

Guest Editorial

Role of Ayurvedic Detoxification (Panchakarma) in the Management of Life Style Disorders

Ayurveda an eternal science since time immemorial approaches comprehensively towards body, mind and soul. This science has a very strong basic principles which is found to be apt and applicable for present day and for future life too which is considered to be eternal truth. Ayurveda gives full of observations and conclusions without backing of scientific experimentation. Such truth for today's sophisticated world is said to be an intuitive and emotional. Actual fact is that, it is a holistic science, elucidating promotion and preservation of health in individuals besides explaining methods for treatment of diseases.

It is possible to lead a healthy and happy life by inculcating *dinacharya* (daily regimen), *ritucharya* (seasonal regimen), *sadvritta* and *swastavritta* (codes and conducts) which forms the paramount importance in life. Having said so, the scenario of modernized life style is forcing the individual to indulge in erratic food habits, along with improper physical activities associated with stressful life which makes an individual to succumb to various illnesses. Not only above said causes but also individuals who are not following the codes and conducts of daily life, along with indulging in the habits of suppressing natural urges are more prone for innumerable diseases. For all these, the root cause is considered as *prajnaparadha* (intellectual misuse) which leads to manifestation of disease later. To maintain the equilibrium state of the body, *tridosha* (3 humours), *sapta dhatu* (7 tissue elements), *trimala* (3 waste products) should be in normal state. When normalcy is affected due to some etiological factors, *tridosha* gets aggravated resulting in various diseases. The root cause for such aggravation is *agni mandya* (recessive digestive fire) which gives rise to a stage of *ama* (free radicals) and allied diseases. When enormous accumulation of morbid *dosha* occurs, then it has to be expelled through nearest

possible route which brings homeostasis of the body. Such method of treatment is considered as internal purification or *shodhana* which is a treatment modality cleansing the body internally. *Panchakarma* merely is not a *shodhana* procedure but it also rejuvenates or revitalizes the body. Due to faulty life style there exists an innumerable life style disorders. When it comes to Indian scenario, India is carrying maximum populations who are termed out to be overweight, obese and morbidly obese. Statistics as per W.H.O. updates during 2016, says that more than 1.9 billion adults were overweight. Of these over 650 million were obese. 39% of adults aged 18 years and over were overweight and 13% were obese. Even true in case of nowadays children, wherein 41 million under the age of 5 were overweight or obese in 2016. Over 340 million children and adolescents aged 5-19 were overweight or obese in 2016.

Apart from genetic factors, other causative factors for obesity accounts towards mismatch between food consumption and its utilization. Obesity is considered to be mother of all diseases which comes under the broad heading of metabolic syndrome including diabetes mellitus, hypertension, dyslipidaemia, atherosclerotic diseases, insulin resistance, fatty liver, cardiac diseases, and ischemic stroke. These disorders are everlasting and linger in the body which paves way for innumerable diseases. For all these conditions, a comprehensive regimen as an integral part of ayurveda treatment is necessarily to be adopted which provides everlasting effects and gives radical relief from chronic diseases. It is a boon to mankind that there exists a science which has the principle and practice of internal cleansing wherein the current medical science does not possess. If the disease should be eradicated completely then it has to be targeted from its root which eliminates the morbid dosha entirely. Such elimina-

tion is performed based on the predominance of dosha. The site of origin of particular disease is identified and they are eliminated through the nearest route.

There are five sets of procedures which are named as *Panchakarma*, namely *Vamana*, *Virechana*, *Niruha basti*, *Anuvasana basti* and *Nasya karma*. They form the prime treatment in treating *tridosha*. Before starting the main procedure, pre-operative procedures are necessarily to be adopted which includes *pachana*, *deepana*, *rukshana*, *snehana* and *swedana* followed by *panchakarma*. In the clinical conditions such as overweight and obesity, patients are made fit to receive *snehapana* after the sub procedures like *rukshana*, *pachana* and *deepana*. When they attain *sneha asatmya* (non-homogeneous) state then only *snehapana* will be started.

All the diseases are considered to originate due to *agnimandya* (recessive digestive fire). To mention the necessity of performing pre-operative procedure in brief is to kindle the digestive fire (*agnideepthi*) as well as to have lightness of gastro intestinal tract (*koshta laghuta*). This can be achieved through *deepana* and *anulomana*. Till the features are attained these sub procedures are to be continued. This is followed by oral administration of the four varieties of *sneha* namely *sarpi*, *taila*, *vasa* and *majja*. Depending on the indications any one of *sneha* can be administered and is named as *snehapana*. The purpose of administering *sneha* is to mobilize morbid dosha from *shaka* (*raktadi dhatu*-different tissues) to *koshta* (gastro intestinal tract). Afterwards it will be eliminated through its nearest route either through oral route or through rectal route. The procedure like *Vamana* (therapeutic emesis) and *Virechana* (therapeutic purgation) are capable of eliminating morbid *dosha* out of the body through oral and rectal route respectively. In this regard, the whole body purification is ensured. The successful completion of *shodhana* (bio purification) is followed by a short course of *samsarjana krama*.

The method of *snehapana* starts with *hraseeyhasi matra* (initial test dose) that means the amount of *sneha* which is digestible

in 3 hours. Once the *sneha* gets digested, rice gruel or green gram soup is given as a food. Then the next day dose will be calculated based on the total duration taken for the digestion of fat on day one. Until the appearance of *samyak snigdha lakshana* (proper oleation) *snehapana* will be continued. As per the text we should give fat minimum for 3 days and maximum for 7 days. But based on the occurrence of symptoms in the individual this can be either for 4 or 5 or 6 days also. After cessation of *snehapana*, for the next two days prior to *Vamana* and for the next four days prior to *virechana*, external treatment like *abhyanga* (oil massage) and *swedana* (inducing sweat) by administering steam to whole body will be administered. *Vamana* will be performed on second day of *abhyanga* and *swedana*. *Virechana* will be performed on fourth day of *abhyanga* and *swedana*. By this enormous morbid *dosha* are eliminated. After completion of the procedure, patient feels lightness, but not weakness and there will be a difference in the body-weight compared to the earlier. Such change can result in a disease free condition which enhances the longevity of life.

Wide applicability of the *Panchakarma* is not only to modernized life style disorders, but also is beneficial in some of the acute, sub-acute and chronic diseases pertaining to different systems of the body. Intention of narrating the necessity of detoxification through *panchakarma* is to highlight the principles and practice along with its everlasting, multifold positive effects to body, mind and soul to enjoy the journey of life devoid of any agony.



Dr. Rajalaxmi MG

Associate Professor,
Department of Panchakarma,
S.D.M.C.A, Udupi, Karnataka, India.
E-mail: drrajalaxmisd@gmail.com