

# GC–MS Analysis of Bio-active Molecules Derived from *Paracoccus pantotrophus* FMR19 and the Antimicrobial Activity Against Bacterial Pathogens and MDROs

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**Abstract** The present investigation is focused on the study of chemical composition of a bioactive compound derived from a rumen isolate *Paracoccus pantotrophus* FMR19 using GC–MS and to find out the antibacterial activity of the extracted crude bioactive compounds against multidrug resistant organisms (MDROs) and other clinical pathogens. GC–MS analysis revealed that *P. pantotrophus* FMR19 produced eight major compounds that have been reported to exhibit antimicrobial property. The main components identified from hexane fraction are long chain alkanes, fatty alcohols, fatty acid methyl ester and aromatic hydrocarbons. These molecules are not only active against clinical pathogens such as *Salmonella* sp. and *Proteus* sp. and also effective against MDROs such as Metallo  $\beta$  lactamase and Pan drug resistant bacterial strains and Methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*.

**Keywords** GC–MS · Bioactive compound · Antibacterial activity · Rumen bacteria · *Paracoccus pantotrophus* FMR19 · Multi-drug resistant organisms

## Introduction

Bioactive compounds produced by plants and microbes exhibit pharmacological or toxicological effects in man and animals. Bacteria have been considered as one of the significant groups of microorganisms due to their ability to produce a wide array of secondary metabolites, such as antibiotics, antitumor agents, immunosuppressive agents, cosmetics, vitamins, nutritional materials, herbicides, pesticides, anti-parasitic agents and enzymes [1–3]. Around 23,000 bioactive secondary metabolites produced by microorganisms have been reported.

Several novel bioactive compounds have also been discovered from aquatic Actinomycetes [4, 5]: rifamycin, (*Micromonospora* sp.) [6]; salinosporamide-A, an anti-cancer metabolite (*Salinispora* sp.) [7]; marinomycins (*Marinophilus* sp.) [8]; abyssomicin-C (*Verrucosispora* sp.) and marino pyrroles (*Streptomyces* sp.) [6, 9]. The appearances of multidrug-resistant pathogenic strains caused substantial morbidity and mortality especially among the elderly and immune-compromised patients [10]. To overcome this situation, there is a need to improve or discover a novel class of antibiotics and antimicrobial compounds that have different mechanisms of action worldwide [11].

There have been a number of reports on the antibacterial activities of long-chain fatty alcohols [6]. It has been reported, the activity increases with the length of the carbon chain [12] and the water/octanol partition coefficient has been identified as an important determinant of activity [8, 13]. Other studies indicated that appropriate length of the carbon chain determines the effective activity [14, 15]. However, there is no consensus about the precise length of the carbon chain for the potential activity.

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In India, approximately 1,50,000 tonnes of offals in the form of rawhide trimmings, limed animal fleshing, green animal fleshing, hide splits and chrome shavings are disposed, that are not utilized or underutilized thus creating a solid waste disposal problem in tanneries [16]. In anaerobic bacterial fermentation, the proteins and amino acids derived from degradation of animal fleshing results in branched chain fatty acid, accompanied by potentially important metabolites such as amines, phenolic compounds, and volatile sulfur compounds.

The present work focuses on the utilization of animal fleshing (ANFL), as a substrate for the microbial production of the bioactive compounds. The ability of microorganisms to grow and produce an appreciable level of bioactive compounds, using ANFL as substrate could offer tremendous potential for the development of biotechnological methods for the rapid hydrolysis of ANFL. The produced crude bioactive preparation was characterized using GC–MS analysis and used as an antibacterial agent against multidrug resistant organisms (MDROs) and clinical pathogens.

## Materials and Methods

### Isolation of Rumen Microbes

The rumen fluid collected from the slaughter house was filtered through double layer muslin cloth. One ml of filtrate was serially diluted and cultured by spread plate using Hungate's medium (HiMedia) under anaerobic conditions. The isolated microbe was identified as *Paracoccus pantotrophus* and the 16S rRNA sequence obtained was

submitted to NCBI GenBank with the assigned number as JX012237.

