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## Sthoulya Review With Special Reference To Obesity

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**Abstract:** An abnormal accumulation of body fat, usually 20-30% or more over an individual ideal body weight is known as Obesity. Obesity is given as *Sthoulya* or *Medo Roga* in *Ayurveda*. When a person's food intake is with high-fat food, fried items, fast food items etc., along with their lifestyle is sedentary leads to excess fat accumulation in the body which gets deposited in the numerous body channels. Appropriate *Ayurvedic Shamana Chikitsa* with *Shodhan Chikitsa* are used to reduce obesity that also with no side effects. *Udavartana, Basti, Virechana, Vamana* these *Shodhana* procedures gives effective results, according to *Dosha* vitiation. There is an important role in the management of Obesity by proper lifestyle modifications and *PathyaApathya*. *Sthoulya* (Obesity) is such a disease, which leads to so many hazards like hypertension, diabetes mellitus etc. as well as psychological disorders like stress. The mortality and morbidity rates are more in obese person. It is one of the most common and most neglected public health problems in the present world. In rich countries, obesity is more common among the less educated, but in poor countries, obesity is more common among the highly educated. In classics *Sthoulya* (Obesity) has been described under the *Santarpanajanya Vikara* and in *Bahudoshavastha* condition. *Ayurvedic* treatment aims not only at the radical removal of the causative factors of the disease, but also at the restoration of *Doshika* equilibrium.

**KEY WORDS:** : Obesity, *Sthoulya*, Lifestyle disorder

### INTRODUCTION

Good health plays an important role in human development, it is universally accepted. Good health is based on the equilibrium state of *Agni, Dosha, Dhatu, and Mala*, according to *Ayurveda*. Also, in *Ayurveda* there is clear-cut emphasis on maintaining physical, mental and spiritual well-being. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines good health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity, which is in close proximity to the definition of good health mentioned in *Ayurvedic* classics. With the evolution of civilization man has become more and more physically inactive. Now a day the codes and conducts narrated in the ancient texts of *Ayurveda* are being ignored. Modernization, science and technological development and other modern things lead to still more sedentary life styles. And due to which human beings unknowingly invited a number of diseases, from which *Sthoulya* is one which disturbs physical, mental as well as social health of an individual. *Sthoulya* is the abnormal & excess accumulation of *Medo Dhatu*. Frequent and excess intake of *Kapha* rising food items, sedentary lifestyle, lack of physical and mental exercise are the most common etiological factors of this disease. *Sthoulya* can also occur due to *Beeja Dosha* i.e., hereditary causes. In modern medical science *Sthoulya* is compared with Obesity and it is defined as excess of body fat that leads to a health risk. It is caused by excess calorie intake, but endocrine disorders like hypothalamic disorders, Hypothyroidism, Cushing's syndrome etc. can also be the cause of Obesity. Obesity can also due to genetic cause. Etymological derivation of *Sthoulya* in Sanskrit grammar each and every word is derived from a particular root word called as *Moola Dhatu*. Similarly the word *Sthoulya* is derived from *Moola Dhatu* "Sthu" with "Ach" *Pratyaya*, which stands probably for bulky or big or thick. Definition of *Sthoulya* - A person in whom excessive and abnormal increase of *Medo Dhatu* along with *Mamsa Dhatu* is found, which result into pendulous appearance of buttocks, belly and breasts is called as *Sthoola*. Obesity- it can be defined as an excess of body fat that cause health risk. The term is normally reserved to describe people who are grossly overweight, while the term overweight is more frequently used to designate mild degree of adiposity. Approximately 20% of excess over desirable weight imparts a health risk.

**Meda**

*Sthoulya* is a *Dushya* dominant disorder, in which *Meda* plays a major role in its pathogenesis. *Meda* is said to be an important *Dhatu* among *Sapta Dhatu* with its main function to smoothen the body by its *Sneha* property.

- **Synonyms of Meda**

1) *Mamsaja* and *Mamsatej* : The formation of *Medo Dhatu* is from *Mamsa Dhatu* by *Mamsa Agnipaka*. So, it is known as *Mamsaja* or *Mamsatej*.

2) *Asthikrita* : The formation of *Asthi Dhatu* is also from *Medo Dhatu* so it is known as *Asthikrita*.

