

Effective Management of Rakta Gata Vata W.S.R. To Hypertension in Ayurveda

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Abstract

Hypertension the silent killer of 21st century is one of the major risk factors for the development of cardio vascular diseases and is also a contributing factor for the development of coronary heart disease. Hypertension is not mentioned directly in any ayurvedic texts as a disease entity or a symptom. Regarding aforesaid disease various ayurvedic scholars have suggested different nomenclatures from time to time according to their own views such as: dhamaniprapurnata, dhamanipraticaya, raktagata vata, vriddhavyanabala, avrita vyanaudana vayu, siragata vata e.t.c. But now, on the basis of comparison and correlation ayurveda sees hypertension as a dysfunction of all the three doshas, viz. vata, pitta and kapha and especially it sees the vitiation of vyana vayu and pitta doshas as the main cause. Therefore, ayurvedic treatment of hypertension mainly involves balancing of these two doshas, along with herbal treatment. The present study has been taken up to assess the raktadushti in hypertension w.s.r. to its panchabhautika composition and therapeutic evaluation of Raktashodhaka ghanavati.

Key words – Hypertension, Blood pressure, Raktadaab, SBP, DBP.

Introduction

Hypertension (HT) - the silent killer of 21st century is now becoming the matter of deep concern for the practitioners of all traditional or modern healing sciences throughout the world. It is one of the major risk factors for the development of cardio vascular diseases & is also a contributing factor for the development of coronary heart disease. Over last few decades, the incidences and prevalence of this ailment raised surprisingly in both developed and developing countries. The present rate of prevalence is 2.5%-3.5% in rural area, 4%-18% in urban population and 7.5% in slum areas. According to estimation, every fourth adult of urban population has a BP measurement above 140/90 mm Hg. If hypertension is ignored and not treated timely then it may lead to heart attacks, strokes, end stage renal failures and other severe complications. In total, hypertension is probably directly or indirectly responsible for 10-20% of deaths all over the world.

Disease Review

Blood pressure like height and weight is a continuously distributed biological variable among individuals. It is the pressure exerted by the circulating blood on the lateral walls of its vessels.

Definition of Hypertension

According to bulletin of the WHO July 2004, 82 (7) presently hypertension in adults aged 18 years and older who are not acutely ill, is defined as “a systolic blood pressure equal to or greater than 140 mm Hg and/or a diastolic blood pressure equal to or greater than 90 mm Hg or any level of BP in patients taking antihypertensive medication.”

Primary or Idiopathic or Essential HT

In more than 95% of cases, a specific underlying cause of hypertension cannot be found this condition is known as essential or idiopathic or primary HT. It usually remains asymptomatic until it causes complications such as heart attack and stroke and thus it is now known as a silent killer in the body. The pathogenesis of this is not clearly understood. Many factors may contribute to its development, including renal dysfunction, peripheral resistance vessel tone, endothelial dysfunction, autonomic tone, insulin resistance and neuro-humoral factors.

Secondary HT

It accounts for about 5% of the rest cases of the hypertension. This condition is considered as a consequence of any other specific disease or abnormality. Prominent among these are chronic glomerulo-nephritis and chronic pyelonephritis, tumours of the adrenal glands, congenital narrowing of the aorta and toxaeimias of pregnancy.

According to range of BP

S.No.	BP Category	SBP (mm Hg.)	DBP (mm Hg.)
(1)	Normal	<130	<85
(2)	High Normal	130-139	85-89
(3)	Hypertension		
•	Stage 1 (Mild)	140-159	90-99
•	Stage 2 (Moderate)	160-179	100-109
•	Stage 3 (Severe)	180-209	110-119
•	Stage 4 (Very Severe)	≥ 210	≥ 120

Ayurvedic approach to hypertension

The ailment named as hypertension is not mentioned as such in any ayurvedic text. Different ayurvedic scholars have used different terms for describing it such as: Dhamaniprapurnata, Dhamanipratichaya, Raktagata vata, Vriddhavyanabala, Rakta vata, Avrita vyanaudana vayu, Siragata vata, Raktavrita vata e.t.c. But now, on the basis of comparison and correlation ayurveda sees hypertension as a dysfunction of all the three doshas, viz. vata, pitta and kapha and especially it sees the vitiation of vata and pitta doshas as the main cause. Therefore, ayurvedic treatment of hypertension mainly involves balancing of these two doshas, along with herbal treatment.

