Obesity – An Ayurvedic Review

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ABSTRACT:
Obesity is a major health problem of modern society which is due to sedentary lifestyle and faulty dietary habits. Compared with other persons, obese persons are at increased health risk for many diseases, which shortens the life span and working capacity of human being. In Ayurveda, obesity can be correlated with the Medoroga which is Kapha predominant Vyadhi and caused by vitiation of Medodhatu. For the management of this disease, there are so many medicines and surgery are described in modern medicine but till date no any perfect therapy is found. But with the help of Ayurveda, obese persons can reduce their weight without side effects.

KEYWORD: Ayurveda; Medodhatu; Medoroga; Obesity.

INTRODUCTION: Ayurveda is science of life. Its two basic aims, to protect health of healthy person and to eliminate the ailments of diseased person. Now a day, every person is busy in getting his life’s goal. Nobody has time to follow Dinacharya and Ritucharya for healthy life. Due to this continuous change in life styles and altered dietetic habits, person has become the victim of many diseases. Medoroga is one of them. The physiology of the body depends upon the structural and functional homeostasis of Dosha, Dhatu, Mala, and Agni along with Atma, Indriya and Mana1. Vitiation or imbalance of any of the above mentioned components leads to the development of disease. Acharya Charaka has also defined a healthy person as the one who possesses optimum level of all Dhatus, Agni, strong sense organs and who can tolerate hunger, heat, cold, physical exercise etc. The two great authorities of Ayurveda have defined health in reference to obesity and asthenia. The obese persons are more likely to suffer from grave diseases when compared to
asthenics and the management of such disease is difficult in obese ones. Acharya Charaka has included in Ashtounindita Purusha and also listed this problem under Santarpanajanita Vyadhi.

A person having pendulous appearance of Sphika, Udara and Stana due to excess deposition of Meda along with MamsaDhatu and also having unequal and abnormal distribution of Meda with reduced zeal towards life is called Atisthula (Medoroga)³. This is Kapha predominant Vyadhi⁴. So, vitiation of Kapha also leads to vitiation of Meda Dhatu (Ashrayashrayeebhava). In this disease, the excessive production of abnormal Meda Dhatu⁵ is clearly visualized. The main culprit in pathogenesis of Medoroga is Kapha and Meda. Therefore, the first line of treatment is considered to restrict the excess production of Kapha and Meda.

NEED OF THE STUDY

World Health Organization⁶ estimated that, the worldwide prevalence of obesity more than doubled between 1980 and 2014. Overall, about 13% of the world’s adult population (11% of men and 15% of women) was obese in 2014. Obesity provides the platform for so many hazards like: cardiovascular diseases, which were the leading cause of death in 2012; diabetes; musculoskeletal disorders (especially osteoarthritis); some cancers. Recently, the whole world is looking behind it how to improve the life style and dietary habits to combat from this disease.

For the management of this disease there are so many medicines and surgery are described in modern medicine but till date no any perfect therapy is found. But in Ayurvedic classic there are so many treatments and life style modifications are described to prevent and cure Medoroga.

NIDANA (Causative Factors)

All the causative factors described in Ayurvedic classics can be classified into four broad categories-  

1. Aharatmaka Nidana  
2. Viharatmaka Nidana  
3. Manas Nidana  
4. Anya Nidana

1. Aharatmaka Nidana:

Aharatmaka Nadanas like Guru, Madhura, Sheeta, Snigdha dominant diet, Navanna and excessive intake of food etc. are responsible factors for Medoroga. Ahararasa plays a major role for increasing Medadhatus in Medoroga. So, Acharya Sushruta has mentioned Sthaulya and Karshya depend upon the quality and quantity of Ahararasa.

2. ViharatmakaNidana:

Viharatmaka Nidanas like Divaswapna (day sleep), Avyayam (lack of exercise) and Avyavaya (lack of intercourse) etc. are responsible factors. Decreased physical activity increase Kapha and deposition of Meda excessively.

