



REVIEW ARTICLE

**Medicinal Plants with Antidiabetic Potential - A Review on Ten Years of
Research (2003-2013)**

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ABSTRACT

Medical plants play an important role in the management of diabetes mellitus especially in developing countries where resources are meagre. This review presents the profiles of plants with hypoglycaemic properties, reported in the literature from 2003 to 2013. The profiles presented include vital information about herbal drugs. The large number of plants described in this review clearly demonstrated the importance of herbal plants in the treatment of diabetes. It also shows the effort to isolate new potential antidiabetic agents. Many studies have confirmed the benefits of medicinal plants with hypoglycaemic effects in the management of diabetes mellitus. The effects of these plants may delay the development of diabetic complications and correct the metabolic abnormalities. Moreover, during the past few years some of the new bioactive drugs isolated from hypoglycaemic plants showed antidiabetic activity with more efficacy than oral hypoglycaemic agents used in clinical therapy.

KEYWORDS

Hypoglycaemic, Antidiabetic, Medicinal Plants, Diabetes Mellitus

INTRODUCTION

Diabetes mellitus is chronic metabolic disorders that affect human body in terms of physical, psychological and social health. It is defined as a group of disorders characterized by hyperglycemia, altered metabolism of lipids, carbohydrates and proteins.^{1,2} It is becoming the third “killer” of the health of mankind along with cancer, cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases.³ The prevalence of diabetes mellitus is expected to reach up to 4.4% in 2030, and the occurrence was found to be high in India, China, and USA. Historical accounts reveal that as early as 200 BC, diabetes mellitus was well recognized disease in India even as distinguished in two types:

a genetically based disorder and a dietary related disorder.⁴ Diabetes mellitus is a global health crisis, which has been persistently affecting the humanity, irrespective of the socioeconomic profile and geographic location of the population. According to an estimate, one person is detected with diabetes every 5 sec somewhere in the world, while someone dies of it every 10 sec.⁵

Several medicinal plants have been used as dietary adjunct and in the treatment of numerous diseases without proper knowledge of their function. Although phytotherapy continues to be used in several countries, few plants have received scientific or medical scrutiny.⁶ Plants and plant derived compounds have a great potential to cure and control diabetes, additionally they are safer and cost effective. Since the antiquity Diabetes has been treated

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with plant medicines and many plants were known for their antihyperglycaemic activity across the world. Now a days more than 400 plants species having hypoglycemic property and many of them still remain to be scientifically evaluated.^{7,8}

We believe that the list of medicinal plants presented in this review is useful to researchers, as well as practitioners. This list is best used only as a preliminary screening of potential antidiabetic plants, not as a definitive or complete list of hypoglycaemic plant.

Plant name	Family	Part used	Result/ Experimental modal	Ref.
Ipomoea aquatica	Convolvaceae	Leaf	Reduces the fasting blood sugar level of streptozotocin induced diabetic rats	[9]
Panax ginseng	Araliaceae	Root, Berry	Antidiabetic and antihyperglycemic activity	[10]
Sclerocarya birrea	Anacardiaceae	Stem bark	Hypoglycemic activity in normal and in alloxan induced diabetic rats	[11]
Acosmium panamense	Fabaceae	Bark	Glucose lowering activity in streptozotocin diabetic rats	[12]
Barleria lupulina	Acanthaceae	Aerial part	Reduction of blood glucose in streptozotocin hyperglycemic rats	[13]
Bauhinia candicans	Fabaceae	Leaf	Hypoglycemic activity in alloxan-induced diabetic rabbits	[14]
Boerhavia diffusa	Nyctaginaceae	Leaf	Significant reduction in serum and tissue cholesterol, free fatty acids, phospholipids, and triglycerides in alloxone induced diabetic rats.	[15]
Brassica oleracea	Brassicaceae	Stem	Hypoglycemic activity in alloxan induced hyperglycemic rats	[16]
Calamintha officinalis	Lamiaceae	Aerial part	Hypoglycemic effect independently of insulin secretion in streptozotocin induced diabetic rats	[17]
Caralluma attenuata	Asclepidaceae	Whole plant	Glucose lowering activity in both diabetic and normal rats	[18]
Cogniauxia podolaena	Cucurbitaceae	Leaf	Hypoglycemic activity in alloxan induced diabetic rats	[19]
Cyamopsis tetragonoloba	Fabaceae	Bean	Antihyperglycaemic activity in alloxan induced diabetic rats	[20]
Datura metel	Solanaceae	Seed	Blood glucose lowering effect in normoglycemic and in alloxan-induced hyperglycemic rats	[21]
Ficus hispida	Moraceae	Bark	Hypoglycemic activity in normal and diabetic rats	[22]
Helicteres isora	Sterculiaceae	Fruit	Exhibit significant antioxidant activity and moderate antidiabetic activity	[23]
Loranthus micranthus	Loranthaceae	Leaf	Hypoglycemic and antihyper glycaemic activity	[24]
Murraya koenigii	Rutaceae	Leaf	Increases plasma insulin level in alloxan-induced diabetic rats	[25]

