Volume : 3 | Issue : 6 | June 2014 • ISSN No 2277 - 8160

Research Paper | Social Science

The Role of Naturopathy in the Management of Diabetes

Dr .I. Maria Yesuraja — Head Dept. of Social Work, Sree Narayana Guru College Coimbatore.

Ann TressaSabu — MPhil (Social Work) Scholar, Sree Narayana Guru College, Coimbatore.

ABSTRACT

Lifestyle diseases are more common as countries become more industrialized and are caused by an inappropriate and non-harmonious relationship of people with their environment. Around the world, diabetes is affecting the health and well-being of alarge volume of people. According to Naturopathy it is a usual metabolic disorder chiefly related to digestive system & functions of liver, though it is commonly believed as a disorder of the pancreas. Whatever may be the cause of or course of the disease it generally brought to control only by a healthy life style. Naturopathic doctors are well-trained and are able to provide patients with excellent individualized treatment options. A comprehensive treatment plan that includes regulated diet, exercise, hydrotherapy, mud therapy and other medications is the best way to regulate blood sugar and manage diabetes. Many scientific studies have validated the use of naturopathic treatments for helping achieve optimal health for diabetics.

KEYWORDS : Naturopathy, Diabetes, Life style

Health is man's precious possession. It influences his activities and shapes his destiny. It is the solid foundation on which man's happiness rests. He is a healthy man whose body is free from all diseases; he carries on his normal activities without fatigue. He can digest ordinary simple food. His mind and his senses are in a state of harmony and poise.On the other hand life has never been as polluted, modified,fast paced and discordant with nature as it is in the Twenty-First century. Everything from the water we drink and the air we breathe has been damaged and changed by human existence. However, it is possible to increase the level of harmony between nature and individuals who are prepared to make intelligent lifestyle changes which draw them closer to nature, and the healing power it offers.

To live in harmony with the laws of nature requires that nature itself is harmonious. Unfortunately, for the majority, if not the whole planet, one or more aspects of nature have been damaged by humans; The air is not fresh. For those living near cities and towns, exposure to air pollution is the main environmental threat to human health.

Modern food is not natural. It is processed, packed, transported, refrigerated, frozen, genetically modified and flavor enhanced before it even reaches supermarket shelves. The practicalities of a typical twenty-first century lifestyle are inherently opposed to nature:

Modern transport and labor saving devices have massively reduced daily physical activity. Instead of returning to natural exercise, the modern fitness trend is to use work out machines in order to make up for lack of exercise due to use of labor saving machines!

Twenty-First century breakdowns of family structures and an imbalanced focus on materialism at the expense of spiritual and mental wellness have led to an increased level of global stress.

An alarming result of this life style change is the emergence of life style diseases especially diabetes. Recent studies revealed that out of 180 million diabetes patients in the world, 3 million are Indians. In short, 1/3 of the population is diabetic patients. No wonder, India will be the diabetic capital of the world. In India, Kerala is the state with largest number of diabetic patients. On an average, every second person above the age of 40 is at the risk or is suffering from this ailment. A number of above mentioned lifestyle factors are known to be important to the development of diabetes mellitus type 2 including: obesity reduced physical activity, diet, stress, and urbanization.

Excess body fat underlies 64% of cases of diabetes in men and 77% of cases in women.A number of dietary factors such as sugar sweetened drinks and the type of fat in the diet appear to play a role.

In one study, those who had high levels of physical activity, a healthy diet, did not smoke, and consumed alcohol in moderation had an 82% lower rate of diabetes.

Although the harmonious balance between nature and humanity has been disrupted, all is not lost. It is possible for each individual to choose to defy the Twenty-First century burden of pollution and lack of wellness and for them to live more harmoniously with nature.

Here comes the importance of nature cure. Nature cure (Naturopathy) is way of life than a system of treatment. It is a system of healing by stimulating the body's inherent power to regain health with the help of nature, earth, water, air, fire and other. This means that with in every human organism, there is a healing energy which includes our immense system in the fuller sense of both physical and the psyche which is responsible for our wellness and our ability to heal and maintain health. We fall ill only when we go against nature and the cause of disease (toxins) is expelled from the body to cure it. It treats physical, mental and spiritual aspects of human being there by having a holistic approach towards disease. It strongly affirms the benevolence of life and recommends simple life style measures to meet the reality of health problems.

Naturopathic physicians prescribe comprehensive therapeutic lifestyle change recommendations in the form of dietary counseling,stress reduction techniques,prescribed exercise. Patients additionally received prescriptions for botanical and nutritional supplementation, often in combination with conventional medication.

