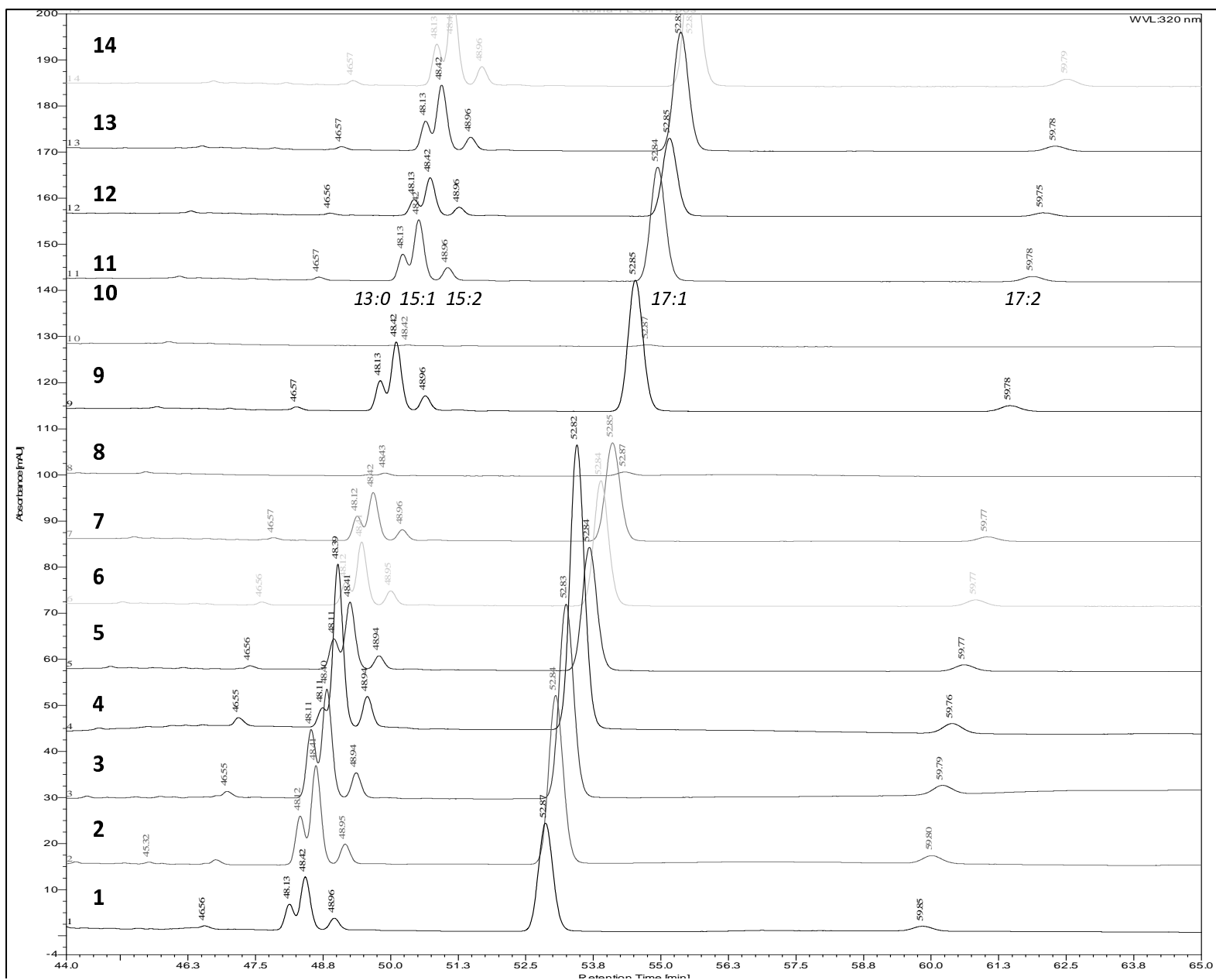
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446 **Figure 3.** % of Cell viability (mean  $\pm$  SEM) of Normal Human Dermal Fibroblasts submitted to.  
447 (A) : *Pistacia lentiscus* L. artisanal oil samples 3 (Akbou 2017), 7 (El Kala) and 8 (Blida) from 0.1  
448 to 100 $\mu$ g/mL, (B) Unsaponifiable fraction of *Pistacia lentiscus* L. artisanal oil 3b (Akbou 2017),  
449 7b (El Kala) and 8b (Blida) from 0.1 to 100 $\mu$ g/mL.

