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Ayurvedic approach towards hyperlipidemia

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Hyperlipidemia is one of the greatest health threats today since it has become the major risk factor for atherosclerosis and cardiovascular diseases. Hyperlipidemia is defined as abnormally elevated levels of any or all lipids and/or lipoproteins in the blood. World Health Organization indicates that raised cholesterol is estimated to cause 2.6 million deaths (4.5% of total deaths) and 29.7 million disability adjusted life years in both developed and developing countries. Prevalence of high cholesterol level in Sri Lanka is 17% for both sexes which is a higher rate than many countries. The objective of this study is to identify the distribution of causative factors among hyperlipidemic patients according to Ayurvedic perspective. Total of 60 clinically diagnosed hyperlipidemic patients were selected for the study depending on Frederickson-WHO diagnostic criteria and a self-administrative questionnaire were distributed to collect data on etiological factors mentioned in Ayurvedic texts. All subjects completed the study and when considered the dietary factors it was found that guru (heavy), madhura (sweet), sheeta (cold) and snigdha (Oily) diet had frequently been taken 93.1% , 94.8 % , 93.1% and 93.1 respectively. Relating to behavioral factors 82.8%, 70.7% and 56.9% have indulged avyayama (lack of exercise), avyavaya (lack of sexual intercourse), diva swapna (day sleep) respectively. Considering the psychological factors involving hyperlipidemia, 74.1 and 77.6% had experienced achinta (lack of mental exercise) and harsha nityatva (uninterrupted cheerfulness) respectively. Out of 60 patients, 69% subjects had related with congenital factor, beeja swabhava which is inherited from father or mother. When the etiological factors were concluded, the most prominent cause for hyperlipidemia was the diet than behavioral or congenital factors. More subjects had consumed with sweet foodstuffs (94.8) than oily or cold foods. Lack of exercise (82%) was the dominant behavioral factor while uninterrupted cheerfulness (77.6 %) was the prominent psychological factor. Mental stress as a relating cause for hyperlipidemia was not an important rationale as 49% had suffered from it. These results suggest that more studies on causatives factors as explored causes are avoidable; therefore, many occurrences of hyperlipidemia can be preventable.

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