Introduction: Fungal infections produce high rates of morbidity and mortality. Species of *Candida*, *Cryptococcus*, *Trichosporon*, *Geotrichum* and *Rhodotorula* are important due to their virulence and resistance to the available drugs for treatment. Plants of the *Hypericum* genus are a notable source of new therapeutic agents. This study reports the antifungal activity of the lipophilic extracts of five *Hypericum* species (*H. caprifoliatum*, *H. carinatum*, *H. linoides*, *H. myrianthum* and *H. polyanthemum*) native to South Brazil.

Methods: Plants were collected in the Rio Grande do Sul state (October - December, 2009) and dried and powdered aerial parts thoroughly extracted with *n*-hexane. Antifungal susceptibility was determined by the broth microdilution method against *C. albicans*, *C. dubliniensis*, *C. glabrata*, *C. guilliermondii*, *C. krusei*, *C. parapsilosis*, *C. tropicalis*, *C. neoformans*, *G. candidum*, *R. mucilaginosa* and *T. insectorum*. Extracts were solubilized with 0.9% NaCl solution / dimethyl sulphoxide and diluted with Sabouraud dextrose broth at 500 µg/mL in 96-well microtiter plates. The fungicidal effect was determined by sub-culturing in Sabouraud dextrose agar from wells without visible grown and incubated (35 °C / 48 h).

Results and Discussion: The samples exhibited a broad spectrum of antifungal action. *Candida* species were the ones yeasts to demonstrated resistance. The extract of *H. carinatum* inhibited the growth of all yeasts tested, being this effect fungicidal in 73% of cases. High percentages of inhibition were also observed to the extract of *H. myrianthum* (82%), *H. linoides* (73%) and *H. caprifoliatum* (64%), while the extract of *H. polyanthemum* shows only 36% of inhibition. The observed effects can be attributed to the phloroglucinol derivatives, major compounds present in the lipophilic extract of the investigated *Hypericum* species.

Conclusion: *Hypericum* extracts show a broad spectrum of antifungal action and potential as source of new anti-infective drugs.

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