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## Obesity and its homoeopathic management: A review

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**Abstract**

Obesity is the major public health problems in developed countries but at present it is one of the most important public health problem in developing countries also. The increased risk of cancer, hormonal imbalance, and other significant disorders are had been linked to obesity. Because of the multifactorial aetiology, obesity is very challenging to treat and it is one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in the world. Overall, in the world, 35 million people suffer from obesity. Overweight and obese also leads to psychological issues. Homoeopathic mode of treatment is a safe and holistic way to overcome obesity without any side effects. Homoeopathic medicines also treat and correct the underlying problems such as endocrinal disturbance, overeating and stress. Homoeopathic management along with lifestyle alteration is the one of the safest and effective method for the treatment of obesity.

**Keywords:** Obesity, Public health problem, Multifactorial aetiology, Homoeopathic management

**Introduction**

Obesity is a state that contains excess of adipose tissues <sup>[1]</sup>. Body weight exceeds more than 20% - 25% considered as both men and women are obese, their weight due to fat (excess adipose) respective <sup>[2]</sup>. Overweight and obesity are serious medical condition that affects children and adolescents. When the Body Mass Index 30 or above is considered to be a person present the clinical obesity <sup>[3]</sup>.

**Table 1:** Body Mass Index and Nutritional Status <sup>[1]</sup>

Body Mass Index	Nutritional Status
Between 20 – 25 kg/m <sup>2</sup>	Normal
Less than 18.5 kg/m <sup>2</sup>	Modest malnutrition
Less than 16 kg/m <sup>2</sup>	Serious malnutrition
Greater than 25 – 30 kg/m <sup>2</sup>	Over weight
Greater than 30 kg/m <sup>2</sup>	Obese
Less than 13 kg/m <sup>2</sup>	Fatal in males
Less than 11kg/m <sup>2</sup>	Fatal in females

Anthropometry (skin fold thickness), electrical impedance, densitometry (underwater weighing), Computed Tomography (CT) or Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) are some other approaches to quantifying the obesity. <sup>[1]</sup>.

The size of adipocytes, mainly increased by overeating, however adipocytes start proliferation once it achieves their maximal size and massive irreversible obesity may result <sup>[4]</sup>. Children's born to two obese peoples has about 75% chance of being obese. Leptin is a protein it produced by the gene namely ob. gene, which is expressed in adipocytes. Leptin is associated with obesity <sup>[2]</sup>. Body Mass Index between 25 and 30 should be considered as a medically significant and deserving for therapeutic interventions <sup>[1]</sup>. Increased Body Mass Index is the major risk factors for some non-communicable diseases such as musculoskeletal disorders, diabetes and cardio vascular diseases. It results in dramatic decrease of life expectancy and life quality <sup>[5]</sup>.

**Prevalence**

In India, obesity is emerging as an important health problem. In India, twenty-two million of peoples are obese, they are especially abdominally obese <sup>[6]</sup>. The fifth leading risk of worldwide death is overweight and obesity <sup>[7]</sup>. In According to a survey conducted in India, in 2016, 20.6 percent of overweight or obese women are increased to 24 percent in 2021.

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On the other hand, 22.9 percent of increased in 2021. [8]. Obesity occurs in all age groups. Men have lower rate of obesity than women. Although men may have higher rates of overweight [7].

### Body fat distribution

Obesity is classified on the basis of fat distribution,

1. Gynoid obesity: Fat accumulates mainly around hips and thighs [10].
2. Android obesity [10]: Fat accumulates mainly in the abdomen in both men and women [3].

### Types of obesity

1. Class I obesity (BMI: 30 - < 35 KG / M<sup>2</sup>)
2. Class II obesity (BMI: 35 - < 40 KG / M<sup>2</sup>)
3. Class III obesity (BMI: 40 KG / M<sup>2</sup>) [11]
4. Morbid obesity: It is a condition where in BMI more than 40 kg/m<sup>2</sup>
5. Super obesity: Body weight exceeding BMI 50 kg/m<sup>2</sup> [12]

### Causes

Obesity is a multifactorial condition. Factors playing an important role in eating and weight control, include; genetic, cultural, socioeconomic, behavioural, situational, metabolic and physiological [6]. Familial hyperinsulinism, hyperadrenocorticism, hypogonadism, abnormal eating behaviour. Other causes of obesity include drugs, neurological disorders [6], Frohlich's syndrome, pregnancy, climacteric males and females, Bardet-Biedl syndrome [3], Prader Willi syndrome and Cushing's syndrome [13].

