

## LIFE STYLE DISEASES IN WORKING WOMEN - A REVIEW STUDY

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### ABSTRACT

The diseases in working women are primarily based on the daily habits of the people because of inappropriate relationship with the environment are called as life style diseases (LDs) or non communicable diseases (NCDs). No other organisms are responsible for these diseases other than woman herself and her wrong conduct. **Aims and objective-** Understand life style diseases in working women and to prevent its recurrence and complications to restore normal life, psycho-physical capacity by diagnosis, screening and treatment through medical model. **Material-** Ayurvedic Samhita and their commentaries, modern medicine textbooks of various authors published research paper, articles, medical journals and internet. **Method - Type of study-** Review study. Literature related to the title is searched from all authentic Ayurvedic journals and internet. Data evaluation is done. **Result-**The Ayurvedic system understands the functioning of human body as a whole and any disease is under-stood to be due to imbalance of Tridoshas–Vata, Pitta and Kapha or can be understood as Movement, Transformation and Growth/Support respectively. Ayurveda texts explain various fundamental principles aimed at preventing occurrence of diseases and to promote a healthy life. Apart from conventional drug approach, non-pharmacological aspects of prevention of disease should also be advised to a patient. In this study, the three main texts of Ayurveda, i.e. *Brihatryi* were explored and the non-pharmacological aspects of Dinacharya (daily regimen), Ritucharya (seasonal regimen), Ahaarvidhi (diet therapy), Vyayama (exercise), and Taking care of mental health (music, yoga etc) were analysed. **Conclusion-**Analyses of the texts revealed that these preventive aspects, if adopted in daily routine by patients of lifestyle disorders can improve their quality of life and maintain good health.

**Keywords:** life style diseases, Ayurveda, Ritucharya, Sadvritta

### INTRODUCTION

Working women even consider a "new generation" life style as a socio-economic status today. Women play multiple roles- specially working women who have to balance between work and home resulting in negligence of their own health. Tight deadlines, work pressures, social networking, travel, etc. are just some

of the common reasons of an increase in lifestyle ailments like obesity, depression and anxiety, polycystic ovarian syndrome, metabolic syndrome, chronic backache, infertility, breast cancer etc. Ayurveda provides better solution in the forms of proper dietary management, lifestyle advises, Panchakarma like detoxifi-

cation and bio-purification procedures, medicaments, and rejuvenation therapies. The holistic approach of Ayurveda, treating the patient as a whole, meaning intervention targeted toward complete physical, psychological, and spiritual wellbeing makes this science a wonderful option in lifestyle disorders [1].

**Causes** - Sedentary schedule, stress, lack of physical activity, sleep deprivation and unhealthy eating habits are the main cause for metabolic imbalance which leads to this group of diseases. Therefore life style disorders are the disease that is not transmitted by another person, a vector, or the environment or it is disease caused by how we live our life.

Along with that there are certain other factors such as heredity, age and gender which cannot be avoided or controlled. But the other factors that can be avoided or controlled are drug abuse, tobacco smoking and alcohol drinking. [2]

**Incidences** - A survey conducted by a study released by the Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that 68% of working women surveyed within the age group of 21 to 52 years were suffering from lifestyle diseases. [3]

#### **Aim and Objective-**

1. To understand life style diseases in working women explain by analysing with critical review on working women life style
2. To prevent recurrence and complications by restore normal life, psycho-physical capacity and medical model diagnosis, screening and treatment.

#### **Material and method-**

**Material-** Ayurvedic samhita and their commentaries, modern medicine textbooks of various authors, published research paper, articles, medical journals and internet.

**Method-** Type of study- Review study.

Literature related to the title is searched from all authentic Ayurvedic journals and internet. Data evaluation is done.

## **RESULTS**

Three out of four Indian working women above 30 years are at risk of dying due to life style diseases; WHO In 2005, 60% of deaths all over the world (35

million) resulting from non-communicable disease of which 40% accounted for premature deaths. [4]

In 2015 jointly published report by the WHO and the world economic forum, revealed that, India would account for a loss of \$236.6 billion. [5]

80% urban Indian working women in the age group 25 - 45 years were overweight and 75% of working women are known to suffer from depression /general anxiety disorder.

