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Hypertension and its homoeopathic management

Dr. Khyati Thakkar

Assistant professor, Department of Practice of Medicine Rajkot Homoeopathic Medical College, Parul University, Rajkot, Gujarat, India

Corresponding Author: **Dr. Khyati Thakkar**

Abstract

Hypertension is the most common chronic disease affecting a large section of the general population. Hypertension is highly prevalent in the elderly because blood pressure rises with age. The risk of developing hypertension increases with predisposing genes, intrauterine growth retardation,

prematurity and childhood obesity. BP is easier to control in the young. Non-pharmacological treatment through lifestyle changes, such as weight control and leisure-time physical activity, is more likely to be successful in young people. Hypertension in older adults is more difficult to control.

Keywords: Hypertension, Homoeopathy, Therapeutics, Management

Introduction

Hypertension is a worldwide risk factor for cardiovascular disease burden and mortality^[1]. It is a disease related to risky health behaviors, including smoking, poor diet, overweight and obesity, alcohol consumption, physical inactivity and occupational lifestyle. The perception of hypertension by the individual also plays an important role in changing lifestyle and risky health behaviours^[2]. Some risk factors for hypertension are modifiable, such as old age and genetic predisposition. Changing modifiable risk factors may result in a reduced burden of hypertension and people have to know that they are at risk of hypertension to be able to make voluntary lifestyle changes. A homoeopathic similimum is able to give more comfort and minimizing the complications. There are sufficient numbers of homoeopathic medicines available for the treatment.

Types

- High blood pressure is classified as either primary (essential) high blood pressure or secondary high blood pressure.
- 90–95% of cases are primary, defined as high blood pressure due to nonspecific lifestyle and genetic factors. Lifestyle factors that increase the risk include excess salt, excess body weight, smoking, and alcohol.
- The remaining 5-10% of cases are categorized as secondary high blood pressure, defined as high blood pressure due to an identifiable cause, such as chronic kidney disease, narrowing of the kidney arteries, an endocrine disorder, or the use of birth control pills^[3].

Measurement

- Blood pressure is expressed by two measurements, the systolic and diastolic pressures, which are the maximum and minimum pressures, respectively.
- Normal blood pressure at rest is within the range of 100-140 millimeters mercury (mmHg) systolic and 60-90 mmHg diastolic.
- High blood pressure is present if the resting blood pressure is persistently at or above 140/90 mmHg for most adults.
- Different numbers apply to children. Ambulatory blood pressure monitoring over a 24-hour period appears more accurate than office best blood pressure measurement^[4].

Pathophysiology



Fig 1

- In most people with established essential hypertension, increased resistance to blood flow (total peripheral resistance) accounts for the high pressure while cardiac output remains normal. There is evidence that some younger people with prehypertension or 'borderline hypertension' have high cardiac output, an elevated heart rate and normal peripheral resistance, termed hyperkinetic borderline hypertension.
- These individuals develop the typical features of established essential hypertension in later life as their cardiac output falls and peripheral resistance rises with age. Whether this pattern is typical of all people who ultimately develop hypertension is disputed.
- The increased peripheral resistance in established hypertension is mainly attributable to structural narrowing of small arteries and arterioles, although a reduction in the number or density of capillaries may also contribute.
- Whether increased active arteriolar vasoconstriction plays a role in established essential hypertension is unclear. Hypertension is also associated with decreased peripheral venous compliance which may increase venous return, increase cardiac preload and, ultimately, cause diastolic dysfunction.
- Pulse pressure (the difference between systolic and diastolic blood pressure) is frequently increased in older people with hypertension.
- This can mean that systolic pressure is abnormally high, but diastolic pressure may be normal or low—a condition termed isolated systolic hypertension.
- The high pulse pressure in elderly people with hypertension or isolated systolic hypertension is explained by increased arterial stiffness, which typically accompanies aging and may be exacerbated by high blood pressure.
- Many mechanisms have been proposed to account for the rise in peripheral resistance in hypertension.
- Most evidence implicates either disturbances in the kidneys' salt and water handling (particularly abnormalities in the intrarenal renin-angiotensin system) and/or abnormalities of the sympathetic nervous system.
- These mechanisms are not mutually exclusive and it is likely that both contribute to some extent in most cases of essential hypertension. It has also been suggested that endothelial dysfunction and vascular inflammation may

also contribute to increased peripheral resistance and vascular damage in hypertension [5].

