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1 **Ellagic Acid potential use for endometriosis treatment: its effect on human endometrial cell**
2 **cycle, adhesion and migration.**

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3

4 **Short title:** Ellagic acid possible endometriosis treatment.

5

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15 **Abstract**View Article Online
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16 Endometriosis is a common and challenging condition of reproductive-aged women that is defined
17 as the presence of endometrial-like tissue outside the uterine cavity. Despite its prevalence, there is
18 still no effective therapeutics so we aim to evaluate the ellagic acid (EA) effect on the most relevant
19 aspects that are known to be altered in endometriosis. Endometrial primary cultures from women
20 with and without endometriosis and endometrial cell lines were incubated with EA (50 and 100 μ M)
21 for 24 and 48 h. The results demonstrated that EA arrest endometrial stromal cell cycle on G2 / M
22 phase, after 48 h. In addition, EA 100 μ M treatment significantly decreased ECC-1 cell migration at
23 20 h and T-HESC cell migration at 10 h and 20 h; while EA 50 μ M caused a significant decreased
24 on T-HESC cell migration at 20 h. On the other hand, we proved that treatment with EA for 24 h
25 reduces T-HESC and ECC-1 adhesion to plastic. However, we did not find an effect of EA on cell
26 proliferation. EA has an inhibitory effect on endometrial cell adhesion, migration and cell cycle
27 progression *in vitro*. These highlight the idea to investigate natural compounds as a novel and
28 promising therapeutic treatment for endometriosis.

29

30 **Keywords:** endometriosis - Ellagic Acid - migration - adhesion - cell cycle

31 1. Introduction

32 Endometriosis is one of the most common benign gynecological diseases in women of
33 reproductive age and is defined by the presence of endometrial-like tissue (epithelial and stromal
34 elements) outside the uterine cavity¹. It affects approximately 10% of the female population causing
35 severe pelvic pain and infertility in 30-50% of the patients who suffer it. This is a disease with a
36 complex etiology and the most accepted theory for endometriosis development is Sampson's
37 implantation theory based on retrograde menstruation². According to this theory, for the
38 endometriotic lesions establishment and maintenance, it is necessary that the endometrial cells
39 reach the peritoneal cavity, adhere to the peritoneum, invade it, vascularize it and have the capacity
40 to proliferate, therefore the migration, adhesion, and proliferation are crucial processes in
41 endometriosis development. In addition, endometriosis is underdiagnosed because a large
42 proportion of affected women are asymptomatic or their strong pelvic pain cannot be considered as
43 specific symptoms of a disease. In general, the first doctor's visit are due to difficulty conceiving
44 and, at present, laparoscopy is the only diagnostic method, which causes long delays before women
45 acquire a definitive diagnosis³.

46 Current treatments for endometriosis involve the surgical removal of implants and/or the
47 induction of an hypoestrogenic state using combined oral contraceptives, progestagens alone or
48 GnRH analogues, because it is an estrogen-dependent disease. That's why current medical therapies
49 for endometriosis do not allow conception in women under treatment⁴. In addition, these therapies
50 are not completely effective and have several adverse side effects leading to high recurrence rates^{5,6}
51 and avoiding their long term use⁷⁻⁹.

52 The search for novel treatments for endometriosis, more accessible, with no side effects and that
53 allow pregnancy, guided us to evaluate natural compounds. The consumption of berries and other
54 polyphenol-enriched foods or juices has been associated with positive health effects like antioxidant
55 properties, prevention of cardiovascular diseases and cancer^{10,11}. Ellagitannins (ETs) and EA are
56 polyphenols¹² present in those fruits, nuts and seeds¹³⁻¹⁵. Taking into account the diverse effects that
57 the EA exerts on different cell types¹⁶⁻²⁰, we think that this natural compound could be a good
58 option as an alternative therapy for endometriosis. In addition to the known anti-inflammatory,
59 antiglycolytic, antioxidant and antimicrobial effects of its metabolites²¹, it has been described that
60 the EA has an antiproliferative and proapoptotic effect on colon, breast, and prostate²² cancer cell
61 lines. It also inhibits cell migration and the production of pro-matrix-metalloproteases 2 and 9 and
62 gelatin. It has anti-angiogenic action since it decreases the levels of vascular endothelial growth
63 factor 165. (VEGF 165)^{23,24}.

64 In addition, considering that endometriosis is an estrogen-dependent pathology, another factor
65 that led us to evaluate this compound as a possible treatment for endometriosis is the fact that it has
66 been described that one of the metabolites of EA, urolithin B is an antagonist of the aromatase²⁵,
67 and this antiestrogenic activity of EA has been proven by other authors^{26,27}.

68 However, EA has not been tested as a therapeutic alternative for endometriosis.

69 The aim of this work was to assess the effect of EA on proliferation, cell cycle progression,
70 adhesion and migration in human endometrial cells in an in vitro model of endometriosis.

