Tackling Obesity (Sthaulya) through lifestyle awareness and dietary management

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Abstract

The increased modernization and industrialization has played a major role in adopting the sedentary life style and faulty diet has made man the victim of many lifestyle disorders, one of them being obesity. According to National family health survey-5 (2019-2021), 1 out of every 4 person is obese now and the incidence is increased to 16.9% in 20-29 years of age and 32% in 30-39 years of age. Obesity is an increasing global health issue as it is the leading risk factor of various non-communicable diseases like hypertension, diabetes, dyslipidaemia, coronary heart disease etc. So, the prevention and management of obesity by creating awareness for adopting healthy lifestyle and dietary habits is much needed in present era. Obesity is a result of heredity, faulty lifestyle and diet. Since factors like heredity cannot be avoided but managing lifestyle (Vihara) and diet (Ahara) play important role. Acharya Charaka has considered Sthaulya as an Santarpanjanya Vyadhi and treated with Guru and Aptarpanajanya Ahara. Ahara recommended in Sthaulya are Yava, Kulattha, Purana Shali, Shastika.

Keywords: Sthaulya, Santarpanjanya Vyadhi; Lifestyle disorder; Metabolic disorder

1. Introduction

Ayurveda is the science of life which primarily preaches about promotion of health as described in the Charaka Samhita. "The purpose of Ayurveda is to protect the health of the healthy and to relieve the disorders of the afflicted." Before disease mitigation, it shows the way of health protection or disease prevention through disciplined routine (Dincharya), night routine (Ratricharya) and diet (Ashta Aharavidhi Visheshayatana). It paves the way for a disease-free life. Ahara Rasa taken in balanced quantity provides proper nutrition to the Rasa and all other Dhatus. If a person consumes unhealthy diet due to ignorance, then the Dhatusamaya is affected, due to which the quantitative increase of certain Dhatu occurs. For example, there is an excessive increase of Meda Dhatu in obesity. Acharya Charaka has described about Ashtanindaniya Purusha in which a very obese person is also considered Nindaniya from the physical point of view, because in a Medashvi Purusha, only Meda (Fat) is excessively anabolised. Due to the excess of Meda in a Medashvi Purusha, there is no further formation of Majja and Shukra. Acharya Charaka while defining obesity said that a person in whom excessive and abnormal increase of Medo Dhatu along with Mamsa Dhatu is found, which result into pendulous appearance of buttocks, belly and breasts is called as Sthaulya. The increased bulk is not matched by corresponding increase in energy. Obesity is a burning problem of the 21st century which is due to lack of time, not being able to take proper care of the body and not following the dietary rules described in Ayurveda literature. In today’s era, there is a large section of the country’s population that consumes oversaturated foods such as pizza, burgers, snacks (crisps, chips, etc.), and dairy products. According to Ayurveda Samhita, the people of Aanuopdesha are Vatakapha Pradhan because there is predominance of Guru and Shita Guna in the water and food consumed by them. Due to obesity, various fatal diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke and deformity of arteries are affecting the human being. According to the World Health Organization, the prevalence of obesity in adults is considered to be BMI greater than 30. The prevalence rate of obesity in India is 3.9 percent in both sexes aged 18 years and above (Age- standard Estimate). In
India, 9.8 million men and 20 million women are obese, which is 3.7 percent and 5.3 percent of the world population. There have been 2.8 million deaths. If this trend continues, by 2025, the global obesity prevalence will reach 18 percent among men and 21 percent among women. Samksheptah Kriya Yoga Nidana Parivrjanam that is, Nidana Parivarjana Chikitsa can prevent from suffering from obesity by the use of balanced diet, exercise, proper lifestyle etc.

1.1. Aims & objectives
Ayurveda advocates sound way of life through Ahara, Vihara, and various types of Karmas to forestall all sort of diseases. By following righteous Ahara as depicted in Ayurveda, one can keep himself away from excess weight gain and lessen its dangers to foster different executioner afflictions which will be talked about here.

