

## Supplementary Material

### Comparison study of cytotoxicity of bare and functionalized zinc oxide nanoparticles

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Significant differences among means of the groups were evaluated using one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The test was performed employing the software IBM SPSS Statistics v.23. Additionally, Dunnett's post hoc test was performed in order to compare the results from each type of functionalized ZnO NPs in relation to the bare (ZnO\_Chem) NPs. The results of post hoc assay are summarized in the Supplementary Material (**Table S1 – S6**).

**Table S1** The Dunnett post hoc test for MB degradation at different conditions. Cross correlation between each type of functionalized ZnO NPs in comparison to the bare ZnO NPs. The statistically significant correlations ( $p < 0.01$ ) are marked in the red colour

Dependent variable	Tested samples	Significance (p-value)
dark	ZnO_Intra	6.93 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto	6.45 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	1.37 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>
	ZnO_Proto	7.84 x 10 <sup>-4</sup>
sunlight	ZnO_Intra	3.21 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto	3.22 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	8.18 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Proto	3.71 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
UV irradiation	ZnO_Intra	8.22 x 10 <sup>-3</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto	9.96 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	9.54 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Proto	2.97 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
pH 3	ZnO_Intra	2.04 x 10 <sup>-2</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto	2.15 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	9.97 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Proto	1.00
pH 10	ZnO_Intra	4.32 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto	1.92 x 10 <sup>-7</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	4.80 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Proto	7.36 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>

**Table S2** The Dunnett post hoc test for MB degradation in various time points. Cross correlation between each type of functionalized ZnO NPs in comparison to the bare ZnO NPs. The statistically significant correlations ( $p < 0.01$ ) are marked in the red colour

Dependent variable	Tested samples	Significance (p-value)
t = 60 min	ZnO_Intra	9.31 x 10 <sup>-4</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto	2.34 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	2.55 x 10 <sup>-4</sup>
	ZnO_Proto	1.01 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
t = 180 min	ZnO_Intra	9.10 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto	4.18 x 10 <sup>-7</sup>

	ZnO_Extra		1.78 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>
	ZnO_Prot		3.50 x 10 <sup>-2</sup>
<b>t = 360 min</b>	ZnO_Intra	ZnO_Chem	3.02 x 10 <sup>-7</sup>
	ZnO_Photo		2.39 x 10 <sup>-7</sup>
	ZnO_Extra		4.85 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Prot		5.26 x 10 <sup>-2</sup>
<b>t = 480 min</b>	ZnO_Intra	ZnO_Chem	1.3 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Photo		3.61 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Extra		3.67 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Prot		7.78 x 10 <sup>-2</sup>
<b>t = 720 min</b>	ZnO_Intra	ZnO_Chem	1.02 x 10 <sup>-4</sup>
	ZnO_Photo		2.40 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Extra		1.14 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Prot		1.18 x 10 <sup>-2</sup>

**Table S3** The Dunnett post hoc test for DPPH assay. Cross correlation between each type of functionalized ZnO NPs in comparison to the bare ZnO NPs. The statistically significant correlations ( $p < 0.01$ ) are marked in the red colour

Dependent variable	Tested samples	Significance (p-value)
<b>c = 1.56 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	1.10 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>
	ZnO_Photo	1.84 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	1.88 x 10 <sup>-4</sup>
	ZnO_Prot	1.59 x 10 <sup>-3</sup>
<b>c = 3.12 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	7.87 x 10 <sup>-7</sup>
	ZnO_Photo	9.96 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	1.08 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Prot	6.94 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
<b>c = 6.25 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	4.45 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Photo	9.77 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	1.60 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Prot	6.15 x 10 <sup>-3</sup>
<b>c = 12.5 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	9.95 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Photo	3.93 x 10 <sup>-2</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	3.09 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Prot	2.70 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
<b>c = 25 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	4.42 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Photo	9.98 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	3.02 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Prot	5.54 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>
<b>c = 50 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	5.17 x 10 <sup>-3</sup>
	ZnO_Photo	9.63 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	2.86 x 10 <sup>-3</sup>
	ZnO_Prot	1.14 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>
<b>c = 100 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	4.84 x 10 <sup>-2</sup>
	ZnO_Photo	1.91 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	2.95 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Prot	4.18 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>
<b>c = 200 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	9.97 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Photo	5.02 x 10 <sup>-2</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	6.67 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Prot	3.43 x 10 <sup>-4</sup>

**Table S4** The Dunnett post hoc test for MTT viability assay. Cross correlation between each type of functionalized ZnO NPs in comparison to the bare ZnO NPs. The statistically significant correlations ( $p < 0.01$ ) are marked in the red colour

