



Ayurvedic Approaches to Obesity: The Role of Diet and Lifestyle Interventions

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ABSTRACT:

Obesity has emerged as a significant public health challenge, affecting millions worldwide. Obesity is characterized by excessive fat accumulation, which increases the risk of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as diabetes, heart disease, osteoarthritis and many more. The alarming rise in obesity rates necessitates urgent interventions at both prevention & treatment levels. Ayurveda, the panacea of traditional knowledge offers a holistic approach to understanding and managing obesity through its principles of *Pathya-Apathya* (dietary guidelines) and *Shamana-Chikitsa* (pacification therapies) whose aim is *Dosha* balance. As prevention is always better than cure, comprehensive review of Ayurvedic classical from different *Samhitas*, *nighantus*, research articles were explicated in the management of obesity through dietary modifications and lifestyle changes. Ayurvedic principles always emphasize on the *Nidaan Parivarjan* i.e elimination of the etiological factor & here food is itself the causative factor which can be easily corrected by following *Pathya-Apathya* guidelines for lifestyle & diet which includes of *Ushna* (hot potency) and *Laghu* (light) foods while avoiding *Guru* (heavy) and *Sheeta* (cold) substances. Herbs such as *Yava* (barley), *Kudhanya* (millets) and *Patol* (pointed guard) have shown promising results in reducing excess *Meda Dhatu* (fat tissue) and improving metabolic health.

Integrating Ayurvedic principles with modern nutritional and metabolic insights provides a sustainable approach to obesity management. The holistic approach of Ayurveda, focusing on dietary habits & lifestyle, offers an effective alternative to conventional obesity treatments. This study aims to explore the Ayurvedic conceptual framework of dietary & lifestyle guidelines for *Sthaulya* (obesity) and its relevance in contemporary health management.

Keywords: *Ahara*, Diet, Lifestyle, *Medoroga*, Obesity, *Sthaulya*, Vihara

Introduction :

Obesity, known as *Sthaulya* in Ayurveda, is a metabolic disorder characterized by excessive accumulation of *Meda Dhatu* (adipose tissue), leading to disturbances in physical, physiological, and psychological health. Obesity has become a major public health concern, predisposing individuals to comorbidities such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, joint disorders & many more. WHO considers the steep increases in prevalence of obesity in all age groups, especially since the 1970s as a global obesity epidemic, approximately 650 million adult people and approximately 340 million children and adolescence (5-19 years) suffer from obesity¹. According to the India's Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey (CNNS, 2016-2018), Childhood obesity (5-9 years) in India is likely to contribute 11% to the global burden by 2030².

The Ayurvedic principles accentuates the ancient approach to well-being through the balance of three fundamental pillars—*Aahar* (diet), *Nidra* (sleep), and *Brahmacharya* (celibacy). These elements support the equilibrium of the *Doshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*), nurturing the body, mind, and soul. Central to Ayurvedic health preservation is the consumption of *Pathya Ahara* (wholesome food) & *vihara* (lifestyle) which plays a vital role in maintaining overall harmony and vitality.

According to Charaka Samhita, *Sthaulya* is primarily caused by the imbalance of *Kapha dosha*, coupled with *Mandagni* (low digestive fire), improper dietary habits (*Mithya Ahara*), sedentary lifestyle (*Avyayama*), and psychological factors like *Atichintana* (no stress). Charaka describes the condition as state of aggravated doshas, especially *Meda*, which obstructs the pathways of nourishment to other tissues³.

Ayurvedic dietary intervention for obesity emphasizes the use of *Ahara* (food) as a therapeutic tool. A well-designed diet aims to pacify *Kapha*, kindle *Agni*, and facilitate *Srotoshodhana* (cleansing of body channels). Foods that are *Laghu* (light), *Ruksha* (dry), and *Tikta-Katu-Kashaya rasa pradhana* (bitter, pungent, and astringent in taste) are recommended for reducing *Meda* and enhancing metabolism⁴. In contrast to modern calorie-restrictive diets, Ayurvedic nutrition emphasizes individualized dietary planning.

The rising interest in integrative approaches for obesity management has brought renewed attention to traditional knowledge systems like Ayurveda. Exploring Ayurvedic principles offers a sustainable, culturally sensitive, and personalized strategy to combat obesity while promoting overall well-being.

