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Case Report

Chronic high BP - My case study and solution

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ABSTRACT

This is the record of my journey with High BP, a brain stroke survivor and hopefully my story will help researchers of the field to advance the understanding of the field and help patients struggling with similar problems. This in no means is a research study as a modern research project requires multiple cases, with control groups, proper methodology while for this the only subject is me and my limited knowledge. More importantly I don't consider myself to be learned on the subject to recommending anyone about it. At best this provides the hypothesis which someone can test and either prove or disproves it. However, in my limited knowledge this seem to make sense and it corroborates with my understanding of human body and physics. Also, the language of this paper might feel very basic or non-technical, but as I am an MBA marketing with computer science engineer by education with biology only till 12th standard. This is the best I could come up with to make it easy to communicate.

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1. Introduction

I had brain stroke on night of 6th of December, 2017. I was in hospital for 20 days and afterword's I came home and had the recovery process for months. Initially complete right part of my body was paralyzed and I had to undergo intense physiotherapy to recover. Luckily there was no permanent impact, and with the help of excellent physiotherapy first at home and when I was able to walk it continued in the centre, I regained control of my body parts. Hand functions were not as it used to be but that I understand takes the longest time.

Coming back to the topic on hand High BP, is a very serious condition, and I have experienced the seriousness of it from unlikely close quarters. I was suffering from High BP from long time but as I believed that as I was not under any kind of long-term stress (or so I believed) I did not take it very seriously. I used to visit a reputed cardiologist from

a reputable hospital regularly and used to take prescribed medications and that was it. I had the hope that medication will do its work and solve whatever was wrong with me. It so happened that I used to frequent the hospital for one issue or the other and I was forced to take High BP seriously. Then it happened, I had a brain stroke - till this moment it happened to be the biggest incident in my whole life. Here I have written down my take which I hope will give someone some lessons of what not to do and some lessons that must be done to live life at your own terms. Only request is to read it completely and also try to understand the side effects that I had to face because of my experiments with myself.

2. High BP

First and foremost, do not take high BP lightly and get down to find out the root cause for high BP in the body, high BP is not the disease but is a symptom. let me tell you that high BP could be due to multiple underlying causes the most important thing to proceed is knowing yourself properly and

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being true to yourself.

High BP – when you experience the blood pressure higher than normal (commonly 120 / 80). So, for simplicity, let's assume that our blood vessels are like a single loop with heart controlling the blood pressure, of the system. There is heart which pushes and pulls the blood in two types of nerve system called veins and arteries. The nerves which carry the pure blood and nutrients from heart to the various organs of the body are called arteries and nerves which carries the impure blood from the organs to heart is called veins. To move blood throughout the body, heart applies pressure which is also observed on the walls of the vessels and it is called the blood pressure. If the pressure exerted increases from normal it is called Hypertension / high BP. Now the important thing to note is that why the pressure increases. What we are looking for is the changes in blood path which is making the heart to apply more pressure and resulting in the high BP. There could be numerous reasons for the same. It could be because of blockage due to cholesterol build up or could be because of increased long-term stress which is causing the changes in blood path or it could be because of a clot formation, somewhere in the vessels which is resulting less than required area for the blood to pass through. There is another reason which increases the blood pressure which is having higher intake of salt in the diet, this we will take separately. These are the known causes of high blood pressure. In this paper we will only take the reasons which leads to chronic high BP and the sudden BP increases we will not consider.

It is important to note that these are various reasons mentioned which can create the changes in blood vessels, or which disturbs how the blood is flowing in the body, but the body is adjusting to these changes, by the heart increasing the blood pressure to ensure sufficient blood and minerals reach every part of the body. So high BP is body's response to the changes in normal path to sustain life. Also, the pressure in the complete system has to be the same, you can't have higher BP around heart and lower BP in feet in the body. In some cases, the blockage becomes so severe that the very high BP is required to pass the necessary blood volume, which is very high for some of the vessels and they burst. Normally it happens in brain as the vessels in brain has thinner membranes and the condition is called brain stroke.

For the treatment of High BP, first we need to identify the core underlying reason and then treat the reason that has been done in the body. It is important to know is, if we want to permanently treat this disease than it is of utmost important to change the habits (lifestyle) because otherwise the blockage will be only removed and it will be back in some time again. So as a permanent measure it is important to trace the root cause. Also, there could be a person who has 2 or 3 reasons for high BP simultaneously, in such a case it is important to treat all the underlying reasons to return to

normalcy.

Now before moving to individual reasons lets understand what I mean by the root cause and how to identifying the root cause. Let's take the example of Cholesterol build up, one way of understanding is High BP is because of cholesterol build up, but what leads to cholesterol build-up is mix of what one consumes and how much physically active one is. This relationship between consumption and utilization determines whether one will have cholesterol build-up or not and hence the root cause is not cholesterol but the relationship of consumption and utilization for the individual. You can't blame only cholesterol containing food in isolation. Also, what a surgery will do is remove the build-up but will still not eliminate the root cause. The root cause can only be eliminated by altering one's lifestyle.

