

PREVENTION OF LIFESTYLE DISORDERS THROUGH AYURVEDA**Nitesh Gupta¹, Rashmi Tiwari²**¹Associate Professor, Department of Kriya Sharir, SGAM, Gujarat Ayurved University, Jamnagar, Gujarat, India²Associate Professor, Department of Agadtantra; GAC Vadodara, Gujarat, India**ABSTRACT**

Multi-dimensional diseases like the Lifestyle diseases and disorders are generally complex to cure; and the conventional medical system with its structural approach is still struggling to keep the check as one disease condition leads to another. There is a definite need of an alternate approach to understand the psycho – somatic impact on the human body and emerging lifestyle diseases. And they hope to treat Lifestyle diseases definitely brighten with the broader approach of *Ayurveda*. The *Ayurvedic* system understands the functioning of human body as a whole and any disease is understood to be due to imbalance of *Tridoshas* – *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* or can be understood as Movement, Transformation and Growth/Support respectively. *Ayurveda* therapy validates the physical, psychological and spiritual wellness of an individual. It provides a well organised system of traditional health care, both in preventive as well as curative spheres – and this has won it wide acclaim. Undeniably, *Ayurveda* is age-old and time-tested. *Ayurveda* offers various methods to manage lifestyle disorders by following *Dincharya*, *Ratricharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Panchakarma* or with help of *Rasayanas*. All the regimens are followed to achieve the homeostasis and not just counter the specific symptom. That is why it outscores the conventional medicines when it comes to tackle a multi-dimensional disorder like Lifestyle disease.

Keywords – lifestyle disorders, *Ayurveda*, *Rasayanas***INTRODUCTION**

Lifestyle disorder is an umbrella term given to all the diseases which arise because of unhealthy lifestyle. The most common Lifestyle diseases include Hypertension, Diabetes, Arthritis, Obesity, Insomnia etc which are the major cause of mortality in today's world. Not only are these lifestyle diseases thwarting, but these are also interfering with natural comfort of wellbeing. Lifestyle disorders were more common in western world but the scenario has changed dramatically. Developing countries like India is predicted to have most number of Lifestyle related patients in the next 10 years in the entire world. As *Ayurveda* is recognized

as foremost life science and describes ways to prevent and manage lifestyle disorders; the world is being attracted towards its potential. *Ayurveda* provides better solution in the forms of proper dietary management, lifestyle advises, *Panchakarma* like detoxification and bio-purification procedures, medicaments, and rejuvenation therapies. The holistic approach of *Ayurveda*, treating the patient as a whole, meaning intervention targeted toward complete physical, psychological, and spiritual well-being makes this science a wonderful option in lifestyle disorders^[1].

Causes

The commonest causes of lifestyle disorders are eating unhealthy foods, over eating, over dependence on processed foods, energy drinks, artificial sweeteners and fast foods. Sedentary living, smoking, drinking alcohol, stress, poor sleeping habits which are all attributed mainly to the so called modern living habits and urbanization added with the altered eating habits makes the situation worse. There is yet another important problem of the modern world. That is poor exposure to sun light and fresh air. Diet and lifestyle are major factors thought to influence susceptibility to lifestyle diseases. The nature and duration of work, the amount of time you spare for exercise and recreation, the time you spend with your loved ones, the stress factors, your physical activity etc decide on how soon you are likely to land up in any one of the lifestyle disorders. More work and no play, makes a lot of us prone to a host of diseases. Along with that there are certain other factors such as he-

redity, age and gender which cannot be avoided or controlled. But the other factors that can be avoided or controlled are drug abuse, tobacco smoking and alcohol drinking [2].

Incidences

With increasing prevalence of life-style diseases in India, one out of four Indians is at risk of dying from non-communicable diseases like diabetes, cardio-vascular ailments or cancer before the age of 70, according to estimates of various global and domestic organizations [3]. According to the NCD (Non Communicable Disease) country profiles of 2014 released by WHO, diseases like cancer, chronic respiratory problems and cardiovascular diseases are the biggest global killers accounting for 38 million deaths every year with a whopping 28 million in low and middle - income countries, including India. As per WHO estimates, NCDs account for almost 60% of the total mortality reported annually in India [4].

