

ROLE OF RASAYAN CHIKITSA ACCORDING TO PRINCIPLES OF AYURVED

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ABSTRACT

Rasayana chikitsa is a glorius part of *Ayurveda*. It is a unique system of medicine which has holistic approach to treat individuals. *Ayurveda* is divided into eight branches, *Rasayana* is one of them. In *ayurvedic* classics plenty of *rasayanas* are explained for longevity as well as management of diseases. *Rasayana* is intended in classical *Ayurveda* as an effective tool to synthesize the excellent quality of *dhatu* that entails the prevention and alleviation of senility and diseases. *Rasayana chikitsa* is one of the important branch of *Ayurveda* helps to maintain healthy life, As per *Ayurveda*, *Rasayana* improves immunity and

perform many vital functions & to keep the body and mind in best of health. Our immunity, strength and resistance depend on the quality & quantity of *ojas*, when depleted it predisposes us to lowered immunity, low spirit and ill health. The main aim of *rasayana* therapy is to restore spirit, vitality and enhance *ojus* thereby attain longevity. This article presents some important role of various *rasayanas* with their clinical or traditional evidences.

KEYWORDS: Rasayana, rejuvenation, immunity, vayasthapan.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is considered the *Upaveda* of *atharvaved*, being the oldest recorded wisdom of the earth. *Ayurveda* is believed to cure human diseases through establishment of equilibrium in the different elements of human life, the body, the mind, the intellect and soul. Basic principle of *Ayurveda* is to maintainance of health of healthy person and is to cure diseases. *Rasayana* therapy involves clinical effects like *vayasthapan*, *Ayushkara*, *Medhakara*,

balakara and *jara vyadhi nashana* effect. It performs work like rejuvenating and promotes healthy life by preventing the diseases.^[1]

The ultimate aim of *rasayana* therapy is to correct *dosha* disturbances & improve *agni* and *dhatu* function which overall improves strength, immunity, *ojus*, vitality, longevity, memory intelligence and excellence of luster.

Ancient *Ayurvedic* approach of disease prevention involves therapeutic measures to delay ageing & rejuvenating whole functional dynamics of the body system. According to *Ayurveda*, the homeostasis of the body is maintained by *doshas* that regulate all the metabolic processes.

- a) *Vata* regulates the catabolic activity (tissue wear & tear).
- b) *Kapha* stimulates synthesis of newer tissues.
- c) *Pitta* governs the process of nutrients assimilation into tissues.

There are three types of modalities for the treatment of diseases as per *ayurvedic* classics, namely *daiv vyapasraya*, *Yukti vyapashray* and *satvavajay*. The main procedure concerned with the medical treatment is *yuktivyapashray* which comprises of *samshodhan* and *samshaman*. *Rasayana* is most important among the *samshman* therapies for the maintainance of health of healthy person but also as treatment of the disease of diseased person.

The current scenario of lifestyle is very much responsible for the *tridosha* imbalance along with *dhatu* disturbances thus need of *rasayana* therapy becomes essential to increase the essence of each *dhatu*, starting from *rasa*.^[2]

Definition

The word '*Rasayana*' is composed of two words i.e 'Rasa' and 'Ayana'. *Rasa* means fluid or juice 3 and 'Ayana' means pathway.^[4] Hence the word '*Rasayana*' means path of the juice. It also means by which one gets the excellence of *rasa* is known as *Rasayana* refers to the means. Literally the technical term *Rasayana* refers to the means of obtaining the optimum nourishment to the *Dhatus*.

According to *Acharya Sushruta*, the substances which decrease the ageing process increases the longevity and increases the mental as well as physical strength and which destroys the disease process is called as '*Rasayana*'.^[5]

According to *Acharya Charak*, the substance which invigorate a healthy person by producing the best quality of *Rasa Raktadhatu* and other *dhatu*s are called as *Rasayana*.^[6]

According to *Ayurveda*, rejuvenation takes place so that a person can become healthy and explore the spiritual aspect of life.

Need for Rasayan (Rejuvenation)

Our lifestyle has become very hectic. This is due to over exertion physical as well as mental. Day by day people are feeling in secured which increase stress. This diet has also become faulty as many people are using fast food items. The timing of eating has become irregular due to change in duties and more & more persons are using stale foods with preservatives.

