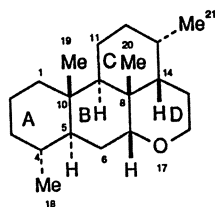


6.1 Introduction

Chunpi, Cortex Ailanthi, is the dry root bark or stem bark of *Ailanthus altissima* (Mill.) Swingle (Simaroubaceae). It can be peeled off throughout the year. This officially listed herbal medicine is used as an astringent, antidiarrheic, and hemostatic agent.

6.2 Chemical Constituents

The major constituents of the bark of *A. altissima* are bitter compounds of quassinoid nature. Isolation of a number of quassinoids was reported: amarolide (6-2), amarolide 11-acetate (6-3) [1, 2], alianthone (6-4) [3–6], glaucarubinone (6-5) [7, 8], 13(21)-dehydroglaucarubinone (6-6) [7, 9], 13(21)-dehydroglaucarubolone (6-7) [7, 10, 11], chaparrolide (6-8) [7, 12], chaparrinone (6-9) [7, 13, 14], shinjulactone A (6-10) [15], shinjulactone B (6-11) [16], shinjulactone C (6-12) [7, 17], shinjulactones D (6-13) and E (6-14) [18], shinjulactone F (6-15) [19, 20], shinjulactones G (6-16) and H (6-17) [21], shinjulactones I (6-18), J (6-19), K (6-20) [20], shinjulactone L (6-21) [22], shinjulactones M (6-22) and N (6-23) [23], and shinjudilactone (6-24) [7, 24]. These compounds are quite related and structurally derived from picrasane (6-1), except for shinjulactone B and shinjudilactone.



Picrasane (6-1)

Shinjulactone B is a C_{19} quassinoid compound with a quite original structure determined by X-ray diffraction [25]. It may be derived biogenetically from a C_{20} quassinoid via a 1,2-dioxo derivative by oxidative bond cleavage between C-1 and C-2, decarboxylation, contraction of ring B, and formation of the α,β -unsaturated γ -lactone [25].