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Novel Applications of Natural Polysaccharides for Pharmaceuticals

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Message from the Guest Editors

Natural polysaccharides are important biomacromolecules that exist in almost all living forms. They have important biological functions, and are receiving increasing attention due to their extensive range of therapeutic and biological activities, including antioxidant, anticoagulant, antidiabetic, anti-tumor, immunomodulatory, antimicrobial, antiviral, and hypoglycemia activities; thus, they are one of the most promising candidates in the biomedical and pharmaceutical fields. Polysaccharides can be isolated from natural sources including algae, plants, microorganisms, and animals. However, there are limitations and challenges to these applications, including batch-to-batch variations, microbial contamination, reduced viscosity during storage, thickening, and uncontrolled rates of hydration. The high variability of polysaccharides in nature adds a new challenge to the extraction and purification of these polysaccharides. Determining and understanding polysaccharides' structural activity relationships could provide new opportunities for their pharmaceutical and biological applications.





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