Origanum vulgare	Lamiaceae	Leaf	Antihyperglycemic activity in STZ diabetic rats without affecting insulin secretion	[26]
Rehmannia glutinosa	Scrophulariaceae	Root	Hypoglycemic activity in glucose-induced hyperglycemic and alloxan-induced diabetic rats	[27]
Silybum marianum	Asteraceae	Aerial part	Hypoglycemic and antihyperglycemic activity in normal and STZ diabetic rats without affecting insulin secretion	[28]
Tamarindus indica	Fabaceae	Seed	Antidiabetic activity in streptozotocin induced diabetic rats	[29]
Tetrapleura tetraptera	Fabaceae	Fruit	Hypoglycemic activity	[30]
Aegle marmelos	Rutaceae	Fruit	improve functional state of the pancreatic β -cells and partially reversed the damage caused by STZ to the pancreatic islets	[31]
Bryophyllum pinnatum	Crassulaceae	Leaf	Antidiabetic properties in streptozotocin (STZ)-induced diabetes mellitus	[32]
Curcuma longa	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome	Significantly suppressed an increase in blood glucose level in type 2 diabetic KK-A(y) mice	[33]
Malmea depressa	Annonaceae	Root	Hypoglycemic effect in streptozotocin diabetic rats	[34]
Morus alba	Moraceae	Root bark	Hypoglycemic effect in streptozotocin-induced diabetic rats	[35]
Phyllanthus niruri	Euphorbiaceae	Leaf	Reduces the levels of plasma glucose	[36]
Retama raetam	Fabaceae	Flower	Hypoglycaemic activity in normal and diabetic rats	[37]
Salvia officinalis	Lamiaceae	Leaf	Hypoglycaemic effect on streptozotocin-induced hyperglycaemic rats	[38]
Syzygium cordatum	Myrtaceae	Leaf	Short-term hypoglycaemic effect in streptozotocin-induced diabetic rats	[39]
Vernonia colorata	Composeae	Leaf	Antidiabetic activity in normoglycaemic and alloxan-induced diabetic rats	[40]
Zizyphus spina-christi	Rhamnaceae	Leaf	Antidiabetic activity	[41]
Bougainvillea spectabilis	Nyctaginaceae	Bark	Sugar-lowering capacity streptozotocin induced diabetic albino rats	[42]
Garuga pinnata	Burseraceae	Bark	Significant increase in the liver glycogen and serum insulin level and a significant decrease in fasting blood glucose and glycated hemoglobin levels	[43]

