

Evaluation of Wound Healing Potential of Galangin on L929 Mouse Fibroblast Cell Lines Using *In Vitro* Scratch Assay

Galanginin L929 Fare Fibroblast Hücre Hatları Üzerindeki Yara İyileştirme Potansiyelinin *In Vitro* Çizik Testi Kullanılarak Değerlendirilmesi

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aimed to examine the impact of galangin, a compound recognized for its anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, on cell proliferation and migration using a scratch wound healing model in the L929 cell line.

Methods: In this study, we investigated the effects of different concentrations of galangin on cell proliferation and viability in the L929 cell line using the MTT method. We then examined the effects of different concentrations of galangin on wound closure in the wound line created by the scratch wound healing test. At 0, 12, 24 and 36 hours, microscopic images of the wound line were taken. Wound closure rates were calculated and a percent wound closure graph was created. At the end of our study, TGF- β levels of all groups were measured using ELISA kits.

Results: According to the viability percentages determined by the MTT method in L929 cells, 10, 25 and 50 μ M concentrations of galangin significantly increased cell viability at 24, 48 and 72 hours. In the scratch wound healing model in which these three concentrations of galangin were applied as treatment, it was observed that 25 and 50 μ M concentrations of galangin showed a nearly complete closure at the end of the experiment. When the measured TGF- β levels were analyzed, a significant decrease was observed in the galangin-treated groups compared to the control group.

Conclusion: In the *in vitro* scratch wound healing model, the observed reduction in TGF- β levels at end of the experiment in the galangin-treated groups, compared to the control group, suggests that the healing process is nearly completed, resulting in a concomitant decrease in cytokine release. These findings are consistent with the percentage closure rates assessed microscopically across the different treatment groups.

Keywords: Galangin, Migration, Mouse skin fibroblast, Scratch wound assay

ÖZ

Amaç: Bu çalışmada, anti-enflamatuar ve antioksidan özellikleriyle tanınan bir bileşik olan galanginin, L929 hücre hattında çizik yara iyileşme modeli kullanılarak hücre proliferasyonu ve göçü üzerindeki etkisinin incelenmesi amaçlanmıştır.

Yöntemler: Bu çalışmada, farklı galangin konsantrasyonlarının L929 hücre hattında hücre çoğalması ve canlılığı üzerindeki etkilerini MTT yöntemini kullanarak araştırdık. Daha sonra, çizik yara iyileşme testi ile oluşturulan yara hattında farklı galangin konsantrasyonlarının yara kapanması üzerindeki etkilerini inceledik. 0, 12, 24 ve 36. saatlerde yara hattının mikroskopik görüntüleri alındı. Yara kapanma oranları hesaplandı ve yüzde yara kapanma grafiği oluşturuldu. Çalışmamızın sonunda tüm grupların TGF- β seviyeleri ELISA kitleri kullanılarak ölçüldü.

Bulgular: L929 hücrelerinde MTT yöntemi ile belirlenen canlılık yüzdelere göre, galanginin 10, 25 ve 50 μ M konsantrasyonları 24, 48 ve 72. saatlerde hücre canlılığını önemli ölçüde artırmıştır. Galanginin bu üç konsantrasyonunun tedavi olarak uygulandığı çizik yara iyileşme modelinde, galanginin 25 ve 50 μ M konsantrasyonlarının deney sonunda neredeyse tamamen kapanma gösterdiği gözlemlenmiştir. Ölçülen TGF- β seviyeleri analiz edildiğinde, galangin uygulanan gruplarda kontrol grubuna kıyasla anlamlı bir düşüş gözlemlenmiştir.

Sonuç: *In vitro* çizik yara iyileşme modelinde, galangin ile tedavi edilen gruplarda deney sonunda TGF- β seviyelerinde kontrol grubuna kıyasla gözlenen azalma, iyileşme sürecinin neredeyse tamamlandığını ve sitokin salınımında eşzamanlı bir azalmaya neden olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu bulgular, farklı tedavi gruplarında mikroskopik olarak değerlendirilen yüzde kapanma oranlarıyla tutarlıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Galangin, migrasyon, fare deri fibroblastı, çizik yara deneyi

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Introduction

The skin is responsible for regulating homeostasis and protecting the body against physical stimuli from the environment, pathogens and dehydration (Proksch et al., 2008). The skin can be injured for various reasons. After injury, wound healing mechanisms are activated to repair and reconstruct the damaged tissue (De Jesus et al., 2016). The wound healing process can be delineated into overlapping stages, comprising inflammation, proliferation, and remodeling (Yan et al., 2024).

