

Obesity management through Ayurveda: A review

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Abstract

Overweight and obesity are the fifth leading risks for global deaths. Being obese or overweight brings significant risks at a range of different points throughout life. At least 2.8 million adults die each year as a result of being overweight or obese. An adult who has a BMI of 25 -29.9 is considered overweight, and an adult who has a BMI over 30 is considered obese. Obesity increases the likelihood of various diseases, particularly high blood pressure, insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, coronary artery disease (heart attacks), cerebro-vascular diseases (stroke), gout, gallstones, colon cancer, sleep apnea, nonalcoholic fatty liver disease, arthritis etc. In addition, 44% of the diabetes burden, 23% of the ischemic heart disease burden and between 7% and 41% of certain cancer burdens are attributable to overweight and obesity. Non-communicable diseases currently cause almost two thirds of all deaths worldwide. This review revolves around the details of Obesity described in various texts of Ayurveda. An attempt has been made to understand Obesity through Modern and Ayurvedic perspective and to find out the likely solutions for obesity through Ayurveda. Obesity has been described as *Sthaulya* or *Medoroga* in Ayurvedic texts. Obesity is primarily a *Kapha dosha* (humor) and *medo dhathu* (fat) predominant condition. *Kapha* and *medo dhathu* increasing food and life style result in abnormal increase in *medo dhathu* and gradually develop blocks in subtle channel which transport *dhathu*, life force and fire principle or *Agni*. Impaired function of fire principle cause craving for food resulting in over eating which again increase accumulated fat. *Nidanas* of *Sthaulya*, mentioned in classics are now changing. Increasing stress, faulty dietary habits and decreased awareness regarding exercise are becoming the prominent causative factors. In society, the percentage of population suffering from *Sthaulya* is increasing day by day. Therefore the public should be made aware regarding the disease and its severe complications before it reaches to its epidemic level. Prevention is the most important key factor for this disease. Subjects should be educated to follow the life style changes which have been recommended by Ayurveda. If we abide by the Ayurveda *Ritu charya* and *Dina charya* help to live a healthy and longer life. Many investigations and experiments have been launched out and medicine invented. Various Internal and External treatment modalities are described in the treatment of Obesity. But this has been a health problem still all over the world. This article is to review the eteopathogenesis of obesity and various theories of its management through Ayurveda.

Key words – Obesity, Overweight, *Sthaulya*, *Medo dhathu*, Ayurveda

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