



ROLE OF HOMOEOPATHY IN MANAGEMENT OF HYPERTENSION

Homeopathy

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ABSTRACT

Hypertension is a chronic condition of concern due to its role in the causation of coronary heart disease, stroke and other vascular complications. It is the commonest cardiovascular disorder, posing a major public health challenge to population in socio-economic and epidemiological transition. It is one of the major risk factors for cardiovascular mortality, which accounts for 20-50 percent of all deaths.¹ Homeopathy has a lot to offer in control & management of Hypertension. It offers a cost effective alternative method of treating hypertension.

KEYWORDS

Hypertension, Blood Pressure, Cost effective, Alternative, Homoeopathy

INTRODUCTION:

Control of Blood Pressure:

Cardiac output and vascular resistance form part of an integrated system which controls arterial pressure and also blood flow to the tissues.²

The renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system plays a major part in the control of blood pressure, regional blood flow and blood volume, via its control of sodium balance.³

Renin secretion from the granules in the juxta-glomerular apparatus is stimulated by

- Fall in plasma volume.
- A drop in blood pressure.
- Sodium depletion.

The consequent rise in angiotensin II production and aldosterone secretion leads to sodium and water retention, and hence to restoration of sodium balance and plasma volume.

In the kidney, angiotensin II has a preferential constrictor effect on efferent arterioles, and thus maintains glomerular filtration pressure at times when the overall arterial pressure is diminished.²

Incidence:

Hypertension is rare below the age of 20 and when present it is always secondary. The exact incidence of Hypertension in the general population in India is not known, but it accounts for 15 to 20% of cardio-vascular patients admitted in hospitals. Essential hypertension accounts for 85% cases of hypertension, renal for about 5-10% and other causes for the remainder. Malignant hypertension is present in less than 1% cases of hypertension.⁴

Worldwide, raised blood pressure is estimated to cause 7.5 million deaths, about 12.8 per cent of the total of all annual deaths. This accounts for 57 million DALYs or 3.7 per cent of total DALYs. It is a major risk factor for coronary heart disease and ischaemic as well as haemorrhagic stroke. In some age groups, the risk of cardiovascular disease doubles for each incremental increase of 20/10 mm Hg of blood pressure. In addition, complication of raised blood pressure includes heart failure, peripheral vascular disease, renal impairment, retinal haemorrhage and visual impairment.¹

Treating systolic and diastolic blood pressure so that they are below 140/90 mm Hg is associated with a reduction in cardiovascular complications. Globally, the overall prevalence of raised blood pressure in adults aged 25 years and over was around 40 per cent in 2008. The proportion of the world's population with high blood pressure, or uncontrolled hypertension, fell modestly between 1980 and 2008.¹

Clinical Features of Hypertension:

- Until complications appear, essential hypertension is a condition without symptoms, which, by definition, has no associated physical signs save for elevated blood pressure. Headaches – once widely regarded as indicators of hypertension – are no more common in hypertension than in the general population, although

very severe hypertension, associated with cerebral oedema, does produce headache.²

- Breathlessness may be present, due to elevated left ventricular and end-diastolic pressure and pulmonary venous congestion produced by left ventricular hypertrophy.²
- Once the complications of essential hypertension are present, they are reflected in the symptoms and physical signs. Ventricular hypertrophy may lead to breathlessness, orthopnoea and frank cardiac failure; coronary disease to angina pectoris or myocardial infarction; cerebrovascular disease to stroke or dementia; and renal disease to all its associated symptoms.²

Table I: Investigation of Hypertension:⁴

- Urine analysis: protein, glucose, haematuria
- Plasma urea/creatinine
- Chest radiograph (Cardiomegaly, heart failure, rib notching)
- ECG (left ventricular hypertrophy, ischaemia)
- Plasma electrolytes (hypokalaemic alkalosis may indicate primary or secondary aldosteronism N.B. diuretic therapy is the commonest cause)
- Plasma Cholesterol/triglycerides

Table II: General Measures in management of Hypertension:⁴

- Diet:**
- Weight reduction in obese and overweight patients
 - Reduce heavy alcohol consumption
 - Avoid excess salt consumption

Exercise: Encourage regular exercise programme

Smoking: Stop Smoking

Hyperlipidemia

- Test Cholesterol (including HDL, LDL) and triglycerides.