71

72 **2. Experimental methods**

73 *2.1. Patients*

74 In this study participated women on reproductive age who underwent diagnostic laparoscopies due
75 to infertility, tubal obstruction or other pathology, and who had not received treatment during the
76 last six months. They were classified into two groups: a) Patients with endometriosis diagnosed by
77 laparoscopy and confirmed by histological studies (the stages I, II, III, and IV were determined
78 according to the Revised American Society for Reproductive Medicine Classification²⁸) and b)
79 Control women who did not suffer endometriosis or other pathology that could alter the cell
80 population to be evaluated.

81 After written consent from the patients, endometrial biopsies were taken during the laparoscopy
82 with diagnostic and therapeutic purposes, yielding to our group a small fraction of the material.
83 Biopsies of eutopic endometrium were obtained from all subjects as described previously^{29,30}.
84 Patient characteristics are provided in Table 1.

85 This study was approved by the Ethics and Research Committee of the Instituto de Biología y
86 Medicina Experimental - Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas (IBYME-
87 CONICET) of Buenos Aires, Argentina, on 26 May 2015 (reference CE 005 - April/2015). Office
88 of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) Assurance identification number: F16-00065 (A5072-01).

89

90 *2.2. Isolation and culture of endometrial stromal and epithelial cells*

91 We obtained epithelial and stromal cells from eutopic endometrial biopsies. The cells were
92 enzymatically separated and isolated by successive centrifugations, and primary cultures were
93 established for in vitro studies. Briefly, tissue was minced, washed and placed in Dulbecco's

94 Modified Eagle Medium: Nutrient Mixture F-12 (DMEM/F-12, Gibco) supplemented with
95 antibiotic-antimycotic (penicillin 100 IU/ml, streptomycin 100 mg/ml and amphotericin B 25
96 mg/ml, Gibco) and collagenase 0.5 mg/ml (type I, Gibco). After 2 h of incubation at 37°C in a 5%
97 CO₂ atmosphere, the resulting suspension was centrifuged at 100 x g for 5 minutes, and the pellet
98 and supernatant were separated and reserved. The pellet containing epithelial glands was
99 resuspended in culture medium and spun again at 100 x g for 5 minutes, so the final pellet mainly
100 contained epithelial cells. This enriched epithelial fraction was cultured with MEM D-Val
101 supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum (FBS) (Gibco) and grown to sub-confluence (70–80%)
102 at 37°C before the experiments. On the other hand, the supernatant containing mainly stromal cells
103 was centrifuged at 400 x g for five minutes and the pellet containing mainly stromal cells were
104 resuspended and the cells counted and plated with DMEM/F12 supplemented with 10% FBS and
105 antibiotic-antimycotic to grow up to sub-confluence (70–80%) in a humidified environment with
106 5% CO₂ at 37°C. It has been previously shown that this method guarantees a high purity of each
107 type of cells in culture 31.

108

109 2.3. Cell line and culture conditions

110 T-HESC (ATCC® CRL4003™) was derived from the stromal cells obtained from an adult woman
111 with myomas³². The primary stromal endometrium cells were immortalized by infection with
112 supernatant from the packaging cell line pA317-hTERT (Geron Corp.; Menlo Park, CA), which
113 expressed the hTERT and the puromycin resistance genes. They were cultured in DMEM/F-12
114 supplemented with 10% FBS (PAA Laboratories, USA) in a phosphate buffered saline (PBS)
115 modified environment with 5% CO₂ at 37°C.

116 ECC-1 (ATCC® CRL2923™) was derived from endometrial epithelial cells from a human
117 adenocarcinoma³³. The cultures were maintained with Roswell Park Memorial Institute (RPMI)-
118 1640 med supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum, 1% pyruvate at 37°C in the presence of 5%
119 CO₂.

120

121 2.4. Cell proliferation assay

122 For cell proliferation assays, 5x10³ ECC-1 cells/well, 5x10³ T-HESC cells/well, 5x10⁴ primary
123 endometrial epithelial cells/well or 2x10⁴ primary endometrial stromal cells/well from eutopic
124 tissue of women with endometriosis and controls were plated in 96 well culture plates with their

125 corresponding media culture supplemented with 10 % FBS and incubated at 37°C in a 5% CO₂
126 atmosphere. When cells reached a 70% confluence, cultures were washed with PBS and incubated
127 for 24 or 48 h with 50 µM and 100 µM EA in fresh medium supplemented with 1% fetal bovine
128 serum. Basal conditions were obtained by incubating cells with the vehicle used to dissolve the EA:
129 1% sodium hydroxide (NaOH, Sigma-Aldrich). We based on previous in vitro studies to fix the
130 effective dose of EA; hence we arrived at these concentrations^{22,34-39}. Each treatment condition was
131 carried out in quadruplicate. Cell proliferation was determined by a colorimetric assay using the
132 WST-1 Cell Proliferation Kit according to the manufacturer instructions (Roche Applied Science).
133 Absorbance was measured at 450 nm using a multi-well plate reader. Cell proliferation was
134 expressed as percentage of basal conditions in each experiment.

