Effect of Butea superba on penile erection and sperm production in rats
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Butea superba Roxb. (Papilionaceae) has been traditionally used to treat age-related problems including erection disorders. We investigated the effect of an alcoholic extract of B. superba on penile erection in aged male Sprague Dawley rats. The animals were pre-treated with the extract at the doses of 0.1, 0.5, 1, 10 or 1,000mg/kg body weight (BW) as a single dose and the cavernous nerves were electrically stimulated. The intracavernous pressure was simultaneously recorded from the beginning. Sperm count was performed using a hemocytometer. Sperm motility was investigated in a modified TCM199 medium. The results showed that B. superba extract enhanced the penile erection most effectively at a dose of 1mg/kg BW. Higher doses did not increase the erection. In addition, long-term treatment with B. superba extract (1mg/kg BW) for six months significantly increased the number of sperm up to about 200% and prolonged the sperm motility of the sperm to about 115% at the sixth hour. These results suggest that B. superba is effective in improve penile erection and may be useful in the treatment of erectile dysfunction as well as infertility.

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