

Efficacy of herbs used in the treatment of obesity

Elilini Koculhan

Central Siddha Dispensary, Velanai.

elilini@gmail.com

Obesity is a metabolic disease. The major factor contributing to obesity is imbalance between energy intake and expenditure. It affects people across all ages, sexes, ethnicities and races and its prevalence has been increasing at an alarming rate. It is a major risk factor for developing many non-communicable diseases such as Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus, Cardiovascular diseases, fatty liver, osteoarthritis and some cancers. Herbs are used for many illnesses since ancient times. 80% of the world population uses herbs for their primary care. Herbs are cost-effective and free from toxic effects, reliability compared with chemically synthetic drugs and surgery. The aim of the review is to assess the efficacy of the herbs used in the treatment of obesity. The search was done in NCBI PubMed and Google Scholar using the key terms “anti-obesity”, “herbs” and “medicinal plants.” Qualitative, English language articles, human and animal studies related to obesity management were included in this review. The main outcomes measured were defined as body weight, body fat including fat mass/fat weight, fat percentage/visceral adipose tissue weight, waist-hip circumferences, triceps thickness and appetite and the amount of food/energy intake. *Nigella sativa*, *Garcinia cambogia*, *Cissus quadrangularis*, *Mimordica charantia*, *Cinnamomum zeylanicum* and *Curcuma longa* which were available in Sri Lanka were selected for this review. In this review 25 articles were selected and had 13 animal studies and 12 clinical studies. Most of the herbs had significant reduction of outcome related to obesity. Some studies had not significant reduction of outcome related to obesity. In future more clinical studies, more randomization, dose-dependent study, larger population, long duration and double-blind trial needed for further confirmation of efficacy of the herbs for treating obesity.

According to this review *Nigella sativa*, *Garcinia cambogia*, *Cissus quadrangularis*, *Mimordica charantia*, *Cinnamomum zeylanicum* and *Curcuma longa* had anti-obesity effect.

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