

23<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on

# HERBAL AND ALTERNATIVE REMEDIES FOR DIABETES AND ENDOCRINE DISORDERS

November 02-04, 2017 Bangkok, Thailand

## Role of Ayurvedic dietetics in the prevention and management of Diabetes Mellitus: A review

**Mukesh Edavalath**

Vaidyaratnam P S Varier Ayurveda College, India

Diabetes Mellitus (DM) is a major non-communicable disease with increasing prevalence at global level. Poorly controlled diabetes leads to several complications, including heart diseases, stroke and death. Prospective clinical trials provide evidence for the effectiveness of nutrition therapy in the prevention of DM. Contemporary studies in biomedicine indicate an unhealthy diet and gut dysfunction as major contributors to DM. Likewise, Ayurvedic texts describe improper diet and the subsequent gut dysfunction as the prime factor in formation of *Ama* (partially digested or toxic end products) which further leads to various diseases including DM (*Prameha*) and other diseases similar to metabolic syndrome in Biomedicine. To prevent formation of *Ama*, Ayurveda advocates eight principles of *Aharavidhi* (rules governing Diet dynamics). Further, it is advised to avoid improper eating patterns like irregular timings and food intake before digestion of the previous meal. The concept of *Virudhahara* (incompatible foods) in disease pathogenesis is also unique to Ayurvedic Dietetics. In established cases of DM, clinical trials as well as systematic reviews report a ~1%-2% lowering of HbA1c values along with other beneficial outcomes from nutrition therapy interventions. The existing Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) guidelines revolve around what to eat and concentrate more on macro and micronutrients with their caloric and glycemic values. Although it emphasizes on individualization, Ayurveda has much broader principles of adapting the diet, with due emphasis on individual factors including the *Prakriti* (body constitution), *Dosha* (body humor), *Agnibala* (digestive power), *Desa* (place of living), *Kala* (season) and *Satmya* (personal compatibility) of the patient. In managing complications, Ayurvedic Dietetics recommends targeted nutrition therapy where food processed with medicinal herbs is administered for specific therapeutic outcomes. Finally, management of DM differs in obese and non-obese accordingly, the diet also varies for them.

### Biography

Mukesh Edavalath currently holds the Chair of Assistant Professor at the Department of Roganidana, in Clinical Medicine at Vaidyaratnam P S Varier Ayurveda College, Kerala, India. He has obtained his Master's degree in Ayurveda from the University of Kannur and had previously served in the Department of Indian Systems of Medicine, Government of Kerala. Apart from being an active Clinician and Clinical Educator, he has been involved in many community outreach programs on health awareness and medical services. His current research focuses on the role of diet dynamics in the pathology and management of diabetes mellitus, often described in classical Ayurvedic medicine but totally disregarded in modern biomedicine.

mukeshayur@gmail.com

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