3. Manas(psychological)Nidana:
Acharya Charaka mentioned Harshanitya (Uninterrupted cheerfulness) and Achintana (Lack of anxiety) etc. are responsible for Medovriddhi.

4. Anya Nidana:

Acharya Charaka has mentioned a specific Nidana Beejadosha (hereditary factor) which plays a major role for Medovriddhi.

PURVARUPA (Premonitory symptoms):

Purvarupa of Medoroga has not been mentioned in our classics. According to Acharya Charaka, the MedovahaSrotodustiLakshanas which are also mentioned as Purvarupa of Prameha can be considered as Purvarupa of Sthaulya. Keeping the views of Acharya Charaka in mind, Lakshana of Kaphavridhdi like Alasya, Angashaithilya, Madhurasyata, Atinidra, Atipipasa etc. may be considered as purvarupa.

RUPA(Symptoms):

Acharyacharaka has described 8 specific Rupas which are as follows – Ayushohrasa, Javoparodha, Kriccha Vyavaya, Daurbalya, Daurgandhya, Svedabadha, Kshudhatimatrata and Pipasaatiyoga. The cardinal or PratyatmaLakshana of Sthaulya has been enlisted by Charaka are: ChalaSphika, ChalaUdara, ChalaStana, AyathaUpachaya and Anutsaha³.

UPADRAVA (Complications):

Acharya Charaka has reported that if Sthaulya is left untreated, Pramehapidika, Jvara, Bhagandara, Vidradhi, Vatavikara may be arisen out.

SAMPRAPTI(pathogenesis):

In the pathogenesis of Sthaulya, all the three Doshas are vitiated, especially Kledaka Kapha, Pachaka Pitta, Samana and Vyana Vayu. Due to the various Aharatmaka, Viharatmaka, Manasika Nidana Sevana, leads to Kaphavridhdi and produces Jatharagnimandhya. Jatharagnimandhya results in production of Ama, which leads to Sanga in Medovaha Srotas and then Medodhatvagnimandhya, whereas Beeja Svabhava Nidana directly leads to Medodhatvagnimandhya and this leads to Medovriddhi (Amarupa). All these things together cause the Medovahasrotodusti. Srotasangodhna of different Srotas is caused by increased Meda, which affects the Poshana of different Dhatus and it again leads to Medodhatuvriddhi. Due to the less Poshana (nutrition) of different Dhatus, Ashtadosha of Medoroga i.e. Ayushohrasa, Kshudraswasa, Daurbalyaetc are produced. Again that Srotasangdha caused the Margavarodha of Vayu. This Avarodhita Vayu reached to the Koshtha and caused Jatharagni Sandhukshana, which lead to Atikshuda and Vishamagni. Further it contributes in the aggravation of the disease.

The whole process of the manifestation of disease is given here in schematic form –
MEDOROGA

Aharatmak aNidana

Viharatmak aNidana

Manasa Nidana

BeejaSva bhava

Kaphavriddhi

Jatharagnimandhy

Production of Ama

Sanga in MedovahaSrotasa

Medodhatvagnimandhya

Increase in Medodhatu compared

Srotovarodha due to excess accumulation of Medas

VataPrakopa

Agni Vriddhi

Increased appetite
CHIKITSA SIDDHANTA (Management):

Management of Obesity in *Ayurveda* is divided into three parts: –

1) Nidana Parivarjana
2) Samshodhana
3) Samshamana

1) **NIDANA PARIVARJANA**
This is the first line of management of Medoroga. Aharatmaka, Viharatmaka and Manasa Nidanas are responsible for Medorogashould be avoided.

