

## Biosynthesis of Silver nanoparticles and investigation of genotoxic effects and antimicrobial activity

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### Abstract

Health risk assessment of nanomaterials is a new and important area emerging; obtaining nanoparticles by green synthesis method and performing cytotoxicity, genotoxicity and antimicrobial testing is an important endpoint. In vitro studies for nanoparticles (NPs) obtained by the non-toxic method offer many advantages, such as the study of the bioavailability of nanomaterials to sensitive target cells. It will be useful for investigating the toxic and genotoxic risks associated with nanoparticle exposure. In this study; silver nanoparticles (AgNPs) were synthesized by green synthesis using grape vinegar prepared by ourselves. The resulting Ag NPs were characterized using Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), Scanning electron microscopy (SEM) and X-ray powder diffraction (XRD) methods and for different AgNPs concentrations in the range of 5-60 nm. The genotoxic effects of AgNPs were investigated using the Sister chromatid exchange (SCE) test and Micronucleus (MN) tests. Furthermore, the antibacterial and antifungal activities of the synthesized compound were tested against some pathogenic bacteria which are causative agents of the disease. As a result; it was found that the synthesized compound showed different degrees of inhibitory effect on the growth of pathogen strains compared to standard antibiotics. The findings are thought to provide clinically useful information in the treatment of many diseases using AgNPs at optimum concentrations (non-genotoxic concentrations).

**Keywords:** Antimicrobial Activity; Green Synthesis; Pathogenic Microorganism; Silver Nanoparticles; Vinegar; Genotoxic Effect.

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### INTRODUCTION

Advances in nanotechnology provide improvements in a number of properties (magnetic, catalytic, optical, electrical and mechanical) of materials of the same formulation. Metal NPs have a very high surface area and surface-atomic fraction. By decreasing the size of NPs, they

acquire physicochemical properties, reactive effects, visual properties, electronic properties, and anti-bacterial properties [1, 2].

NPs are synthesized by making use of different methodologies including chemical, physical and biological [3]. Synthesis of high amounts of NPs using chemical methodology can be carried out in a short time. However, chemicals used for reduction

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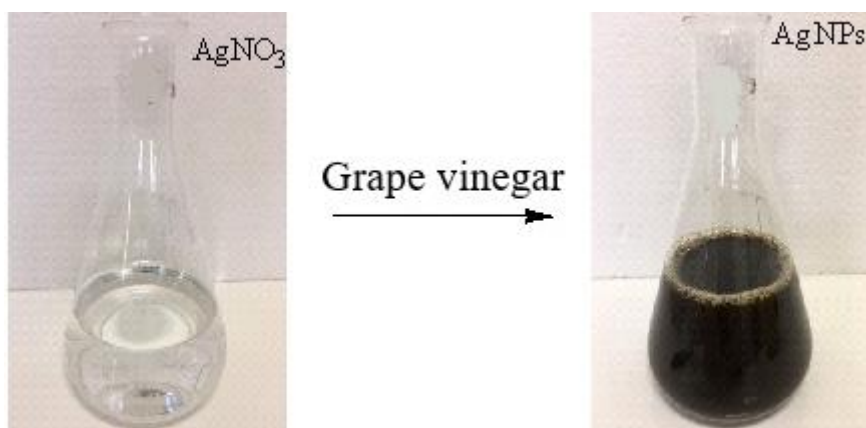


Fig. 1. Green synthesis of AgNPs.

are lethal and lead to non-environmentally friendly results. These drawbacks have led to increased interest in the use of ecological non-toxic methods in the synthesis of NPs [4–7].

Therefore, in recent years, there is increasing interest in the use of environmentally friendly, economical and non-toxic “green synthesis method” in the synthesis of NPs [8]. For this purpose, NPs were synthesized *in vitro* and *in vivo* using many plants, fungi and bacteria [9, 10].

AgNPs from metal NPs have limited effect on numerous bacterial progeny and microorganisms that occur in biological and industrial procedures due to their high antimicrobial properties [11]. AgNPs are used in medical equipment and cream and skin balm applied to open wounds to prevent bacterial contamination [12, 13].

