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Yoga practice and vascular health in elderly with hypertension

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Aging is one of the most important and powerful risk factors for the development of cardiovascular (CV) disease. Age-associated decline in vascular function and its integrity is the major event that most often impacts on the health of elderly people and longevity. The major structural and functional changes associated with vascular aging are arterial stiffness and endothelial dysfunction, which are mainly implicated in the development of hypertension and CV disease in elderly individuals. Stiffening of elastic artery with age causes decline or failure in expansion of aorta during ventricular systole leading to elevation in systolic blood pressure (SBP) (isolated systolic hypertension) and failure in recoiling of aorta during diastole causes fall in the diastolic blood pressure (DBP) thus resulting in widening of pulse pressure. Moreover, arterial stiffness is an independent and strong predictor of cardiovascular morbidity and mortality in hypertensive patients, and also in well-functioning older adults as well. Other major factors that contribute to hypertension through vascular dysfunction in aging are oxidative stress, inflammation and sympathetic over-activity. Patients with hypertension and CV disease are often resistant to pharmacological treatment and are associated with multiple co-morbidities. They require multiple drug therapy leading to increase in the cost of treatment. Therefore, an alternative holistic approach that controls/reduces the aging effect on vasculature with least adverse effects and cost of therapy is the need of the hour. We endeavored to study the effect of yoga on cardiovascular health of older individuals with mild hypertension. We have reported that yoga can reduce blood pressure and arterial stiffness. It improves endothelial function, reduce sympathetic activity and induce beneficial modulation in sympathovagal balance. Yoga can also reduce age-associated oxidative stress and enhance antioxidant capacity. Further, a beneficial change in cardiac function with yoga practice has also been observed.

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Efficacy of two ayurvedic dosage forms of guduchi (*Tinospora cordifolia* wild. Miers) on type-2 diabetes

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All diseases with manifestation of polyuria are described under 'prameha' in ayurveda, ultimately fates into madhumeha, which is a subtype of prameha and correlated with type 2 diabetes. Anti-diabetic potential of two highly potent dosage forms of Guduchi (*Tinospora cordifolia* Wild. Miers) viz. Satva (sedimented starchy aqueous extract) and Ghana (solidified aqueous extract) are highly appreciated and applied by ayurvedic fraternity. Recent experimental studies validate and establish these ayurvedic claims, however, till date no report is available on their clinical evaluation. Present study is aimed to evaluate the therapeutic potential of Guduchi Satva (GS) and Guduchi Ghana (GG) in Madhumeha (type-2 diabetes). A randomized clinical trial was conducted on 100 known patients of Madhumeha of both genders. The patients were randomly allocated into two groups, viz. GS (group A) and GG (group B). Both drugs were administered orally, 500 mg twice daily, with lukewarm water, half hour before meal for four weeks. The efficacy of therapy was assessed based on relief in cardinal signs and symptoms and blood sugar, lipid profile and other routine biochemical, hematological and urine examinations. The data was analyzed statistically by applying paired and unpaired 't' tests. Both the dosage forms exerted statistically proven significance in reduction of blood sugars along with relief in signs and symptoms of Madhumeha. Present study validates the Ayurvedic therapeutic claims of efficacy of both dosage forms of Guduchi i.e., GS and GG, where GG is found to be comparatively more efficacious (in view of glycemic control and relief in signs and symptoms) and establishes their use as safe anti-diabetic agent. No any adverse drug reactions were observed during the course of study.

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