Pterocarpus marsupium	Fabaceae	Bark	Exhibits significant antidiabetic activity and corrects the metabolic alterations in diabetic rats and this activity may resemble insulin-like properties.	[44]
Syzygium cumini	Myrtaceae	Bark	Significantly decreased the blood glucose, effect exerted by the extract was greater than that of glibenclamide.	[45]
Zizyphus jujuba	Rhamnaceae	Leaf	Significantly reduced fasting serum glucose level and increase serum insulin level	[46]
Anacardium occidentale	Anacardiaceae	Leaf	significantly reduced the blood glucose levels in a dose dependent manner in diabetic rats	[47]
Cichorium intybus	Asteraceae	Whole plant	Shows Antidiabetic Effect in STZ-Diabetic Rats	[48]
Desmodium gangeticum	Fabaceae	aerial parts	Significant reduction in blood glucose & increase in insulin secretion from MIN6 cells grown as monolayers and as pseudo islets, indicating the antidiabetic activity	[49]
Terminalia chebula	Combretaceae	Fruit	Significantly reduced the elevated blood glucose and elevated glycosylated hemoglobin	[50]
Aloe vera	Liliaceae	Leaf	Significant reduction in blood glucose level	[51]
Cyanodon dactylon	Poaceae	Whole plant	Aqueous extract and non-polysaccharide fraction of Cyanodon dactylon shows Antidiabetic activity	[52]
Hemidesmus indicus	Asclepiadaceae	Root	Decrease blood glucose level significantly and restored serum electrolytes, glycolytic enzymes and hepatic cytochrome P-450-dependent enzyme systems	[53]
Mucuna pruriens	Fabaceae	Seed	Hypoglycemic activity in STZ induced diabetic rats.	[54]
Psidium guajava	Myrtaceae	Leaf	Increase the plasma insulin level and glucose utilization in diabetic rats	[55]
Tridax procumbens	Asteraceae	Leaf	Shows antidiabetic activity	[56]
Astragalus membranaceus	Fabaceae	PLSH. fraction	Shows hypoglycemic effect of polysaccharides enriched extract	[57]
Abutilon indicum	Malvaceae	Whole plant	Aqueous extract inhibits glucose absorption and stimulates insulin secretion in rodents.	[58]

Artemisia judaica	Asteraceae	Whole plant	Significantly reduce the blood glucose level in diabetic rats.	[59]
Panax quinquefolius	Araliaceae	Root	significant effects on fasting blood glucose levels and glucose tolerance test	[60]
Butea monosperma	Fabaceae	Leaf	Significant hypoglycemic and anti-oxidant activity in alloxan induced diabetic male adult mice	[61]
Costus speciosus	Costaceae	Root	Significantly decreased Plasma glucose level, glycosylated hemoglobin (HbA(1c)), increased plasma insulin & tissue glycogen.	[62]
Diospyros peregrina	Ebenaceae	Fruit	Possess significant dose dependent hypoglycemic and hypolipidemic activity	[63]
Eugenia jambolana	Myrtaceae	Seed	Showed dose-dependent decrease in blood glucose level in diabetic rats	[64]
Eucalyptus globulus	Myrtaceae	Leaf	Reduces the oxidative stress in alloxan-induced rat	[65]
Ficus bengalensis	Moraceae	Aerial root	Hypoglycemic effect in normoglycemic and antidiabetic effect in sub- and mild-diabetic models	[66]
Gymnema sylvestre	Asclepiadaceae	Leaf	Significant reduction in fasting blood glucose, cholesterol and serum triglyceride content	[67]
Helicteres isora	Sterculiaceae	Fruit	Exhibit significant antioxidant activity and moderate antidiabetic activity	[68]
Inula racemosa	Asteraceae	Root	Significant decrease in blood glucose levels, super oxide dismutase and glutathione	[69]
Leucas lavandulaefolia	Lamiaceae	Whole plant	Significant and consistent hypoglycemic effects in Alloxan hyperglycemic rats	[70]
Moringa oleifera	Moringaceae	Leaf	FBG and PPG levels were reduced whereas, total protein, body weight and haemoglobin were increased	[71]
Otostegia persica	Labiataeae	Whole plant	Shows antidiabetic effects on STZ diabetic rats.	[72]
Scorparia dulcis	Scrophulariaceae	Whole plant	Significant increase in plasma insulin levels, evoked two-fold stimulation of insulin secretion from isolated islets, indicating its insulin secretagogue activity	[73]
Tinospora cordifolia	Menispermaceae	Stem	prevented the rise in glucose levels by 21.3%, insulin by 51.5%, triglycerides by 54.12% and glucose-insulin index by 59.8% of the fructose fed rats	[74]