With the base of various studies conducted in various parts of the world, naturopathy believes that the ultimate cause of diabetes is faulty life style and for them a change in life style can contribute positively in the management of diabetes. For the modification of the life style they primarily focus on the elimination of toxins accumulated in the body as a result of the faulty life style.

According to naturopathy, the following techniques are capable of managing diabetes.

HYDROTHERAPY

Hydrotherapy is one of the most popular remedies for diabetes. Beginning with simple drinking of the right quantity of water, to the use of water packs and baths such as hip bath, abdominal douche, immersion bath, foot bath, arm bath, steam bath etc. can be used effectively for the treatment of diabetes. Hydrotherapy helps to reduce stress, detoxify the body, cure insomnia, reduce excess fats hence doing away with obesity and do away with diabetes mellitus type 2. In a study of 40 persons at University of Minnesota, 85% of the participants pointed it to be effective in reducing the participants' reactivity to stress and in reducing anxiety. Diabetes control by naturopathy following hydrotherapy enhances the muscle capacities to metabolize the sugar level in blood and increase blood circulation throughout

the body. These lower the excessive high sugar levels in blood and take it to normal levels. This treatment is equally helpful for men and women of all ages and under all the physical conditions.

REGULATED DIET

The decisions you make in selecting different foods, preparing them, and eating them can make a significant difference in your health. We know that diabetes is a condition in which the body does not assimilate food as effectively as it should. When the sugar resulting from digestedfood is not able to enter the cells, it remains in the bloodstream. This can, over time, cause serious injury especially to the eyes and kidneys. It can slow the healing of soresand blisters, and in extreme cases can even lead eventually to amputation. In naturopathy, patients are assisted to adjust their diet to prevent or treat diabetes without the use of heavy drugs. . Naturopath may recommend adjusting the amounts of food taken at each meal. Usually patients are advised to eat small amounts at frequent intervals rather than a few large meals each day. In addition, the naturopathic doctor may suggest taking care in the way that you combine foods. For instance, you may be advised to eat protein-containing foods along with vegetables in order to slow the process of absorption. Part of that treatment includes a low carbohydrate diet. A great deal of evidence-based research supports the use of such a dietary program. It plays a major role in restoring the health by supplying the needed nutrients and recuperating the organs. Hippocrates preached "Thy food thy medicine and thy medicine thy food." Those who can follow this simple rule can lead a healthy life. 90% of the total number of diseases, especially diabetes arises from faulty food habits and hence correction of food habits helps to regain health.

A study conducted in Varkala naturopathy Centre, Kerala in the year 2005 studied the effect of regulated diet on 100 diabetic in patients in the Centre within duration of one year. The result of the study revealed that in 89% of them, there has been substantial reduction in body weight and the level of blood sugar. It also throws light on the fact that a reduction in body weight has a direct relationship with the reduction in the diabetes level.

EXERCISES

Hand-in-hand with diet management is the subject of weight control. Selecting foods that help reduce blood sugar levels will usually also provide help in controlling weight. In addition to a change in diet, physical exercise appropriate to your health condition is also suggested. Regular exercise and nutritious diet leads to weight loss and can reverse Insulin Resistance and increase insulin sensitivity, thereby reducing the risk of complications for people with diabetes. Exercise not only lowers blood glucose level, it also promotes healthy metabolic functions and oxygenates tissues.

MUD THERAPY

Mud is one of the five elements of nature which has immense impact on the body in health as well as in sickness. It is used as the best therapeutic agent in Naturopathy treatment. Mud retains moisture for a long time. When applied over the body part it causes cooling by absorbing the heat of the body. It reduces the inflammation of the area and improves the circulation, absorption and elimination.

It is supposed to be a great purifier as it tries to draw away the toxins from the system by increasing circulation in the affected part where it is applied. For diabetes patients different mud packs and baths are given.

Micro studies conducted on the diabetic inpatients in Varkala naturopathy centre in the years 2000 and 2005 shows that mud therapy has got a stimulating effect on pancreas thereby assisting the increased production of insulin. The study further says that 92% of the cases reported with reduction in tension and stress when mud packs are applied to head. Reduction in stress has got a direct effect on the reduction of diabetes.

Naturopathy invites all to be part of Mother Nature and her healing power. It is passionate about inspiring and educating people to become happier and healthier through harmony with nature. By making simple changes to diet and lifestyle you can recover and restore your natural wellness and vitality.