

Guest Editorial



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History is an amalgamation of huge sacrifices, sufferings, trials and failures. Also, it tells the tale for the next generations to analyze and explore science and its roots. Hypertension is an ancient disease, which has crossed a distant way and has challenged even the most famous medical practitioners for centuries. The “Father of Indian Medicine” Sushruta narrated hypertension and its symptom in his book “Sushruta Samhita”, a few centuries before the Greek physician Hippocrates.

The modern history of hypertension began with the work of English physician William Harvey, who described the fundamentals of circulation that blood circulates in the body in one direction in 1628. It was Stephen Hales, an English clergyman, who carried out the catheterization of a live horse by inserting fine tubes into the carotid artery and measured the blood pressure directly in 1733. Followed by, there is a long list of physicians and experimenters who have spent their entire life in advancing Blood Pressure (BP) measuring techniques.

Finally, Nikolai Korotkoff, a Russian surgeon, improvised the Italian physician Scipione Riva-Rocci's and the German physician von Recklinghausen's easy-to-use upper arm cuff-based mercury sphygmomanometer by attaching it to a stethoscope. In the year 1905, he invented the auscultatory technique for blood pressure measurement by applying a cuff on the upper arm and slowly deflating it and measured the systolic and diastolic blood pressure based on the appearance and disappearance of (Korotkoff) sounds over the brachial artery.

Presently BP apparatus are feasible everywhere in the world but it has taken around two hundred years to get an accurate measurement of BP. Today it will take less than two minutes for the measurement of BP.

The prevalence of hypertension and associated complications in the Indian population is increasing. We treating physicians should focus on screening hypertension by measuring BP for all the patients (including attenders) who comes to our clinic or hospital for any ailments, advocate Home Blood Pressure Monitoring (HBPM) and by creating public awareness regarding this silent killer.