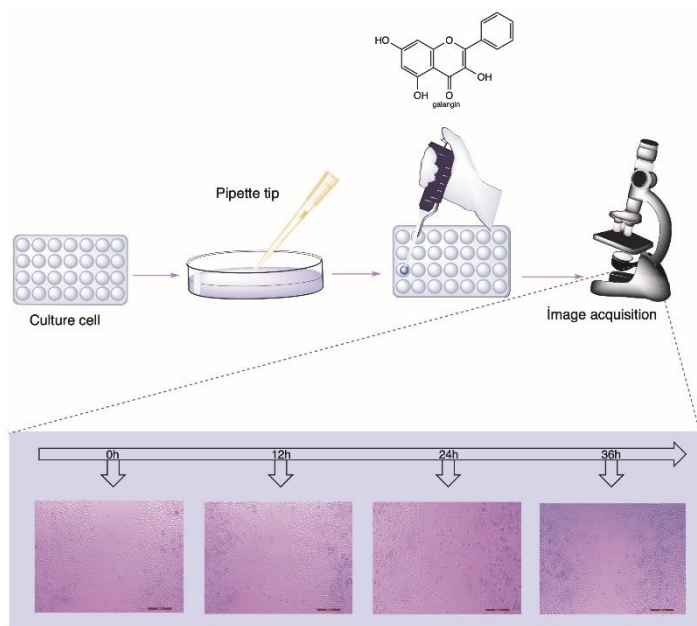


Figure 1. The process of making wound

The inflammation process starts with homeostasis, which prevents blood loss from the wound. Neutrophils traveling to the site of injury provide a favorable environment for wound healing and remove bacteria and debris (Berman et al., 2017). During the proliferative phase, keratinocytes, fibroblasts, and endothelial cells undergo migration and proliferation. This process is initiated

by the release of growth factors, including transforming growth factor- β (TGF- β) and vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) (Bielefeld et al., 2013). The remodeling phase represents the concluding step of wound healing, necessitating a careful balance between the apoptosis of existing cells and the proliferation of new cells (Wang et al., 2018). Despite its complexity, recovery is often successful. If the cascade goes awry at any point in the healing process, pathological conditions such as non-healing wounds or fibrosis can occur (Bochaton-Piallat et al., 2016; Darby & Hewitson, 2007). It is critical that type III collagen, initially secreted by myfibroblasts stimulated by TGF- β , is degraded and replaced by type-1 collagen. Any deviation during this stage can result in either excessive wound healing or the formation of chronic wounds (Plikus et al., 2017; Tsai et al., 2018).

A review of recent studies reveals that current treatments aimed at promoting wound healing and preventing chronic wound development remain inadequate. Consequently, there is a need for novel pharmacological agents in the treatment of wounds (El Ayadi et al., 2020). Galangin is a natural flavonoid primarily extracted from propolis and the roots of *Alpinia officinarum* Hance (Rampogu et al., 2021). It is also used in modern clinical therapy due to its antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and proapoptosis effects (Ru et al., 2021; Yu et al., 2018). In addition, bioflavonoids have been reported to alleviate fibrosis in kidney and kidney organs (Cao et al., 2018). A recent study in rabbits suggested that galangin may potentially prevent hypertrophic scar formation (Ru et al., 2021). Numerous studies have been conducted to investigate the therapeutic effect of galangin, but little is known about its effect on wound healing. In addition, no studies are showing the effect of galangin on wound healing at the cellular level. Considering the bioactivity and pharmacological effects of galangin, it is suggested that it may have positive effects on the wound healing process and encourages research.