3) *Vasa* and *Vapa* : *Vasa* is the fatty substance which locates in *Mamsa*, when it is deposited in abdomen, it is termed as *Vapa*.

4) *Majja* : *Asthi Madhya Gata Sneha* is called as *Majja*.

The total quantity of *Meda* and *Vasa* is 2 and 3 *Anjali* respectively. Thus, there is 5 *Anjali* total *Meda* content of body. The proportion is raised in *Sthoulya*.

- **Karma of Meda Dhatu**

*Snehana*, *Sweda*, *Drudhatva*, *Asthipusti* and *Netra*, *Gatra*, *Snigdhatata* are the main functions of the *Medo Dhatu*.

- **Snehana**: The luster of skin, hairs and eyes etc is due to *Sneha* Property.

- **Sweda**: To produce *Sweda* is the main function of *Meda*. *Sweda* is mentioned as *Mala* of *Meda*.

- **Asthi Pusti**: Another function of *Meda* is nourishment of further *Dhatu* i.e., *Asthi*.

- **Drudhatva**: It is possible with the help of *Snayu*, the *Upadhatu* of *Meda*. Both *Snayu* and *Sandhi* are directly related to the *Asthi Dhatu*. *Snayu* provides supports to *Asthi* and *Sandhi* helps in joint formation.

- **Netra and Gatrasnigdhatata**: These are the symptoms of *Sthoulya* which may arise through increased *Snehana* function of *Meda*.

- **Medovaha Srotas**

The channels, which give nutrition to the *Medodhatu* or the vessels carrying the nutritive material up to the site of *Medodhatu* can be considered as *Medovaha srotas*.

- **Nidana Panchaka**

The need for proper diagnosis of a disease before planning its management needs no special emphasis as it has been rightly described by *Charaka*. He says;

The meaning says, before prescribing any medicine the *Rogapareeksha* should be done properly before prescribing the medicines. *Nidana* is to arrive at the conclusive diagnosis of the disease due consideration of the *Nidana Panchaka* which are : *Hetu* (Etiology), *Purvarupa* (Prodromal symptoms), *Rupa* (Symptomatology), *Upashaya* (Relieving and Aggravating factors) and *Samprapti* (Pathogenesis).

- **Nidana**

The knowledge of *Nidana* help the physician towards therapeutics and also in advising about *Pathyaapathya*.

*Sthoulya* is due to the vitiation of *Meda* and *Shleshma*. *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned more about the exogenous causes and *Acharya Sushruta* and *Avharya Vagbhatta* mentioned about the endogenous causes of *Sthoulya*. Exogenous causes are due to the diets that increases the *Meda* or body fat where as *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Mala*, *Srota* are under endogenous causes.

*Nidana* of *Sthoulya* can be categorized as;

- *Aharaja Nidana*
- *Viharaja Nidana*
- *Manasika Nidana*
- *AnyaNidana*

**Samprapti :**

Series of pathological events taking place during the journey of a healthy human body towards any disease is known as *Samprapti*. In the disease manifestation there is mandatory involvement of *Dosha, Dushya, Strotas, Agni, Ama* etc. They are called as *Samprapti Ghataka*.

Where as *Acharya Sushruta's* concept of *Kriyakala* says the mode and stages of the development of disease. A good knowledge and understanding of *Samprapti* is very essential for early diagnosis and prognosis. It is also required for preventive and curative measures. To study and understand the *Samprapti of Sthoulya* it is dealt under the headings:

1. *Samanya Samprapti*
2. *Samprapti Ghataka*
3. *Naidanika Samprapti*
4. *Samprapti based on Kriyakala.*

**Purvarupa (Prodromal symptoms)**

The symptoms which appears before the complete manifestation of the disease are known as *Purvarupa*. No one has described the *Purvarupa of Sthoulya*. Similar pathogenesis of *Prameha* and *Sthoulya* are mentioned in *Nidana Sthana of Acharya Charaka*, in both there is vitiation of *Kapha* and *Meda*. Therefore, *Purvarupa of Prameha* and *Medovaha Strotodushti Lakshana* can be considered as *Purvarupa of Sthoulya*.

These are as follows:

- *Atinidra*
- *Tandra*
- *Alasya*
- *Visra Sharira Gandha*
- *Anga Gaurava*
- *Anga Shaitihilyata* etc.