Another thing to understand is that for the natural blood path to be altered, it is not necessary that the build-up need not be inside the blood vessel, it can be outside and pressing on the vessel, as long as it is disturbing the normal passage of blood by pressing the blood vessel and not letting sufficient blood pass it can lead to a case of high BP.

Now let's examine various root causes for high BP and impacts the human body and what changes are done to the human body and how can one reverse it.

2.1. Disturbance to blood path created due to cholesterol build-up

Due to lifestyle which is mainly combination of ingestion and physical movement, one can notice the cholesterol build up in the vessels. If this is the reason modern doctors can very easily identify this and zero down the location of build-up and also remove the blockage with medicines or surgery depending on the severity of blockage. Though the blockage can be removed but it is of very much importance to course correct the lifestyle slowly and steadily so that another build up is not developed.

I Was cleared of this reason for high BP by cardiologist doctor, post my stroke.

2.2. Disturbance to blood path created due to long term stress

In modern medicine there is no medical test to determine whether a person is having long-term stress or not. It is only selected as a default option when there seems to be no other probable cause. Also please understand that one of instance of stress or anxiety will not cause any permanent change in body to result in chronic high BP but long-term stress or sustained anxiety will affect the nervous system to make a case of chronic high BP. Dealing with long term stress is considered difficult, in such a case combination of counselling, meditation and medication is a good approach to deal with root cause which is long term stress. Counsellor can decide if there is need for medicine

or not, who can discuss the case with a psychiatrist and prescribe the tailor-made solution specific to the person. With regards to changes that long term stress does are mainly to the flexibility or nerves to the organs which are utilized in fight or flight response as that is the default response of body for any given stressful situation. One can consult a Homeopathic doctor as they have a medication to correct flexibility of nerves. The root cause is stress or anxiety which needs to be dealt with to permanently get rid of problem. Also, one thing which complicates this is that “same instance” might affect two different individuals differently, depending on individual.

This area is dicey as there is no conclusive medical procedure which can test either way, but I was following the practise of meditation and homeopathic medicine.

2.3. Disturbance to blood path created due to chronic Kabz (constipation)

In the modern medicine we don't have a diagnostic procedure which can test whether one has constipation or not and or test to tell whether it is chronic or not. It is said as if one is having regular bowel movements there is no problem of constipation to worry about. Whereas in Ayurveda it is said that complete residue of digestion needs to be eliminated from the body otherwise it is called Kabz. Chronic Kabz leads to digestive waste been stored within the body and depending on where in body this waste gets accumulated and if it presses any nerve which makes lesser space for the blood flow and causes the need for high BP. The root cause here will be having Kabz and changes is body will be accumulation of digestive waste or toxin as it is commonly called. So, one needs to remove all digestive waste and change the lifestyle to eliminate Kabz. Let's touch on this in detail as this is not the known or discussed cause of high BP.

2.4. My case details and hypothesis to be tested

Any disease should be treated in three steps,

1. Diagnosis
2. Identify the root cause
3. Treatment of root cause

I came across a YouTube video by and NGO called Satvic Movement.¹⁻³ It gave few recommendations for altering lifestyles which could cure many lifestyle diseases including high BP. I anyway did not completely agree to the diagnosis that I had high BP because of long term stress that too severe enough to cause a stroke. The video did not call it curing Kabz but rather changes in lifestyles which can cure lifestyle diseases. Since this video talked about changing habits about what to eat, how to eat and when to eat and this made a lot of sense to me as in my earlier carrier I was away from home and my eating habits were way off. I went

through the video and started making changes in my lifestyle slowly and steadily. As any sudden change in lifestyle is very hard to sustain for long term, I made slow and steady changes which I could sustain. The changes mentioned are as below.

There is recommendation of what to eat, how to eat and when to eat.

1. 16:8 hour intermittent fast.
2. Satvic Food: Plant based ingredients, Guidelines on food combinations to be eaten as per time of day, Dairy if its cruelty free on animals, many other guidelines which are covered in the video linked below and Satvic food book.
3. They have a Satvic food book on their website which contains the details of what to eat, when to eat and also explain the logic of their suggested approach as per them.

There are some basic procedures which needs to be done

1. Enema with water: Initial 21 days continuously, then once a week
2. Geeli Patti (30-40 min): Daily, even twice a day in case of diseases

Satvic Movemen Video: The video below talks about what changes to be carried out. <https://youtu.be/xO5FBjz474g>.

