

Management of Obesity by Special Breathing Techniques

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Abstract

The effect of breathing techniques, *Pranayama* and certain yogic *Āsanas* on parameters of obesity viz. weight reduction (BMI and waist to hip ratio) was studied¹. Due to the hectic and tedious lifestyle nowadays people are becoming more prone to gaining weight¹. Under the name of low calories diet people are consuming improper diet. Mostly, all of us are tempted by the junk foods viz. Pizzas, Burgers, *Samosas*, *Vadapavs*, soft drinks etc. They skip meals and fall prey to such junk foods. Sedentary lifestyle and lack of exercise as well as the lack of proper knowledge in metropolitan city like Mumbai, are also the vital factors for the obesity.

Thirty patients male and female were selected who were affected with moderate grade of obesity. They had given special breathing techniques along with specific *Āsanas* on a regular basis on a specified time and duration. They were educated for lifestyle modifications and advised to take wholesome diet as well as to adopt active lifestyle. These days Obesity has become the main cause of all the hazardous diseases such as CAD, DM, and Hypertension etc². Major companies and medical professionals have started their way of treatments, the so called wonder remedies especially the *Āyurvedic* ones, *LekhanBastis* (Medicated enemas), *Udwartans* (Dry powder massage) and medicines are given with diet. Liposuctions, Bariatric surgeries, TMJ joint surgery by which one cannot open their mouth fully are some of the latest trends from the modern science. Even crash dieting, G M Diet etc are also adopted to lose weight. People have been trying all these things but are reluctant to mention that all these don't work at all. This has led to hatred and desperation. The only fact which is not been considered at all is the basic etiopathology of the disease. i.e., lack of exercises and *Yoga*.

Keywords

BMI (*Body Mass Index*), WHR (*Waist Hip Ratio*), Yoga, Obesity, Breathing techniques, *Āsanas*, *Prānāyamas*, *Bandhas* and *Mudrās*



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INTRODUCTION

Obesity has reached epidemic proportions in India in the 21st century, with morbid obesity affecting 5% of the country's population. A study published in the noted medical journal Lancet says India is just behind US and China in this global hazard list of top ten countries with highest numbers of obese people.

Āyurveda has given prime importance to preventive as well as curative aspects. *Swasthavritta* related regimen, as mentioned in the *Dincharyas* to be adopted by everybody for healthy living. *Vyayām* (exercise) has been advised by the great writers of *Āyurveda*. *Yogā* is also the important part of the said regimen.

Yoga is a science practiced in India over thousands of years. It produces consistent physiological changes which have found scientific basis (*Iyenger*, 1968). Yoga provides one of the best means of self improvement and gaining full potential of one's body and mind. Lack of exercise, sedentary lifestyle, untimely and excessive eating habits leads to deposition of white Adipose tissues on the dependent parts such as abdomen, Hips, Breasts etc. The BMI > 30% is considered as obese. Family history as well as dietary habits also plays a vital

role in obesity. Excess of deep fried and high caloric intake of foods are the responsible factors for obesity.

Yogic management of Obesity and related disorders can be successfully managed by the specific therapy as designed by us. It includes *Āsanas*, *Pranayamas*, *Bandhas* and *Mudras* along with specific breathing techniques which increase the BMR. We have conducted our study to see the effects of yoga on obesity and its complications from a scientific point of view.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

As per the following.

Inclusion criteria

- 25 to 45 years of age group - both sex
- Specific symptoms of obese person according to *CarakSamhita*' Text.

Exclusion criteria

Patients suffering from other disorders like liver disease, pulmonary diseases, malabsorption, thyrotoxicosis, alcoholism, below 25 and above 45 years, uncontrolled hypertension and diabetes, pregnancy and lactating women, malignancy, cardiac disorder, recent surgery and acute illness

and non co-operative patients were excluded from the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the context of body eight persons are despicable such as over tall, over short, over hairy, hairless, over black, over fatty, over obese and over lean. The *Charakachaya* has described eight causative factors and also eight types of adverse effects: Shortening of lifespan, Hampered movements, Difficulty in sexual pleasures, Debility, Foul smell, over sweating, Excessive hunger and Excessive thirst (*Carakasamhitā* 21/4).

