

AYURVEDA AND MODERN PERSPECTIVES ON MEDA DHATU AND STHAULYA: A
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ABSTRACT

According to the principles of Adharbhuta Siddhanta Ayurveda is considered as science of life which provides excellent concepts related to the prevention and treatment of diseases. According to Ayurveda, Dhatu is one of the most important entities of body, possessing anatomical and physiological significances. The poor eating habits, sedentary lifestyle, changes in sleep patterns and stress, etc. can hamper the health of Dhatus leading to the pathological manifestation and Sthoulya (obesity) is one of them which mainly arise due to the vitiation of Meda Dhatu. The role of Meda Dhatu in Sthoulya is inevitable because Medadhatwagni's derangement prevents the formation of additional Dhatus and may even harm the individual's longevity. Ayurveda described several therapeutic and preventive measures to prevent vitiation of Meda Dhatu and prevalence of Sthoulya. Present article summarizes Ayurveda and modern perspectives on Meda dhatu and Sthaulya.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Meda dhatu, Sthaulya, Obesity.

INTRODUCTION

The *Tridosha*, *Trimala* and *Sapta Dhatu* regulates the body's physiological functioning and balances of these *Doshas* & *Dhatus* helps in the general health maintenance. The body shows signs of disease when the *Doshas* and *Dhatus* are out of balance. The concept of *Dhatu* is one of them, and it is very important for explaining the structural and physiological parts of the body.^[1-4]

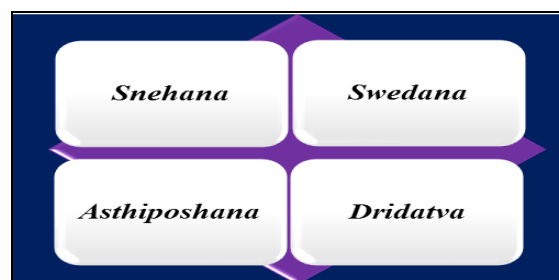
Meda Dhatu

Sharira is made up of *Sapta Dhatu* and *Meda Dhatu* play important role in the composite frame work of body. The vitiation of *Meda Dhatu* may leads condition like *Sthoulya* in which *Dhatus* are remain in undernourished conditions. *Sthoola* is a condition in which a person's fat metabolism is hindered and their *Kapha* levels rise in an abnormal way. *Meda Dhatu* refers to the *Mamsa*, the normal physiology of *Meda Dhatu* contributed towards the normal physical health of individual while excessive and abnormal accumulation of *Meda Dhatu* brings conditions of *Sthoulya*.

Meda Dhatu is also regarded as a *Sneha* dominant *Drava Dhatu*, which is *Guru* and *Snigdha-Gunayukta*. *Acharya Charaka* says that *Meda Dhatu* is primarily composed of *Jala Mahabhuta*. *Acharya Susruta* says that *Meda Dhatu* is primarily composed of *Jala* and *Pruthvi Mahabhuta*.

Sthira, *Guru*, *Snigdha*, *Sandra* and *Mrudu* are the main features of *Meda Dhatu*. *Meda Dhatu's* properties are similar to *Kapha Dosh* because both are primarily composed of *Jala* and *Prithvi Mahabhuta*.^[4-7] The biological functions of *Meda Dhatu* are depicted in **Figure 1**.

Sandhi and *Snayu* are *Upadhatu* of *Medadhatu*, according to *Acharya Vagbhata Meda Vriddhi* causes fatigue, breathing difficulty, excessive fat over buttocks and abdomen. *Meda Vriddhi* leads hypertension, diabetes and lethargy, etc. *Meda Vriddhi* involves excessive accumulation of *Meda Dhatu* inside the body which termed as *Sthoulya*. Sometimes *Sthoulya* is responsible for many health issues related to the heart or blood circulation.

**Figure 1: Karmas of Meda Dhatu.**

Sthoulya

Sthoulya is the condition in which there is an increase of the *Meda* and *Mamsa Dhatu*, which causes flabbiness and pendulous appearance in the *Udara Sthana*. *Acharya Charaka* has described the patho-physiology of *Sthoulya* by focusing on the *Medasavruta Vata*. According to this, *Nidana* raises *Medas* alone at the expense of other *Dhatu*s in vulnerable individuals. *Vata* is confined specifically to *Koshtha* as a result of *Medas' Avarana* of *Vayu*, which speeds up digestion. Derangement of *Agni* leads production of *Ama*, which disturbs *Dhatvagni* of *Medadhatu* and prevents the proper formation of additional *Dhatu*s. *Medadhatu* that is not formed correctly builds up in the body, leading to obesity. Fat accumulation disrupts *Vata's* movement, which in turn causes an increase in appetite. As a result, the patient consumes more food, which is transformed into unsuitable fatty tissue, resulting in a vicious cycle.^[6-9]

Vagbhata has mentioned three types of *Sthoulya* as follows:

1. *Adhik sthoulya* associated with other complications
2. *Madhyam sthoulya* possess moderate symptoms
3. *Hina sthoulya* associated with minor symptoms of obesity with no severe complications.

