

## Never attempt total starvation as treatment for Obesity: Dr. C.R Agnives

The third day of GAF started off with a lecture by Dhanvantari Award winner Dr. C.R Agnives. Speaking at the Plenary Session chaired by Dr. S. Vidyadharan, he made a presentation on the topic 'Obesity - A treatment protocol in Ayurveda perspective'. Starting off that in Ayurveda, diseases are examined by utilizing 5 folds pathology known as *Pancha Lakshana Nidana*, Agnives, who is also the Editor-in-Chief of Kerala Ayurveda Vaidyam Magazine, added that Sthaulya is not a disease while Athi-Sthoulya is to be considered as a disease. 'The lean wants to be fat and the obese wants to be lean, this is the present mentality of society', he commented.

Discussing about the condition of pot-bellies, Agnives said that such a condition is now-a-days considered as a high risk factor causing metabolic syndrome and leading to heart diseases and high blood pressure. Adding, he said genetic factors and age are the main reasons for pot-belly.

The doctor ended his talk mentioning the need for long-term therapy as a cure for obesity. As prescriptions, good sleep, drugs, diet and exercise are the ways to outcome obesity. This is because vaata, fat and kapha are to be reduced for better results. "Never attempt total starvation as treatment for obesity", he strongly quoted. He was presented a memento by Dr. Shyamalakumari, former DAME.

The session continued with Dr. M. R. Vasudevan Nampoothiri presenting the second lecture on the topic, Ayurveda Dietetics-Relevance in the Context of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs).

NCDs affect both men and women, and they can be prevented by means of effective interventions that tackle shared risk factors like unhealthy diet, tobacco, physical inactivity etc. Ayurveda deals with 'Pathyavastha' i.e. planned diet or dietetics.

The doctor cited the ancient scriptures Bhavaprakasha and Charaka Samhitha, where improper diet is cited as the main cause of NCDs. This is further classified into three kinds such as 'Samasana' (un-desirable food), 'Adhyasana' (eating before 3 hours from the previous food), 'Vishmasana' (untimely food irrespective of quantity). The processing of food, psychological condition of the people, age, season, habitat, status of health and digestion are the basic things of concern in diet.

While taking foods, one must take at least 20 minutes to complete the dine and one must fill only half his stomach with food, quarter with water and remaining quarter must be left free.

He pointed out that along with food, regular exercise is also required for a healthy living. The doctor also stated that according to the vedas, milk is for body and ghee for brain. He concluded the session by saying that the right amount of food at the right time will have the effect of any medicine.

Renowned Dr. L. Mahadevan, Clinical Ayurveda teacher from Tamil Nadu, was the next in line for with the topic 'Hepatobiliary disorders in Ayurveda with special reference to treatment experience of Indian childhood cirrhosis'.

Dr. Mahadevan classified his lecture on the topic into two parts; the theory part and the clinical experiment part. Vaata, Pitta and Kabha are the basic of human body and main factors leading to various diseases, he remarked. "Ayurveda texts starts with 'Jvara' and ends with 'Vatha Raktha'", he said.

In the theoretical part of his lecture, he added that there are 6 *Ritus* happening inside our body and each of it rotates in every four hours. He also noted about the seven 'Dhatus' in our body, which are, life sap (rasa), blood (rakta), muscles (mansa), fatty tissue (med), bones (asthi), bone marrow and nervous tissue (majja) and semen and reproductive system (shukra). Our body becomes a hub of diseases when these Dathus are crossed by Vatha, Pitha or Kapha. As an ending note to his theory part of lecture, he mentioned about obesity, saying that, obesity contributes to diabetes and high blood cholesterol, further complicating the health of the person with NASH (Non Alcoholic Steatohepatitis) or better known as 'Silent' liver disease.

His whole lecture seemed to be great classroom material, which was well received and appreciated by the audience. As a token of appreciation from GAF, he was presented with a memento by D.K Shyamalakumari, former DAME.

After the engrossing talk by Dr Mahadevan, the audience sat in rapt attention for another interesting session by Dr Sathiyamurthi, who presented his lecture on "Non Communicable Diseases - Genomics and Prakrithi". According to him, "Ayurveda considers everything unique."

He said that a number of hidden theories revealed the fact that DNA repairing capacity decreases along with ageing. He also spoke about the influence of rasayana in DNA repair. The non-communicable diseases associated with anemia blood syndrome, clot syndrome, damaged cells and tissues are due to mismatched DNA.

Rasayana enhances the DNA repair activity and maintains the original functions of the cells. Amalaki rasayana and Brahmarasayana, which is made out of at least 35 herbs, are the most effective for these defects. He also narrated a study he had made on defected flies and he found these defects were diminishing by giving them Brahmarasayana.

The stage was then taken over by Mr Mark Rosenberg, REAA, from Germany. He gave an interesting insight into Ayurveda and Social Health. He said Mental stress and psychic problems are being common these days.

A survey held in 2011 has found the most common diseases were depression, anxiety, backpain and even pregnancy. In Europe, every third person feels himself exhausted, and unable to find a balance to their lives.

In western countries, 80% of young girls feel that they are not pretty. Psychic problems are becoming more and more significant and these arise from the increasing need for modern lifestyle- looking for fulfilment outside, losing contact to one's self, loss of inspiration and enthusiasm. Almost 50% of marriages are ending in divorce due to unhealthy family binding. Yoga, meditation, relaxation, understanding and respecting nature along with stepping into organic food with a balanced nutrition is a practical remedy for mental and physical stress.

*Swasta*, as termed in Ayurveda, is being in balance with oneself, having inner strength through Ayurveda. According to Mr Rosenberg, Ayurveda as an integrative system of medicine will work best with a new focus on its own concepts. He closed his session pressing on the importance of rebuilding a patient's self-esteem, which is the key for every healing process.

The plenary lecture of the Global Ayurveda Fest concluded with Dr. E P Jeevan's sensitizing session on the scope of Ayurveda in Europe. His lecture titled "Ayurveda in Europe: What we achieved and what we have to create," focused on the increasing prospects of Ayurvedic medicine in Germany, where he is the Founder of Ayurveda Care, an Ayurveda centre in Berlin.

Providing an opportunity for meaningful research, the Ayurvedic system in Germany is one that offers immense opportunity for Indian students and young practitioners. *"The number of Ayurvedic doctors in Germany would count to a number less 10."* Unlike the pharmaceutical medicinal system in India, A holistic system of medicine, focusing on practicing different life systems, rather than mere prescription of medicines, is the requirement in Europe.

Experienced as an Ayurvedic practitioner in Europe for more than 15 years, Dr. Jeevan lists the most frequent health issues in Germany as the following: Psychosomatic diseases (depression etc.), Rheumatism, Skin diseases, Digestive problems, Metabolic diseases (diabetes, thyroid etc.) and a few others like headache, migraine and trinnitis.

The major questions faced by Ayurveda overseas are pertaining to safety and origin of the plant types used. "Home-grown plants from the place can be used to bring up new medicines, by making use of the traditional Ayurvedic procedures."

He also talked of the necessity to extending support by the Indian government, to those pursuing study and research on Ayurveda abroad. To the Ayurveda students and young practitioners, Dr. Jeevan's plea was to consider Ayurveda as a stand-alone system. "Ayurveda principles should be studied without using the parameters of modern medicine."

For more info:

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