135

136 *2.5. Cell Cycle Analysis*

137 For cell cycle analysis, 2.5 x 10⁵ T-HESC and ECC-1 cells/well were plated in 6 well culture plates
138 with their corresponding culture medium supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum. After 24 h,
139 cultures were washed and incubated with different concentrations of EA (50 and 100 µM) in
140 medium supplemented with 1% FBS for 24 or 48 h. Then, cells were harvested using 0.25% trypsin
141 (Gibco) and centrifuged at 300 x g for 5 minutes. The supernatants were removed; cells were
142 washed with ice-cold PBS, and fixed by slowly adding ice-cold 70% ethanol while mixing the
143 solution in a vortex at low speed. Cells were kept at -20°C until assayed. On the day of the assay,
144 tubes containing cells were centrifuged at 100 x g for 5 minutes and the supernatants were removed.
145 Pellets were carefully resuspended adding the DNA-staining solution (50 µg/ml propidium iodide
146 (Sigma-Aldrich) in PBS) and kept in the dark for 15 minutes at room temperature. Finally, cell
147 cycle distribution was determined using a flow cytometer (FACS Canto II, BD Biosciences). The
148 results were analyzed using Cyflogic 1.2.1 software. All treatments were compared to the basal
149 condition.

150

151 *2.6. Scratch (wound healing) assay*

152 The wound healing assay was carried out using an established procedure⁴⁰. Cells were seeded in a 6
153 well plate and allowed to adhere for 48 h. Then the monolayer was wounded by cross scratching
154 with a 200 µl pipette tip. The detached cells were removed by rinsing with PBS. Immediately after
155 wounding, 50 or 100 µM EA was added in culture media supplemented with 1% FBS. Images of
156 the scratch were acquired immediately after wounding (0 h) and 5, 10 and 20 h later. All treatments

157 were compared to the basal condition. The healing rate was calculated using the closure ratio
158 analysis method ⁴¹:

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159 $\text{Healing rate (\%)} = [(0 \text{ h scratch area} - X \text{ h scratch area})/0 \text{ h scratch area}] \times 100.$

160

161 *2.7. Adhesion assay to plastic.*

162 Cell adhesion to plastic was evaluated in ECC-1 and T-HESC cultures treated with EA. Briefly,
163 cells were cultured in their respective culture medium supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum,
164 at 37° with 5% CO₂ until reach a 70% confluence. Then, the cells were treated for additional 24 h
165 with vehicle or 50-100 μM EA in culture medium supplemented with 1% fetal bovine serum.
166 Following, the cells were harvested with trypsin 0.25% (Gibco), resuspended in serum-free medium
167 and leave to recover for 40 minutes. Following recovering, cell suspension was added to 6 well
168 culture plates (10⁴ cells/ml/well) and cultured in a 5% CO₂ atmosphere at 37°C for 60 minutes.
169 After that, the wells were washed four times with PBS, and the adherent cells were harvested and
170 counted. Cell adhesion was determined staining cells with trypan blue and counting them under a
171 phase-contrast microscope. All treatments were compared to the basal condition.

172

173 *2.10. Statistical analysis*

174 Statistical analysis was performed using GraphPad PRISM software V4.0 (GraphPad Software Inc,
175 San Diego, California). Statistical comparisons among groups were carrying out by the Student t-
176 test or the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) followed by Tukey's multiple comparison tests.
177 Results were expressed as mean ± SEM. In all cases, only a p value < 0.05 was considered
178 significant.

179

180 **3. Results**

181 *3.1. Effect of EA on endometrial cell proliferation.*

182 The effects of both assayed concentrations of EA (50 and 100 μM) on cell proliferation are
183 displayed in **Figure 1**. We did not find a statistically significant difference between EA and Basal,
184 on cell proliferation in human endometrial epithelial (Figure 1A) or stromal (Figure 1B) cells. In the
185 same way, we did not observe statistically significant effects of EA on ECC-1 (Figure 1C) and T-

186 HESCs (Figure 1D) cell proliferation. As shown in Figure 1, both cell lines and primary cultures
187 behaved similarly, and facing the complexity conferred by the management and establishment of
188 primary cultures³²; from this point we decided to continue using the ECC-1 and T-HESC cell lines
189 as a representative in vitro experimental model.

190

191 *3.2. Effect of EA on endometrial cell cycle progression.*

192 The effects of both assayed concentration of EA (50 and 100 μ M) on the progression of the cell
193 cycle are displayed in **Figure 2**. Cell cycle distribution profiles of 24 and 48 h EA-treated cells were
194 evaluated via flow cytometry. Only exposure to 100 μ M EA for 48 h caused a significant arrest of
195 cell cycle in G2/M phase in T-HESCs cells (Figure 2B; $p < 0.05$); we have no observed significant
196 differences with EA treatment in the other conditions in T-HESs or ECC-1 cells.

