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A REVIEW ON DIETARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PATIENTS WITH FATTY LIVER DISEASE IN RELATION WITH ORGANON OF MEDICINE

Dr. Sammaia Papiah[1*], Dr. Shivangi[2], Dr. Ankita Ankan[3]

[1]Ph.D.(Homoeopathy) Research Scholar, Tantia University, Sri Ganganagar (Rajasthan)

[2]Asso. Prof., Research Supervisor, Dept. of Organon of Medicine with Homoeopathic Philosophy, Tantia University, Sri Ganganagar (Rajasthan)

[3]PG Scholar, Dept. of Organon of Medicine with Homoeopathic Philosophy, North Eastern Institute of Ayurveda & Homoeopathy, Mawdiangdiang, Shillong, (Meghalaya)

***Corresponding Author –** Dr. Sammaia Papiah

*Lecturer, North Eastern Institute of Ayurveda & Homoeopathy, Mawdiangdiang, Shillong, Meghalaya- 793018

pdrsammaia@gmail.com

ABSTRACT:

This review explores the integration of contemporary dietary recommendations for managing fatty liver disease (FLD) with the fundamental principles outlined in Samuel Hahnemann's Organon of Medicine. Modern nutritional science emphasizes a hypocaloric Mediterranean diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and healthy fats (omega-3s, monounsaturated fats), while minimizing simple sugars, processed foods, and saturated fats, to achieve gradual weight loss and improve liver health. The Organon of Medicine mandates the physician to be a "preserver of health" by identifying and removing "obstacles to cure" (Aphorism 259). It stresses the importance of an individualized diet and lifestyle (Aphorisms 94, 259-263) that avoids medicinal or stimulating substances (e.g., strong coffee, highly spiced dishes, excessive alcohol) which could interfere with the delicate action of the homeopathic remedy. The specific food groups and macronutrient ratios recommended by current clinical guidelines align with Hahnemann's general principles of a simple, well-balanced diet free from irritants. The homeopathic philosophy of individualization complements modern efforts towards personalized nutrition in FLD management. The

review concludes that integrating modern evidence-based dietary strategies with the foundational, individualized dietary principles of the Organon offers a comprehensive and effective approach to managing fatty liver disease, thereby enhancing patient outcomes by addressing both the material cause of the disease and the overall well-being of the patient.

KEYWORDS: Diet, Regimen, Fatty liver, Organon of medicine

INTRODUCTION:

Liver is the commonest site for accumulation of fat because it plays central role in fat metabolism. Depending upon the cause and amount of accumulation, fatty change may be mild and reversible, or severe producing irreversible cell injury and cell death. [1]

Fatty change in the liver, also known as hepatic steatosis, can result from two broad categories of causes. The first relates to conditions in which there is an excessive amount of fat in the body (hyperlipidemia), surpassing the liver's ability to metabolize and process it. This is commonly seen in individuals with obesity, diabetes mellitus, and congenital hyperlipidemia, where elevated levels of circulating lipids increase fat deposition within hepatocytes. [1]

The second category involves direct liver cell damage, where the hepatocytes lose their ability to metabolize fat, leading to its accumulation. Alcoholic liver disease is the most frequent cause of this type of hepatic steatosis. Other contributing factors include starvation and protein-calorie malnutrition, in which the lack of essential nutrients disrupts normal hepatic metabolism. Chronic systemic illnesses such as tuberculosis can also impair liver function. Additionally, acute fatty liver occurring in late pregnancy, hypoxia due to conditions like anemia or cardiac failure, and exposure to hepatotoxic substances such as carbon tetrachloride, aflatoxins, chloroform, ether, and other poisons can damage hepatocytes directly. [1]

Furthermore, a number of drugs are known to induce liver cell injury and fatty change—for instance, methotrexate, halothane anesthetic agents, steroids, tetracycline, and carbon tetrachloride (CCl_4). Another specific condition, Reye's syndrome, is also associated with fatty liver. This typically occurs following viral infections, particularly in children, and is often linked with aspirin use, leading to severe mitochondrial dysfunction and hepatic steatosis. [1]

Causes [2]

