

REVIEW ON THERAPY OF UDVARTANA IN THE MANAGEMENT OF STHAULYA (OBESITY)

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ABSTRACT

Now days, due to the change in the lifestyle of people, they have very less time to maintain their health also they not having time to follow *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Hita Kara Ahara Sevana*. Obesity has reached epidemic proportions in India in the 21st century. In *Ayurveda* three types of treatment described for the diseases, they are *Samshodhana*, *Samshamana* and *Nidanaparivarjanm*. The procedures like *Udvartana*, *Vyayama*, *Abhyanga*, are well elucidated in *Dinacharya* with an aim of maintaining one's own health. *Ruksha*, *Udvartana* (rubbing medicated powders on skin) has been mentioned with its properties like *Kaphahara*, *Medasa Pravilayana*, *Shithilikarna Anganam* help to reduce weight. *Udvartana* is an ideal procedure for many diseases like obesity, *khapha vata* related conditions in some skin disorders.

Keywords: *Udvartana*, *Sthaulya*, *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*

INTRODUCTION

Obesity is described under the title of *Samtarpanjanita Vyadhi* in *Ayurvedic* text. Obesity has reached epidemic proportions in India in the 21st century, with morbid obesity affecting 5% of the country's population. India is following a trend of other developing countries that are progressively becoming more obese. Unhealthy, processed food has become much more accessible following India's continued incorporation in global food markets.¹ Due to genetic

tendency of Indians, they are towards abdominal obesity and its associated risks of related lifestyle diseases like Diabetes and Heart Disease. The main causative factor of the *Sthaulya* are excessive intake of food, change in dietary habits, lack of exercise, less energy expenditure, sedentary lifestyle, psychological factors like stress, depression, excessive pleasure and genetic predisposition.²

A person having heaviness and bulkiness of the body due to extensive growth, especially in abdominal region is termed as *Sthula* and the state of *Sthula* is called “*Sthaulya*”.³ *Sthaulya* is the disease where *Tikshnagni* is found along with *Medodhatvagni* and *ya*. Incompatibility between the main two levels of *Agni* is suggestive of the gravity of *Sthaulya*. Hence, treatment modality should be planned considering these subjects. Thus, physician must have sound knowledge of its *Dosha*, *Dushya*, *Sampraptighataka* and *Nidana* for the proper management of *Sthaulya*.^{4,5} So, in disease review all the aspects of disease starting from its definition, classification, *Nidana*, *Samprapti*, *Chikitsa*, *Upadrava* are described according to *Ayurveda* as well as modern science.⁶

Concept of Udvartana:

Rukshan therapy like *Udvartana* is observed effective in obesity and mentioned in the *Shodhana Chikitsa* of *Sthaulya* by different *Acharyas* in *Ayurvedic* texts. The word *Udvartana* means *Vilepanam* or *Gharshanama* i.e. rubbing of the body.⁷ *Udvartana* is a procedure of applying powders of various herbs on the skin and rubbing it to form wicks with gentle strokes directing towards heart, with the palm evenly spread on the surface of the skin. It is a cleaning procedure of *Mala*, *Mutra* and *Rakta* of the skin by using *Gandha Dravyas*. *Acharya Charaka* describes *Udvartana* as *Shareera Parimarjanam*. *Acharya Charaka* states that *Shareera Parimarjanam* destroys body Odour, *Guruthva*, *Tandra*, *Kandu*, *Arochaka*, *Sweda* etc. of the body.⁸ He also says that *Udvartana* should be done before *Abhyanga*. According to *Vagbhatta*, *Udvartana* normalize *Kapha* and liquefies *Meda*. It gives firmness to the body, smoothness to skin and increase its complexion. By doing *Udvartana* it liquefies the *Medas* it means *Shoshana* of *Medas*. Giving friction to the body by *Kashaya Churna* is known as *Udvartana*.⁹ In *Ashtanga Sangraha* the quality of *Udvartana* is mentioned as same as *Ashtanga Hridaya*. *Sushruta* describes *Udvartana* helps to restores the deranged *Vayu* of the body to its normal condition. It liquefies *Kapha* and *Meda*.¹⁰ *Udvartana* is a procedure of applying powders of herbs to the skin and rubbing it to form wicks with gentle strokes directing towards heart,

with the palm evenly spread on the surface of the skin. It is a cleaning procedure. It cleans *Mala*, *Mutra* and *Rakta* of the skin by using *Gandha Dravyas*. *Charaka* describes *Udvartana* as *Shareera Parimarjanam*. *Charaka* states that *Shareera Parimarjanam* destroys body Odour, *Guruthva*, *Tandra*, *Kandu*, *Arochaka*, *Sweda* etc. of the body. He also says that *Udvartana* should be done before *Abhyanga*. According to *Vagbhatta*, *Udvartana* normalize *Kapha* and liquefies *Meda*. It gives firmness to the body, smoothness to skin and increase its complexion. By doing *Udvartana* it liquefies the *Medas* it means *Shoshana* of *Medas*. Giving friction to the body by *Kashaya Churna* is known as *Udvartana*. In *Ashtanga Sangraha* the quality of *Udvartana* is mentioned as same as *Ashtanga Hridaya*. *Sushruta* describes *Udvartana* helps to restores the deranged *Vayu* of the body to its normal condition. It liquefies *Kapha* and *Meda* and gives smoothness and cleanness to the skin and imparts firmness to the limb.