In addition, in the textile industry, where AgNPs are used the most, antibacterial products (sports equipment, swimsuits, bandages, etc.) are produced [14]. Although AgNPs have many benefits, their side effects are not fully known and the risk of reaching the cell nucleus and damaging the genetic material [15].

However, there are some studies suggesting the widespread use of Ag nanoparticles, hepatotoxicity, neurotoxicity, nephrotoxicity and genotoxicity [16]. The genotoxicity and cytotoxicity of Ag nanoparticles have been demonstrated in both *in vitro* and *in vivo* assay systems. Induction of chromosomal and DNA damage by Ag NPs has been studied in many mammalian and fish cells [17].

In this study; AgNPs were synthesized by green synthesis using grape vinegar. The resulting

AgNPs were characterized structurally and morphologically (using Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR), Scanning electron microscopy (SEM) and X-ray powder diffraction (XRD) methods. In the last stage of the research; Sister chromatid exchange (SCE) and Micronucleus (MN) assays were performed to investigate the genotoxic effects of AgNPs for different AgNPs concentrations in the range of 5-160 mg/mL. Synthesized AgNPs were investigated for antimicrobial activity against pathogenic strains (Gram (-) and Gram(+) bacteria and yeast); *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Staphylococcus epidermis*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Escherichia coli*, *Salmonella typhi* H, *Micrococcus luteus*, *Bacillus cereus*, *Klebsiella pneumonia*, *Proteus vulgaris*, *Brucella abortus* and *Candida albicans*.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Synthesis of silver nanoparticles

AgNPs were performed using the procedure in the literature of Nadaroglu *et al.*, [6]. Briefly; 20 mL of grape vinegar was added to 80 mL of 0.1 M  $\text{AgNO}_3$  solution and the mixture was stirred at room temperature with a magnetic stirrer. The color of the solution changed from colorless to light yellow and then to brown. The formation of silver nanoparticles was followed by color change. Separation of the silver nanoparticles from the dispersion was carried out by centrifugation, after which the AgNPs were washed several times with distilled water and then with acetone to remove water insoluble impurities. The resulting Ag NPs were lyophilized for analysis and stored in dry vials (Fig. 1).

### Synthesis and characterization of AgNPs

For identification of AgNPs in solution, the wavelength ( $\lambda$ ) was determined using the Epoch Nanodrop UV-Vis spectrometer in the 300-900 nm range. Characterization of surface chemistry of the AgNPs and biomolecules in the grape vinegar solution was performed using a Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (Bruker VERTEX 70v). FT-IR spectra were recorded at 4000-400  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ . The shape, size and surface of the synthesized AgNPs were analyzed using scanning electron microscopy (SEM) with high resolution images using Zeiss Sigma 300 scanning electron microscope (SEM), and the selected area was X-ray diffraction (XRD) analysis to determine synthesized phase distribution, crystallinity and purity using PANalytical Empyrean X-Ray Diffractometer (UK). It was used to calculate the average silver nanoparticle size with the help of the Debye-Scherrer equation.

### In vitro micronucleus and sister chromatid exchange tests

The method developed by Fenech [18] was modified to determine the number of micronucleus. To the prepared solution, the agents to be tested was added and cultured at 37 °C for 72 h in a 5%  $\text{CO}_2$  moist atmosphere [19]. Then, cytochalasin-B was added 28 h. before harvesting to all culture tubes with a final concentration of 3  $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$ . After 72 h. incubation, the cells were harvested by centrifugation (1000 rpm, 10 min.) and the supernatant was removed. 6 mL of hypotonic solution (0.05 M KCl) was added to the pellet containing lymphocyte cells, vortexed and incubated at 37 °C for 7 min. After the incubation period, the lymphocyte cells were harvested by centrifugation and the supernatant was removed. 6 mL of fresh fixative solution was added drop by drop to the pellet. The fixation procedure was repeated three times and the tube was centrifuged. The cell pellet was re-suspended in 1 mL of fresh fixative solution, and then the suspension was dropped on to clean and labeled microscope slides and incubated at room temperature for 72 h. After the incubation period, the slides were stained with 5% giemsa dye solution for 10 min and excess giemsa dye was removed with distilled water. The slides were air-dried and only binucleated cells were scored for MN analysis. For each experimental group, approximately 1000 binucleated cells were analyzed for the presence of MN [20].