In summary, this study aimed to explore the effects of galangin on cell viability in L929 fibroblast cells, as well as to evaluate its role in fibroblast migration and wound closure during

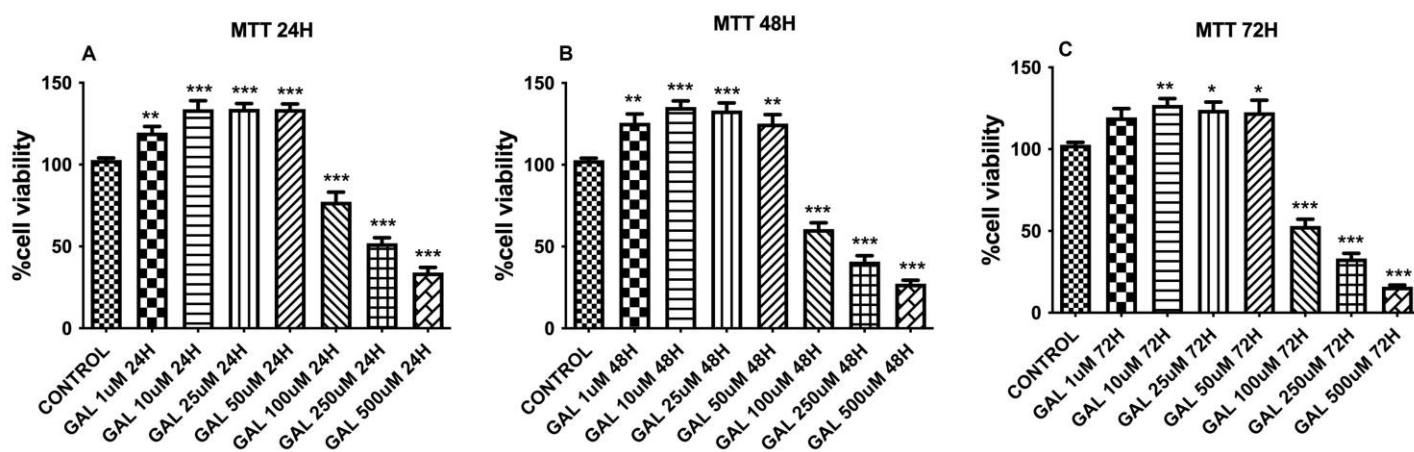


Figure 2. Cell viability results obtained from MTT test. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$ and *** $p < .001$ according to Tukey's post-hoc test.

the wound healing process.

Methods

Cell Culture

The L929 cell line, acquired from the American Type Culture Collection (ATCC, USA) and cryopreserved in a Cryotube, was thawed from liquid nitrogen storage and transferred into a T75 cm² flask containing DMEM supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum (FBS). The flask was subsequently incubated at 37°C in a humidified atmosphere with 5% CO₂.

Assessment of Cell Viability

A total of 5×10^3 cells were added to each well of a 96-well plate. The cells were incubated for 24 hours to allow adhesion to the bottom of the wells. At the end of this period, galangin was dissolved in DMSO, and different concentrations (1, 10, 25, 50, 100, 250, and 500 μM) were prepared. At 24, 48, and 72 hours, measurements were taken using the MTT method with a microplate reader (Epoch Microplate Spectrophotometer, BioTek, USA) at an absorbance wavelength of 570 nm. Cell viability rates were analyzed by comparing them to control wells.

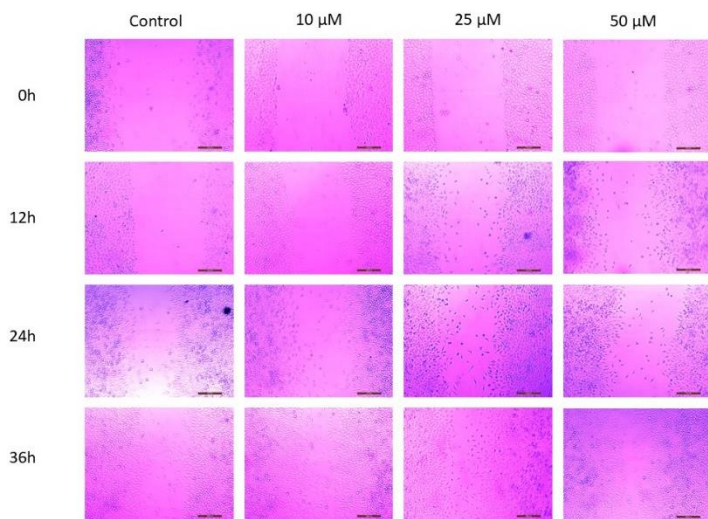


Figure 3. Photographs of scratch test after 0, 12, 24 and 36 hours.