197

198 *3.3. Effect of EA on endometrial cell migration.*

199 We evaluated the effects of EA on ECC-1 and T-HESCs cell migration by the wound healing
200 technique (**Figure 3**). Treatment with 100 μ M EA significantly decreased ECC-1 cell migration at
201 20 h (Figure 3A; $p < 0.05$) and T-HESC cell migration at 10 h and 20 h (Figure 3B; $p < 0.05$ and
202 $p < 0.001$ respectively). In addition, 50 μ M EA caused a significant decreased on T-HESC cell
203 migration at 20 h (Figure 3B; $p < 0.01$) even though no significant effects on ECC-1 cell migration
204 was observed (Figure 3A).

205

206 *3.4. Effect of EA on endometrial cell adhesion to plastic.*

207 We examined the adhesion of EA-treated ECC-1 and T-HESCs cells to plastic culture plates and
208 compared this to attachment of untreated cells. As shown in **Figure 4**, the efficacy of EA-treated
209 cells attachment was reduced on both cell lines. ECC-1 pre-treated with 50 and 100 μ M EA
210 significantly reduced their attachment competence ($p < 0.01$ and $p < 0.001$ vs. Basal respectively), and
211 in the same way T-HESCs cells pre-treated showed a significant reduced attachment competence
212 ($p < 0.05$ and $p < 0.01$ vs. Basal respectively).

213

214 4. Discussion

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215 Endometriosis is one of the most common benign chronic hormonal woman diseases with poor
216 prognosis and a high recurrence rate. Long-term therapy is required, and nowadays the current
217 treatments are surgical and/or medical approaches. The pharmacological strategy is based on drugs
218 that are generally ineffective because there is no balance between their clinical efficacy and the
219 personal needs of patients⁴². The choice between the treatments is influenced by several factors,
220 including the type of lesion suspected, the personal insights of the patient, and the already known
221 adverse effects that appear when hormonal drugs are used for a long period⁴³. The variety of
222 strategies and modalities demonstrates that treatment of endometriosis is constantly evolving and no
223 single therapy is ideal for all patients.

224 Over the last years, evidence has been accumulated to suggest that medicinal botanicals have
225 anti-inflammatory and pain-alleviating properties and hold promise for treatment of
226 endometriosis⁴⁴. Taking into account previous results obtained in our laboratory^{45,46} and earlier
227 promising results obtained in cancer¹⁵, we focus on possible natural therapies that prevent
228 recurrences after laparoscopy. In this sense, EA is a polyphenol usually found in berries and nuts;
229 and is one of the natural options that have lately been considered to treat different diseases. It
230 affects a large range of biological activities and its mechanisms of action are varied. At a systemic
231 level, EA have shown to successfully inhibit angiogenesis, cell migration and cell invasion in
232 ovarian, colon and bladder cancer cell lines¹⁵; some of the crucial processes for the infiltrative
233 behavior and metastatic process as well as endometriosis pathophysiology^{47,48}. Accordingly to
234 Sampson's implantation theory², endometriotic cells may migrate, attach, proliferate, and invade.
235 These sequential cellular events are involved in the initiation, progression, and growth of ectopic
236 endometriotic lesions, and therefore in the development of the disease.

237 In the present study, we analyze cell proliferation and cell cycle progression to assess the effect
238 of EA on endometrial growth. Our data indicate that EA does not exert any effect nor in
239 endometrial primary epithelial and stromal cells, neither on endometrial ECC-1 and T-HESC cell

240 lines (Figure 1). These results are in agreement with a previous work which demonstrates that EA in
241 doses up to 50 μ M has no effect on cell proliferation in ECC-1 and T-HESCs cell lines⁴⁹. However,
242 it has been shown that 50 and 100 μ M EA suppresses the cell viability of U251 cells glioblastoma⁵⁰.

243 In addition our cell cycle results showed that EA causes an arrest in the G2/M phase in T-HESCs
244 after 48 h treatment (Figure 2). These results are congruent with González-Sarrías et al.
245 investigation⁵¹ in which the exposure of Caco-2 cells to a mixture of EA and its metabolites (10 μ M
246 EA, 40 μ M Urolithin A and 40 μ M Urolithin B (Mix)) arrested cell growth at G2/M-phase since
247 day 2 of treatment, associated to a downregulation of cyclins A and B1. On the other hand, we
248 demonstrated that ECC-1 cell cycle progression is not affected by treatment with EA. This is
249 consistent with previous works^{24, 52} in which it is demonstrated that EA has cell type-dependent
250 effects on cell metabolism, suggesting that there is no a single target of action for this compound.

