

EVALUATION OF STRAINS *CANDIDA* AS COLLAGENASES PRODUCERS

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Proteases are enzymes which occupy a pivotal position with respect to their medical application and commercial field. Collagenases are detached among several kind of proteases used in pharmaceutical and cosmetic industry for skin smoothing, oral hygiene, suppurative wounds disinfection, cicatrizing processes, burning and to be used as thrombolytic agent. The aim of this work was to select species of *Candida* as collagenase producers. Were analysed 21 samples of yeasts isolated from different substrates, obtained from the culture collection URM-UFPE. Samples were cultured in Malte extract (1.5% w/v) supplemented with 1% gelatin, pH 6.3 at 30°C under shaking (140 rpm) during 72 hours. The qualitative collagenolytic activity was determined in agar-gelatin medium and the quantitative activity was determined using azocoll 0.5% as substrate. Among the studied species was selected *Candida albicans*, because showed the highest levels of collagenolytic activity in qualitative (halo = 25 mm) and quantitative (21.9 U/mL) assays. These results suggest that *Candida albicans* is a viable source of collagenase with interest for pharmaceutical and cosmetic industry.

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