

USE OF RASAUSHADHI IN GERIATRICS DISEASE: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The global increase in the elderly population presents significant challenges and opportunities for the field of geriatrics. Traditional medicine, particularly Ayurveda, offers unique perspectives and strategies that could be integrated into geriatric healthcare to enhance the well-being of the elderly. In this article we discuss on Rasayana property of Rasaushadhis in geriatrics.

KEYWORDS: Geriatrics, Ageing, Rasayana, Rasaushadhi.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda, often referred to as the science of life and longevity, offers a comprehensive framework for understanding and managing the aging process. It combines various principles and practices to promote health, prevent disease, and extend life. One of the key aspects of Ayurveda that addresses aging and related health issues is Rasa Shastra.

Rasa Shastra is a branch of Ayurveda that emerged predominantly during the medieval period. It incorporates a diverse range of substances used in Ayurvedic formulations, including Rasa (mercury), Maharasa (major minerals), Uparasa (secondary minerals), and Sadharana Rasa (common minerals) Dhatu and upadhatu. These formulations, which include one or more of these constituents, are known as Rasaushadhis.

Ayurveda and Aging

Ayurveda views aging as a natural process that can be managed effectively through proper lifestyle, diet, and therapeutic interventions. The primary goals in Ayurvedic management of aging are to maintain vitality, prevent degenerative diseases, and promote overall well-being.

Ayurveda and Geriatrics

- 1. Preventive Measures:** Ayurveda emphasizes preventive care, which can play a crucial role in addressing the aging process. This ancient system of medicine advocates for lifestyle and dietary modifications, herbal supplements, and routine practices that can help in maintaining health and preventing age-related diseases.
- 2. Rasayana Tantra:** A specialized branch of Ayurveda, Rasayana Tantra, is dedicated to combating age-related disorders (Jarajanya Vyadhi). It focuses on rejuvenation and enhancing the quality of life in the elderly.
- 3. Rasaushadhis:** Rasaushadhis, or medicinal preparations containing minerals and metals, are central to Ayurvedic treatment due to their Rasayana (rejuvenative) and therapeutic properties. These preparations are believed to enhance vitality, immunity, and overall health, making them particularly beneficial in geriatric care.

Benefits of Integrating Ayurveda in Geriatric Healthcare

- **Holistic Approach:** Ayurveda's holistic approach, which considers physical, mental, and spiritual health, can complement conventional medical treatments for the elderly.
- **Personalized Care:** The individualized treatment plans in Ayurveda, tailored to the unique constitution (Prakriti) of each person, can address specific health needs and improve outcomes.
- **Focus on Wellness:** By focusing on wellness and prevention, Ayurveda can reduce the incidence of chronic diseases and improve the quality of life for the elderly.

Rasa Shastra: Ayurvedic Pharmaceutics

Rasa Shastra is a specialized branch of Ayurveda that focuses on the preparation and therapeutic use of medicines derived from metals, minerals, and herbo-mineral compounds. This branch encompasses.

- **Drug Varieties**
 - **Metals:** Such as gold, silver, iron, and mercury.
 - **Minerals:** Including various salts and inorganic substances.

- **Herbo-Mineral Compounds:** Combinations of herbs with metals or minerals to enhance therapeutic efficacy.
- **Properties**
 - Each substance used in Rasa Shastra has specific properties (Gunas) that contribute to its therapeutic effects. These properties are carefully studied and documented in Ayurvedic texts.
- **Processing Techniques**
 - Processing techniques (Sanskaras) are crucial in Rasa Shastra to detoxify and purify the raw materials. Techniques include Shodhana (purification), Marana (calcination), and Jarana (incineration). These processes transform the substances into a bioavailable and therapeutically potent form.
- **Therapeutic Uses**
 - Rasaushadhis (medicines prepared through Rasa Shastra) are known for their rejuvenative (Rasayana) and curative properties. They are used to treat a wide range of ailments, especially those associated with aging, such as joint disorders, cognitive decline, and weakened immunity.