Pancha-mahabhautika configuration of Rakta

According to ayurvedic classics, everything either mobile or non mobile, either living or nonliving is composed of five basic elements called pancha-mahabhutas. The physical body (sharir) is nothing but the collection of pancha-mahabhutas. Rakta is also supposed to be composed of these five elements. Acharya charaka has put forward the idea in connecting with pancha-mahabhutas in a brief form. (Su.Su.14/10). But on the basis of certain gunas, acharya susruta has clearly described about the panchamahabhautika configuration of rakta. These gunas are visra, drava, raga, spandana and laghu.¹

Visra

Everything in this universe is panchabhautika. The natural guna of pruthvi is smell and the normal smell of rakta is visra. So it can be concluded that the visra-gandha of rakta is due to the presence of pruthvi mahabhuta. Modern medicine experimented for the composition of blood which is shown that blood contents are proteins, uric acid, nitrogen etc. All these in combined form emits a visra type of smell. Commenting on it, acharya chakrapani designated it is as amra smell. In fact this smell is produced due to above written constituents present in it. Its natural smell is also written as lohagandhi, indicating the iron constitute that plays the major role for the smell. This is a kind of ordinary raw smell coming from the loha dhatu (mineral).

Dravata

The drava form of rakta is clearly evident from various experiments. During bleeding its liquid form is directly visible. Drava guna is due to jala mahabhuta. In modern medicine, the plasma part of blood is in liquid form which is taken as rasa dhatu in ayurveda.

Raga

Raga means ranjana. Rakta is also a ranjaka dravya. This responsibility of redness is bestowed upon shoulders of ranjaka pitta, which is the contribution of tejas mahabhuta.

Spandana

Spandana indicates to motion. As rakta spandan leads us to think about the palpation of heart, which is noted at every time of life. The jeevan karma of rakta is justified, because life action cannot be performed without its circulation to the whole body and it helps for the formation of new dhatu. In this way, it becomes a keeping agent for the touch perception. Its description is done among the karma of rakta. Rakta spandana and its fluidity functions are done in their siras named as raktavaha sira.

Laghuta

In general, rakta is heavier but its activity to do the function is because of its laghu guna. Being comparatively lighter the red corpuscles of blood float in it. The transmission of these cells from one place to another is also possible through this property. When these cells become heavier then due to this property, they stick inside the wall of either vessel. There they go on accumulating and obstruction will be the resultant form. Thus the circulation will be checked and the disease will be produced. But normally this does not happen, which clearly signifies the property of laghuta. Thus, it is clear that the blood (rakta) is composed of these five basic elements- aakash, vayu, agni, jala and pruthvi. So the treatment of high B.P. can be done by maintaining the balance and equilibrium of these pancha-mahabhutas or tridoshas ultimately.

Nidana

The term nidana signifies all the aetiological factors, which produces any ailment in the body. . Now, on the basis of comparison and correlation ayurveda sees hypertension as a dysfunction of all the three doshas, viz. vata, pitta and kapha and especially it sees the vitiation of vata and pitta doshas as the main nidana (cause). Therefore, ayurvedic treatment of hypertension mainly involves balancing of these two doshas, along with herbal treatment. Nidana of hypertension may be categorised as follows:

(1)Aharaja Nidana

- Atimatra ashana
- Adhyashana
- Atisantarpaka aahara
- Viruddhashana
- Madyapana