Methods

Ayurvedic classical texts such as *Samhita* (*Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Astanga Hridaya*), *Nighantu* (*Bhavaprakash Nighantu*, *Kaiyadeva Nighantu*), *Dravyaguna* literature, journals, various published articles and books were comprehensively reviewed for collecting significant data about ayurvedic diet & lifestyle related to obesity.

Obesity in Ayurveda

Sthaulya, or obesity, is recognized in Ayurveda as a disorder primarily associated with *Medo Dhatu* (fat tissue) and metabolic imbalance.

The most comprehensive explanation of *sthaulya* is mentioned in *Charaka Samhita*, categorizes *Sthaulya* under *Ashtauninditiya Purusha*—eight undesirable body types—accentuating its adverse effects on health and longevity. According to *Charaka*, obesity arises due to excessive consumption of *Guru* (heavy), *Snigdha* (unctuous), *sheet* (cold) and *Madhura* (sweet) foods, *Atisampoorana* (over eating), *Avyayama* (no physical activity), *Avyavaya* (no indulgence), *Divaswapana* (daytime sleeping), *Harshnitiya* (over joyous), *Achintana* (no mental exertion) & *Bija Swabhava* (hereditary factors) all these factors leading to rise of *kaph* & thus *Meda dhatu* (*ashraya-ashrayi bhav*) results in obstruction of *medovaha* srotas and impaired *Medodhatvagni* (fat metabolism) therefore more accumulation of *Medo Dhatu*, causing obesity. *Charaka* describes eight key symptoms of obese individuals, highlighting their physiological and functional impairments: *Ayushohrasa* (Reduced lifespan), *Javoparodha* (Diminished enthusiasm), *Kriccha Vyavaya* (Difficulty in intercourse), *Daurbalya* (General weakness), *Daurgandhya* (Unpleasant body odor), *Atikshudha* (Excessive hunger), *Atisveda* (Profuse sweating) & *Alpa Prana* (Reduced vitality)^[5]. These symptoms emphasize the pathological impact of obesity beyond mere weight gain, affecting both physical and mental well-being. According to modern medicine etiology of obesity include genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors, with pathogenesis linked to adipocyte dysfunction, hormonal imbalance, and inflammation.⁶

Charaka advocates *Apatarpana Chikitsa* (depleting therapy), dietary modifications, and *Panchakarma* treatments to restore balance⁵. It can be easily seen that dietary habits and lifestyle choices are the most significant contributing factors to obesity.

Role of Ahara

Ayurveda underscores the essential role of *Ahara* (food), recognizing it as one of the fundamental sub-pillars (*Trayopastambha – Aahara, Nidra & Brahmacharya*) that support the body's well-being ensuring the balance of *Doshas* (*Vata, Pitta, Kapha*) and promoting longevity⁷. Neglecting these pillars can lead to imbalances, contributing to diseases like obesity, insomnia, and metabolic disorders.

Ahara is recognized not only as a fundamental pillar of life but also as the supreme form of medicine, essential for sustaining health and preventing diseases - "*Aharam Uttamam Aushadham*"⁸ as food is the supreme medicine.

The phrase "*Praninam Pranamulam Ahara*" aligns with Ayurvedic principles that emphasize food as the fundamental source of life and health. Ayurveda extensively discusses the role of *Ahara* (food) in sustaining life and preventing diseases⁹.

It is ironic that food, once revered as the ultimate medicine, has now become a leading cause of disease in the modern world.

Excessive intake of heavy-to-digest (*Guru*), *sweet* (*Madhura*), *cold* (*Sheeta*), and *unctuous* (*Snigdha*) leads to an aggravation of *Kapha* dosha, which ultimately contributes to the development of obesity⁵.

In contemporary urban lifestyles, the daily diet is increasingly dominated by ultra-processed foods, including fried and bakery products rich in Trans Fats, SFAs, Oxidized PUFAs and added sugars. A study conducted by the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) highlighted that, in urban populations, the average daily intake of fried snacks was 18.93 grams, while sweets contributed approximately 12.2% to total daily energy intake. Additionally, bakery products were consumed at an average of 12.89 grams per day. Notably, the study reported significantly higher consumption levels in urban slum areas, where bakery items were consumed at 60 grams per day, and fried snacks and sweets were consumed at 75 grams and 44.3 grams per day, respectively¹⁰. These findings reflect a concerning dietary trend, particularly among lower-income groups, where dependence on energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods is markedly higher.

