

HYPERTENSION ‘THE SILENT KILLER’

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Abstract

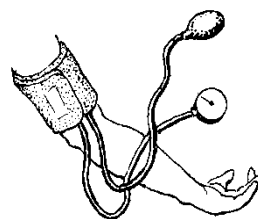
Pressure of the blood is explained in different ways by different medical systems and depending on the understanding of the Physicians. It is one of the oldest disorders known and affects more than half the world's population. It is generally termed as the disorder of the rich as it is aggravated by rich unhealthy diet and lack of physical activity associated with rich peoples' lifestyle.

When blood flows through arteries it pushes against the inside walls of the artery. The more pressure the blood exerts on the artery walls, the higher the blood pressure. The size of small arteries also affects the blood pressure. When the muscular walls of arteries are relaxed, or dilated, the pressure of the blood flowing through them is lower than when the artery walls narrow, or constricts.

Hypertension is a major health problem, especially because it has no symptoms. It is sometimes referred to as the silent killer. Many people have hypertension without knowing it. Hypertension is more common in men than women and in people over the age of 65 than in younger persons. Hypertension is serious as it increases the risk of heart disease and other medical problems than people with normal blood pressure. If left untreated, hypertension can lead to Arteriosclerosis, [heart attack](#), [stroke](#), enlarged heart and renal failure.

Background

In traditional medicine Hypertension is defined as an abnormality caused due to an imbalance in Blood and Wind (*Khya byed lung*). It is described that the two organs that the blood pressure affects are the heart (as the center of veins) and the brain (as the center of nerves). The Traditional Medicine theory assumes that all the breathing creatures, whether physically healthy or not is basically sick i.e. disease might not manifest, but it is present in the quiescent form, any commotion in any of *three Humors, three excretions or seven physical constituents* alters the functions of the normal body, leading to different forms of disease states.



Blood Pressure (BP) is caused by veins and nerve system that affect the movement of the blood and the wind (one of the three Humors that promote diseases). The Pervasive wind or *Khya byed rLung* originates in the heart and it flows through the entire body, pervading every parts. It

controls all the motions, extension, contraction and other activities like opening and closing of the sense organs.

The pressure exerted on the wall of arteries simultaneously affects the vein and the nerve center. The dilated cardiovascular system circulates more blood towards the brain and the brain being unable to mobilize the blood back causes some BP patients to faint.

In Traditional Medicine System we distinguish BP as two types:

- 1) Blood domination: This is caused when there is over burden on the Mind, the Body and the Soul, suppressing the hot for long periods, taking alcoholic beverages and doing heavy works.
- 2) Wind domination: This is mainly caused by insomnia, empty stomach, suppressing the cold for long periods, shouting and anxiety.

Hypertension is the high blood pressure. It is the force of the blood pushing against the walls of arteries as it flows through them. Arteries are the blood vessels that carry oxygenated blood from the heart to the body's tissues.

Signs and Symptoms

Most people with hypertension do not show any particular sign or symptom. This is because high blood pressure does not cause problems over a day or weeks or even months. It usually takes several years for the condition to cause noticeable symptoms, and even when it does cause problems, the symptoms are often mild and nonspecific. For this reason, high blood pressure is often referred to as "the silent killer." People with the condition typically don't even realize that they have it until they have blood pressure readings that are too high.

The early signs of Hypertension are dizziness and headache followed by hot sensation, breathlessness, chest pain, weakness, thirst, excessive perspiration, loss of appetite, whole body ache, trembling, blurred vision, nausea, depression and insomnia. The other signs are heavy and fast pulse with reddish yellow and light bluish urine.

In addition symptoms include bleeding from the nose, fatigue or confusion, irregular heartbeat, blood in the urine, pounding in your chest, neck, or ears etc

Diet

Check your BP every week. If the pressure is high, whatever may be the cause, follow the rule of DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) that includes: whole grain, poultry, fish and nuts. Reduce intake of fats, butter and any form of salt, red meat, sweets, and stay away from pungent items like acidic fruits, yogurt, vinegar, chillies, and hot spices. Avoid greasy foods like ghee, all nuts or food prepared by any one of them, hot coffee, tea, roasted meat and fish. All alcoholic beverages must be strictly prohibited.

Behavior

The urges of the faeces, urine and gas must not be withheld and one must maintain calm with the help of medications. The person must sleep well in a well ventilated room. Taking complete rest in a place with peaceful surroundings will help and always try to be in a cool place and avoid the heat. Morning walk in the cool atmosphere is excellent for someone with high blood pressure.

Medicine

In general, the treatment of Hypertension is based on drugs that restore the balance of nervous and vein system. The medicines help restore the good and regular blood circulation and better movement of the Wind. These medicines do not aggravate other Humors.

Agar 15 and 35, Kobyi 7 and 13, Khrag sman 11, are some of the examples of drugs used for the treatment of Hypertension.



Therapeutic Treatment

The most effective treatments for people suffering from wind domination are application of *Serkhap* and *Num-tshug* on the crown, anterior and posterior fontanelle, temple, Atlas, on sixth and seventh vertebra and on the body of the sternum (Point where 4th rib joins sternum). Bloodletting from the Bregma is another treatment procedure effective in treating blood domination.

Risk factors:

1. **Age and Sex:** The risk of developing BP increases as you age. Most cases of high blood pressure are diagnosed in men until the age of 45. From age 45 to 54, both genders are equally at risk of getting high blood pressure. After the age of 54, women are more likely to have high blood pressure than men.
2. **Family History:** People with relatives who have high blood pressure are more likely to develop high blood pressure.

3. **Diet:** People who regularly eat foods that are high in salt are more susceptible to high blood pressure.
4. **Obesity:** Overweight people are at higher risk of suffering from high blood pressure and many other illnesses.
5. **Stress:** People with heightened anxiety, intense anger, and suppressed expression of anger are more at risk of developing high blood pressure.

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