

AYURVEDIC APPROACH IN THE MANAGEMENT OF STHOULYA (OBESITY) - A CASE STUDY

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Abstract :Obesity is a chronic metabolic disorder characterized by abnormal or excessive fat accumulation, leading to adverse health consequences. It is strongly associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes mellitus, obstructive sleep apnea, certain malignancies, osteoarthritis, and psychological disorders such as depression. Globally, obesity represents a major preventable cause of morbidity and mortality, with its prevalence rising steadily among both adults and children.

In Ayurvedic literature, Sthoulya is described as a Santarpanajanya Vikara manifested in a Bahudoshavastha state, predominantly due to vitiation of Kapha and Pitta doshas. Classical management emphasizes Shodhana therapies, particularly Vamana Karma and Virechana Karma. The present single-case study evaluates the therapeutic efficacy of Panchakarma procedures in the management of Sthoulya.

The treatment protocol comprised Deepana-Pachana, Shodhana. Post-intervention, the patient demonstrated significant reduction in clinical manifestations of Sthoulya along with a five kg decrease in body weight. These findings suggest that Panchakarma based Ayurvedic interventions may provide an effective strategy for weight reduction and overall improvement in quality of life in patients with Sthoulya.

Keywords: - Ayurvedic management of Sthoulya , Obesity, Basti

1.0 Introduction

The most common metric used for assessing groups of the prevalence of Obesity is the body mass index scale. The prevalence of obesity has been steadily increasing across all age groups, particularly in many developed nations. Statistical data indicate that over the past decade, obesity rates have risen from 22.09% among men and from 24% among women. [1] Obesity is also linked with significant health complications, not only due to its physiological effects but also because of social stigma associated with excess body weight. Individuals with central (abdominal) fat accumulation are at a greater risk of morbidity and mortality compared to those with a peripheral fat distribution. [2] In Ayurveda, obesity can be correlated with Sthoulya, which is categorized by Acharya Charaka as a Santarpanajanya Vyadhi—a disorder caused by overnutrition. [3] Both Sthoulya and Medovridhi are considered Kapha pradhana Vyadhi (disorders dominated by the Kapha dosha). Among the Panchakarma therapies, Basti is specifically indicated for managing Santarpanajanya conditions such as Sthoulya. [4]

2.0 Types of study - Single case study

2.1 Study Center - Govt. Ayurved Hospital, Nanded

A. Case report

A 38-year-old female patient visited the OPD of Government Ayurved Hospital on 04/01/2025, where he was diagnosed with obesity. She had no history of any systemic illness, and there was no family history of obesity.

The patient reported a gradual weight gain over the past 02 years, accompanied by exertional breathlessness and excessive sweating. Clinically, the patient exhibited classical symptoms of Sthoulya, including Bhara Vriddhi (increased body weight), Chalasphik Udara-Stana (flabbiness and excessive movement of the abdomen, buttocks, and breasts), Atikshudha (increased appetite), Swedabadha (profuse sweating), Daurbalya (general weakness), and Alpa Dourgandhya (foul body odor) [5]. On examination, her weight was 78 kg and BMI measured 33.8, indicating Grade I obesity. Diagnosis was established based on the patient’s weight, BMI, and classical Ayurvedic symptomatology of Sthoulya. The patient had not previously undergone any treatment for obesity. Ayurvedic management was initiated as follows.

Table no.1: Treatment Modality.

| Sr. no. | Treatment modalities | Dose | Duration |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 1 | Guduchi + Punarnawa | 5gm each 40ml | 10 days |
| 2 | Tab. Triphala Guggulu | 250mg 2tab Twice a day After food | 15 days |
| 3 | Syp. Dashamoolarishta | 20 ml twice a day After food | 15 days |
| 4 | Tab. Erandabhrishta | 500 mg H.S. With lukewarm water | 10 days |
| 5 | Sarwang Snehana | Tila Taila | 15 days |
| 6 | Sarwang Swedana | Nadiswed | 15 days |
| 7 | Basti | Niruha Basti 760 ml | 6 days |

2.0 Observations and results :

Table no. 2 Sign and Symptoms

| Sr. no. | Sign and Symptoms | Before | After |
|---------|-------------------|--------|-------|
| 1 | Bhara Vriddhi | +++ | ++ |
| 2 | Chalaspik-Udara | ++ | + |
| 3 | Atikshudha | ++ | + |
| 4 | Swedabadha | ++ | + |
| 5 | Daurbalya | + | - |
| 6 | Alpa Dourgandhya | + | - |
| 7 | Kshudrashwasa | ++ | + |

Table no. 3 Clinical Examination

| Sr. no | Clinical Examination | Before Treatment | After Treatment |
|--------|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | BMI | 33.3 | 30.7 |
| 2 | Weight in kg | 77 | 71 |
| 3 | Waist circumference | 86 | 84 |

3.0 Discussion

The treatment yielded promising outcomes following Basti Karma, with the patient experiencing a weight reduction of approximately 4 kg within 15 days. According to the fat analysis, this loss was attributed to a decrease in fat mass rather than water content, indicating genuine fat reduction. The patient’s BMI decreased from 33.3 to 30.7, reflecting a significant improvement. Before treatment, the patient’s waist circumference measured 86 cm, suggesting central obesity. Following therapy, the waist circumference reduced to 84cm, demonstrating notable improvement in abdominal fat. Along with measurable physical changes, the patient reported a sense of lightness, improved energy levels, and overall well-being.

Although Basti Karma Shodhana therapy is strongly advised for patients exhibiting moderate strength and Bahu Dosh Lakshana[6]. Since this patient presented with grade I obesity, Basti were appropriately administered. Therefore, following Bhavaprakasha’s guidance, Musta,guduchi,triphal Shunthi Churna was used for its Deepana (appetizer) and Pachana (digestive) properties to ensure optimal digestion and prevent adverse effects[7-8].

- **Tila Taila** – As mentioned by Acharya Charaka, Tila Taila is considered the best Sneha Dravya among all plant-based oils. It is widely utilized for both internal and external therapeutic applications. This oil effectively pacifies Vata Dosha without causing any aggravation of Kapha[9]. Acharya Vagbhata highlights its unique dual action, stating that Tila Taila promotes nourishment (Brimhana) in emaciated individuals (Krisha persons) and induces reduction (Karshana) in obese individuals (Sthoola persons). In cases of Sthoulya (obesity), due to its Sukshma (penetrating), Teekshna (sharp), and Ushna (hot) properties, Tila Taila enters the minute body channels (Sukshma Srotas) and facilitates Kshapana (reduction) of excess Meda Dhatu (fat tissue), thereby helping the person to regain a leaner physique[10].
- **Abhyanga and Swedana** – Abhyanga, or whole-body massage, helps soften and mobilize morbid Doshas, preparing them for elimination. Swedana (sudation therapy), as described by Acharya Charaka, is considered the best treatment for disorders dominated by Vata and Kapha Doshas. The process of Swedana liquefies and loosens the vitiated Doshas spread throughout the body, making them easier to expel through Pradhana Karma, particularly Basti Karma.

5.0 Conclusion

Grade -1 patient lost fkg weight in 15 days after classical Basti karma which shows significant decrement not only in weight but also sense of wellbeing and improve quality of life. Treatment of Panchakarma like Shodhana followed with Basti karma are the best way to manage obesity. Basti karma are safe, effective and long lasting Ayurveda treatment for grade -1 obesity.

6.0 References

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