Consider renal/endocrine causes

- Further investigation and management

Homeopathic Medicines for Hypertension

Spartium scoparium:

The effect of spartein sulphate (the alkaloid of Broom) is to cause a *lowering* of the systolic and diastolic pressures of the probers. Sphygmograms also show a condition of lowered blood-pressure. It depresses the heart by poisonous action exerted on the myocardium and this, with the stimulating action of the drug upon the vagus, accounts for the lowered blood pressure and reduced pulse rate. It weakens the cardiac contraction. The total amount of urine is increased. The drug has, therefore, diuretic properties and is useful in dropsy.⁵

Albuminuria. Cheyne-Stokes respiration. Irregular heart following grip and various infections. Hypotension used palliatively in physiological dosage to combat arterial hypertension, arteriosclerosis. Very useful hypodermically 1/10 to 1/4 grain in sustaining heart after stopping habit of Morphia. Spartium is indicated when primarily the muscles of the heart and especially the nervous apparatus is affected. Acts rapidly and lasts three to four days. Does not disturb

digestion. Nephritis.⁵

Tobacco heart. Angina pectoris. Irregular action, disturbed rhythm due to gas, etc, feeble in nervous hysterical patients. Myocardial degeneration, failing compensation. Also useful in Hypotension. Spartein in 2 gr doses for water-logged cases, cannot lie down. Here it produces much comfort. Has specific action upon the kidneys, enabling them to eliminate and relieve the distress upon the heart.⁵

Natrum muriaticum:

Unpleasant occurrences are recalled that she may grieve over them. Consolation aggravates the state of the mind the melancholy, the tearfulness, sometimes brings on anger. She appears to bid for sympathy and is mad when it is given. Headache comes on with this melancholy. Unrequited affection brings on complaints. She is unable to control her affections and falls in love with a married man. She knows that it is foolish but lies awake with love for him. She falls in love with a coachman. She knows that she is unwise but cannot help it. This remedy belongs to hysterical girls.⁶

Crataegus oxycantha:

Produces giddiness, lowered pulse, and air hunger and reduction in blood-pressure. Acts on muscle of heart, *and is a heart tonic*. No influence on the endocardium. Myocarditis. *Irregularity of heart*. Insomnia of aortic sufferers; anemia; edema; cutaneous chilliness. High arterial tension. Is a sedative in cross, irritable patients with cardiac symptoms. *Arteriosclerosis. Said to have a solvent power upon crustaceous and calcareous deposits in arteries.*⁵

Rauwolfia Serpentina: (Sarapgantha)

High blood pressure; irritative condition of central nervous system; insanity; violent maniacal symptoms. Fever during perpeureum. In high blood pressure without marked atheromatous changes in the vessels. It also acts as a sedative.⁷

Aconitum napellus:

It is generally indicated in acute or recent cases occurring in young persons, especially girls, of a full, plethoric habit who lead a sedentary life; persons easily affected by atmospheric changes; dark hair and eyes, rigid muscular fibre. Great fear and anxiety of mind, with great nervous excitability; afraid to go out, to go into a crowd where there is any excitement or many people; to cross the street. This mental anxiety, worry, fear accompanies the most trivial ailment.⁸

Glonoine:

Sharp pains in the heart. Fulness in the heart. Violent action of heart, distinct pulsation over whole body. Violent palpitation of heart, with throbbing carotids, pulsating headache in forehead and between temples. Violent palpitation of heart; frequency of pulse; stitches in left hypochondrium; feeling as if she would die; numbness in whole left arm. Violent palpitation; constant tremulous sensation in cardiac region; heart's impulse increased; pulse quick, small. Palpitation of heart with heat in face, accelerated pulse and pulsation of carotid arteries.⁹

Belladonna:

Adapted to bilious, lymphatic, plethoric constitutions; persons who are lively and entertaining when well, but violent and often delirious when sick. Women and children with light hair and blue eyes, find complexion, delicate skin; sensitive, nervous, threatened with convulsions; tuberculous patients. Violent delirium; disposition to bite, spit, strike and tear things; breaks into fits of laughter and gnashes the teeth; wants to bite and strike the attendants (Stram.); tries to escape (Hell.). Head hot and painful; face flushed; eyes wild, staring, pupils dilated; pulse full and bounding, globular, like buckshot striking the finger; mucous membrane of mouth dry; stool tardy and urine suppressed; sleepy; but cannot sleep (Cham., Op.).⁸

Naja tripudians:

