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1 **Toxicology properties of commercial anti-mosquitos and their effects on carboxyhemoglobin**
2 **and malondialdehyde levels**

3

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14

15 **Abstract**

16 Exposure of carbon monoxide (CO) released by insect repellent has a negative impact on
17 health by forming carboxyhemoglobin (CO-Hb) as a trigger for oxidative stress in the human body.
18 Therefore, the objective of the study was to investigate the effect of commercial anti-mosquitos
19 on CO-Hb and malondialdehyde (MDA) levels in the blood. Effect of electric spray, coils, and
20 electric mats on CO-Hb and MDA levels in blood was evaluated using male Wistar rats (8 hours
21 per day) and monitored for 20 days. The study found that the highest increase in CO-Hb and CO-
22 Hb levels in the blood was observed when exposed to electric spray formula compared to other
23 anti-mosquitos. In addition, the highest increase in MDA levels also occurred when exposed to the

24 electric spray. Statistical analysis revealed that there was a significant relationship between CO-
25 Hb and MDA levels in the blood (p-value = 0.000). High CO-Hb levels in the blood could stimulate
26 oxidative stress and lead to cell damage in the body.

27

28 Keywords: Anti-Mosquito, Carboxyhemoglobin, Malondialdehyde

29

30 **1. Introduction**

31 People worldwide use insect repellent as protection of mosquito bites that could cause
32 several diseases such as dengue fever, malaria, zika, chikungunya, and yellow fever (Tavares et
33 al., 2018). The insect repellent utilization is quite high across the world, especially in tropical and
34 subtropical regions considering vulnerable environment for mosquitos breeding (Al-Damegh,
35 2013). Indonesia geographical area is suitable for the life and development of various types of
36 mosquitoes that act as disease vectors. In many areas, heavy rainfall makes it very easy for
37 mosquitoes to breed. Various types of mosquito repellent formulas available in the market consist
38 of sprays, lotions, liquids electric, mats electric, and coils. Prior research related to mosquito
39 repellent formulas use attended by 83 respondents in the Special Capital Region of Jakarta and
40 Depok city, Indonesia, found that they used 32.5% lotion, 26.5% spray, 18.1% spray, 15.7%
41 electricity, and 1.2% fuel. The perceived safety based on the types of mosquitos repellent by
42 respondents were 31% lotion, 30% electric, 15% emulsion spray, and 12% liquid spray (Wahyono
43 & Oktarinda, 2016).

44 The chemical compounds used in mosquito repellents mostly are pyrethroid, N, N-Diethyl-
45 3-methylbenzamide (DEET), ethyl 3-[acetyl(butyl)amino]propanoate (IR3535), picaridin, and
46 essential oils (Deletre et al., 2019; Elsayed & Hassabo, 2022; Tavares et al., 2018). The pyrethroid

47 compound type in insect repellent includes deltamethrin (α -cyano pyrethroid with phenoxy benzyl
48 moiety), permethrin (phenoxy benzyl pyrethroid without -cyano group), transfluthrin,
49 dimefluthrin, metofluthrin, and meperfluthrin (polyfluorinated benzyl compounds), and prallethrin
50 (a modified cyclopentadione compound) (Sarkar et al., 2018; Yuan et al., 2019). The previous
51 study revealed dimefluthrin, metofluthrin, and meperfluthrin in insect repellent had higher efficacy
52 defences against mosquitoes (Sarkar et al., 2018). Other research investigated dimefluthrin volatile
53 had multiple and cross-resistance both target-site and metabolic resistant mechanism in mosquitos
54 than volatile of metofluthrin, meperfluthrin, esbiothrin and deltamethrin (Yuan et al., 2019). The
55 dimefluthrin usage in mosquito repellent products in Indonesia reaches around 30.4% (Maksud et
56 al., 2019) due to dimefluthrin having better mosquito control ability than D-allethrin based on
57 knockdown time (Ogoma et al., 2012). Dimefluthrin is a pyrethroid group with a broad spectrum,
58 active in sodium channel modulators which will cause the sodium gate to be more sensitive to
59 stimuli that paralyze mosquitoes (Du et al., 2016).