For SCE, 5-bromo 2-deoxyuridine (BrdU) at 8  $\text{mg}/\text{mL}$  was added at the initiation of cultures. All cultures were kept in dark to avoid damage to the BrdU and then, 0.1  $\text{mg}/\text{mL}$  of colcemid was added 3 h. before harvesting to arrest the cells at metaphase. The cultures were centrifuged at 1000 rpm for 10 min. Cells were harvested and treated for 25 min. with hypotonic solution and fixed in a 1 : 3 mixture of acetic acid/methanol (v/v). BrdU incorporated metaphase chromosomes were stained with the fluorescence plus Giemsa technique as described by Perry and Evans [21]. For each cell culture, 30 metaphase with at least 43 chromosomes with good distribution were evaluated in light microscope [22]. The color continuity of staining in the chromatids was impaired, and each point where there was a change of color between the chromatids was evaluated as a fracture [23].

### Antimicrobial activity

#### Test microorganisms

The pathogenic bacteria cultures; *Staphylococcus aureus* ATCC25923, *Staphylococcus epidermis* ATCC12228, *Escherichia coli* ATCC1280, *Salmonella typhi* H NCTC901.8394, *Micrococcus luteus* ATCC9341, *Bacillus cereus* RSKK-863, *Klebsiella pneumonia* ATCC 27853, *Proteus vulgaris* RSKK 96026, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* sp. *Brucella abortus* RSKK03026 and *Candida albicans* Y-1200-NIH yeast were used.

#### Detection of antimicrobial activity

The synthesized compound was examined for their antimicrobial activity by the well-diffusion method against gram-negative bacteria (*S. typhi*, *H. E. coli*, *K. pneumonia*, *P. vulgaris*, *P. aeruginosa* and *B. abortus*), gram-positive bacteria (*S. aureus*, *S. epidermis*, *M. luteus*, *B. cereus*) and one yeast (*C. albicans*) [24–28].

The compound was kept dry at room temperature and dissolved (0.25  $\mu\text{g}/\text{mL}$ ) in DMSO. DMSO was used as solvent for compounds and also for control. DMSO was found to have no antimicrobial activity against any of the tested organisms. 1% (v/v) of 24 h. broth culture (pathogenic bacteria and yeast) containing  $10^6$  CFU/mL was placed in sterile plates. Mueller-Hinton Agar (MHA) (15 mL) kept at 45 °C was then poured into the petri dishes and allowed to solidify. Then wells of 6 mm diameter were punched carefully by using a sterile cork borer

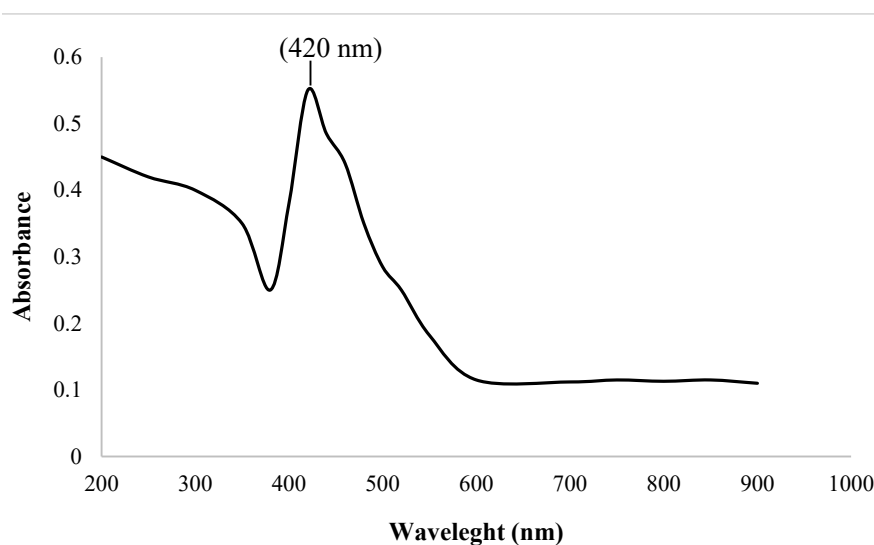


Fig. 2. UV spectrum of silver nanoparticles.

and were entirely filled with the synthesized compounds. In last stage, plates were incubated for 24 h at 37 °C on the incubator. At the end of the incubation period, the mean value obtained for the two well was used to calculate the zone of growth inhibition of each sample.

