

Short Communication

Usefulness of homeopathy in essential hypertension: an exploratory interventional trial

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Background

The prevalence of hypertension has significantly increased not only among the urban, but also among the rural population of India.¹ Out of all hypertensive cases, 85%-95% correspond to essential hypertension, which is mostly attributed to genetic, psychological and environmental factors.² As this condition is alarmingly rising, there is a need for approaches to check its progression and offer holistic treatment. Homeopathy and with lifestyle changes might represent a relevant alternative to conventional treatment. The present observational study was undertaken to investigate the usefulness of homeopathic medicines with lifestyle changes in management of essential hypertension.

Objectives

The primary objective was to evaluate the role of homeopathic drugs in the management of essential hypertension. The secondary objective was to detect cases of metabolic syndrome according to the clinical criteria formulated by the National Cholesterol Education Program (Adult Treatment Panel (ATP) III).³

Methods

An exploratory interventional study was conducted at Dharam Kiran Govt.

Homoeopathic Hospital, Hyderabad, India, from 2004 to 2006. Thirty cases were enrolled from the hospital outpatient department. Patients fulfilling the inclusion criteria were enrolled in the study after signing an informed consent form.

Inclusion criteria

- Essential hypertension; age 25 or older; from both gender and any socioeconomic level.
- Stage I and II hypertension according to the classification in the Seventh Report of the Joint National Committee on Prevention, Detection, Evaluation and Treatment of High Blood Pressure (JNC VII).⁴

Exclusion criteria

- Target organ damage like cardiovascular accidents, kidney failure, congestive heart failure and diabetes mellitus.
- Pregnant and breastfeeding women.

Medical history, physical examination, and laboratory tests were used to rule out secondary hypertension. Detailed case history was recorded as per the standard format. The cases were subjected to repertory analysis, and the final selection of medicines was performed on an individual basis following consultation of the homeopathic materia medica. Modifiable risk factors, like obesity, excess salt intake, alcohol



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consumption, etc. were recorded at baseline
(Table 1).

S. No.	Characteristics	Number of patients (percentage)
1.	Age groups in years	
	25-34	3 (10.00%)
	35-44	8 (26.67%)
	45-54	13 (43.33%)
	55-64	6 (20.00%)
2.	Sex	
	Male	16 (53.33%)
	Female	14 (46.67%)
3.	Family history of hypertension	
	Present	24 (80%)
	Absent	6 (20%)
4.	Lifestyle factors	
	a) Obesity	
	Yes	20 (66.67%)
	No	10 (33.33%)
	b) Extra salt consumption	
	Yes	10 (33.33%)
	No	20 (66.67%)
	c) Alcohol consumption	
	Yes	9 (56.25%)
	No	7 (43.75%)
	d) Smoking	
	Yes	8 (50%)
	No	8 (50%)
	e) Physical activity	
	Active	1 (3.34%)
Moderately active	13 (43.33%)	
Sedentary	16 (53.33%)	

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of participants

The cases with stage II hypertension according to JNC VII³ were followed up every 15 days, and the cases with stage I hypertension were followed up every month up to 1 year. Improvement was defined based on changes in the JNC VII stages and improvement of the participants' general

condition. The main outcome was changes in the blood pressure, and the secondary outcome was presence of metabolic syndrome.⁵ The data were analyzed using statistical software SPSS version 16 and the Wilcoxon signed rank test was applied.
(Table 2).



Outcome parameter	Median (interquartile range)		Z value	P value
	Baseline	Final		
Diastolic blood pressure	92.0 (90.0-100.0)	86.0 (82.0-90.0)	4.594	0.001
Systolic blood pressure	150.0 (145.5-160.0)	136.0 (130.0-146.0)	128	0.001

Table – 2: Outcome assessment

Results

Sixteen (53.33%) cases showed marked improvement, 8 (26.67%) moderate improvement, 3 (10%) no improvement and 3 (10%) dropped out. (Figure 1) *Arsenicum album*, *Natrum muraticum*, *Nux vomica*, *Causticum* and *Lycopodium clavatum* were

found to be useful in the management of essential hypertension. The difference in the systolic and diastolic blood pressure before and after treatment was statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). Metabolic syndrome was present in 46.67% of the cases.

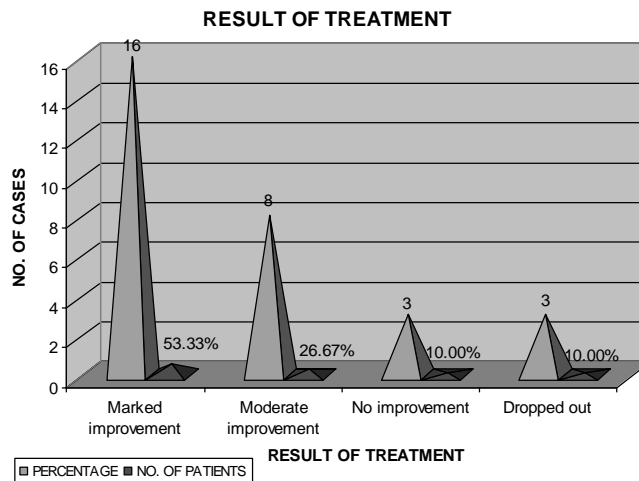


Figure 1: Treatment outcomes

Conclusion

The results showed that constitutional treatment based on homeopathic principles might represent a satisfactory option for the management of essential hypertension. Further studies are needed to establish the

efficacy of homeopathy in the management of essential hypertension.

Keywords: Essential hypertension; metabolic syndrome; obesity; homeopathy

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