(2)Viharaja Nidana

- Avyayama
- Vegadharana
- Ratri jagarana
- Diva svapna
- Dhumra pana

(3)Manasika Nidana

- Chinta
- Shoka
- Krodha
- Irshya
- Bhaya
- Avasaada

Samprapti (Dosha Dushya Sammurchana):-

Udbhava	→	Amashaya samuttha vyadhi
Dosha	→	Vata-Vyan, prana, udana vayu
Pitta	→	Pachaka, sadhaka pitta
Kapha	→	Kledaka,avalambaka, tarpaka kapha
Manasa	→	Raja and tama.
Dushya	→	Rasa, rakta, medo dhatu.
Aama	→	Rasa, rakta and medogata aama
(jatharagni & dhatvagni mandyajanya aama)		
Srotasa	→	Rasa, rakta, manovahi srotasa
Srotodushti prakara	→	Atipravritti, sanga, siragranthi
Adhishtana	→	Dhamani, Sira
Rogamarga	→	Madhyama

Ayurvedic Management of Hypertension:-

As hypertension results especially from the vitiation of vata dosha mainly that of Vyana vayu and pitta dosha; so the ayurvedic treatment is to correct the balance of these two doshas along with supportive treatment. The supportive

treatment of hypertension mainly involves dietary, behavioural and lifestyle modifications, breathing exercises (pranayama), yoga, meditation, along with shaman chikitsa i.e. (usage of various herbs and minerals) and shodhana chikitsa (panchakarma therapy).

Nidana Parivarjana

Aetiological factors responsible for genesis of hypertension should be avoided.

Life Style Modification

Improving your lifestyle by adoption of daily and seasonal regimen (dincharya, ratricharya and ritucharya) and ethical elements mentioned in achara rasayana is must if you really want to stay away from mental and physical stress and from eventual hypertension.

Vyayama

According to ayurveda exercise improves the body, depletes excess fat and brings lightness in the body. In this way it lowers the blood pressure.

Langhan

It is considered as aama pachana, srotoshodhaka and removes agnimandya.

Lekhana

They clear the obstruction in microcirculatory channels and also reduce excessive deposition of fatty substances in blood vessels e.g. shilajatu, guggulu, triphala e.t.c.

Srotoshodhana

These drugs reduce obstruction in the path of circulation.

Rakta shodhana

Mostly tikta drugs act as rakta shodhaka drugs e.g. sariva, nimbi.

Tridosha shaman

Since it is a tridoshaja vyadhi therefore tridosha shamaka drugs will be helpful in the treatment.

Common Herbs for Hypertension are:

Sarpagandha	→	Rauwolfia serpentina
Shankhapushpi	→	Convolvulus pluricaulis
Arjuna	→	Terminalia arjuna
Guggulu	→	Commiphoramukul
Gokshuru	→	Tribulus terrestris
Punarnava	→	Boerhavia diffusa
Rasona	→	Allium sativa

Panchakarma-therapy

Virechana is the best treatment for hypertension since it is a pittolbana tridoshaja vyadhi. Niruha basti Chikitsa (non unctuous enema) will be beneficial in hypertension and should be given by experienced physician. Shiro dhara therapy is also helpful in treating mild hypertension. Oil processed with bala (sida cordifolia) and milk is allowed to drop in small droplets on the forehead of the patient.

Yoga and Pranayama (Breath Therapy)

Yogic exercises like vajrasana, makarasana and shavasana are helpful in maintaining the complete tranquillity of mind. Pranayama (Breath therapy) is another way to keep mind in a state of complete calm and peace. First, concentrate on the incoming and outgoing breath, focusing on the temperature of the breath as it flows in and out. You may notice the exhaled air is slightly warmer than the inhaled air. If you focus the mind on the breath for 10 minutes, mental disturbance gets diminished and blood pressure normalizes.

Satvavjaya Chikitsa

This is the therapy of emotional stress. It counteracts the manasika nidana of vyadhi. Relaxation and removal of emotional stress will help in lowering mildly elevated levels of blood pressure. Affectionate touch and speech can significantly drop the raised blood pressure. Laughter therapy is also good medicine as it decreases adrenaline and cortisol production. Chanting the mantra 'OM' or listening to a recording of it in the early morning and evening is also beneficial.

Ahara mentioned for Hypertension

Ayurvedic diet of a hypertensive patient must balance the three doshas, reduce body weight and excessive fat. Here, the ayurvedic diet for hypertension is categorised in two groups one consisting of food articles to be taken and another of food articles to be avoided.

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