

## A SURVEY STUDY ON –“CONSEQUENCES OF LIFESTYLE DISORDERS AND AYURVEDIC APPROACH TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE

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### ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the science of life and an art of living in balance with nature. Its two prime goals are to maintain and promote health as well as prevent diseases and treat illnesses<sup>[1]</sup>, which emphasizes the phrase – ‘Prevention is better than cure’. These goals are based on the belief that only a healthy person can achieve the *chaturth purusharth*<sup>[2]</sup>, the ultimate aim of human life. A person is called healthy when his *Agni, doshas, all dhatus* and *mala* are in equilibrium phase with the happiness of mind and soul.<sup>[3]</sup> The basic principles of Ayurveda describe that diseases can be avoided by balancing the body, mind, spirit and environment. The do's and don'ts explained in Ayurveda

enable each person to live a healthy, happy, comfortable and advantageous life; mentally, physically, and socially. Ayurveda promotes self-care by helping us comprehend our fundamental nature also known as our distinct ayurvedic constitution or *prakriti* - in a world where we are increasingly disassociated from ourselves. Lifestyle disorders can be avoided by following some ayurvedic regimens, including *sadvritta- palan, dincharya* (daily routines), *ritucharya* (seasonal regimens), *panchakarma* and *rasayan* therapy. People who don't practice Ayurveda frequently develop lifestyle disorders or noncommunicable diseases (NCDs).

**KEYWORDS:** Lifestyle disorder, Ayurveda, *dincharya, ritucharya*, NCDs.

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## INTRODUCTION

Lifestyle diseases are illnesses mostly brought on by people's daily activities and poor lifestyles. These disorders cannot be passed/communicate from one person to another, but a number of elements including genetics, physiology, environment, and behavior contribute to their development. Habits that inhibit physical exercise and promote inactivity can lead to a number of health issues including chronic noncommunicable diseases with potentially fatal consequences. These NCDs include heart disease, stroke, diabetes, obesity, metabolic syndrome, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and several types of cancer etc. These disorders share risk factors with prolonged exposure to some modifiable lifestyle behaviors eg. Smoking, inappropriate sleeping and eating patterns and being inactive. Unfortunately, the relationship between health and lifestyle is not widely known, many people are unaware that changing one's lifestyle plays a significant role in the development of chronic diseases as major contributor to lessen the morbidity and mortality. Around 40 million people each year die from noncommunicable diseases, accounting for almost 70% of all fatalities worldwide.<sup>[4]</sup> Over 15 million of these deaths include persons between the ages of 30 – 69.<sup>[5]</sup> In India approximately 6 million people die from NCDs per year.<sup>[6]</sup>

## AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Ayurveda has a holistic approach that effectively describes many ways to prevent and manage lifestyle disorders. It provides an ultimate solution in the form of healthy lifestyle approaches, proper dietary management, *dincharya* (daily regimen), *ritucharya* (seasonal regimen), *panchakarma* (detoxification therapy), and *rasayana* (rejuvenation therapy), to get rid of various lifestyle disorders. Besides this, the ideal behaviors and codes of conduct as *Aachar-Rasayan* also play an important role to maintain physical and psychological well-being. Ayurveda is more than just medicine. Its fundamental goals are to enhance wellbeing, avoid illness and lengthen the life.

## METHODS AND MATERIALS

For the present study, a survey was conducted over randomly selected 1021 volunteers in Rajasthan by Madan Mohan Malviya Government Ayurveda College, Udaipur in April 2022. A questionnaire was prepared for this survey containing demographic characteristics including name, age, occupation, gender etc. The second part of the questionnaire contained 17 questions about lifestyle disease, nutrition, physical activity, stress, vision, bowel habits, hunger, sleep, addiction etc. Each answer was given a particular number to assess the health

score. Less than 5 is considered as *atiheen*, between 6-9 considered as *heen*, between 10-14 considered as *madhyam*, and more than 15 is considered as *uttam*.

## RESULTS

### 1. LINK BETWEEN SLEEP AND DISEASE

We all have some sense of the relationship between sleep and our ability to function throughout the day. After all, everyone has experienced the fatigue, bad mood or lack of focus that so often follow a night of poor sleep. What many people do not realize is that the lack of sleep - especially on a regular basis, is associated with long-term health consequences including chronic medical conditions like diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease etc. which may lead to a shortened life expectancy. On the other hand, habitually over-sleeping more than nine hours is also associated with poor health. Results of the above survey also applaud the same.

**Table 1: Impact of abnormal sleep over health.**

Disease/ consequences	No. of people (220/1021)	Percentage
Constipation	157	71.36%
Hypertension	53	24.09%
Asthma	15	6.82%
Vitamin Deficiency	79	35.91%
Headache/ Migraine	51	23.18%

The study reveals that out of 1021 participants, 220 had abnormal sleeping. Out of which, 71.36% complained of not having a clear bowel, 24.09% had hypertension, 6.82% were asthmatic, 35.91 were Vitamin deficient and 23.18% complained of headache/migraine.

