REVIEW ARTICLE

Understanding of Kuposhan in Ayurveda: A Review

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The term malnutrition covers two broad groups of conditions. One is under-nutrition; other is over-nutrition. Malnutrition affects people in every country. Undernutrition is widely recognized as a major health problem in developing countries of the world. It has been estimated that in India, 47% of children suffer from varying degrees of malnutrition.

Aims and Objective: The aim of the study was to collect and compile the data regarding kuposhan (undernutrition) in different ayurvedic and contemporary texts.

Materials and Methods: Different Classical textbooks, modern books, different journals, and websites were referred to in the above context.

Discussion: Aahara (food) is one of the Trayopsthambha (Tripods of life) as per Ayurvedic classics. Ayurveda describes malnutrition under Apatarpanjanya Vyadhis. (undernutrition diseases). Based on severity and etiology, these disorders may be considered as Karshya (Undernutrition), Phakka, Parigarbhika (Kwashiorkor), and Balashosha (Marasmus). The exact correlation of Kuposhana with any specific disease of modern medicine is not possible but various clinical signs and symptoms are exactly same as that of Protein-energy malnutrition. Proper diet and lifestyle modification, Nidan parivarjan (removal of cause), and Brimhna chikitsa describe in ayurveda, one can control or reverse this type of condition.

Conclusion: Kuposhan can be correlated with malnutrition there are detailed description and its management available in classical text in Ayurveda. This management is equally helpful in the present context.

1. INTRODUCTION

Malnutrition refers to deficiencies, excesses, or imbalances in a person’s intake of energy or nutrients. The term malnutrition covers two broad groups of conditions. One is undernutrition; other is overnutrition but Protein-energy malnutrition (PEM) is restricted to under-nutrition. Nutritional status is an indicator of the nutritional profile of the whole community. Malnutrition affects people in every country. Undernutrition is widely recognized as a major health problem in developing countries of the world. It has been estimated that in India, 47% of children suffer from varying degrees of malnutrition. Sometimes, malnutrition and PEM are used conversely with undernutrition. The term PEM applies to a group of related disorders that include marasmus and kwashiorkor. Ayurveda describes malnutrition under Apatarpanjanya Vyadhis. Based on severity and etiology, these disorders may be considered as Karshya, Phakka, Parigarbhika, and Balashosha. Aahara (food) is one of the Trayopsthambha of life as per Ayurvedic classics. Acharya Charaka has described 18 types of kshaya, in which seven types of dhatu kshaya have also been described Kupashana causes “Emaciation of child” which originates from a nutritional deficiency in children, which is the same as PEM in modern science. The exact correlation of Kuposhana with any specific disease of modern medicine is not possible but various clinical signs and symptoms are exactly same as that of PEM.
2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Different classical textbooks, modern books, different journals, and websites were referred to in the above context.

2.1. Nidana

There are many causes of malnutrition in terms of classical texts mentioned such as Aaharaja- Katu and Tikta Rasas, Ruksh Annapan, Alpa Bhojana, Viharaja- Kriya Atiyoga (excess exercise), Ratri Jagrana (night awakening), Vata and Atapa Sevana (Sunbath), Malmutradi Nigraha. Manasik- Chita (stress), Bhaya (fear), Udvega (depression), and Ati krodha (anger). Many factors involve in pathogenesis of Nutritional Deficiency Disorders.

2.2. Samprapti Ghatak

The component in kuposhana (malnutrition) involves on the basis of predisposing factors that decide the vitiation. Normally, Doshas, Dushya, Srotas, Srotodushti, Adhishtana, and Vyaktisthana are Vata Rasavaha, Sangha, Pakvashaya, and Sampurna Sharir (whole body), respectively.

2.3. Probable Comparisons of Some Karshya-Related Diseases in Children

Ayurveda has mentioned Karshya in numerous contexts where it has been explained as a clinical feature of a disease or as a complication of certain conditions. Most of the diseases which are of acute nature cause Karshyata in children due to their less intolerance to diseases. As we look into the presentation of the said conditions, it is evident that these are symptoms of severe malnutrition and its consequences of it.