Withania somnifera	Solanaceae	Root, Leaf	Possess hypoglycaemic and hypolipidaemic activities in alloxan-induced diabetes mellitus (DM) rats	[75]
Annona squamosa	Annonaceae	Root	Shows Antidiabetic activity in Streptozotocin induced- hyperglycemic Rats	[76]
Berberis aristata	Berberidaceae	Root	Strong potential to regulate glucose homeostasis through decreased gluconeogenesis and oxidative stress.	[77]
Begonia malabarica	Begoniaceae	Stem	Reduction in fasting and postprandial plasma glucose levels, increase in Serum insulin levels and liver glycogen levels	[78]
Andrographis stenophylla	Acanthaceae	Leaf	Shows Hypoglycaemic Activity	[79]
Artocarpus heterophyllus	Moraceae	Leaf	Significant reduction in the F.B.S. conc. and a significant improvement in glucose tolerance in normoglycemic rats	[80]
Benincasa hispida	Cucurbitaceae	Fruit	Improve the glucose level and metabolic derangements in lipid caused by alloxan induced diabetes in rats	[81]
Catharanthus roseus	Apocynaceae	Leaf	Lowering of plasma glucose and an increase in plasma insulin were observed	[82]
Costus igneus	Costaceae	Leaf	Reduced the fasting and postprandial blood sugar levels, bringing them towards normal, in dexamethasone-induced hyperglycemia in rats.	[83]
Cecropia pachystachya	Urticaceae	Leaf	Significant hypoglycemic effect with a blood glucose reduction & antioxidant activity	[84]
Cucumis trigonus	Cucurbitaceae	Fruit	Significant increase in the body weight, liver glycogen and serum insulin level and decrease in the blood glucose, glycosylated hemoglobin levels.	[85]
Enicostemma littorale	Gentianaceae	Whole plant	Significant decrease in serum glucose and triglycerides	[86]
Ficus glomerata	Moraceae	Leaf	Shows hypoglycaemic Activity in alloxan Induced Diabetic Rats	[87]
Ficus religiosa	Moraceae	Bark	Significant reduction in blood glucose levels glucose-loaded hyperglycemic and streptozotocin (STZ)-induced diabetic rats.	[88]
Indigofera tinctoria	Fabaceae	Leaf	Significant decrease in blood glucose level of rabbits as estimated by Folin-Wu Method.	[89]
Jatropha curcas	Euphorbiaceae	Leaf	Significant reduction in blood glucose level in alloxan induced diabetic rats.	[90]

Ocimum sanctum	Labiatae	Leaf	Restored the depressed hepatic glycogen levels possibly by increasing the level of insulin	[91]
Paspalum scrobiculatum	Poaceae	Grain	Significant increase in serum insulin level, liver glycogen and a significant decrease in glycated haemoglobin levels	[92]
Phoenix dactylifera	Arecaceae	Leaf	significantly reduced blood glucose & Plasma insulin level increased in alloxan-induced diabetic rats	[93]
Pterocarpus santalinus	Fabaceae	Bark	Significant antidiabetic activity by reducing the elevated blood glucose levels and glycosylated hemoglobin, improving hyperlipidemia and restoring the insulin levels in treated experimental induced diabetic rats	[94]
Pongamia pinnata	Fabaceae	Leaf	Decreased the blood glucose level in alloxan-induced diabetic albino rats	[95]
Vinca rosea	Apocyanaceae	Whole plant	Shows antidiabetic activity in Allaxon diabetic rats.	[96]
Adhatoda zeylanica	Acanthaceae	Leaf	Significant reduction in blood glucose level	[97]
Aloe barbedensis	Liliaceae	Leaf	significant decrease in serum glucose, total cholesterol and triacylglycerols	[98]
Azadirachta indica	Meliaceae	Seed	the whole oil and the acidic portion of oil shows very significant hypoglycaemic effect	[99]
Brassica juncea	Brassicaceae	Seed	Significant dosage dependent augmenting effect of the seed extract on the serum insulin was recorded on streptozotocin induced diabetic male albino rats.	[100]
Camellia sinensis	Theaceae	Leaf	Effective to reduce most of the diabetes associated abnormalities in a streptozotocin-induced diabetes model of rats	[101]
Carum carvi	Apiaceae	Seed	Caraway has both antihyperglycemic and hypolipidemic activity in diabetic	[102]
Coccinia indica	Cucurbitaceae	Fruit	Reduction of fasting blood sugar alloxan induced diabetic rats.	[103]
Coriandrum sativum	Apiaceae	Fruit	Reduced plasma glucose ,insulin and IR, TC, LDL-cholesterol in obese-hyperglycemic-hyperlipidemic (OHH) Meriones shawi rats	[104]
Clerodendron infortunatum	Verbenaceae	Leaf	Significantly reduced blood glucose levels SGOT, SGPT, alkaline phosphatase in STZ diabetic rats.	[105]