Scratch Wound Healing Experiment

A total of 2×10^5 cells were added to the wells of a six-well culture plate and incubated overnight. An *in vitro* wound model was established by creating a scratch across the monolayer cell layer formed by fibroblast cells in each well of a six-well culture plate using a sterile pipette tip in a single motion. During the scratching procedure, the upper medium was removed to eliminate debris, and the wells were washed with sterile phosphate-buffered saline (PBS) before adding fresh medium. A healthy group without a wound line and a control group with a wound line were formed. Galangin was applied to cells at 10, 25 and 50 μM concentrations. Images of all wells were taken using a Leica Inverted Microscope (Leica, DMIL LED) before and at 12, 24

and 36 hours after galangin treatment. Wound closure rates were calculated using the following formula (Figure 1).

$$\% \text{ wound closure} = [(At=0h - At=\Delta h) / At=0h] * 100$$

At=0h: Wound length measured at 0th hour (μm)

At= Δ h: Wound length measured at Δ th hour (μm)

Determination of TGF- β 1 Amount

At the end of the experiment, the supernatants of all experimental groups in the 6-well plate were taken. TGF- β 1 levels were measured using ELISA kits on Epoch Spectrophotometer System and Take3 Plate. The ELISA procedure was conducted following the steps outlined in the kit protocol.

Statistical Analysis

The data were analyzed using IBM SPSS version 27 (27 (IBM SPSS Corp., Armonk, NY, USA). Statistical analysis was performed using One-way ANOVA, followed by Tukey's post-hoc multiple comparison test. Results are reported as the arithmetic mean \pm standard deviation, with a p-value of <0.05 considered statistically significant.

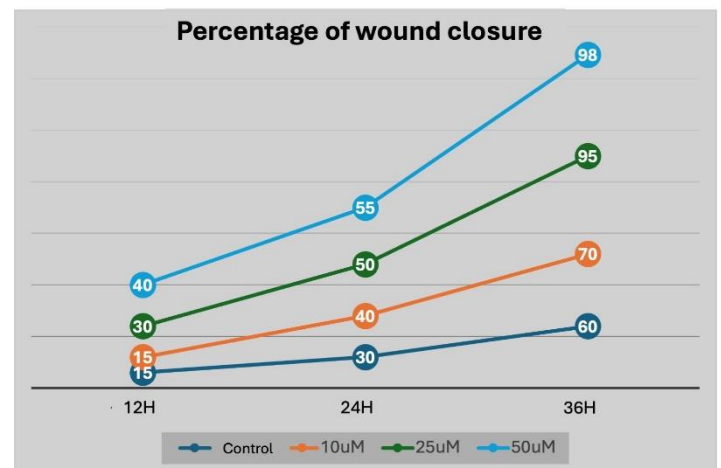


Figure 4. Wound Closure Percentage at 12, 24, and 36 Hours

Results

When the MTT findings of our study are examined; it is seen that galangin concentrations of 1 μM ($p < 0.01$), 10 μM ($p < 0.001$), 25 μM ($p < 0.001$) and 50 μM ($p < 0.001$) significantly increased the percent viability of the control group at 24 hours. Galangin concentrations of 100, 250 and 500 μM significantly decreased the percent viability compared to the control group ($p < 0.001$) (Figure 2A). At 48 h; 1 μM ($p < 0.01$), 10 μM ($p < 0.001$), 25 μM ($p < 0.001$) and 50 μM ($p < 0.01$) galangin concentrations significantly increased the percent viability compared to the control group. When compared to the control group, 100, 250 and 500 μM concentrations of galangin significantly decreased the percent viability ($p < 0.001$), similar to the results obtained at 24 h (Figure 2B). At 72nd; 10 ($p < 0.01$), 25 ($p < 0.05$) and 50 μM ($p < 0.05$) concentrations of galangin significantly increased the percent

viability compared to the control group. Compared to the control group, 100, 250 and 500 μM concentrations of galangin significantly decreased percent viability ($p < .001$), similar to the findings at 24 and 48 hours (Figure 2C).