Wherever *Purvarupa* of disease are not mentioned, the weak manifestation of *Rupa* should be considered as *Purvarupa* of the concerned diseases says *Acharya Charaka*. Keeping the views of *Acharya Charaka* in mind, *Lakshana of Kapha Vriddhi* like *Alasya, Angashaitihilya, Madhurasyata, Atinidra, Atipipasa*, etc. may also be considered as *Purvarupa*.

**Roopa (Symptomatology)**

The most important diagnostic parameter of a disease is *Roopa* or *Lakshana*. At this stage, *Dosha Dooshya Samurchana* is completed & the onset of the diseases takes place, which gives rise to appear symptoms of the disease. According the progress of disease these sign & symptoms may change from time to time. Certain symptoms may newly appear while some may disappear as the disease progresses. All the symptoms are not seen in every patient at a time.

The symptomatology of *Sthoulya* is elaborated as follow.

According to *Charaka, Chala Sphika, Chala Udara, Chala Stana* and *Ati Meda-Mamsa Vrddhi* are very obvious in all the patients of *Sthoulya*, hence these may be considered as cardinal symptoms or *Pratyatma Lakshana*.

Besides these cardinal symptoms, *Ashta Dosha* of *Sthoulya* are *Ayusyahrassa, Javoprodha, Kricha Vyavayata, Daurbalya, Daurgandhya, Svedabadha, Ksudha Atimatrata, Pipasa Atiyoga* are the most prominent clinical features of *Sthoulya* as stated by *Charaka, Susruta* and *Ashtanga Samgraha*.

**Chikitsa (Treatment)**

The actions, which bring the equilibrium of *Dhatu* is known as *Chikitsa*.

*Acharya Charaka* has further stated the scope of the term *Chikitsa*. According to him, "*Chikitsa* aims at the radical removal of the causative factors of the disease, and also at the restoration of the *Doshika* equilibrium".

While describing the *Chikitsa* of *Sthoulya*, *Charaka* has said that it is very difficult to treat *Atisthoola* people because, if *Karshana* therapy is applied then it leads to further aggravation of already aggravated *Jathragni* and *Vayu* and if *Brimhana* therapy is applied it further increase the *Meda*. General principles of management of any disorder is ;

Thus, in any disorder management is divided into 3 parts.

1. *Samshodhana*

2. *Samshamana*

3. *Nidana Parivarjana*

*Sthoulya* management is explained in detail as follows;

- **Bahya Chikitsa**

*Ruksha Udvartana* is the *Bahi Parimarjana Chikitsa* which is indicated for the management of *Sthoulya*. *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned *Rooksha Udavartana* for *Sthoulya*. And *Acharya Vagbhata* has mentioned the benefits of *Rooksha Udavartana* as it is *Kaphahara, Medasa Parivilayana, Sthirikarnam Angam etc.*

- **Samshodhana**

*Shodhana* is the therapy in which the *Dosha* which are vitiated are eliminated after mobilizing them from their respective sites by *Adha Marga* or *Urdhva Marga* from the body .

*Samshodhana* therapy is highly recommended for *Sthoulya* management by *Charaka* being a syndromic i.e. *Bahudosha Lakshanas*. *Atisthoulya* patients with *Adhika Dosha* and *Bala* should be treated by *Samshodhana* therapy according to *Vagbhata*.

Description of various *Poorva Karma* and *Pradhana Karma* of *Shodhana* for *Sthoulya* given by various *Acharya* is as follows:

- **Snehana**

For the patients of *Sthoulya*, *Snehana Karma* is always restricted. However, *Lekhaniya, Medohara* properties and *Sthulatvahara Karma* of *Taila* are described in *Ayurveda*. So, usage of *Taila* is recommended.

- **Swedana**

For obese patient, *Sweda* is contraindicated but if essential *Mrudu Sweda* can be given, as it is advised. *Anagneya Sweda* mentioned by *Charaka* can also be adopted, it is given in *Sutrasthana*.

- **Vamana**

Most of the texts have prohibits the use of *Vamana Karma* due to inability to bear the potency of medicine and therapy causing *Pranaparodha* (life threatening condition).

- **Virechana**

Though *Virechana* has not been recommended for patients of *Sthoulya* but *Virechaka Dravya* mentioned in *Ayurvedic* texts like *Haritaki, Katuki, Aragvadha, Trivruta, Danti Dravanti* etc., which have *Medonashaka* property could be applied to the patients of *Sthoulya*. Practically also *Virechana Karma* seems to be beneficial for the *Sthoulya* management.