2.5. Diagnosis

I was following their guidelines as per what was possible for me. Over a period of time, I was able to inculcate many of their suggestion like eating vegetarian diet, not eating processed food, intermittent fasting but there were few changes that I could not get used to, like giving up dairy products. I was also not following the exact dishes recommended by the Satvic food book but I was following the principals in spirit as what I understood in the book.

Initially I was eating 3 meals in a day,

1. Breakfast (heavy 9:30 AM),
2. Lunch (light 1 PM),
3. Dinner (light 7 PM).

I was also doing Enema and Geeli patti as advised. I could observe that my BP reading were closely related to my eating time. After eating my BP reading was higher compared to before eating the food, and the dosage of medicine required also increased to manage same readings.

This forced me to dig deeper into this. I changed my eating pattern further as per the recommended window of eating, I made my full consumption into two meals.

1. Morning meal (~ 10:30 AM) – Fruit + Grain meal.

2. Evening meal (~ 5:30 PM) – Salads/ Fruits/ Shakes.

Also, in morning and evening and used to drink detox juices, Lemonade and Milk before sleeping. Please note that even I reduce the no of meals to two instead of earlier three my food intake did not change, only the time of eating changed. My morning meal became even heavier than earlier. This helped me further to reduce the medicine needed to maintain my BP.

At this point I think it's important to discuss salt intake for me, as this revelation was important for me in my journey.

2.6. BP and salt

So, I used to eat less salt as advised for a person with high BP. I had completely stopped eating salty snacks so I used to be on the lower end of permitted Na⁺, K⁺ in KFT report. During one of the years, it so happened over the winter the NA⁺ levels dipped below the permitted lower level but my BP reading was ok, so I did not pay any heed to it. As we were about to welcome summer, my BP readings were rising. I had to take medicines which I had stopped earlier. For me this was out of ordinary, because I had observed earlier that BP readings use to be higher in winters than summer. So, I took a call to increase my salt intake and observe, to my surprise my BP readings and in turn medicine required reduced.

2.7. Hypothesis to be tested 1

So, it must be understood that I found that BP and Salt have a tricky relationship it's not a linear with increasing slope as I had assumed earlier rather its parabolic, means if your salt intake goes below a certain level the BP can go up (Figure 1).

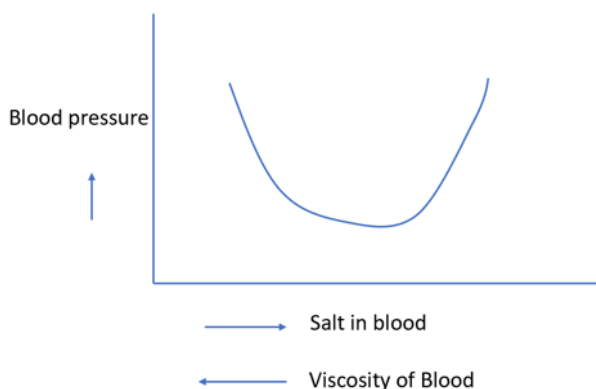


Fig. 1: Salt and blood pressure

Also, when I started to increase salt intake, my complexion also improved, the biggest noticeable difference was in soles of my feet, which earlier I assumed was tanning because of morning walks in summer.

2.8. Hypothesis to be tested 2

In the end I came to the conclusion that salt intake does not only affect the blood pressure alone but it affects total water quantity in the body and also in blood, it changes total volume and viscosity of blood which in turn impact the BP required for blood flow.

As mentioned earlier any sudden change in the habits can cause unforeseen affects in the body. So, when I started eating more salt in my diet I faced no ill effects in my daily life, but I observed during my cardio sessions in gym I used to get extra sweaty and sudden pinching pain in left side of my chest around the heart. I assumed it was because of my body was retaining more water in the body and blood volume would have also increased causing the pain but it happened for initial 4,5 sessions and it became ok after that. The sweating reduced along with no pain in my chest. After 2,3 weeks my BP reading also become similar as earlier when I was eating less salt.

2.9. Hypothesis to be tested 3

Chronic Kabz (constipation) can be the root cause of High BP.

2.10. Identify the root cause for me: kabz (constipation)

I have numerous indicative and convincing reason for me to settle on this as the main reason. Let's take all of those reason one by one.

1. If given two options of having long term stress and long-term constipation and knowing myself and my lifestyle, I will take this reason any day. I know this is not a convincing argument for others but for me it works.
2. My BP readings were closely dependent on my eating times and schedules.
3. I used to do Geeli Patti procedure, as recommended in the satvic movement video, In my observation, what the procedure was mainly doing was to make water seep through the Geeli Patti to the organs through the skin. I also had the concern that the cloth I was using for the procedure was not thick enough to store enough water, so I started taking two pieces of cloth for the procedure. Initially, My BP reading were higher than what it used to be after Geeli Patti procedure before So, I reduced the amount of time I was using for it, I was using the Geeli Patti earlier for 35-40 mins to 20-25 mins. The readings were back to my earlier readings. This demonstrated to me again my BP readings were depended on what is in my gut.
4. As a Procedure, Satvic movement also advised to take up Juice fast for removing the toxins from the body.

