

Effect of Universal Healing Program on Coronary Heart Patients with Special Reference to Yogic Practices

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Abstract

To find out the effectiveness of Universal healing program on coronary heart disease a experiment was conducted on a total of 104 (81 male and 23 female) Coronary artery disease patients of Ahmedabad, Baroda, and Rajkot and Mumbai city selected from different private hospitals through newspaper advertisement. Patients were given healing program including selected yogic practices like some slow stretching exercise, breathing exercise, shavasana and meditation designed by an eminent cardiologist Dr. Ramesh Kapadia. They performed universal Healing Program, twice in a week regularly for three months. Blood pressure and total blood cholesterol levels were examined before and after healing program. Results show that the healing program is effective in controlling high blood pressure and in reducing total blood cholesterol level. The level of HDL in blood and the left ventricle ejection fraction (LVEF) is improved. Although this training program is effective in controlling blood pressure but the effect is more on systolic blood pressure than diastolic blood pressure.

Key words- Universal healing program, blood pressure, blood cholesterol, coronary heart disease

Introduction

Modern age, no doubt is significant for fragmentation of human personality at several levels. As a result man is faced with tremendous rise of inner and outer forces, making him perplexed, anxious, agitated, angry and worried due to non-fulfillment of his desire and expectations. Naturally this results in mental and emotional imbalance and immaturity, causing disharmony in his life and making him susceptible to various psychosomatic, mental and nervous ailments of functional and chronic type. In this new mechanized and competitive era, man is passing through a very busy life and has got little time for physical and mental relaxation. The mental worries in association with sedentary habits have contributed to a lowering of vitality and causation of many diseases including Coronary artery disease (CAD). The general

causes of coronary artery disease are heredity, high blood pressure, diabetes, high serum cholesterol, smoking and sedentary life style. The way of living and the way of feeling are important factors in its rising incidence. Hostility, lack of social support, job and family stress are the major causes of heart attack amongst the young. The key issue in the rising incidence of coronary artery disease is imbalance in the autonomic nervous system; the sympathetic tone is much higher than parasympathetic tone. The imbalance occurs due to job stress, family stress, financial stress, lack of social support and the loss of control of situation resulting in isolation. Smoking, alcoholism and obesity are offshoots of the sense of isolation. Cynicism, hostility, and self-centeredness are also the sign of isolation. Increase in insulin resistance, vascular spasm increase in platelet stickiness, atherosclerosis and plaque rupture resulting in unstable angina is all the result of the increased sympathetic tone in stressful situation. Furthermore autonomic imbalance affects the ejection fraction of the left ventricle. Coronary artery disease is the silent killer of mankind. It is common asymptomatic, readily detectable, usually treatable and if uncured then often leads to lethal complication. Thus now a days it has become a life threatening disease. Rs. 10,000 crores per year being spent for CAD treatment, yet CAD incidence death rate rising by 6 to 8 fold. Every hour approx 90 Indians are dying due to heart disease. By 2020 33% of Indians population will be dying of cardiovascular disease. Everyday 2500 new cases of heart disease are detected in India. Approximately 135 million Indians are at present suffering from heart disease. The incidence is still rising in spite of advancement in modern medicine and large number of expensive Bypass/Angioplasty procedures. According to WHO expert Committee estimates, by the year 2025, India will have the highest number of heart disease, diabetes and high BP in the world.

Enormous amount of work has already been done in recent years in the field of coronary artery



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disease, especially with regards to its etiology, pathology and management, still the incidence of this diseases increasing through the civilized world and still no preventive measures could be under taken. The present medical approach is to dilate the Coronary arteries, increases the blood flow through them and diminish the need of oxygenated blood by the heart muscles. The surgical approach is to bypass the narrowed arteries or dilate them by inflating a balloon in the narrowed artery. These are palliative measures and do not address the root cause of the problem. Bypass / Angioplasty are not solution to rising CAD incidence and deaths. Heart attacks and death can occur even after bypass / angioplasty.