### Production of Bioactive Compound

The rumen bacterial strain was inoculated in anaerobic basal medium namely Hungate's broth containing the composition (g/L): (KH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>—0.02 g; K<sub>2</sub>HPO<sub>4</sub>—0.03 g; MgSO<sub>4</sub>—0.01 g; CaCl<sub>2</sub>—0.01 g; (NH<sub>4</sub>)<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>—0.1 g; NaCl—0.1 g; Cysteine HCl—0.02 g; NaHCO<sub>3</sub>—0.5 g; resazurin—0.0001 g; cellulose—1.0 g; Trace element—1 ml/l). In addition to that, the medium was supported with 1:4 ratio of cellulose and leather industry solid waste animal flesh and incubated for 9 days at 37 °C to achieve the better degradation of animal flesh and thereby the high yield of bioactive compounds. The samples were centrifuged at 10,000×g in 10 min and the cell free supernatant was collected and extracted with chloroform. The hexane fraction that showed good antibacterial effect was subjected to GC–MS analysis to identify the nature of compounds. The chloroform was removed using rotary evaporator under reduced pressure to get crude extract and the crude extract was further purified by column chromatography. A glass column of 50 cm height and 3 cm diameter with silica gel (100–200 Mesh size) was used for the purification of the crude extract. The admixture is loaded at top of the column and the fractions were eluted using non polar solvents (hexane or ethyl acetate).

### Antibacterial Bioassay

The antibacterial activity of isolated fractions was checked against clinical pathogens such as *Proteus* sp.,

**Table 1** GC–MS conditions

<i>GC programme</i>	
Column	HP-5MS (5 % phenyl methyl siloxane), 30 m × 250 μm × 0.25 μm
Equipment	Agilent Technologies (GC-7890B: MS-5977AMSB)
Carrier gas	Helium gas 1 ml/min, splitless mode
Detector	Mass detector
Software	MassHunter
Sample injection	1 μl
Oven temperature programme	35 °C (2 min hold) up to 275 °C at the rate of 2 °C/min on hold
Injection temperature	200 °C
Total GC run time	122 min
<i>MS programme</i>	
Library used	NIST version—2011
Inlet line temperature	200 °C
Source temperature	300 °C
Electron energy	70 eV
Mass scan (m/z)	40–700 amu
Solvent delay	2 min
Total MS run time	120 min

