

# CONTENTS

<b>CONTENTS.....</b>	i
<b>ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....</b>	iii
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	1
<b>1.1    Structure and functions of endothelium.....</b>	1
<b>1.2    Endothelial dysfunction.....</b>	3
1.2.1    Causes and consequences of endothelial dysfunction .....	3
1.2.2    Mechanism of endothelial dysfunction .....	4
1.2.3    Prognostic implications of endothelial dysfunction.....	6
1.2.4    Therapeutic target of endothelial dysfunction.....	7
<b>1.3    Statin therapy beyond lipid-lowering effects in cardiovascular disease.....</b>	8
1.3.1    Improved endothelial dysfunction.....	8
1.3.2    Anti-oxidant effects of statins.....	10
1.3.3    Anti-inflammatory properties.....	11
1.3.4    Stabilization of plaques.....	12
1.3.5    Anti-thrombotic effects.....	12
1.3.6    Pro-apoptotic function.....	13
<b>1.4    Aim of the study.....</b>	15
<b>CHAPTER TWO: MATERIALS AND METHODS.....</b>	16
<b>2.1    Materials .....</b>	16
2.1.1    Laboratory equipments.....	16
2.1.2    Chemicals, reagents, antibodies and kits.....	17
<b>2.2    Methods.....</b>	21
2.2.1    Experimental animals.....	21
2.2.2    Atorvastatin treatment .....	21
2.2.3    Lipid measurements .....	21
2.2.4    Hindlimb perfusion.....	22
2.2.5    Endothelium-dependent, -independent vasodilatation.....	23
2.2.6    Tissue preparation.....	24
2.2.7    NAD(P)H oxidase activity measurement.....	24

2.2.8	Real-time reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction.....	25
2.2.9	Western blot.....	29
2.2.10	Immunohistochemistry and image analysis .....	31
2.2.11	Statistical analysis.....	32
<b>CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS.....</b>		<b>33</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Influence of atorvastatin treatment on serum lipid metabolic parameters.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Effects of atorvastatin treatment on vascular function.....</b>	<b>34</b>
3.2.1	Endothelium-dependent vasodilatation.....	34
3.2.2	Endothelium-independent vasodilatation .....	34
<b>3.3</b>	<b>Effects of atorvastatin treatment on oxidative stress .....</b>	<b>37</b>
3.3.1	NAD(P)H oxidase activity.....	37
3.3.2	Expression of eNOS.....	37
<b>3.4</b>	<b>Effects of atorvastatin treatment on inflammation.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>3.5</b>	<b>Effects of atorvastatin treatment on ERK 1/2 MAPK and NF-κB signaling pathway in the non-perfused diabetic skeletal muscles.....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION.....</b>		<b>47</b>
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Improvement of atorvastatin on endothelial dysfunction independently of lipid-lowering effect.....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Anti-oxidative effect of atorvastatin in diabetic rats.....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Anti-inflammatory effect of atorvastatin in diabetic rats .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>4.4</b>	<b>ERK1/2, and NF-κB signaling pathways implicated in the improvement of endothelial dysfunction by atorvastatin.....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS.....</b>		<b>57</b>
<b>CHAPTER SIX: STUDY LIMITATIONS AND PERSPECTIVES.....</b>		<b>58</b>
<b>CHAPTER SEVEN: SUMMARY.....</b>		<b>59</b>
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>		<b>61</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....</b>		<b>76</b>
<b>CURRICULUM VITAE AND PUBLICATIONS.....</b>		<b>77</b>
<b>STATEMENT IN LIEU OF OATH.....</b>		<b>79</b>