Effects of OM Chanting during Exams Stress at Chirayu Medical College & Hospital, Bhopal

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Abstract

**Background:** The effects of Om meditation were studied in 40 Medical and Paramedical Students who were in the age group of 20–35 years at Chirayu Medical College & Hospital, Bhopal. **Method:** 40 Students of Chirayu Medical and Paramedical college, Bhopal, were recruited in the study from Jan 2018 to Dec 2018. They were divided into study group (40) and control group (40). The study group practiced Om meditation daily for 30 minutes in the evening 4:45-5:15pm. Out of 30 minutes, 20 minutes were spent in OM Meditation and remaining 10 minutes were spent in relaxation exercises (05 minutes preceding the meditation and 5 minutes post meditation). The control group was not exposed to above yoga exercises. **Result:** The abrupt effect of 5 min of Om chanting showed statistically significant reduction in systolic B.P as well as diastolic B.P. and also significant reduction in PR. Om chanting can be used to control B.P in moderate hypertensive subjects and to manage B.P in mild hypertensive even before starting the drug therapy. **Conclusion:** Om chanting can be used to improve performance in studies and concentration apart from this Om chanting helps to maintain good health and it also helps in controlling body weight, pulse, respiratory rate & B.P in moderate hypertensive subjects and to manage B.P in mild hypertensive even before starting the drug therapy. It can be added to the lifestyle of subjects in the pre hypertensive stage and in subjects having strong family history. In the present scenario of higher stress in routine life, 5 min Om chanting can be incorporated in the routine of adults to reduce the overall prevalence of HTN in the country.

**Keywords:** Om Chanting, Meditation, Stress & Lifestyle.

INTRODUCTION

In today’s fast life people are facing many challenges & problems since the stress perhaps the most commonly experienced among them. Stress or ‘chinta’ is said to be more harmful than the flame because flame burns the person after death, while, stress burns the person alive.[1]

We have used Om chanting in our study because it is the most commonly practiced spiritual technique by the people since the time of Upanishads. Education has been highly valued in Indian culture since times immemorial and is seen as the major pathway to social success.[2]

These days’ people are aware of several techniques of pranayama & meditation, but there is no standard and scientifically proven advice given to the patients for reduction of B.P. In this study, humble attempt has been made to scientifically define the benefits of a particular type of meditation for a particular period in hypertensive subjects.[3]

MATERIALS & METHODS

40 Students of Chirayu Medical and Paramedical, Bhopal from Jan 2018 to Dec 2018 are recruiting for this study. They are divided into study group (40) and control group (40). The study group practiced Om meditation daily for 30 minutes in the evening 4:45-5:15pm. Out of 30 minutes, 20 minutes will be spend in OM Meditation and remaining 10 minutes will be spend in relaxation(05 minutes preceding the meditation and 5 minutes post meditation). The control group was not exposed to above yoga exercises.

Subjects were advised not to perform any physical exercises or any type of yogic exercises during the study. The autonomic parameters were recorded in both study group and the control group before practicing Om meditation and after practicing Om meditation for three months using computerized 8-channel polyrite (RMS-POLYRITE, VERSION 1.0)
and these parameters were compared between the two groups.

**Inclusion Criteria**
The following criteria were included in the study:
- Males and females
- Age 20–35 years old

**Exclusion Criteria**
The following criteria were excluded from the study:
- Secondary HTN of any etiology
- Significant cardiovascular complications
- Thyroid disorders
- Uncontrolled diabetes mellitus
- Addiction to alcohol
- Subjects practicing yoga/meditation/stress reduction technique.

The results were expressed in terms of Mean±SD. Data was analyzed by SPSS 20.0. Paired t-test was used to compare the values of the groups. P value<0.05 was considered as significant.

**RESULTS**

Table 1: Distribution of Subjects according to Age and Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number of subjects (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male (years)</td>
<td>20–35</td>
<td>23 (28.75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (years)</td>
<td>20–35</td>
<td>19 (23.75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>45 (56.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (years)</td>
<td>20–35</td>
<td>22 (27.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female (years)</td>
<td>20–35</td>
<td>16 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>22 (27.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Changes in B.P. and PR before and immediately after Om Chanting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B.P</th>
<th>Before meditation</th>
<th>After meditation</th>
<th>P Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Systolic (mmHg)</td>
<td>130.29±66</td>
<td>119.27±96</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diastolic (mmHg)</td>
<td>81.7±4.1</td>
<td>72.6±7.4</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR (beats/min)</td>
<td>79.82±7.3</td>
<td>69.±6.5</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B.P.: Blood pressure, SD: Standard deviation, PR: Pulse rate

**DISCUSSION**
Our study supports earlier studies as we have also observed significant improve performance of studies, improve concentration and much better health and decrease in the blood pressure and pulse rate followed by chanting of Om mantra and meditation. This decrease may be due to effect of Om meditation on autonomic functions, which causes psycho physiological relaxation. We have observed significant decrease in depression, anxiety and stress scores. Yoga mantras & prayers have been found advantageous for many physiological and psychological functions of the body.[4] Om chanting is an important exhalation exercise,[5] and significantly improves pulmonary functions in healthy subjects. Significant decrease in the heart rate was reported followed by Om meditation.[6]

In this study, significant deactivation was bilaterally during ‘OM’ chanting in evaluation to the resting brain state in orbito-frontal, anterior cingulate, parahippocampal gyri thalami & hippocampi. In addition the right amygdale demonstrated significant deactivation. No significant activation was observed during ‘OM’ chanting. In contrast, neither activation nor deactivation occurred in these brain regions during the comparative task. Even if there is no previous report on the effect of ‘OM’ chanting on brain hemodynamic responses, a former study by Kraus et al.,[7] had examined the impact of transcutaneous VNS on BOLD changes using fMRI. Since the commonality of the vagus involvement (as hypothesized in the current study), we compared our study observations with this earlier study.[7] Interestingly, our study findings are in tune with this previous study; significant deactivation was observed in the amygdala, parahippocampal, hippocampal brain regions. This reveals that neurophysiological effects of ‘OM’ chanting may be mediated in the course of the auricular branches of the vagal nerves.

**CONCLUSION**
The abrupt effect of 5 min of Om chanting in significant improve performance of studies, improve concentration and much better health and there is also changes in lifestyle any reduction in systolic B.P as well as diastolic B.P. and also significant reduction in PR. Om chanting can be used to control B.P in moderate hypertensive subjects and to manage B.P in mild hypertensive even before starting the drug therapy. It can be added to the lifestyle of subjects in the prehypertensive stage and in subjects having strong family history. In the present scenario of higher stress in
routine life, 5 min Om chanting can be incorporated in the routine of adults to reduce the overall prevalence of HTN in the country.

REFERENCES