The pathogenic bacteria cultures and yeast were tested for resistance to five standard antibiotics produced by Oxoid Lt., Basingstoke, UK. These were: Ampicillin, Nystatin, Kanamycin, Sulphamethoxazol and Amoxycillin [29–34].

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Synthesis of silver nanoparticles*

The formation of silver nanoparticles in the medium was determined mainly by color change. The color changes in the reaction medium function as the reducing power of silver ions ( $\text{Ag}^+$ ) of some chemical compounds such as alkaloids, flavonoids, saponins, steroids and color found in grape vinegar. Visually; when the grape vinegar was treated with 0.1 M silver nitrate aqueous solution, colorless to light yellow coloration was observed within the first few minutes, then the solution turned from light yellow to brown. It then turned dark brown when the reaction was continued all night at 25 °C (Fig. 1). Silver nanoparticles are due to the surface plasmon resonance in this brown, aqueous solution [35-36].

### *Characterization*

#### *UV-Visible absorption spectrum*

Optical properties of silver nanoparticles were investigated by absorption spectroscopy. For this purpose, wavelength scanning for Ag NP formed in the reaction medium Surface Plasmon resonance bands plays a vital role in terms of size, shape and morphology. Fig. 2 shows the UV-visible spectra of nanoparticles obtained by cimin grape vinegar. The synthesized Ag nanoparticles gave a strong plasmon resonance band at 424 nm. UV-Vis spectroscopy has generally been used to detect the presence of AgNPs by green syntheses. In particular, the absorbance between 400 nm and 450 nm was generally used as an indicator to prove the reduction of  $\text{Ag}^+$  of metallic Ag [35].

#### *Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR)*

Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy measurements were performed to determine possible biomolecules responsible for the reduction and effective stabilization of silver nanoparticles [35]. In green synthesis, there are many functional groups that may be responsible for the bi-reduction of  $\text{Ag}^+$  ions. Bands in different regions of the spectrum for grape vinegar and silver NPs were analyzed and shown in Fig. 3.

The FTIR spectrum of the extract of grape shows the vibrations of different main bands at

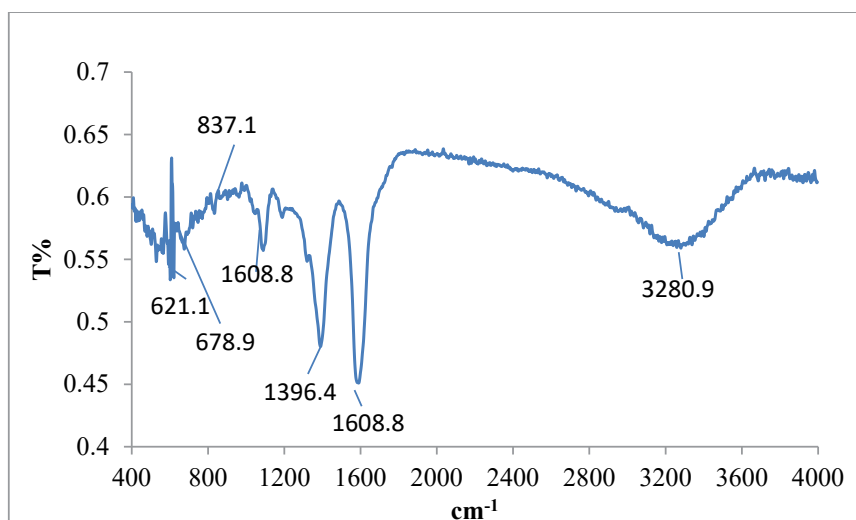


Fig. 3. FTIR spectra of silver nanoparticles.