In the scratch wound healing model, we created in our study, images of the wells were taken at 0, 12, 24 and 36 hours and wound closure percentages were calculated according to the formula mentioned above (Figure 3,4). When the graph is analyzed, the wound closure percentages calculated from the images taken at the 12th hour are higher in the groups treated with 10, 25 and 50 μM galangin compared to the control group. The 50 μM galangin treatment group showed a higher percentage of closure compared to the other groups. When the wound closure percentages calculated from the images taken at 24 hours are examined, it is seen that the closure percentage is 50% in the 25 μM galangin treated group and 55% in the 50 μM galangin treated group. At the end of the 36th hour, a nearly complete closure percentage was observed in the 25 and 50 μM galangin-treated groups.

When the TGF- β levels measured from the supernatants taken at the end of the experiment were analyzed; it was observed that TGF- β levels were significantly increased in the control group compared to the healthy group ($p < .05$). TGF- β levels were substantially lower in the groups treated with 25 and 50 μM galangin compared to the control group ($p < .001$) (Figure 5).

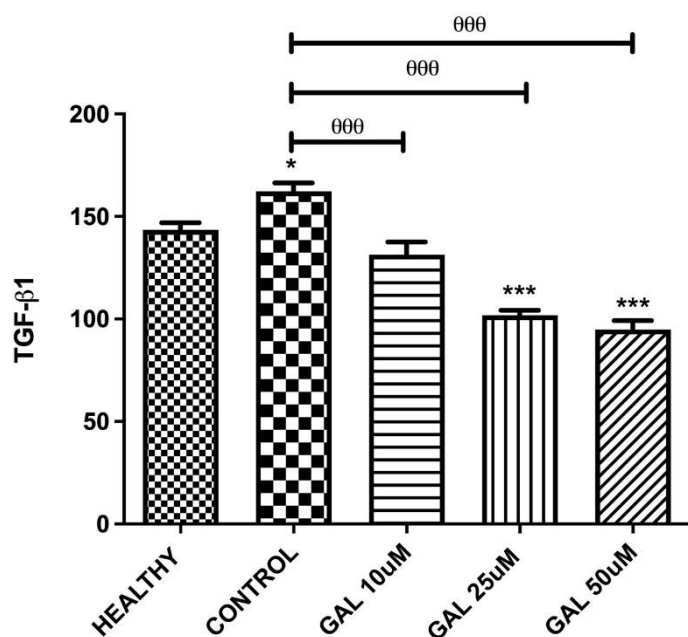


Figure 5. TGF- β 1 ELISA results at 36th hour of scratch test. *, θ $p < .05$, **, $\theta\theta$ $p < .01$ and ***, $\theta\theta\theta$ $p < .001$, according to Tukey's post-hoc test.

Discussion

In this study, we investigated the effect of galangin on cell viability in L929 skin fibroblast cells and examined its effect on cell

migration in scratch wound healing assay. When the findings of our study are examined, it is seen that in the dose study with galangin; 10, 25, and 50 μM concentrations significantly increased the viability of L929 skin fibroblast cells. In the scratch wound healing test performed with these doses, it was shown that at the end of 36 hours, 25 and 50 μM concentrations of galangin provided nearly complete closure. TGF- β levels measured at the end of the experiment showed a dose-dependent decrease in the treatment groups compared to the control.

Fibroblast cells are among the most extensively researched cell types in the context of wound healing (Borges et al., 2017; Teplicki et al., 2018). The MTT assay is commonly employed to assess cell viability, making it a preferred method for analyzing both cell proliferation and cytotoxic effects (Cangul et al., 2020; Ozdemir et al., 2009). In our study, we evaluated the impact of galangin at various concentrations (1, 10, 25, 50, 100, 250, and 500 μM) on the viability of L929 skin fibroblast cells using the MTT assay. Measurements taken at 24, 48, and 72 hours indicated that the 10, 25, and 50 μM concentrations of galangin significantly increased cell viability compared to the control group.