**Table 2** GC–MS analysis of the crude hexane fraction

S. no.	Compound name	Retention time (min)	Formula	Molecular weight	Area %	Activity	Compound nature
1	1-Dodecene	29.471	C <sub>12</sub> H <sub>24</sub>	168.31	1.624	Antibacterial [22]	Long chain alkene
2	Dodecane	30.032	C <sub>12</sub> H <sub>26</sub>	170.34	0.339	Anti-oxidant [26]	Long chain alkane
3	Benzene, 1,3-bis(1,1-dimethylethyl)-	33.505	C <sub>14</sub> H <sub>22</sub>	190.32	0.396	Antibacterial activity [28]	Aromatic hydro carbon
4	2,4-Dimethyldodecane	34.369	C <sub>14</sub> H <sub>30</sub>	198.38	0.146	Antimicrobial and antioxidant activity [24]	Long chain alkane
5	Dodecane, 2,6,11-trimethyl-	35.461	C <sub>15</sub> H <sub>32</sub>	212.41	0.417	Antibacterial activity [24]	Alkane
6	n-Tridecan-1-ol	42.861	C <sub>13</sub> H <sub>28</sub> O	196.37	6.861	Antibacterial activity [30]	long-chain fatty alcohol
7	Tetradecane	43.285	C <sub>14</sub> H <sub>30</sub>	198.39	0.954	Antimicrobial diuretic, anti tuberculosis [27]	Long chain alkane
8	Tetradecane, 4-methyl-	44.604	C <sub>15</sub> H <sub>32</sub>	212.41	0.135	Antimicrobial activity [24]	Hydro carbon
9	Pentadecane, 2,6,10-trimethyl-	46.500	C <sub>18</sub> H <sub>38</sub>	254.49	0.171	Antimicrobial activity [24]	Hydro carbon
10	Heptadecane	48.638	C <sub>17</sub> H <sub>36</sub>	240.46	0.151	Antimicrobial activity [24]	Hydro carbon
11	Pentadecane	49.396	C <sub>15</sub> H <sub>32</sub>	212.41	0.241	Antimicrobial and antioxidant activity [27]	Hydro carbon
12	Phenol, 2,4-bis(1,1-dimethylethyl)-	50.169	C <sub>14</sub> H <sub>22</sub> O	206.32	1.115	Antibacterial activity [26, 16]	Aromatic hydro carbon
13	Benzoic acid, 4-ethoxy-, ethyl ester	50.761	C <sub>14</sub> H <sub>14</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	194.22	0.139	Antimicrobial preservative [33]	Aromatic acid ester
14	Dodecane, 2,6,11-trimethyl-	51.792	C <sub>15</sub> H <sub>32</sub>	212.41	0.351	Antibacterial activity [24]	Alkane
15	Hexadecane	55.249	C <sub>16</sub> H <sub>34</sub>	226.44	0.806	Antimicrobial and antioxidant activity [16]	Long chain hydrocarbon
16	Eicosane	57.993	C <sub>20</sub> H <sub>42</sub>	282.54	0.250	Antibacterial activity [20]	Long chain fatty acid
17	1,11-Tridecadiene	60.359	C <sub>13</sub> H <sub>24</sub>	180.329	0.326	Antimicrobial activity [34]	Alkene
18	E-15-Heptadecenal	65.818	C <sub>17</sub> H <sub>32</sub> O	252.43	10.555	Antioxidant and antibacterial activity [16]	Long chain alkene
19	tert-Hexadecanethiol	67.091	C <sub>16</sub> H <sub>34</sub> S	258.51	0.887	Antioxidant and antibacterial activity [37]	Long chain thiol
20	Isopropyl myristate	67.440	C <sub>17</sub> H <sub>34</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	270.45	0.422	Antioxidant and antibacterial activity [23]	Long chain fatty ester
21	Hexadecanoic acid, methyl ester	72.383	C <sub>17</sub> H <sub>34</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	270.45	0.706	antibacterial, antioxidant, antitumor, immunostimulant, chemopreventive and lipoxigenase inhibitor [24]	Long chain fatty ester
22	3-Pentadecanone	73.551	C <sub>15</sub> H <sub>30</sub> O	226.39	0.185	Antioxidant and antibacterial activity [36]	Long chain ketone
23	Heneicosane	74.157	C <sub>21</sub> H <sub>44</sub>	296.57	0.288	Antiasthmatics urine acidifiers Antimicrobial [26]	Hydro carbon
24	n-Nonadecanol-1	75.674	C <sub>19</sub> H <sub>40</sub> O	284.52	7.956	Antimicrobial and cytotoxic properties [35]	Long chain alcohol
25	8-Octadecenoic acid, methyl ester	80.389	C <sub>19</sub> H <sub>36</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	296.487	0.736	Antioxidant, antimicrobial [24]	Fatty acid ester
26	Methyl stearate	81.648	C <sub>19</sub> H <sub>38</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	298.28	0.288	Antidiarrheal 19 and cytotoxic and antiproliferative Activities [35]	Fatty acid methyl Esters
27	Tetracosane	81.921	C <sub>24</sub> H <sub>50</sub>	338.65	0.553	Antioxidant and antimicrobial activity [20]	Alkane
28	Oxiraneoctanoic acid	88.668	C <sub>19</sub> H <sub>36</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	186.24	0.945	Antioxidant activity [32]	Fatty acid
29	n-Tetracosanol-1	92.929	C <sub>24</sub> H <sub>50</sub> O	354.65	4.641	Antibacterial activity [30]	Alcoholic compound
30	6,9,12-Octadecatrienoic acid, methyl ester	95.386	C <sub>19</sub> H <sub>32</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	292.45	0.315	Antibacterial activity [24]	Polyenoic fatty acid methyl ester
31	Octadecanoic acid, 9,10-dichloro-, methyl ester	97.084	C <sub>19</sub> H <sub>36</sub> Cl <sub>2</sub> O <sub>2</sub>	367.40	4.166	Antibacterial activity [24]	Unsaturated fatty acid
32	1-Heptacosanol	100.572	C <sub>27</sub> H <sub>56</sub> O	396.73	2.738	Antimicrobial and anti-oxidant activity [31]	Long chain alcohol

