



TOXIC RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH APITHERAPY PRODUCTS

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ABSTRACT

The history of honeybee products utilization for medicinal applications dates back thousands of years. Today, the benefits attributed to these products by traditional medicine are confirmed by scientists, research data revealing antibacterial, antifungal, anti-inflammatory, cytotoxic and antihepatotoxic activities for honey, propolis, royal jelly and bees' pollen. The paper addresses the problem of toxicological risk assessment of honey and related products. Although there is substantial scientific data to sustain the use of apitherapy as a prophylactic tool, as well as treatment for several medical conditions, the quality and safety of these products needs to be carefully assessed. Several contaminants and toxic compounds have been identified in honeybee products (phytotoxins, heavy metals, pesticides, antibiotics, 5-hydroxymethylfurfural, mycotoxins), and, in some cases, the presence of these compounds was associated with severe outcomes.
