



## Review Article

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### A CONCEPTUAL REVIEW ON ROLE OF AAHAR VIHARA IN MANAGEMENT OF STHAULYA (OBESITY)

Monica Aggarwal \*

M.D Scholar, Department of Kayachikitsa, A and U Tibbia College, Delhi

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\*Corresponding author

E-mail: mncgrwl20@gmail.com

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#### ABSTRACT

Sthaulya or obesity is a common lifestyle disorder now-a-days in which a person calorie intake exceeds his daily requirement. Along with decreased physical activity, there is increased deposition of fat in body making a person obese over long term. In Ayurveda, Sthaulya (obesity) is also considered as a Santarpanjanya vikara (over nutritional disorder), in which there is increase in Kapha Dosha and Meda Dhatu accumulation in body. Charaka has considered it under Asthonindniya Purush with difficult treatment. Ayurveda line of management first step includes Nidana Parivarjana which involves restriction of etiological factors causing disease. As Sthaulya is over nutritional disorder, sodietary restrictions along with lifestyle modification in terms of Vihara are urgent for its management. Ayurveda classics have given sufficient focus on Sthaulya Aahara Vihara for its efficient management.

**Keywords:** Sthaulya, Aahara, Vihara

#### INTRODUCTION

Sthaulya is a Santarpanjanya Vikara caused due to over nourishment of body<sup>1</sup>. It is mainly due to excessive consumption of Madhur Rasa causing increase formation of Meda Dhatu in body due to similarity in Mahabhuta composition of both (Prithvi and Jala). Meda Dhatu obstructs body channels hampering formation of other succeeding Dhatu's like Asthi, Majja and Shukra. This leads to various co morbidities. Obstruction in Annava Srotas cause excessive hunger and thirst in a person, making him to eat more and it follows more production of Meda Dhatu. This is a vicious circle. Sthoola person is easily characterized by the pendulous appearance of his buttocks, abdomen and breast and showing little enthusiasm disproportionate to his big body frame.<sup>2</sup> An obese person always complains of weakness, increased sweating, body odour, feeling excessive hunger and thirst. Ayurveda, which is a holistic science, addresses any disease as Nidana Parivarjana being the first line of treatment. Root cause of any disease is to be eliminated for its treatment and chances of nonoccurrence. Pathya includes Aahara Vihara which causes pacification of disease. Apathya is referred as Aahara which causes complication and aggravate the disease. Consumption of good quality food results in strength, complexion and vitality in human beings. Concept of Guru Aptarpana given by Acharya Charaka is the basis of dietary management in Sthaulya for easy weight reduction.<sup>3</sup> Acharya Sushruta has advised Rukshniya and Chedaniye Aahara and Aushadha to be used in Sthaulya management<sup>4</sup>. Asthang Samgraha has advised use of Laghu, Ushna, Ruksha, Tikshna articles in obesity management<sup>5</sup>.

#### Concept of Guru aptarpana

Guru is the substance which does Brimhana Karma i.e. to promote or increase body weight. Guru substance increases Kapha and decreases Vata in body.<sup>6</sup> It promotes strength, corpulence and disappearance of emaciation. Guru Dravya is made up of Prithvi and Jala Mahabhuta. It increases Kapha Dosha in body along with

Meda Dhatu and increases quantity of Mala in body. Out of 6 rasas. Madhur Rasa is most Guru.

Aptarpana is a term which includes 3 Karma namely Langhana, Rukshana and Swedana.<sup>7</sup> In Sthaulya, Aptarpana Chikitsa predominantly refers to Rukshana Karma which helps in controlling excessive Sneha and Kleda in body thus decreasing Kapha Dosha and increasing Vata in body.

Sthaulya is Kapha Pradhan Tridoshaja Vyadhi in which Samana Vayu is aggravated by channel obstruction by Meda causing symptoms like Atikshudha, Atipipasa. So, to control Vata along with decreasing Kapha Dosha, concept of Guru Aptarpana is applied here by Acharya in Sthaulya Chikitsa. Guru Guna equalizes Vata and Aptarpana (Rukshana) Karma decreases Kapha Dosha in body. Guru Aptarpana Aahara can be taken by a person by directly consuming the Dravya with Guru and Ruksha properties or a Ruksha Dravya can be made Guru by process of Samyoga, Sanskara and Matra.<sup>8</sup> A food item taken in large quantity (even if it is Laghu ) produces heaviness in body. Sanskara of a Dravya is done to make it guru with Jala, picking a Dravya from anupa desh (Kapha predominant) like arid regions, choosing food items which have a longer ripening period (kala), giving bhawana with certain another guru Dravya. All these processes make a Dravya guru in nature.

Modern diet also follows concept of Guru Aptarpana for obesity management by including high fiber diet with low calorie intake by an obese person.

