



Ain Shams University  
Faculty of Pharmacy  
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# **Study of the potential neuroprotective effect of Rifampicin on lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures in rats**

*A Thesis*

*submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
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(**Pharmacology & Toxicology**)*

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# ABSTRACT

Epilepsy is one of the serious neurological sequelae of bacterial meningitis. Rifampicin, the well-known broad spectrum antibiotic, is clinically used for chemoprophylaxis of meningitis. Besides its antibiotic effects, rifampicin has been proven to be an effective neuroprotective candidate in various experimental models of neurological diseases. In addition, rifampicin was found to have promising antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and anti-apoptotic effects. Herein, we investigated the anticonvulsant effect of rifampicin at experimental meningitis dose (20mg/kg, i.p.) using lithium-pilocarpine model of status epilepticus (SE) in rats. Additionally, we studied the effect of rifampicin on seizure induced histopathological, neurochemical and behavioral abnormalities. Our study showed that rifampicin pretreatment attenuated seizure activity and the resulting hippocampal insults marked by hematoxylin and eosin. Markers of oxidative stress, neuroinflammation and apoptosis were evaluated, in the hippocampus, 24 hr after SE induction. We found that rifampicin pretreatment suppressed oxidative stress as indicated by normalized malondialdehyde and glutathione levels. Rifampicin pretreatment attenuated SE-induced neuroinflammation and decreased the hippocampal expression of interleukin-1 $\beta$ , tumor necrosis factor- $\alpha$ , nuclear factor kappa-B, and cyclooxygenase-2. Moreover, rifampicin mitigated SE-induced neuronal apoptosis as indicated by fewer positive cytochrome c immunostained cells and prevent the elevation of caspase-3 activity in the hippocampus. Furthermore, Morris water maze testing at 7 days after SE induction showed that rifampicin pretreatment can improve cognitive dysfunction. Therefore, rifampicin, currently used in the management of meningitis, has a potential additional advantage of ameliorating its epileptic sequelae.

**Keywords:** seizure, meningitis, lithium-pilocarpine, Rifampicin, hippocampus

# LIST OF CONTENTS

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	<i>Page</i>
<b>I. LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....</b>	<b>III</b>
<b>II. LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>III. LIST OF FIGURES.....</b>	<b>VII</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.1 Epilepsy .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1.1 Definition of seizures and epilepsy .....	1
1.1.2 Classification of seizures and epilepsy .....	2
1.1.3 Epilepsy etiology .....	3
<b>1.2 Temporal lobe epilepsy (TLE) .....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.2.1. Background .....	6
1.2.2. Cardinal signs and symptoms.....	7
1.2.3. Neuropsychological co-morbidities .....	8
1.2.4. Pathophysiology .....	9
1.2.5. Temporal Lobe Epilepsy Treatment & Management .....	18
1.2.6. Animal models .....	21
<b>1.3 Rifampicin.....</b>	<b>27</b>
1.3.1. Background .....	27
1.3.2. Rifampicin pharmacokinetics.....	27
1.3.3. Mechanism of action.....	30
1.3.4. Pharmacological uses .....	30
1.3.5. Adverse events .....	30
1.3.6. Toxicology .....	31
1.3.7. Drug Interactions.....	32
1.3.8. Pharmaceutical dosage forms and dosing .....	33
1.3.9. Rifampicin as neuroprotectant.....	33
<b>2. AIM OF THE STUDY .....</b>	<b>38</b>

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<b>3. MATERIALS AND METHODS.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>3.1 Experimental design.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>3.2 Materials .....</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>3.3 Methods and experiments.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>3.3.1. Assessment of behavioral variables (seizure score, latency to develop SE, % animals developed SE) and mortality .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>3.3.2. Histopathological examination .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>3.3.3. Assessment of the oxidative stress biomarkers.....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>3.3.4. Assessment of inflammation biomarkers .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>3.3.5. Assessment of the apoptosis biomarkers .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>3.3.6. Behavioral tests during the latent period (epileptogenesis)....</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>3.3.7. Statistical analysis .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>4. RESULTS.....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>4.1 Behavioral variables (seizure score, latency to develop SE, % animals developed SE) and mortality .....</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>4.2 Histopathological examination.....</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>4.3 Oxidative stress biomarkers.....</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>4.4 Inflammation biomarkers.....</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>4.5 Apoptosis biomarkers .....</b>	<b>93</b>
<b>4.6 Behavioral tests during the latent period (epileptogenesis).....</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>5. DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>7. REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>8. ARABIC SUMMARY .....</b>	

