

Hypertension -An Ayurvedic View

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Abstract

The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified India as one of those nations that is going to have most of the killer because it rarely exhibits symptoms before it damages the heart, brain or kidney. Hypertension is a world- wide public health challenge and remains a major cause of morbidity and mortality worldwide. About 26.4% of the world adult population in 2000 had hypertension and 29.2% were projected to have this condition by 2025. Hypertension is a chronic and often asymptomatic medical condition in which systemic arterial blood pressure is elevated beyond normal. Lifestyle disorders are becoming more common in day today practice, among them Hypertension is also noted ,it results from variety of reasons like stress, obesity, lack of exercise, lack of proper diet, etc. Hypertension is the excessive pressure exerted by blood vessels while flowing through them due to which heart has to work harder for pumping blood through the body because of which heart may get enlarged & also damaged. Hypertension is the psychosomatic disorder which is not directly mentioned in Ayurvedic classics. We are unable to get it from ancient classics in scientific manner, where in we can co-relate Hypertension as Raktagata vata, Raktavritta vata, Raktavata, Dhamani prapurnata & Dhamani pratichaya etc. In Ayurveda there is concept of unknown vyadhis as to study the nature of disease through Dosa, Dooshya & Samprapti, so in this article an effort is made to understand the concept of Hypertension in Ayurvedic view.

Keywords: *Hypertension, Ayurveda, Blood pressure, Raktavata, Raktavritta Vata, Dhamani pratichaya*

INTRODUCTION

High blood pressure is a common condition in which long-term force of the blood against your artery walls is high enough that it may eventually cause health problem such as heart disease. Blood pressure is determined both by the amount of blood your heart pumps and the amount of resistance to blood flow in your arteries .The more blood your heart pumps and the narrower your arteries ,the higher your blood pressure.⁴

Rakthgatavata is discussed in the context of vatavyadhichikitsa chpt.by charak, in shabdakalpadruma rakthavata as rakthapradhano vatah⁵ (shabdakalpadrum 4th volume Rajaradhakantadeva ,chaukhaba sankrit series office,Varanasi edition 2011)

Rujastreevra sasantap vaivarnyaam krushataaruchi |

Gatre charunshi bhuktasya stambhschasrugagateanile ||⁶ (vatavyadhi chikitsa 28th chpt 31 (page no2376)If vata located in the blood gets provoked, there occurs acute pain, burning, discoloration, emaciation, anorexia, rashes on the body and spasticity of limbs after meals.

Rakthavrtte sadahartest vakmamsantrajo Bharsma |

Bhavet saragaah shvathuurjayate mandalani cha ||⁷

Vatavyadhi chikitsa 28th chpt 63

If it is occluded in the blood, there will be severe burning pain in the area between the skin and the flesh, and there will be edema with reddish tinge and rashes.

Charaka clearly describes that Vyana Vata, a component of Vata Dosha constantly forces the blood out of the heart and distributes it 8.Therefore it is said that systolic pressure of BP is controlled by Vyana vata during contraction of heart. Though the SA node generates its own impulses, the rate of impulse is controlled by Autonomic nervous system & Para-sympathetic nerve fibres emerging from the Brain.

CONCEPT OF GATAVATA AND AVARANA

Margavarane vegapratibandhdeva kupito bhavati,

Avarana is the pathological condition of vata which is characterized by an obstruction in the ‘gati’(movement)of vata,

leading to the paralyzed state of activities further leading to different disorders. Raktha vata is due to vitiation of vata by swanidana in this aggravation of vata occurs. Rakthavritta vata is a process of pathogenesis where in rakthavrddi impedes the gati of vata.

Rakthgataavata is discussed in the context of vatavyadhichikitsa 28th chpt.by charak, in shabdakalpadruma rakthavata as rakthapradhano vata⁷ (shabdakalpadrum 4th volume Rajaradhakantadeva, chaukhamba Sanskrit series office, Varanasi edition 2011)

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Whereas Raktavritta vata is a process of pathogenesis where in Rakthavriddhi impedes the gati of vata. Various Ayurvedic scholars have interpreted different words for Hypertension as RakthagataVata, Siragatavata, Avritavata, Dhamaniprapurana, Raktavikshepa, Vyanaprakopa, Raktamada, Uchharaktachapa, Vyana Atibala etc.¹⁰ As nowadays people following improper food habits and sedentary lifestyle with or without genetic predisposing factors vitiates all tridoshas leading to the etiopathogenesis of Hypertension. In view of Ayurvedic perspective pathogenesis of Hypertension, indulgence to vatakarak ahara vihara which aggravates the vata vitiating vata dosha exhibiting symptoms as giddiness, headache & fatigue. These conditions are: Pittavritavata, Vyanavrita Prana, Pittavrita Prana, Pittavrita Vyana, Pittavrita Samana and Pittavrita Udana other conditions where these symptoms are seen together are Amashayagata Vata [Sushruta Samhita, Nidana Sthana, 1/32–39]. Rakta Dushti & Pradoshaja Vikara [Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana, 24/5–10] and Pittaja Hridroga [Charaka Samhita,

Sutra Sthana; 17/32]. Vyana Vata is said to be responsible for Sweda (sweat) and Asruk Sravana (ejection of blood) and if it gets vitiated it produce diseases which will affect the entire body [Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana, 24/11–16]. This can be correlated to hypertension as excessive perspiration is a symptom of hypertension.

Measurement of Blood Pressure

Measurement of blood pressure is done by 2 numbers i.e
Systolic pressure & Diastolic pressure.

Systolic pressure

Systolic pressure is the pressure in the blood vessels when the heart contracts for pumping blood to the body.

Diastolic pressure

Diastolic pressure is the pressure in the blood vessels when the heart is relaxing refilling with blood for pumping it in the body.

