

ROLE OF RASAYANA IN IMMUNITY**Dr. Kshitija Dhane^{*1} and Dr. Deepali Manore²**

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ABSTRACT

Rasayana is one of the eight clinical specialties of classical ayurveda known as Ashtang Ayurveda. The word rasayana is composed of two words Ras + Ayan, means by which one gets the excellence of Rasa (The nourishing fluid which is produced immediately after digestion) is known as Rasayana. The Rasayana therapy enhance the qualities of Rasa, enriches it with nutrients so one can attains longevity, memory, intelligence, freedom from disorder, youthfulness, excellence of luster, complexion and voice, optimum development of physique and sense organs, mastery over phonetics and brilliance. The rasayana are rejuvenators, nutritional supplements and possess strong antioxidant activity. They also have antagonistic actions on the oxidative stressors, which give rise to the formation of different free radicals. Taking

rasayana is helpful to increase the immunity of the person to keep him away from the disease & also reverse the disease process & prevents the re-occurrence. Rasayana is the tool to create premium dhatus so when the quality of dhatus enhances results are longevity, strong immune system to fight against diseases, development of body and youthfulness.

KEYWORDS: Rasayana, Immunity, Vyadhikshamatava.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda has two aims i.e. prevention & promotion of health and secondly cure from the disease. Acharyas promoted the use of rasayana to enhance the oja and immunity. Rasayana therapy means rejuvenation therapy. Taking rasayana is helpful to increase the immunity of the person to keep him away from the disease. Rasayana are health promoting and

rejuvenating agents which by their empirical effects produce resistance against disease both physically and mentally.

Rasayan: Ras + Ayana –Transportation of Ras (Nutrition) in the whole body.

Vyadhikshamatava:-Vyadhi + Kshamatava- Opposes the Vyadhibala & prevents the Vyadhi.

OBJECTIVE

- 1) To review Rasayana & Vyadhikshmatava from various Ayurvedic samhita.
- 2) To study Immunity from modern text book.

Definition of Rasayana

According to ayurveda the substances which decreases the aging process increases the longevity and increases the mental as well as physical strength and producing the best quality of saptadhatu and accordingly increases Oja & Bala and which prevents the disease process is called as Rasayana.

Classification of Rasayana

As per scope of use

Kamya Rasayana Kamya rasayana is used to serve a special purpose. It is also used to promote general physical & mental health. It is of three types.

- a) Prana kamya rasayana – It is used for achieving or maintaining the best quality of prana in the body. E.g. Amalaki, Haritaki, Guduchi etc. are used for this purpose.
- b) Medha kamya rasayana- e.g. Brahmi, vacha, Mandukparni, shankhapushapi etc. are used for enhancing memory & intellect.
- c) Sri Kamya rasayan –Promoter of complexion. e.g. Guduchi, Amalaki, Triphala, Ashwagandha etc.

Naimittika Rasayana - To be used in person suffering from specific disease. Naimittika rasayana is not the specific medical treatment for particular diseases, but it is used as adjuvant along with the specific management of disease.

Naimittika rasayana for some of specific diseases

Netra roga – Jyotishmati, Triphala, Yashtimadhu.

Hridya roga – Shaliparni, Arjuna, Pushkarmula.

Twak roga – Tuvarka, Somaraji, Bhalattaka.

Pandu – Lauha, Mandura.

Shwas – Agastya rasayana, pipalli, chyavanprash.

Vata vyadhi – Guggula, Bala, Nagbala.

Madhumeha – Shilajit, amalaki.

Medo roga- Guggula, triphala.

Unmada – Shankhapushapi, Brahmi, Mandukparni.

As per method of use

- 1) **Kutipravesnik Rasayana** – It is an Indoor therapy. This is administrated by keeping the individual inside a special cottage.
- 2) **Vatatapika Rasayana** – It is an outdoor therapy .This is administrated even if the individual is exposed to the wind and the sun. In today's lifestyle we can administer this rasayana without disturbing our daily routine.

Shodhan is very essential for a person who wishes to undergo rasayana therapy as a preparatory procedure. Rasayana is more effective when it is given after panchakarma therapy. The shodhan process detoxifies both body & mind. This helps in the initial detoxification of the body and prepares it for the rasayana regime.

Kutipravesnika Rasayana

Kutipravesnika is made up of two words. That is 'Kuti' means "A cottage" and pravesnika means "To enter". In this method, the person has to reside in a specially prepared cottage for a long period while receiving various herbs. The person has to strictly follow the prescribed diets and other instructions given by the physician. He should undergo panchakarma therapy before taking the rejuvenation.

Vatatapika Rasayana

It consist of two words 'vata' means Air and Atapa means 'Heat' or 'Sun'. So this is a method of taking rasayana, while a person remains exposed to air and heat and this rasayana can be taken while working and doing your normal routine work.

Following are some of examples of rasayanas used for specific purpose.

Medhya Rasayana – Improve the intellect and memory.

Haritaki Rasayana – Improves strength and gives healthy life and longevity.

Chyawanprash- Useful in shwas & kasa.

Brahmi & vacha Rasayana – Improves our memory, gives sharpness and intelligence.

Pipalli Rasayana – Used for anti aging purpose & used in treating respiratory conditions.

