

An Overview on Viscum Album - An Antihypertensive Remedy.

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Abstract

Hypertension known as raised blood pressure is a condition in which the blood vessels have persistently raised pressure. It is serious medical condition and can increase risk of heart, brain, kidney and other diseases. This is a major cause of pre-mature death world-wide, with upwards of one in four men and one in five women over a billion people. Here usefulness of Viscum Album as an anti-hypertensive drug, was explained through its history and authority, doctrine, sphere of action and symptomatology.

Keywords: Hypertension, Homoeopathy, Specific remedy, Viscum Album.



Figure 1

Abbreviation: - HTN, BP, JNC7, H.P.I

Introduction

Homoeopathy is a perfectly simple system of medicine, remaining always fixed in its principles. Hypertension is a major public health problem due to its high prevalence all around the globe. Raised blood pressure is a major risk factor for chronic heart disease, stroke and coronary heart disease. Other than coronary heart disease and stroke, its complication includes heart failure, peripheral vascular disease, renal impairment, retinal haemorrhage and visual impairment.

Hypertension is defined as abnormally high arterial blood pressure. According to the Joint National Committee 7 (JNC7), normal blood pressure is a systolic BP < 120 mmHg and diastolic BP <80 mm Hg. Hypertension is defined as systolic BP level of 140 mm Hg and or diastolic BP level > 90 mm Hg. The grey area falling between 120-139 mm Hg systolic BP and 80-90 mm Hg diastolic BP is defined as “Pre hypertension”.

It is a silent killer as very rarely any symptom can be seen in its early stages until a severe medical crisis takes place like heart attack, stroke, or chronic kidney disease. Since people are unaware of excessive blood pressure, it is only through measurements of detection can be done. Although majority patients with hypertension remain asymptomatic, some people with hypertension reports

headaches, light-headedness, vertigo, altered vision, or fainting episode.

Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia of India (HPI): -

Botanical name: Viscum Album

Kingdom: Plantae.

Phylum: Spermatophyta

Class: Dicotyledonae

Order: Santalales



Figure 2

Family: Santalaceae

Genus: Viscum

Species: Viscum. Album

Origin: Native to Europe and Northern Asia and found growing as a parasite on host trees such as oak and apple.

Part used: Tincture of ripe berries, bruised leaves, whole plant.

Common name: Mistletoe.

Prover: Proll, Stager, Schier and black.

Description: It is a hemi-parasitic shrub, which grows on

the stems of other trees. It has stems 30-100 cms long with dichotomous branching. The leaves are in opposite pairs, strap shaped, entire leathery textured, 2-8 centimetres broad and are a yellowish green in colour. This species is dioecious and insect-pollinated flowers are inconspicuous, yellowish green, 2-3 millimetres in diameter. The fruit is a white or yellow berry containing one seed embedded in the very sticky glutinous fruit pulp.

It is commonly found in the crowns of broad-leaved trees.

History and authority: Homoeopathic preparation does offer antihypertensive options of which Viscum album has been used for over 2 centuries. Revered in Nordic and Druidic legend, this plant has been used in herbal medicine and is currently being researched as a treatment for cancer.

Doctrine of Signature: The main constituents of Viscum album are lectins, a mixture of high-molecular-weight polypeptides (mistletoe lectins I, II, III). The amount of mistletoe lectins in the range of 340 to 1000 mcg/ g dried plant material and viscotoxins (0.05% to 0.1%), a mixture of low molecular weight polypeptides. Further constituents of Viscum album are polysaccharides, cyclitols and flavonoids, phenyl propane derivatives, triterpenoids like amyirin, betulinic acid and oleanolic acid, phytosterols (approximately 0.2%), amino acids, alkaloids, cyclic peptides and amines like histamine and acetyl-choline, and proteins (9.3%) are constituents.

The crude mistletoe extract prevents changes in erythrocytes, packed cell volume of erythrocytes, plasma protein levels, and erythrocyte sedimentation rate, which indicates that the extract prevent changes in blood viscosity- a major determinant of arterial blood pressure. Moreover, an animal trial of Viscum album aqueous extract on albino Wistar rats has shown antihypertensive

effect without any change in heart rate.

Sphere of action: Lowered blood pressure. Dilated blood vessels but does not act on the centres in the medulla.

Pulse is slow due to central irritation of the vagus.

Preparation: The fresh, leafy shoots and berries are harvested in fall, chopped finely and macerated in alcohol.

Symptomatology: Table 1

System	According to Dr. S.R Pathak	According to Dr. William Boericke	According to Dr. J. H Clarke
Mind and head	Fear of telephone. Vertigo; persistent, after epileptic attack. Sudden throbbing in vertex.	Feeling as if whole vault of skull were lifted up. Blue rings around the eyes. Double vision	Incoherent talk and spectral illusions; inclined to be violent. Insensibility. Felt in bad temper when pain in chest was on. Great depression. Giddiness. Intense throbbing headache. Numb feeling in head. Tightening sensation of the brain once or twice. Twinges of pain in left supraorbital region and right thigh.
Heart	Palpitation, during coitus, in males. Hypertrophy. Low tension.	Hypertrophy with valvular insufficiency: pulse small and weak; unable to rest in a reclining position. Palpitation during coitus. Low tension. Failing compensation, dyspnoea worse lying on left. Weight and oppression of heart; as if a hand were squeezing it; tickling sensation about heart.	Just when going off to sleep heart gave two severe thumps, then went off beating at a great rate. Heart gave a throb and then a pause. Palpitation during coitus. Pulse small, quick and very irregular. Pulse slow, full and bounding.

Reportorial approach

1. Concise Repertory of Homoeopathic Medicines- S.R. Pathak.

Blood pressure High: Visc.

2. Homoeopathic Medical Repertory- Robin Murphy

Chapters- Blood, Diseases,

Hypertension, high blood pressure: visc.

Relationship: Compare: Secale: Convallar; Bry; Puls; Rhodod. Guipsine - active principle- (exalts the hypotensive properties of Viscum). Hedera Helix-Ivy- (Intracranial pressure).

Dose: Tincture and lower potencies.

Conclusion

Viscum album can be considered as a good choice to regulate blood pressure as well as to lower serum triglyceride levels. Some more studies should be

conducted on the rare remedies and its effectiveness so that we get a wide range of homoeopathic medicines to treat the patient.

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