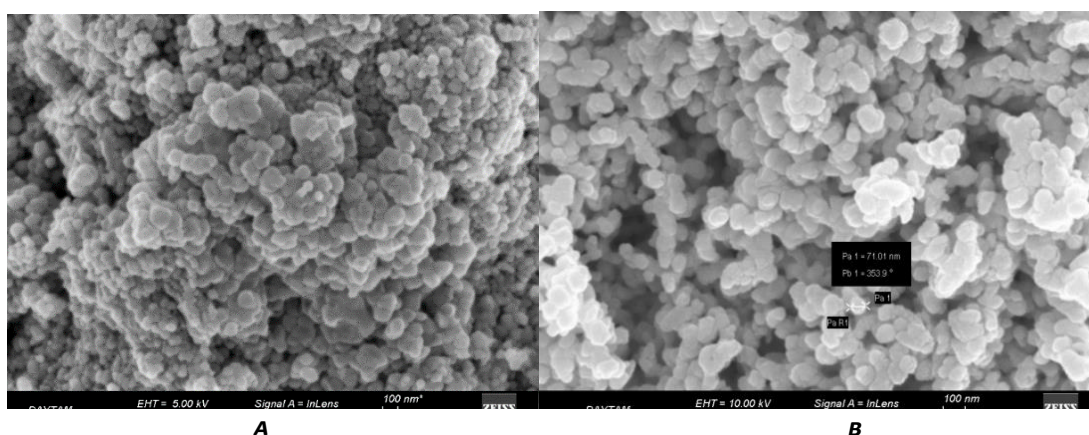


Fig. 4 (a, b). SEM images of the AgNPs.

3458, 2098, 1638 and 739  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ . The shifts in the FTIR spectra of the bonds indicate that the AgNPs formed in the reaction are coated with grape vinegar. The wide and dense peak at 3280.9  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  in the spectrum corresponds to the OH stretching vibrations of the phenol/carboxylic group present in the extract, the alkyne group present in the phyto-components in the plant structure showing the peak at 2093  $\text{cm}^{-1}$ . The peak of the extract at 1608.8  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  belongs to the C = O stretching or amide bending. Peak nitro N-O bending [26] at 1394.4  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  refers to peaks of 678.9 and 837.1  $\text{cm}^{-1}$  C-H alkenes. The findings are supported by some studies that synthesize AgNPs using plant extract [35-38].

#### Scanning electron microscopy analysis (SEM)

SEM device; it works on the basis of collecting and examining the interactions formed by dropping electrons originating from tungsten end onto the sample to be examined. In this way, the surface topography and structure of the sample examined are informed. SEM images, SEM images were taken to examine the morphology of silver nanoparticles synthesized by Green synthesis method and given in Fig. 4a and 4b. Silver NPs obtained as a result of SEM analysis were determined to have an average size of 20 nm (6-40 nm) and spherical shape [39].

#### X-ray diffraction

XRD analysis of Ag NPs obtained in Fig. 5 is

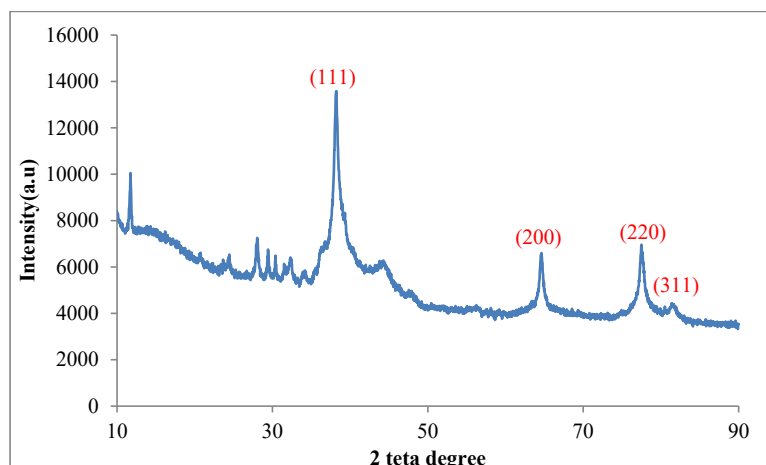


Fig. 5. XRD image of the AgNPs.