Normal Blood Pressure

Normal blood pressure is less than 130/85mm of Hg. High normal is 130-139/85-89, anything above these numbers is considered as hypertension & puts the patient at risk. Complications of a patient are determined to have hypertension, regardless of whether it is mild or severe;

it needs the attention of a physician to determine the best method management.

According to Ayurveda, Hypertension is caused by the vitiation of all the three doshas vata, pitta, kapha but mainly 2 doshas are involved so treatment of hypertension main involves balancing of these doshas.

Causes

According to American Heart association in about 90% to 95% cases of high blood pressure there is no identifiable cause .This type of high blood pressure is called Essential hypertension /Primary hypertension which tends to develop gradually over many years. The remaining 5-10% of cases high blood pressure is caused by underlying cause called as Secondary hypertension tends to appear suddenly and causes higher blood pressure than Primary hypertension.

RISK FACTORS

High Blood Pressure Has Many Risk Factors

Age-The risk of high blood pressure increases as the age increases, high blood pressure is more common in men. Women are more likely to develop high blood pressure after menopause.

Race-High blood pressure is common among blacks, often developing at an early age than it does in whites.

Family History–High Blood Pressure Tends To Run In Families

Dhamle Madhumati. Department of Basic Principles, Institute of Post Graduate Teaching and Research in Ayurveda; 2001. Post Graduate Thesis on – The study of Yojana- Chatushka of Charaka and Yojana for the management of Raktashrita Vyadhi (hypertension) [Google Scholar].

CONCEPT OF AVARANA IN THE PATHOGENESIS OF HYPERTENSION

As blood circulation is mainly the function of Vata (Vyana vata) { Patwardhan K. The history of the discovery of blood circulation: unrecognized contributions of Ayurveda masters. *Adv Physiol Educ.* 2012;36:77–82. [PubMed] [Google Scholar]}6, its impairment is certain in Hypertension It may be impaired by its own Prakopa (aggravation) due to Vataja Nidanas (etiological factors for Vata) or may get vitiated by the influence of other Doshas and Dhathus. This is where the concept to occlusion of normal functioning of Vata plays a major role in the pathogenesis of hypertension. The normal course of Vata can be occluded by Pitta,

Kapha, Rakta and or Medas [Charaka Samhita, Chikitsa Sthana; 28/61–69]. These Anya-Dosha Avarana pathologies can be considered under the hypertension due to increased hormonal and enzymal action7

[Decreased sodium excretion [Ha S.K. Dietary salt intake and hypertension. *Electrolytes Blood Press.* 2014;12(1):7–18. [PMC free article] [PubMed] [Google Scholar]

[Change in the chemical constituents in the blood and atherosclerotic changes in the arteries due to lipid deposition [. Cecelja M., Chowienczyk P. Role of arterial stiffness in cardiovascular disease. *JRSM Cardiovasc Dis.* 2012;1(4) cvd.2012.012016. [PMC free article] [PubMed] [Google Scholar]

[Another type of occlusive pathology happens when there is Anyonya Avarana of Vata (mutual occlusion between subtypes of Vata). The subtypes of Vata such as Prana and Vyana Vata obstruct each other and cause the disease [Charaka Samhita, Chikitsa Sthana, 28/200–215]. This condition can be considered as hypertension due to hampered autonomic nervous system as it plays an important role in the regulation of blood pressure9

[Charaka and Sushruta have enumerated and explained many different types of mutual occlusions of Dosha and occlusion of one Dosha by other Dosha or Dhatu and in many of these conditions; symptoms of hypertension such as giddiness, headache, and fatigue have been mentioned. These conditions are: Pittavritavata, Vyanaavrita Prana, Pittavrita Prana, Pittavrita Vyana, Pittavrita Samana and Pittavrita Udana [Charaka Samhita, Chikitsa Sthana, 28/221–230]. Other conditions where these symptoms are seen together are Amashayagata Vata [Sushruta Samhita, Nidana Sthana, 1/32–39]. Rakta Dushti & Pradoshaja Vikara [Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana, 24/5–10] and Pittaja Hridroga [Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana; 17/32]. Vyana Vata is said to be responsible for Sweda (sweat) and Asruk Sravana (ejection of blood) and if it gets vitiated it produce diseases which will affect the entire body [Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana, 24/11–16]. This can be correlated to hypertension as excessive perspiration is a symptom of hypertension.

DISCUSSION

Hypertension is the disease which has been manifested in the young age to old age peoples, but mainly in old age group. Every year more than 16 lakhs people loss their life due to this disease. Current life

style along with modernization and disturbed life cycle has attributed a lot. In Ayurveda direct reference of hypertension is not mentioned. But the clinical manifestation of this disease can be correlated to the symptoms of various conditions as explained in raktagata vata, raktavrita vata, pranavrita vyana, vyanaavrita prana and poorva roopa of rakta pitta. Hypertension in Ayurveda can be understood in terms of dosa, dushya and srotas etc. But there is no standardize theory we get in Ayurveda . Many controversies are there related to this disease. Hence it is compulsory to understand the hypertension in terms of ayurvedic principle.

CONCLUSION

Estimating the danger posed by constant hypertension overtime on vital organs like brain, heart & kidney it has become a must now to protect the arteries by leading a healthy and active life within the premises drawn by Dinacharya & Ritucharya in Ayurveda. Yoga and Vyayam has become a part of our day to day life in elites class mass. As per Ayurveda this condition can be understood by the assessment of involved dosa, dushya and srotas. The different termed are coined by Ayurvedic Acharya's to understand hypertension asraktagata vata, siragata vata, aavrita

vata, dhamni paripoorna , rakta vikshepa , rakta mada, vyana atibala etc.

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