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Diet and Lifestyle Modifications in *Sthoulya* (Obesity)

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ABSTRACT

In Process of Modernization and Rapid urbanization human beings are falling prey to various disorders. Unhealthy food habits and lifestyle play a major role in causing many ailments including Obesity. The prevalence of Obesity worldwide has dramatically increased during the last three decades. Obesity has significant effects on an individual's quality of life as well as their life expectancy. The treatment of many of these conditions which involves multi-drug regimens which can be associated with a variety of side effects. Although therapy with prescription of medication is often unavoidable lifestyle modifications can play a key role in Obesity. In *Ayurveda* and other alternative therapy can manage the obesity through *Ahara* (Diet) and *Vihara* (Lifestyle).

Key words: Diet, Food habits, Lifestyle changes.

INTRODUCTION

Obesity is a complex condition, one with serious social and psychological dimensions, that affects virtually all age and socioeconomic groups and threatens to overwhelm both developed and developing countries. Obesity is result of complex variety of social, behavioural, cultural, environmental, physiological and genetic factors India is just behind US and China in this global hazard list of top 10 countries with highest number of obese people.^[1] Obesity has reached epidemic proportions in India in the 21st century, with morbid obesity affecting 5% of the

country's population.^[2] Overweight and Obesity are defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that may impair health, for an individual, obesity is usually the result of an imbalance between calories consumed and calories expended.^[3] In *Ayurveda*, *Sthoulya* is the nearest clinical entity for obesity and obese persons are included under *Asta Nindita Purusha* (*Athi Deerga, Athi Hraswa, Athi Stoola, Athi Krusha, Athi Goura, Athi Sweta, Athi Roma and Aroma*).^[4] In classics it is mentioned under the *Santarpanajanya Vikara* and in *Bahudoshavastha* condition.^[5] The role of *Ahara* (Diet) and *Vihara* (Lifestyle) are equally or even more important in *Sthoulya* to control as well as to prevent complications of this disease. The *Ayurvedic* treatment for this disease is based on an entire change in the lifestyle of the person. Along with medication and diet, the patient is also advised to lead a healthy lifestyle and live an active life.

Ahara

Acharya Charaka has stressed upon the *Guru* and *Atarpana Dravya* as a special diet for *Sthoola*.

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Table 1: List of Pathya Ahara found in the disease Sthoulya^[6]

Varga	Aharadravya	English name
Anna varga	<i>Purana Shali</i>	Old variety of Rice
	<i>Raktashali</i>	Red variety of Rice
	<i>Shasthika shali</i>	Rice harvested in 60 days
	<i>Yava</i>	Barley
	<i>Chanaka</i>	Chickpea
	<i>Kulatha</i>	Horsegram
Jalavarga	<i>ShrutaSheetaJala</i>	LukeWarm Water
	<i>PanchkolashrutaJala</i>	Water with <i>Panchakola</i>
	<i>Shunti siddha jala</i>	Ginger Water
	<i>Madhu</i>	Honey
Madyavarga	<i>Purana Sidhu</i>	Old Wine
Mutravarga	<i>Gomutra</i>	Cow's Urine
Kanda varga	<i>Lasuna</i>	Garlic
	<i>Ardraka</i>	Wet Ginger
	<i>Sunthi</i>	Dry Ginger
Ksheeravarga	<i>Takra</i>	Buttermilk
Shakavarga	<i>Patola</i>	Bottlegourd
	<i>Karavellaka</i>	Bitter gourd
	<i>Varthaka</i>	Brinjal

	<i>Nimbapatra</i>	Neem leaves
	<i>Shigru</i>	Drum Stick
Mamsavarga	<i>JangalaMamsa</i>	Forest meat

Table 2: List of Apathya Ahara found in the disease Sthoulya^[7]

Varga	Aharadravya	English name
Anna varga	<i>Navanna</i>	New variety of Rice
	<i>Masha</i>	Black gram
	<i>Taila</i>	Oil
Jalavarga	<i>Dushita Jala</i>	Polluted water
	<i>Sheeta Jala</i>	Cold water
Madyavarga	<i>Nutana Madhya</i>	New Wine
Kanda varga	<i>Aluka</i>	Potato
Ksheeravarga	<i>Dadhi</i>	Curd
	<i>Ksheera (Apakva)</i>	Milk
	<i>Guda</i>	Jaggery
Mamsavarga	<i>Anupa Mamsa</i>	<i>Marshy land Animal meat</i>

Dravyas possessing *Guru Snigdha*, *Ati Drava*, *Picchila* and *Abhishyandi Guna* are considered as *Apathya* for *Sthoulya*.

Exercise Therapy

Exercise in the morning is suggested for keeping metabolism at its peak. Aerobic activity is most often recommended for weight management programme owing to the increased number of calories expended during its activity. Patient should be emphasized to

start with light exercise, gradually increase it and then maintain it regularly.

An Obese person can do exercise in the following manner-

- Exercise can be broken up into smaller 10 minute sessions.
- Start slowly and progress gradually to avoid injury, excessive soreness, fatigue. Over time, built up to 30 to 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise every day.
- Types of Exercise include walking, bicycling, brisk walking, jogging on a treadmill, stair climbing, swimming.
- People are never too old to start exercising. Even frail, elderly individuals (ages 70 to 90 years) can improve their strength and balance.