given. As a result of the analysis, a dense peak confirming the presence of silver nanoparticles obtained by green synthesis was determined. Fig. 5 shows the presence of silver nanoparticles at 25 ° C, which corresponds to the planes 38.15, 44.05 and 64.38, 77.32 corresponding to the three planes (111), (200), (220) and (311), respectively.

The obtained Ag NPs are compatible with literature and obtained with high efficiency [6].

#### Antimicrobial activity results

Silver NPs showed higher inhibition activity than other antibiotics (AMP10, SXT25 and K30) to the same degree (25 mm) as the antibiotic AMC30 in *M. luteus*. Again, the compound showed a lower inhibition effect in *S. aureus* than in the same antibiotics as the K30 antibiotic alone. The silver compound showed a higher inhibition effect in *B. cereus* than the antibiotic AMC30 (22 mm) and other antibiotics. The bacteria is known as an opportunist [40]. The silver compound showed a significantly higher inhibition activity (25 mm) than all standard antibiotics in *P. aeruginosa* (Table 1). The genus *Pseudomonas* is common in nature, leading to opportunistic and nosocomial infections. Among these agents, *P. aeruginosa* is one of the leading causes of nosocomial infections, it can develop resistance to various antibiotics and causes high mortality and morbidity due to infections [41,42]. *P. aeruginosa* is responsible for 10-25% of hospital infections [43,44]. Since *P. aeruginosa* usually shows multiple antibiotic resistances, it also causes problems in treatments. *P. aeruginosa* septicemia occurs especially in weakened and immunosuppressed patients and

has a mortality rate of 10-20%. In *K. pneumoniae*, the silver compound had the same (20 mm) inhibition effect as the SXT25 antibiotic alone, but lowers than the others.

The compound also showed high inhibitory activity (21 mm) in *B. abortus* (Table 1). *Br. abortus* has gram-negative bacterium that causes premature abortion of cattle fetus [45], furthermore, it is a very serious, debilitating and sometimes chronic human pathogen that can affect various organs [28, 46].

Ag NPs showed higher inhibition effect against *S. typhi* H than only one standard antibiotic (AMP 10-11 mm) (15 mm) and lower inhibition than others (Table 1). *Salmonella serovars* cause many different clinical symptoms, ranging from asymptomatic infection to severe typhoid-like syndromes. [44-46]. The silver compound showed a higher inhibition effect than other antibiotics (AMP10, SXT25, AMC 30-10 mm, 18 mm, 14 mm respectively) except for the same antibiotic (K30-25mm) in *E. coli* (Table 1). It is a bacterium usually found in the lower intestines of warm-blooded organisms (endoderms). Many *E. coli* species are harmless, but some serotypes can cause serious food poisoning in humans. *E. coli* bacteria are normally live in the intestines of humans and animals. Most *E. coli* are harmless and in fact an important part of a healthy human intestinal system. However, some *E. coli* species are pathogenic, ie they may cause disease, diarrhea or disease outside the intestinal tract (Source: CDC-Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Emerging and Zoonotic Infectious Diseases (NCEZID), Division

Table 1. Antimicrobial activities of AgNPs (diameter of zone of inhibition (mm)).

Microorganisms	Compound	Standart Antibiotics					
		Ag NPs	AMP 10*	SXT 25	AMC 30	K 30	NYS 100
Gram (+)	<i>M. luteus</i>	25	22	21	25	23	N
	<i>S. epidermis</i>	17	26	25	27	25	
	<i>S. aureus</i>	25	30	24	30	25	N
	<i>B. cereus</i>	22	23	25	20	28	N
Gram (-)	<i>P. aeruginosa</i>	25	8	18	15	14	N
	<i>K pneumonia.</i>	20	21	20	21	23	N
	<i>B.abortus</i>	21	-	-	-	-	N
	<i>S.typhi H</i>	15	11	17	19	20	N
	<i>E.coli</i>	25	10	18	14	25	N
	<i>P. vulgaris</i>	22	17	19	20	21	N
Maya	<i>C.albicans</i>	26	N	N	N	N	20

\* Standard reagents (diameter of zone inhibition (mm)). SXT25, sulfamethoxazole 25 µg; AMP10, Ampicillin 10 µg; NYS100, Nystatin 100 µg; K30, Kanamycin 30 µg; AMC30, Amoxycillin 30 µg. N: not tried.