60 Insect repellent exposure, especially mosquito coils, can produce pollutants in the form of
61 carbon monoxide (CO) which can bind hemoglobin (Hb) in the blood to form carboxyhemoglobin
62 (CO-Hb) which leads to the Hb function inhibition in distributing oxygen to all body cells. As a
63 result, body tissues not obtained an adequate supply of oxygen (O₂) (Mao et al., 2021). This
64 condition promotes oxidative stress in the body, causing increased levels of Malondialdehyde
65 (MDA) in blood serum (Flores et al., 2017). MDA is a product of membrane phospholipid
66 catabolism which is a sign of oxidative stress (Andini et al., 2021). The macrophages release heme
67 oxygenase and oxygen-dependent cysteine transporters as protection against reactive oxygen
68 species (ROS) during oxidative stress (Duvigneau et al., 2019). However, prolonged insect
69 repellent pollutant exposure in the body lead to biological health impact (Handore et al., 2019;

70 Madhubabu & Yenugu, 2012, 2017; Syafiuddin et al., 2017). Therefore, this study aimed to
71 investigate the effect of mosquito repellent on electric mats, electric liquids, and coils containing
72 dimefluthrin in various concentrations in serum MDA and CO-Hb levels.

73

74 **2. Materials and Methods**

75 **2.1 Materials**

76 The study was an experimental study. The samples were 2–3-month-old Wistar rats and
77 weighing 150 gr-250 gr. Among 30 male rats were divided into 3 groups randomly, namely E
78 which was exposed to anti-mosquito electric spray containing 0.610% dimefluthrin, C which was
79 exposed to anti-mosquito coils containing 0.031% dimefluthrin, and M which was given anti-
80 mosquito electric mats exposure containing 0.566% dimefluthrin. Each group was exposed at
81 daytime for 20 days (8 hours per day). This study had approved ethical clearance through No.
82 062/EC/KEPK/UNUSA/2021.

83 The equipment was used in this study were a digital balance, cage made of wire, rat feeder
84 set, drinking bottles during the treatment and intervention process. Blood sampling was conducted
85 by using a 2cc Terumo syringe. The serum preparation was carried out by using a centrifuge and
86 a centrifuge tube. Meanwhile, the tools used for CO-Hb and MDA were Thermo Scientific UV-
87 VIS Spectrophotometer and cuvette.

88 This study utilized several materials such as husks, water, and rat feed. Intervention
89 activities used an exposure of insect repellent included electric spray, coils, and electric mats.
90 Solution for CO-Hb test using ammonium hydroxide (NH₄OH) and sodium dithionite (Na₂S₂O₄),
91 while the solutions for the MDA test included 50% glacial acetic acid, acid solution, 20%
92 trichloroacetic acid (TCA), and 0.67% thiobarbituric acid (TBA) solution.

93

94 2.2 Carboxyhemoglobin (CO-Hb) Assay

95 The CO-Hb level test was performed using the Hinsberg-Lang method. As the preparation
96 of samples, 20 ml of 0.1% NH₄OH solution was put into an Erlenmeyer and 10 L of blood sample
97 was added and homogenized (sample). Afterwards, 4 ml samples were taken and put into 2 test
98 tubes, namely R (Reagent) and SR (Sample Reagent). Twenty (20) mg Na₂S₂O₄ was added in the
99 RS tube and homogenized. The R and SR tubes were incubated at 37°C for 8 minutes and the
100 absorbance R and RS was measured with a spectrophotometer at a wavelength of 414.2 nm. The
101 carboxyhemoglobin (CO-Hb) levels calculation using the following equation.

$$102 \text{ COHb Levels} = \frac{\Delta A}{\Delta Ar Hb} \times 6,08\% \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

103 Where Δ A is the reagent absorbance , Δ Ar is the standard sample absorbance and 6.08 is the
104 conversion factor for percent CO saturation in Hb (Wimpy & Harningsih, 2019).

105

106 2.3 MDA Assay

107 In this experiment, the MDA assay was conducted based on the proposed method by
108 Wulandari et al (2020) and Andini et al (2020). Serum MDA levels were measured in several steps
109 such as 0.3 mL serum of P1, P2, and P3 were added 1.0 mL of 20% TCA serum and 1.0 mL of 1%
110 TBA serum in 50% glacial acetic acid, then incubated for 45 minutes at 95°C and allowed to cool
111 down for 15 minutes. The sample solution reagent was centrifuged at 1000 rpm. Subsequently, the
112 supernatant was separated and absorbance was measured using a spectrophotometer with a
113 wavelength of 532 nm. The MDA level was acquired after determining the standard curve and
114 calculating it according to the resulting equation (Andini et al., 2020).