The patho-physiology of *Sthoulya* is interpreted slightly differently in *Susruta Samhita* than in *Charaka Samhita*. *Annarasa* which is primarily *Madhura* in nature will result from *Nidana's* indulgence. *Dhatu Parinama* is hindered, in excessive *Sneha* and *Medas* as a result of *Dhatwagnimandya*, which ultimately leads to *Sthoulya*. Formation of *Ama* is also play vital role in the pathogenesis of *Sthoulya*. *Dhatwagnimandya* and *Adhyashana* are the main causes of *Amotpati*. The *Dhatwagnimandya* eventually leads to the production of more *Ama* and *Medadhatu Upachaya* takes place at the expense of *Rakta* and *Mamsa Dhatu*. The *Amarasa* that is produced as a result of *Rasadhatwagnimandya* remains in *Ama Avastha* itself in the *Dhatu Poshana Krama*. Eating the *Vishista Ahara*, sedentary life style and stress, etc. triggers *Samprapti* of *Sthoulya*.

The production of *Anna Rasa* is primarily found in *Amavastha*, which mixes with *Sleshma*, this is because of consumption of *Guru Ahara*, etc. In *Sthoulya Meda Dhatu* increases correspondingly higher than that of other *Dhatu*s in *Dhatu Pariposhana Krama* due to specific factors that favours *MedaVridhhi*. Indulging in *Nidanas* like *Avyayama*, *Sleshmala Ahara* and *Divaswapna*, etc. creates the *Anna Rasa*, which is dominated by the *Madhura Rasa* and causes an increase in the body's *Sneha Guna* and *Meda Dhatu*. *Margavarodha* is caused by the excessive production of *Medadhatu*; as a result, other *Dhatu*s get depleted, resulting in symptoms like *Trushna* and *Ksudra Shwasa*, etc.

Madhava Nidana emphasizes that obese people develop *Ama* as a result of eating too quickly. The *Samprapti* of

Sthoulya that is discussed in *Bhavaprakasha*, *Yoga ratnakara*, *Sharangadhara*, *Basavarajeeyam* and *Vangasena* is identical to that is mentioned in *Madhavanidana*.

Management of Sthoulya

- *Vamana*, *Virechana* and *ShiroVirechan* therapies.
- *Ruksha* and *Tikshna Basti*.
- *Rasoushadhis* like *Trimurtirasa*, *Murtirasa* and *Trushanadiloham*, etc. these drugs imparts *Kapha Nashaka* and *Medohara* properties.
- *Arogyavardhini vati*, *Triphala*, *Vidanga*, *Pippali*, *Trikatu*, *Vidangadi Churna* and *Takrarishta*, etc.

These therapies offers *Medovinasini* property, *Dipana* and *Pachana Karma*, provides *Ama Pachana* effect, balances digestive strength, imparts *Tridosha Shaman* effect, clears channels of body, control metabolic activities, regulates hormonal balances, decrease fat deposition and reduces mental stress, etc. thus provides pathological and symptomatic relief in *Sthoulya*.^[9-11]

Causes of obesity as per modern science

- ✚ Psychological factors
- ✚ Consumption of fast foods, oily and fatty foods
- ✚ Hormonal changes
- ✚ Menopausal symptoms in female
- ✚ Certain medications

Symptoms as per modern view

- Laziness and difficulty in walking
- Lack of enthusiasm and excessive sweating
- Loss of lust and breathlessness
- Inappropriate body frame work, etc.

Diagnosis of obesity as per modern science

- General physical examination.
- Calculation of BMI.
- Measuring waist circumference.

CONCLUSION

Meda Dhatu is *Sneha* dominant *Drava Dhatu*, which is primarily composed of *Jala* and *Pruthvi Mahabhuta* according to *Acharya Susruta*. The *Meda Dhatu* possesses *Sthira*, *Snigdha*, *Sandra* and *Guru Gunas*. The vitiation of *Meda Dhatu* along with *Kapha Dosha* may leads condition of *Sthoulya*. The sedentary lifestyle, awful dietary pattern, late night awakening and mental stress, etc. can affect nourishment and normal physiology of *Meda Dhatu*s leading to the pathological triggering of *Sthoulya*. Derangement of *Agni* initiates production of *Ama*, which affects *Dhatvagni* of *Medadhatu* and prevents proper formation of other *Dhatu*s. *Medadhatu* that is not formed properly and not work correctly in the body leads consequences of obesity.

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