Arteriosclerosis is a diffuse disease and relentlessly progresses if the risk factor is not controlled. It is proved that the most heart patients, in their coronary arteries, have several developing blockages scattered throughout the coronary arterial tree. They are not seen in on an angiogram and although non obstructive, these blockages have same high risk of causing heart attack by plaque rupture and formation. Tunnel visioned modern cardiology keeps on developing more complicated, risky and expansive operative techniques to open up only the sever blockages but neglects developing vulnerable plaques. Hence heart attack and deaths continue to occur and many patients come back with recurrence needing repeat operations which very few can afford. Mankind has always tried to attain health and happiness through all available means. The urgency of getting an ideal method of maintaining health and attaining mental peace has become great in view of the tremendous increase in the stress and strain of life especially in urban areas. Unfortunately coronary artery disease is the direct product of stress. No doubt, the issue of coronary artery disease is a burning issue today. So the researcher feels a need to determine the effect of yoga on high coronary artery disease patients.

Yoga deals with human personality as a whole i.e. body, mind and soul together. It has therefore great potentiality of developing them and integrating the split personality- the root cause of all mental and emotional imbalance, pains and miseries. Thus yoga is capable of eradicating stress by stilling the turbulent mind and by harnessing the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual energies.

Experimental

The subjects were 104 (81 male and 23 female) CAD patients of Ahmedabad, Baroda, and Rajkot and Mumbai city selected from different private hospitals through newspaper advertisement. The age of the patients ranged from 44 to 81 with an average of 58 years. The initial systolic blood pressure varied from 126 to 180 mm. Hg and the diastolic blood pressure from 85 to 105 mm. Hg. The average blood pressure was 160/97 mm. Hg. The average, total blood cholesterol level, LDL and HDL was 240,171 and 43 mg/dl respectively. The LVEF was 35% in average. All the patients were receiving drug therapy with satisfactory control in blood pressure and cholesterol. Drug users were under treatment for minimum 2 years and maximum 7 years.

Blood pressure test was administered to all the subjects before and after the experimental period of three months. Blood cholesterol level was recorded from the medical report before and after the experimental period. The data of 2-D echo studies was also recorded from 6 subjects. After the initial test all the subjects were introduced to Universal Healing Program, based on the unique combination of science and philosophy, and consisting some selected yogic practices like some slow stretching exercise, breathing exercise, shavasana and meditation designed by an eminent cardiologist Dr. Ramesh Kapadia. They performed universal Healing Program, twice in a week regularly for three months.

The data was analyzed using t-test. The level of significance was set at 5% level of confidence.

Results and Discussion

The key issue in the rising incidence of coronary artery disease is imbalance in the autonomic nervous system; the sympathetic tone is much higher than parasympathetic tone. The imbalance occurs mainly due to stress. By removing stress one can remove the causative factors that have led to hypertension and CAD. This is achieved by freeing the mind of chaos and turmoil so that it can think more clearly and function more efficiently. Problems that seems insoluble in a state of tension are easily solved when the body and mind is relaxed. Shavasana is an excellent yogic practice, which is based on these two aspects of human existence: relaxation and awareness. Relaxed



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awareness is the key to aware relaxation. Hypothalamus is the center for visceral function and maintains homeostasis via the autonomic nervous system. The regulatory mechanism in the hypothalamus is thus set at a higher level in stress situation. It has been shown that a low rate, low intensity, monotonous stimulation of peripheral afferent nerves brings on electroencephalographic synchronization and even sleep, by decreasing the tonic activity of the ascending reticular activating system. By doing Shavasana, the practitioner relaxes with slow diaphragmatic breathing. The frequency and intensity of both proprioceptive and enteroceptive impulses is thus reduced. While doing shavasana the person is less conscious of external environment but is alert inwardly. Shavasana influences the hypothalamus through continuous feedback of slow, rhythmic proprioceptive and enteroceptive impulses. This sets the regulatory mechanism in the hypothalamus at a lower level and thereby helps to reduce blood pressure. When a patient is trained properly with shavasana, it gradually removes not only physical stress but also mental stress from conscious, subconscious and unconscious levels of the mind. The regulatory mechanism in the hypothalamus comes back to its normal level and reduces the blood pressure. The autonomic nervous system is linked to the hypothalamus in the brain, which in turn controlled by the limbic system in the mid brain, the center concerned with emotions and feelings. The

hypothalamus feeds its information into the endocrine glands and the autonomic nervous system. Meditation directly affects the mid-brain complex, calms the hypothalamus and calms the emotions, thereby shutting off excess sympathetic stimulation and hypertension.