Table no.1 Top Life Style Diseases [5]

Name	Comments
Alzheimer's Disease: a form of brain disease.	No one knows the exact cause, but a real breakdown of the cells of the brain does occur. There is no treatment, but good nutrition may slow the progress of this lifestyle disease.
Arteriosclerosis: A generic term for several diseases in which the arterial wall becomes thicken and loses elasticity. Atherosclerosis is the most common and serious vascular disease.	Plaques (atheromas) deposited in the walls of arteries are major causes of heart disease, chest pain (angina pectoris), heart attacks, and other disorders of the circulation. Atherosclerosis usually occurs with aging. It is linked to overweight, high blood pressure, and diabetes.
Cancer: diseases characterized by uncontrolled, abnormal growth of cells.	Cancer is definitely considered the number one Disease of Civilization. There are more than 150 different kinds of cancer and many different causes.

	Top 5 Cancers	
	MEN 1. Prostate (28%) 2. Lung (17%) 3. Colorectal (12%) 4. Bladder (07%) Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma (04%)	WOMEN 1. Breast (30%) 2. Lung (13%) 3. Colorectal (12%) 4. Uterus (06%) Ovary (04%)
Chronic Liver Disease/Cirrhosis: any of a group of liver disorders.	Characteristics of liver disease are jaundice, loss of appetite, liver enlargement, fluid accumulation, and impaired consciousness.	
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD): a disease characterized by slowly progressing, irreversible airway obstruction.	The symptoms are problems in breathing while exercising, difficulty in breathing in or out deeply, and sometimes a long-term cough. The condition may result from chronic bronchitis, emphysema, asthma, or chronic bronchiolitis. Cigarette smoking and air pollution make it worse.	
Diabetes: a disease affecting sugars used by the body.	There are four main types of diabetes mellitus. Type I diabetes is also called insulin-dependent diabetes, juvenile-onset diabetes, brittle diabetes, or ketosis-prone diabetes. Type II diabetes is also called non-insulin-dependent diabetes, adult-onset diabetes, ketosis-resistant diabetes, or stable diabetes. Type II often develops in overweight adults. Type III, or gestational diabetes, occurs in some women during pregnancy. Type IV includes other types of diabetes are linked to disease of the pancreas, hormonal changes, side effects of drugs, or genetic defects.	
Heart Disease: any of several abnormalities that affect the heart muscle or the blood vessels of the heart.	Heart disease has been the number one cause of mortality and morbidity. There are a couple dozen forms of this lifestyle disease. Heart disease and other forms of cardiovascular disease can lead to congestive heart failure, a condition in which the heart cannot pump sufficient blood to meet the demands of the body.	
Nephritis/CRF: any disease of the kidney marked by swelling and abnormal function.	Characteristics of kidney disease are bloody urine, persistent protein in urine, pus in urine, difficult urination, and pain in the back.	
Stroke: a condition due to the lack of oxygen to the brain that may lead to reversible or irreversible paralysis.	Stroke is linked to advanced age, high blood pressure, previous attacks of poor circulation, cigarette smoking, heart disorders, embolism, family history of strokes, use of birth-control pills, diabetes mellitus, lack of exercise, overweight, high cholesterol etc	

Prevention through Ayurveda

According to *Ayurveda*, basically the cause of any life style disorder is '*Prajnaparadha*'. A particular lifestyle of person is a cumulative product of his/her physical capacity co-ordinated with psychological functioning, displayed in the form of habits, behaviour, dietary and living pattern based on his own training sought from childhood, and mimics he gained from his immediate companions including parents, siblings, peers, etc. Thus, it involves a pure psychological and innate control over the physical and sensory activities. When this initiation, control, and co-ordination are disturbed, it leads to the derangement of lifestyle and results in any lifestyle disorders. *Ayurveda* narrated this phenomenon as '*Prajnaparadha*' (intellectual blasphemy) which is one of the three basic causes of any disease^{[6] [7]}. There are ample improper actions as an impact of *Prajnaparadha* which are root causes of various diseases, e.g., habit of suppression of any natural urge is a result of *Prajnaparadha* and enlisted as a cause of nearly 50% of the diseases. Reversal of any neurotransmission or improper removal of the waste products formed during metabolism leading to accumulation of toxins is the basic cause of a disease. Therefore, the habit of suppression of urge in improper lifestyle can be considered as one of the root causes of lifestyle diseases. Removal of these accumulated waste products is the first line of treatment as described in *Ayurveda*.

In the management of lifestyle diseases, *Ayurveda* offers various regimens including *Ahara* and *vihar* (dietary habits and daily routine).

Dinracharya (daily regimen), *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen), *Panchakarma* (five detoxification and bio-purification therapies), and *Rasayana* (rejuvenation) therapies. The

Sadvritta (ideal routines) and *Aachara Rasayana* (code of conduct) are utmost important to maintain a healthy and happy psychological perspective^[6].