#### **List of life style disease in working women [6] -**

1. **Obesity** - Work pressures lead them to eat more of junk food which leads to obesity. Obesity does not just happen overnight, it develops gradually from poor diet and lifestyle choices. For example - eating unhealthy food, fast food of high fat but not eating fruit, vegetables and unrefined carbohydrates, such as whole meal bread and brown rice.
2. **Chronic Backache** - Traffic on the Indian roads is also responsible for many common ailments for frequent travelers or those who earn their living by driving. According to the research study bad public transportation and faulty office postures rides for quite a long time can lead to a chronic back pain. Research also shows that most of the (41%) working women suffering from backache are users of public transport and exacerbated by long hours of static posture at work, inappropriate /no back support, excessive and sudden weight gain by the sedentary lifestyle.
3. **Depression/Anxiety disorder** - The study 'Preventive Healthcare and Corporate Female Workforce also said that long hours and working under strict deadlines. Factors such a lack of sleep, exercise, addiction to alcohol and drug abuse can lead to 75% of working women to suffer from depression or general anxiety disorder, compared to women with lesser levels of psychological demand at work.
4. **Metabolic Syndrome** - It can be linked to obesity, cardiovascular system diseases, high cholesterol levels and fasting glucose levels in the blood. This can be due to stress, poor eating patterns or lack of physical activity. According to a joint survey by WHO and ASCOM, majority of

the women affected by MS are between age group of 25 to 45 who have poor eating patterns, sedentary lifestyle, and have a degree of insulin resistance. Stress is also known to be a contributing factor. Some women work in late night to them leading insomnia, indigestion, acidity, loss of appetite, headache, irritability, hypertension, mood fluctuations and body pain.

5. **Infertility** - There is a rising trend in the incidence of infertile women due to stress, delay in conception, obesity, and pre-existing condition like PCOS or diabetes. PCOS most commonly noticed in young reproductive aged women. It's a hormonal disorder leading to menstrual irregularities, obesity, and infertility. Lifestyle diseases are also complicating pregnancies, affecting both the mother and baby. These patients are always in a high risk category, complicated with the risk of miscarriage, pre-term labour and diabetes in pregnancy and increased intervention, causing increase in morbidity and mortality.
6. **Cancer** - In recent years, the incidence of breast cancer is increasing in the younger women mainly due to unhealthy lifestyle. In 5% women it could be genetic therefore the testing has to be done at an early age.

#### Prevention through Ayurveda -

Ayurveda the ancient system of medicine has a great potential in preventing lifestyle disorders. Ayurveda has volumes of texts available explaining many fundamental principles for promotion of health and longevity and prevention of diseases. Lifestyle diseases are potentially preventable with changes in the diet, daily routine and environment. Science of Ayurveda offers dinacharya (daily regime), Ritucharya (seasonal regime), Rasayana (rejuvenation therapy), sadvritta (ideal routine) for maintenance of health and wellbeing.<sup>[7]</sup> It provides appropriate solution to the problem arising out of faulty lifestyle.

## DISCUSSION

The Motto of Ayurveda is "swasthasya swasthya rakshanam, aaturasya vikaara prashamanam"<sup>[8]</sup> i.e., Ayurveda aims to maintain the health of the healthy person and to restore the health diseased. It is the state

of equilibrium of the three principles of the body, vata, pitta and kapha along with a contented State of senses mind and soul.<sup>[9]</sup>

The four components of a person's daily life are Ahara (food), Achara (conduct), Vihara (behaviour) and Vichara (thoughts). When any of these components is unhealthy there is imbalance in the Tridhosa, which manifests as disease.