Dependent variable	Tested samples	Significance (p-value)	
		Caco-2 cells	L929 cells
$c = 1.56 \mu\text{g/mL}$	ZnO_Intra	$7.7 \times 10^{-2}$	$8.86 \times 10^{-4}$
	ZnO_Photo	$3.09 \times 10^{-2}$	$7.56 \times 10^{-1}$
	ZnO_Extra	$2.01 \times 10^{-2}$	$9.85 \times 10^{-1}$
	ZnO_Prot	$1.77 \times 10^{-6}$	$9.8 \times 10^{-1}$
$c = 3.12 \mu\text{g/mL}$	ZnO_Intra	$1.43 \times 10^{-1}$	$2.46 \times 10^{-6}$
	ZnO_Photo	$2.09 \times 10^{-2}$	$8.58 \times 10^{-6}$
	ZnO_Extra	$3.44 \times 10^{-1}$	$2.17 \times 10^{-1}$
	ZnO_Prot	$6.49 \times 10^{-4}$	$3.64 \times 10^{-1}$
$c = 6.25 \mu\text{g/mL}$	ZnO_Intra	$2.72 \times 10^{-2}$	$3.06 \times 10^{-3}$
	ZnO_Photo	$4.24 \times 10^{-2}$	$2.87 \times 10^{-3}$
	ZnO_Extra	$7.66 \times 10^{-1}$	$2.58 \times 10^{-1}$
	ZnO_Prot	$2.07 \times 10^{-5}$	$8.94 \times 10^{-1}$
$c = 12.5 \mu\text{g/mL}$	ZnO_Intra	$7.85 \times 10^{-2}$	$1.96 \times 10^{-4}$
	ZnO_Photo	$1.33 \times 10^{-1}$	$1.94 \times 10^{-4}$
	ZnO_Extra	$2.58 \times 10^{-1}$	$2.19 \times 10^{-4}$
	ZnO_Prot	$1.44 \times 10^{-4}$	$6.77 \times 10^{-1}$
$c = 25 \mu\text{g/mL}$	ZnO_Intra	$6.39 \times 10^{-5}$	$3.12 \times 10^{-8}$
	ZnO_Photo	$5.85 \times 10^{-4}$	$3.12 \times 10^{-8}$
	ZnO_Extra	$8.51 \times 10^{-4}$	$3.12 \times 10^{-8}$
	ZnO_Prot	$5.32 \times 10^{-8}$	$1.12 \times 10^{-3}$
$c = 50 \mu\text{g/mL}$	ZnO_Intra	$3.28 \times 10^{-4}$	$4.22 \times 10^{-1}$
	ZnO_Photo	$5.43 \times 10^{-3}$	$3.82 \times 10^{-1}$
	ZnO_Extra	$8.95 \times 10^{-4}$	1
	ZnO_Prot	$3.58 \times 10^{-8}$	$9.66 \times 10^{-1}$
$c = 100 \mu\text{g/mL}$	ZnO_Intra	1	$9.98 \times 10^{-1}$
	ZnO_Photo	$2.21 \times 10^{-2}$	$6.84 \times 10^{-2}$
	ZnO_Extra	$1.38 \times 10^{-2}$	$1.87 \times 10^{-1}$
	ZnO_Prot	$3.64 \times 10^{-3}$	$9.92 \times 10^{-1}$
$c = 200 \mu\text{g/mL}$	ZnO_Intra	$5.00 \times 10^{-1}$	$8.92 \times 10^{-3}$
	ZnO_Photo	$1.52 \times 10^{-3}$	$2.72 \times 10^{-4}$
	ZnO_Extra	$2.04 \times 10^{-3}$	$4.38 \times 10^{-3}$
	ZnO_Prot	$3.55 \times 10^{-2}$	1

**Table S5** The Dunnett post hoc test for LDH membrane integrity assay. Cross correlation between each type of functionalized ZnO NPs in comparison to the bare ZnO NPs. The statistically significant correlations ( $p < 0.01$ ) are marked in the red colour