- Macrovesicular (Large Fat Droplets in Hepatocytes)
- Alcohol, alcoholic liver disease
- Diabetes mellitus
- Obesity
- Protein-calorie malnutrition
- Total parenteral nutrition, jejunoileal bypass
- Drugs, e.g., methotrexate, aspirin, vitamin A. glucocorticoids, amiodarone, and synthetic estrogen, nucleoside analogues (Didanosine, Zidovudine)
- Microvesicular (Small Fat Droplets in Hepatocytes)
- Reye's syndrome
- Acute fatty liver of pregnancy
- Jamaican vomiting sickness
- Drugs, e.g., valproic acid, tetracycline, nucleoside analogues

Clinical features [2]

The signs and symptoms of hepatic steatosis are related to the degree of fat infiltration, the time course of its accumulation, and the underlying cause. The obese or diabetic patient with a chronic fatty liver is usually asymptomatic and has only mild tenderness over the enlarged liver. The liver function tests are normal or show mild elevations of alkaline phosphatase or aminotransferases. In contrast, the rapid accumulation of fat seen in the setting of hyperalimentation, may lead to marked tenderness, presumably resulting from stretching of Glisson's capsule. Similarly, alcoholic patients with acute fatty liver following a bout of heavy drinking may have right upper quadrant pain and tenderness, often with laboratory evidence of cholestasis. The clinical presentation of fatty liver from hepatotoxins is similar to that of fulminant hepatic failure arising from any cause, with evidence of hepatic encephalopathy, marked elevations of pro-thrombin time and aminotransferases, and variable degrees of jaundice. Although steatohepatitis is generally thought to have a benign clinical course with improvement following elimination of the associated precipitant, in some individuals it may result in significant fibrosis and even cirrhosis. Recent studies indicate that substantial fibrosis or cirrhosis may be present in 15 to 50% of patients with NASH. In the only long-term follow-up study, 30% of patients with fibrosis had cirrhosis after 10 years. It is possible

that some cases of "cryptogenic" cirrhosis are due to longstanding NASH and that the fat leaves the liver as end stage liver disease develops.

DIETARY RECOMMENDATION ACCORDING TO MODERN CONCEPT:

Lifestyle changes and dietary modifications that result in weight loss and/or improve insulin sensitivity are the primary treatments for NAFLD. Many studies indicate that loss of 3–5% of body weight improves steatosis and that greater weight loss (i.e., ≥7–10%) improves steatohepatitis and hepatic fibrosis. The benefits of modifying dietary macronutrient contents (e.g., low-carbohydrate vs low-fat diets, saturated vs unsaturated fat diets) generally parallel changes in calorie consumption, suggesting that diet modifications are mainly beneficial because they reduce energy intake and improve obesity. [2]

Excluding foods and beverages high in added fructose and increasing coffee consumption, are also recommended because high-fructose diets have been shown to exacerbate hepatic steatosis, steatohepatitis, and fibrosis, and consuming two or more cups of coffee per day is associated with reduced risk of liver fibrosis. Changes in diet composition particularly merit consideration in lean individuals with NAFLD, although available data are insufficient to determine if this improves their liver histology. Adequate nutritional intake, removal of alcohol or offending toxins, and correction of any associated metabolic disorders usually result in recovery. Modifying lifestyle to increase physical activity (i.e., energy expenditure) complements dietary caloric restriction and, thus, expedites weight loss. Exercise also improves muscle insulin sensitivity, which improves the metabolic syndrome independent of weight loss. Both aerobic exercise and resistance training effectively reduce liver fat. At least 30 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic exercise or resistance training five times per week is recommended. The choice of training should be tailored to patient's preferences and functional capacity to enable long-term maintenance. Any activity is better than remaining sedentary. [2]

Guideline No. 8 (Indian Council of Medical Research- ICMR) [3]

"Avoid overeating to prevent overweight and obesity."

