

been inhibited through witchcraft. All patients were of low socioeconomic groups and were under emotional and psychological stress as consequence of their relative infertility. Pseudocyesis, although not common in gynecological practice, has been recognized since the time of Hypocrites, Aldrich.<sup>1</sup> In our study the incidence of pseudocyesis is 1:160 this comparable with 1:170 found by Hennessy.<sup>2</sup> Sterile unions are, therefore, invariably associated with considerable stress, especially when the other women in polygamous marriage succeeded in bearing children. In a monogamous marriage infertility is often license for extra marital affairs. Pseudocyesis is classic evidence of the supreme role of the central nervous system on gonadal function through a rather complex and poorly understood psycho-neuro-endocrine interaction Bray et al.<sup>3</sup> The reproductive potential of a woman is very important for social, psychological and economic reasons, so it is not unheard of to detect psychosomatic symptoms due to infertility. All patients presented with amenorrhea, belief of pregnancy and abdominal distension, these results are similar to the results of Meza et al<sup>4</sup> who demonstrated the above symptoms in all his patients. Reactive depression is of importance in the genesis of pseudocyesis and subsequent manifestations of symptoms and signs could be a defense against psychological disorder. The predominance of women of low socioeconomic of group in this series may imply that educated or sophisticated women can compensate for their childlessness by the diversional pursuits, although occasionally varying degrees of depression and mood alteration do occur. Pseudocyesis had no definitive effect on the pituitary function, our case had normal level of prolactin, FSH, LH, and this is consistent with what Padayachi et al<sup>5</sup> found in his study. Unless the symptoms and sign of pregnancy disappeared spontaneously, it is very difficult to convenes the patient.

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## Garden cress (*lepidium sativum*) seeds as oral contraceptive plant in mice

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In recent years, health care professional working in family planning programs have paid increasing attention to the quality of care and informed choice. The provider for contraceptive choice is most likely to be concerned with the ability of a method to prevent pregnancy, with its safety in use and with its feasibility in terms of provision. Choice of a method will of course be concerned with its efficacy, safety and side effects.<sup>1</sup>

Oral contraceptive method is widely used in the world to control birth. But individual variation in absorption and metabolism account for small minority of failures. Therefore, and under the circumstances of the economic sanction, a search for herbaceous plant should be discovered and should be used without hard effort and counseling.

BALB/c mice bred in the College of Science, University of Basrah, Iraq were used throughout this work. They were 4-5-weeks-old. The mice were maintained in an animal house which is kept at a 25°C. Plastic cages with silk covers and saw dust beddings were used and were cleaned twice a week. Thirty-two female mice were divided randomly into 2 groups. Sixteen mice of one group were fed for one week on a standard diet containing garden cress (*lepidium sativum*) seeds. At 4 pm daily and throughout the experiment, each 4 female mice were transferred and caged with 2 males until the morning (9 am) of the next day. Then, female mice were isolated in the cages alone for experimental feeding. The other group of 16 female mice was fed on standard diet only and left with a male mice as a control.

In statistics, chi square ( $X^2$ ) was used as a test of significance. The differences were considered significant at a level of  $p < 0.05$ .

The rate of contraception was (100%) in female mice in the treated group. In which, each mice received one g/day of oral dose of garden cress seeds. However, the total interruption of oral dose for the same female mice were recovered with the ability for pregnancy (80%). The pregnancy rate for the control group was (100%). Statistically, the difference was not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). Similarly,

there was an insignificant relationship in the body weights between the treated and control groups ( $p>0.05$ ). Also, there was no difference in the pregnancy period, weight and number of newborn between the treated and controlled female mice.

The contraceptive usage of oral *lepidium sativum* seeds was efficient compared to other known contraceptive methods. Different contraceptive means had a various failure rate and it ranged from 0.1-8%.<sup>2,3</sup> In addition, *lepidium sativum* seeds did not cause any harmful effects or deaths on the treated mice. While most of the contraceptive methods cause different complications including nausea, cardiovascular disease, liver malfunction, psychological stress, bleeding, inflammation of the pelvic organs, cancer, neoplasm and increased body weight.<sup>4</sup> Sexually transmitted diseases and reproductive tract infections often occur among contraceptive users.<sup>5</sup> Also, *lepidium sativum* seeds are available, cheap and easy to use. The ability of the treated mice to become pregnant was 100% after a very short time in comparison to pills or chemical contraceptive users. *Lepidium sativum* has less need for counseling which is another advantage for its use.

This study demonstrated that the *lepidium sativum* seeds are efficient to prevent pregnancy in laboratory mice and the purification of the main ingredient(s) is essential for future application in

human beings. Also, its effects on the reproductive organs, endocrine organs and others should be investigated.

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