Ahara *Ahara* and *Vihara* play a central role in the life according to *Ayurvedic* understanding. *Ayurveda* places special emphasis on *Ahara* and *Vihara* as measures for better living, health and wellness. *Ayurveda* emphasizes more on *Ahara* in comparison to other systems of medicine and also explored its emotional and spiritual significance, in addition to its material and biological attributes. *Ahara* is considered as *Prana* (basis of life) in *Ayurveda*^[8]. *Ahara* has described as one of the *Trayopastambha* (three subsidiary pillars) of life which are *Ahara*, *Nidra* (sleep) and *Brahmacharya* (celibacy)^[9]. Diet is considered as vital for a human body as it provides the basic nutrients and promotes longevity. *Ayurveda* always emphasizes on consuming healthy and nutritious diet for maintaining good health. As per the view point of *Ayurveda*, both the living human body and the diseases afflicting it are the products of *Ahara*. Use of *hita-ahara* (wholesome diet) promotes health and longevity and *ahita-ahara* (unwholesome diet) promotes manifestation of different disorders. Unfortunately in modern era the concept of *hita-ahara* is continuously being ignored leading to the emergence of lifestyle disorders^[10]. *Ayurveda* also described eighteen types of dietary incompatibilities (*Viruddha Ahara*)^[11], which should be avoided to maintain health and longevity. In this way *Ayurveda* offers different *Pathayapathya* (do's & don'ts) regarding diet/dietary supplementations which definitely help in the prevention and management of a wide range of lifestyle disorders.

Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa *Daivavyapashraya Chikitsa* includes chanting *Mantras*, *Aushadhi* and *Mani Dharana* (spiritual use of herbs and gems) *Mangal Karma* (propitia-

tory), *Bali* (offering oblations), *Homa*, *Prayashchita* (ceremonial penances), *Upavasa* (fasting), *Swastyayana* (rituals for social well being) etc. All these rituals activities directly or indirectly exert a positive impact on mind (*Manas*), promote psychosomatic health; impede the psychosocial stress and leads to reduction & abolition of negative thoughts like suicidal ideations etc. Some 90% of the world's population engaged in religious or spiritual practices. These practices are major means of coping with stress and for prevention and management of lifestyle disorders [12].

Satvavajaya Chikitsa The author of foremost classic on internal medicine, *Charaka Samhita* defines it as a method of restraining or withdrawal of the mind from unwholesome objects (*Arthas*). Thus, the term *Sattvavajaya* implies to that modality which is therapeutic for mental or emotional stresses and disturbances. This is secured best by restraining the mind from desire for unwholesome objects. All these measures help in developing control over the *Manas* or mind, which is usually unstable [13].

Dincharya Normal circadian rhythms are very important in day to day life to maintain biological clock. *Ayurveda* suggests to begin daily habits with awareness, early rising, avoid suppression of natural urges and eliminate wastes as per urge, keep the teeth & skin cleaned, regular use of massage (*Abhyanga*), regular daily bathing (bathing enhances the appetite and promotes longevity), consume suitable and wholesome diet according to the appetite and metabolic needs, since it is the basis of life and important for day to day promotion of health. *Ayurveda* has also suggested avoiding late night sleep, eating stale foods, having sex with inappropriate partner & at unsuitable time and position and the misuse of senses. These might lead to imbalance in the circadian rhythms and thus long term imbal-

ance predisposes to lifestyle disorders. Therefore, one has to stay aware about this daily regimen for day to day promotion of health, boost immunity and prevention from lifestyle disorders. Modified from [14].

Ritucharya Ritu (season) classified by different features expresses different effects on the body as well as on the environment. *Ayurveda* has depicted various rules and regimens (*Charya*), regarding diet and lifestyle to acclimatize seasonal enforcement easily without altering body homeostasis. The prime objective of *Ayurvedic* system of medicine is preventive aspect, which can be achieved by the modification in diet and lifestyle in response to change in climatic condition. *Ritucharya* represents a very important aspect of preventive measure for various illnesses including lifestyle disorders as mentioned in *Ayurvedic* texts [15]. It is the only system of medicine in the world which proposes the need of regular purification of the human biological system from gross level to the molecular level to render it suitable for self recovery and therapeutic responsiveness. The human biological system continuously undergoes wear and tear and needs to be cleansed and rejuvenated regularly. Therefore, *Ayurveda* advises seasonal *Panchakarma* as preventive measure for maintenance and promotion of physical as well as mental health.