### Pathogenesis

There are two parallel discussions that clearly explain the pathogenesis of obesity, one from the nutritional stand point and one from the energetic [14]. It was supported by physiological mechanisms that, adipose tissue reflects the fat stores and a receptor or "adipostat". The adipostat present in the hypothalamic centres. The adipostat signal gets low, when the fat stores gets depleted and the hunger is stimulated by the hypothalamus. In order to conserve the energy, it decreases the energy expenditure. Conversely the adipostat signal get increased, once the fat stores are abundant. The hunger also gets decreased and the energy expenditure get increased by the hypothalamus [1]. Due to inflammatory adipokine secretion, obesity also contributed the immune dysfunction and it became a major risk factor for many secondary complications and also in certain cases hepatocellular, oesophageal and colon cancers [15].

### Clinical features

- Onset: Insidious.
- Progressive increase in body weight.
- Gradual alteration in body contour and configuration uniform deposition of fat throughout the body.
- Discomfort in warm condition due to defective heat loss [16].
- Shortness of breath.
- Trouble in sleeping. [17]
- Depression.
- Fatigue.
- Back and joint pain.
- Excessive sweating.

- Sleep apnoea.
- Infection in skin folds [18].

### Complications

Obesity has adverse effects on both mortality and morbidity. Obesity at 40 years of age can reduce life expectancy by upto 7 years for non-smokers and by 13 years for smokers [13].

### Other complications are

- Restrictive lung diseases.
- Obstructive sleep apnoea.
- Coronary heart disease.
- Cerebrovascular and thromboembolic diseases. [20]
- Hernia.
- Varicose vein.
- Hyperlipidaemia. [16]
- Deep vein thrombosis.
- Breast, endometrial and colon cancers. [22]
- Diabetes mellitus.
- Stroke.
- Cholelithiasis.
- Degenerative arthritis. [21]
- Perinatal mortality.
- Pre-eclampsia.
- Gestational Diabetes. [3]

### Management

The management of obesity mainly depends upon on the amount of calorie intake and output [23].

### Dietary management

Healthful foods include: Fat-free and low-fat milk, lean meat, fish, poultry, cooked beans, peas, whole wheat bread, oat meal, brown rice, cereals, fresh fruits and vegetables. Canola or olive oils are heart healthy [3].

### Physical activity

Generally, adults should follow the underlying guidelines in relation to physical activities [23].

Exercise should be initiated slowly and the intensity should be increased gradually [3].

- Regularly moderate exercise should be done for 30-45 minutes per day [22].
- Physical activity causes increase in BMR, which persists for some time after vigorous exercise.
- Physical activity also leads to increase in cardiac contractility and also psychological wellbeing [16].

Regular motivation is mandatory for weight reduction. Neurotic individuals are known to seek relief from their anxiety by eating [20], so physical activity and counselling helps them to reduce anxiety, which in turn reduces stress related over eating.

### Surgical therapy

- Vertical banded gastroplasty
- Jaw wiring
- Jejunioileal bypass [12]
- Raven gastric bypass
- Duodenal switch
- Gastric bonding [20].

**Homoeopathic management**

Homoeopathic system of treatment is very efficient in managing all the primary and secondary symptoms of obesity and it also plays a prominent role in preventing relapse of the condition<sup>[3]</sup>. Homoeopathic medicines have great potential to lose the unwanted body fat, effectively<sup>[12]</sup>. Homoeopathic remedies help in two ways to manage obesity; Dynamic way of breaking the constitutional nature of obesity.

Molecular way like accelerating the fat burns and modulating the hunger pattern<sup>[24]</sup>.

The underlying medicines are indicating the therapeutic affinity but this is not a complete and proper guide to the treatment of the obesity<sup>[3]</sup>.

**Ammonium Carbonicum**

Stout women, who lead a sedentary life and weary take cold easily. They are always tired. Flatulent. Dyspepsia. Great appetite but easily satisfied<sup>[25]</sup>. Dyspnoea<sup>[27]</sup>.

**Ammonium Muraticum**

It is adopted to fat and sluggish patients. Excessive fatty deposit around abdomen. Much flatus<sup>[25]</sup>. Body looks large and fat, but their legs too thin<sup>[26]</sup>.

**Antimonium Crudum**

Tendency to grow fat. Loss of appetite. Constant belching present. Gouty metastasis to the bowels and stomach. After eating bloating present. Sweetish water brash. Continued drowsiness. All complaints are ameliorated by open air, moist warmth<sup>[25]</sup>.

**Aurum Metallicum**

Depression. Excessive hunger and thirst. Tendency of hernia, incarcerated flatus<sup>[30]</sup>. Fatty degeneration of heart<sup>[27]</sup>.