Firstly the adequate amount of food should be taken to avoid excessive eating, the amount of low calorie food should not be taken more than your gut capacity while high calorie food should be taken one-third or half of gut capacity⁵¹. While excess hunger can be managed through dietary formulation like *apamarga yavagu*⁵². In Ayurveda, the primary approach to managing obesity (*Sthaulya*) is *Karshana* (weight reduction), which is achieved through the use of *Guru* (heavy and satiating substances) - *Apatarpana* (controlled undernourishment or depletion therapy)¹¹. The ayurvedic dietary principle includes foods that are *Tikshna* (intense), dry (*Ruksha*), and warm (*Ushna*) help reduce *Kapha* and promote metabolism¹². Bitter (*Tikta*), *Katu* (pungent) and astringent (*Kashaya*) tastes reduce fat accumulation and help cleanse the system⁴[Table 1].

Table 1. Properties of Ahara Dravya mentioned in ayurveda under obesity management^[12,13,19,20,21,22,23,24,25,26]

S.No.	Property	Ayurvedic Effect	Pharmacological Effect	Effect on Glycemic Index (GI)
1.	<i>Ushna Virya</i>	Increases Agni, reduces Kapha	↑ Thermogenesis, ↑ Lipolysis	Lower GI
2.	<i>Laghu</i>	Easy to digest	↓ Caloric intake, ↑ Metabolism	Lower GI
3.	<i>Ruksha</i>	Reduces oiliness	Absorbs fat, promotes catabolism	Indirectly lowers GI

4.	<i>Tikshna</i>	Penetrates & scrapes fat	↑ Enzyme activity, fat breakdown	Lower GI
5.	<i>Tikta Rasa</i>	Detoxifies, reduces fat	↑ Bile, ↑ Insulin sensitivity	Lower GI
6.	<i>Kashaya Rasa</i>	Astringent, drying	↓ Appetite, ↓ Water retention	Lower GI
7.	<i>Katu Rasa</i>	Stimulates digestion	↑ Catecholamines, ↑ Fat oxidation	Regulates GI

The ahara dravyas in ayurveda has been divided into different vargas describe under obesity management[Table 2].

Table 2. Classification of Ahara Dravya mentioned in obesity management^[27,28,29,30]

S.No.	Ahara Varga	Ahara Dravya
1.	<i>Shalidhanya</i> (includes rice varieties)	<i>Dagdhbhoomijaata dhanya</i>
2.	<i>Shimbidhanya</i> (includes pulses and legumes found in pods)	<i>Kulatha (Macrotyloma uniflorum), Vanakulatha (Wild variety of Kulatha), Aadhki (Cajanus cajan), Mudga (Vigna radiata)</i>
3.	<i>Shookdhanya</i> (includes cereal grains borne on ears or spikes)	<i>Yava (Hordeum vulgare), Yavak (barley variety)</i>
4.	<i>Shudradhanya</i> (includes millets)	<i>Gavedhook (Panicum antidotale), Priyangu (Callicarpa macrophylla), Shyamaka (Echinochloa frumentacea), Prashatika (Setaria italica)</i>
5.	<i>Shaka varga</i> (includes green leafy vegetables and edible herbs)	<i>Sunishanak (Marsilea minuta), Bimbi (Coccinia grandis), Vrintaak (Solanum melongena)</i>
6.	<i>Phala varga</i> (includes fruits)	<i>Bhibhitaki (Terminalia bellirica), Aamlaki (Embllica officinalis)</i>
7.	<i>Krittan varga</i> (includes prepared foods, mainly from grains or pulses)	<i>Yusha, Raaga, Shaadav, Yavpupalika, Laaja, Dhaana, Saktu, Lumbika</i>
8.	<i>Tail varga</i> (includes various vegetable oils & fats)	<i>Sarshap (Brassica campestris), Bhallatak (Semecarpus anacardium), Tuvar (Hydnocarpus laurifolia), Yavatikta (Andrographis paniculata), Shankhini (Convolvulus pluricaulis)</i>
9.	<i>Madhya varga</i> (includes alcoholic and fermented preparations)	<i>Sura, Sidhu</i>

The ahara dravya with action of medohara, shthaulyahra, lekhaana karma in ayurvedic text with their attributes & nutritional value responsible for the fat reduction has mentioned [Table 3].

