

**World Piles Day: Addressing a Common Health Concern in Public Health****Mahesh Kumar\***

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Sir,

World Piles Day is observed annually on 20<sup>th</sup> November every year to raise awareness in society about Piles (Haemorrhoids). The day aims to encourage an individual to seek medical consultation without hesitation or stigma—just as they would for any other health condition. It also emphasizes the importance of early diagnosis, prevention, and treatment while highlighting the broader impact of piles on public health <sup>[1]</sup>.

The history of Piles is not new existing since Egyptian, Greek, and Roman civilizations. Ancient Ayurveda literature like *Charak Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita* shows much description about various Anorectal diseases (disease of anus and rectum) like *Arsha* (Piles), *Bhagandara* (Fistula in ano), *Parikartika* (Fissure in ano), *Gudabhramsha* (rectal prolapse) etc in the last thousand years back <sup>[2]</sup>. The Piles or Haemorrhoids are one of the most common Anorectal Disorder (ARD) affecting the population in today's clinical and surgical practice. In modern times, due to fast-paced lifestyles marked by stress ["hurry (to move or act quickly), worry (tension), curry (spicy food) and Shurry (spoiled state with combination of other three)"], people experience an imbalance in both physical and mental health. Such irregular lifestyle often lead to various lifestyle disorders, many of which are related to the gastrointestinal tract (GIT). Within GIT disorders, anorectal diseases are particularly more prevalent and troublesome due to more recurrence and hamper the quality of life. These include

conditions affecting the anus and rectum, such as piles, fissure-in-ano, fistula-in-ano, rectal prolapse, anorectal abscess, pruritus ani, and sinus formations. The prevalence of ARDs in society is significant, with piles being one of the most frequently reported conditions in both men and women <sup>[3]</sup>. Multiple factors can contribute to or worsen piles, such as chronic constipation, frequent diarrhoea, excessive straining or prolonged time during defecation, heavy weight lifting, prolonged driving, excessive sitting, a sedentary lifestyle, consumption of fast and junk food, pregnancy, colorectal cancers, spinal cord issues, local injuries, and obesity. The clinical symptoms of piles may include bleeding per rectum, anal pain, swelling or mass protruding from the anus (massa), mucus discharge, difficulty during defecation, constipation, anal itching or irritation, and anal discomfort while sitting or walking. These symptoms vary based on the severity of the condition. Bleeding piles are specifically termed haemorrhoids, and pain is usually due to swollen haemorrhoidal tissues. Diagnosis primarily depends on clinical history and physical or local examinations (Per rectal examination). A thorough per rectal examination (PRE) is usually sufficient to confirm the diagnosis and help to differentiate piles from other anorectal conditions. The diagnosis also takes into account the duration of symptoms and the presence of any complications <sup>[4]</sup>.

The treatment of piles involves several options, depending on the severity of the

condition. Management typically begins with conservative methods, such as lifestyle modifications and dietary changes in initial stage of piles. Preventive measures play a crucial role and can be promoted through education and awareness campaigns using information, education, and communication (IEC) strategies and that need early consultation. Lifestyle changes include adopting a high-fiber diet, managing obesity and weight, engaging in regular physical activity and exercise, and ensuring adequate fluid intake. It is also important to avoid excessive consumption of fast food, junk food, and spicy food, and to establish regular bowel habits. Constipation should be managed through the use of laxatives or purgatives if necessary. Treatment may involve prescribing medication based on whether the piles are bleeding or non-bleeding. Initially, conservative medical management is preferred. In addition to modern medicine, many well-known Ayurvedic remedies are also used to treat piles. Avoidance of spicy food, junk food, prolonged sitting, excess driving, excessive toilet timing, excessive alcohol intake, smoking, constipation, etc. is general advice to avoid hemorrhoid formation. Modern medical science offers several minimally invasive treatments for hemorrhoids, including infrared coagulation, sclerotherapy, cryotherapy, rubber band ligation, stapled hemorrhoidopexy, and laser

hemorrhoidoplasty. Surgical options include open hemorrhoidectomy (Milligan–Morgan technique), closed hemorrhoidectomy (Ferguson technique), MIPH (Minimally Invasive Procedure for Hemorrhoids), DGHAL (Doppler-Guided Hemorrhoidal Artery Ligation), and FGHAL (Full-Thickness Doppler-Guided Hemorrhoidal Artery Ligation). Each technique has specific indications depending on the patient's condition. Ayurveda outlines various methods such as *Bhesaja* (medicines), *Kshara* (alkaline therapy), *Agnikarma* (thermal cauterization), and *Shastrakarma* (surgical procedures) for managing piles (*Sushruta Samhita*). However, in more advanced cases, surgical intervention may be necessary<sup>[5][6]</sup>.

The date 20<sup>th</sup> November (annually) is observed since 2006 as world piles day with goal to raise the awareness about piles. The slogan famous as “no piles only smiles” used for campaign in this regard. Actual purpose behind this is to educate people about cause, sign, symptoms and management of Piles in society also to combat stigma. Public health initiative, making awareness, patient education through campaigns, public lectures, and piles day celebration, medical camp is helpful in early diagnosis, management and preventing the complications.<sup>[7]</sup>

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