### 2. LINK BETWEEN HUNGER AND DISEASE

Diet is said to be one of the three *upstambhas*<sup>[7]</sup> (the foundation pillar of a healthy human body) responsible for both good health and diseases.<sup>[8]</sup> A proper balanced diet is associated with fair complexion, beauty, vitality, happiness, nutrition and intellectual growth.<sup>[9]</sup> All these functions are directly dependent on *jatharagni* of the individual, expressed through their hunger. Improper digestion even of a good healthy food can cause various diseases by forming *aama* and its resultant *strotovarodh*. A number of do's and don'ts are described in Ayurveda as *ahar vidhi visheshayatana*, *dwadashashana*, *viruddhaahara* etc. to promote good digestion.

Contrary, the modern western lifestyle including some addiction is responsible for *aama* production and consequent diseases. These diseases again distort the gastric secretions and interpose the hunger. Results of our survey throwing light upon this deep relation.

**Table 2: Impact of hunger over health.**

Disease/ consequences	No. of people (162/1021)	Percentage
Any type addiction	49	30.25%
Weakness	72	44.44%
Irregular bowel	92	56.79%
Lack of Mental Happiness	104	64.20%
Abnormal sleep	60	37.04%
Stress	81	50.00%

According to our study 162 out of 1021 participants, reported abnormal hunger as result of their associated disease. Out of which, 30.25% complained of having an addiction, 44.44% felt weakness, 56.79% had irregular bowel, 64.20% perceived lack of mental happiness, 37.04% complained of abnormal sleep and 50% reported stress.

### 3. LINK BETWEEN DISEASE MEDICATION AND LIFESTYLE

A disease is a condition that changes the way of an organ functioning. Chronic disease can be managed far more effectively than to be permanently cured. They are caused by lack of physical activity, unhealthy eating, alcohol, substance use disorders and smoking tobacco etc. which can lead to many diseases including heart disease, joint pain, asthma, stroke, obesity, type II diabetes, lung cancer and many more.

Healthy lifestyle habits can improve the chances that a medication will be effective. For people with high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and many other conditions, medications should be in addition to lifestyle changes, not instead of them. Ayurveda has described a number of pursuable behaviors in the context of *sadvritta palan*, *ahar vidhi vidhan*, *pathyapathya*, *viruddhahara*, *yama*, *niyam*, *achar-rasayan* etc. Following these regimen can increase the efficacy of given medicines and promotes a healthy life; while infringing them can increase the risk of disease as our survey results unveiled.

**Table 3: Impact of lifestyle over efficacy of medication.**

On medication of any disease	No. of participants (267//1021)	percentage
Diabetes	63	6.17%
Thyroid Disease	50	4.90%
Hypertension	141	13.81%
High Cholesterol	64	6.27%

Arthritis	197	19.29%
Heart Disease	62	6.07%
Asthma	48	4.70%
Allergies	198	19.39%
Dyspnoea on stairs climbing	354	34.67%
Weakness	360	35.26%
Other Diseases	124	12.14%

Results of the present study showed that most of the diseases of participants were resultant of unhealthy lifestyles including lack of physical activity (*vyayam*), poor food habits (*mithya-aahar*) and not following *dinacharya*, *ratricharya*, *ritucharya*, *sadvritta-palan*, etc. Many of these parameters are modifiable through ayurveda which promotes self-care, enhances digestion, sleep, immunity, weight management, mental health, life-span, and sense of purpose and also assisting the prevention of NCDs. The *dinacharya*, *ritucharya*, and *sadvritta* are components of an ideal lifestyle practice recommended in the classical Ayurvedic texts for maintaining health and achieving a long, healthy life that relieves pain and disease. *Dinacharya* enables us to maintain a connection with the circadian rhythm (cycle of nature), while chronodisruption is associated with poor cognitive performance, mood and sleep disorders, diabetes, obesity, daytime sleepiness, substance abuse, heart disease, and some malignancies. *Ritucharya* is a potent, health-enhancing ayurvedic technique that enables us to live in accordance with seasonal changes and make internal adjustments to maintain the balance of our *doshas*. Proper *nidra* safeguards the body's development and growth (*Dhatu Pushti*), and also aids in developing adequate learning ability. Oja (the in-charge of our body's immune system) also depends on sleep for good health. Lack of sleep can have an impact on the body by making stress rise and perhaps affecting mental well-being.

## CONCLUSION

Ayurveda is the art of leading a healthy lifestyle in fusion with factual science, which when adopted in its entirety, brings a wave of general well-being to our daily life. It helps to reclaim health with balanced dietary guidelines, effective sleep patterns, home remedies, daily and seasonal routines, pranayam, yoga, and exercise patterns. Heighten concentration levels through yoga, meditation, herbal intake, and adequate sleep to recalibrate mental and goal-based settings in our daily life. Exercising, having an active lifestyle, adequate sun exposure, appropriate treatments and emotional well-being help to cleanse the mind and spirit. Not only the ayurvedic methods and treatments improve

digestion, appetite, immunity and overall health but also work in perfect harmony with alternative medicine. All these advantages lead the humankind to adopt ayurveda not only as a treatment but moreover as a way of living life to obtain and sustain health throughout.

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