Table 3. Ahara Dravya with their ayurvedic attributes^[27,28,29,30,34-48]

Sno.	Ahara Dravya (Ayurvedic Name)	Rasa (Taste)	Guna (Qualities)	Virya (Potency)	Ayurvedic Action in Obesity	Modern Nutritional Insights	Classical Reference
1.	Yava (Barley)	Kashaya, Madhura	Ruksha, Guru	Sheeta	Lekhana, Medohara, Agnivardhaka	Rich in beta-glucans and dietary fiber, enhances satiety and improves lipid profiles.	Bhavprakash nighantu, 8/28
2.	Mudga (Green Gram)	Madhura, Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Kapha-pittahara, easy to digest	High protein and low glycemic index; supports lean mass and regulates glucose.	Charaka Samhita, Sutra 27/20 & 21/25
3.	Kulattha (Horse Gram)	Kashaya	Ushna, Ruksha	Ushna	Deepana, Lekhana, Medohara	Rich in polyphenols, proteins; has lipid-	Bhavprakash nighantu, 8/61

						lowering and anti-obesity effects.	
4.	<i>Aadhaki</i> (Pigeon Pea)	<i>Madhura, Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Kapha-pittahara</i>	Low GI legume, supports satiety and metabolic health.	Charaka Samhita, Sutra 21/26 & Bhavprakash nighantu 8/52
5.	<i>Yavaka</i> (Wild Barley)	<i>Kashaya, Madhura</i>	<i>Ruksha, Guru</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Same as yava but lesser potent</i>	Fiber-rich, detoxifying; supports weight regulation.	Bhavprakash nighantu, 8/30
6.	<i>Gavedhuka</i> (Coix lacryma-jobi)	<i>Katu</i>	-	-	<i>Karshyakarak, Kaphanashani</i>	Rich in starch and phenolics; anti-inflammatory and anti-obesity potential.	Bhavaprakasha Nighantu 8/85
7.	<i>Priyangu</i> (Callicarpa macrophylla)	<i>Madhura, Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu,</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Same as Shyamaka</i>	Contains calliterpenone; potential for metabolic regulation.	Charaka Samhita, Sutra 21/25 & 27/18
8.	<i>Shyamaka</i> (Panicum sumatrense)	<i>Kashaya, Madhur</i>	<i>Laghu</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Kaphahara, Shoshak</i>	Low GI cereal with antioxidant and anti-obesity properties.	Charaka Samhita, Sutra 21/25 & 27/18
9.	<i>Prashatika</i> (Rice Flakes/Flattened Rice)	<i>Madhura, Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Same as Shyamaka</i>	Easily digestible carbohydrate source with moderate glycemic load.	Charaka Samhita, Sutra 21/25 & 27/18
10.	<i>Sunishannaka</i> (Marsilea minuta)	<i>Madhur, Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Medohara, Agnideepak</i>	Exhibits antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activity.	Bhavaprakasha Nighantu 9/31
11.	<i>Bimbi</i> (Coccinia indica)	<i>Madhur</i>	<i>Guru</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Lekhana</i>	Supports glycemic control and lipid metabolism.	Bhavaprakasha Nighantu 9/31
12.	<i>Bibhitaki</i> (Terminalia bellirica)	<i>Kashaya</i>	<i>Ruksha, Laghu</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Medodosha hanti, Kaphahara</i>	Contains tannins, gallic acid; antioxidant, anti-obesity effects.	Charaka Samhita, Sutra 27/148 & Bhavaprakasha Nighantu 1/35
13.	<i>Amalaki</i> (Emblica officinalis)	<i>Amla, Madhur, Kashaya</i>	<i>Ruksha</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Rasayana, Tridosahara, Agnivardhaka</i>	High in vitamin C; regulates lipids and prevents fat accumulation.	Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 21/27 & Bhavprakash nighantu 1/40
14.	<i>Patola</i> (Pointed Gourd)	<i>Tikta, Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu, Snigdha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Kapha-Pittahara, Deepana</i>	Low-calorie, fiber-rich; beneficial for digestion and weight loss.	Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 21/27

Food preparations advised in obesity^[13,32]

1. *Kulatha Yusha*- It is prepared with one part of *Kulatha* cooked in eighteen parts of water added with *Rock Salt*.
2. *Raaga*- By adding *Kapith*, sour fruits like raw mango, jaggery, tila oil, shunthi are mixed to prepare *raaga*.
3. *Shadava*- It is prepared by adding *Kapith*, *Tintidik*, *Vrikshamla*, *Bijpurak*, *Daadim*, *Ikshu* & mixed with honey & sugar.