2.3.1. Karshya (Underweight)

Karshya as underweight according to Ayurveda Karshya is a condition where a child having a stable Agni, good appetite, and taking feeds properly but has weakness of the body and does not gain weight appropriately. Acharya Charaka has mentioned both sthula (corpulent person) and krisa (emaciated person); both are causing problems, but corpulence is causing more serious complications in comparison with emaciation.[6] The lean person has emaciated buttocks, abdomen, neck, and body having prominent network of vessels, joints being prominent and appearance as if only the skin and bones.[7]

Treatment: Instruct to patients for Nidan parivarjan (removal of cause) and use Vidarikandadi powder, Ashwangandha ghrity, Suvarna yoga, Lakshadi oil, and Ubatnadi as Brimhana chikitsa taking nourishing therapies and light and nourishing diet.[8]

2.3.2. Phakka as PEM

Phakka: The word “Phak” means slow movements or creeping like a snail. It means if the child remains in capacitated of walking independently even after attaining of 1-year age, he is said to be suffering from Phakka Roga.[9]

The symptoms of Phakka Roga are Jwara, loss of Spikh, Bahu, and Uru, excess growth of abdomen, Peetaksi, Angaharsha, weakness, excess of Mutra and Pureesha, Manda cheshta, irritability, dullness, and excessive nasal discharges.[10]

Acharya Kashyapa has described three types of Phakka.[11]

1. Ksheeraj
2. Garbhaj

- Ksheeraj Phakka is similar to Bal Shosha and is caused by breast milk vitiated by Kapha dosha.[12]
- Garbhaj phakka is caused when a mother conceives again which results in deficiencies of her breast milk. The child becomes very weak if fed with such milk.[13]
- Vyadhitj Phakka is caused by when a child is not taken care of properly (Anatha Shishu) and may suffer from various chronic diseases and unhygienic conditions.[14]

It manifests as a severe form of malnutrition and represents grades of Marasmus with clinical features such as loss of strength, wasting of buttocks, thighs, and upper limbs, pot belly, big head appearance, slow and feeble movement, and irritable excess production of Dhatu mala (nasal secretions).[15]

- Treatment depends on the cause of disease, that is, if there is milk impurity, the mother should be treated and in case of chronic diseases, treatment of such diseases should be given.
- The treatment of Phakka includes Snehana chikitsa then Shodhana chikitsa.
- Administration of drugs such as Rasas and Punarnava having the property of activating the neuromuscular response along with Samvardhana ghrity is done.
- A nutritious diet also should be prescribed such as ghee, soups, and Mamsa rasa. Raj Taila Abhyanga is advised to improve muscle tone of body.
- For regaining locomotive ability, rehabilitative measures like Tripad chakra Ratha (tricycle) are advised.[15]

2.3.3. Parigarbhika

If a baby is on breast milk of pregnant women, then Parigarbhika Roga can occur and if milk has less in quantity and quantity.

- Signs and symptoms of Parigarbhika Roga are cough, Anorexia, delirium impaired digestive capacity, vomiting, and fever.
- Treatment – Agnideepan (correction of digestion and appetite) is the main treatment in Parigarbhik disease.
- It is achieved by small doses of Ghrita made of Pippali, Pipalimula, chitak, Kanika, etc. Various Lehya preparations, Jeevaniya gana drugs, and milk are also prescribed with guru and singhada food.

2.3.4. Balshosha

The causes of Balshosha are Arochaka (reduced digestive capacity), Pratishthyayaa (running nose), Jwara (fever) and Kasa (cough), and excessive sleeping, talking cold water; at last, baby may lead to Shoshaa (emaciation).[16]

- Treatment – In anorexia, trikatu, pata, and saindhav used with honey Ber, dhakabi, amla churn used with honey using shishushoshanashak shodhan ghrity and shoshnashak oil in child.[17]

2.3.5. Shuska Revati

Shuska Revati one Graha (demon) affecting the child represents infections spectrum of disease resulting Sarvangakshya (emaciation).[18]

The child becomes emaciated even though consuming food of many kinds suffers from severe thirst and shriveled eyes. Symptoms of shuska revati are falling of the hair, Annadwesha (anorexia to food), feebile voice, Vivarata (loss of lusters), Nanavidiyashakritha (variegated color stool), and Udara granthis (abdominal nodular swelling). The child shows progressive emaciation at the outset of the clinical condition which can be with marasmus.[19]

3. DISCUSSION

We can say that Kuposhana Janya Vikara (under nutritional diseases) is growth and developmental deficiency. It can be correlated with PEM,
Malnutrition state in children can be diagnosed as Karshya (under nutrition) in Ayurveda. The treatment protocol of Karshya like Mridu langhana followed by Brimhana was adopted in the present case. Babya and Abhyantara sneha prayogas were adopted so as to achieve Brimhana. The treatments were mainly focused on improving the Agni at the level of Koshta, Rasa, Rakta, and Mamsa dhatu level. There were significant changes in various parameters including body weight, bowel status, and generalized weakness after 10 days of treatment. Kuposhana is related to inappropriate diet. It occurs specially in childhood. Up to age of 16 years and Dhatu are going to nourishes and maturation. Diet and brinhana aushadhi (nutritional drugs) need to dhatu pushi and dosh homeostasis.

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9. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
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10. DATA AVAILABILITY
This is an original manuscript and all data are available for only review purposes from principal investigators.

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