

# INDIVIDUALIZED HOMOEOPATHIC MANAGEMENT IN CASES OF OBESITY

**Dr. Dilshad (Afsana) J. Mujawar, PG Student.**

**Dr. Sunil B. Banne Sir, Professor and HOD**

**Dr. Saroj R. Sawant, Professor**

**Dr. Angaraj M. Mane Sir , Lecturer**

**Dr. Padmaja P. Patil, PG Student**

Department of Homoeopathic Materia Medica, Dr. J. J. Magdum Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital, Jaysingpur, Maharashtra, India.

## ABSTRACT

Obesity is a condition where a person has accumulated so much body fat it might have a negative effect on their health. If a person body weight is at least 20% higher than it should be he/she is considered obese. Excess of weight increases the mortality due to the complications arising out of it. Obesity also act like a precursor of many dangerous systemic illnesses like Diabetes Mellitus, hypertension and cardiovascular diseases, etc. and thus knowing its cause and treatment of prime importance. 5% to 10% weight loss can significantly improve health, quality of life, and economic burden of an individual and a country as a whole. Homeopathic medicines don't have any side effect on the body unlike conventional treatments. Homeopathic medicines are extremely effective in reducing weight by speeding up the metabolic rate. This article emphasis on incidence, etiology, pathogenesis, clinical features and management of Obesity with discussion on homoeopathic medicines indicated in this clinical condition.

**KEYWORDS:** Obesity, Body Mass Index, Individualization, Homoeopathy

## INTRODUCTION

According to WHO overweight and obesity are defined as abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that presents a risk to health. A crude population measure of obesity is the body mass index (BMI) <sup>[1]</sup> Recent studies have reported that globally 2024, more than 1.9 billion adults will be overweight and 650 million are obese. Approximately 2.8 million deaths are reported in a result of being obese. In India, more than 135 million individuals were affected by obesity. The prevalence of Obesity in India varies due to age, gender, geographical environment, socio-economic status, etc. According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) -INDIAB study, the prevalence rate of obesity and central obesity are varying from 11.8% to 31.3% and 16.9% -36.3% respectively. In India, abdominal obesity is one of the major risk factors for cardiovascular disease <sup>[2]</sup>

Obesity is a complex condition in developing countries, with serious social and psychological dimensions, affecting virtually all ages and socioeconomic groups. Increased consumption of more energy-dense, nutrient-poor foods with high levels of sugar and saturated fats, combined with reduced physical activity led to increased rates of obese people in our society. The obesity epidemic is not restricted to industrialized societies; this increase is often faster in developing countries than in the developed world. Obesity is a condition of excess accumulation of fat in fat depots. Fat deposition usually results from the discrepancy between energy consumption and expenditure. A small excess consumption of only 0.2-0.8 MJ (50-200 Kcal) daily will lead to a weight gain of 2-20 kg over a period of 4-10 years. Weight tends to stabilize when the increased metabolic demands of the body balance the energy intake. Obesity may happen with all ages but excess weight gain usually starts at the age of 20- 40 years and maximum weight gain is achieved in middle age. Once the weight gain has started in a person, it is very difficult to lose weight before the age of 65 years. Moreover weight gain has a hereditary tendency in most of case Obesity and overweight pose a major risk for serious diet-related chronic diseases, including type-2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension and stroke, and certain forms of cancer. The health consequences range from increased risk of premature death to serious chronic conditions that reduce the overall quality of life. Of special concern is the increasing incidence of child obesity. Obesity itself is not a big problem but the complications which arise out of it are more serious and often become life-threatening. This global health hazard requires special attention to prevent and control its progression. We have a considerable number of homeopathic medicines

which can successfully control obesity. [3]