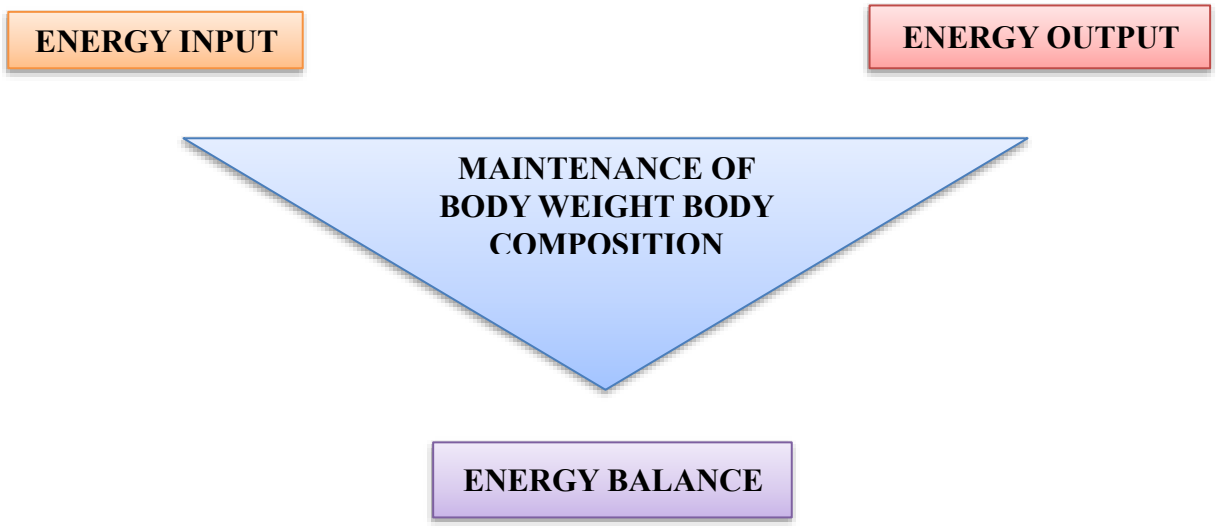
- Rationale (as quoted): "Overweight/obesity is the causative factor for several chronic non-communicable diseases including heart disease, diabetes and certain types of cancers."
- Avoid overeating and practice portion control to prevent excess calorie intake, as weight gain directly contributes to fat accumulation in the liver.

- Increase intake of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fiber-rich foods.
- Reduce consumption of refined carbohydrates, saturated fats, trans fats, and deep-fried food.
- Limit sugar, sweets, sweetened beverages, bakery products, and high-fat fast foods.
- ICMR suggests maintaining ideal body weight—since 30–50% of adults are overweight or obese and at increased risk for fatty liver.
- Excess body fat increases risk of type 2 diabetes, high triglycerides, hypertension, cardiovascular disorders, gallstones, fatty liver, and psychosocial problems.
- Prefer home-cooked meals, mindful eating, and slow chewing; avoid binge eating and emotional eating.

Guideline No. 9 (Indian Council of Medical Research- ICMR) [3]

"Exercise regularly and be physically active to maintain ideal body weight".

- ICMR emphasizes the principle of energy balance: match energy intake with energy output through regular physical activity to avoid storage of excess fat in the liver and other organs.



Guideline No. 13 (Indian Council of Medical Research- ICMR) [3]

"Drink plenty of water and take beverages in moderation"

- Rationale: Water is the most important nutrient of all and helps in the upkeep of our health Water is the major constituent of the human body. Beverages are useful to relieve thirst and to meet fluid requirements of the body. Some beverages provide nutrients while others act as stimulants.

Alcohol provides higher calories (7 Kcal/g) than carbohydrates and proteins and thus, can contribute to obesity. Ironically, excessive intake of alcohol is known to suppress appetite and interfere with absorption and metabolism of nutrients, leading to various nutritional deficiency diseases. Excessive intake of alcohol suppresses appetite and as a result, leads to several nutritional deficiency diseases. People who regularly consume more than two alcoholic drinks (one equals about 30 ml of ethanol) are at a higher risk for hypertension and stroke. Alcohol intake has also been shown to increase the risk of cancer of the mouth, larynx and esophagus, prostate and of the breast in women. Excessive alcohol intake weakens the heart muscle (cardiomyopathy) and also damages the liver (cirrhosis), brain and peripheral nerves. It also increases serum triglycerides.

