ROLE OF DIFFERENT FOOD ARTICLES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF MEDOROGA (STHOULYA) OR OBESITY

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ABSTRACT

Overweight and obesity are defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that presents a risk to health, resulting in number of chronic diseases, including diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, arthritis, PCOS and cancer etc. Once considered a problem only in developed countries, overweight and obesity are now dramatically on the rise in developed countries, particularly in urban settings. In Ayurveda Acharya Charaka has described Ashtanindita Purusha and emphasized in detail about two pathological conditions viz. Atishoola and Atikarshya. Atishoola purusha is considered worst among them, due to its complicated pathogenesis, variable complications and treatment. Obesity has been described as Sthoulya or Medoroga also in Ayurvedic texts. It is described under the caption of Santarpanottha Vikara. Ayurvedic classics give sufficient focus on obesity (Sthoulya or Medoroga) and advise diet and life style modifications and drugs to control the disease.

Keywords: Sthoulya, Medoroga, Ashtanindita

INTRODUCTION

Ayurvedic classics described obesity under headings of Atishoulya and Medorogam. The word Atishoulya is made up of prefix 'Ati' and 'Sthoola' dhatu. Ati means excessive and Sthula means extraordinary, bulky. The meaning of Atishoulya is to become excessively fat. There is increase in body fat and muscles so that hips, abdomen and breast become pendulous\(^1\). The body metabolism and enthusiasm is decreased, the persons having these characteristics are termed as “Atishoula” or obese. The basic principles of treatment of Sthoulya (Obesity) as described in Ayurvedic classics are Nidanaparivarjana, Apatarpanachikitsa and Samana & Shodhan chikitsa are used in the management of obesity. Knowledge of Pathya Apathya is essential for proper management of disease and maintenance of health. Food which are mentioned in Ayurvedic textbooks for the management of Obesity are aimed to pacify kapha dosha and medodhatu and vataamuloman are rich in dietary fiber and low glycemic index. Pathya is referred to the ahara and vihara, which causes pacification of the disease\(^2\). Apathya is referred to the ahara and vihara, which causes complications and aggravate the disease\(^3\). Consumption...
of good quality food results in the strength, complexion and vitality of the living beings. 

Ahara has the ability to promote health as well as to control the disease. The benefits of food like health, strength, longevity and energy are achieved only when the food is consumed by the person according to Ahara Ashtvidha Aayatana mentioned in Ayurveda otherwise it will end up in manifestation of disease like sthoulya.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Ayurveda emphasizes that the successful treatment of any disease is not only depends upon the proper medication but proper diet and proper lifestyle is equally important. By following Ahara Vihara as described in Ayurveda one can prevent himself from Obesity and reduces its risks of various complications will be discussed here. Administration of Guru and Apatarpana articles which possess additional Vata Shleshmahar (Alleviating Vata-Kapha-Meda) properties is considered as an ideal for Sanshamana therapy. In Ashtanga Samgraha usage of Laghu (Light), Ushna (Hot), Ruksha (Dry), Tikshna (Sharp) articles etc are suggested for obesity management as they possess Medonashak Kaphanashaka and Shhoulyahara actions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In different ayurvedic texts various food articles are mentioned as medohar, aptarpaniye, karshniye and lekhniye but literature on Medoroga elaborated in Bhaishjyaratnavali has been taken for present review. In Bhaishjyaratnavali following food articles has been described for Medoroga:

*Venu Yava (Bamboo seeds)*

Venu Yava is ruksha in guna with madhur and slightly astringent in rasa. It is kapha and Medodhatu nashak. It is believed that bamboo rice has low glycemic index compared to other varieties of rice, which is considered to be a healthier option for diabetics and obese patients. The rice has low or no fat and is rich in vitamin B. It has immense calcium and phosphorus content.

*Kodo, Samak, Niwar and Priyangu Dhanya*

Kodo millets are rich in B vitamins, especially niacin, B6 and folic acid, as well as the minerals such as calcium, iron, potassium, magnesium and zinc. It has high protein content (11%), low fat (4.2%) and very high fiber content (14.3%). Instead of eating polished white rice, which has been stripped of its nutrients, one could opt for wild rice, as it contains complex carbs and belongs to the low glycemic index foods list, enabling one to lose weight.