Meditation activates the parasympathetic nervous system, which makes secretion of hormones like adrenaline, noradrenaline and corticosteroid normal. As a result, the heart rate, blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol become normal. Blood becomes thin and the arteries dilate. The formation of the lactic acid is also reduced which results in reduction of the aging process. Endorphins and neuropeptides are secreted from the brain. This brings peace and joy. The regular practice of meditation is effective in reducing blood pressure, both systolic and diastolic, total blood cholesterol level and LDL (Figure 1 and 2). Slow stretching exercise, both static and dynamic, which is designed to relax and strengthen the body and mind. Practice of these gives relaxation, mobilize pranic energy and help one to gain more out of meditation. Exercise, when practiced with mental concentration and breath awareness, they will allow one to achieve a state of integration or homeostasis, which indicates that the mechanism ensuring equilibrium of body and mind functions faultlessly. Practice of abdominal breathing, relaxes the mind and decreases sympathetic arousal. The oxygen level of the blood increases and the efficiency of oxygen

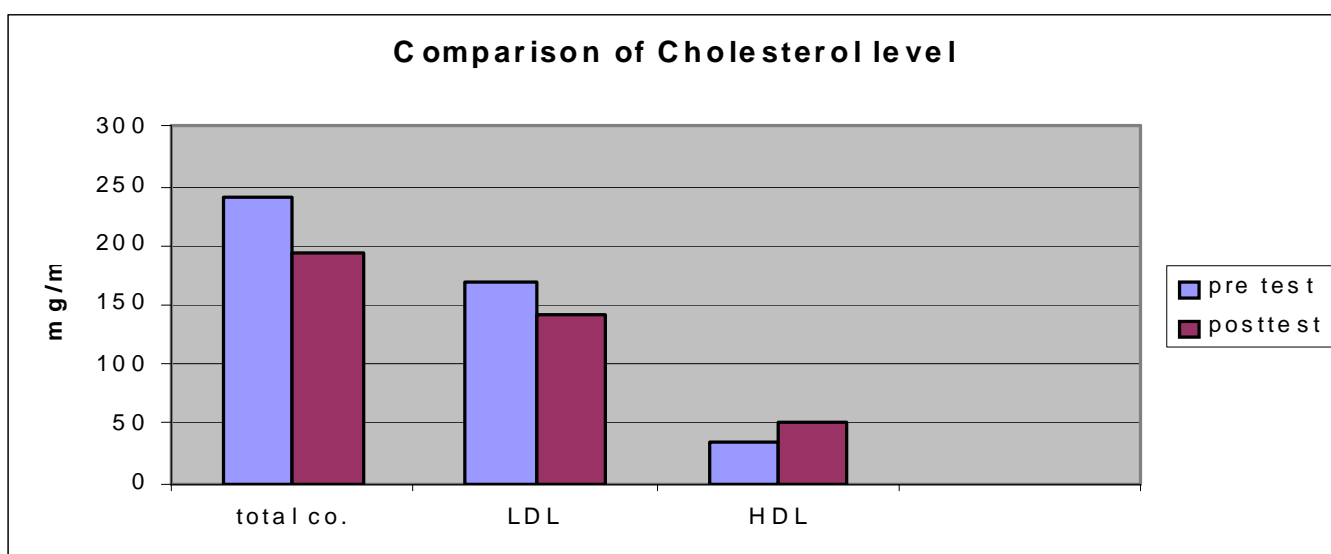


Figure 1 Effect of meditation on cholesterol levels, LDL and HDL

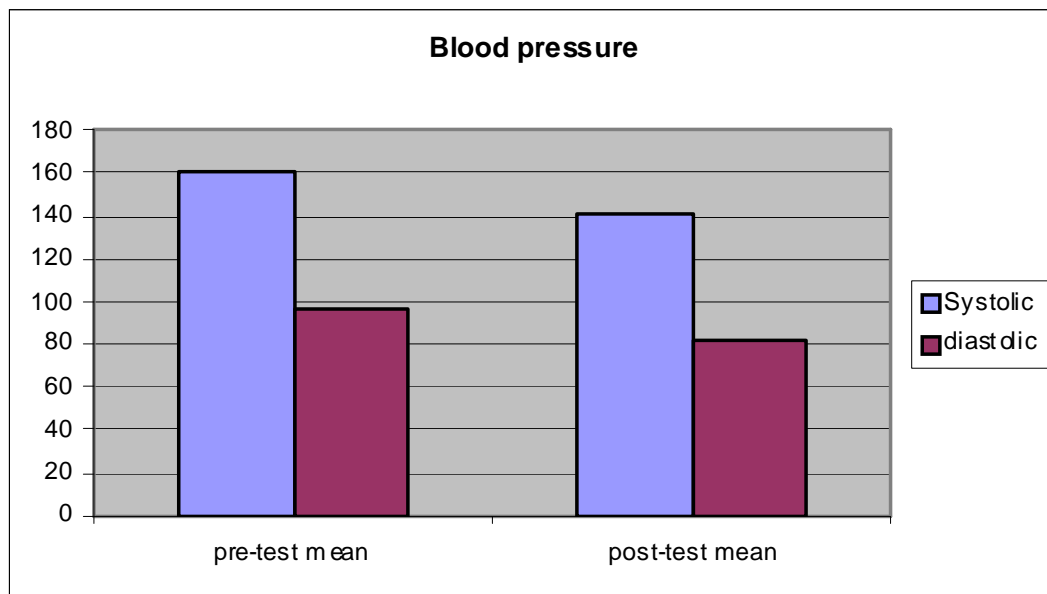


Figure 2 Effect of meditation on blood pressure

utilization by the tissue is maximized leading to deeper relaxation and more energy which in turn strengthening the nervous system and ultimately leading to better overall health. Through abdominal breathing one can influence the basic cellular metabolism.

