

ROLE OF VAYAHSTHAPANA DRUGS IN PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF AGEING

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is an ancient Indian system of medicine that emphasizes holistic health and wellness through the balance of body, mind, and spirit. It utilizes herbs, dietary practices, and lifestyle changes to promote health and treat disease, focusing on the individual's constitution and natural healing processes. As we know that ageing is the accumulation of changes in an organism or object over time. In human it refers to a multidimensional process of physical, psychological and social changes. The detail description of such drugs which are used in prevention and management of ageing are scattered all over the Ayurvedic texts, amongst them Vayahsthapana Mahakashaya of Charaka Samhita is very important. Other drugs which are described in Jivaniya Mahakashaya, Brimhaniya Mahakashaya, Balya Mahakashaya, Rasayana and Vajikarana drugs

are also useful for the prevention and management of ageing. According to Ayurveda main cause of ageing is Dhatukshaya, which is based on poshana level, agni level and shrotas level. So the Jivaniya, Brimhaniya, Balya, Rasayana and Vajikarana drugs may be most beneficial for the prevention and management of ageing. As societies advance and lifestyles evolve, geriatric care has become increasingly vital, acknowledging the changing health needs of the elderly. The use of these vayasthapana as internal medicine with general principles of Ayurveda to delayed the ageing process as we cannot eliminate it but we can delay it through some medicines and some life style changes known as *Achar Rasayan* mentioned as *Achar Rasayans* in the charak samhita.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Vayahsthapana, Mahakashaya, Dhatukshaya, Rasayana,

Vajikarana, Geriatric Diseases, Agni, Shrotas, Ageing, Balya, Svabhavik Vyadhi, Shaman Chikitsa, Shodhan chikitsa, oja.

INTRODUCTION

Global health scenario in geriatrics twenty first century is witnessing a gradual decline in fertility; and with increase in life expectancy, the society will need to grapple with issues of longevity. The leading causes of mortality among aged people comprise respiratory problems, heart diseases, cancer and stroke. Significant causes of morbidity among this group is chronic inflammatory and degenerative conditions such as Arthritis, Diabetes Osteoporosis, Alzheimer's disease, Depression, Psychiatric disorders, Parkinson's disease and age related urinary problems. Ayurveda describes jara chikitsa (geriatrics) is mentioned as one of eight branches. Jara is considered as *swabhavika vyadhi* in Ayurveda which means it can not be avoided but it can be delayed as per *Acharya Susrut*. Ageing is an inevitable change for all the living creatures. According to Ayurveda the concept of anti-ageing can be used in many concepts as *Rasayan*, *Vajikaran*, *Vayasthapan Mahakashya*, *Ojovardhak dravya* etc etc. *Rasayana* therapy helps to delay in the ageing process and its ill effects which leads to longevity, immunity against diseases and improves mental and intellectual competence. Various single and combination of drugs mentioned in *Vayasthapana mahakashaya* delay ageing. These drugs which acts on over all body through different mode of action and leads to Over all good health and less diseases and rejuvenate body cells) properties have been mentioned. According to Ayurveda body is a key component of three doshas as vata pitta and kapha and if all the three doshas are in equilibrium state with each other it leads to healthy body in the terms of physical fitness but as per *Ayurveda* health is more from physical fitness. As it describes health as.

Samadoṣa samāgni ca sama dhātu malakriyah

Prasanna ātma indriya manah svastha iti abhidhīyate

One who is established in Self, who has balanced dosas (primary life force), balanced agni (fire of digestion), properly formed dhatus (tissues), proper elimination of malas (waste products), well-functioning bodily processes, and whose mind, soul and senses are full of bliss is called a healthy person. Acharya Sushruta has classified the diseases and mentions Svabhava Bala Pravritta Vyadhi, which include Kshudha (hunger), Pipasa (thirst), Nindra (sleep), Jara (*Ageing*) and Mrityu (death). Which means these states are not avoided but it can be delayed through balancing the doshas via a suitable mechanism for the individual named

as personalized treatments either shaman chikitsa or shodhan chikitsa.