*Kodo, Samak, Niwar and Priyangu all work in the body with madhur- kashaya ras, sheetavirya and laghu guna these are kaphhar and dhatushoshak which leads to shoshan of medodhatu.*

*Jau (Barley)*

Jau is kaphavikarhar due to its ruksha, laghu guna, Kashaya ras and vata dosha aggravating properties, as a result helpful in Medoroga. As barley contains a lot of fiber; it helps one feel full for a longer period of time. So, one does not get cravings for snacks very often.

*Kulthi (Horsegram)*

Kulthi has ushnaveerya, kashaya ras and amla vipaka. With its kashaya ras and ushnaveerya kulthi has kaph- medohar properties. Horse gram and other legumes are high in protein and fiber. Protein and fiber rich foods are typically high-satiety i.e. they keep a person full and less hungry when dieting.

*Chana daal*

Chana daal causes rukshta (dryness ) in the body because of its laghu, sheetviryra and madhur-kashsyaya ras properties. It is high in fibre and helps to lower cholesterol. It also has a very low glycemic index, high fiber which is important for Obesity patients.

*Masoor Dal*

Masoor dal also causes rukshta (dryness) in the body because of its laghu, sheetviryra and madhur-kashsyaya ras properties. It has low contents of fats and is enriched with fiber. Masoor Dal controls appetite and can make one feel fuller for longer period of time.
Toor daal (Arhar Daal)
It balances kapha by increasing level of vata.\[^{12}\] It is high in protein and soluble fiber, two nutrients required for weight loss

Mung Daal
Mung posseses Kashaya-madhur ras, sheetveerya, katuvipaka, ruksha- laghu- vishad guna and kaphnashak karma, which are beneficial in the chikitsa of Medoroga.\[^{13}\] Mung beans provide fiber and protein, two satiating nutrients that can help control hunger so you can reduce your calorie intake to lose overall body fat.

Madhu (Honey)
Madhu is guru but kaphashamak.\[^{14}\] It is also yogvahi in nature means carries the properties of drugs added to it. According to a 2010 study published in the journal of American college of nutrition, Honey had less on an effect on Blood Sugar than regular table sugar. That is important in controlling one’s appetite since rapid swings in blood sugar levels can trigger hunger, even if you don’t truly need more food

Laaja
Laaja is described as ruksha, laghu and kapha-medoohar.\[^{15}\] While there is no puffed rice diet, this nutty-tasting, low-calorie cereal makes a good choice if a person is trying to lose weight or limit sodium intake. But its high-glycemic index means it may not keep one feeling full for too long. Compared to other ready-to-eat cereals, puffed rice is very low in calories.

Tikta, Katu and Kashaya Articles
Katu rasa specially indicated for the cure of Upachaya rog i.e. Medoroga. It also balances kapha by its laghu,ushna and ruksha guna.\[^{16}\] Tikta rasa also has ruksha and laghu guna with lekhan and Medoshoshak karma.\[^{17}\] Kashaya rasa dries up sharirik Kleda and balances kapha dosha because of its rukha and laghu guna.\[^{18}\]

Takra (Buttermilk)
Takra is digestive, stimulant, agnivardhk and recommended in Medoroga.\[^{19}\] It’s possible to lose weight with the help of buttermilk if used to replace snacks that contain more calories.

Sura( Jirna Madya)
Although Sura is amla rasa and amla vipaka but being a ushnaveerya, ruksha and tikshana article it is helpful in the Medoroga.\[^{20}\]

Vartaku (Eggplant)
Vartaku possesses katu tikta rasa and katuvipaka and ushnaveerya, all work for Medoroga.\[^{21}\] Eggplant is a great food to help you lose weight. Eggplant is a low-carb, nutrient-dense, calorie-poor food, meaning that it contains high levels of nutrients but not a lot of calories or carbohydrates.

Triphala
Triphala is ruksha, agnideepak and kaphanashak,\[^{22}\] so it is helpful in Medoroga. Triphala, also known as the “queen mother” of remedies in ayurvedic medicine, according to Almine Barton, licensed acupuncturist and owner of Indigenous Medicine Therapies in Bend, Oregon. Triphala is an herbal formula that simultaneously cleanses tones and detoxifies the entire digestive system, which can lead to weight loss.