251 Interestingly, we observed that EA arrests cell cycle at G2/M-phase in T-HESCs cells but has no
252 effect on cell proliferation. We think that this may be due to the fact that the arrest was observed at
253 48h, the same time that cell proliferation was evaluated. Therefore it would be reasonable to find a
254 decrease in cell proliferation at a later time, which was not analyzed in this work. In this regard, it
255 has been reported that endometrial carcinoma KLE and AN3CA cell lines treated with EA 20 μ M
256 for 24, 48 and 72 h, showed a significant decrease in cell viability only after 48 h⁵³. However,
257 during the same investigation, the arrest of the cell cycle in the G1 phase was evident at 24 h of
258 treatment. Likewise, a study performed with apigenin, another natural compound, on pancreatic
259 cancer cells⁵⁴ detected a cell cycle arrest in the G2/M phase at 24 h of treatment, although the
260 decrease in the number of cells was confirmed only at 72 h.

261 Studies of the cellular mechanisms involved in the pathology of diseases are ideally carried out
262 on primary cultured cells. However, the limited availability of tissue, the difficulties in establishing
263 the culture, and the short useful life of these cells in subsequent passages leads to low
264 reproducibility of assays³². Consequently, in this study we mainly use ECC-1 and T-HESCs cell

265 lines since they have been widely utilized as a model of endometriosis due to the close
266 physiological⁵⁵ and molecular^{32, 56-60} similarities they share with primary cultures.

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267 As we mentioned before, cell migration and adhesion are key processes for the establishment of
268 the lesions and the development of endometriosis^{1, 61, 62}. Accordingly, we assessed the effect of EA
269 on these cell abilities. We demonstrated that EA treatment reduces cell migration in both ECC-1
270 and T-HESCs cells. In agreement with our results, Huidi Liu and col.⁶³ demonstrates that the
271 ovarian cancer cells (A2780) underwent inhibition of cell migration upon exposure to 5, 10 and
272 15µg/ml EA. In addition, our results showed that pretreatment with EA decreases the ability of both
273 cell lines to adhere to plastic (Figure 4). Congruently, a previous study conducted on neuroblastoma
274 SH-SY5Y cells has already demonstrated that EA treatment (30µM) induces detachment and lower
275 viability of adherent cells⁶⁴.

276 It is known that many intracellular and soluble cellular adhesion molecules are differentially
277 expressed in endometrial cells from women with and without endometriosis^{65, 66} which may
278 facilitate the implantation of endometrial cells in an ectopic place. Moreover, Zhao Q. and col.⁶⁷
279 demonstrated that endometrial stromal cells from ectopic endometrium have a higher rate of
280 migration than stromal cells from normal endometrium. These reports highlight the importance of
281 targeting cell migration and adhesion as they are central processes in endometriosis
282 pathophysiology and support the use of EA as a putative compound for the treatment of this disease.

283 Nevertheless, EA is a polyphenolic compound from the family of ellagitannins, which have low
284 water solubility and absorption leading to a poor bioavailability^{68, 69}. This disadvantage could be a
285 difficulty thinking it as a possible treatment for endometriosis. However, new promising approaches
286 are being developed. Recently, poor water soluble drugs have been successfully delivered by the
287 use of nanoscale systems⁷⁰⁻⁷². Growing evidence demonstrates that this strategy allows the delivery
288 of higher local concentrations of drugs, which can enhance their therapeutic efficacy^{73, 74}. In this
289 sense, novel drug-delivery systems that overcome the low EA solubility and bioavailability (i.e.,
290 biocompatible polymers-based nanoparticles/ microcapsules/ biofilms/ micelles) are being tested *in*

291 *vitro* and *in vivo*⁷⁵⁻⁷⁹. In summary, we found that EA affects cell cycle progression of endometrial
292 stromal cells through the arrest at G2/M phase. Moreover, EA also inhibited the migration and
293 adhesion of both stromal and epithelial cells suggesting that it could interfere with the early stages
294 of lesion establishment. To the best of our knowledge our report constitutes the first study to test the
295 effect of EA on endometriosis. Our results are promising even though more studies are needed to
296 better understand the mechanisms of action of EA and it is the potential use as a preventive or
297 therapeutic agent for endometriosis. Full characterization of this natural compound will likely
298 provide new insights into alternative medicines with potential for therapeutic applications in
299 women. In this context, further evaluation of the EA and its active metabolite(s) are currently being
300 carry out by our group, in order to provide therapeutic alternatives for the inhibition of the
301 development of endometriotic-type lesions.

302

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307

308 **Conflict of Interest**

309 Authors declare no conflict of interest. NONE

310

311 **Authorship**

312 BMC, did all the experimental work and contributed new ideas. MAB taught and collaborated in the
313 realization of the cell cultures, DM and AGR collaborated in the processing of the samples, JJS
314 provided the endometrial tissue biopsies; RIB proposed the evaluation of the ellagic acid as a
315 possible treatment for endometriosis, elaborated the work plan and direct the laboratory.

316

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317 **5. References**View Article Online
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540 **Figure captions**View Article Online
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541 **Figure 1:** Effects of EA on cell proliferation in epithelial (A) and stromal (B) primary cell cultures
542 from patients with Endometriosis and controls; and in ECC-1 (C) and T-HESCs (D) cells. Cell
543 cultures were treated with EA 50 and 100 μ M or vehicle (Basal group) for 24 or 48 h and cell
544 proliferation was assessed by WST assay. N is expressed between parentheses in each bar.