DIET AND REGIMEN ACCORDING TO HOMOEOPATHIC POINT OF VIEW:

Samuel Hahnemann approached disease as a disturbance of the vital force resulting from internal or external influences. He stressed that cure depends on understanding the totality of symptoms, the exciting causes, and the fundamental cause of disease. He differentiated acute diseases arising from sudden external factors—from chronic diseases, which are rooted in deep-seated miasmatic dyscrasia. Hahnemann insisted that the physician must study the patient as a whole not merely the pathology by considering constitution, lifestyle, temperament, environment, psychological traits, and habits.

In aphorism 5, Dr. Samuel Hahnemann points out that the physician must investigate two main aspects: [4]

1. The exciting (triggering) cause in acute disease, and
2. The historical and fundamental cause in chronic disease, which is often a chronic miasm.

He further instructs that for chronic disease, the physician should carefully examine the patient's: physical constitution, temperament and emotional state, occupation, diet and lifestyle habits such as alcohol consumption and inactivity social and domestic environment sexual function age and general living conditions. These are called accessory circumstances. [4]

Fatty Liver Disease is a modern example where this holistic assessment becomes essential. It commonly arises not from a single infectious or genetic cause but from lifestyle and metabolic factors such as: high-calorie and high-sugar diet, obesity, insulin resistance,

sedentary habits, stress-related eating patterns, disturbed sleep cycle, chronic alcohol exposure (in alcoholic fatty liver).

Miasmatic Interpretation

If lifestyle correction results in improvement (weight loss, exercise, alcohol avoidance), the condition aligns with the type of acquired lifestyle disease referenced in Aphorism 77. However, if despite lifestyle improvement the liver disease progresses or persists, it might suggest a deeper constitutional susceptibility—related to a chronic miasmatic basis in Hahnemann's framework (e.g., Psora → metabolic dysregulation).

Hahnemann's aphorism teaches that identifying causes—both immediate and fundamental—is crucial. When applied to fatty liver disease, this means understanding not only the biochemical fat accumulation in the liver but the patient's broader lifestyle, constitution, and habits. Thus, the homeopathic physician, guided by Hahnemann's philosophy, treats fatty liver disease not as a mere hepatic disorder but as a systemic imbalance rooted in the individual's entire way of living.

Hahnemann explains that some illnesses are wrongly called "chronic" because they are actually caused by self-imposed unhealthy habits and environments—such as alcohol abuse, poor diet, lack of exercise, breathing impure air, poor living conditions, overwork, stress, and constant emotional strain. These conditions are acquired due to lifestyle, and they improve or disappear when the person changes their way of living—as long as no deep-seated chronic miasm exists.

Fatty liver (especially Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease – NAFLD) is a perfect example of the kind of illness described in Aphorism 77: It commonly results from avoidable lifestyle factors, such as: overeating and high-fat/sugar diet, alcohol consumption, obesity, sedentary behavior, chronic stress. These causes are external influences and self-induced health-undermining habits. If the person changes lifestyle—improves diet, exercises, avoids alcohol, reduces stress—the disease can reverse and disappear. In this case, fatty liver is not a true chronic disease in the miasmatic sense; rather, it is a reversible lifestyle-induced state of ill-health.

Aphorism 94: - A careful exploration of a patient's personal history is essential in understanding chronic disease, as it reveals the contextual influences that contribute to health and illness over time. When investigating a chronic condition, one must closely

examine the patient's routine activities, occupation, dietary habits, lifestyle patterns, and home surroundings. By scrutinizing these elements, we can identify those that may initiate or perpetuate the disease. Recognizing and removing such harmful influences enables and promotes the process of genuine recovery. [4]

Aphorism 260: - Careful investigation into obstacles to cure becomes even more essential in chronic cases, since these conditions are frequently worsened by unnoticed harmful factors—such as detrimental lifestyle habits and errors in diet or regimen. Identifying and correcting these hidden influences helps prevent further aggravation of the disease and supports the natural course of healing. [4]

CONCLUSION

Given that homeopathic treatment relies on extremely minute and precise doses, it becomes clear that during therapy, all items in the patient's diet and daily routine that possess any medicinal or biologically active effects must be eliminated. Otherwise, these external influences may overpower, interfere with, or completely neutralize the subtle action of the homeopathic remedy, preventing it from exerting its intended therapeutic effect. Knowledge of diet and regimen is essential in homeopathy to identify and remove obstacles that may interfere with the remedy, thereby enabling the medicine to act effectively and permanently cure the disease.

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