Causes

- The exact causes of high blood pressure are not known, but several factors and conditions may play a role in its development, including [3]:
 - Smoking
 - Being overweight or obese
 - Lack of physical activity
 - Too much salt in the diet
 - Too much alcohol consumption
 - Stress
 - Older age
 - Genetics
 - Family history of high blood pressure
 - Chronic kidney disease
 - Adrenal and thyroid disorders
 - Sleep apnea

Sign Symptoms

- One of the most dangerous aspects of hypertension is that you may not know that you have it. In fact, nearly one-third of people who have high blood pressure don't know it. The only way to know if your blood pressure is high is through regular checkups. This is especially important if you have a close relative who has high blood pressure.
- If your blood pressure is extremely high, there may be certain symptoms to look out for, including [3]:
 - Severe headache
 - Fatigue or confusion
 - Vision problems
 - Chest pain
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Irregular heartbeat
 - Blood in the urine
 - Pounding in your chest, neck, or ears
- If you have any of these symptoms, see a doctor immediately. You could be having a hypertensive crisis that could lead to a heart attack or stroke.

Effect of Hypertension on different organ

- High blood pressure (hypertension) is sometimes called the "silent killer" because there typically are no symptoms. You can't feel it damaging your arteries, heart, or other organs. Over time, however, uncontrolled high blood pressure can cause life-threatening problems [6].

1. Heart and artery damage

- High blood pressure can cause microscopic tears in your artery walls. These tears turn into scar tissue. The scar tissue creates rough walls, collecting cholesterol, platelets, fats, and plaque. This narrows and hardens the arteries
- Narrowing of the arteries to your legs, stomach, arms, and head, called peripheral artery disease (PAD), can cause cramping, pain, or tiredness mostly in the leg and

hip muscles. People with PAD also have a much higher risk of heart attack or stroke.

2. Stroke

- High blood pressure causes your arteries to burst or clog more easily, putting you at high risk for a stroke.

3. Kidney damage

- The kidneys are full of arteries, and damage to those arteries can make your kidneys lose their ability to filter toxins in the blood and regulate fluid, hormones, acids, and salts in the body.

4. Vision damage

- High blood pressure strains delicate blood vessels in the eyes and swells your optic nerve. This leads to impaired vision.
- Permanent vision problems occur when high blood pressure goes untreated. Lowering your blood pressure is the only way to treat the damaged blood vessels in the eye.

5. Hypertension crisis

- Characterized by an extreme and rapid rise in blood pressure (180 or higher systolic or 110 or higher diastolic).
- May be accompanied by a severe headache, shortness of breath, nosebleed, and/or severe anxiety.
- Blood pressure may reach levels that are damaging to organs effect of htn on different organ
- High blood pressure (hypertension) is sometimes called the "silent killer" because there typically are no symptoms. You can't feel it damaging your arteries, heart, or other organs. Over time, however, uncontrolled high blood pressure can cause life-threatening problems.

Management

- Maintain a normal body weight.
- Eat a diet high in fruits and vegetables and low in fat.
- Consume less than 2.4 g of sodium per day.
- Get 30 minutes of aerobic activity at least four days per week.
- Men should have no more than two alcoholic drinks per day, and women no more than one alcoholic drink per day.
- reducing sodium intake,
- increasing exercise,
- moderating alcohol consumption,
- Following the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension.
- Losing weight.
- Smoking cessation.