Panchakarma *Panchakarma* is a collective term used to address the five principal procedures or technologies of bio-purification. These procedures are used in order to cleanse the body channels, to eliminate toxins out of the body, brings about the harmony of bio-humors (*Tridosha* i.e. *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*, and *Manasa Dosha* i.e. *Raja* and *Tama*) to obtain long-lasting beneficial effects which further leads to chemical balance inside the bio-system and thus provide the normal chemical and electrical environment in brain and ulti-

mately restore the homeostasis. When done properly, these promote psychosomatic health, rejuvenate the body and increase the receptivity and effectiveness of subsequent therapies. The five technologies of *Panchakarma* include *Vaman* (therapeutic emesis), *Virechan* (therapeutic purgation), *Asthapan Basti* (therapeutic decoction enema), *Anuvasana Basti* (therapeutic oil enema) and *Nasya Karma* (nasal medication) [16]. *Ayurveda* emphasizes more on the preventive aspect of the *Panchakarma* rather than curative. It also facilitates the absorption of nutrient and drugs administered thereafter in favor to attain their desired pharmacotherapeutic effects. *Panchakarma* also restore the mental health, reduces the stress and therefore, help in the prevention as well as management of many lifestyle disorders. *Panchakarma* is claimed for its preventive, promotive, prophylactic and rejuvenative properties [17]. *Rasayana* In addition to food and diet, *Ayurveda* propounds a separate concept of medicinal dietary supplements in the context of *Rasayana* (rejuvenative measures). *Rasayanas* can be used as nutritional supplement as well as medicine depending upon its various types. Most *Rasayanas* produce their nourishing and rejuvenating effect by promoting the *Agni Bala*, acting as direct nutrients and by way of *Sroto-prasadan* (purification of body channels), resulting in an improved nutritional status which further leads to an improved quality of *Dhatu*s or body tissues. Although the *Rasayanas* are a generic class of restorative and rejuvenative supplements, many *Rasayanas* could be tissue and organ specific such as *Medhya Rasayana* for the brain, *Hridya Rasayana* for the heart, *Twachya Rasayana* for the skin, and so on [18]. Various studies on *Rasayana* drugs suggest their following action [19].

- Immunomodulator
- Adaptogenic

- Antioxidant
- Nootropic
- Antistress

Sadvratta and *Achara Rasayana Ayurveda* offers some code of good conducts under the heading of *Sadvratta* and *Achara Rasayana*. The conducts under *Sadvratta* and *Achara Rasayana* can be categorized into personal (viz. limited sexual relations, early sleeping and awakening, avoid excess exertion, avoid suppression of natural urges, regime of bathing, keeping skin clean), social (keep mercy on others, telling truth, avoid alcoholism, be soft hearted, always use cleaned and washed cloths), psychological and emotional (try to be in a steady mental state i.e. avoid height of emotions, try to avoid to memorize if being insulted by anyone, keep patience, etc). Such type of lifestyle adaptation always helpful in the prevention and management of a wide range of lifestyle disorders [20]. Social inclusion is a protective factor for maintaining mental health. Social networks and supports contribute to one's sense of purpose, self-esteem, resilience and access to resources and information. Furthermore, community participation and civic engagement are associated with better self-reported mental health. Hence, *Ayurveda* has an upper edge in treating the disease with emphasis on its root cause. The *Ayurvedic* physician concentrates on achieving the objective of *Ayurveda* for promotion of health, prevention and management of disease for a healthy and happy life in the ailing society.

CONCLUSION

"Lifestyle diseases" known internationally as 'non-communicable diseases' (NCD's) or 'chronic diseases of lifestyle' (CDL) emerge from inappropriate relationship of people with their environment. These are a group of diseases that share similar risk factors, which

may be due to exposure over many decades, unhealthy diets, smoking, lack of exercise, and stress.

The major risk factors are high blood pressure, tobacco addiction, high blood cholesterol, diabetes and obesity. These result in various long-term disease processes, culminating in high mortality rates attributable to stroke, heart attack, tobacco- and nutrition-induced cancers, chronic bronchitis, emphysema, renal failure, and many others.

From the history of treatment and preventive measures given to the persons suffering from life style diseases, Ayurveda has proven its role and importance in this area. The other systems do not have any other answers than the supply of nutritional food and physical activities in this respect. Also as the nutritional food and physical activity are well defined in Ayurvedic system, it can be considered that there is much scope in Ayurveda only.

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