Exercise should be stopped when the *Swedagamama* (Perspiration), *Shwasavidhi* (Enhance respiration), *Gatralaghavata* (Lightness of the body), *Hridayoparodha* (Palpitation) signs are appear.^[8]

Effect of proper exercise bring us a lot of changes in body like, Lightness, Ability to work, Stability, Resistance to discomfort, Alleviation of Dosas (especially *Kapha*), Stimulates *Agni*.^[9]

Precautions

Men over 40 and women over 50, individuals who experience chest pressure or pain with exertion, or who develop fatigue or shortness of breath easily, individuals with Heart or Lung disease, Asthma, Arthritis, Osteoporosis, individuals with condition that increase their risk of developing Coronary heart disease, such as high blood Cholesterol, having family members with early onset of Heart attacks and Coronary heart disease are consult a Doctor before doing vigorous Exercise.

Counselling and Behaviour modification

Under this, detailed knowledge of the disease needs to be given to the obese person. It includes the following points,

- Person must be realizing that prolonged dieting is necessary for following a restricted diet regimen ensures optimal weight loss. A permanent change in eating habits, Planning of Daily food intake, Separation of Eating from other Activities are required to maintain the new low weight.
- The Person must understand Details regarding the disease and the principles of energy intake and expenditure. The best results are obtained in educated, well motivated patients.
- The Person must have Mental built to lose weight and should have Self monitor Feelings and Emotions.
- Excess consumption of food is called as *Atimatra Ahara Sevana*. Here the consumption of food is related not only for quantity of intake but also the frequency of intake. As the formation of *Rasa* is more, it over- nourishes the *Dhatu* of the body; leading to *Sthoulya*.
- The lunch and dinner timings should be fixed
- The time difference 2 meals should be 4 hours
- Low fat meal, with fibre rich vegetables and fruits should be taken.
- Reduce fats, excess calories, sweets, milk, butter, cheese etc in meals.
- Do not sleep for more than 6 to 7 hours
- Try to stop addictions such as smoking, drinking alcohol or any other drugs.
- Taking help from dietician, one should fix the daily diet schedule.
- If possible take massage and steam bath regularly.

Yoga^[10]

Yoga has an important role to play in the treatment of obesity. Yoga techniques affect body, internal organs, endocrine glands, brain, mind and other factors concerning Body-Mind complex. Various Yoga techniques can be practiced effectively to reduce the weight and achieve a normal healthy condition of body and mind.

Asanas or body posture which provide stability and strength to the body, and many benefits like,

- *Yoga* are especially useful to reduce the fats in various parts, especially forward bending, twisting and backward bending *Asanas* help to reduce the fats near abdomen, hips and other areas.
- Practice of *Asanas* improves functioning of internal organs, strengthening Heart, Lungs, Kidneys, Excretory and Reproductive organs.
- Regular practice builds strength in Muscles.
- Good results are achieved by doing the *Asanas* for a shorter duration with an increase in number.

Table 3: List of *Asanas* for the disease *Sthoulya*

Asanas	Benefits
<i>Dhanurasana, Chakrasana</i>	Reduces abdominal fat and help in Slimming Whole body.
<i>Ardhakatichakrasana, Padahastasana</i>	Reduces abdominal fat and abdominal muscles get strengthened and toned up.
<i>Mayurasana, Padmasana</i>	Reduces fat in waist region and improve liver function.
<i>Bhujangasana</i>	Tones up abdomen, reduces fat on tummy, strengthens the forearm, wrist and elbows, vitalizes the endocrine in the abdomen and very good for obesity.
<i>Dhanurasana</i>	It helps to alleviate constipation, dyspepsia, sluggishness of the liver, diabetes and excess fat.

Suryanamaskara

Reduces the abdominal fat. Harmonizes the *Prana* throughout the body thus revitalizes the whole body and reduces the whole body fat.

DISCUSSION

Lifestyle plays an important role in the development of Obesity. Obesity are defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that may impair health, for an individual, obesity is usually the result of an imbalance between calories consumed and calories expended. In Ayurveda, *Sthoulya* is the nearest clinical entity for obesity and obese persons are included under *Asta Nindita Purusha*. The role of *Ahara* (Diet) and *Vihara* (Lifestyle) are equally or even more important in *Sthoulya* to control as well as to prevent complications of this disease. Improper diet and lack of physical exercise increases the chances of Obesity. In addition to that increase in sitting work, indoor activities like TV, computer gaming which are now became the essential part of today's lifestyle, enhances the risk of Obesity. Irregular eating habits, intake of fried foods, fats, sugar, and refined carbohydrates are getting added in the risk of Obesity. Hence to control and prevent Obesity Dietary and lifestyle plans should be made in accordance with day-to-day requirement of an individual. Inclusion of food items like whole grains, garlic, onion, bitter gourd in the diet, avoiding food stuffs like, pineapple, grapes, mangoes etc. from diet and involving light exercise like walking, jogging, cycling in day to day lifestyle reduce the chances of Obesity. The prolonged use of the above treatment procedure will not only generate the person free from Obesity but protect to live a long life.

CONCLUSION

Obesity is result of complex variety of social, behavioural, cultural, environmental, physiological and genetic factors. By adopting *Ayurveda and Yoga* we can manage the healthy weight, quality of life and prevent the complications due to obesity. In *Ayurveda*

and other alternative therapy can manage the obesity through *Ahara* (Diet) and *Vihara* (Lifestyle).

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