Naja has surging of the blood upwards, like Lach. a distressing symptom. There is marked dyspnoea, cardiac or otherwise. There is stuffing up of the chest; great rawness of the trachea and larynx, the whole passage is raw as if excoriated. The whole chest is in a state of congestion; emptiness of the left side of the chest; low pulse or intermittent pulse. With all the complaints of the chest there is inability to lie on the left side. Numbness of the left arm. There is dyspnoea; if he goes to sleep, he wakes up suffocating, gasping, choking, or he starts from sleep as if from a dream. In most complaints there is inability to

lie on the left side. It is natural for the Naja headache to be present in the morning and wear off with exertion. The other complaints are < exertion. The mind symptoms are < exertion of the mind.⁶

Valeriana:

Extremely delirious, attempting to get out of the window, threatening and vociferating wildly. Anxious, hypochondriacal sensation, as if all around were desolate, disagreeable, or strange (very changeable disposition). Headache, which appears suddenly or in jerks. Fulness as from rush of blood to head. Pressive headache, or with pressive shootings, esp. in forehead, towards orbits, often alternating with confusion and dizziness in the head. Headache; < in evening, when at rest, and in the open air; > from movement in the room and when changing the position; the pressure over the orbits alternates between a pressing and a sticking; the sticking is like a darting, tearing as if it would pierce the eyes from within outward. Frequent jerks and stitches in chest (with the sensation as if something were pressed out), sometimes on left side (in region of heart) when drawing breath. Sudden stitches in chest and liver from within out.¹⁰

Baryta muriaticum:

The different salts of Baryta are called for in organic lesions of the aged and dwarfish, both mentally and physically. Arterio-sclerosis and cerebral affections due to this condition. Headaches, but without acute crisis, occurring in old people; heaviness rather than pain. Vertigo, due to cerebral anemia and noises in ears. Acts on lower alimentary canal, especially rectum; on muscles and joints, giving stiffness and weakness as from overwalking. The white blood corpuscles increased. Hypertension and vascular degeneration. Increased tension of pulse. Arterio-sclerosis (*Aurum; Secale*) where a high systolic pressure with a comparatively low diastolic tension is attended by cerebral and cardiac symptoms.⁵

This remedy has indurated and *narrowing of the cardiac orifice with pain*, immediately after eating, and epigastric tenderness, which has been repeatedly verified, also its use in *aneurism* and chronic hypertrophy of the tonsils.⁵

Aurum metallicum:

The general features of the remedy are such as relate to the mind and such as relate to the tissues of the body in general. If you run through the mental symptoms, taking them all in as one great whole, you will see that all the affections, natural to healthy man, are perverted. So great in extent is this that one of the fundamental loves, which is the love of living, of self-protection, is perverted and he loathes life, is weary of life, longs to die and seeks methods to commit suicide. No love of life. The affections pre-eminently are deranged, the intellectual sphere is only secondarily changed.⁶

Serum anguillae:

The serum of the eel has a toxic action on the blood, rapidly destroying its globules. The presence of albumin and renal elements in the urine, the hemoglobinuria, the prolonged anuria (24 and 26 hours), together with the results of the autopsy, plainly demonstrate its elective action on the kidneys. Secondarily, the liver and the heart are affected, and the alterations observed are those usually present in infectious diseases.⁵

From all these facts it is easy to infer, *a priori*, the therapeutical indications of the *serum of the eel*. Whenever the kidney becomes acutely affected, either from cold or infection or intoxication, and the attack is characterized by *oliguria*, *anuria* and *albuminuria*, we will find the *eel's serum* eminently efficacious to re-establish diuresis, and in rapidly arresting albuminuria. When during the course of *heart-disease*, the kidney, previously working well, should suddenly become affected and its function inhibited; and when besides we observe cardiac irregularities and a marked state of *asystolia*, we may yet expect good results from this serum. But to determine here the choice of this remedy is not an easy matter. While *digitalis* presents in its indications, the well-known symptomatic trilogy: *arterial hypertension oliguria and edema*; the *serum of the eel* seems better adapted to cases of *hypertension and oliguria, without edema*.⁵

Digitalis purpurea:

Digitalis is primarily a heart remedy. It should be considered when the **pulse is abnormally slow** and later in the pathology, fast or irregular, **intermittent**; where there is heart disease, with great weakness, and the patient can hardly talk, and is losing strength to the point that he feels faint. The greatest indication for Digitalis is in failure of

compensation, **cardiac muscular failure** and when **atrial fibrillation** has set in, especially when it comes after rheumatic fever. There is **arrhythmia** of several kinds: irregular and unequal pulse; '*Distension of the arteries, sometimes more and sometimes less*'; extrasystoles, in irregular distribution or after every normal beat of the heart; intermissions of irregular kind and length of time; '*the slow and small pulse frequently intermits for a shorter or longer time.*'¹¹

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