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REVIEW ARTICLE

UNDERSTANDING FATTY LIVER DISEASE AND ITS MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

A fatty liver is a condition where extra fat builds up in the liver. This can lead to inflammation and scarring, and over time, it can cause serious health problems. Globally, nonalcoholic fatty liver disease is the primary cause of liver disease. It is thought to affect 47 cases per 1,000 people worldwide, with a greater incidence rate in men than in women. According to estimates, 32% of individuals worldwide have Nonalcoholic fatty liver; the prevalence is higher in men (40%) than in women (26%). An unhealthy lifestyle is the root cause of many health issues in today's world. A common and holistic medical system is homoeopathic. Using a holistic approach, the notion of individualization and symptom similarity are used to guide the choice of treatment. This review paper provides detailed information about fatty liver disease, the significance of homoeopathic medications and the use of yoga therapy.

INTRODUCTION

Fatty liver, also known as hepatic steatosis is a condition where excess fat accumulates in the liver cells. Fatty liver can develop due to a variety of factors, including alcohol consumption, obesity, and certain medical conditions such as diabetes and high cholesterol. In the western world, Non- alcoholic fatty liver disease affects 20% to 30% of the general population. Type 2 diabetes mellitus (70%) and morbid obesity (90%) have higher prevalence rates. This is related to the western world's increasing rates of obesity and metabolic syndrome. The National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys conducted in the US from 2009 to 2010 revealed obesity rates of 35.5% for men and 35.8% for women. According to research conducted in Asia, the prevalence of Non- alcoholic fatty liver disease is similar there, falling between 15% and 30% in the general population and exceeding 50% in patients with diabetes and metabolic syndrome.

Nonalcoholic fatty liver is the most common type of chronic liver disease worldwide, with a growing prevalence. Most medical professionals agree that a combination of factors, including genetics and environmental circumstances, contribute to the development of the illness. A medical disorder known as nonalcoholic fatty liver has the potential to advance to end-stage liver disease, which would then result in portal hypertension and liver failure. Although NAFL is likely to never progress in some people, it does take a very benign course in some and remains stable for years in others.

Causes of Fatty Liver Disease

Fatty liver disease can take one of two primary forms:

a) Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease: It is the most common form of fatty liver disease and is not caused by alcohol consumption. The primary factors includes obesity, insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol levels. Poor dietary habits, sedentary lifestyle, and genetics can also play a significant role.

b) Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease: It is caused by excessive alcohol consumption over time. The liver's ability to metabolize and process alcohol is limited, leading to fat accumulation in liver cells.

Histological features of fatty liver

Macrovesicular fatty liver – A single giant fat droplet or several smaller, well-defined fat droplets fill the cytoplasm of hepatocytes, pushing the nucleus to the periphery.

Microvesicular fatty liver - Hepatocytes have centrally positioned nuclei and their cytoplasm packed with microscopic lipid droplets.

Symptoms of Fatty Liver Disease

In the early stages, fatty liver disease might not present noticeable symptoms, making it challenging to detect without medical evaluation. The symptom includes:

Fatigue and weakness Abdominal discomfort or pain Unexplained weight loss or loss of appetite Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and eyes). Swelling in the legs and ankles Easy bruising and bleeding tendencies

Elevated alanine aminotransferase values are frequently detected during physical exams, which ultimately results in the diagnosis of fatty liver disease.

Diagnosis

Blood test: Liver function tests can be used to detect certain liver enzymes that serve as indicators. SGOT (aspartate transaminase -AST) and SGPT (alanine transaminase -ALT) are two liver enzymes that may be high. Blood tests, such as those for thyroid function, lipid profiles, and blood sugar, rule out further causes of fatty liver.

Ultrasound: to confirm the diagnosis of liver disease

Fibroscan: can measure the amount of fat and degree of fibrosis (scarring) in the liver.

Liver biopsy - to determine the degree of liver damage and rule out other liver conditions.

Differential diagnosis

- Alcoholic liver disease
- Hepatitis C (particularly genotype 3)
- Wilson Disease
- Starvation
- Parenteral Nutrition
- Acute fatty liver of pregnancy

Homeopathic Management

- **Aconite Napellus-** Hepatic pressure, shooting, stinging, and burning pain that makes breathing difficult. A painful touch sensitivity in the liver region. Liver inflammation and a discomfort sensation. Pressure in the liver region. Abdominal cramps felt when squatting (as when reaching for a stool). Excruciating pains while cutting in bed in the morning
- **Chelidonium Majus** – Patient have a hepatic obstruction leads to jaundice. Gall-colic. Distention. Slow digestion and fermentation. A string-like restriction across an enlarged liver.
- **Cardus Marianus** - Pain in the liver region. Extremely sensitive left lobe with moist skin, fullness, and pain. Liver hyperemia with jaundice. Dropsy together with cirrhosis.
- **Lycopodium Clavatum** – susceptible to liver. Hepatic disease-related dropsy. Hepatitis caused by the atrophic nutmeg liver. Distress just after a meal. Walking-related pain in

the upper half of the right hypochondrium, as if the liver's suspensor ligament were about to rupture.