Homeopathy has a great scope in the management of obesity because of its DYNAMIC, INDIVIDUAL AND HOLISTIC concept. Homoeopathy treats the psychosomatic disease, more effectively and successfully than any other systems. Homoeopathic treatment is more advantageous in cases of functional disturbances like obesity and effective in preventing and treating complications associated with it. Obesity and its homoeopathic treatment must be in the context of the triad (remedy, diet and exercise/sleep). Dr. Samuel Hahnemann recognized the intrinsic role of sensible eating in maintaining good health [4]

Constitutional medicines can help one lose weight by improving digestion, elimination and metabolism.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### Types of obesity:

In individual, two types of phenotypes appear:

1. Generalized obesity (pear shaped)
2. Abdominal obesity (apple-shaped) [4]

Teenage obesity: Obesity in teenagers mainly due to their inactivity and diet. Teenage obesity cannot only create medical problems but may also lead to psychological problems [5]

**Etiology-** Some of the major causes are:

- **Environmental factors-** lifestyle behavior (sedentary lifestyles).
- **Overeating-** person eating a high fat or a carbohydrate diet tends to store more excess calories.
- **Metabolism-** women have less muscle than men as result women have a slower metabolism than men.
- **Psychological factors-** people feel that they cannot control how much they eat (depression).
- **Economic background-** it is common amongst the rich in our country who consumes lots of protein, fats and carbohydrates.
- **Pregnancy-** During pregnancy, a woman may develop adiposity increasing the body weight to about 4-5 kg and this may go on increasing a subsequent pregnancy.
- **Certain medication.**
- **Endocrinal cause-** Hypothyroidism, Cushing's syndrome. Insulin resistance, PCOS, Congenital disorders, Diabetes etc.
- **Genetic factors-** Genes can make one or more person susceptible to gain weight. Genes affect the hormones involved in fat regulation. (leptin), metabolic rate, blood glucose, metabolism, fat storage etc. [6]

Leptin in typical obesity: The vast majority of obese people have increased leptin level but do not have mutations of either Leptin or its receptor. They appear, therefore, to have a form of functional 'Leptin Resistance' [7].

### Clinical Features

- Body weight progressive increases.
- Alteration in the contour and configuration of body.
- Uniformly deposition of fat throughout the body.
- Adiposity is marked in the legs and extends up to the Waist.
- As the body becomes heavier, the movements are slow, and due to low vital capacity, slightest exertion may give rise to Dyspnoea.
- Menstrual disturbances.
- Difficulty in sitting in a squatting position, getting up or sitting in a chair or a vehicle.
- Clothes feeling tight and need a larger size [6].

### Diagnostic criteria for obesity

- Body weight > 20% above the ideal body weight.
- Ponderal index < 12.
- Waist circumference - women > 35 inch and men > 40 inch are considered as obese.
- A fat fold thickness > 2.5cm at the tip of scapula in males or mid triceps in females.

**BMI = weight (kg)/ [Height (m)]** (m= mass, h= height).<sup>[6]</sup> Normal values:

BMI	Nutritional status
Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5 – 24.9	Normal weight
25.0 – 29.9	Pre-Obesity
30.0 – 34.9	Obesity class I
35.0 – 39.9	Obesity class II
Above 40	Obesity class III <sup>[1]</sup>

### Investigation: -

Some baseline investigations for obesity to exclude possible underlying causes of obesity.

- Biochemical Profile
- Full Blood count
- Fasting lipid Profile
- Fasting plasma glucose
- Serum uric acid
- Serum T<sub>s</sub>& TSH

Further investigation depending on clinical picture-

- 24 hours' urine free cortisol
- ECG & chest X ray
- Respiratory function Tests<sup>[8]</sup>

### Management

- **Diet**-Take low fat and very low calorie diets.
- **Exercise**-walking, running and cycling are the most effective to reduce body fat
- **Weight loss program**-promote lifestyle changes and diet modification.