Benefits of Rasa Shastra in Geriatric Care

- **Rejuvenation (Rasayana)**
 - Rasaushadhis have potent Rasayana properties that help rejuvenate the body, enhance vitality, and slow down the aging process.
- **Disease Management**
 - These preparations are effective in managing chronic diseases commonly seen in the elderly, such as arthritis, diabetes, and cardiovascular conditions.
- **Enhanced Immunity**
 - Rasaushadhis boost the immune system, making the body more resilient to infections and other health challenges.

According to **Rasa Sara Samgraha**, Rasaushadhis are valuable in Ayurvedic medicine due to their potent therapeutic effects, rejuvenative properties, and ability to balance Doshas and enhance immunity. Their role in detoxification, improved bioavailability, and holistic approach further underscores their importance. Integrating Rasaushadhis into modern healthcare, particularly in geriatric care, can provide a comprehensive and effective strategy for managing health and promoting longevity.

Rasaushadhi

1. Rasa (Mercury-based Preparations)

- Mercury is considered the most potent and essential component in Rasa Shastra. It undergoes rigorous purification and processing to ensure its safety and therapeutic efficacy.
- **Example**
 - **Makardhwaja:** A famous mercury-based preparation known for its rejuvenative and aphrodisiac properties.

2. Maharasa (Major Minerals)

- These include significant minerals that are vital in Ayurvedic treatments.
- **Examples**
 - **Abhraka Bhasma:** Prepared from mica, it is used for its rejuvenative properties and in the treatment of respiratory and digestive disorders.
 - **Loh Bhasma:** Prepared from iron, it is used to treat anemia, general debility, and other blood-related disorders.

3. Uparasa (Secondary Minerals)

- These are less prominent than Maharasa but still play an essential role in therapeutic formulations.
- **Examples**
 - **Haritala (Orpiment):** Used in small amounts for its detoxifying and skin-related benefits.
 - **Manashila (Realgar):** Used in treating skin diseases and respiratory disorders.

4. Sadarana Rasa (Common Minerals)

- These include commonly used minerals with widespread applications.
- **Examples**
 - **Tamra Bhasma:** Prepared from copper, it is used to treat liver disorders, respiratory issues, and skin diseases.
 - **Yashad Bhasma:** Prepared from zinc, it is used to boost immunity and treat eye disorders, diabetes, and skin conditions.

5. Herbo-Mineral Compounds

- These formulations combine herbs with minerals or metals to enhance their therapeutic effects.

➤ **Examples**

- **Swarna Bhasma:** Prepared from gold and used for its powerful rejuvenative properties, improving vitality, immunity, and cognitive function.
- **Rajata Bhasma:** Prepared from silver and used for its cooling properties, beneficial in treating Pitta-related disorders.

According to Sarangadhara Samhita, an ancient Ayurvedic text, there is a progressive loss of specific biological factors (Dhatus) in each decade of life. This concept highlights the changes in the human body as it ages and the corresponding decline in certain physiological and biological aspects. Here's a summary of the loss of different biological factors by decade as per Sarangadhara.

Loss of Biological Factors by Decade

1. First Decade (0-10 years)

➤ **Growth (Bala)**

- The first decade is marked by rapid growth and development. The focus is on building and strengthening the body's foundational structures and functions.

2. Second Decade (10-20 years)

➤ **Complexion (Varna)**

- The loss of optimum complexion begins in the second decade. This period is characterized by the peak of physical beauty and vigor, which starts to decline gradually after adolescence.

3. Third Decade (20-30 years)

➤ **Luster (Tejas)**

- The loss of luster or radiance starts in the third decade. This period is associated with the peak of vitality and energy, but signs of aging such as reduced skin glow and energy levels start to appear.

4. Fourth Decade (30-40 years)

➤ **Intellect (Medha)**

- The fourth decade sees a decline in intellectual sharpness. Cognitive functions, memory, and the ability to learn new things may start to wane, although they are still strong.

5. Fifth Decade (40-50 years)**➤ Skin Texture (Twak)**

- The fifth decade is marked by the loss of skin texture. Skin starts to show signs of aging such as wrinkles, dryness, and reduced elasticity.

6. Sixth Decade (50-60 years)**➤ Vision (Drishti)**

- The loss of vision becomes prominent in the sixth decade. This includes both the physical ability to see and the clarity of sight.