The causes of obesity are over saturation, Intake of heavy, cold and fatty items, Indulgence in day sleeping, Lack of physical and mental exercises and genetic defects.

Once a person starts gaining weight he/she is unable to keep fit and healthy. They become more prone to various diseases. Obesity is one of the fatal disorders now days. *Vāyu* (*VataDosha*) due to getting obstructed with fat in the abdomen and thus it stimulates digestive fire frequently and it produces more hunger. This ultimately leads to over eating. *Vāyu* and *Agni* are making the obesity worst. The person is called as obese due to excessive deposition of fats and muscles in the body. Excessive

deposition of fat in Pendulous buttocks, abdomen, breasts and lack of energy and metabolism are some of the features of obesity. Obesity is a major risk factor for cardiovascular diseases.

Ministry of health and family welfare along with the Indian medical council research released updated guidelines (in 2012) that a BMI over 23 kg/m² is considered overweight. Further definitions: Normal BMI: 18.0-22.9 kg/m², Overweight: 23.0-24.9 kg/m², Obesity: >25 kg/m².

As per the *Yoga Prāna*, the vital energy force of cosmos should be utilized equally in the body and also the channels which are blocked are to be opened so as to ease the free flow of *Prāna* in the entire body.

Systematic and rhythmic breathing techniques associated with the *Āsanas*, *Prānāyamas*, *Bandhas*, *Mudrās* and meditation leads to free flow of *Prāna* in the entire bodily systems and thus sheds off excess of fats accumulated in the body³.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The said 30 patients of Obesity were enrolled in the centre. Height, weight, BMI and inch wise measurements of hips, chest, abdomen, thighs etc. were recorded weekly for three months.

Breathing particularly of Chest, abdomen and clavicles had given in proper manner. Prone, Supine, sitting, standing *Āsanas* were given for forty minutes. *Halasana*, *Dronasana*, *Pavanmuktasana*, *Bhujangasana*, *Shalabhasana*, *Kativakrasana*, *Dhanurasana*, *Bhadrasana*, *Gomukhasana*, *Parvatasana*, *chakrasana*, *Tadasana*, *vrikshasana* *Padahastana*, *Paschimottanasana* -these *Asanas* were practiced daily. *Panchkoshdharana* practice was given for 20 minutes. It is a self awareness and visualization of body parts. *Simhamudra* and *Brahma Mudra* were taught to all. *Anulom -Viloma*, *Ujjayi*, *Bhramari*, *Suryabhedana* *Pranayamas* were practiced for 20 minutes. Each practice was done under supervision and as per the capacity^{4,5}.

Active lifestyle was advised. Deep fried, cold, sweet and high caloric items were avoided. Water intake immediately after food was restricted. Walking exercise was also advised for 30 minutes daily. Untimely and excessive eating was restricted. *Bakery* products and day sleeping also were restricted.

Diet control and exercise are only two important weapons to control obesity. The bodily movement which is meant for

producing firmness and strength is known as physical exercise (*Caraksamhita* 7/31). By physical exercise one gets lightness, capacity to work, firmness, tolerance of difficulties. (*Caraksamhita* 7/32).

The average weight reduction per day was 300gm.

In the months time patients have lost 5 kg.

It has been observed in first few days' patients tend to reduce 300-600 gms per day.

CONCLUSION

At the end of the entire study these patients were benefited. Inch wise losses along with the weight loss were significant. Stamina and flexibility were improved. Perspective of looking at the life was changed. Personality was enhanced with positive state of mind and boosted confidence levels. Heaviness, lethargy, dullness were markedly rectified. Overall improvement in health of each patient was observed. Pseudo hunger was eradicated.

An overall 300-800 GMS/hr weight loss was attained the end of the study maximum of 3-5 Kg weight losses was observed.

The perspective and vision towards the life was improved.

The gradual weight loss is one of the best ways of losing excess weight. There are

many formulations available in the market under the name of *Āyurveda* .viz. herbal slimming tea, tablets, gels and oils. But efficacy of that is somewhat controversial. Only relying on the medications or *Panchakarma treatments* are not going to help, but lifestyle modification plays a vital role.

Further research related studies are essentially required as Obesity is prevalent.

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