### Treatment

#### Conventional treatment

- Medication.
- Surgery- Bariatric surgery for severe obese (BMI>40)<sup>[9]</sup>

#### Complications

- Mechanical - Due to heavy weight of the body, weight bearing joints osteoarthritis changes.
- Infection- Due to exaggeration of skin creases cleanliness cannot be maintained.
- Cardiovascular-atherosclerosis may develop. Cholesterol, Calculus, etc.
- Metabolic-Diabetes, Cholesterol, Calculus, etc.
- Psychic complications.<sup>[5]</sup>

### MEHODOLOGY:

Study Design – Descriptive case series

**CASE INFORMATION: 1** Patient information Patient: A 35-year-old female, Ms. X.

**Chief Complaint:** Gradual weight gain over the past 5 years, leading to obesity.

#### Present History:

Weight: 90 kg (BMI: 32.6)

Height: 165 cm

Appetite: Increased, especially for sweets and carbohydrates. Thirst: Moderate.

Bowel Habits: Regular.

Sleep: Disturbed, difficulty falling asleep.

**Menstrual History:** Regular.

**Past Medical History:** No significant illnesses.

**Family History:** Mother obese.

**General Appearance:**

Obese build with central adiposity. Pale complexion.

Puffy face.

Slow and deliberate movements.

**Mental Generals:**

Anxious and worried disposition. Low self-esteem due to weight gain. Craves sympathy and attention.

Feels tired and lethargic.

**Other Symptoms:**

Cold hands and feet. Excessive sweating. Dyspnea on exertion. Mild joint pains.

**Diagnostic assessment - Obesity****Homoeopathic Analysis**

Based on the totality of symptoms, the patient's constitutional remedy was determined to be *Calcarea carbonica*.

Totality of symptom- [10 -12]

Physical Generals: Obesity, tendency to sweat easily, cold extremities, slow metabolism. Mental Generals:

Anxious, timid, craving sympathy, irresolution

Other Symptoms: Craving sweets and carbonated drinks, aversion to open air.

**REPERORIZAION**

Mind – Anxiety Mind – Timidity Mind – Sympathetic Mind - Irresolution Generals – Obesity

Perspiration- Exertion -agg-slight exertion Generals – Food and Drinks – Sweets – desire Generals – Food and Drinks – carbonated drinks Generals – Air,open – Aversion to open air Extrimities– Coldness

In this case, repertorisation was carried out using the computer Homoeopath classic software, using complete Repertory. After repertorisation, the top-ranked medicines *Calcarea Carb.*, *Phosphorus*, *Nat-carb.*, *Lycopodium*, *Sulphur* were the repertorial result shown in Figure 2

**Therapeutic Intervention: -**

Based on repertorization totality of symptoms, *Calcarea carb.* 30C was prescribed it the reference of *Materia medica*. The *Calcarea carbonica* 30 centesimal potency was chosen as twice a week for 4 weeks.

In *Calcarea carb.*, Excessive weight gain, slow metabolism, tendency to sweat easily, cold extremities, Anxious, timid, craving sympathy, irresolution, Craving sweets and carbonated drinks, aversion to open air.[10,13]

**Follow-up**

After 4 weeks, the patient reported a slight improvement in her appetite and a sense of increased energy. Weight loss was minimal (2 kg). The remedy was continued for another 4 weeks with a gradual increase in potency to 200C.

**Outcome:**

- Over the next 3 months, the patient lost a total of 8 kg.
- Her energy levels improved significantly.
- Her anxiety and low self-esteem also showed improvement.
- The patient continued to follow a healthy diet and exercise regimen.

## CASE INFORMATION: 2

### Patient Details:

- \* Name: Mr. R.K.
- \* Age: 38 years
- \* Gender: Male
- \* Occupation: Office Worker

**Chief Complaint:** Progressive weight gain over 3 years, especially around the abdomen, thighs and buttocks.

- \* Complains of fatigue, breathlessness on exertion, and low energy.

### History of Present Illness:

- \* Gained approximately 12 kg in the past 3 years.
- \* Sedentary lifestyle due to desk job.
- \* Increased appetite, particularly in the evening.
- \* Feels heavy after meals, with bloating and gas.
- \* Craving for sweets, fried foods, and salty snacks.