Guggulu
Guggulu possesses katu, tikta, kashaya ras, katu vipaka, ushnaveerya and laghu, ruksha guna. Having all above characteristic, guggulu is indicated in Medoroga.\[^{23}\] In Medoroga specifically old guggulu is used because has atilekhan property.

Lauha Bhasma
It has lekhana action and burns excess fat. Thus, it is also useful in obesity. Lauha bhasma works well in central obesity and reduces belly fat. Lauha Bhasma is Kapha Medohara, as it is possessing Tikta-Kashaya Rasa, which does Shoshana of kleda, meda, sweda, mutra, pureesha, sleshma in the body thus doing Karshana.\[^{24}\]

Trikatu
Trikatu is the combination of three herbs Saunth, Maricha and Peepali. It is agnideepak, medohar, kaphahar and Shooltanashak.\[^{25}\] Trikatu churna also burns accumulated fats by rectifying the fat me-
代谢在身体中的作用和改善代谢力。

**Sarshapa Tail (Mustard oil)**

Mustard seeds are low in calories and carbohydrates, so the seeds may be a beneficial addition to your weight loss meal plan. [26]

**Ela (Small cardamom)**

Ela is katuras and laghuguna yukta, it is kapha and medahar. [27] Cardamom also helps fend off fat accumulation in a common problem area – the abdominal region. For many people, the fat tends to sit around the belly, putting them at risk of a host of metabolic problems and even cardiovascular problems. Research now tells us that cardamom powder taken as a supplement may help prevent this abdominal fat deposition.

**Til Tail (Sesame oil)**

Til tail is beneficial in Medoroga by virtue of its madhur-kashaya rasa and ushnaveerya properties. [28] Studies suggest that polyunsaturated fatty acids in sesame oil may play a role in the reduction of body fat. These polyunsaturated fatty acids increase the plasma levels of the hormone leptin, which is a hormone that regulates body weight. Leptin goes to the satiety center of the brain providing a full and satisfied feeling.

**Shaaka (Vegetables)**

Green leafy vegetables contain compounds known as thylakoids that trigger satiety signals in humans to help people regulate food intake, prevent weight gain, and promote weight loss. Generally all kind of Shaakas is Laghu, ruksha and kaphvatashamak so they should be included in Diet [29]

**Shilajeet**

Shilajeet has kaphashamak property because of its katu- tikta ras and katuvipaka. Shilajeet is beneficial in medoroga because of its chhedan karma. [30] It has well established “Fat Scraping Action” to lower Body Fat and increases lean muscle mass. According to Ayurveda, shilajit possesses “lekhaniya” or fat Scraping Qualities that remove excess fat and accumulations in the body.

**Ushna jal (Hot water)**

Drinking hot water is beneficial in diseases like kapha related disorders, aamvata, decreases fat deposition in the body and cleanses the urinary bladder. [31] Cold water is absorbed a little faster than hot water, so drinking a cup of hot water could help one feel fuller a bit longer than drinking the same amount of cold water.

**DISCUSSION**

Sthoulya as described in Ayurveda can be closely compared with Obesity. The main cause of Obesity is excessive intake of calories and less physical activity to burn those calories. Similarly in Ayurveda excessive accumulation of meda dhatu leads to sthoulya or medoroga. In today’s hectic schedule, in the race of meeting deadlines, a person has no time for physical effort or exercise, so putting its health on back foot.

Ayurvedic texts have mentioned sthoola persons under ashtaninditta purush and they are difficult to treat than others. Ayurveda has given equal importance to pathya- apathyya regarding the treatment of most of the diseases. Pathya ahara plays a important role as that of medicine especially in the disease like sthoulia. Considering the pathological factors, the Acharya have advocated numerous pathya aharas for sthoulya under the caption of santaranottatha vikaras. Acharya has stressed upon the use of guru and apatarpana articles as a special regimen for sthoulya. Commentators like Chakrapaani and Gangadhar had mentioned that sthokabhojan or alpabhojan are best for karshana. They have also emphasized on laghu and ruksha ahara sevan.

So articles mentioned above are having same properties that’s why recommended in sthoulya.

**CONCLUSION**

Excessive accumulation of kapha and meda with other factors eventually leads to Sthoulya roga, so specific diet management as discussed above should be followed to combat Sthoulya Roga. The weight loss expected to be gradual and long-lasting.
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