



And also, this clinical situation shows how important and significant it is to take into account the individual characteristics of patients. Despite the fact that the increase in blood pressure was not critical in accordance with modern classifications, for a particular patient this may well be a hypertensive crisis.

It is also necessary to remember the diversity of diseases and their course, to be able to think deeper and broader than shown in the protocols of medical care.

*Ifeakor Gift*

**THE CLINICAL ROLE OF FLUTED PUMPKIN (TELFAIRA OCCIDENTALIS) IN PREVENTING SICKLE CELL CRISIS IN PREGNANCY**

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Background. Sickle cell anemia (SCA) is an autosomal recessive blood pathology, that is related to an abnormal crescent shape of the hemoglobin. It is one of the prevailing diseases in sub-Saharan region in Africa. This disease has proven to be a big issue in both the young and old, most especially in pregnant women. The SCA has 4 main crisis and in fact it is one of the main reasons for mortality.

Introduction. Telfairia occidentalis also known as fluted pumpkin popularly known as “Ugu” in the eastern Nigeria is a member of the gourd family. Ugu has been used over decades as a blood tonic in people with anemia because of its high component of vit. K, A, B6, Fe, Cu, Mg, Zn, essential amino acids, and omega-3 fatty acids. Ugu is mostly used in the treatment of some diseases and often given to pregnant women with sickle cell anemia to prevent crisis and improve blood volume.

The relevance of the research. SCA in pregnancy is a great problem to the health sector at large, most especially in underdeveloped countries. This disease is utterly delicate during pregnancy because it improves the threat of acute painful crises, preterm labor, miscarriage, fetal death, and preeclampsia. Hence, the continuous search for cheaper and more effective ways to manage this issue. In Nigeria, traditional medicines are



cheaper and easier methods when it comes to managing and treating diseases. Due to the delicate nature of pregnancy most drugs are contraindicated. Research has shown that pumpkin leaves has diverse benefits ranging from its anti-sickling effect, it is presumed that this plant acts in the system by countering the sickled hemoglobin, preserve the red blood cells and diminishes the sickled hemoglobin thickness.

The aim of the research is to prove the potency of pumpkin leaves to prevent sickle cell crisis in pregnant women.

**Materials and Methods.** 20 pregnant women all in their second trimester were randomly selected with a mean age of  $27 \pm 7$  years with a history of SCA and acute painful crisis. The place of study was Nigeria Teaching Hospital Enugu. 4ml of blood was taken from each patient to determine the packed cell volume (PCV) which was  $19.8 \pm 2\%$  in NaEDTA anticoagulated bottle. These women were adequately informed about this study and they gave consent. They were divided into two groups (A&B) respectively. Group A consisted of 10 women, and group B consisted of 10 women, too. Group A patients were given finely washed pumpkin leave (ugu) juice that should be taken every day for the next 3 months and group B pharmacological therapy for thirty days also as prevention. The patients were closely monitored for any adverse result or complaints.

**Results.** Examination of patients from group A after 3 months showed an increase in PCV up to  $28 \pm 3.5\%$  after using ugu juice in comparison with the PCV obtained before the commencement of ugu, 75% of women in this group reported to have no pain, and more energy while 15% reported to have a pain and 10% no pain but a bit of diarrhea. Examination of patients from group B showed a slight increase in PCV up to  $23 \pm 2\%$ , 80% of women in this group reported to have slight pain, and fatigue, 20% had acute pain crisis within the 3 months. There were no statistically differences in the above indicators. Thus, the effect of Ugu was similar to the effect of pharmacological therapy. We cannot use hydroxyurea, the most effective medicine for SCA in pregnant women due to the teratogenic effect. Despite the presence of diarrhea, this method of treatment (Ugu juice) is safe, especially in pregnant women.

**Conclusion.** Pumpkin leave (ugu) revealed an increase in the PVC of patients, no pain crisis, and improvement of fatigue in the women. Diarrhea was reported in 10% the



patients. This study has shown that the abundance and easy accessibility of pumpkin leave in Nigeria is shown to have massive health benefits for preventing sickle cell crisis in pregnant women.

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**THE ADVANCEMENT OF PHYTOTHERAPY IN THE TREATMENT OF  
HYPERTENSION AND DIABETES MELLITUS: USAGE OF MORINGA  
OLEIFERA AS ADJUNCT THERAPY IN NIGERIA**

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Relevance: it is safe to say that hypertension and diabetes mellitus are two amongst the most dreaded diseases in Nigeria due to the associated complications and difficulties in their management. As a result of these being of generally rising concern, the need of resolving to herbs as adjunct therapies was birth. While moringa oleifera (also known as zogale in the Hausa language of northern region of Nigeria where it is most commonly found, Ewe ile in Yoruba and Odudu oyinbo in Igbo) is commonly consumed as food in various soups, salads and tea, it has much more of medicinal than of nutritional effects on the body. The various effects include: antispasmodic, antihypertensive, antioxidant, antimicrobial, analgesic, antifungal, antibacterial, hypolipidemic, diuretic, antidiabetic, antituberculous and hepatoprotective, antiatherosclerotic and immune boosting effects. Phytochemistry of Moringa oleifera revealed constituents such as polyphenols (kaempferol glycosides, rutin, quercetin glucosides, and chlorogenic acids) in high amounts. Also, flavonol glycosides and benzoic acid 4-O-beta-glucoside, benzoic acid 4-O-alpha-rhamnosyl-(1→2)-beta-glucoside and benzaldehyde 4-O-beta-glucoside have been found in methanolic extracts of leaves of Moringa oleifera. Water soluble polysaccharides such as d-galactose, 6-O-Me-D-galactose, D-galacturonic acid, l-arabinose, and l-rhamnose in the same molar ratio were isolated from aqueous extract of pods from Moringa oleifera. Moringa oleifera seeds are said to contain sterols, tocopherols and fatty acids