So, I tried it for 2 or 3 times on my own. So, I used to have detox juices in the morning, then after that I used to take 2 big glasses of vegetable juices. Post which my BP readings were higher. I tried it for 2,3 times and then stopped trying the juice fast. This again showcased that my BP readings were strongly related to what I eat.

5. When I started using the Duphalac syrup for me and more so when I started taking it before my morning walk, it became quite clear to me that constipation was the reason for me as I could observe digested waste being removed from body and the reduction in medicine required reduced drastically.
6. To test observation further I started varying my morning meal timings further and I observed that my BP readings were once again closely related to it.

2.11. Treatment of root cause

At this point, I have arrived at root cause of high BP in me is chronic Kabz and now I was learning on treating constipation also. The interesting thing is that you change your habits to remove constipation but you also need to remove the digestive waste which is already in your body. Also, we were facing oncoming winter, which eliminated Geeli Patti practise for me. In my search, I came across a generic OTC syrup medication in modern medicine which is used in treatment of constipation called Duphalac by abbot which is a lactulose syrup. It is recommended to mothers after delivery, if they had diabetes during their pregnancy. So, I started using it, but initially I got into habit of taking it post my both meals. Then it came to me that I should only use it to remove stored digestive waste in the body and depend on changes that I made in my diet and way of eating to eliminate constipation. So, then I started taking the syrup only after my morning ablutions and before going for morning walk / gym sessions and in the evenings as suggested post the last meal for me. I used to not take it on days where I was not going for morning walk or gym. Please try to understand that I am not saying this is the best approach to consuming the syrup. It is just the best approach right now between what I had tried. There is one associated side effects of consuming Duphalac syrup which I observed. It made me feel thirsty quite often and I were forced to drink more water, lemonade etc when the Satvic Movement is talked about for the first time.

Also, another key thing to note is that only changing what I eat did not made all the difference alone but how I eat also made the difference. Chewing the food completely was one big change for me and it took me repeated practise to get it into my habit of eating.

Now I have NOT stopped eating medicine completely, but the amount of medicine has reduced considerably and in due time I am hoping to get rid of the medicine overall.

The reason for writing my experience at this point is to offer my findings which can be taken up by someone and do a thorough research and come up with faster way to treat it as many people are suffering from these problems and currently it is being considered as a no cure disease.

In the end I will summarise my finding in this below diagram.

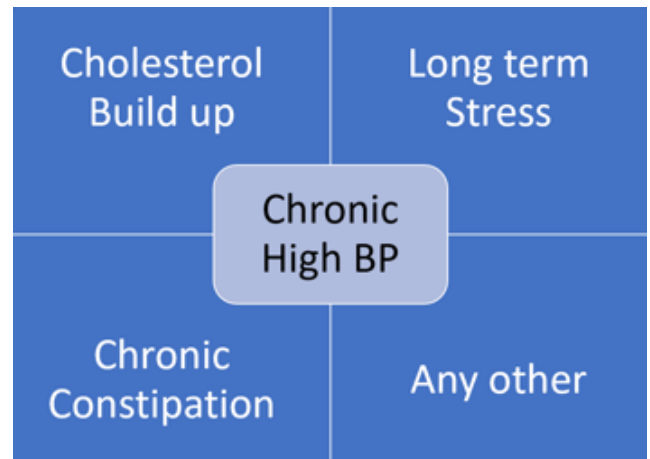


Fig. 2: Chronic high BP

2.12. Other changes i noticed

I have also observed my hair line has improved, I have noticed new hair growth on the forehead ahead of my hairline, my love handles have reduced from earlier. One side effect of the procedure explained by Satvic movement is getting pimples. I used to use another OTC syrup called Safi. Which helped me a lot and forced me to further believe in what I was doing and it proved to be the root cause for middle age acne.

There is also one more condition that can be related to this directly. Assume if for a person, If the digestive waste gets accumulated over pancreas it may cause diabetes. This is not personally tested by me but seems quite logical and probable to me, also many have claimed in satvic movement YouTube videos to benefit from it.

2.13. Hypothesis to be tested 4

Constipation can also be the root cause for having chronic BP, Hair loss, Diabetes, Middle age Acne.

Once again, this article should not be taken as completed research as it's a record of things that I faced and what I did to overcome it to best of my knowledge. I have tried to put as many side effects as observed by me, but there could be more side effects.

3. Source of Funding

None.

4. Conflict of Interest


None.

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