Table 2 continued

S. no.	Compound name	Retention time (min)	Formula	Molecular weight	Area %	Activity	Compound nature
33	17-Pentatriacontene	102.603	C <sub>35</sub> H <sub>70</sub>	490.93	0.422	Antioxidant activity [16]	Alkene
34	Tetraatriacontane	104.317	C <sub>34</sub> H <sub>70</sub>	478.92	0.401	Antibacterial activity [30]	Long chain Hydrocarbon
35	1-Dodecanol	114.325	C <sub>20</sub> H <sub>42</sub> O	186.33	0.676	Anti-oxidant, antibacterial activity [25]	long-chain fatty alcohol
36	Hentriacontane	117.585	C <sub>31</sub> H <sub>64</sub>	436.85		Antibacterial activity [29]	Long chain hydrocarbon

*Salmonella* sp., *Salmonella paratyphi* A, *Salmonella paratyphi* B and *Staphylococcus aureus*. Activity was also tested against MDROs such as Metallo  $\beta$ -lactamase resistant organism (MBL)-*Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, Pan drug resistant organism (PDR)—*Klebsiella pneumoniae* and Methicillin Resistant *S. aureus* (MRSA). These cultures were obtained from Sri Muthukumaran Medical College, Chennai. The multidrug resistance was confirmed by agar well diffusion method. Briefly, the bacterial lawn ( $10^{-8}$  CFU/ml) of the each test organism was prepared in Mueller–Hinton agar plate. The agar plates were allowed to dry and wells of 10 mm were made with a sterile cork borer on the inoculated agar plates. 10  $\mu$ g of the active fraction in Dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) was added into the well and the DMSO was used as control. The plates were incubated at 37 °C for 24 h and observed for the zone of inhibition around the wells and the zone of inhibition was measured using an antibiotic zone scale (Himedia, Mumbai).

#### GC–MS Analysis of the Crude Bioactive Compound in Hexane Fraction

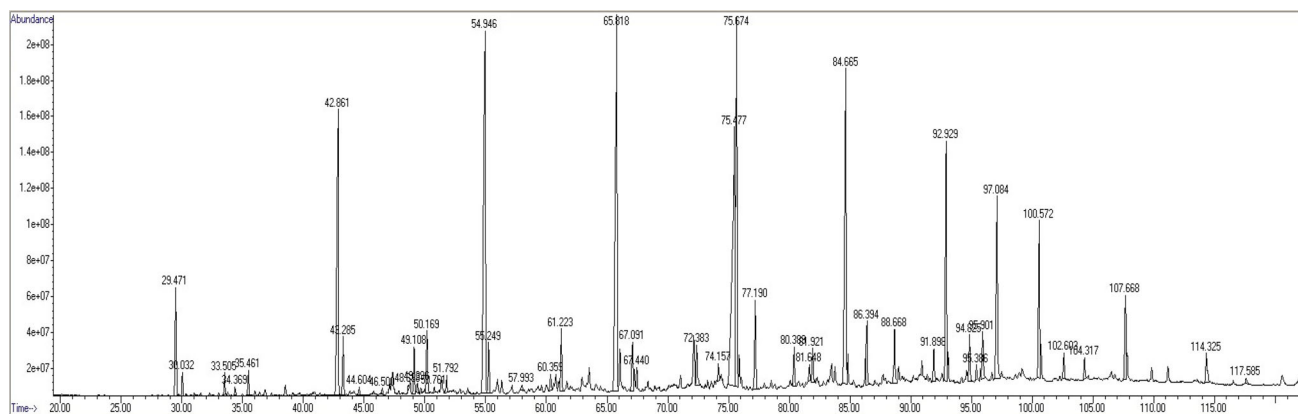
The crude bioactive hexane fraction was subjected to GC–MS analysis (Fig. 1) and the conditions used for the GC–MS analysis are presented in Table 1. The spectrum of the crude component was compared with the spectrum of the known components in the National Institute Standard and Technology (NIST) library [17]. The name, molecular formula, weight and chemical structure of the components of the test materials were identified.