Dillenia indica	Dilleniaceae	Leaf	Beneficial effect on blood glucose level and enhance serum insulin level	[106]
Dioscorea alata	Dioscoriaceae	Tuber	Blood glucose level was reduced significantly and Serum lipid levels, total protein, albumin, and creatinine were reversed toward near normal	[107]
Ganoderma lucidum	Ganodermataceae	Fruiting bodies	Body weights and serum insulin levels of the GI-PS treated groups are significantly higher whereas FBG levels are significantly lower.	[108]
Luffa cylindrica	Cucurbitaceae	Fruit	Shows promising antidiabetic activity in alloxan-induced diabetic Wistar rats.	[109]
Mangifera indica	Anacardiaceae	Leaf Kernel	Significantly increased insulin level at the dose level of 100, 200 mg/kg in alloxan induced diabetic rats.	[110]
Plectranthus amboinicus	Lamiaceae	Leaf	Significant reduction in blood glucose, possesses hypoglycemic and antihyperlipidemic effects mediated through the restoration of the functions of pancreatic tissues and insulinotropic effect	[111]
Stevia rebaudiana	Asteraceae	Leaf	Significant decrease in the blood glucose level, without producing condition of hypoglycemia	[112]
Swietenia macrophylla	Meliaceae	Seed	Significantly reduced blood glucose levels after 45 days of treatment in STZ-diabetic rats	[113]
Symplocos cochinchinensis	Symplocaceae	Leaf	Significant reduction in plasma insulin, plasma and hepatic total cholesterol and a significant increase in liver glycogen were observed in treated diabetic rats.	[114]
Terminalia arjuna	Combretaceae	Leaf	Demonstrated remarkable antihyperglycemic activity in STZ-induced diabetic rats	[115]
Tectona grandis	Lamiaceae	Flower	Shows antidiabetic activity in STZ induced diabetic rats	[116]
Zingiber officinale	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome	Reduced fasting blood glucose, increased serum insulin level and also enhanced insulin sensitivity in alloxan-induced diabetic and insulin resistant diabetic rats	[117]
Biophytum sensitivum	Oxalidaceae	Leaf	Significantly reduce the blood glucose and glycosylated haemoglobin level	[118]
Caesalpinia bonducella	Caesalpinaceae	Seed	Significant recovery in the activities of carbohydrate metabolic enzymes along with correction in FBG and glycogen levels	[119]

Carica papaya	Caricaceae	Leaf	Exerted a hypoglycemic and antioxidant effect and also improved the lipid profile in diabetic rats	[120]
Cassia fistula	Fabaceae	Stem	Reduced serum blood glucose conc., induced favorable changes in body weight, improved transaminase activity.	[121]
Citrullus colocynthis	Cucurbitaceae	Root	Significant reduction in blood sugar level, serum creatinine, serum urea and serum protein	[122]
Carthamus tinctorius	Asteraceae	Flower	Meaningful decrease in FBS, triglyceride, cholesterol, LDL-C and VLDL-C in diabetic rats	[123]
Cinnamomum tamala	Lauraceae	Oil	Significant reduction in blood glucose level liver glycogen content, plasma insulin level and glycosylated hemoglobin in streptozotocin induced diabetic rats	[124]
Cucurbita ficifolia	Cucurbitaceae	Fruit	Hypoglycemic action, improve GSH redox state, increasing glutathione pool	[125]
Dalbergia sissoo	Fabaceae	Bark	Significant reduction in blood glucose levels increase in glycogen content in liver of Alloxan-induced diabetic rats	[126]
Dioscorea bulbifera	Dioscoriaceae	Bulb	Showed α -amylase inhibitory activity	[127]
Emblica officinalis	Euphorbiaceae	Leaf	Showed a significant decrease in fasting blood glucose and increase insulin level as compared with the diabetic rats	[128]
Juglans regia	Juglandaceae	Leaf	Significant reduction of glucose, HbA1c, total cholesterol and serum triglycerides	[129]
Kigelia pinnata	Bignoniaceae	Flower	Significantly reduced blood glucose, serum cholesterol and triglycerides levels	[130]
Luffa acutangula	Cucurbitaceae	Seed	Significantly reduced fasting blood sugar of Streptozotocin diabetic rats in a dose-related manner, with maximum hypoglycemic effect at after 21 days	[131]
Momordica charantia	Cucurbitaceae	Fruit	Isolated compounds, bitter melon extract, juices and powders have demonstrated potential in lowering blood sugar	[132]

