

# New approaches for hypertension treatment

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## Opinion

Hypertension, one of the worldwide health concerns, is related to various kinds of concomitant diseases, including cardiovascular and kidney diseases that have held the attention of scientists in their quest for medication of higher effectiveness. Despite the availability of plenty of synthetic anti-hypertensive drugs in the market, low efficacies with undesired adverse effects were often reported. Recently, researchers have tried to confront this problem by using TCM. According to the principles of TCM, hypertension is a multi-syndromic disease that can cause fire, phlegm fluid retention, and deficiency syndromes, thus a single-drug therapy is often insufficient. At this point, TCM herbs have been shown to be capable of providing an extraordinary therapeutic effect in the treatment of hypertension based on their holistic benefits. Furthermore, the combination of TCM herbs could possibly enhancing the therapeutic effect of the main herb in eliciting its vasodilatory effect. These phenomena could be attributed to the variety of vasoactive components present in the combined TCM herbs, which could tackle hypertension through multiple signaling mechanism pathways at the single time. There are a few articles published recently that demonstrated the reliability of this theory in *in vitro* pharmacological vasculature studies. Based on the clinical experiences of physicians who practice TCM in China, the crude extract of TCM herbs was often preferred rather than the use of fractionated pure compounds to achieve an overall therapeutic effect. Additionally, over the tens of thousands of medicinal plants and the animal species studied in Chinese literature, only a few of them were shown to have low safety concern as well as insignificant adverse effects. In addition, the TCM herbal formulas often provide outstanding advantages with regards to bodily regulation. Therefore, TCM herbs could play as one of the important role for the discovery of future generations of anti-hypertensive drugs, as well as medications for other multi-syndromic diseases in the new era. In cases where the combination of TCM herbs has been employed, the ratio of each herb should be optimized and their toxicology studies carried out in order to achieve the best therapeutic effects.

## Conflict of interests

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