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## I. LIST OF ABBREVIATION

<i>Abbreviation</i>	<i>Term</i>
°C	Degree Celsius
μl	Micro liter
μg	Micro gram
μmol	Micro mole
A <sub>sample</sub>	Sample absorbance
A <sub>standard</sub>	Standard absorbance
AAP	4-aminoantipyrine
AED	Anti epileptic drug
Ag	Antigen
AMPA	α-amino-3-hydroxy-5-methyl-4-isoxazolepropionic acid
ANOVA	Analysis of variance
ATP	Adenosine-5'-triphosphate
AUC	Area under the curve
Aβ	Beta-amyloid
Aβ	Amyloid beta protein
BBB	Blood–brain barrier
BSA	Bovine serum albumin
Ca <sup>++</sup>	Calcium
CA	Cornu Ammonis
CAT	Catalase
CBZ	Carbamazepine
cm	Centimeter
CNS	Central nervous system
COX-2	Cyclooxygenase- 2
CPSs	Complex partial seizures
CSF	Cerebrospinal fluid
Cu	Copper
DHBS	3, 5-Dichloro-2-hydroxybenzene sulfonic acid
DTNB	5,5'-Dithiobis(2-nitrobenzoic acid)
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic acid
EAA	Excitatory amino acid
EAAT	Excitatory amino acid transporter
ECS	Extra cellular space
EEG	Electroencephalogram
ELISA	Enzyme linked immunosorbent assay

<b><i>Abbreviation</i></b>	<b><i>Term</i></b>
<b>FDA</b>	Food and drug administration
<b>Fe</b>	Ferrous
<b>g/gm</b>	Gram
<b>GABA</b>	Gamma-aminobutyric acid
<b>GSH</b>	Glutathione reduced
<b>hr</b>	Hour
<b>H&amp;E</b>	Hematoxylin and Eosin
<b>H<sub>2</sub>O</b>	Water
<b>H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub></b>	Hydrogen peroxide
<b>HRP</b>	horseradish peroxidase
<b>i.p.</b>	Intraperitoneal injection
<b>IHC</b>	Immunohistochemical
<b>ILAE</b>	International league against epilepsy
<b>IL-6</b>	Interleukin- 6
<b>IL-1<math>\beta</math></b>	Interleukin- 1 Beta
<b>K<sup>+</sup></b>	Potassium,
<b>Kg</b>	Kilogram
<b>LiCl</b>	Lithium chloride
<b>LTA</b>	Lipoteichoic acid
<b>M</b>	Molar
<b>MDA</b>	Malondialdehyde
<b>mg</b>	Milligram
<b>min</b>	Minute
<b>ml</b>	Milliliter
<b>mM</b>	Millimolar
<b>mmol</b>	Millimole
<b>MPP<sup>+</sup></b>	1-methyl-4-phenylpyridinium
<b>mTLE</b>	Mesial temporal lobe epilepsy
<b>MWM</b>	Morris water maze
<b>Na<sup>+</sup></b>	Sodium
<b>Na<sup>+</sup>-K<sup>+</sup>-ATPase</b>	Sodium potassium ATP pump
<b>NF-<math>\kappa</math>B</b>	Nuclear factor-kappa b
<b>ng</b>	nanogram
<b>nm</b>	Nanometer
<b>nmol</b>	Nanomole
<b>NMDA</b>	N-methyl-D-aspartate
<b>nTLE</b>	Neocortical temporal lobe epilepsy
<b>O.D</b>	Optical density
<b>p.o.</b>	Per oral