545

546 **Figure 2:** Effect of EA on cell cycle distribution in ECC-1 (A) and T-HESCs (B) cells. Cell
547 cultures were treated with EA 50 and 100 μ M or vehicle (Basal group) for 24 or 48 h. Cell cycle
548 was assessed by staining DNA with propidium iodide and analyzed with flow cytometer.
549 Fluorescence-activated cell sorting (FACS) analysis of the cell cycle distribution for the Basal
550 condition and for 50 and 100 μ M EA treatment for 24 h (i) and 48 h (iii). Comparison of percentage
551 of cells in each stage of the cell cycle after EA treatment for 24 h (ii) and 48 h (iv). N=5. *P < 0.05
552 versus Basal.

553

554 **Figure 3:** Effect of EA on cell migration in ECC-1 (A) and T-HESCs (B) cells. Cell cultures were
555 treated with EA 50 and 100 μ M or vehicle (Basal group) and images were captured at 0, 5, 10 and
556 20 h after scratch. Quantitative analysis of the open wound was performed using Image J software
557 and expressed as the percentage of 0 h wound for each treatment. Each point represents the mean of
558 five experiments, performed in duplicate. *P < 0.05 and ***P < 0.001 100 μ M EA versus Basal; ##
559 P < 0.01 50 μ M EA versus Basal.

560

561 **Figure 4:** Effect of EA on ECC-1 (A) and T-HESCs (B) cell attachment to plastic. Cell cultures
562 were treated with EA 50 and 100 μ M or vehicle (Basal group). After 24 h cells were harvested and
563 let them to adhere to plastic for 1 h, and the number of attached cells was counted under a
564 microscope. **P < 0.01 and ***P < 0.001 versus Basal. N is expressed between parentheses in each
565 bar.

566

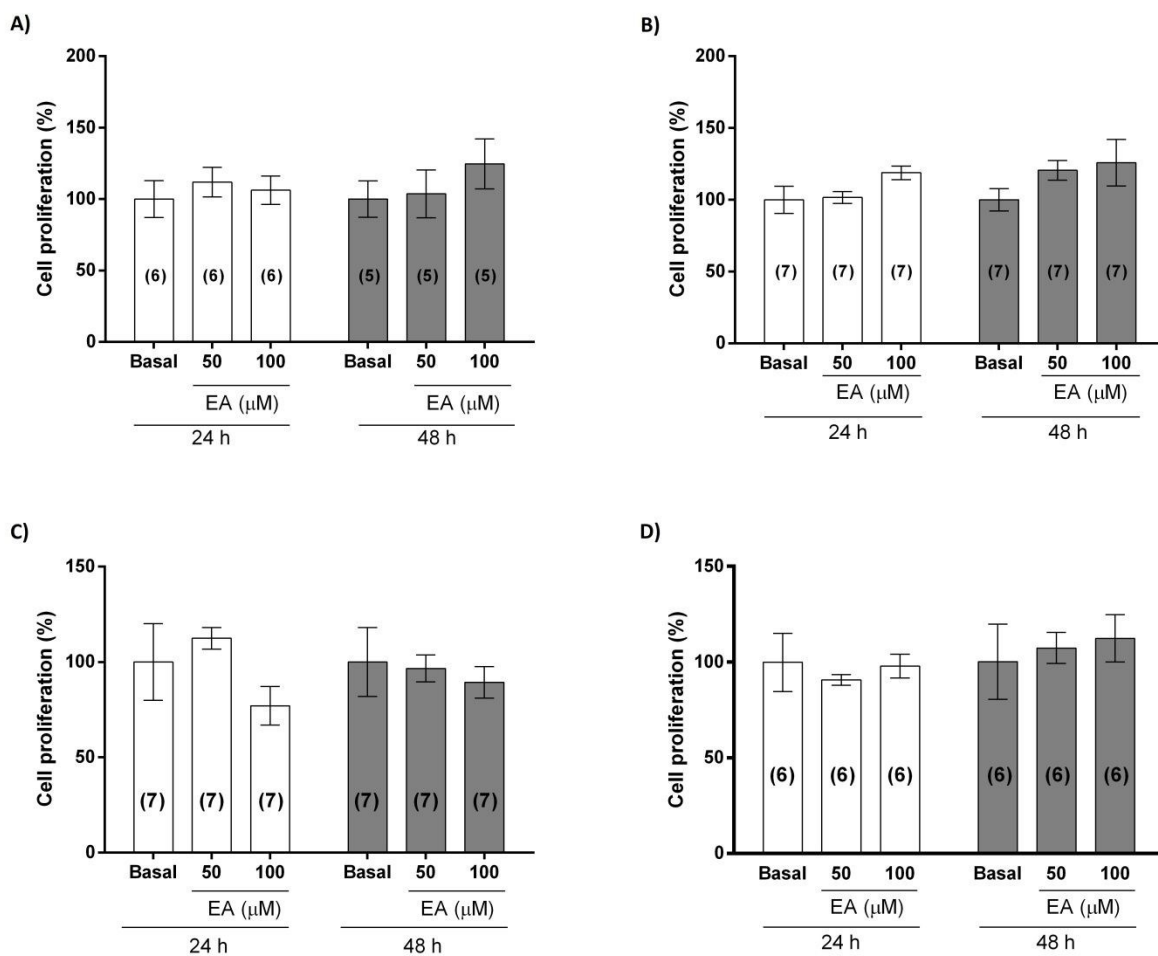
567 **Table1:** Characteristics of biopsies.