Fiber or cellulose is a subtype if carbohydrate present in lining of fruits, green leafy vegetables, cereals and grains. It is the indigestible part of food which absorbs water, increasing bulk and facilitating intestinal movements thus helping in defecation. It delays digestion process making a person feeling less hungry over longer periods of time. One can easily include fibrous food in his diet by consuming whole cereals (not refined), whole pulses whose husk has been removed, fruits and vegetables with skin

intact.<sup>9</sup> In management of Sthaulya (obesity) high fiber along with low calorie diet is important to include in daily routine by a person. One should avoid consuming food with simple carbohydrates and fat which have higher rate of absorption in body. Here are some examples.

**Table 1: Examples of simple carbohydrates and fats**

<b>Glucose</b>	<b>Fruit juices, soft drinks, grapes, dried apricot</b>
<b>Fructose</b>	Soda, candy, yoghurt, bread
<b>Galactose</b>	Butter, cheese, cream, ghee
<b>Sucrose</b>	Banana, sugarcane, sugar beet
<b>Maltose</b>	Sweet potato

One should also avoid refined food items like rice, chirwa, suji, maida, bread, pasta, biscuit, starchy tubers, chocolate, candies etc. While selecting a food item one should keep in mind its calorie value. Calorie value is the energy provided by a food item in terms of kilocalorie (kcal). Food with low calorie value is to be chosen so that with same amount of food portion, a person eats less, thus overcoming obesity. Foods which have low calorie value are green leafy vegetables and fruits. Green leafy vegetables have lowest calorie value being as low as 50 kcal/100 g of serving. Green leafy vegetables also have good amount of fiber and water in it which makes it very suitable to be included in a weight loss management plan. One should include whole pulses like soybean, horse gram, moong Daal, urad, cowpea in one's diet. Also include fruits and vegetables with edible peel like radish, cucumber, tomato, beans, apple, pear, lime etc. in daily routine diet. Calorie value of some fruits are given below.<sup>10</sup>

**Table 2: Calorie value of some common fruits**

<b>Sitaphala</b>	104	<b>Guava</b>	50
<b>Amla</b>	60	<b>Orange</b>	50
<b>Grapes</b>	70	<b>Papaya</b>	30

### Shooka varga (cereals)

Kudhanaya among cereals like Prashatika, Priyangu, Nivaar, Shyamaka and Kodrava are of Kashaya Madhur Rasa, Laghu, Sheeta Virya, aggravating Vata, correcting Kapha and Pitta in body and are of drying nature. They are called pseudo cereals, are of smaller grain size and of low quality than cereals.<sup>11</sup> They have been termed Trina Dhanaya by Acharya Vagbhata with Laghu, Sheeta Guna correcting Kapha, Pitta in body, aggravating Vata and causing Lekhan (depleting) Karma.<sup>12</sup> Yava (barley) is of Kashaya Madhur Rasa, Sheeta Virya, Laghu, Ruksha Guna, increasing Vata, producing increase amount of stool, correcting Kapha and providing strength and stability to body.<sup>13</sup> Yavaka (oats) are of Madhur Rasa, Ushna Virya, Amla Vipaka, Snigdha Guna, decreasing Kapha in body with increase amount of stool and urine.<sup>14</sup>

### Shami varga (pulses)

Moong is of Kashaya Madhur Rasa, Sheeta Virya, Laghu, Ruksha, Vishada Guna, correcting Kapha and Pitta misbalance in body.<sup>15</sup> Kulathi is of Kashaya Rasa, Amla Vipaka and Ushna Virya correcting Vata, Kapha and Shukra Vikara in body. Rajmasha is of Madhur Kashaya Rasa, Ruksha, Guru, and Vishada Guna, correcting Kapha Dosha and Amlapitta in body. Chana and Masura Daal are of Madhur Kashaya Rasa, Sheeta Virya, Laghu, and Ruksha in property causing decrease in Kapha and Pitta in body. All Shimbi Dhanaya like Moonga, Arhar are of depleting action to Meda Dhatu. Amalaki is of Madhur, Kashaya, Amla Rasa, and Ruksha Guna, decreasing Kapha and Pitta in body. Vibhitaka acts on vitiated Kapha, Pitta Dosha in body

correcting misbalance among Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa and Meda Dhatu.<sup>16</sup>

### Shakavarga

Vartaka (baigana) is of Katu, Tikta, Madhur Rasa, Ushna Virya, decreasing Vata, Kapha in body, increasing Pitta in slight proportion and is digestive by nature.<sup>17</sup> Patola Shaaka is of TiktaRasa, Katu Vipaka, and Sheeta Virya, of constipated nature, increasing Vata and decreasing Kapha and Pitta in body.<sup>18</sup>

### Madyavarga

Madya is of Madhur, Tikta, Katu, Kashaya Rasa, Amla Vipaka, Ushna, Tikshna and Ruksha Guna. Madya is beneficial to both Sthoola and Krisha as it clears channels obstruction in body and of digestive nature.<sup>19</sup> Arishta has been advised as Anupana in Sthaulya Roga which shows its effect according to the drug from which it is prepared. Arishta is of digestive, carminative nature and decreases Kapha in body. Asava is made up of either Madhu or wheat both are beneficial to Sthaulya Rogi. Asava made up of wheat is sharp in nature, causing depletion (Chedaniye) Karma. Asava made up of honey is digestive, Laghu in Guna, increasing Vata and decreasing Kapha, Pitta in body.<sup>20</sup>