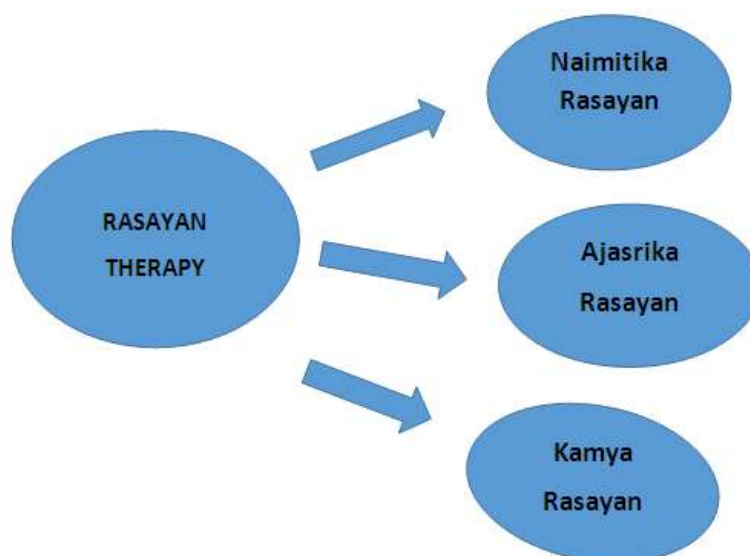
Due to availability of various gadgets in the kitchen, use of television, mobile phones and computers has resulted in lack of exercise. More and more people are becoming addicted to alcohol, smoking, excessive sex, too much sleep and drugs. This all leads to low *dhatubala*, low *ojas*, vitiation of all *doshas*, resulting in premature ageing, fatigue, debility, inability to adopt stress, recurrent illness and depression. Antioxidants *rasayana* food herbs and regimen helps to re-establish this balance.

Benefits of Rasayana Therapy

According to *Acharya Charak*, a person undergoing Rasayana therapy

- 1) It enhances the intelligence, memory power, will power, body strength, skin luster and physical strength.
- 2) Rasayana nourishes the whole body and improves natural resistance against infection by increasing immunity power.
- 3) Rasayana therapy keeps the body and mind pleasant.
- 4) Prevents wasting of muscles, delays the ageing process keeps strong bones, tendons etc. provide good sleep and appetite.

Types of Rasayan Therapy



According to achievable outcome- *Rasayana* is of three types:^[7]

1) *Naimittika Rasayana*- (*Nimitt*-sanskrit for 'cause')

Is also known as *Rogapaharan* or Curative type of *Rasayana*. It is used to balance a specific cause responsible for the disease in the body.

Few examples include *Dhatri rasayana*, *Mandookparni rasayana*, *Bramhi rasayana* & *Triphala rasayana*.

2) *Ajasrika Rasayana*

It is used to maintain good health & improve the quality of life through a healthy lifestyle diet or exercise. It is also called as *vayasthapak Rasayana*.

It involves utilization of milk, ghee, honey and maintenance of discipline lifestyle.

3) *Kamya rasayana*

This is described as to fulfil a wish or desire or to serve a special purpose (*kama*-desire)

It is of four types:

- 1) ***Prana kamya***: Best quality of *prana* (life energy) in the body.
- 2) ***Medhya Kamya***: Enhance the memory & intellect e.g. *shankhapushpi rasayana*.
- 3) ***Ayush kamya***: Increasing longevity.
- 4) ***Chakshu kamya***: Maintaining healthy eyes.

According to mode of administration, it is of two types**1) *Kutipravesha* - (Kuti-cottage, pravesha-enter).**

It is made up of two words kuti means 'cottage' and pravesha means 'enter'.^[8] Hence in this form of Rasayana therapy, the person is made to stay in specially designed chamber for a certain period and is given Rasayana preparations (Indoor therapy). Before taking this form of rejuvenation therapy, the person has to undergo panchakarma therapy.^[9]

2) *Vatatapika* - Where 'vata' means air and 'atapa' means heat or sun.^[10]

It is an outdoor management and involves taking rasayana,^[11] while a person remains exposed to air and heat and this type can be taken while working & doing normal routine work. It includes *chavanprasha*,^[12] *amalaki rasayan*,^[13] *Haritaki rasayana*,^[14] *pippali rasayana*.^[15]

A total of 63 combinations of various rejuvenation formulae are described in the *charak samhita*.

According to modalities-It is of three types**1) *Achar Rasayana*-(Behavioural modalities)**

Describes a type of *rasayana* for psychological and spiritual health. It focuses on the body mind and soul.

Achara literally means "discipline".

2) *Ahar Rasayana*-(Dietary modalities)

Including rules relating to eating, sleeping & create rejuvenation in a person. Following a *sattvik* diet & lifestyle, speaking the truth practicing nonviolence, following social ethics and conducts. Hence a person can get the same benefits as attained by internal administration of *rasayana*.