568

569 **Figures**

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570 **Figure 1:**



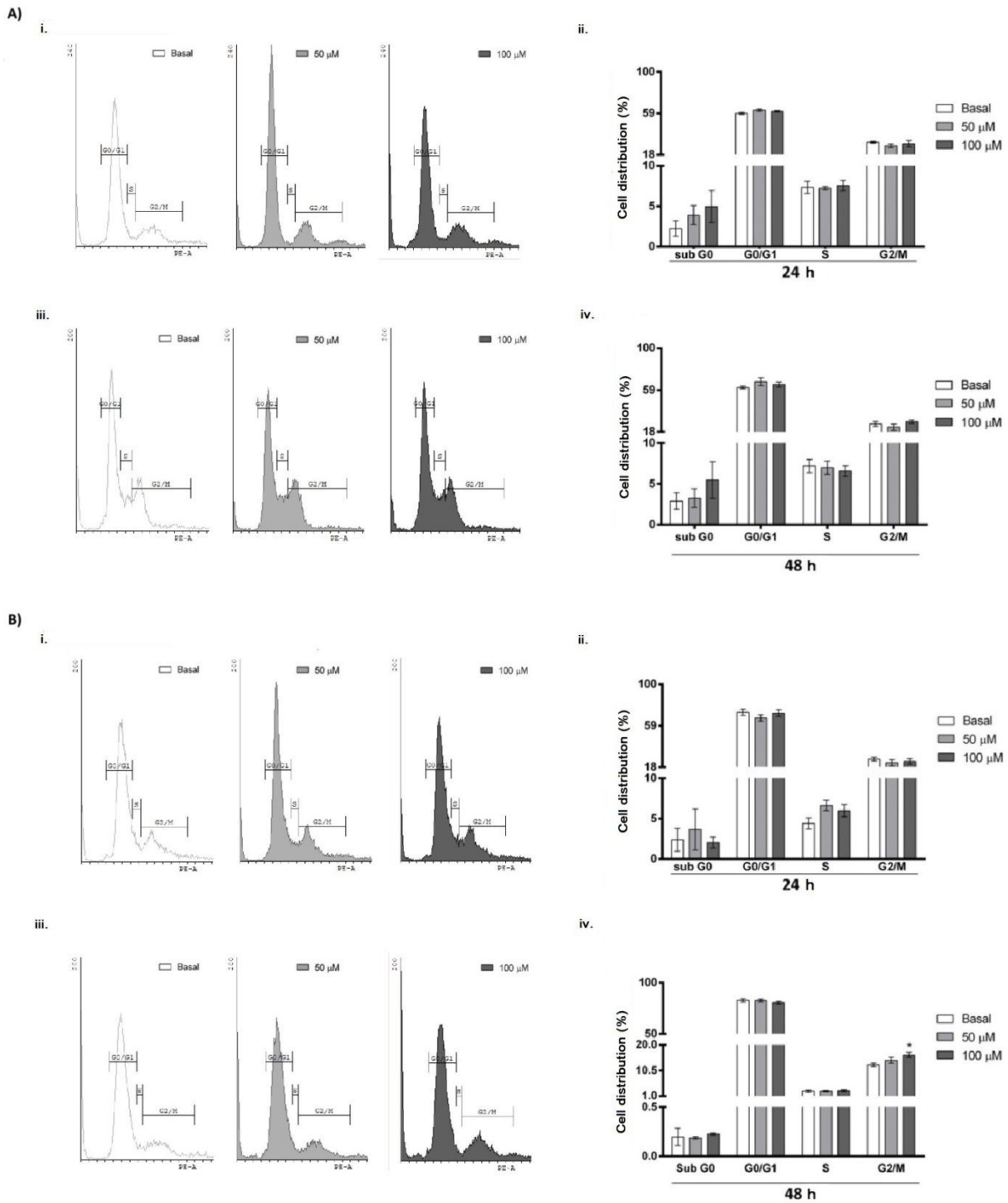
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574 **Figure 2:**