Dependent variable	Tested samples	Significance (p-value)	
		Caco-2 cells	L929 cells
$c = 1.56 \mu\text{g/mL}$	ZnO_Intra	$7.39 \times 10^{-2}$	$3.5 \times 10^{-8}$
	ZnO_Photo	$4.92 \times 10^{-1}$	$6.28 \times 10^{-1}$
	ZnO_Extra	$7.12 \times 10^{-1}$	$1.84 \times 10^{-2}$
	ZnO_Prot	$4.51 \times 10^{-1}$	$9.74 \times 10^{-1}$
$c = 3.12 \mu\text{g/mL}$	ZnO_Intra	$1.7 \times 10^{-6}$	$3.21 \times 10^{-8}$
	ZnO_Photo	$6.99 \times 10^{-1}$	$9.62 \times 10^{-1}$
	ZnO_Extra	$5.11 \times 10^{-1}$	$3.21 \times 10^{-8}$

	ZnO_Prot	4.86 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	1
<b>c = 6.25 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	3.22 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	3.21 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto	6.94 x 10 <sup>-3</sup>	3.21 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	3.21 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	3.21 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Prot	8.45 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	9.51 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Intra	6.72 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	3.21 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
<b>c = 12.5 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Phyto	1.34 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>	3.21 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	9.29 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	3.21 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Prot	1	1
	ZnO_Intra	6.33 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	4.71 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>
<b>c = 25 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Phyto	2.07 x 10 <sup>-4</sup>	3.38 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	7.86 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>	3.24 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Prot	6.76 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	2.03 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Intra	1.39 x 10 <sup>-3</sup>	3.51 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
<b>c = 50 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Phyto	7.83 x 10 <sup>-4</sup>	1.91 x 10 <sup>-2</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	3.46 x 10 <sup>-4</sup>	6.4266 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Prot	1	9.97 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Intra	3.25 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	8.92 x 10 <sup>-3</sup>
<b>c = 100 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Phyto	4.66 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>	3.21 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	2.4 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>	5.58 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Prot	3.46 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>	9.48 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Intra	3.38 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	4.39 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
<b>c = 200 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Phyto	4.04 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	9.23 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	4.01 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	2.59 x 10 <sup>-3</sup>
	ZnO_Pro	3.29 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>	8.27 x 10 <sup>-3</sup>

**Table S6** The Dunnett post hoc test for ROS generation assay. Cross correlation between each type of functionalized ZnO NPs in comparison to the bare ZnO NPs. The statistically significant correlations ( $p < 0.01$ ) are marked in the red colour

	Dependent variable	Tested samples	Significance (p-value) Caco-2	Significance (p-value) L929
<b>c = 1.56 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	ZnO_Chem	3.24 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	3.77 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto		3.75 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	2.96 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Extra		6.31 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	7.95 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Prot		3.71 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	9.99 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
<b>c = 3.12 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	ZnO_Chem	3.92 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	3.64 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto		1.02 x 10 <sup>-7</sup>	4.40 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Extra		5.07 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	4.34 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>
	ZnO_Prot		4.63 x 10 <sup>-3</sup>	6.98 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
<b>c = 6.25 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	ZnO_Chem	3.22 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	5.58 x 10 <sup>-7</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto		3.22 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	3.45 x 10 <sup>-7</sup>
	ZnO_Extra		3.22 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	1.41 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>
	ZnO_Prot		3.22 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	7.42 x 10 <sup>-6</sup>
<b>c = 12.5 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	ZnO_Chem	6.12 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	1.53 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto		5.95 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	4.39 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Extra		5.14 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	1.25 x 10 <sup>-4</sup>
	ZnO_Prot		8.87 x 10 <sup>-8</sup>	5.50 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
<b>c = 25 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	ZnO_Chem	2.31 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	7.61 x 10 <sup>-4</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto		5.78 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	5.11 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Extra		1.04 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	2.17 x 10 <sup>-4</sup>
	ZnO_Prot		5.62 x 10 <sup>-2</sup>	2.12 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
<b>c = 50 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	ZnO_Chem	1.10 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	8.33 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>

	ZnO_Phyto	3.76 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	9.69 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	4.58 x 10 <sup>-2</sup>	3.73 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Pro	3.32 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	2.04 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
<b>c = 100 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	1.22 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	1.54 x 10 <sup>-4</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto	9.76 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	1.04 x 10 <sup>-2</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	2.67 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	1.28 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
	ZnO_Pro	6.44 x 10 <sup>-2</sup>	8.04 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>
<b>c = 200 µg/mL</b>	ZnO_Intra	1.42 x 10 <sup>-4</sup>	9.85 x 10 <sup>-7</sup>
	ZnO_Phyto	1.48 x 10 <sup>-2</sup>	5.39 x 10 <sup>-5</sup>
	ZnO_Extra	5.95 x 10 <sup>-3</sup>	8.10 x 10 <sup>-7</sup>
	ZnO_Pro	4.91 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>	4.85 x 10 <sup>-1</sup>