Merremia emarginata	Convolvulaceae	Whole plant	Carbohydrate metabolizing enzymes such as hexokinase were significantly increased whereas G-6-P, fructose-1, 6-bisphosphatase were significantly decreased in diabetic rats.	[133]
Morinda citrifolia	Rubiaceae	Fruit	Gluconeogenic genes, phosphoenolpyruvate C kinase (PEPCK) and glucose-6-phosphatase (G6P), were significantly inhibited	[134]
Merremia tridentata	Convolvulaceae	Root	Significant increase in serum insulin, body weight and glycogen content in liver and skeletal muscle of STZ-induced diabetic rats	[135]
Punica granatum	Punicaceae	Rind ,Leaf	Showed significant and dose dependent antidiabetic activity by maintaining the blood glucose levels within the normal limits.	[136]
Pandanus fascicularis	Pandanaceae	Aerial root	Significant dose-dependent reduction in serum glucose in both normoglycemic and hyperglycemic rats and also improved glucose tolerance test	[137]
Salacia Oblonga	Celastaceae	Root	Serum insulin was significantly increased & Plasma HbA1c was significantly decreased	[138]
Salmalia malabarica	Bombacaceae	Sepal	A significant reduction of FBG level in STZ-induced diabetic rat.	[139]
Santalum album	Santalaceae	Heart wood	Santalum album pet ether fraction has potential antihyperlipidemic activity that can help in overcoming insulin resistance	[140]
Sida tiagii	Malvaceae	Fruit	Significant improvement in blood glucose level, glycated hemoglobin and liver glycogen contents	[141]
Stereospermum suaveolens	Bignoniaceae	Bark	Significantly reduced the fasting blood glucose and pancreatic TBARS level and significantly increased the liver glycogen	[142]
Toddalia asiatica	Rutaceae	Leaf	Significant decrease in blood glucose, plasma enzymes (SGOT, SGPT and ALP) and significant increase in body weight, total protein, serum insulin and liver glycogen levels in treated diabetic rats	[143]
Terminalia paniculata	Combretaceae	Bark	Significantly reduced elevated blood glucose, HbA1c, creatinine, urea, SGPT and SGOT levels	[144]

Trigonella foenumgraecum	Menispermaceae	Seed	reverse the hyperglycemia induced changes to normal levels in diabetic rat brain	[145]
Viscum album	Viscaceae	Leaf, stem	Shows anti-diabetic and anti-hyperlipidemic effects in STZ-diabetic rats	[146]
Withania coagulans	Solanaceae	Fruit	activities of glucokinase and phosphofructokinase were significantly increased, whereas glucose-6-phosphatase activity was significantly decreased	[147]
Adenia lobata	Passifloraceae	stem	Significant reduction in blood glucose level	[148]
Ginkgo biloba	Ginkgoaceae	Root	Antihyperglycaemic, antioxidant & antihyperlipidemia activities in STZ-induced chronic diabetic rats	[149]

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper has presented a list of anti-diabetic plants used in the treatment of diabetes mellitus. It showed that these plants have hypoglycaemic effects. Many new bioactive drugs isolated from plants having hypoglycaemic effects showed antidiabetic activity equal and sometimes even more potent than known oral hypoglycaemic agents such as daonil, tolbutamide and chlorpropamide. However, many other active agents obtained from plants have not been well characterized. More investigations must be carried out to evaluate the mechanism of action of medicinal plants with antidiabetic effect. It is very essential to have a proper documentation of medicinal plants and to know their potential for the improvement of health and hygiene through an ecofriendly system. Thus, a detailed and systematic ethnomedicinal study is required for identification, cataloguing and documentation of plants, which may provide a meaningful way for the promotion of the traditional knowledge of the herbal medicinal plants.

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