The statistical analysis of data revealed that all the subjects showed significant difference between pretest and posttest value in systolic blood pressure ($t = 7.835$) and in diastolic blood pressure, ($t = 11.896$). The t -values of 8.720 revealed that the difference in mean cholesterol level was significant. In respect of the HDL cholesterol in blood, t -values of 9.047 were also significant. The statistical analysis of data also revealed that the t -value of 7.620 between pre-test and post-test value in the left ventricle ejection fraction (LVEF) amongst 6 subjects was significant.

Conclusions

Within the limitation of the present study, the following conclusion may be drawn:

1. The Universal Healing Program, i.e. the combination of some slow stretching exercise, breathing exercise, shavasana and meditation are effective in controlling high blood pressure and in reducing total blood cholesterol level.
2. The Universal Healing Program is proved to be very effective in improving the level of HDL in blood and the left ventricle ejection fraction (LVEF). The level of blood is a very important

factor in CAD because it's thought that HDL picks up the cholesterol and brings it back to the liver for reprocessing or excretion. HDL also removes excess cholesterol from fat-sated cells, possibly even those in artery walls. High level of HDL are associated with a decreased risk of heart attack and till now no drugs are there to improve the level of HDL but the UPH program is proved to be very effective in improving the HDL level in blood which is very encouraging.

3. This training program is effective in controlling blood pressure but the effect is more on systolic blood pressure than diastolic blood pressure.
4. Apart from the physical benefits of reduction in the frequency of angina and the increased capacity to work, a very encouraging spiritual gain was observed in increased confidence and wholesome attitude towards life circumstances. Surprisingly, the fear of death almost vanished in a large number of them.
5. Most of the subjects showed subjective improvement. Symptoms like headache, nervousness, giddiness, irritability and insomnia disappeared in most subjects and became less severe in the others.
6. The doses of drugs are reduced in 36% subjects.