

## A study on herbal treatment of hypertension

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### SUMMARY

Hypertension is the common major problem encircling the each community of the society. It is one of the leading causes of disability or death, due to stroke, heart attacks, and kidney failure. Hypertension is associated with numerous causes relating to life style as well as environmental factors. Modern therapies of treatment are beneficial up to a limit but with a number of limitations and side effects. The natural herbs may play a functional role in preventing and curing the life threatening problem, hypertension. The present study emphasizes on the applicability of natural herbs in hypertension.

**Key words :** Essential and secondary hypertension, Antihypertensive agents, Botanicals.

**H**ypertension is one of the leading causes of disability, morbidity and mortality among the population; it is the most common chronic illness the world faces (Akinkigbe, 2001; Schutte *et al.*, 2003). The risk of hypertension increases with age in both man and women (Whelton and Klag, 1989). Hypertension means abnormally high blood pressure. There are two types of high blood pressure: essential (primary) hypertension and secondary hypertension. Essential hypertension does not have a readily identifiable cause, and is the most common type of hypertension, accounting for 90 per cent of all cases of high blood pressure. Genetics play a role in essential hypertension. In case of secondary hypertension, the cause can be identified and is usually treatable or reversible. It accounts for 5% of all cases of high blood pressure. The secondary hypertension may caused by a specific abnormality in one of the organs or systems of the body such as renal hypertension, adrenal gland tumors and contraction of the aorta.

It is usually labeled if in younger age group the systolic and diastolic blood pressure raises above 140 mm Hg and 90 mmHg at rest, respectively. Blood pressure is the force of blood against the walls of arteries. High blood pressure is dangerous because it makes the heart work harder to pump blood to the body and it contributes to hardening of the arteries or atherosclerosis. High blood pressure increases the chance of getting heart disease and kidney disease, and for having a stroke. Hypertension is, therefore, often called as “silent killer”.

Hypertension is a common disorder that if not

effectively treated may results in greatly increased probability of coronary thrombosis, strokes and renal failure.

### Causes of hypertension:

Blood pressure is determined by the amount of blood pumped by the heart, and the size and condition of the arteries. Many other factors can affect blood pressure, including volume of water in the body, salt content of the body, conditions of the kidneys, nervous system/blood vessels and level of various hormones in the body.

The two main categories of high blood pressure may be resulted-

- Essential hypertension may be caused by genetics, environmental factors or even diet, such as how much salt is used.

- Secondary hypertension is high blood pressure caused by another disorders *viz.*, Adrenal gland tumor, Cushing’s syndrome, Anxiety, Obesity and alcohol, Licorice candies, Smokeless tobacco (oral snuff or chewing tobacco), Kidney disorders such as glomerulonephritis, renal vascular, obstruction or narrowing, renal failure, use of medications, drugs or other chemicals, oral contraceptives, hemolytic uremic syndrome, periarteritis nodosa, radiation enteritis, retroperitoneal fibrosis, Wilma’s tumor.

### Symptoms of hypertension:

Usually, no symptoms are present in the patient. Occasionally, one may experience a mild to moderate headache. These may be a sign of dangerously high blood pressures (called malignant hypertension) or a complication from a high blood pressure. The symptoms associated with hypertension are tiredness, fatigue, confusion, nausea, visual disturbance, angina like chest pain, heart failure, blood in urine, nose bleeding, irregular heartbeat, and tinnitus (a ringing or buzzing in the ears).

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