Effects of *Maytenus ilicifolia* on reproduction and embryo-fetal development in Wistar rats

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**ABSTRACT.** *Maytenus ilicifolia* (Celastraceae), popularly known as espinheira-santa, is a native plant from the Atlantic forest and is commonly used in popular medicine to treat inflammation and as an abortifacient. To evaluate the effects of *M. ilicifolia* on pregnant rats during the organogenic period (T1) or throughout the gestational period (T2), an extract obtained using an acetone-water mixture at a 70:30 ratio was administered via gavage at a dose of 15.11 mg·kg⁻¹·day⁻¹ over 2 treatment periods (T1 and T2). No clinical signs of maternal toxicity were observed. Term fetuses did not present malformations or anomalies as the number of implantations, reabsorptions, live, and dead fetuses were similar to the control group. In conclusion, *M. ilicifolia*
hydroacetonic extract is non-toxic to pregnant rats and appears to not interfere with the progress of embryo-fetal development.

**Key words:** *Maytenus ilicifolia*; Toxicology; Reproduction; Embryo-fetal development