4. *Lumbika*- Roasted uncooked wheat cereal.
5. *Laaja*- Roasted different varieties of shaali mentioned under *Shaalidhanya Varga*.
6. *Dhaana*- Roasted barley.
7. *Yava Saktu*- Dry roast the barley grains over medium heat grind the cooled, roasted barley into a fine powder sieve the powder, mix 1–2 tablespoons of *Yava Saktu* with water or buttermilk (*Takra*) to make a refreshing drink.
8. *Gavedhook yavagu*- Roasted seeds of gavedhook cooked with six times of water until it become thick soup. It is best for weight loss.
9. *Takra*(butter milk)- Curd added with *one fourth amount of water* and churn or whisk thoroughly until it becomes a thin, smooth liquid it is called *Takra*.
10. *Madhuodaka*- Honey mixed water is called *Madhuodak*. It is prescribed in the form of *Anupaan* (after food) in obese people.

Yusha, Raaga, Shadava & Yavagu are full one time meal in itself, they not only help in fat loss but also have other health benefits too without causing nutrient deficiency unlike modern dieting. Lumbika, Laaja, Dhaana can be considered as best replacement of deep fried namkeens for snacks. While Takra & saktu are good choices for the drinks instead of soft drinks added with lots of sugars & preservatives. Madhuodak should be taken after meals for satiety to avoid overeating.

Ayurveda also describes the eight factors (Ashta Aahara Vidhivishesha Aayatan)⁵³ responsible for the result of food taken, they are as follows w.r.t obesity-

1. *Prakriti* (Nature of food)- Choose light (*Laghu*), dry (*Ruksha*), and warm (*Ushna*) foods. Avoid heavy (*Guru*), oily, cold, and sweet items. Favor millets, barley, green gram (*Mudga*), bitter vegetables, and warming spices.
2. *Karana* (Processing)- Prefer foods that are roasted, steamed, or boiled—not deep-fried. Fermentation (like in idli/dosa) may help if digestion is sluggish. Avoid frying, heavy ghee preparations, and over-processing.
3. *Samyoga* (Combination)-Avoid incompatible food combinations (*Viruddha Ahara*), e.g., milk + salty items, honey + warm water. Prefer combining food with digestion-aiding spices: ginger, black pepper, turmeric, cumin.
4. *Rasi* (Quantity)-Eat in moderate quantity—fill only 1/3 stomach with solids, 1/3 with liquids, 1/3 should remain empty for dosha & caloric wise amount as mentioned above.
5. *Desa* (Habitat)-In Kapha-predominant regions (cold, damp climates), food should be dry and hot in potency.
6. *Kala* (Time)- In *Kapha* season (late winter/spring), reduce heavy, oily, sweet foods & do exercise. Take meals at fixed time.
7. *Upayoga Samstha* (Dietary rules)- Only when the previous meal is digested one should have the next meal.
8. *Upyokta*- the obese person himself must be so disciplined to follow all the above guidelines & should know the difference between healthy & unhealthy for him.

Role of Vihara

In Ayurveda, *Vihara* refers to lifestyle practices, and physical activities which are part of daily routine that support health and prevent disease.

In today's lifestyle, it has become common to spend the entire day sitting in air-conditioned rooms with little to no outdoor activity, which significantly contributes to the rising number of obesity cases. A systematic review published in *Obesity Reviews* analyzed 45 studies and found that adults with overweight or obesity consistently exhibited lower levels of physical activity and higher levels of sedentary behaviour¹⁴.

Ayurveda asserts many activities in a routine (*Dincharya*) for a person to remain healthy from those some of the activities which plays a vital role in obesity management includes Regular Physical Activity (*Vyayama*), Avoid Daytime Sleep (*Divaswapna*) & Adequate and regular nighttime sleep is essential, but excess sleep should be avoided¹²[Table 4].