<i><b>Abbreviation</b></i>	<i><b>Term</b></i>
<b>pNA</b>	Para -nitro aniline
<b>PC12</b>	Rat pheochromocytoma cells
<b>PD</b>	Parkinson disease
<b>PEG</b>	Polyethylene glycol
<b>R.T</b>	Room temperature
<b>RIF</b>	Rifampicin
<b>RNS</b>	Reactive nitrogen species
<b>ROS</b>	Reactive oxygen species
<b>s/sec</b>	Second
<b>SE</b>	Status epilepticus
<b>SEM</b>	Standard error of mean
<b>SOD</b>	Superoxide dismutase
<b>SRS</b>	Spontaneous recurrent seizure
<b>TBA</b>	Thiobarbaturic acid
<b>TBS</b>	Tris buffered saline
<b>TGF-<math>\beta</math></b>	Transforming growth factor-beta
<b>TLE</b>	Temporal lobe epilepsy
<b>T<sub>m</sub></b>	Transport maximum
<b>TNF-<math>\alpha</math></b>	Tumor necrosis factor-alpha
<b>UV</b>	Ultra-violet light
<b>VNS</b>	Vagal nerve stimulation



## II. LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1</b>	Classification of anticonvulsants according to mechanism of action.....	<b>18</b>
<b>2</b>	Reaction scheme of caspase-3 for 96 well plate microassay method.....	<b>67</b>
<b>3</b>	Effect of rifampicin (20 mg/kg) on LiCl-pilocarpine induced SE latency, seizure severity, no of animals developed SE and mortality rate .....	<b>75</b>
<b>4</b>	Effect of rifampicin (20 mg/kg) on GSH, MDA levels and CAT activity in the hippocampus after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures .....	<b>80</b>
<b>5</b>	Effect of rifampicin (20 mg/kg) on TNF- $\alpha$ and IL-1 $\beta$ levels in the hippocampus after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures .....	<b>90</b>
<b>6</b>	Effect of rifampicin (20 mg/kg) on caspase-3 activity in the hippocampus after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures .....	<b>97</b>
<b>7</b>	Effect of rifampicin (20mg/kg) on locomotor activity of rats after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures .....	<b>100</b>
<b>8</b>	Effect of rifampicin (20 mg/kg) on the escape latency (sec) during the 4 training days in Morris Water Maze after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures .....	<b>103</b>
<b>9</b>	Effect of rifampicin (20 mg/kg) on time spent by rats in target quadrant during the probe trial in Morris Water Maze after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures .....	<b>104</b>

### III. LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Fig. No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1</b>	ILAE 2017 classification of seizure types .....	<b>2</b>
<b>2</b>	Hippocampal subregions .....	<b>7</b>
<b>3</b>	Steps of pathogenesis of TLE .....	<b>9</b>
<b>4</b>	Mechanism of TLE induction involved in various animal models of epilepsy .....	<b>23</b>
<b>5</b>	Multiple neuroprotective mechanisms of rifampicin .....	<b>37</b>
<b>6</b>	Outline for different experimental groups .....	<b>41</b>
<b>7</b>	Schematic workflow of the experimental design .....	<b>44</b>
<b>8</b>	Standard calibration curve of TNF- $\alpha$ .....	<b>60</b>
<b>9</b>	Standard calibration curve of IL-1 $\beta$ .....	<b>64</b>
<b>10</b>	Standard calibration curve of pNA .....	<b>68</b>
<b>11</b>	Locomotor activity detector .....	<b>70</b>
<b>12</b>	Different virtual quadrants in morris water maze .....	<b>72</b>
<b>13</b>	H & E staining of hippocampal CA1 area (x400).....	<b>77</b>
<b>14</b>	H & E staining of hippocampal CA3 area (x400).....	<b>78</b>
<b>15</b>	Effect of Rifampicin (20 mg/kg) on MDA content in the hippocampus after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures.....	<b>81</b>
<b>16</b>	Effect of Rifampicin (20 mg/kg) on GSH content in the hippocampus after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures.....	<b>82</b>
<b>17</b>	Effect of rifampicin (20 mg/kg) on catalase activity in the hippocampus after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures.....	<b>83</b>

