

Home >> Pune >> Pune: Ayurved medicines improve constipation management in end-stage cancer patients

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Pune based Rasayu Cancer Clinic's research study on improving the management of constipation and quality of life of end-stage cancer patients by Ayurvedic medicines

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Pune: City-based Rasayu Cancer Clinic's research study on improving the management of constipation and quality of life of end-stage cancer patients by Ayurvedic medicines has been accepted and presented at European Society of Medical Oncology (ESMO) 22nd World Congress on Gastrointestinal Cancer recently held in Barcelona, Spain.

Constipation is the third most common symptom in cancer. It is even worse in advanced stage cancers where 50-87 per cent of patients' experience constipation and other conditions associated with this. This is also attributed to the adverse effect of some chemotherapeutic agents or due to opioids taken for pain management. Various classes of laxatives are indicated to manage constipation and its effects but that also does not relieve the symptom completely which leads to treatment delay, dose limitation of chemotherapy, cessation of anti-cancer treatment greatly affecting cancer management, and clinical outcomes. This also hampers the health-related quality of life of cancer patients.

This year due to the outbreak of COVID-19, congress was conducted on virtual platform. The paper presented by Dr Yogesh Bendale of Rasayu Cancer Clinic was among the most visited papers in the congress and has also been published in Annals of Oncology, an official journal of the ESMO and the Japanese Society of Medical Oncology. The research work was conducted by a multidisciplinary team of Rasayu Cancer Clinic, Pune by Dr Bendale, Dr Vineeta Bendale, Dr Avinash Kadam, Dr Anandrao Patil, Dr Poonam Birari-Gawande and Dr Vaishali Dharashive-Patil.

Dr Bendale said, "Per Ayurveda, daily satisfactory bowel clearance is a very important aspect. It is also one of the signs of a healthy person. In cancer patients, this carries more importance. The results of this study had shown significant changes in patients treated with Ayurvedic medicine. This research has pointed out the importance of the management of constipation to improve the quality of life of end-stage cancer patients."

"Personalised treatment approach will definitely prove the importance of Ayurveda in the management of cancer patients. This is really very important to let the world know the real strength of Ayurveda in the present global health sector," Bendale added.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- Constipation occurs in 50 to 87 per cent of advanced cancer patients. It is the third most common symptom (after pain and anorexia) in those with advanced cancer.
- Patients with a diagnosis of constipation has risks of colorectal and other GI cancers including pancreatic cancer.
- A total of 43 to 58 per cent of patients with cancer report constipation.
- Constipation is the third most common symptom in patients receiving cytotoxic chemotherapy
- Constipation prevalence is 16 per cent in cancer patient who receive cytotoxic chemotherapy with 5 per cent classified as severe and 11 per cent classified as moderate.
- Terminally ill patients, bowel dysfunction may occur in more than 80 per cent of patients and in 90 per cent of patients taking opioids.
- Average prevalence of constipation in adults has been estimated as 16 per cent worldwide (varies between 0.7 per cent and 79 per cent).
- Prevalence of 33.5 per cent was attributed to adults aged 60 to 110 years.
- The prevalence of constipation is higher in adults over 65 years of age due to loose-fitting dentures or tooth loss, resulting in chewing difficulty, which forces the patient to select soft and soft fibre materials.