

SOME COMMENTS ON DIABETES AND HERBAL THERAPY

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Received: 4 April, 1995

Accepted: 11 April, 1995

ABSTRACT : *Diabetes mellitus is a chronic disease recognized as a malady of aged people and the young. As the contemporary civilization is advanced more people in civilized world are suffering from diabetes mellitus due to irrational dietary habits. Though the disease was known since long effective treatment was scarce. There is no effective treatment for its radical cure but the preventive measures can be resorted to. However, ayurvedic system has been successful in controlling the disease by medicines and sound advice on dietetics.*

INTRODUCTION

Diabetes is purely a metabolic disease due to derangement of carbohydrate metabolism resulting in excess glucose in blood. This is a disease characterized by glycosuria and glycaemia. Ayurveda has recognized abnormalities in urogenital physiology. *Madhumeha* is a disease known since the Vedic period.

Roman physicians recognized this malady as diabetes which means 'Pass through' due to frequent urination which is a symptom of diabetes mellitus. Eminent Greek physicians named this malady as diabetes which also means 'Syphoning of water through the body'.

Sushruta recognized this malady in two types. Diabetes occurring in childhood is generally taken as hereditary and another type which occurs during lifetime due to abnormal intake of diet. The former case is associated with the symptoms like emaciated and dehydrated body, loss of appetite, increased thirst and polyuria whereas in the later case the patient is

usually of a stout build and afflicted by gluttony and drowsiness.

Presently diabetes mellitus is recognized as a state of altered body metabolism characterized by abnormal elevation of blood glucose level resulting in glycaemia and glycosuria due to insufficient availability of insulin in blood. In the present era, two recognized such as insulin dependent diabetes and non-insulin dependent diabetes.

Insulin-dependent diabetes is called juvenile diabetes which occurs usually in the age groups under twenty years, whereas the other type of diabetes usually occurs in persons over thirty five or forty years of age. Juvenile diabetes is more severe type than the other one. The other type of diabetes is known as maturity – onset diabetes. It is a stable type of diabetes occurring in persons with overweight and with irrational eating habits.

Diabetes mellitus is found mostly among persons who are:

- ❖ Women
- ❖ Women who have shown carbohydrate intolerance during pregnancy.
- ❖ Blood relatives of diabetics
- ❖ Overweight
- ❖ Over 35 years of age

Diabetes cannot be cured but can be controlled where dietary treatment has got prime role. The goal of the dietary treatment is to restore normal carbohydrate, protein and fat metabolism through a balanced diet, medication and exercise. The role of dietician is more important as he recommended the correct diet. Considering the number of meals the dietician has to enquire about the food preferences, eating pattern, occupation and food preferences, eating pattern, occupation and food budget of the patient so that a realistic meal pattern can be constructed. The obese diabetic should always follow a weight reducing diet to attain ideal weight. An ideal weight for diabetic is 10 per cent less than normal desirable weight, as recommended by physicians.

Dietary requirement vary according to the complications associated with the patients. The nutritional requirement of a diabetic patient depends on activity, age, sex, weight and climate.

Some Ayurvedic Remedies

Apart from dietary treatment diabetes can be controlled by some low cost indigenous remedies. The treatment in vogue at present

for the malady diabetes mellitus in Ayurvedic science is given below:

- ❖ *Kadara* and *Kramuka Kashaya* – juice
Dose : 30oz.; twice daily (2)
- ❖ *Madhunasini*(*Gymnema sylvestre*) – leaves powder
Dose : 15 gms; twice daily with water (2)
- ❖ *Vimbi* (*Coccinia indica*) – leaves powder
Dose : 20 gms; twice daily with water (2)
- ❖ *Karela* (Bittergourd or *Momordica charantica*) – juice of the fruit.
Dose: Five drachms daily (2)
- ❖ *Jambu* (*Eugenia jambolana*) – seed powder
Dose : 15 gms; twice daily with water (2)
- ❖ Periwinkle flower (*Catharanthus roseus*) – flower juice
Dose : Juice of five flowers; twice daily (1)
- ❖ *Methi* (Fenugreek) –
Dose : Soak one tablespoonful of *methi* overnight in water.

Drink the water in early morning .

When seeds sprout on the second day, eat them raw.

It is a good tonic also⁽¹⁾

While considering the above topic on diabetes mellitus except juvenile diabetes it is evident that diet of human being is mainly responsible to cause this malady. Hence,

everyone should be cautious in taking their daily diet to avoid overweight and underweight, so that such a degenerative disease can be prevented. Undoubtedly this will act as preventive measure against the malady. In the Sushruta era normal diet was in practice, so this malady was very scarcely seen. Wanton dietary habits characteristics of this present hi-tech age is bound to

increase the incidence of this vexing ailment.

1. M. Sevanada, Diabetes – Periwinkle instead of Insulin, Health Action, 25-26 (1994).
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