- **Basti**

*Acharya Charaka* suggested *Ruksha, Ushna & Tikshna Basti* for *Chikitsa* of *Sthoulya* . In *Ayurvedic texts* a number of *Basti Kalpa* are also mentioned but *Lekhana Basti* is considered as the best therapy for *Sthoulya/Medovridhi*.

- **Raktamokshana**

*Raktamokshana* is recommended by *Maharshi Kashyapa* and *Bhavamishra* for the treatment of *Sthoulya* in *Chikitsasthana, Medasvi Dhatri Chikitsa*. *Charaka* has also mentioned *Raktamokshana* for treatment of *Santarpana Janya Vyadhi* including *Atisthoulya*.

- **Nasya**

The use of *Triphaladi Taila Nasya* in the patients of *Medovridhi* has recommended by *Acharya Sushruta*.

- **Samshamana**

The therapy, which does not do *Shodhana* of the *Dosha* , not disturb the equation of balanced *Dosha* and simultaneously bring equilibrium of imbalance of *Dosha* is known as *Samshamana*

*Santarpana Janya Vyadhi, Shleshmika Vikara, Amashayotha Vikara, Rasaja Vikara- Langhana* is advisable and it is the best remedy for the *Sama* state of disease. *Charaka Samhita* has given treatment of *Sthoulya* in following words.

i.e., Administration of *Guru* and *Apatarpana* articles which possess additional *Vata, Shleshma* and *Medonashaka* properties are considered as best for *Shamana* therapy. *Chakrapani* has explained that *Guru* property is essential to alleviate vitiated *Agni* by suppressing the *Atikshudha*. Along with *Guru Dravya*, *Apatarpana Dravya* provides non-nourishment and thus helps to reduce the *Meda*. Such as, *Madhu* possess *Guru* and *Ruksha* properties, hence it is ideal for management of *Sthoulya*.

The drugs planned for *Sthoulya* should have *Deepana & Pachana* property to enhance *Agni*. They should also be *Amapachaka* as obstruction of *Medovaha Srotas* by *Ama* is main factor for *Medoroga*.

The drugs must have *Rookshna & Chedana* property to produce *Srotovishodhana*. Along with these *Teekshna, Ushna, Rooksha, Guna Dravya* are advised as they are opposite to *Manda, Snigdha & Sheeta Guna* of *Kapha & Meda*.

Again, it is told that the causative factors of *Karshya* i.e., *Ruksha Annapana Prayoga, Langhana, Pramitashana, Shoka, Nidra Vega Vinigraha, Ruksha Udavartana, Krodha* etc. can be practiced as line of treatment for *Sthoulya*.

Some important references about *Shamana Chikitsa* of *Sthoulya* are mentioned as follows;

Some *Samshamana Yoga* like *Guduchi, Triphala, Mukshika, Bhadramusta, Takrarishta, Vidangadi Lauha, Bilvadi Panchmula* and *Shilajatu* with *Agnimantha Svarasa* are advised for prolonged period.

- In *Charaka Samhita*, drugs and preparations like *Karshana Yavagu of Gavedhuka, Lekhaniya Mahakashaya, Bibhitaka, Venuyava and Madhudaka* are advocated as *Medonashaka* and *Lekhana*.
- *Akasha* and *Vayu Mahabhuta* dominant *Dravya* are attributed to have *Laghavakara* action, so these can be used for management of *Sthoulya*.
- *Katu* and *Kashaya Rasa* are having *Karshana, Upchayahara* properties, while *Tikta Rasa* is having *Lekhana* and *Medo Upshoshana Karma*.