1. **Nidana Parivarjan** - Removal of these accumulated waste products is the first line of treatment as described in Ayurveda. Other effective treatments include lifestyle modification, primarily weight loss, diet and exercise and the appropriate use of pharmacological agents to reduce specific risk factors. In the management of lifestyle diseases, Ayurveda offers various regimens including Dinracharya (daily regimen), Ritucharya (seasonal regimen), Panchakarma (five detoxification and biopurification therapies) and Rasayana (rejuvenation) therapies. The Sadvritta (ideal routines) and Aachara Rasayana (code of conduct) are utmost important to maintain a healthy and happy psychological perspective.<sup>[10]</sup>
2. **Daily Regimen** - Right from waking up in the morning till sleeping at night, all the daily routines is called dincharya and has been given utmost importance in Ayurveda. It recommends that in order to be optimally healthy Everyday two cycles of change pass through us, each bringing Vata, Pitta or Kapha predominance. The approximate times of these Ayurveda contends that routines help establish balance. Ayurveda has also suggested avoiding late night sleep, eating stale foods and the misuse of senses. These might lead to imbalance and thus long term imbalance pre disposes to lifestyle disorders. Therefore, one has to stay aware about this daily regimen for day to day promotion of health, boost immunity and prevention from life style disorders.<sup>[11]</sup>
3. **Diet therapy** - Ahara has described as one of the Trayopastambha (three subsidiary pillars) of life which are Ahara, Nidra (sleep) and Brahmacharya (celibacy).<sup>[12]</sup> Diet is given maximum importance in healthy as well as in diseased status. It is said in ancient Indian litera-

ture that if dietetics is followed, medicine is not needed and if dietetics is not observed, even medicines are not useful. Hita Ahara is responsible for the happiness and formation of the body. As per Ayurveda, food affects the mind also by causing either an increase or decrease in the three qualities of mind, i.e., Satvaguna, Rajoguna and Tamoguna. Acharya Charaka emphasises on food which are wholesome to the body like Shaali, Mudga, Yava, Saindhava, Jangala Mamsa etc. They should be consumed regularly for the health maintenance. Thus the primary focus of diet therapy is to reduce overall calorie consumption. Ayurveda also described eighteen types of dietary incompatibilities (Viruddha Aharha)<sup>[13]</sup> which should be avoided to maintain health and longevity. In this way Ayurveda offers different Pathayapathya (do's & don'ts) regarding diet/dietary supplementations which definitely help in the prevention and management of a wide range of lifestyle disorders.

4. **Exercise** - Although exercise alone is only moderately effective for weight loss, the combination of dietary modification and exercise is the most effective approach for the treatment. Regular light exercises help the body to shape up, increase muscle strength, improve appetite and maintain health. It gives the body the ability to withstand exertion, fatigue, and changes in the climate such as fluctuations in temperature. It helps one relax and have sound sleep, and improves digestion and elimination.
5. **Drug therapy** - In Ayurveda various plant based drugs are advocated for the prevention and management of obesity, chronic Backache, depression/ anxiety, metabolic syndrome, infertility etc.
6. **Seasonal regimen** -The human beings lives are ruled by the seasons, as the seasons power and temperature automatically change the natural low of the body. By being the time cycles, seasons bring birth, life sustaining, aging and also death. Ritu (season) classified by different features expresses different effects on the body as well as on

the environment. Ayurveda has depicted various rules and regimens (Charya), regarding diet and lifestyle to acclimatize seasonal enforcement easily without altering body homeostasis. The prime objective of Ayurvedic system of medicine is preventive aspect, which can be achieved by the modification in diet and lifestyle in response to change in climatic condition. on which Ayurveda has laid a great stress because prevention is better than cure. Specific regimen has been mentioned for the six seasons (Shishira, Vasanta, Greeshma, Varsha, Sharad, Hemanta) which includes Vamana in Vasanta Ritu; Virechana in Sharad Ritu; Basti in Varsha Ritu and Ritu.<sup>[14]</sup>

7. **Taking care of mental health** - In order to live a healthy and active life, a sound mind in the sound body is very essential. Therefore, to maintain the healthy status of the mind, Ayurveda prescribes a code of social as well as personal conduct, known as "Sadvritta".<sup>[15]</sup> Mental health is an important component of one's health. To control on Rajas and Tamas one can perform Meditation. Other various means of maintaining mental health are music, yoga, chanting, charity etc.

## CONCLUSION

Ayurveda prove to be beneficial from the history of treatment and preventive measures given to the persons suffering from life style diseases. The decisions we make now, will affect our health later in life. Ayurveda reminds us that health is the balanced and dynamic integration between our environment, body, mind, and spirit. Providing guidelines on ideal daily and seasonal routines, diet and behavior in management of life style disorders in working women. The other systems do not have any other answers than the supply of nutritional food and physical activities in this respect. Also as the nutritional food and physical activity are well defined in Ayurvedic system, it can be considered that there is much scope in Ayurveda only.

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