### General Symptoms:

- \* Sleep is disturbed; wakes up feeling unrefreshed.
- \* Perspiration profuse, especially on the scalp.
- \* Feels drowsy after meals.
- \* Sensitive to heat; prefers cool environments.

### Mental Symptoms:

- \* Low self-confidence, especially regarding appearance.
- \* Irritation
- \* Anxiety about health and future.
- \* Timidity

### Physical Generals:

- \* Craving for sweets and spicy foods.
- \* Constipation with dry, hard stools.
- \* Belly fat prominent with a tendency for love handles.
- \* Back pain after prolonged sitting.

### Family History:

Father - Hypertension and obesity. Mother - Diabetes Type 2.

### Diagnostic assessment - obesity

**Homoeopathic case analysis-**Based on the totality of symptoms, the patient's constitutional remedy was determined to be *Lycopodium clavatum*.

Totality of symptom [10-12]

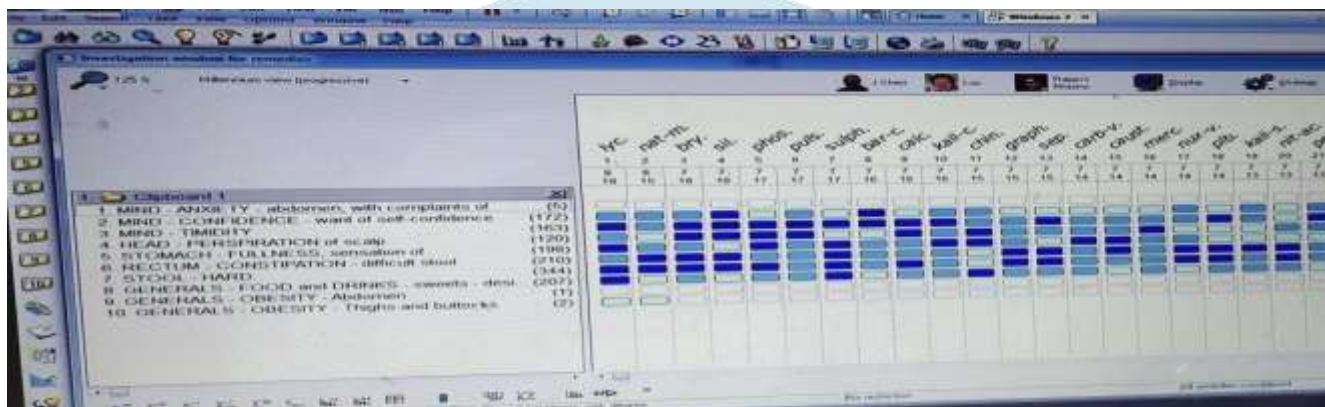
1. Obesity predominantly in the abdomen, thighs and buttocks.
2. Craving for sweets and spicy foods.
3. Low self-confidence, especially regarding appearance.
4. Irritation
5. Anxiety about health and future.
6. Timidity
7. Flatulence, Fullness after small meals, and Constipation with hard, difficult stools.
8. Perspiration profuse, especially on the scalp.

### REPERTORIZATION: -

1. Mind- Confidence - want self-confidence
2. Mind-Timidity
3. Mind-Anxiety-abdomen; with complaints of
4. Generals -Obesity -Abdomen
5. Generals-Obesity-Thighs and buttocks.
6. Rectum – Constipation-difficult stool.

7. Stool-Hard
8. Generals - Food and drinks – sweets-desires
9. Stomach –Fullness,sensation of
10. Head– Perspirationof scalp – profuse

In this case, repertorisation was carried out using the computer Homoeopath classic software, using complete Repertory. After repertorisation, the top-ranked medicines Lycopodium clavatum. Natrum Muraticum, Bryonia alba,Silicea and Phosphorus were the repertorial result shown in Figure 2



### Therapeutic Intervention: -

Based on repertorization totality of symptoms, Lycopodium Clavatum 200C was prescribed it the reference of Materia medica. The Lycopodium Clavatum 200centesimal potency was chosen as for 4 weeks.

