

Lifestyle Disorders & Their Management in Ayurveda

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Abstract

The term lifestyle is rather a diffuse concept often used to denote “the way of people live”, reflecting a whole range of social values, attitudes & activities. The incidence of lifestyle diseases like hypertension, diabetes mellitus, dyslipidemia, and overweight/obesity associated with cardiovascular diseases is high on the rise and they are associated with lifestyle changes. In India prevalence of these diseases has reached alarming proportions in the recent years. Life factors such as personality traits, living habits, nutrition, physical exercise, use of alcohol, drugs & smoking, etc are associated with particular diseases.

Ayurveda is recognized as foremost life science and describes ways to prevent and manage lifestyle disorders i.e. metabolic disorders. The proper management perspectives in Ayurveda were described in form of Ahar, Vihar, Medicinal treatments, Panchakarma treatment and Rejuvenation.

INTRODUCTION

Over last few decades, the rapid economical development increased westernization of lifestyle prevalence of the disease has reached alarming proportion among Indians in the recent years.¹ The food pattern changed considerably which changed our diet by the use of lots of processed foods, foods with saturated fats, foods with sugar content less and less fruits and vegetables, which can be understood as the Mithya ahara in Ayurveda. Life style diseases are also called as the diseases of longevity or diseases of civilization². So it is mandatory to develop a health oriented life style. Where the scope is almost fully lies on Ayurvedic concepts, because of its references of preventive & also curative measures.

How the life styles leads to diseases

We can understand that almost all the diseases are caused by the *mithya ahara's* & *vihara's* (improper diet & lifestyle) which we follow. e.g. overeating of junk food, dairy products, irregular timings of meal etc. Peoples are leading a mechanical life without considering their physical, mental, spiritual, social well being. E.g. Lack of exercise,

sedentary habits, Addiction of alcohol smoking, tobacco chewing, sleep disturbances and suppression of natural urges³.

So they are suffering later with chronic and incurable disease which is nothing but a product of their ignorance. In fast developing countries increasing globalization brings nothing but the changing life style ignorance of health by sticking to the strict pattern of jobs. The arousal of such crisis is just because of inappropriate relationship of people with the environment.

Life style Changes and Associated Diseases:

The incidence of lifestyle diseases like hypertension, Diabetes mellitus, Obesity, Arteriosclerosis etc. are associated with cardiovascular diseases are high on the rise. Cardiovascular disorder continues to be the major cause of mortality about 30% of all death of worldwide¹.

Continuous and long time work without breaks, related to the people working in financial sector and also to IT Professionals can develop Spinal problems, Carpal tunnel syndrome, Joint pains, Dementia, Depression, Anxiety Disorders etc. Addiction of smoking, alcohol and drugs in adult Causes more incidence of diseases of renal, respiratory, liver diseases & cancer².

MANAGEMENT ASPECT OF LIFESTYLE DISORDERS:-

1. PREVENTIVE ASPECT:

The specialty of the life style diseases is that, it takes years to develop. And if occurred once, is not easy to cure. Here we can understand the importance of preventive measures. So one who likes to maintain good health should be aware of his life styles, & should follow following rules:-

A. Diet (Ahar) –

Rules of diet in Ayurvedic classics (ashtvidh ahar visheshayatan) states as Quality & quantity of food both should be balanced. Excess of food & low calorie diet leading to starvation both are not good. Freshly prepared food should be taken in proper time, at a proper place, in good company, after digestion of previous food, & in appropriate amount⁴. Use of Ghee –a good source of Omega-3 fatty acids .It also reduces atherogenic lipids in the serum. Help in enteric coating of molecules to help drug delivery system, essential for brain development⁵. Should take Vegetarian diet cause, it helps mineralization of bones. Non vegetarian diet like meat causes demineralization of bones as - during metabolism lots of H⁺ ions are liberated in order to offset acidity generated , calcium hydroxide from the bone is removed resulting osteoporosis⁶.

B. Measures To Be Adopted For Preventing Life Style Diseases

Some important and easy changes that we can impart in our life style are Follow the Dinacharya⁷ (daily regimen) and Rithucharya (seasonal regimen)⁸ also adopt which are

possible in today's lifestyle. Daily practices of some Yogas like Surya namaskaram, Practice of Pranayama., Daily Chanting of some manthras.

Avoid processed foods with saturated fats, trans-fats, cholesterol, salt (Na) and added sugars. Avoid as possible as mobile phones, computers. Reduce the consumption of alcohol and smoking etc addictions. Further extension of anti-tobacco measure including higher taxes, smoking bans in public places etc.

For all these measures, there is necessity of awareness programs to make rural and urban people aware. But, that should contain the methods which will help them on the basis of their life style.

2) CURATIVE ASPECT:

A. Samshamana chikitsa-

a. **Langhana**⁹ – Langhana is main treatment advised in metabolic disorders, also important treatment in Santarpanjanya diseases.

b. Medicinal treatment¹⁰:-

In treatments there are various forms of herbal, mineral and herbo-mineral drugs are available as per disease treatment.eg Triphala Churna, Chavanprash etc.

B. Panchakarma Chikitsa¹¹:

In Panchakarma therapy there are special forms of reduction therapies that help in detoxification of patients.

Vamana(Emesis) – best for vitiated kapha resulting in ailments of lungs , stomach & obesity.

Virechana (Purgation)- best for vitiated pitta . indicated in constipation , raktapitta & pitta disorders .

Basti (Enema) - method of an Enema. Eliminate vitiated vata.

Raktamokshna(Blood Letting) – a method of bloodletting supposedly toxic blood is eliminated.

Snehana (Oleation) - oil application to body benefit through absorption in to skin of cholesterol & other lipids.

Swedana(Steam)– steaming body after oleation may help increase the lipid metabolism through the heat generation in the skin

Nasya- it is administration of drugs through nasal passage. It is useful in psychological disorders.

C. Rejuvenation¹² –

Practice of Rasayana Chikithsa (Rejuvenation Therapy) is the treatment by which one gets the excellence of immunity which nourishes body tissues as well as mind also. The vital fluid produced by the digestion fluid i.e. rasa provides nutrition enhances immunity, and sustains life.

Importance of Ayurvedic Treatment in Life Style Diseases

Ayurveda treats the body as a whole not only the affected part where deformation is visible. Ayurveda has answers for physical, mental, social and spiritual illness of a person. As all the disease development due to life style changes are purely individual based, no other systems can provide a clear prediction of what disease this patient can develop. In the system of Ayurveda, there is difference in treatment on the basis of desa, kala and vaya. Though some treatments in Ayurveda are not easy to follow, there are a lot of remedies mentioned which can be practiced easily and are cheap in cost.

Scope of Ayurveda in Management of Life Style Diseases:

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. 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.

Ayurvedic System is now getting recognition and fame worldwide because of its unique therapeutic procedures. In western countries a lot of people are being attracted to Ayurveda for the cure of long standing diseases. Increase awareness of the Yoga, Meditation, Pranayama for well-being. The individuals who are going through hectic patterns in their work needs preventive measures ,an Ayurvedic Physician can give list of suitable regimens the individual can be followed.

CONCLUSION:

The root cause of all human sufferings is ignorance, while that of all progress & happiness is unclouded knowledge. Naturally, everybody has to die of something at sometime. But, Life style diseases take the people before the actual time comes. Our choices are to give attention to our body or leave it as a machine itself. Which mean we must avoid the factors which cause imbalance and there must be regular use of factors maintain balance of our body. It is said that by observance of this rule unbalanced condition of *Doshas*, *dhatu*s does not pursue and balance is restored. The 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.

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