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### Salutary effect of Terminalia Arjuna in patients with severe refractory heart failure.

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#### Abstract

Twelve patients with refractory chronic congestive heart failure (Class IV NYHA), related to idiopathic dilated cardiomyopathy (10 patients); previous myocardial infarction (one patient) and peripartum cardiomyopathy (one patient), received Terminalia Arjuna, an Indian medicinal plant, as bark extract (500 mg 8-hourly) or matching placebo for 2 weeks each, separated by 2 weeks washout period, in a double blind cross over design as an adjuvant to maximally tolerable conventional therapy (Phase I). The clinical, laboratory and echocardiographic evaluation was carried out at baseline and at the end of Terminalia Arjuna and placebo therapy and results were compared. Terminalia Arjuna, compared to placebo, was associated with improvement in symptoms and signs of heart failure, improvement in NYHA Class (Class III vs. Class IV), decrease in echo-left ventricular enddiastolic ( $125.28 \pm 27.91$  vs.  $134.56 \pm 29.71$  ml/m<sup>2</sup>;  $P < 0.005$ ) and endsystolic volume ( $81.06 \pm 24.60$  vs.  $94.10 \pm 26.42$  ml/m<sup>2</sup>;  $P < 0.005$ ) indices, increase in left ventricular stroke volume index ( $44.21 \pm 11.92$  vs.  $40.45 \pm 11.56$  ml/m<sup>2</sup>;  $P < 0.05$ ) and increase in left ventricular ejection fractions ( $35.33 \pm 7.85$  vs.  $30.24 \pm 7.13\%$ ;  $P < 0.005$ ). On long term evaluation in an open design (Phase II), wherein Phase I participants continued Terminalia Arjuna in fixed dosage (500 mg 8-hourly) in addition to flexible diuretic, vasodilator and digitalis dosage for 20-28 months (mean 24 months) on outpatient basis, patients showed continued improvement in symptoms, signs, effort tolerance and NYHA Class, with improvement in quality of life.(ABSTRACT TRUNCATED AT 250 WORDS)

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