In Lycopodium clavatum, Suited for obesity with gastric disturbances and slow digestion; bloating, fullness in the abdomen, excessive flatulence. Desires sweets, fried food, warm drinks. Obesity predominantly in the abdomen, thighs and buttocks. Mentally Low self-confidence. Irritation Anxiety about health and future. Timidity. Flatulence, Fullness after small meals, and Constipation with hard, difficulty stools. Fatty accumulation primarily around the abdomen (apple – shaped obesity). Gas, bloating, and liver problems [14]

**Prescription:** Lycopodium 200C was prescribed due to dominant digestive symptoms and mental irritability.

**Advice:** The patient was encouraged to follow a light diet, avoid overeating, and engage in daily walking or light exercise.

**Follow-up:** After 4 weeks, the patient reported reduced bloating and slight improvement in energy levels. Weight reduction was minimal but digestion improved. Treatment was continued with adjustments.

### CASE INFORMATION: 3

#### Patient Details:

- \* Name: Mrs. S.R.
- \* Age: 32 years
- \* Gender: Female
- \* Occupation: Homemaker

#### Chief Complaint:

Mrs. XYZ presents with complaints of excessive weight gain following her second pregnancy, which occurred 1 year ago. Despite efforts to control her diet and increase physical activity, she continues to gain weight, particularly in the abdominal and thigh areas.

#### History of Present Illness:

- \* Weight gain of approximately 15 kg within a year postpartum.
- \* Complaints of bloating, heaviness after meals, and sluggish digestion.
- \* Craving for sweets and salty foods.
- \* Feeling exhausted throughout the day, even with adequate rest.
- \* Mild hair loss and skin dryness noticed after delivery.

- \* Complains of low backache and knee pain while standing for long periods.
- \* Emotional sensitivity, weeps easily, and fee's overwhelmed with responsibilities.
- \* Irregular menstrual cycles post-pregnancy.

### **Obstetric History:**

- \* **Gravida: 2, Para: 2, Abortions: 0**
- \* Delivered via normal vaginal delivery.
- \* Postpartum period was complicated by sleep disturbances and anxiety about the newborn.
- \* Breastfeeding stopped after 8 months.

### **Family History:**

- \* Mother: Diabetic, obese
- \* Father: Hypertensive

### **Personal History:**

- \* Diet: Mixed, prefers sweets and fried foods
- \* Thirst: Moderate, prefers cold drinks
- \* Sleep: Disturbed, with frequent waking
- \* Bowels: Constipated, hard stools with straining
- \* Urination: Normal
- \* Perspiration: Profuse on the head and neck
- \* **Thermal Reaction:** Chilly, prefers warm clothing
- \* **Mental State:** Easily irritable, weeps easily, feels lowself-confidence

### **Physical Examination:**

- \* Height: 160 cm
- \* Weight: 78 kg (Pre-pregnancyweight: 60 kg)
- \* BMI: 30.5 (Obese)
- \* Pulse: 78 bpm
- \* BP: 125/85 mmHg
- \* Skin: Dry, stretch marks on the abdomen
- \* Hair: Thin and falling
- \* Tongue: Pale and coated.

### **Diagnostic assessment nosological- obesity**

**Homoeopathic case analysis-** Based on the totality of symptoms, the patient's constitutional remedy was determined to be Natrum Muriaticum