115

116 2.4 Statistical Analysis

117 The CO-Hb levels, increase in CO-Hb and MDA levels were analyzed using the One-Way
118 ANOVA test for parametric data and Kruskal Wallis test for non-parametric data (Ostertagova et
119 al., 2014)(Van Hecke, 2010). To determine the significant difference between one group and
120 another, the Post Hoc test for parametric data and the Mann Whitney test for non-parametric data
121 was used (Vickers, 2005). The correlation of CO-Hb and MDA levels used the Spearman test for
122 non-parametric data.

123

124 **3. Results and Discussion**

125 3.1 The effect of anti-mosquitos on CO-Hb

126 The highest levels of CO-Hb in the blood due to insect repellent exposure occurred in 0.100
127 % electric fluid, then coils and electric mats at the same level of 0.059%. Based on the CO-Hb
128 levels increase in the blood, electric spray exposure increased CO-Hb up to 2.858%, while coils
129 were 1.696% and electric mats were 1.681% (table 1). The result showed that exposure to electric
130 spray potentially increases CO-Hb levels in comparison to coils and electric mats. Based on one-
131 way Anova statistical analysis obtained significant differences in CO-Hb levels and enhancement
132 of CO-Hb in all exposure groups. Further analysis was conducted to determine the significant
133 differences of each group by using a post hoc test. The test showed that electric spray with higher
134 dimefluthrin content had significant differences on CO-Hb levels compared to coils and electric
135 mats, but coils and electric mats had no significant differences (table 2 and table 3). Therefore,
136 electric spray exposure had a significant effect in CO-Hb levels in blood.

137 CO can interfere the oxygen-carrying by Hb to vital organs and tissues, causing stress that
138 lead to organ's malfunction and failure (Chen et al., 2021; Röhrig, 2016). Lack of oxygen would

139 increase Hb levels in the blood as the body's adjustment to low levels of oxygen bound to Hb
140 because CO has a stronger affinity for Hb. CO enters the body through the respiratory system
141 diffuses together with O₂ through the alveolus membrane. Both dissolved in the blood, CO
142 combines with hemoglobin to form CO-Hb. The CO and Hb binding occur at the same rate as for
143 O₂ and CO. But CO binds to Hb 245 times stronger than O₂. Therefore, CO and O₂ compete for
144 binding to hemoglobin. CO binds longer than oxygen, which easy to break away from hemoglobin
145 (Dewanti, 2018). The hemoglobin desaturation and a lack of oxygen supply condition to all body
146 tissues promote the mechanism for increasing Hb (Röhrig, 2016). Therefore, CO activates the
147 oxygen site in Hb, interferes the oxygen, and initiates calcification or thickening of blood vessel
148 walls. Thus, CO decreases capacity, increases blood viscosity, facilitates blood clotting, increases
149 blood hemoglobin levels (Chan et al., 2013; Röhrig, 2016).

150

151 3.2 The effect of anti-mosquitos on MDA

152 The MDA results assay showed that the highest serum MDA levels occurred in rats with
153 electric spray exposure at 221.380 ng L⁻¹, followed by mat exposure at 75.548 ng L⁻¹ and electric
154 coils at 73.365 ng L⁻¹. These results showed that electric spray had a greater effect on increasing
155 serum MDA levels in the exposure group. Statistical data analysis obtained significant differences
156 in MDA levels in all exposure groups (table 4). Furthermore, the Mann Whitney test showed that
157 electric spray had a significant difference, while in the coil and electric mat group had no
158 significant difference (table 5). Therefore, dimefluthrin compounds in mosquito repellent not only
159 affect the CO-Hb levels, but also MDA levels in blood.

160 Oxidative stress is an imbalance condition of free radicals such as ROS and nitrous oxide
161 systems (NOS) against anti-oxidants that causes the cell and tissue damage. ROS activity can be

162 measured by determining MDA. During oxidative stress, macrophages secrete oxygen-dependent
163 heme oxygenase and cysteine transporters to protect against ROS. Free radicals in the body can
164 damage cells such as hyperplasia conditions or abnormal cell growth. The CO and Hb bond is
165 stronger that could not easily be broken by antioxidants (Dewanti, 2018; Flores et al., 2017). CO
166 is a toxic pollutant that enhancing cell damage to oxidative stress and inflammation (Boehm et
167 al., 2018). Numerous cases of morbidity and mortality in toxicological cases are caused by carbon
168 monoxide poisoning (COP) (Kavakli et al., 2010).