The scratch wound assay is a widely used, reproducible method for assessing key parameters of cell migration, including velocity, persistence, and polarity. Once the cells have reached confluence on the bottom of the plate, a thin wound is created using a sterile pipette tip (Cory, 2011). Numerous studies have employed this method to investigate wound healing (Jagiello et al., 2023; Pinto et al., 2019). Wound healing occurs in all tissues and organs of the body, with many of these repair processes being common across various tissue types. While the healing process is continuous, the physiological events occurring within the wound and the surrounding tissue can be categorized into distinct stages (Richardson, 2004). The wound healing process can be delineated into overlapping stages, comprising inflammation, proliferation, and remodeling (Yan et al., 2024). If any disruption occurs within the cascade during the healing process, it may lead to pathological conditions such as chronic non-healing wounds or fibrosis (Bochaton-Piallat et al., 2016; Darby & Hewitson, 2007). When the studies on wound healing are examined; positive results have been obtained in studies with substances with antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties (Hecker et al., 2022; Kant et al., 2015). In our study, the effects of galangin, which is known to have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, on wound healing were investigated. In an *in vivo* study, Ru et al. reported that galangin may potentially prevent hypertrophic scar formation (Ru et al., 2021). In our study, in the scratch wound healing model, 25 and 50 μM concentrations of galangin provided a nearly complete closure of the wound line at the end of the experiment. It was shown *in vitro* that galangin has positive effects on wound healing.

It is well known that growth factors and cytokines have important roles in all stages of wound healing (Everts et al., 2006). TGF- β 1 plays a pivotal role in wound healing by facilitating key processes such as inflammation, angiogenesis, re-

epithelialization, and connective tissue regeneration. Research has indicated that its expression significantly rises at the initial stages of injury (Kane et al., 1991; Kopecki et al., 2007). TGF β plays a pivotal role in maintaining skin homeostasis by inhibiting keratinocyte proliferation and regulating their differentiation. Upon wounding and disruption of the epidermal barrier, TGF β signaling continues to exert significant effects on keratinocyte function and the regulation of wound re-epithelialization (Ramirez et al., 2014). *In vitro* studies demonstrate that TGF- β 1 plays a crucial role in the initiation of granulation tissue formation by upregulating the expression of genes related to extracellular matrix formation, such as fibronectin, fibronectin receptors, collagen, and protease inhibitors (Greenwel et al., 1997; Mauviel et al., 1996; White et al., 2000). Furthermore, *in vitro* studies indicate that TGF- β 1 contributes to wound contraction by promoting fibroblast-mediated contraction of the collagen matrix (Meckmongkol et al., 2007). In the remodeling phase, which is the last phase of wound healing, collagen Type-3 is converted to Type-1 and TGF- β differentiates myofibroblasts and closes the wound (Desmouliere et al., 1993; Hosokawa et al., 2003; Ronnov-Jessen & Petersen, 1993). At the end of the wound-healing process, growth factors and cytokines decrease. The reduction in these growth factors and cytokines suggests that the wound-healing process has been completed (Nogueira et al., 2020). In our study, the TGF- β 1 levels measured after the experiment were significantly reduced in the groups treated with 25 and 50 μ M galangin compared to the control group. Additionally, in line with the microscopic observations, wound closure was nearly complete in these groups, suggesting that galangin effectively supported the healing process.

Conclusion

In the *in vitro* scratch wound healing model, the observed decrease in TGF- β levels at the end of the experiment in the galangin-treated groups, relative to the control group, indicates that the healing process is approaching completion, which is associated with a reduction in cytokine release. These results are in line with the microscopically measured percent closure rates by group. However, this effect of galangin should also be evaluated by *in vivo* experiments. Experimental and clinical studies are needed to evaluate the effects and mechanisms of galangin on wound healing.

Etik Komite Onayı: Hücre Kültürü çalışması olduğundan etik komite onamına ihtiyaç yoktur.

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Author Contributions: Concept - P.A.; Design - P.A.; Supervision - P.A.;

Resources - Z.K.; Materials - Z.K.; Data Collection and/or Processing - Z.K.; Analysis and/or Interpretation - Z.K., H.H.; Literature Search - P.A., H.H.; Writing Manuscript - P.A., H.H.; Critical Review - P.A., H.H..
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