

Prevention of Lifestyle Disorder Hypertension through Ayurveda

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Abstract

Lifestyle disorders are generally complex to cure. Hypertension is one of the most common lifestyle disorders today. Due to unhealthy advance modernization people are leading to stressful lives. Lifestyle disorders definitely illuminate with the broader approach of Ayurveda. The Ayurvedic system understands the functioning of human body as a whole and any disease is concluding to be due to imbalance of Tridosha—Vata, Pitta and Kapha. The principals of Ayurveda are concentrated on maintaining good health by good diet and good lifestyle. The treatment for hypertension in Ayurveda aims at balancing of these three doshas. Hypertension (known as Rakta Gata Vata in Ayurveda) is elevated pressure of the blood in the arteries. It is usually higher after exercise or under stress. Having higher blood pressure for short intervals of time is normal. However, when blood pressure stays high for a longer duration, the Ayurvedic approach for the treatment of hypertension is aimed at identifying the root cause of the condition and then administering herbs that can eradicate the problem from its roots.

Keywords: lifestyle, Ayurveda, herbs, hypertension

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INTRODUCTION

Hypertension is usually considered a *vata* and/or *pitta* condition, although ultimately all three *doshas* may be involved. Teachings of the traditional text, the Charaka Samhita, the three pillars of healthy and long life are *Aahara* (proper diet), *Vihara* (proper lifestyle) and *Brahmacharya* (controlled sexuality). Undigested, junk food and accumulated wastes are mostly toxic to the body as they produce changes in blood, lymph and other body fluids resulting in imbalance of elements [1].

Ayurveda therapy validates the physical, psychological and spiritual wellness of an individual. Ayurveda offers various methods to manage lifestyle disorders by following *Dincharya*, *Ratricharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Panchakarma* or with help of *Rasayanas*.

CAUSES

- Stress, anxiety;
- Sedentary lifestyle;
- Vitiation of *vata*;
- Consumption of high-fat and low-fiber diet;

- Smoking and an excessive intake of intoxicants;
- Excessive intake of common table salt;
- Excessive intake of tea, coffee;
- Alcohol;
- Obesity/overweight;
- Lack of exercise;
- Metabolic disorders;
- Negative mental feelings.

SYMPTOMS

- Pain experienced at the back of the head and neck on waking up, which soon disappears;
- Dizziness;
- Palpitations;
- Heart pain;
- Frequent urination;
- Nervous tension;
- Fatigue;
- Difficulty in breathing.

AYURVEDIC TREATMENT

Ayurveda approach provides better solution in the form of proper dietary management, lifestyle advises, *Panchakarma* like

detoxification and bioprocedures, medicaments, and rejuvenation therapies. The Ayurveda approach treat the patient as a whole, meaning intervention targeted towards complete physical, psychological, and spiritual well being makes this science a wonderful option in lifestyle disorders. The treatment of hypertension consists of all or some of the following approaches:

- *Nidana parivarjana* (removal and avoidance of the cause);
- *Niramkarana* (removal of *ama*);
- *Dosha pratyanyika* (antagonistic to the vitiated *doshas*);
- *Vyadhi pratyanyika* (antagonistic to the vitiated *dhatu*);
- *Shodhana* (purification) including:
 - *Virechana* (purgative therapy)
 - *Shiro virecana* (purification through nasal root)
 - *Niruha Basti* (herbalized enema decoction)
 - *Raktamokshana* (bloodletting)
 - *Pizicchil* (special massage technique utilizing large quantities of herbalized oil)
- *Shirodhara* (using *takra* medicated with *brahmi*, *amalaki*, and *musta*);
- *Shamana* medications (includes diet and herbal medicines);
- *Satvavajaya* (psychotherapeutic approach);
- *Chikitsa* (rejuvenative medicines).

Diet and Lifestyle Advice

- Avoid meat, eggs, table salt, pickles, tea and coffee.
- Avoid smoking as it increases heart rate.
- Increase use of garlic, lemon, parsley, Indian gooseberry (*amla*), watermelon, grapefruit, skim milk and cottage cheese.
- Regular exercise is one of the best ways to lower blood pressure; brisk walking, jogging, swimming and athletics are good options. Laughter is the best medicine, as it relieves stress and anxiety, which are the main causes of high blood pressure in today's lifestyle.

Herbal Medications

The several individual herbs mentioned in Ayurveda texts are:

- Sarpagandha (*Rauvolfia serpentina* Benth. ex Kurz)
- Arjuna (*Terminalia arjuna* (Roxb.) Bedd.)
- Rasona (*Allium sativum*)
- Gokshura (*Tribulus terrestris* Linn.)
- Haritaki (*Terminalia chebula* Retz.)
- Jatamansi (*Nardostachys jatamansi* (D.Don) DC.)
- Candrasuram (*Lepidium sativum* Linn.)
- Sadanpushpa (*Catharanthus roseus* (Linn.) G. Don)
- Rudraksa (*Elaeocarpus sphaericus* (Gaertn.) K. Schum.)
- Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri* (Linn.) Penn.)
- Punarnava (*Boerhaavia diffusa* Linn.)
- Vatasnabha (*Aconitum ferox* Wall. ex Ser.) [2–9]

Some common compounds mentioned in Ayurveda texts are:

- Sarpagandha Tablet
- Sarpagandhadi Gutika
- Gulakanda (Pravala mishrita)
- Sarpagandha Yoga
- Sarpagandha Curna Yoga
- Sarpagandha Vati
- Tagaradi Vati
- Sarvavataroge Siddha Gugglu
- Ridhi Vidaryadi Kvatha
- Jaharmohra Bhasma
- Yograja Rasa
- Mukta Pisti
- Pravala Pisti [3–9]

CONCLUSION

Hypertension (high blood pressure) is a lifestyle disorder. It is treated with lifestyle management and medicines. There are various antihypertensive allopathic drugs to control high blood pressure but it will not cure permanently. If we stop the allopathic treatment, then blood pressure related problems will rise. So, everyone should follow the Ayurveda regimens for better and healthy life. However, modern Ayurveda understands quite clearly that hypertension is caused by an excess of all three *doshas* in the *rasa* and *rakta dhatus* as well as *shonita* (blood), compromised digestion, the presence of *aama*, *sroto varodha*, central and autonomic nervous deregulation, and mental stress. Ayurveda treats this condition with a sequence of

detoxification protocols, dietary and behavioral modifications, herbal treatments, lifestyle changes and to restore equilibrium throughout the body. All treatments are according to the individual's *prakriti*, *vikriti*, and other specific factors for hypertension.

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