169

170 3.3 The relationship between CO-Hb and MDA

171 The relationship between CO-Hb and MDA levels in the blood was shown to have a
172 significant correlation based on statistical analysis using Spearman's test with p-value = 0.000
173 respectively (table 6). The study results proved a linear relationship between CO-Hb and MDA
174 levels in the blood (Abass et al., 2017)(Flores et al., 2017). These results identify that an increase
175 in CO-Hb levels was followed by MDA levels increase in the blood and vice versa. Those
176 continuous condition could affect the body state because of oxidative stress in the body.

177 Insecticides contain both toxic and active substances. The various active substances in
178 these insecticides are not only felt by insects that are targeted but also impacted on animals and
179 humans exposed to. Mosquito repellent as an insecticide can poison the body in several ways,
180 namely ingested, inhaled, exposed to the skin or eyes. One of the insect repellent compounds is
181 dimefluthrin. Dimefluthrin compound in mosquito repellent has direct effect on CO-Hb and MDA
182 levels in blood. The use of insect repellent impacted on air quality. The insect repellent exposure
183 in the form of CO gas can bind Hb in the blood with high affinity to form CO-Hb (Setiawan et al.,
184 2020). High levels of CO-Hb in the blood can trigger damage to the lungs such as chronic

185 obstructive pulmonary disease, bronchial asthma, and acute pneumonia (Liu et al., 2011). An
186 increase in CO-Hb in the blood will lead the formation of oxidative stress due to antioxidants and
187 oxidants imbalance that can trigger persistent inflammation and impacted on organ health (Teksam
188 et al., 2019). This study found that CO-Hb and MDA levels have a significant relationship and
189 proved that free radicals increase in the blood will promote oxidative stress in blood.

190

191 **4. Conclusion**

192 Dimefluthrin compound in the mosquito repellent formula has a significant relationship to
193 CO-Hb and MDA levels in the blood. The highest dimefluthrin compound in the electric fluid had
194 CO-Hb levels of $0.100 \pm 0.042\%$ and increase in CO-Hb of $2.858 \pm 1.211\%$. Meanwhile, MDA
195 levels were also found in the electric spray exposure group of $221,380 \pm 126,855 \text{ ng L}^{-1}$. Further
196 studies are needed to confirm the effects of oxidative stress because of anti-mosquito exposure on
197 cellular damage.

198

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203

204 **Conflicts of Interest**

205 The authors declare no conflict of interest.

206

207 **Data Availability Statement**

208 The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author
209 upon reasonable request.

210

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317

318

319 Table 1. CO-Hb levels in blood in rats after being exposed to insect repellent

Group	N	Mean ± SD		One-Way Anova Test	
		CO-Hb (%)	Increase in CO-Hb (%)	CO-Hb	Increase in CO-Hb

Electric spray (E)	10	0.100±0.042	2.858±1.211		
Coils (C)	10	0.059±0.032	1.696±0.927	0.019*	0.021*
Electric Mats (M)	10	0.059±0.029	1.681±0.843		

320 *significant p-value<0.05

321

322 Table 2. The Post hoc test results of CO-Hb increase after being exposed to insect repellent.

Group	Electric spray (E)	Coils (C)	Electric Mats (M)
Electric spray (E)		0.015*	0.013*
Coils (C)			0.960
Electric Mats (M)			

323 *significant p-value<0.05

324

325 Table 3. The post hoc results increase in CO-Hb levels

Group	Electric spray (E)	Coils (C)	Electric Mats (M)
Electric spray (E)		0.016	0.014*
Coils (C)			0.974
Electric Mats (M)			

326 *significant p-value<0.005

327

328 Table 4. The MDA serum levels analysis

Group	N	Mean ±SD (ng L ⁻¹)	Kruskal Wallis Test
Electric spray (E)	10	221.380±126.855	
Coils (C)	10	73.365±16.519	0.005*

Electric Mats (M)	10	75.548±32.179
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329 *significant p-value<0.05

330

331 Table 5. The results of Mann Whitney test of MDA test

Group	Electric spray (E)	Coils (C)	Electric Mats (M)
Electric spray (E)		0.010*	0.003*
Coils (C)			0.650
Electric Mats (M)			

332 *significant p-value<0.05

333

334 Table 6. The results of CO-Hb and Serum MDA levels correlation test

Group	N	Spearman Test	
		CO-Hb and MDA	Increase in CO-Hb and MDA
Electric spray (E)	10		
Coils (C)	10	0.000	0.000
Electric Mats (M)	10		

335 *significant p-value<0.05

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