

Narrow escape from the third attack of jaundice

I had suffered from jaundice twice- in 1956, when I was in school and next in March 1972. So, I was quite familiar with the early symptoms of jaundice. In March 1999, I started experiencing similar symptoms again, e.g. nausea, loss of appetite, irritability for minor reason etc. When I met the family doctor, he expressed that these symptoms may or may not be due to jaundice as clinically the liver appeared to be normal. He gave me some medicines and asked me to meet him after one week with pathological reports if symptoms persist. Attack of Jaundice causes prolonged weakness and upsets digestive system severely. Therefore, I strongly felt that some quick action was necessary.

2) Around the year 1980, I had got cured of colitis with the help of diet, exercise and Ayurvedic medicine. Since then, i.e. for almost fifteen years, I had taken great interest in reading books on health, especially on Ayurveda. But that reading was superficial without any practical application of it. So, when the family doctor told me that there was a possibility of jaundice, but the diagnosis could be confirmed only after one week. I cursed myself and said to myself, "If you only read Ayurveda books, but can't apply that knowledge when needed, what's the use of reading?"

(3) Being annoyed with myself, I opened the book written by Doctors Subhash and Mrs. Sunanda Ranade titled "संपूर्ण कायचिकित्सा" (Internal Medicine). In chapter on Jaundice (KAmala), two broad types were listed. (i) one due to blockage of passage of bile Ruddhapatha KAmala- (Obstructive Jaundice) and (ii) Bahupitta KAmala (Infective Viral Hepatitis). I ruled out the possibility of viral infection; because the quality of meal at office was well controlled. The book explained the causes of obstructive jaundice as follows-

(a) Obstruction in the path of Bile. One reason could be dry and thickened phlegm due to Vata dosha obstructing the bile duct. So, the bile produced in the liver didn't reach the small intestine. Jaundice-like symptoms appear due to accumulated bile which circulates in the body through blood.

(b) A block in the bile duct, caused by gallstones, infection and swelling, tumour in gallbladder, can result into obstructive jaundice. I ruled out this possibility also because I had no history of such a problem.

(4) I remembered that I had read about this phenomenon in the book "Ritucharya"- (Regimen for different seasons). It was explained

that phlegm accumulated in body during the Winter, liquefies due to rising heat of the sun in Spring. It flows in liquid form and may solidify in some cavities or narrow ducts in the body. It was also noticed by me that I had contracted Jaundice in March 1972 and after 27 years, the early symptoms of jaundice had erupted in the month of March only. Therefore, I strongly felt that the cause of jaundice might be obstruction caused by phlegm in the bile duct.

(5) In the book "Sampurna KAyachikitsA", under the medicines section, five or six combination drugs were suggested, but since I was doing this experiment myself without the advice of a physician, I decided not to take those medicines. Instead of medicines, I preferred to follow the guideline (suggested in the book) of using food items with pungent, sour, salty taste and having penetrating properties. I, therefore, decided to take sutshekhara mAttrA (a medicine, which I had been taking since childhood), ginger, lemon juice, salt and sugar. I took the medicine on empty stomach for four days, twice in a day. On the fourth day, at 10 o'clock in the morning, I was so hungry that I had no option but to consume a packet of biscuits. That the feeling of hunger had appeared, signified that I was relieved of jaundice. I stopped the medicine and recovered within a week. A few days later, when I met the family doctor, he confirmed that the liver was normal.

Thus, this is the 'now amusing' but 'once worrisome' account of surviving a third possible attack of jaundice.

What is the purpose of writing this article?

1. According to the principles of Ayurveda, a disease shows some symptoms in the initial stage before it manifests. If one recognizes these symptoms early and takes adequate steps (home remedies if available), then it is possible to arrest progress of the disease in initial stage and get back to normal health naturally. I felt that it is important to put this information across to everyone in simple words.

2. To assert that the need of the day is to think a little more seriously about your own health and be health literate so that we can maintain wellness.

3. The answer, to the question, whether one should take certain medicines without the advice of a doctor; is of course, NO. At the same time, I think that there is no problem in using common household medicines and food items with certain medicinal properties, for experimenting on oneself.

Please do not get a wrong idea from reading this article that the remedy will work for early symptoms and reversal of any type of jaundice. In my case, perhaps, there was a minor blockage in the bile duct, due to phlegm, which got cleared easily and I was relieved.

Therefore, I request you to contact your Doctor for any guidance in this regard.

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Topic – Narrow escape from Jaundice

Reference- 1. “संपूर्ण कायचिकित्सा ” (Internal Medicine)- Dr. Subhash Ranade and Dr. Mrs. Sunanda Ranade

2. ऋतुचर्या "Ritucharya"- (Regimen for different seasons)- Prof. Vd. Ya. Go. Joshi