Table 4. Vihar described in obesity management^[27,29,50]

S.No.	Vihar	Description	Ayurvedic Perspective	Modern Benefits	Classical Reference
1.	<i>Vyayama</i> (Exercise)	Daily moderate exercise like brisk walking, light running	Stimulates <i>Agni</i> , reduces <i>Kapha</i> and <i>Meda</i> , promotes lightness (<i>laghavam</i>)	Enhances metabolism, burns calories, reduces body fat	Charaka Samhita, Sutra 7/32-34
2.	<i>Udvartana</i> (Dry Powder Massage)	Rubbing the body with herbal powders in upward strokes	<i>Lekhana</i> (scraping), reduces subcutaneous fat, improves	Improves blood flow, helps in cellulite reduction	Ashtanga Hridaya, Sutra 2/15

			circulation		
3.	Walking after meals	Slow walking after food intake	Improves digestion, prevents <i>Kapha</i> aggravation	Helps in glycemic control, supports metabolism	Ashtanga Hridaya, Sutra 2
4.	Use of minerals – <i>Tamra</i> (copper), <i>Ranga</i> (tin), <i>Seesa</i> (lead), <i>Moti</i> (pearl), <i>Praval</i> (coral), <i>Sphatika</i> (alum), <i>Hira</i> (Diamond), <i>Vaidurya</i> (cat's eye)	By solely wearing these minerals, having them in diet or simply store the food in utensils made by them	<i>Lekhana karma</i> Helps in scrapping out the fat from <i>srotas</i>	-	Sushrut samhita, Sutra 46

Eminence of Physical activity

Physical activities like exercise efficiently help in fat reduction as, it increases total *caloric expenditure*, creating a *negative energy balance*. It activates β -adrenergic receptors (β_1 , β_2 , β_3) in adipose tissue through *catecholamines* (epinephrine and norepinephrine), which stimulate *cyclic AMP (cAMP)* production. cAMP activates *protein kinase A (PKA)*, which phosphorylates and activates *hormone-sensitive lipase (HSL)*¹⁶. Leading to the release of *free fatty acids (FFAs)* into the bloodstream. It increases *mitochondrial density* in skeletal muscle. This enhances the β -oxidation of fatty acids¹⁷. Regular exercise *upregulates GLUT4 (glucose transporter)* expression in muscles. Enhances *insulin sensitivity*, thereby reducing insulin resistance (which promotes fat accumulation)¹⁸.

In gist exercise lowers insulin and leptin resistance while increasing glucagon, catecholamines, and adiponectin—hormonal changes that together promote fat breakdown, improve metabolism, and support weight loss.

The exercise not only helps in fat reduction but also plays a vital role in balancing the *tridoshas (Vata, Pitta, Kapha)*, increasing digestive fire, promoting stability, lightness of the body, mental clarity and pacification of elevated *Doshas*³³.

Role of Indian government In controlling Obesity

The Indian government is actively working to curb the obesity epidemic since many years by promoting preventive healthcare, traditional medicine, public awareness campaigns, and policy initiatives.

The latest initiatives are *Fit India Movement* which encourages citizens to incorporate regular exercise and fitness routines into daily life, *POSHAN Abhiyaan (National Nutrition Mission)* focuses on reducing undernutrition and addressing the double burden of malnutrition, including obesity. *Eat Right India Movement* Led by the FSSAI promotes safe, healthy, and sustainable diets through awareness, labeling reforms, and reduction of trans fats and sugar in foods, *Khelo India Programme* encourages youth to engage in physical activities and sports to maintain fitness. *National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD)* provides screening, diagnosis, and management of lifestyle-related diseases like obesity, diabetes, and hypertension, strengthens healthcare systems and promotes preventive healthcare services. To encourage healthier eating habits, FSSAI launched the '*Aaj Se Thoda Kam*' campaign, urging consumers to gradually *reduce their intake of fat, sugar, and salt*. FSSAI's *RUCO (Repurpose Used Cooking Oil)* initiative ensures that used cooking oil is not re-entered into the food chain but is safely repurposed. When oil is repeatedly used for frying, harmful *total Polar Compounds (TPC)* form, increasing the risk of diseases³¹.

