

Choice

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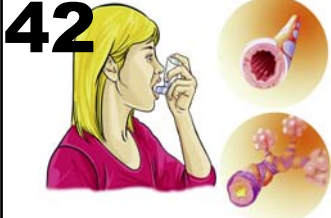

The Leading Publication for Complementary Health, Education and Wellbeing



Homeopathy

for babies and children

In this issue:

Carrier Oils	Asthma	Repairing skin damage
6 	42 	48 

Your Health and Wellbeing Success Starts Here!

Are you a health-conscious consumer, looking to come into the industry or looking for a suitable treatment? Find out what the experts say and read.

Natural Ayurvedic

Management of Diabetes

Diabetes is one of the fastest-growing modern-day epidemics. As of August 2011, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO), there were 346 million cases of diabetic patients worldwide.

This is a chronic metabolic condition in which the body is unable to properly utilise glucose in the body. Beta cells of the islets of Langerhans in the pancreas are responsible for the secretion of insulin. This hormone is responsible for converting glucose into energy. A malfunction of the pancreas or inappropriate secretion of insulin results in hyperglycaemia (high blood sugar) and glycosuria (sugar in urine) leading on to what has widely become known as diabetes.

The majority of diabetic cases are diet and lifestyle related and referred to as type II in modern medicine. Over 5,000 years ago, 'Prameha' as it is known in Ayurveda was classified into 20 types of metabolic disorders. Caused by a vitiation of one or all of the Doshas; Vata, Pitta and Kapha play a major role in this condition, and most commonly caused by an

aggravation of the Kapha Dosha. Since Madhumeha (the equivalent of Diabetes Mellitus) is a metabolic disorder, low digestive and tissue 'agni' (fire) is also responsible in the rise of this condition. Here the malfunction of the digestive fires do not allow for sufficient utilisation of carbohydrates leading to increased glucose in the blood.

Common causes

- ☛ Excessive intake of food that increase the Kapha Dosha such as potatoes, rice, burnt foods, oily, cold, dairy and mostly foods with high sugar content
- ☛ Lack of exercise/sedentary lifestyle
- ☛ Excessive sleep
- ☛ Mental and emotional stress
- ☛ Smoking
- ☛ Hereditary factors

Early signs of this condition manifesting include, sweating, foul smell of the body, lethargy, heaviness in the body, excessive growth of hair, nails preference for cold and dry substances in the throat, sweet taste in mouth or bad breath with dryness in mouth, coating on tongue and teeth.

Signs and symptoms

- ☛ Excessive and frequent urination
- ☛ Change in colour and smell of urine
- ☛ Burning sensation in the palms and soles
- ☛ Increased hunger
- ☛ Excessive thirst
- ☛ Sweet taste to mouth
- ☛ Weight loss
- ☛ Visual changes
- ☛ Wounds that take time to heal
- ☛ Susceptibility to skin infections
- ☛ Unexplained fatigue

Diet changes

Since diabetes is a predominantly Kapha Dosha conditions, an anti-Kapha diet would be advisable. Although not extensive this includes avoiding foods such as sweet fruits, new cereals

and lentils, sweet, sour and salty substances, heavy, fried foods and fats such as oils and ghee, milks with lactose. Consumption of bitter 'tikta rasa' foods, astringent 'kashaya rasa' foods and foods with a heating potency are the taste of preference in conditions of diabetes and can include, bitter melon, fenugreek, soya, barley, mung, horsegram, chickpeas, red lentils, old rice, bottle gourd, white pumpkin, onions, garlic, apples, pear, mustard oil, flaxseed oil, curry leaves.

Lifestyle changes

Daily practice of yoga can reduce the stress that can aggravate diabetes. Forward bending asanas like 'Paschimottasana', 'Halasana', 'dhanurasana', 'tadasana' can have a particularly positive effect. Pranayama and meditation of course benefits in the management of stress and helping the oxygenation of the blood as well as maintaining energy levels.

Keep active to prevent accumulation of fat occurring in the body. Avoid excessive sleep



Herb	Botanical Name	Action/Use
Amla	Emblia officinalis	Mixed with turmeric and honey can be taken. A key component in the 'triphala' formulation
Neem	Azadiracta indica	This bitter leaf can be consumed in a paste form
Bael	Aegle marmelos	The potent leaf of bael fruit is highly effective for the treatment of diabetes
Turmeric	Curcuma longa	Mixed with amla and honey can be taken
Aloe Vera	Aloe Vera	Pulp or juice of this bitter plant is a traditional remedy
Fenugreek	Trigonella Foenum graecum	A decoction of fenugreek seeds relieves symptoms of diabetes and suppresses excretion of sugar in urine. Very effective in bringing down blood sugar
Garlic	Allium sativum	Useful in treating complications of diabetes
Honey		Mixed with turmeric and amla can be taken. Sweet but in moderation can be taken by diabetic patients with antibacterial and antimicrobial properties
Jambul	Syzygium cumini	This Indian plum acts specifically on the pancreas. The component jamboline assists the conversion of starches to sugars and controls blood glucose

especially during the day as well as smoking. If diet and lifestyle changes are not made, it becomes difficult to manage diabetes, there are increased complications and risks to your health and these can include heart disease and stroke, reduced blood flow especially to the extremities leading to amputation, diabetic retinopathy leading to blindness, cataracts, nerve and kidney disorders and impotency.

According to Ayurveda if signs and symptoms are ignored, most types of prameha becomes a vata dominant condition such as that in madhumeha and therefore not only difficult to treat or manage but in some cases incurable.

It is always best to monitor your blood sugar levels with your doctor if you suspect you are at risk of diabetes or a trying to control an early onset.



Ayurvedic treatment for diabetes

Ayurvedic treatment would involve pancakarma, the five methods of purification for the body; these are emesis, purgation, enemas, bloodletting and errhines. These purification methods fall under the category of 'reduction' treatment and in some instances fasting would also be appropriate. This would then be following by replenishing the body to become strong and robust. If the patient is not strong enough then palliative treatment would be the best option; following dietary and lifestyle advice and use of herbal remedies.

Generally herbs that increase agni such as ginger and rock salt, black pepper, long pepper and other heating spices would be administered in moderate doses. In addition to customised pancakarma treatments based on your doshic constitution, general health and various other factors, there are numerous herbs ascribed with curative capabilities for diabetic patients.

Other useful herbal compounds include, triphala, chandraprabha, arogyavardhini, shilajit vati, guduchi satva. These are all best taken under the advice of a qualified Ayurvedic practitioner.

The management of diabetes needs to include a combination of changes to diet and lifestyle, herbs, exercise and stress management. Ayurveda offers a natural and holistic approach and no side effects in the absence of conventional drugs. **CHW**

© As a member of the APA, Geeta Vara is a fully qualified Ayurvedic practitioner working in Central London and Kent providing consultations, treatments and corporate and small group workshops.

For more information about diabetes or other health concerns, please visit www.geetavara.co.uk