### **Totality of symptom [10-12]**

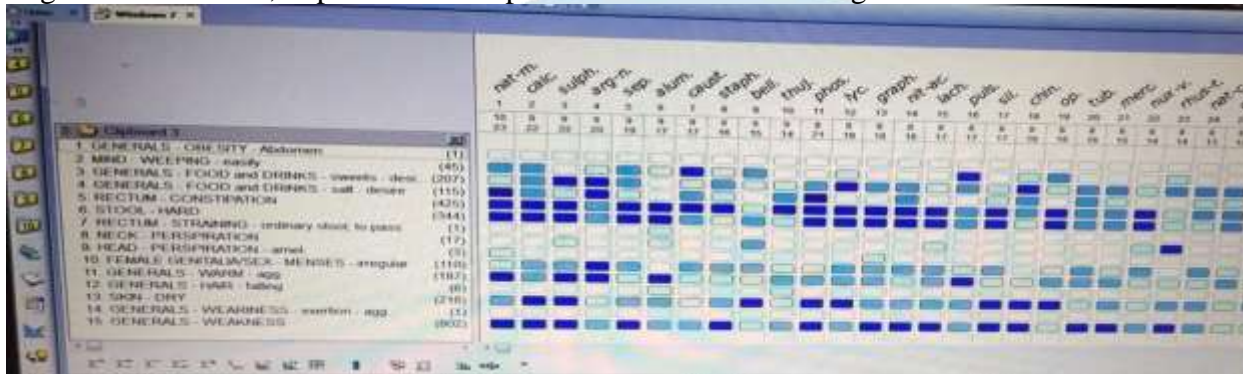
1. Obesity after pregnancy with weight gain in abdomen and thighs.
2. Craving for sweets and salty food.
3. Constipation with hard stools and straining.
4. Profuse perspiration, especially on the head and neck.
5. Chilly patient, prefers warm clothing.
6. Emotional sensitivity, easily weeps, overwhelmed.
7. Low energy levels with exertional fatigue.
8. Irregular menstruation post-pregnancy.
9. Hair fall and skin dryness.

### **REPERTORIZATION: -**

1. Generals – Obesity- Abdomen and thighs
2. Mind – Weeping – easily
3. Generals – Food and Drinks -Sweets – desire
4. Generals – Food and Drinks -Salts – desire
5. Rectum – Constipation
6. Stool – Hard

7. Rectum – Straining- ordinary stool;to pass
8. Perspiration – profuse especially on head and neck
9. Female Genitalia/sex-menses – irregular
10. Generals- chilly person/warm agg.
11. Generals- Hair – falling
12. Skin – Dry
13. Generals – Weariness -exertion – agg.
14. Generals – weakness

In this case, repertorisation was carried out using the computer Homoeopath classic software, using complete Repertory. After repertorisation, the top-ranked medicines Natrum Muriaticum. Calcarea carb., sulphur, Argentum Nitricum , Sepia were the repertorial result shown in Figure 2



### Therapeutic Intervention: -

Based on repertorization totality of symptoms, Natrum Muriaticum 200C was prescribed it the reference of Materia medica. The Natrum Muriaticum 200 centesimal potency was chosen as for one dose stat, followed by placebo for 7 days.

In Natrum Muriaticum, Weight gain after pregnancy, especially around the abdomen. Emotional sensitivity with a tendency to weep easily. Craving for salty and sweet food. Constipation with hard stools.

Profuse perspiration, particularly on the head and neck and scalp. Chilly disposition with a preference for warmth. [17,18]

**Prescription:** Natrum Muriaticum 200C, one dose stat, followed by placebo for 7 days.

\* Dietary modifications: Increase fiber intake and hydration.

\* Light exercise regimen: Walking 30 minutes daily.

### Follow-up Plan:

\* Assess progress in weight management and digestion after 2 weeks.

\* Monitor emotional well-being and menstrual regulation.

\* Evaluate the need for potency repetition or remedy change.

### DISCUSSION: -

This case study showed the homoeopathic management was effective in cases of obesity and Calcarea carb in case information 1; Lycopodium in case information 2 and Natrum Muriaticum in case information 3 was selected as most appropriate remedy.

