

Oral administration of Neem (*Azadirachta indica* a. Juss, 1886) extract and its effect on body weight and blood cells of hypertensive patients

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The use of medicinal herbs is popular among trado-medical practitioners in Nigeria and the world at large. Different concentrations of ethanolic and aqueous extracts of Neem (*Azadirachta indica*), a medicinal herb, were administered on hypertensive patients with high blood pressure and changes in body weight measured at eight weeks. Result showed a change in body weight rate ranging from 8.50kg/ml -10.51kg/ml with aqueous *A. Indica* extract (AAIE) and from 10.60kg/ml-11.61kg/ml for ethanoic *A.indica* extract (EAIE). ANOVA statistics indicates that EAIE significantly caused higher body weight change than AAIE ($P<0.05$). Regression analysis of extract concentration and body weight shows a linear equation of $y=88.55x-1496.5$. Histological examination of blood smears from treated patients shows no degenerative changes in cell morphology indicating lack of toxicity and hence *A. indica* is safe to be administered to patients up to a concentration of 800mg/kg body weight. It is recommended however, that microbiologically safe standard should be applied in its extraction, storage and use to avoid contamination, which will eventually negate its potency as curative herb.