

6.1. ANTIAMOEBIIC DRUGS

6.1.1. Introduction

Amoeba is a single-celled organism which needs a host to survive and hence, comes under protozoan category. **Amoebiasis** (or amoebic dysentery) is the most common disease caused by amoeba. This infection is caused in the intestinal tract by *Entamoeba histolytica*. Amoebiasis can be acute or chronic with symptoms ranging from mild diarrhoea to fulminating dysentery. The diagnosis of amoebiasis can be done by isolating *E. histolytica* from fresh faeces.

Anti-amoebic drugs reduce the infections caused by amoeba.

6.1.2. Classification

Anti-amoebic drugs are classified as follows:

- 1) **Luminal Amoebicides:** These agents act against the intestinal forms of amoeba, e.g., Diloxanide furoate.
- 2) **Systemic Amoebicides:** These agents are used for treating severe amoebic dysentery or hepatic abscesses, e.g., Dihydroemetin and Chloroquine.
- 3) **Mixed Amoebicides:** These agents act on both the intestinal and systemic forms of amoeba, e.g., Metronidazole, Tinidazole, and Ornidazole.

6.1.3. Individual Compounds

The following drugs are studied in detail:

- 1) Emetine,
- 2) Metronidazole,
- 3) Halogenated hydroxyquinolones,
- 4) Diloxanide furoate, and
- 5) Paromycin