Shilajit Rasayana- It is useful in diabetes and impotency.

Shatavari and Ashwagandha Rasayana-Increases strength of the body.

Amalaki Rasayana- It is beneficial for brain, eyes, skin & hair.

Triphala Rasayana- It nourishes both body & mind, thereby promoting longevity of life. It also useful in skin, eye diseases.

Bhalattaka Rasayana – Used for skin diseases .

Vaya sthapak yoga – Shital jala, Dudha, Madhu, Ghrita can be consumed as a single component or two mixed with one another or three of them consumed at the time helps in longevity of life.

As per contents of rasayana

- 1) Aushadha rasayana – Based on drugs and herbs
- 2) Ajastrika rasayana- In this type food is used as rasayana for nourishment of body.e.g. Cow's milk, ghee, honey.
- 3) Achara rasayana – Based on conduct and behavior.

Achara Rasayana

Achara rasayana is a unique concept in ayurveda that implies moral, ethical, and benevolent conduct: truth, nonviolence, personal and public cleanliness, mental and personal hygiene, devotion, compassion. The concept of achara rasayana is to change our behaviours in order to reverse the disease process and stay in balance. Achara rasayana gives us tools to find balance in our daily life & improves the mental health.

Benefits of rasayana

According to charak, the person undergoing the rasayana therapy benefits

- Enhancement of intelligence, memory, body strength, skin luster, sweetness of voice & physical strength.
- It helps to attain optimal physical strength & sharpness of the sense organs.

Vyadhikshamatava

According to Acharya Chakrapani Vyadhikshamatava means “vyadhibalapratibandhatavam” and “vyadhyutapadapratibandhakatvam”.

When etiological factors come in contact with body they try to produce disease. At the same time the body tries to resist the disease. This power of the body, which prevents the development of disease or resists a developed disease, is called Vyadhikshamatava.

Immunity

Immunity is the ability of the body to protect against all types of foreign bodies like bacteria, virus, and toxic substances etc. which enter the body.

Types

There are two major types of immunity: innate or natural or nonspecific and acquired or adaptive.

1) Innate immunity – Innate immunity is inherited by the organisms from the parents and protects it from birth throughout life.

2) Acquired immunity – The immunity that an individual acquires after the birth is called acquired immunity.

Bala – According to ayurveda there is relation between sharir bala & vyadhikshamatva.

There are 3 types of bala

1. Sahaja – Sahaja bala comes from the parents and is inherited.
2. Kalaja – Kalaja bala is inclusive of the time of day, day of the week, season, age and place of birth are important factors for enhancing immunity.
3. Yuktikruta – Yuktikruta bala represents acquired immunity.

Mechanism of Rasayana

Sushruta defines a healthy man as one who has equilibrium of doshas, normal functioning of agni, normal condition of seven dhatus, beside his soul, the sense organs and mind should be happy and cheerful. Rasayana stands as an answer to solve the problem of healthful longevity including mental development and resistance against the disease. Rasayana is a specialized type of treatment influencing the fundamental aspect of the body i.e. Dhatu, Agni, Strotasa.

Rasayana is made up of rasa and ayana, rasa primarily means essential seven vital tissues, rasa, rakta, mamsa, meda, asthi, majja, shukra. Aayana means the path or channel for the same. So rasayanas are those that bring about proper uptake, growth, and improvement of essential seven vital tissues, which is ultimately increases oja. Thus there is regeneration of cells and body tissues leading to increased immunity.

When Rasayana drugs of different rasas are taken, they are digested by jatharagni followed by bhutagni. During this phase vata, pitta & kapha produced along with pure saara part i.e. Ahaara rasa. This qualitative ahaara rasa produces pure Rasa dhatu, which then continues the chain of production of other raktadi dhatus with the help of respective dhatavagni upto ojas formation. Therefore well formed dhatus keep on nourishing the body till they are taken. Rasayana drugs act at the level of Rasa by improving the nutritional value of the poshak rasa which helps to obtain the best quality of dhatu e.g. shatavari, bala, atibala etc. Some rasayana drugs act at the level of Agni & strotas by improving digestion and metabolism. The rasayana drugs possessing the ushna, laghu, ruksha, and katu, tikta, kashaya rasa acts at level of agni, vitalizing the organic metabolism leading to an improved structural and functional pattern of dhatus. Drugs such as pippali, guggulu, rasona, bhallataka, vidanga, chitraka, haritaki mainly acts at level of agni to improve the digestion and create excellence of saptadhatu. Similarly amalaki, amrita, pippali, kumari are supposed to act the level of dhatwagni also causing excellence of all dhatus.

Vyadhikshamatava is depends on the presence of bala in the body. Rasayana drugs also influence oja which increases sharir bala. A person with appropriate amount of bala is also said saptadhatu-sara. This provides the capacity to resist the external disease causing agents. Thus Rasayana can act as immunomodulator, by strengthening the immunity. Rasayana also acts as antioxidants which can prevent many diseases such as heart diseases, diabetes mellitus, cancer. Many rasayana drugs like amla, ashwagandha acts are antioxidants.

CONCLUSION

Thus we can say that rasayana has important role in immunity enhancement. It is required to create awareness among people about rasayana, which will prevent disease & promote health of the every individual.

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