The key factors that led to this choice include:-

In Calcarea carb., Excessive weight gain, Slow metabolism, tendency to sweat easily, cold extremities, Anxious, timid, craving sympathy, irresolution, Craving sweets and carbonated drinks, aversion to open air. [10,13]

In Lycopodium clavatum, Suited for obesity with gastric disturbances and slow digestion; bloating, fullness in the abdomen, excessive flatulence. Desires sweets, fried food, warm drinks. Constipation and acidity are common. The patient's mental state of irritability and lack of confidence. Anxiety about health and future. Timidity. Flatulence, Fullness after small meals. Fatty accumulation primarily around the abdomen (apple – shaped obesity). Gas, bloating, and liver problems. [14]



In Natrum Muriaticum, Obesity after pregnancy with abdominal fat accumulation. Craving for sweets and salt, and emotional eating. Constipation with hard stool and bloating. Profuse perspiration, especially on head, neck and scalp. Hormonal imbalance and irregular menses. Sensitive, anxious, easily stressed, tendency to easily weeps. Fluid retention. Worse from heat and sun; better with fresh air. [18,19]

While Calcarea carb. of case information 1; Lycopodium of case information 2 and Natrum Muriaticum of case information 3 was the primary remedy chosen, it is essential to consider other potential remedies and their differential features:-

**Phosphorus:-** Phosphorus is indicated when obesity is accompanied by digestive disturbance with bloating and acidity; liver issues, and nervous exhaustion with marked mental fatigue. Anxiety about the future and easily frightened. Craving for cold drinks and ice cream. Leaning towards tall and slender builds but can also suffer from fat deposition. It's suited for individuals with a delicate, nervous constitution prone to weight gain due to metabolic disorders. [15]

**Natrum – carb:-** Natrum carb is useful when obesity stems from poor digestion, flatulence and weakness. Intolerance to certain foods (milk, fats, bread). Desire potatoes and sweets. The remedy matches those who feel worse from exertion and heat exposure. [24]

**Sulphur:-** Sulphur suits individuals who are obese yet active and prone to overeating and neglecting hygiene. Weight gain with heat intolerance and excessive sweating. Aversion to bathing, craving for sweets and spicy foods. Intellectual yet lazy and untidy. Burning sensations, especially in the feet and palms. [25,26]

**Bryonia Alba: -** Bryonia Alba for obesity associated with sedentary habits and irritability. Weight gain primarily due to overeating and lack of physical activity. Mental characteristics - Irritability, dislikes disturbances, prefers solitude. Strong Attachment to financial and professional concerns. Constipation with dry stools. Dryness of mucous membranes and thirst for large quantities of water at long intervals. Worse from motion, warmth, and being disturbed. Better from rest and lying the affected side. [20,21]

**Silicea :-** Obesity despite weak assimilation and poor nutrient absorption. Typically seen in individuals with weak, chilly constitution. Mentally lack of confidence, shyness, and perfectionist tendencies. Tendency to overthinking and fatigue easily from mental exertion. Excessive sweating, especially on the head, feet, and hands. Coldness, even in warm weather, and sensitivity to drafts. Worse from cold, mental exertion, and dampness. Better from warmth, wrapping up, and gentle nourishment. [22,23]

**Argentum Nitricum:** Obesity with impulsiveness, anxiety, and craving for sweets. Cravings: Sweets, chocolate, salty foods. Digestive Issues: Bloating, diarrhea from excitement or sweets. Modalities: Worse from emotions, heat; better in open air. Body Type: Abdominal obesity with bloating. [27,28]

**Sepia:** Obesity due to hormonal imbalance, indifference, and fatigue. Cravings: Sour foods, vinegar, pickles. Sluggish digestion, constipation, bearing-down sensation. Worse in the afternoon, before menstruation; better with exercise. Body Type: Pear-shaped, sagging abdomen, loose muscles. [29,30]

## CONCLUSION: -

This case study showed that homoeopathic management was effective in cases of obesity with Calcarea carb remedy of case information 1, Lycopodium remedy of case information 2 and Natrum Muriaticum remedy of case information 3 & further clinical evaluation needed for the many cases.

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