International Journal of Chemistry Studies
www.chemistryjournal.in
ISSN: 2581-348X
Received: 24-01-2026, Accepted: 23-02-2026, Published: 10-03-2026
Volume 10, Issue 1, 2026, Page No. 38-40

Therapeutic potential of Quinoline derivatives: A literature survey

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Abstract
Quinoline derivatives constitute an important class of nitrogen-containing heterocyclic compounds widely explored in medicinal chemistry due to their diverse pharmacological activities. Several quinoline-based molecules have been successfully developed as clinically useful drugs, particularly in the treatment of malaria, bacterial infections, cancer, and inflammatory disorders. Recent advances in synthetic methodologies, molecular modeling, and biological screening have further expanded the therapeutic relevance of quinoline scaffolds. This literature survey critically reviews published research on the therapeutic potential of quinoline derivatives, emphasizing their biological activities, mechanisms of action, structure–activity relationships, and future prospects in drug discovery. The analysis of reported studies highlights quinoline derivatives as promising lead compounds for the development of novel therapeutic agents.

Keywords: Quinoline derivatives, heterocyclic compounds, medicinal chemistry, pharmacological activity, drug discovery

Introduction
Heterocyclic compounds form the backbone of modern medicinal chemistry, and quinoline is one of the most significant heterocyclic scaffolds due to its broad biological relevance [1]. Quinoline consists of a benzene ring fused with a pyridine ring, which provides structural rigidity and electronic properties suitable for interaction with various biological targets [2]. The importance of quinoline derivatives was first recognized with the discovery of quinine, a naturally occurring antimalarial agent [3].
Over the past decades, quinoline derivatives have been reported to possess antimalarial, antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral, anticancer, anti-inflammatory, and neuroprotective activities [4, 5]. The structural flexibility of quinoline allows chemical modifications at different positions, leading to enhanced pharmacological activity and reduced toxicity [6]. This literature survey compiles and evaluates research findings related to the therapeutic potential of quinoline derivatives reported in reputed journals.

Chemistry of Quinoline Derivatives
1. Structure and Properties
Quinoline is an aromatic heterocycle with the molecular formula C_9H_7N. The presence of a nitrogen atom imparts basicity and influences hydrogen bonding interactions with biological macromolecules [7]. Substitutions on the quinoline ring significantly affect lipophilicity, electronic distribution, and biological activity.

2. Synthetic Approaches
Various classical methods such as Skraup, Friedländer, Doebner–Miller, and Conrad–Limpach syntheses are commonly employed for quinoline synthesis [8]. Recent studies have emphasized green chemistry approaches, microwave-assisted synthesis, and multicomponent reactions to improve yield and sustainability [9].

Antimalarial Activity
Quinoline derivatives are well-established antimalarial agents. Drugs such as chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine have been extensively used for malaria treatment [10].
The antimalarial activity of quinoline derivatives is mainly attributed to the inhibition of heme polymerization in Plasmodium parasites, resulting in toxic heme accumulation and parasite death [11]. However, resistance to classical quinoline drugs has necessitated the development of new derivatives with improved efficacy [12]. Recent studies have reported novel quinoline analogs effective against chloroquine-resistant strains [13].

Antibacterial Activity
Several quinoline derivatives exhibit potent antibacterial activity against Gram-positive and Gram-negative bacteria [14]. Fluoroquinolones represent a clinically successful class of quinoline antibiotics that act by inhibiting bacterial DNA gyrase and topoisomerase IV [15].
Structure–activity relationship studies reveal that substitutions at the C-6 and C-7 positions enhance antibacterial potency [16]. These findings support the continued exploration of quinoline scaffolds for combating antimicrobial resistance.

Antifungal Activity
Quinoline derivatives have demonstrated significant antifungal activity against pathogenic fungi such as Candida albicans and Aspergillus species [17]. The antifungal mechanism is often associated with disruption of fungal cell membranes and inhibition of essential enzymes [18]. These compounds show potential as alternative antifungal agents with improved safety profiles.

Antiviral Activity
Recent literature highlights quinoline derivatives as promising antiviral agents [19]. Studies indicate their effectiveness against HIV, influenza viruses, and other emerging viral pathogens [20]. Quinoline compounds exert

antiviral effects by inhibiting viral replication enzymes, proteases, or viral entry processes [21].

Anticancer Activity

Quinoline-based compounds have gained attention in cancer research due to their ability to target multiple cellular pathways [22]. Their anticancer mechanisms include DNA intercalation, inhibition of topoisomerases, kinase inhibition, and induction of apoptosis [23].

Several quinoline derivatives have shown potent cytotoxic activity against breast, lung, and colon cancer cell lines [24]. These findings suggest quinoline scaffolds as valuable leads in anticancer drug development.

Anti-inflammatory and Analgesic Activity

Quinoline derivatives also exhibit anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties by inhibiting cyclooxygenase enzymes and reducing inflammatory mediators [25]. These compounds are being investigated as potential alternatives to traditional NSAIDs with reduced gastrointestinal side effects.

Neuroprotective Activity

Neuroprotective effects of quinoline derivatives have been reported in studies related to Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases [26]. The mechanisms include acetylcholinesterase inhibition, antioxidant activity, and metal ion chelation [27]. These properties make quinoline derivatives promising candidates for neurodegenerative disorder therapy.

Structure–Activity Relationship (SAR) Studies

SAR studies reveal that biological activity of quinoline derivatives is strongly influenced by substitution patterns [28]. Halogen substitution enhances lipophilicity and membrane permeability, while alkyl and aryl substitutions improve target selectivity [29]. Computational tools such as molecular docking and QSAR have significantly contributed to optimizing quinoline-based drug candidates [30].

Pharmacokinetic and Toxicological Considerations

Despite promising biological activities, some quinoline derivatives exhibit toxicity and poor bioavailability [31]. Modern drug design focuses on improving pharmacokinetic profiles through prodrug strategies and in silico ADMET analysis [32].

Future Perspectives

The therapeutic potential of quinoline derivatives remains vast. Future research should focus on hybrid molecules, target-based drug design, and clinical validation [33]. Integration of artificial intelligence and molecular modeling is expected to accelerate quinoline-based drug discovery [34].

Conclusion

The present literature survey highlights the diverse therapeutic applications of quinoline derivatives. Extensive research demonstrates their potential as antimalarial, antibacterial, antifungal, antiviral, anticancer, anti-inflammatory, and neuroprotective agents. Continued exploration and rational modification of quinoline scaffolds may lead to the development of novel, effective, and safer therapeutic agents suitable for clinical use.

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