The causes of ageing

Any state of unhealthy conditions or as per Ayurveda imbalance of the equilibriums among the three pillars of the body named as Doshas as Vatta, Pitta, Kapha and imbalance in the mansik gunas named as satva, rajas and tamas as physical, mental and emotional status are linked the each other either in a healthy state or unhealthy state. These changes affects the body in the terms of unhealthy state which is followed by diseases sometimes. Sometimes it can be due to doshkshya or dhatu kshya but both of these pathologies can turn into the state of ojkshya and which is again a type of degenerative changes or unable to sustain the normal functioning of the body. All these pathologies at the end can be concluded as ageing. As per some other studies there is no single known cause for ageing. Gerontologists have formulated number of theories for ageing as loss of irreplaceable cells, production of unsound cells, limited capacity for division, accumulation of waste products. This concept is rooted in Ayurvedic philosophy, which views aging as a natural process that can be influenced by various factors, including lifestyle, diet, and stress.

Pathological ageing

Hypertension, diabetes mellitus, obesity, heart attack, stroke, peptic ulcer, constipation, jaundice, tuberculosis, lung cancer, arthritis, urinary problem, thyroid disease, cancer, surgical problems, sexuality in old age, psychiatrics problems like depression, dementia.

Healthy ageing

Periodic health check-up, nutrition, exercise, prevention of osteoporosis, prevention of arthritis, care of special senses, maintenance of mental health, mental exercises, sound finance. The all will help both physical and mental health. With little bit of sound finance, elders living in joint family can definitely enjoy their old age.

Changes during ageing

Sensory System - Change in vision and hearing etc.

Nervous System - Decrease in neurons and slow neurotransmitter, changes in sleep cycles.

Musculoskeletal System -Sarcopenia, gradual loss of bone mass, and joints becomes less lubricated.

Gastrointestinal Systems - Decreased tone of intestine and stomach result in slow perigastric juices, nutrients result in mal absorption.

Cardiovascular System - the heart less able to pump efficiently, Left ventricular and atrial hypertrophy, Sclerosis of atrial and mitral valves.

Respiratory System- Decreased volume and expansion of lungs may lead to decreased function.

Renal and Genitourinary Systems- Decreases in kidney mass, blood flow, GFR, Decreased drug clearance, Reduced bladder elasticity, muscle tone, capacity

Immune System -Immune response dysfunction with increased susceptibility to infection, reduced efficacy of vaccination, chronic inflammatory state.

Anti-Aging Methods in Ayurveda

Aahar	Nidra	Brahmcharya
Vayyam	Dincharya	Ratricharya
Ritu charya	Virudh dravyas	Hittam and Ahittam
Medhya Drvaya	Medhya Rasayan	Vajikarn chikitsa
Rasayn Chikitsa	Jivniya Mahakashya	Vayasthapan Mahakashya
Bhrihamniya Mahakashya	Balya Mahakashya	Dhee Dhairy aatmadi vigyan

Mechanism

All the pharmacodynamic and pharmacokinetic properties collectively pacify *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Mala* and maintain the equilibrium of the body which helps to stabilize the process of ageing. The pharmacological potentials of *Vayahsthapana Dashakaya* help to prevent damages and protect the human body from ageing disorders. which helps in overall nourishment of different dhatu. Rasayana drugs possess strong antioxidant activities. This activity is responsible for combating the effect of ageing, stress, diabetes and auto immune diseases. Acharya charaka has given unique importance to Vayasthapan Mahakashaya for maintaining vitality and managing ageing and its allied ill effects.

Ageing is defined as gradual biological impairment of normal functions, probably as a result of changes made into the cells and structural components. Through the ayurveda basically we have to maintain the anabolism and catabolism in the balanced state for the maximum period in the best sustainable methods. These changes would consequently have a direct impact on functional ability of organs and biological symptoms. Ayurveda counters the aging and its allied ill-effects with three pronged approach. First it recommends the countering of aging and its adverse effects by use of Vayasthapak drugs (age stabilizers) and the Life extension science, also known as antiaging medicine, experimental gerontology, and biomedical gerontology is the study of slowing down or reversing the processes of aging to extend both

the maximum and average life span. Experimental studies done on various Rasayana drugs prove that they have immune stimulant, antioxidant, and anti- stress etc properties.