<b>Fig. No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>18</b>	Immunohistochemical staining of NF- $\kappa$ B in hippocampal CA1 area .....	<b>85</b>
<b>19</b>	Immunohistochemical staining of NF- $\kappa$ B in hippocampal CA3 area .....	<b>86</b>
<b>20</b>	Immunohistochemical staining of COX-2 in hippocampal CA1 area .....	<b>87</b>
<b>21</b>	Immunohistochemical staining of COX-2 in hippocampal CA3 area .....	<b>88</b>
<b>22</b>	Effect of rifampicin (20 mg/kg) on TNF- $\alpha$ level in the hippocampus after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures .....	<b>91</b>
<b>23</b>	Effect of rifampicin (20 mg/kg) on IL-1 $\beta$ level in the hippocampus after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures .....	<b>92</b>
<b>24</b>	Immunohistochemical staining of cytochrome c in hippocampal CA1 area.....	<b>94</b>
<b>25</b>	Immunohistochemical staining of cytochrome c in hippocampal CA3 area.....	<b>95</b>
<b>26</b>	Effect of rifampicin (20 mg/kg) on caspase-3 activity in the hippocampus after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures..	<b>98</b>
<b>27</b>	Effect of rifampicin on locomotor activity of rats after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures .....	<b>101</b>
<b>28</b>	Effect of rifampicin (20 mg/kg) on the escape latency (sec) during the 4 training days in Morris Water Maze after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures .....	<b>105</b>
<b>29</b>	Effect of rifampicin (20 mg/kg) on time spent by rats in target quadrant during the probe trial in Morris Water Maze after lithium-pilocarpine induced seizures .....	<b>106</b>

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Epilepsy:

Epilepsy is a chronic neurological disease of the brain which is characterized by the occurrence of recurrent spontaneous seizures. It contributes 1% of the global burden of disease affecting the lives of nearly 50 million people globally, out of which around 80% reside in developing countries (Birbeck, 2010; Megiddo et al., 2016).

### 1.1.1 Definition of seizure and epilepsy:

An epileptic seizure is defined as: a transient occurrence of signs and/or symptoms due to abnormal excessive or synchronous neuronal activity in the brain. Epilepsy occurs when someone has an epileptic seizure and their brain shows a pathologic and enduring tendency to have recurrent seizures (Fisher et al., 2014).

Epilepsy is diagnosed when an individual has (Fisher et al., 2014; Falco-Walter et al., 2018):

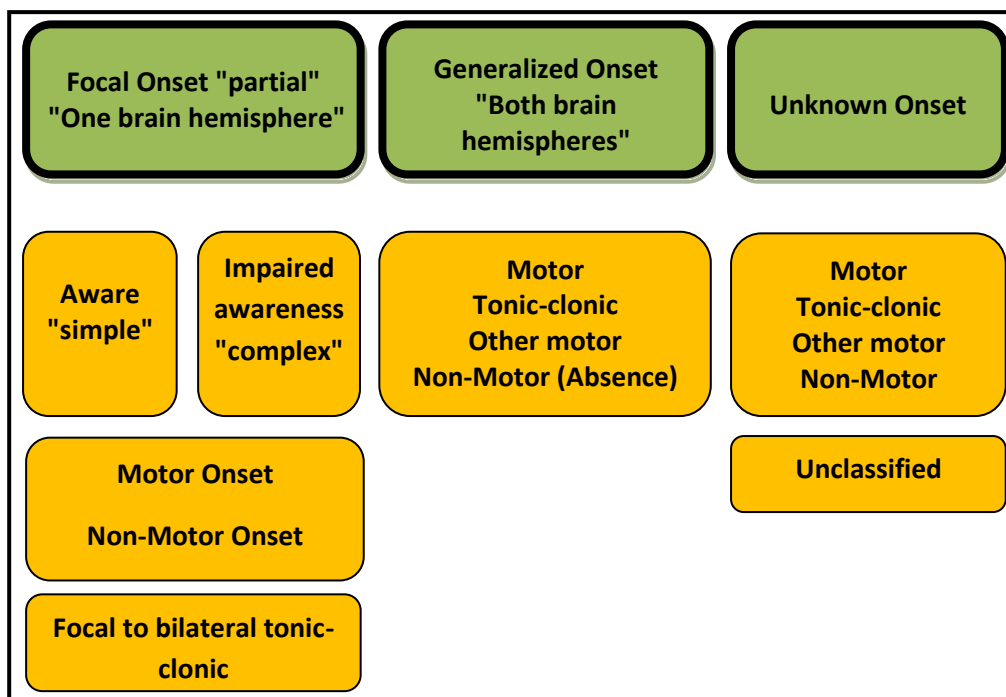
- 1) At least two unprovoked or reflex seizures >24 h apart;
- 2) One unprovoked or reflex seizure and a probability of having another seizure similar to the general recurrence risk after two unprovoked seizures ( $\geq 60\%$ ) over the next 10 years;