## Results and Discussion

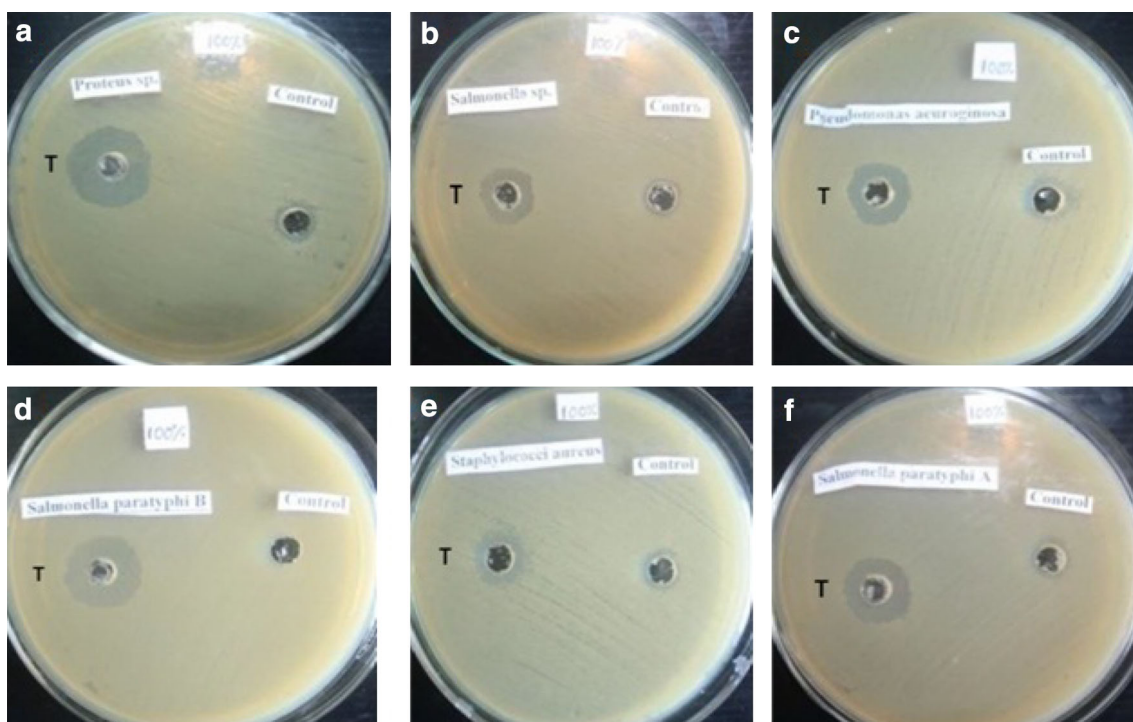
#### Production of Antibacterial Compound and GC–MS Analysis

*Paracoccus pantotrophus* FMR19 produced eight major compounds, identified from hexane fraction by GC–MS analysis as long chain alkanes [E-15 Heptadecanol], fatty alcohols [n-Nonadecanol-1, 7.956 %; n-Tridecan-1-ol, 6.861 %; n-tetracosanol-1, 4.641 %; 1-Heptacosanol, 2.738 %], fatty acid methyl ester [Octadecanoic acid, 9,10-dichloro-, methyl ester, 4.166 %] and aromatic hydrocarbon [2,6-bis(1,1-dimethylethyl)phenol, 1.115 %] and other minor compounds are also represented in Table 2. These major compounds may be responsible for antibacterial activity [6, 7, 12, 15].

Retention time at 65.818 min corresponds to the compound E-15-Heptadecanol with peak area 10.555 %. Long chain alkanes such as Hexadecane have also been reported to have antibacterial and antioxidant activities [15].