7. Seventh Decade (60-70 years)**➤ Vitality (Shukra)**

- The seventh decade is characterized by a decline in reproductive vitality and overall vigor. This includes reduced libido and fertility.

8. Eighth Decade (70-80 years)**➤ Strength (Bala)**

- The eighth decade sees a significant loss in physical strength and endurance. Muscle mass decreases, and overall physical capability diminishes.

9. Ninth Decade (80-90 years)**➤ Cognition (Vijnana)**

- The ninth decade is marked by a substantial decline in cognitive functions, including decision-making and understanding. There is often a noticeable decrease in mental acuity.

10. Tenth Decade (90-100 years)**➤ All Functions (Sarvendriya)**

- The tenth decade involves the gradual decline of all sensory and functional abilities. This includes hearing, taste, smell, touch, and overall bodily functions.

Major Rasaushadhi Formulations and Their Indications in Geriatrics**1. Makardhwaja**

- **Indications:** Rejuvenation, general debility, aphrodisiac, and improving vitality.
- **Dose**
- **Benefits:** Enhances energy levels, strengthens the immune system, and improves overall physical and mental health.

2. Swarna Bhasma (Gold Ash)

- **Indications:** Cognitive decline, immune deficiency, cardiac disorders, and general debility.

- **Dose:** 125mg.
 - **Benefits:** Boosts immunity, improves cognitive function, enhances vitality, and supports cardiovascular health.
- 3. Rajat Bhasma (Silver Ash)**
- **Indications:** Nervous disorders, digestive issues, and anxiety.
 - **Dose:** 125mg
 - **Benefits:** Calms the nervous system, improves digestion, and reduces anxiety.
- 4. Abhraka Bhasma (Mica Ash)**
- **Indications:** Respiratory disorders, anemia, and digestive issues.
 - **Dose:** 125 mg
 - **Benefits:** Enhances respiratory function, improves hemoglobin levels, and supports digestive health.
- 5. Loh Bhasma (Iron Ash)**
- **Indications:** Anemia, general debility, and weakness.
 - **Dose:** 125mg
 - **Benefits:** Increases hemoglobin levels, boosts energy, and strengthens the body.
- 6. Tamra Bhasma (Copper Ash)**
- **Indications:** Liver disorders, digestive issues, and skin diseases.
 - **Dose:** 125mg
 - **Benefits:** Supports liver function, improves digestion, and treats various skin conditions.
- 7. Yashad Bhasma (Zinc Ash)**
- **Indications:** Immune deficiency, diabetes, and eye disorders.
 - **Dose :** 125mg
 - **Benefits:** Enhances immunity, regulates blood sugar levels, and supports eye health.
- 8. Kushta (Mercurial Compound)**
- **Indications:** Skin diseases, chronic ulcers, and syphilis.
 - **Benefits:** Treats chronic skin conditions, promotes healing of ulcers, and has antimicrobial properties.
- 9. Maha Yograj Guggulu**
- **Indications:** Joint disorders, arthritis, and musculoskeletal pain.
 - **Benefits:** Reduces inflammation, alleviates pain, and improves joint mobility.
- 10. Arogyavardhini Vati**
- **Indications:** Liver disorders, digestive issues, and skin diseases.
 - **Dose:** 250mg

- **Benefits:** Enhances liver function, improves digestion, and treats skin conditions.

11. Chandraprabha Vati

- **Indications:** Urinary disorders, diabetes, and general debility.
- **Dose:** 500mg
- **Benefits:** Supports urinary health, regulates blood sugar levels, and improves overall vitality.

CONCLUSION

Rasaushadhis, as part of Rasayana therapy, are a cornerstone of Ayurvedic medicine, offering profound benefits for geriatric care. They promote longevity, enhance immunity, improve mental and physical health, and maintain the sharpness of the sense organs. By nourishing and balancing the body's tissues and systems, Rasaushadhis help the elderly achieve better health, resilience, and quality of life. Integrating these powerful Ayurvedic formulations with modern medical practices can provide a comprehensive approach to geriatric healthcare, ensuring holistic well-being and vitality in the later stages of life.

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