**Calcerea Arsenicum**

Obesity, fatty de-arrangement. No craving of food for mind or body. No appetite, can enjoy only soup, eating which after causes eructation and vomiting. Bowels are very tense<sup>[29]</sup>.

**Calcerea Carbonicum**

These persons are so called leuco-phlegmatic temperament, because of pale skin, chalky appearance<sup>[25]</sup>. Calcerea Carbonicum children are grow fat and they have large belly. Fat, flabby baby, Fatness without fitness, mere flab by bulk with weakness and weariness<sup>[28]</sup>. Glandular swelling. Sensation of coldness felt in single parts of the body, such as head, stomach, legs, feet, etc. Very hard to keep them warm. Appetite is uncertain and peculiar constant tendency to diarrhoea<sup>[32]</sup>.

**Capsicum**

Capsicum indicates to person of lax fibres and muscles; obesity, lazy, fat, unclean person. Clumsy children. Obesity. Haemorrhoidal troubles<sup>[30]</sup>.

**Ferrum Metallicum**

Pesudoplethora, who flesh easily. Weakness from basic speaking or basic walking through the looking strong. Muscle flabby and relaxed, sanguine temperament Voracious appetite. Flatulent dyspepsia<sup>[25]</sup>.

**Fucus Vesiculosus**

Fucus Vesiculosus is mainly indicated for obesity and non-toxic goitre and it also indicate also exophthalmic goitre. Thyroid enlargement in obese. It is found very beneficial for shedding excessive fat from the entire body. They also have fluctuations in their appetite<sup>[25]</sup>.

**Graphites**

Especially adopted to person inclined to obesity particularly females who delay menstruation<sup>[28]</sup>. It is useful in people who are morbidly fat, or have been fat and are now emaciating. Extreme weakness and desire to lie down<sup>[27]</sup>. Obesity due to hormonal imbalance at menopause<sup>[34]</sup>.

**Kali Bichromicum**

Kali Bichromicum is mainly indicated for fleshy, fat, light complexion persons with syphilitic or scrofulous history. Gastritis. Cannot digest meat. Dysentery; tenesmus, stool, brown, frothy<sup>[25]</sup>.

**Lycopodium**

It is adopted to persons who are intellectually keen, but of weak muscular power. Lycos patient full of gas and dry. Lack of vital heat. Dyspepsia. Rolling of flatulence. Abdomen bloated felt after eating<sup>[25]</sup>. It mainly indicated for excess fat in thigh and gluteal region. Having tendency for overeating, results in weight gain<sup>[34]</sup>.

**Phosphorus**

In a blood, as a result of the decomposition and of the lowering of the power of resistance in the parietals of the vessels by fatty metamorphoses. Ravenous hunger. Loss of appetite. Regurgitation of food, also in mouthful much belching of food after beating. Emission of much flatus. Aphonia<sup>[31]</sup>. Acute hepatitis, fatty degeneration<sup>[25]</sup>.

**Phytolacca**

Decrease of weight. Aged person have constipation and they had weak heart. Aphonia, difficulty in breathing. Tincture of Phytolacca berry is treatment of obesity. The general symptoms such as Aching, soreness, restlessness, prostration is guiding to Phytolacca<sup>[25]</sup>. Thyroid dysfunction cause obesity<sup>[34]</sup>.

**Pulsatilla Nigricans**

Situated to loathes fat<sup>[28]</sup>. Regurgitation of food or flavours. Flatus, mucous diarrhoea. Tightness of stomach, especially if from fat food. Much flatulence. Flatus moves around in the intestine. Obstinate constipation<sup>[33]</sup>.

**Senega**

Senega is mainly indicated to persons who tend to become obese and children had chubby appearance. It also adopted to person who have lax fibres<sup>[25]</sup>.

**Thyrodinum**

Great weakness and hunger<sup>[25]</sup>. Depression. Eructation and dyspeptic troubles<sup>[26]</sup>. Easy fatigue. It produces emaciation muscular weakness. Much flatus in abdomen<sup>[25]</sup>.

**Conclusion**

Obesity, besides affecting the quality of life, is associated with a greater number of chronic diseases. Fortunately, the management of many of these diseases can be done by

weight reduction. It is more important to institute major educational efforts that aimed to promote, better habits of physical exercise and eating, which in turn decreases the morbidity and mortality in different disease associated with both children and adults in both men and women. The Homoeopathic treatment along with proper and consistent general management plan, aims to give a holistic approach in reducing the body weight and also plays a prominent role in psychological wellbeing of the individual and thereby prevents many associated diseases.

#### Conflict of Interest

Not available

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