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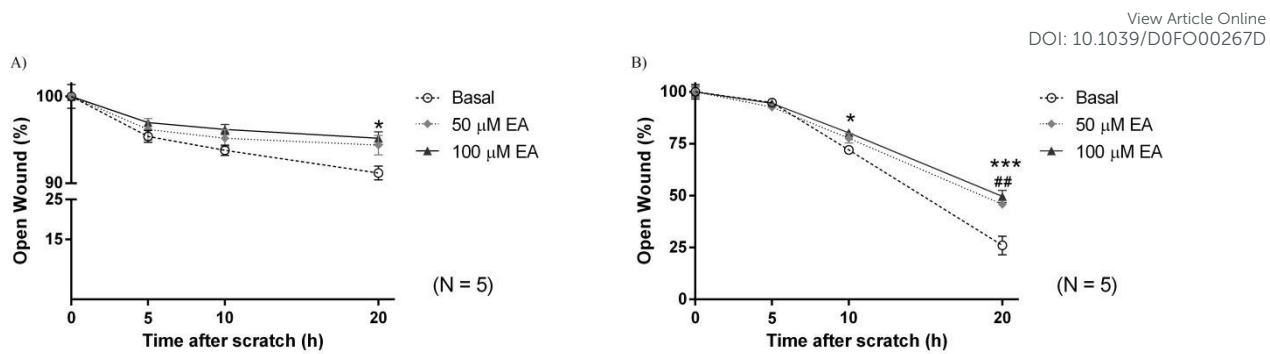


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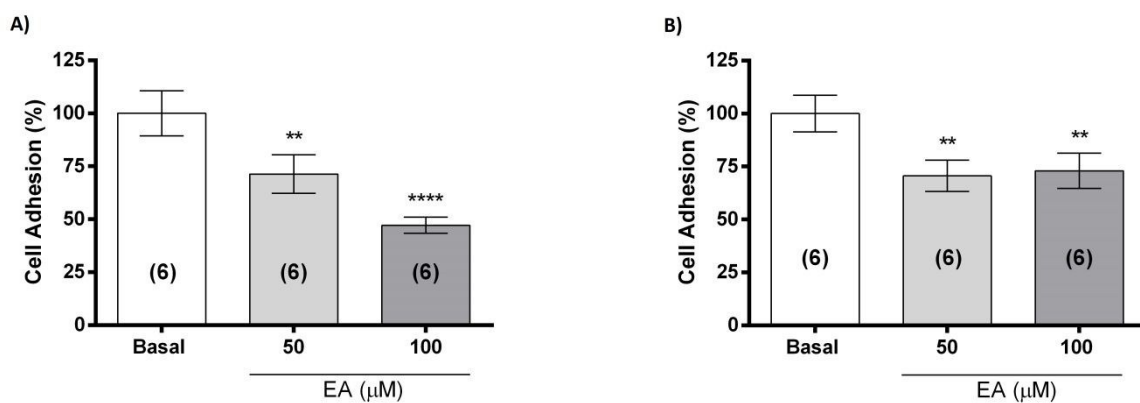
578 **Figure 3:**



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581 **Figure 4:**



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
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584 **Tables**View Article Online
DOI: 10.1039/D0FO00267D585 **Table1:**

Laboratory Code	Patient age at biopsy	Endometriosis manifestations	Location of biopsy
C99a	42	EDT stage III Ovaric endometrioma	Uterus (eutopic)
C110a	28	EDT Ovaric endometrioma	Uterus (eutopic)
C113a	30	EDT stage II Ovaric endometrioma	Uterus (eutopic)
C123a	33	EDT stage II - Sterility Pouch of Douglas	Uterus (eutopic)
C126a	34	Control 2 years Sterility	Uterus (eutopic)
C149a	no data	Control	Uterus (eutopic)
C150a	40	Control	Uterus (eutopic)
C151a	26	EDT stage IV Ovaric endometrioma	Uterus (eutopic)
C152a	42	EDT stage I Bladder-Uterine	Uterus (eutopic)
C115a	40	EDT stage IV – 4 years Sterility Ovaric endometrioma	Uterus (eutopic)
C146a	36	Control	Uterus (eutopic)
C147a	40	Control Sterility	Uterus (eutopic)
C148a	34	EDT stage III Ovaric endometrioma	Uterus (eutopic)
C155a	41	EDT stage III - Sterility Ovaric endometrioma	Uterus (eutopic)
C164a	46	Control Endometrial polyp	Uterus (eutopic)

586

EA treatment decreases cell adhesion and migration of endometrial cells, and alters the progression of endometrial stromal cell line cycle. [View Article Online](#)
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Experimental Model	Treatment	Ellagic Acid (EA) 
Stromal and Epithelial Primary Culture		We did not find an statistical effect of EA on cell proliferation in human endometrial cells
T-HESCs		No statistical effect on cell proliferation G2/M cell cycle arrest ↓ Migration ↓ Adhesion to plastic
ECC-1		No statistical effect on cell proliferation No statistical effect on cell cycle ↓ Migration ↓ Adhesion to plastic