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Anti Ageing Drugs

According to Ayurveda, aging is a result of the accumulation of toxins (ama) in the body, which can lead to cellular damage, inflammation, and oxidative stress. As we age, our bodies undergo a series of physiological changes, including: Decreased cellular regeneration, Reduced metabolic rate, Increased inflammation, Weakened immune system. In ayurveda it is regulated by the three main pillars named as aahar, nidra and brahmcharya which means a proper diet regular and sound sleep and proper balance of desires in the terms of reproduction.

Drug	Botanical Name	Mechanism
Guduchi	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	Immunomodulatory and Antioxidant
Amlaki	<i>Embllica officinalis</i>	Antioxidant, Nutritive
Haritaki	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	Antioxidant
Punarnava	<i>Boerrhavia diffusa</i>	Antioxidant
Bala	<i>Sida cordifolia</i>	Antioxidant and Adaptogenic
Sursa	<i>Ocimum Sanctum</i>	Antistress, Adaptogenic and Antioxidant
Arjuna	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	Hypocholesterolemic, Antioxidant
Amaltash	<i>Cassia fistula</i>	Antioxidant and Immuno modulatory
Haridra	<i>Curcuma longa</i>	Antioxidant and Immuno modulatory
Kalmegha	<i>Andrographis paniculata</i>	Antioxidant
Bhallatak	<i>Semicarpus anacardium</i>	Antioxidant and immuno modulatory
Shilajit		Antioxidant, Immunomodulatory, Adaptogenic and Antistress. Aphrodisiac & Anti inflammatory
Ashvagandha	<i>Withania somnifera</i>	Adaptogenic and Antioxidant, Aphrodisiac
Shatavari,	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i>	promote hormonal balance,
Jivanti	<i>Leptadenia reticulata,</i>	nourishing properties
Shalparani	<i>Desmodium gangeticum,</i>	Adaptogenic and nourishing properties
Aparajita,	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i>	calming effects on the nervous system
Mandukaparni	<i>Centella asiatica,</i>	supporting mental clarity, memory, and overall brain health, vital elements in aging and cognitive support.

Ayurvedic drugs possesses unique properties that target specific aging-related issues. Ayurvedic wisdom in rejuvenating aging populations, providing holistic preventive and

restorative options for geriatric care. As longevity increases, it is critical to focus not just on the quantity of life but also on the quality, which can be significantly enhanced through these herbal formulas.

CONCLUSION

Vayasthapan offers a comprehensive approach to anti-aging, combining herbal remedies, lifestyle modifications, and spiritual practices to promote overall well-being. By incorporating these principles into your daily life, you can help reduce the visible signs of aging, promote vitality, and radiate a youthful glow. On the basis of above description we may conclude that mode of action of vayasthapan drugs (Rasayana) depends upon poshana level, agni level and shrotas level. It has been described that in old ages vata increases spontaneously. Dhatukshaya and Shrotorodha are the predominant cause for vata vriddhi. Dhatukshaya may be corrected by the Ayurvedic preparations and drugs which are described in above description. Generally it has been seen that the drugs having madhur vipaka are vatashamaka and kapahavardhaka. Drugs having the kapahavardhaka property provide nutrition to all dhatus. Tikta rasa is more beneficial for shrotosodhana and agnideepana. Drugs which are beneficial in the improvement of ageing having the free radicals and anti oxidants properties. There is no cure for timely ageing and death. Degenerative processes can be slowed down to some extent, but can never be reversed. Therefore, the relevance of Rasayana therapy comes in the context of premature ageing and death due to it. From the very definition of Rasayana^[2] it can be seen that Rasayanatherapy aims ultimately at the attainment of perfect Rasadi dhatus. Rasayana drugs serve to meet this end, by acting at the level of Agni, dhatu and shrotas. The rasayana gunas that it imparts to the body can only be attributed to its prabhava. The aims of rasayana therapy are bestows youthfulness (Taraunam) Stamina (Dehabala) Strength of Vital organs (Indriya Bala) Intelligence (Medha) Memory (Smrithi) Complexion (Prabha) and prolonged life (Ayus). The fair utilization of Vayasthapan can lead to improved health outcomes and potentially prolong lifespan in the elderly, proving its relevance in contemporary health care paradigms. Ayurveda encompasses natural substances and therapeutic practices that enhance health and treat illnesses. This broad term includes herbs, minerals, and lifestyle changes, focusing on restoring balance within the body through holistic approaches tailored to individual needs.

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