



## Antifungal Peptides

Guest Editor:

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### Message from the Guest Editor

Dear Colleagues,

Fungal pathogens are a worldwide threat to human health. *Candida albicans*, which is normally a commensal resident of the oral cavity, can cause oropharyngeal candidiasis (OPC) in an individual whose immune system is compromised. Although our understanding of factors that tip the balance from commensalism to virulence is incomplete, disruption of the microbiota and host epithelial barriers or alterations in host innate immunity including antimicrobial peptides are predisposing factors for development of mucosal candidiasis by *C. albicans* and other related *Candida* species.

*C. albicans* resides not only in the oral cavity, but also in the GI tract where its colonization may serve as a niche for systemic dissemination upon alteration of host defenses.

Antimicrobial peptides are attractive as an alternative treatment since their mechanism of action is distinct from most antifungal drugs. Several human salivary or tissue-derived peptides, including histatins, lactoferrins, defensins, cathelicidins, and calprotectins, may serve as novel antimicrobial agents.

Dr. Mira Edgerton

*Guest Editor*





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