**Fig. 1** GC–MS chromatogram of the hexane fraction of the crude compounds from *Paracoccus pantotrophs*



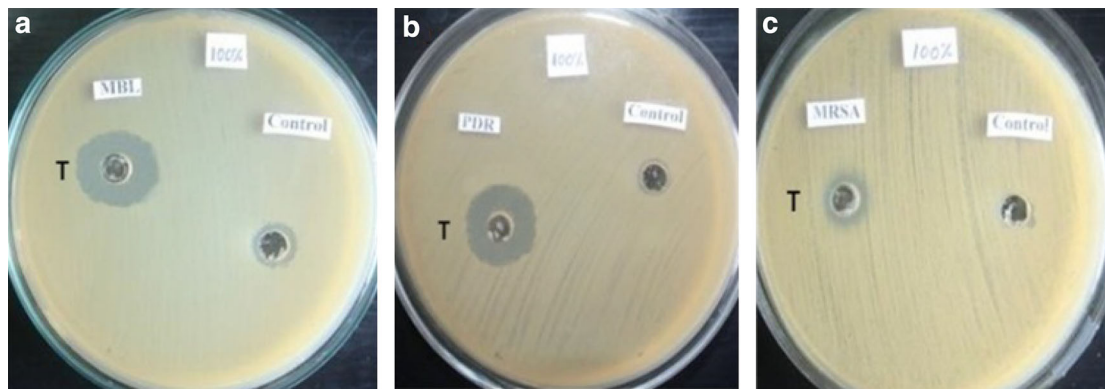
**Fig. 2** Zone of inhibition against microbial pathogens such as **a** *Proteus* sp., **b** *Salmonella* sp., **c** *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, **d** *Salmonella paratyphi* B, **e** *Staphylococcus aureus* and **f** *Salmonella paratyphi* A. Control: DMSO; T test: 10 µg of crude compounds in DMSO

The n-Nonadecanol-1 compound appeared at 75.674 min with a peak area 7.956 % and has been proven to have cytotoxic property and antibacterial activity [1]. The compound 1-Heptacosanol appeared at 100.572 min with a peak area of 2.738 % are reported to have antimicrobial and antioxidant activity [2].

The crude bioactive compound produced in the study contains fatty acid methyl esters. Only few studies have been reported that the crude bioactive compound showed the antimicrobial activity against *Bacillus subtilis* and *Sarcina lutea*, but there is no antimicrobial activity against

the growth of *S. aureus* and *Pectobacterium carotovorum* at a concentration of 2000 µg/ml. Whereas the compound extracted in our study showed antibacterial activity against *S. aureus* (4 mm) proving to be even more effective at a concentration of 10 µg/ml. Fatty acid methyl esters from microalgae were also reported to possess antimicrobial properties [18, 19]. Also, few aromatic hydrocarbons are shown to have antibacterial activity against the microbial pathogens [20, 21]. Hence, all those components eluted in hexane might be attributed to the antimicrobial activity of the MDROs and clinical pathogens.





**Fig. 3** Zone of inhibition against multi drug resistant organisms such as **a** MBL, **b** PDR, and **c** MRSA. Control: DMSO; T test: 10 µg of crude compounds in DMSO

### Antibacterial Activity of the Bioactive Molecule Extracted in Hexane

The clinical pathogens *Proteus* sp. (7 mm), *Salmonella* sp. (5 mm), *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (5 mm), *Salmonella paratyphi-B* (6 mm), *S. aureus* (4 mm), *Salmonella paratyphi-A* (5 mm) showed zone of inhibition. The bioactive hexane fraction showed 8, 7 and 4 mm zones of inhibition against metallo  $\beta$  lactamase resistant (MBL) bacterial strain, pan-drug resistant (PDR) bacterial strain and methicillin-resistant *S. aureus* (MRSA) respectively. The results showed that the hexane fraction is more active against MDROs than the clinical pathogens (Figs. 2, 3).

Naoko et al. [22] reported that the long chain fatty acids 1-Dodecanol, n-Nonadecanol-1, and 1-tridecanol had the highest antibacterial activity against *S. aureus*. Chandrasekar et al. [23] showed that NimbapatradiChoornam had strong antimicrobial activity against *Klebsiella pneumoniae*, *S. aureus*, *E. coli* and *Candida albicans*. The presence of phenol, 2,4-bis[1,1-dimethylethyl]-derivative, isopropyl myristate, eicosane, octadecanoic acid and hexadecanoic acid compounds were responsible for the antimicrobial activity of Nimbapatrachooram.

Rahbar et al. [24] had done investigation on leaf and stem extracts of *Origanum vulgare* L. sp. and found good antimicrobial activity of tridecane, 9, 12, 15-octadecatrienoic acid [ $\omega$ -3], tetradecane, hexadecanoic acid and pentadecane against seven Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria (*Bacillus subtilis*, *Enterococcus faecalis*, *S. aureus*, *Staphylococcus epidermidis*, *Escherichia coli*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and *Klebsiella pneumoniae*), as well as three fungi (*Candida albicans*, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* and *Aspergillus niger*).

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