- **Natrum Sulphuricum** - Hepatitis, duodenal catarrh, icterus, bile vomiting. A sore liver with stitching pains, inability to wear tight clothing around the waist, and worst when laying on the left side. Hepatic area pain when touched, while walking, or when something is suddenly jarred.
- **Phosphorus** – Enlargement of liver, fatty degeneration and congested liver.
- **Ptelea Trifoliata** - Sharp pains in the right hypochondrium, a persistent sensation of weight in both hypochondria, a dragging pain while moving, pains shooting downward, discomfort at the base of the liver. Jaundice with hyperemia of the liver.

Repertorial Approach

- Abdomen – inflammation - Liver
- Stomach – appetite – diminished
- Skin- discoloration- yellow, jaundice, etc.
- Abdomen - Atrophy of liver

Treatment and Management

Lifestyle Modifications: For individuals with NAFLD, lifestyle changes are often the first line of defense. These changes may include:

- Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight through a balanced diet and regular exercise.
- Limiting or avoiding alcohol consumption
- Managing diabetes and high blood pressure effectively
- Incorporating more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains into the diet while reducing
- the intake of saturated and trans fats, sugar, and refined carbohydrates

Medications: In some cases, doctors may prescribe medications to manage underlying conditions contributing to fatty liver disease, such as diabetes, high cholesterol, or hypertension. However, there is no specific medication approved solely for treating fatty liver disease itself.

YOGA THERAPY

Yoga improves lipid metabolism- Yoga enhances cholesterol metabolism by stimulating and strengthening the liver through various poses. This causes the liver's fat cells, known as adipocytes, to store extra fat. Yoga increases blood flow: A fatty liver results in the production of scar tissue, which inhibits the body's ability to circulate blood. Contrarily, yoga encourages blood flow and permits the liver to function properly.

Yoga increases insulin production: Some yoga poses stimulate the liver,

which aids in the body's synthesis of energy. This boosts the creation of insulin. It supports the pancreas' ability to produce insulin.

Yoga promotes hormonal functions: The proper hormonal balance and operation of the body are supported by yoga. A proper hormonal balance in the body is beneficial for healthy metabolism, blood flow, cell regeneration, and food absorption.

Yoga aids the liver's filtering process: Yoga removes toxins from the body, which enhances liver function.

Yoga Asanas for a Healthy Liver- There are a few powerful and basic yoga asanas that can be included in our daily lives to improve liver health, which include:

Kapalbhati - During Kapalbhati Pranayama, you must inhale deeply and exhale via your nose. Exhalation should receive the majority of focus. Two repetitions should be made per second, or 120 each minute. On an empty stomach, it should be carried out first thing in the morning.

How Kapalbhati Pranayama heals fatty liver disorders: It is a well-known yoga technique for enhancing blood circulation throughout the body, which effectively stimulates the liver.

Padmasana - The lotus position is healthy for the spirit as much as the body. The person must cross their legs in this position and keep their feet flat on their respective thighs. Adjust your back and spine. Since Padmasana refreshes both the body and the mind, it is best performed in the morning. You should perform it without eating.

The role of padmasana in fatty liver: By regularly performing this asana, you may be able to overcome any liver weakness and delay the emergence of fatty liver.

Dhanurasana - Laying on your stomach while simultaneously elevating both your body and your legs is recommended. Then make a bow by reaching your arms behind you and holding your ankles. Four to five hours following a meal is the recommended timeframe. Hold the position for 10 to 15 seconds, focusing on your breathing and taking long, deep breaths.

The asana Dhanurasana stimulates and fortifies the liver, enabling it to utilise fat that has been stored as energy for the body. This reduces the risk of fatty liver. Yoga also improves the abdominal muscles and reduces belly fat.

Chakravakasana - Start out by doing this yoga pose on your hands and knees. Take a deep breath, stand in the cow position, and push your chest forward. You adopt the cat's posture when you exhale. Bring your spine outward and tuck your tailbone in. The body has adequate energy four to

six hours after a meal for chakravakasana, which is recommended.

The asana chakravakasana plays a part in fatty liver because it boosts the metabolism of the liver and promotes continuous blood and oxygen flow.

Bhujangasana - Lift your chest up while lying on your stomach with your palms at shoulder height. Practice Bhujangasana every morning for at least five minutes. The function of bhujangasana in fatty liver - By energizing and fortifying the liver, this yoga pose helps with cirrhosis of the liver and fatty liver.

CONCLUSION

Fatty liver disease is a significant health concern that requires attention due to its rising prevalence and potential for serious complications. Early detection, lifestyle modifications, and medical management are crucial steps in preventing the progression of fatty liver disease to more severe liver conditions. With proper care and awareness, individuals can mitigate the risk factors associated with fatty liver disease and improve their overall liver health.

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