3) *Aushadha Rasayana* - (Drug based modalities)

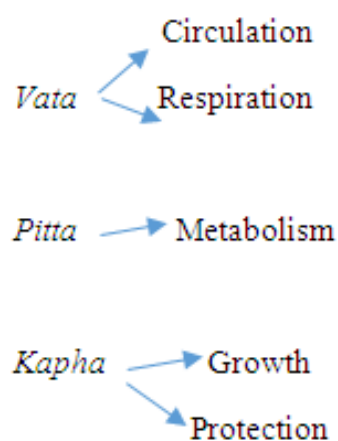
Includes some herb & food types that are indeed beneficial for the optimum functioning of the body as well as brain.

All therapies in *Ayurveda* aim to provide complete health physical, mental and spiritual so that people can engage in achieving the real goal of life.

Basic principles of *Ayurveda* and Role of *Rasayan*

Ayurveda suggest that body consisted of five elements: ether (space), air, fire, water & earth. These elements also contribute towards the nature like human body. *Ayurveda* believe that imbalance of these elements leads to many diseases. The combined rational effects of these elements are responsible for *vata* dosha, *pitta* dosha & *kapha* dosha.

These three are represents as '*Tridosha*' of *Ayurveda* which play vital role for diagnostic as well as treatment purpose of many disorders. *Rasayana* therapy play important role of treating many diseases by correcting the imbalance of *tridosha*. *Rasayana* improve movement by correcting *vata dosha* also improve metabolism through balancing of *pitta dosha* and improve growth & protection mechanism by correcting *kapha dosha*.

**Some therapeutics importance of *Rasayana*****1) *Medhya rasayanas* in neuroprotection**

Medhya rasayana drugs play an essential role in the treatment of psychiatric & psychosomatic diseases. The mode of this therapy involves the individual to attain sedation calmness, tranquillity or a stimulation of activities of brain.

Based on the experimental and clinical research it is known that these drugs have varying degree of psychotropic action and are known to possess antidepressant, sedative & tranquilizing action. Infact they produce neuronutrient effect by improving cerebral metabolism. This helps the mental patient to get relieve from stress, anxiety and depression.^[16]

2) *Amalaki* in rejuvenative therapy

Acharya charaka has mentioned *amalaki* (*Emblica Officinalis*) a best *vayasthapana* drug.^[17] It has properties like *Rasayana*,^[18] *Chakshushya*, *sarvadoshaghna* and *vrushya*.^[19] *Amalaki* fruit is probably the richest known natural source of vit c.^[20]

The recent studies done on *rasayana* preparation highlight the antioxidant property of many widely used *rasayan* drugs. The drug *amalaki* has been proved as an antioxidant. Vit c has been reported to be important hypocholesteronic & hypolipemic agent. *Amalaki* has been shown too helpful in both aspects.

3) *Rutuharitaki Rasayana* in *Amlapitta*

Rasayana chikitsa involves utilization of various herbs like *amalaki*, *Bhringaraj*, *Ashwagandha*, *punarnava*, *chitraka* & *haritaki*. *Rutuharitaki Rasayan* describes the *Rasayana* effect of *haritaki* taken along with different *anupana*.

Amlapitta a disease of *annavaha strotas* related with gastric problem. *Haritaki* along with *guda* having curative properties for all types of gastric disorders. It possess properties like *dipana*, *anulomana* & *tridoshaghna* which relieves *amlapitta*. The symptoms of *amlapitta* involves *avipaka*, *klanma*, *utklesha*, *amlodgar* & *aruchi*.

As per traditional *ayurvedic* text '*Haritaki Shodhan*' stimulates *agni* & help to maintain health by correcting imbalance also improves vitality. strength, immunity, potency & antiageing effects. It also possess *pittashamaka* effect since its having properties like *madhura*, *tikta*, *kashaya*.^[21]

4) *Vayasthapak Mahakashay*-Antiageing drugs

Mahakashay is an *ayurvedic* formulation comes under category of *rasayana* used as age stabilizer it also cures various disease and improves power. This type formulation includes herbs like *Guduchi* (*Tinospora cordifolia*), *Haritaki* (*Terminalia Chebula*), *Amalaki* (*Emblica Officinale*), *Shweta* (*Clitoria ternattea*), *Jeewanti* (*Leptadenia Reticulate*), *Shatavari* (*Asparagus Racemosus*), *Mandookparni* (*Centella Asiatica*), *Punarnava* (*Boerhavia Diffusa*).^[22]

CONCLUSION

The term *Rasayana* does not only refer to a drug or a therapy but to a comprehensive discipline. It is a multiangle approach taking care of the body, mind and spirit thus affecting a total wellbeing of an individual.

It is a basic therapy for rejuvenation since it attains longevity, memory, intellect, freedom from disease, youth and excellence of lustre.

This review article describes significant informations regarding various options of *rasayanas chikitsa* as per *Ayurveda* including herbs and its combination. *Rasayana* contributes significantly as the treatment component of *Ayurveda* for curing various disease and maintain healthy life style.

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