Examples of evidence that increases the probability of having additional seizures include:

- A) Epileptiform activity on EEG (Electroencephalogram) or
  - B) A potential epileptogenic abnormality on brain imaging.
- 3) An epilepsy syndrome; epilepsy syndromes refer to clusters of features (seizure type(s), EEG findings, imaging findings, age-dependent features, triggers and sometimes prognosis) that occur together.

### 1.1.2 Classification of seizures and epilepsies:

*1.1.2.1 The classification of seizure types according to the International League against Epilepsy (ILAE) 2017 is summarized by Figure 1:*



**Figure 1:** ILAE 2017 classification of seizure types (Falco-Walter *et al.*, 2018).

#### 1.1.2.2 Classification of epilepsy:

After classification of seizure type, the clinician should aim to identify the patient's epilepsy type. To classify an epilepsy type, a patient must have met the definition and the criteria for epilepsy, as was mentioned before. The epilepsy type classification is broader in scope than is the seizure classification as it considers the possibility of having multiple seizure types, and includes information about the overall clinical picture, genetics, imaging, laboratory tests, prognoses and co morbidities (Falco-Walter *et al.*, 2018).

Epilepsy types are classified as:

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| <b>1) Focal</b>                          | <b>2) Generalized</b> |
| <b>3) Combined Generalized and Focal</b> | <b>4) Unknown.</b>    |

The patient is placed into one of these categories after classifying all types of seizures he has and then mapping them in aggregate to one of these four categories. (Scheffer *et al.*, 2017)

### **1.1.3- Epilepsy etiology:**

Primary epilepsy (50%) is idiopathic (“unknown cause”). In secondary epilepsy (50%), referred as acquired epilepsy (Reddy, 2014), seizures may result from a variety of conditions including trauma, metabolic imbalances, anoxia, cerebrovascular disease, infections of the central nervous system (CNS), tumors, drug withdrawal seizures, or neurotoxicity (Loscher and Brandt, 2010).

The clinician should consider the etiology of seizures due to its critical impact on epilepsy management and prognostic counseling. The ILAE has defined six etiologic categories, focusing on those etiologies with management implications (Belousova *et al.*, 2017).

**These categories are:**

- **Structural etiology:**

The presence of a finding on neuro-imaging which reasonably can be concluded to be the cause of patient’s seizures (Lapalme-Remis and Cascino, 2016)

- **Genetic etiology:**

The presence of a specific disease-causing variant in a gene, which is believed to be pathogenic for epilepsy, would lead to a genetic classification. Moreover, having a relevant family history and typical features (EEG, seizure semiology) is sufficient for a genetic etiology classification (**Hildebrand *et al.*, 2013**).

- **Infectious etiology:**

CNS Infections and infestations are among the most common risk factor for seizures and acquired epilepsy and are probably the most common preventable risk factor for epilepsy ( **Vezzani *et al.*, 2016; Ramantani and Holthausen, 2017**). People of any age may develop seizures due to infections. It is important to differentiate between early seizures (also termed acute symptomatic, provoked, or insult-associated seizures), which may occur within the first 1–2 weeks after infection (**Beghi *et al.*, 2010**) and late unprovoked seizures, which occur later (often months to years) after infection and are therefore defined as acquired epilepsy (**Lowenstein, 2009**).

Early seizures which occur at or soon after the infection occur in up to 30 % of all CNS infections (**Singhi, 2011**). and are not considered spontaneous seizures; they are thought to be mechanistically different from any subsequent consequential chronic epilepsy (**Shorvon and Guerrini, 2010**). Early seizures are a risk factor for the later development of epilepsy. However, not all people with early seizures will develop epilepsy (**Vezzani *et al.*, 2016**).

Status epilepticus (SE), defined as continuous seizure activity for more than 5 min or consecutive seizures without recovery of consciousness, can be a serious consequence of CNS infections (**Trinka *et al.*, 2012**). Status epilepticus is a life-threatening neurological and medical emergency with high mortality,