2. Material and methods
Review from diverse Ayurvedic literatures, medicine books, research journals, magazines and publications.

2.1. Importance of Pathya-Apathya
Consideration of Pathya-Apathya in the course of treatment of any disease is an important feature of Ayurvedic medicine. Ayurveda believes that proper dietary system is to be followed simultaneously along with medicines.

Pathya- The food which is not going to cause harm to the Strotus (channel) and it is not harmful to the mind and body, it is called Pathya.

Apathya- Just as 'Pathya' is the basis of human body, in the same way 'Apathya' is the basis of disease, due to consumption of unhealthy diet, it creates imbalance of Dosha, Dhatu and Mala and cause diseases.

2.2 Aharatmaka Pathya-Apathya

Table 1 Aharatmaka Pathya-Apathya

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.</th>
<th>Ahara Varga</th>
<th>Pathya</th>
<th>Apathya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Shooka Dhanya</td>
<td>Purana Shali, Kaudrav, Yava, Shayamak, Priyangu, Kanguni</td>
<td>Godhuma7, Naveen Dhanya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Shami Dhanya</td>
<td>Mudga, Rajmasha, Kulattha, Chanaka, Masoora, Aadhaki</td>
<td>Masha, Tila</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Shak Varga</td>
<td>Patola, Patra Shak, Shigru, Tripusha</td>
<td>Kanda Shak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Phala Varga</td>
<td>Kapittha, Jambu, Aamlaki, Bibhitaki, Haritaki, Bilva</td>
<td>Madhura Phala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Mamsa Varga</td>
<td>Rohita Matasya</td>
<td>Anoopa, Aaudak, Gramya Mamsa Sevana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3 Viharaja Pathya-Apathya Sharirika

Table 2 Viharaja Pathya-Apathya Sharirika

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.</th>
<th>Pathya</th>
<th>Apathya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Shrama</td>
<td>Sheetal Jalsevan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ratrijagrina</td>
<td>Divaswapna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Nitya Bhramana</td>
<td>Sukhashayya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ashwarohana</td>
<td>Atiasana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Vyavaya</td>
<td>Avyavaya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.4 Viharaja Pathya-Apathya Mansika

Table 3 Viharaja Pathya-Apathya Mansika

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.</th>
<th>Pathya</th>
<th>Apathya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Chinta</td>
<td>Nityaharsha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Shoka</td>
<td>Achintya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Krodha</td>
<td>Mansonivritta</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.4 Kaphamedanashak Chikitsa

There is an increase Kapha and Meda in Sthaulya. This Kapha and Meda is reduced by exercise, Samshodhana Chikitsa, Virechana Karma, Arishtapana, Gomutrapana and use of Haritaki.

3. Discussion

The dietary preparations made in Sthaulya mainly contains Kashaya Rasa. Kashaya rasa is Kaphashamaka and have Guru, Ruksh and Shoshaka properties. Acharya Charaka described barley and Millets useful in obesity. Millets is a good source of fibre. There is a soluble fiber called Beta Glucan in Yava which makes it gel-like in the stomach and slows down the digestion and absorption of carbohydrates and nutrients, which does not produce hunger very fast. These all the positive grains have low glycemic index. High fiber content is found in Kanguni (Foxtail millet) and Shyamaka (Barnyard millet). Millets have antioxidants, phenolic acid, avenanthramides, flavonoids, lignans, phytosterols, Vitamin B Complex and found which cooperate in controlling metabolism. All Pathya Vihara are Kapha and Meda Dhatu Shamaka. In this way, diseases can be cured by the diet and exercise regimen.

4. Conclusion

The Nidana of any disease is its cause and obesity can be easily relieved by dieting and exercise (Nidana Parivarjana Chikitsa). In the present era, our lifestyle and food habits have changed, due to which the number of obesity patients has increased day by day, but by following Pathya, obesity not only can be avoided, but also can be cured.

Compliance with ethical standards

Acknowledgments

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest

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