Dietary Supplements

- Vitamin C, omega-3 fatty acids, coenzyme Q10, and magnesium have been purported to reduce blood pressure. However, their use in management of hypertension is not recommended because of the lack of data from well-designed randomized controlled trials.
- Our Homoeopathic Material Medica contains a vast treasure of magical medicines in itself. Homoeopathy considers health as a state indicating harmonious functioning of the life force. Disease is a deviation from health, which develops when the life force is unable to overcome obstructions to its smooth functioning. It can be seen as the total response of the organism to adverse

environmental factors, internal or external, conditioned by constitutional factors, inherited or acquired. This stands true for all diseases, including hypertension [7].

Thus in the case of hypertension, homoeopathy focuses on the patient with the hypertension, rather than on the hypertension itself. The totality of various characteristic signs and symptoms exhibited by this patient leads the homoeopath to the similar remedy. The similar remedy relieves the totality of symptoms, and with it the symptom of an elevated blood pressure.

Homoeopathic remedy for hypertension

1) Aconitum Napellus-for high blood pressure with anxiety

Aconite napellus is a medicine for high blood pressure along with anxiety and restlessness. The affected person often experiences a sudden fear of death. Other accompanying symptoms include palpitations, a pressure in the left side of the chest, sensation of weight under the breastbone and oppression of the chest. Pain in the heart extending to the left shoulder is also present.

2) Allium Sativum-For High Blood pressure with high cholesterol

Allium sativum is a medicine for high blood pressure with high cholesterol levels. This medicine helps in reducing cholesterol as well as lowering blood pressure. Other symptoms include a pain in the chest that prevents sleep and leads to palpitations.

3) Amylenum-For high blood pressure with constricted sensation

Amylenum nitrosum is a medicine for high blood pressure when constricted sensation around the heart is the main symptom. Along with constriction, aching in the heart is also present. A sensation of swelling in the chest, fluttering in the heart and intensified beating of the heart are the other symptoms that indicate the need for this medicine.

4) Baryta Mur-For High systolic/Low Diastolic

Baryta Mur is a medicine for high blood pressure with high systolic reading and a low diastolic reading. The arteriosclerotic changes in the arteries are its main symptom, along with vertigo, irregular heartbeats and a heated sensation in the upper part of the chest.

5) Crataegus oxyacantha-To dissolve calcareous Deposits

Crataegus oxyacantha is a medicine used to help lower the blood pressure by dissolving the calcareous deposits in the arteries. Symptoms indicative of this medicine include pain in the region of the heart, oppression of chest, accelerated pulse and irregular pulse. Other symptoms include anxiety and cardiac dyspnea.

6) Glonoinum-For High blood pressure with Headaches

Glonoinum is a medicine for high blood pressure accompanied by headaches. The headaches feel intense, congestive, throbbing and bursting in nature. Other symptoms include strong palpitations, dyspnoea, heat in the face and cardiac pains radiating to other parts. Exertion leading to rush of blood to the heart and fainting spells is another feature that indicates the need for this remedy. Glonoinum is also indicated for nephritis with high blood

pressure.

7) Latrodectus Mactans-For High blood pressure with heart pain

Latrodectus mactans is a medicine for high blood pressure with marked heart pains. The heart pain extends to the shoulder or arm and fingers. There may be numbness of the upper limb, suffocation, restlessness, and extreme weakness.

8) Tabacum Nicotiana-For High blood pressure in tobacco users

Tabacum nicotiana is a medicine for high blood pressure used in cases where the person has a habit of taking tobacco. Symptoms include palpitations, oppression in the chest and a rapid pulse. Other symptoms include pain between shoulders, inability to take a deep breath and twisting sensation around the heart.

9) Strophanthus Hispidus-high blood pressure due to arteriosclerosis

Strophanthus hispidus is a medicine for high blood pressure in elderly due to arteriosclerosis. Strong palpitations that get worse upon emotional release and exercise are noted. The symptoms include constriction behind breastbone, difficult breathing, and alternating rapid slow pulse.

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