Table 2. The frequencies of SCE and MN in human lymphocytes treated with different concentrations Ag NPs

Test Items	Concentrations	SCE/Cell ± S.E.	MN numbers ± S.E.
Control (-)		6.04 ± 0.12 <sup>a</sup>	1.82 ± 0.09 <sup>a</sup>
Control (+)	5 µM	9.24 ± 0.08 <sup>d</sup>	3.48 ± 0.04 <sup>d</sup>
Ag	5 µg/mL	6.62 ± 0.04 <sup>a</sup>	2.10 ± 0.02 <sup>a</sup>
Ag	10 µg/mL	7.06 ± 0.10 <sup>b</sup>	2.24 ± 0.11 <sup>b</sup>
Ag	20 µg/mL	7.42 ± 0.03 <sup>b</sup>	2.70 ± 0.15 <sup>bc</sup>
Ag	40 µg/mL	8.04 ± 0.14 <sup>c</sup>	2.92 ± 0.07 <sup>c</sup>
Ag	80 µg/mL	8.32 ± 0.06 <sup>c</sup>	3.15 ± 0.08 <sup>d</sup>
Ag	160 µg/mL	8.95 ± 0.02 <sup>d</sup>	3.26 ± 0.04 <sup>d</sup>

Sodium azide (NaN<sub>3</sub>) was used as positive controls for human peripheral lymphocytes.

<sup>a, b, c, d</sup> Statistically significant differences in the same column are indicated by the different superscripts ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ).

of Foodborne, Waterborne and Environmental Diseases (DFWED).

In addition, the compound showed significantly higher inhibition activity (22 mm) in *P. vulgaris* than all standard antibiotics (Table 1). *P. vulgaris* is a patient with weak immune systems.

Finally, the compound showed a higher (26 mm) inhibition effect in yeast, *C. albicans* (Table 1). Systemic fungal infections, including *C. albicans*, have emerged as significant causes of death and disease in immunocompromised patients (organ or ligament transplantation, adjuvants, cancer chemotherapy) [47–50]. As a result; the synthesized compound showed similar or higher inhibition effects in both

Gram (+) and Gram (-) bacteria and yeast, similar to standard antibiotics and antifungals. At the same time, compared with standard antibiotics, the compound has an inhibitory effect against pathogenic bacteria and yeast (Table 1). In addition, it was determined that the synthesized compounds showed more inhibitory effect on gram-negative bacteria (Table 1).

#### Genotoxicity activity

The effects of genotoxicity for Ag NPs were investigated by SCE and MN tests. When the results obtained from the SCE and MN test systems are evaluated in Table 2, it is determined

that the silver nanoparticles increase the SCE and MN averages with genotoxic effect with increasing concentrations. It was found that the increase in the MN and SCE averages of 5 µg/mL in the concentrations used in the study was statistically insignificant and the highest genotoxic effect was in the 160 µg/mL application [51, 52].

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## CONCLUSION

In this study, AgNPs were synthesized by green synthesis method and morphological and structural characterization was performed. Then, the genotoxic effects of AgNPs obtained *in vitro* were investigated. From the results obtained, it has shown that at known non-toxic concentrations of AgNPs synthesized by the non-toxic green method [52, 53], it can certainly compete with, or even better result, commercial antibiotics used in the treatment of microbial infections and open wounds.

Therefore, it is believed that the resulting environmentally friendly silver nanoparticles can be used as an excellent antimicrobial agent against pathogenic microorganisms or as an additive to antimicrobial products.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript.

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