2) **SAMSHODHANA**
*Shodhana* means Apakarsana of Dosha. *Atisthul a* patients with Adhika Dosha and Adhika Bala should be treated with Samshodhanatherapy, including *Vamana, Virechana, Ruksha Niruha, Raktamoksha* and *Sirovirechana*. *Ruksha, Ushna & Tikshnavasti* are also suggested by *Charaka*. *Ruksha Udvartana* is the *Bahya Shodhana* indicated for the management of *Sthaulya*. ‘*Snehana Karma* is always restricted for the patients of *Sthaulya*’, however on exigency usage of *Taila* is recommended.

3) **SAMSHAMANA**
The therapy which could not excrete the *Dosha* from the body and also not disturb the equation of balanced *Dosha* in the body but, it brings equilibrium to imbalance of *Dosha* is called Samshamana and is of seven types i.e., *Pachana, Deepana, Kshudha Nigraha, TrishnaNigraha, Vyayama, Atapa Sevana* and *Maruta Sevana*. Among the *Sad Upakramas, Langhana and Rukshana* can be administered for Samshamana purpose having *Ruksha Guna* dominance in them. Alleviation of *Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha* especially *Samana Vayu, PachakaPitta* and *Kledaka Kapha* along with depletion of *Medodhatu* by increasing *Medodhatvagni* is main goal of treatment in *Sthaulya*.

Administration of *Guru* and *Apatarpana* articles which possess additional *Vata, Shlesha* and *Meda Nasaka* properties is considered as an ideal for Samshamana therapy.

*Gangadhara* added *Guru, Ruksha* and *Ushna* properties, most suitable to alleviate *Vata, Shlesha* and *Meda* at ones. *Katu, Tikta* and *Kashaya Rasa* can be used for treatment of *Sthaulya* and *Dasavidha Langhana* therapy is mentioned for the same by *Charaka*. Besides that *Susruta* has included regimomial treatment and narrated *Paschima Maruta* i.e., winds from western direction as *Meda Vishosana* due to its *Ruksha* property. In *AshtangaSangraha* usage of *Laghu, Ushna, Ruksha, Tikshna, Sara, Kathina, Vishada, Khara* and *SukshmaGunarare* suggested for *Sthaulya* management as they possess *Kaphanashaka* and *Sthaulya* actions. *AcharyaCharaka* has mentioned *LekhaniyaDasemaniDravyasand inSusrutaSamhitavarious groups of drugs like VarunadiGana, SalaSaradiGana, RodhradiGana, ArkadiGana,*
MuskadiGana etc. are described as Medonashaka.

According to AshtangaSangraha, Pragabhakta Kala i.e. administration of medicine before meal is insisted for Krishikarana purpose. It has been further elaborated by Sharangadhara and advised to take Lekhana drug on empty stomach in early morning and before a meal.Further, it has been emphasized to consider Agnibala, Dehabala, Doshabala and Vyadhibala prior to fixation of dose and duration of treatment for Sthaulya(Dalhana). It has been advised by Charaka to follow constant and prolonged therapeutic intervention for management of Sthaulya (Gangadhara).

Some Samshamana Yoga mentioned in Charaka Samhita like Guduchi, Bhadra Musta, Triphala, Takrarista, Makshika, VidangadiLauha, BilvadiPanchmulawith MadhuandShilajat withAgnimanthaSvarasa are advised to practice for prolonged period.Rasanjana is mentioned as the best for the treatment of Sthaulya, while Guggulu is mentioned as the best for the disorder of Vata andMeda.In Ashtanga Hridaya, Gomutra Haritaki, Rodhrasava, Navakaguggulu, Amrutaguggulu, Vardhamana Bhallataka Rasayanaetc. are the remedies added for the management of Sthaulya.Madhu has Guru and Ruksha properties; hence it is ideal one for management of Sthaulya.

### PATHYA–APATHYA AHARA

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CONCLUSIONS

Meda and Kapha potentiating diet, sedentary lifestyle, less mental thinking along with genetic predisposition factors are play a major role in aetiogenesis of Medoroga. There is no specific treatment for obesity, only diet and exercise can play important role in management of obesity.

References


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