## DISCUSSION

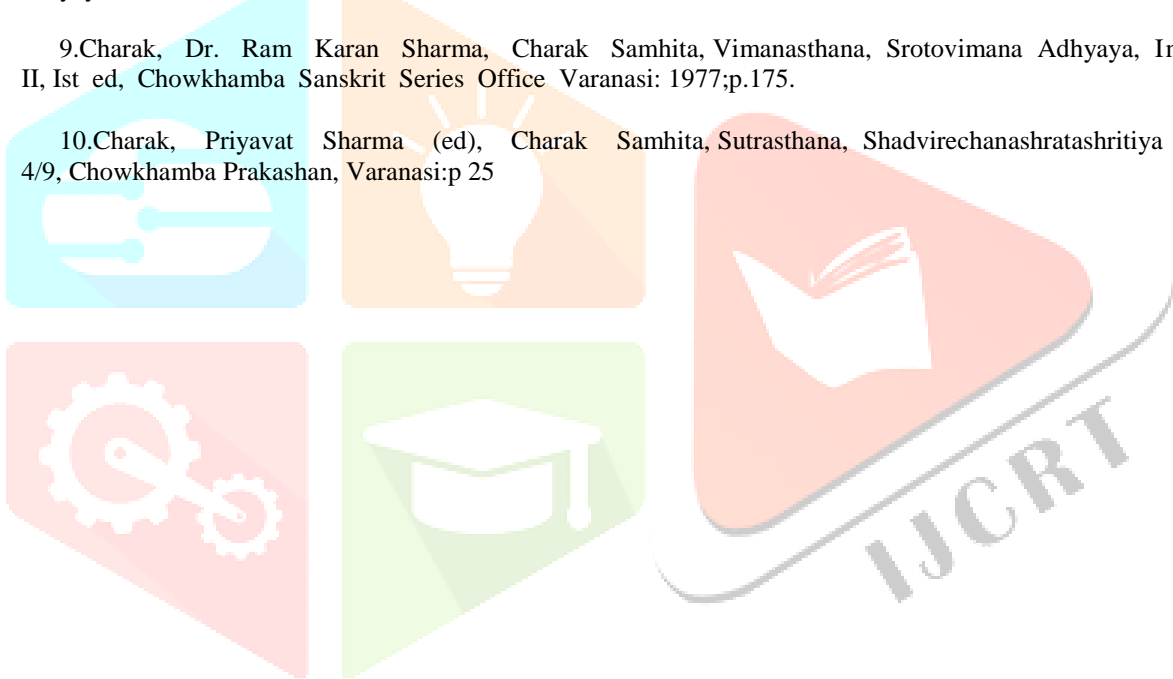
“Heavy and non-nourishing diet” (*Guru Apatarpana*) is the principle treatment for obese according to *Charaka Acharya*. Due to their heaviness diets like these would minimize the force of the aggravated power of digestion and because of their non-nourishing nature, they would help to reduce fat. *Ayurveda* emphasizes the holistic care and treatment in any disease. In the management of disease spiritual, psychological and physical, these all three aspects are given importance to. Exceed expenditure of energy and minimal food intake would be the basic rule to reduce obesity. Now a days *Ayurvedic* management is recognized as the better option for those whom are suffering from the remedy of obesity (*Sthoulya*). *Vata* and *Kapha* reducing diets and drinks and which can reduce fat are advised. Enema with drugs that are sharp (*Tikshna*), ununctous (*Ruksha*) and hot, unction with ununctous (*Ruksha*) drugs, Intake of *Guduchi* (*Tinosporia cordifolia* Miers), *Musta* (*Cyperus rotundus* Linn), *Haritaki* (*Terminalia chebula* Linn), *Bibhitaka* (*Terminalia belerica* Roxb) and *Amalaki* (*Emblica officinalis* Gaertn). Administration of *Takrarishta*. Administration of honey. *Vidanga* (*Embelia ribes* Burn F.), *Nagara* (*Zingiber officinale* Rose.), *Yavaksara* (a preparation of barley containing among others sodium and potassium bicarbonate), powder of black iron along with honey and powder of *Yava* and *Amalaki* can be taken.

## CONCLUSION

You must take precautions rather following treatment after increase in weight, as it is said ‘Prevention is better than cure’. Once you are obese it is very difficult to treat yourself. The person suffering from obesity or prone to the obesity should be encouraged to avoid the foods with high calories, high sugar contents. Follow up of proper *Dinacharya*, proper *Vyayama, Asana* and *Pranayama* such as *Paschimottanasana* (the back stretching pose) *Bhujangasana* (the cobra pose), *Pawanmuktasana* (the wind releasing pose) are helpful in the reduction of body fat. Regular exercises like brisk walking, running and swimming in morning hours for the duration of 30-45 minutes and this duration should be extended day by day as possible. Also it will keep you healthy and away from diseases.

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