### Kritaana varga

Laaja is heated rice to make it puffed which is light, digestive, Sheeta Virya, decreasing Kapha and Meda in body.<sup>21</sup> Dhaan is a term given to fried items which makes it Laghu owing to its contact with Agni and Vayu. Dhaan items are Ruksha, Sukshma, and Guru, constipated with Lekhan action. It also increases thirst.<sup>22</sup>

### Aahara upyogi varga

Madhu is a Dravya which is of Kashaya Madhur Rasa, Ruksha Guna, increasing Vata, decreasing Kapha, Pitta in body and performs Chedaniye Karma (depletion).<sup>23</sup> Tail is of Ruksha, Ushna, Vyavayi properties which balances Kapha in body. It has been stated by Acharya Charaka that Tail is able to win all diseases owing to its Sanskarasya Anuvartana property. It is beneficial to be used in both Sthoola and Krisha person.<sup>24</sup> Maricha is of Laghu Guna, Anushna Virya which has Chedana and Soshana properties.<sup>25</sup> Kshara drugs are Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna Guna, Ushna Virya with digestive, appetizing and depleting properties.<sup>26</sup>

On evaluating all AaharaVarga from different Ayurvedic texts, food articles with following Rasa, Guna, Virya, Vipaka, Karma can be used in management of Sthaulya.

**Table 3: Rasa-guna-virya-vipaka-karma of Aahar used in Sthaulya**

Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka	Karma
kashaya madhur	ruksha laghu vishada khara	sheeta	katu	vata kapha shamaka chedaniya lekhaniya rukshana

### Vyayama

According to Acharya Charaka, Vyayama is a Karma making body stable, increases strength, incorporating lightness in body, making one able to perform various activities, resistance to discomfort, decreasing Kapha Dosha and stimulate digestion.<sup>27</sup>

According to Sushruta, there is no anti-obesity measure as suited as Vyayama

In Vyayama, there is a sense of lightness (Laghuta) which is attributed to decrease in adipose tissue of body which is heavier than muscle. Stimulation of digestion is due to increase in Ushna Guna of body due to increased heat dissipation. So, an act of Vyayama helps in combating Guru and Sheeta Guna of Kapha and Meda with an increase in muscle mass and proportionate decrease in adipose tissue.

### Vyavaya

In Sthaulya, consumption of Kapha Vardak Aahara Vihara leads to production of Meda and little of other Dhatus like Asthi, Majja and Shukra. Shukra is the ultimate or final Dhatu of body providing strength and vitality to body.

Indulgence in sex can be considered as being a mechanical act responsible for a considerate amount of energy utilization. So, a person not involved in physical activities like indulgence end up getting obese over long period of time.

### Anidra (Ratri Jagrana)

Nidra or proper sleep is responsible for a person's stout appearance. Excessive of daytime sleepiness has been prohibited by Ayurveda as it increase Snigdha Guna in body.<sup>28</sup> Snigdha in body is due to increase in Kapha Dosha, ultimately contributing to etiology of Sthaulya. So, a Sthoola person is absolutely denied of day time sleepiness and is advised to even sleep late in the night. It increases Ruksha Guna in body combating excessive Snigdha.

### Mansikabhava

Chinta is a normal physiological body function. An excess of both Chinta and Achinta is a matter of concern. In Sthaulya, a person not indulging in any type of mental work aggravates the Tama Guna of mind causing depression which worsens the condition. A depressed mind withdraws itself from society, living in isolation and involved in minimum of any physical and mental activity causing Sthaulya in long run.<sup>29</sup> So a sthoola person is advised to be involved in Krodha is one of the causes of fight by a person. It produces bodily symptoms along with mental exertion. Symptoms include sweating, tremors, palpitations, exaggerated body movements, sleeplessness, irritation, tensed muscles, increase physical strength with fast speech and motion, stiffed posture, yelling and trembles. It increases Vata and Pitta Guna in body with a decrease of Kapha Dosha.<sup>30</sup>

On evaluating the all Vihara mentioned in various Samhita's Guna which increases in an attribute to decrease Kapha Dosha and Meda Dhatu in body has been compiled here.

**Table 4: Increased guna attributed to vihara in Sthaulya**

vyayama	laghu, ushna
vyavaya	laghu
anidra	ruksha
mansika bhava	laghu, decreased tama guna

### CONCLUSION

In Sthaulya, Excessive accumulation of Kapha Dosha and Meda Dhatu can be corrected by intake of Aahara with Kashaya Pradhan Rasa and Madhur Anurasa, food articles with

predominantly Ruksha Guna performing depleting and drying actions.

In Vihara category, a Sthoola person is to be actively involved in physical and mental activities for effective weight loss. It helps in decreasing Guru, Snigdha and Tama Guna of Kapha Dosha.

Usage of medicines can be easily avoided by adopting a healthy diet and lifestyle for obese persons expecting a gradual and long-lasting weight reduction.

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