The government mainly stresses on its prevention rather than its cure. From encouraging people for increasing physical exercise through Fit India Movement & Khelo India programme, by promoting healthy eating by Eat right India movement, Aaj Se Thoda Kam, RUCO initiative by FSSAI.

Discussion

The incidence of obesity is rapidly increasing across the globe, raising serious concerns about major health complications. Mainly diet, lifestyle & hereditary are the outlined causative factors for obesity. *Nidaan Parivarjan* is the firstline regime in the Ayurveda, it could be easily done by following dietary & lifestyle Ayurvedic principles. While food is essential for sustaining life and is the primary source of energy for humans, the modern lifestyle has shifted from "eating to live" to "living to eat". *Ahara* (food) being one of the three sub-pillars of life & crucial player in preventing obesity, focussing on its amount, its time i.e twice a day should be followed. Food mainly of *Laghu* (light), *Ushna* (warm), *Ruksha* (dry) properties & *Tikta* (bitter), *Katu* (pungent) and astringent (*Kashaya*) taste should be added in obese person's diet. along with the restriction of *Guru* (heavy), *Snigdha* (unctuous), *Sheet* (cold) and *Madhura* (sweet) foods, plays a critical role in pacifying aggravated *Kapha Dosha*. Moreover, the use of specific *Ahara* (food) mentioned under obesity management in ayurveda such as low calorie & high fibre cereals *Yava* (barley), *Kudhanya* (millet), *Kulatha* (*Macrotyloma uniflorum*), *Aadhi* (Cajanus cajan), *Mudga* (*Vigna radiata*), vegetables such as *Patol* (pointed guard), *Sunishanak* (*Marsilea minuta*), *Bimbi* (*Coccinia grandis*), *Vrintaak* (*Solanum melongena*), *Tikshna* (intense) food such as fermented drinks like *Sura*, *Madya* etc can be really helpful. The eight factors responsible for the effect of the food we consume should be kept in mind according to obesity. Low calorie & with properties as described above food preparation like *Lumbika*, *Yusha*, *Yavagu*, *Dhaana*, *Laaja*, *Saktu*, *Takra* etc. In addition, mindful eating (*Ahara Vidhi Vidhan*) and practices like intermittent fasting (*Langhana*) and purification therapies (*Shodhana*) such as *Vamana* and *Virechana* may offer additional therapeutic benefits in selected individuals with higher degrees of obesity.

Lifestyle modifications are equally important as the dietary modifications. Lifestyle i.e *Vihara* inayurvedic terminology means routine involving fat reducing activities like exercise contribute significantly to weight management by promoting stability (*Sthairya*), lightness (*Laghutva*), balances of all three doshas with pacification of the elevated *Dosha* and *Agni Deepana* (igniting digestive fire), avoiding daytime sleeping by taking required amount of sleep only in night & wake up in brahm muharat to avoid kapha dosha accumulation, Dry Powder Massage (*Udvaartana*) to scrap the underlying fat in skin, small walks after food intake for the proper digestion of food other practices like wearing some gemstones like which have been known for their fat reduction property in classical texts & abstaining from all unhealthy activities.

For the positively implementation of all above one need to have calm & stable mindset & strong willpower, could be achieved by regular practice of meditation.

The initiatives in executing the policies made on prevention, management, curing & awareness about non communicable diseases commendable. However, at last it all depends on a maturity of a person because until a person itself not understand the difference between healthy & unhealthy interventions it will remain as an issue of concern.

While Ayurvedic interventions demonstrate promise in holistic obesity management, challenges remain. Standardization of protocols, variability in individual constitution (*Prakriti*), and lack of large-scale randomized controlled trials necessitate further scientific validation. Integrative approaches combining Ayurveda with modern diagnostics and monitoring tools may pave the way for more effective, evidence-based obesity management strategies.

Conclusion

Ayurveda offers a comprehensive and holistic approach to obesity management through balanced diet, lifestyle discipline, and elimination of causative factors. By incorporating specific dietary practices, lifestyle interventions like regular physical exercise (*Vyayama*), application Dry Powder Massage (*Udvaartana*) etc, it is possible to effectively prevent and manage obesity. While current outcomes are promising, further research and integrative efforts are essential to establish Ayurveda as a validated, sustainable solution in the fight against obesity.

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