Effect of Udvartana in Obese person (Sthaulya)^{11,12}

- *Kaphaharam* – Destroys morbid *Kapha*
- *Vataharam* – Destroys morbid *Vata*
- *Medasaha Pravilaapanam* – Liquefies and mobilizes the stagnant morbid *meda* (fat / adipose tissue)
- *Sthireekaranamangaanam* – Provides stability to body parts
- *Twakprasadakaramparam* – Rejuvenates the skin and brings freshness in it
- *Dourgandhyaharam* – Alleviates foul smell
- *Gouravaharam* – Alleviates heaviness of the body
- *Tandraharam* – Remove drowsiness, brings freshness
- *Malaharam* – Removes dirt and dust
- *Swedaharam* – Removes sweat
- *Beebhatsaharam* – Removes awkward look, gives glamour
- *Sira mukhaviviktatvam* – Opens up the blocked channels, blood vessels and transport systems of the body and enables free circulation of nutrients and essentials in the body
- *Twakstha Agni samyakaram* – Stabilizes and normalizes the *Agni* (*Bhrajaka Agni* or *Bhrajaka*)

Pitta in the skin which is responsible for skin immunity, to provide good colour and complexion)

- *Kantikaram* – Provides good shine and complexion
- *Sharira Parimarjanam* – Cleanses the body

Modern view:^{13,14}

Rubbing helps in the absorption of expressions, relief of blood stasis and carrying away the morbid products in the system. Deep pressure massage helps the interchange of tissue fluids by increasing the circulation in the superficial vein and lymphatics. The pressure helps the contents of the vessels towards the heart, if applied strongly and quickly, it has a stimulating effect. It increases nutrition in all tissues. It removes fatigue, carrying away the increased products of combustion. Important qualities of rubbing that it has great influence on the muscles which gives them a mechanical stimulation causing them to contract. It increases circulation in the veins. It improves the nutrition of the area and raises temperature locally which increases secretion and absorption. It improves the condition of the nervous system by stimulating the cutaneous nerve endings. Also helps in the re-absorption of inflammatory products and absorption of fat in fatty tissues.

When rubbing is done lightly on the nerves for a short time it stimulates them. It affects the vasomotor nerves and there by widens the blood vessels also influences the secretory nerves for increasing their function.

DISCUSSION

Obesity: Commonly obesity is found due to excessive eating and lack of adequate exercise by an individual. Acharya Charaka has quoted a *Sthaulya* under the eight varieties of impediments which designated as *Astha-Nindita Purusha*, *Ati-sthauya* comprises one of them (Ch. Su. 21/2). Acharya Charaka also enlisted this problem under *Santarpanjanita Vyadhi* (Ch. Su. 23). He listed eight defects underlying- *Sthaulya Purusha*, *Ayurhasa*, *Javoprodha*, *Alpa-vyavayita*, *Daurbalya*, *Daurgandhya*, *Swedabadha*, *Ati-trisha*, *Ati-kshudha* (Ch. Su. 21/3). According to Bhavaprakasha, a person, having heaviness and bulkiness of the body due to extensive growth, especially in abdominal region is termed as *Sthula* and the state of *Sthula* is called

“*Sthaulya*”. *Sthaulya* is a *Dushya* dominant *Vyadhi* specially *Meda Dhatu*. There is an involvement of all the three *Doshas* in *Sthaulya* but the dominancy of *Kapha-Vata* and *Meda* of prime importance. This vitiated *Meda* obstruct the path of *Vata* and causes its *Avarana* which results into provocation of *Vata*. Thus, remaining in the *Kostha Vata* causes *Atikshudha*, this increases gravity of the disease and make the *Sthaulya Krutchhsadhaya*.

Mode of Action of Udvartana:

The drugs having properties like *Katu*, *Tikta*, *Kashaya Rasa* acts as *Kaphahara*, *Krumighna*, *Kandughna*. *Ushna Virya* produces *Srotoshuddhi*, *Ruksha Guna* predominance of *Agni* and *Vayu Mahabhuta* pacifies *Snigdha* and *Pichila Guna* of *Kapha* and subsequently decreases *Kledatwa*. The drugs applied and rubbed over skin were digested by *Bhrajakapitta/Twachagni* (local temperature increases) which is present in the skin, its *Ushna-Virya* enter *Rasadhatu* remove the obstruction in the *Rasa* and *Swedavaha Srotasa*, its *Gunas* and *Vipak*, *Veerya* spreads all over the body. By doing *Udvartana* the increased *Twakgata Agni/Bhrajakapitta* will increase *Uttarottara Dhatwagni* functions, by increased *Medodhatwagni*, the *Dhatupaka* process increases, thus excessive accumulated *Vikruta Medo Dhatu* decreases.¹⁵ When the vitiated *Medo Dhatu* gets dissolved, formation of excessive *Sweda*, diminishes thus cures, *Daurgandhyata*, *Swedatipravratiti* (*Sweda* being a *Mala* of *Medo Dhatu* excessive sweating results into bad smell of the body), thus normalizes *Dosha Dhatu Poshana Kriya*. The *Lakshanas* of *Sthaulya Roga* like *Kandu*, *Daurgandhyata*, *Swedatipravratiti* etc., is controlled, produces lightness in body, process of *Udvartana* slowly reduces the *Lakshanas Sthaulya Roga*.

CONCLUSION

Sedentary life, lack of exercise, faulty food habits, genetic predisposition, *Kapha* predominant *Prakruti* and urbanization precipitate the disease in increasing prevalence globally. By doing *Udvartana*, the increased *Twakgata Agni (Bhrajakapitta)* increases *Uttarottara Dhatwagni* functions, by increased

Medodhatwagni the *Dhatupaka* process increases and excessive accumulated *Vikruta Medo Dhatu* decreases thus it could be better to implement *Udvartana* along with medication for the effective management of obesity.

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