

## REVIEW OF LASUNA (GARLIC) AS A RASAYANA

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## ABSTRACT

According to modern science, longevity means enhancement of life span but in *Ayurveda*, continuous process of aging is correlated with *Jara* and *Vridhdhavastha*. With the help of *Rasayana*, *yoga*, exercise, dietary habits, *Pranayama* and *Aasana*, *Jara* and *Variddhavastha* can be delayed. *Rasayana* therapy is best among these therapies because all diseases are due to *Tridosha* and *Rasayanas* are *Tridosh Shamaka*. *Acharya Vagbhatta* has mentioned *Lasuna* as a *Rasayana* in *Astanghariddhyam Uttratantra*. *Acharya Kashyapa* has also mentioned *Lasunadi kalpa* as a *rasayana* in a separate *adhayaya* to treat *vata dosha* and esp. in diseases of females. *Lasuna* (English name- Garlic, Botanical name -*Allium sativum*, family- *Lilliaceae*) cures common diseases, enhances longevity (*Dheerghayu*), strength, improve complexion and eye sight. It promotes reproductory health of both males and females. It is said to be best for stability of life. *Lasuna* as a *Rasayana Kalpa* is indicated in *Vataj Vyadhi* such as *Bandhytva* (Infertility), *Krimi* (Worm infestation), *Kustha* (Skin disease) and

*Timir* (Eye disease) etc. Its use is contraindicated in *Pitta* and *Kapha Dosha*. Recent research works suggest that garlic has antioxidant, ant atherosclerotic, anti diabetic properties. The paper will explain role of *Lasuna* as a *Rasayana* in prevention of diseases and enhancement of longevity.

**KEYWORDS:** Longevity, *Lasun*, *Lasunadi Kalpa*, *Vvariddhavastha*, *Rasayana*.

## INTRODUCTION

Longevity means life expectancy in demography. Longevity and life expectancy are similar words but longevity means long duration of life and life expectancy means the number of

years that a person is likely to live. Ayurveda says that “प्रयोजनं चास्य स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्यरक्षणमातुरस्य विकारप्रशमनं च”<sup>[1]</sup> (*Charaka*). When health of healthy person is maintained and disease of diseased person is cured, it improves longevity. In *Ayurveda*, continuous process of aging is related to *Jara* and *Varridhavastha*. Busy life and lack of caring are cause for early *Jara* and *Varridhavastha*. The first chapter of *Charak Samhita Sutrasthana* is “दीर्घजीवितीयोऽध्यायः”<sup>[2]</sup> means quest for longevity. Due to lack of time, stress, improper diet habits, improper sleeping routine, premature graying of hairs, wrinkles on face and many diseases occur in early stage of life. In *Ayurveda*, many procedures are described to prevent aging such as *Rasayana* therapy, single drug therapy and compound formulations of drugs.

*Vyasthapana Mahakshay*,<sup>[3]</sup> *Brahmcharya*,<sup>[4]</sup> *Yoga*, exercise and *Pranayaam* plays important role for it. *Rasayana* therapy<sup>[5]</sup> is best among all of these.

## 1. *Rasayana*

*Rasayana* is a *Sanskrit* word which means path or *Strotas* of essence. In *Charaka Samhita*, *Rasayana* are described in first chapter of *Chikitsasthana* before *Vyadhi Prakarana* because *Rasayana* improves immunity and provides disease free life. It is directly stated that *Rasayana* provides *dhirghayu*.<sup>[6]</sup>

In *Sharangdhara Samhita*, *Rasayana* is defined as which prevent *Jara* and *Vyadhi*. Mainly three types of *Rasayana* are described by *Acharya Sushrut*.<sup>[7]</sup>

- *Kamyas Rasayana* promotes longevity. E.g *Chawanaprasha*
- *Naimitika Rasayana* to prevent specific diseases. E.g. *Shilajatu* in *Prameha*
- *Ajasrik Rasayana* are for regular use E.g. milk & ghee.

## 2. *Lasuna*

लशुनः स्यादुग्रगन्धी यवनेष्टो रसोनकः।

गृञ्जनोऽन्यो महाकन्दो जर्जरौ दीर्घपत्रकः॥ (Madanpala Nighantu)<sup>[8]</sup> Botanical Name- *Allium sativum*

Family Name- *Liliaceae*

English-Garlic

*Ugragandhi*, *Yavanesta* and *Rasonaka* are the synonyms for *Lasuna*. The other variety is known as *Grnjana* or *Mahakanda* or *Jarjara* or *Dirghpatraka*.

Different varieties- *Kasyapa* mentioned two varieties viz. *Girija* and *Kshetraja* meaning that garlic grown in the mountain areas and that cultivated in the plains respectively. Usually the *Nighantus* quoted two kinds of *Lasuna* viz. *Lasuna* (*A. sativum*) and *Maha Kanda/Grnjana* (*A. ascalonium* Linn.).

- *Rasa:* -
  - *Katu Rasa* - root
  - *Tikta Rasa* - leaf
  - *Kaṣāya Rasa* - stem
  - *Lavaṇa Rasa* - stem tip/terminal bud
  - *Madhura Rasa* - seed
- *Guna:* - *Snigdha*, *Tikshna*, *Picchila*, *Guru*, *Sara*
- *Virya:* - *Ushna*
- *Vipaka:* - *Katu*
- **Part used-** Bulb, oil, leaves

#### Properties of *lasuna*<sup>[9]</sup>

'लशुनो बृहणो वृष्यः स्निग्धोष्णः पाचनः सरः। भग्नसन्धानकृत्केश्यो गुरः पित्तास्त्रबुद्धिदः॥

रसायनं कफश्वासकासगुल्मज्वरारुचीः। हन्ति शोथप्रमेहार्श कुष्ठशूलानिलक्रिमीन्।

तत्पत्रमं मधुरं क्षारं नालो मधुरपित्तलः॥ (Madanpala Nighantu)

*Lasuna* is *Brmhaṇa*, *Vrsya*, *Snigdha*, *Sara-Guru*, *Usna Virya*, *Pacana*, *Bhagnasandhanakara*, *Kesya*, *Rakta-Pittakara*, *Buddhivardhana*, *Rasayana*, *Kaphahara*, *Swasahara*, *Kasahara*, *Gulmanasana*, *Jvarahara*, *Arucinasana*, *Sothahara*, *Pramehahara*, *Arshoghna*, *Kushthaghna*, *Sulaprasamana*, *Vatahara* and *Krishna* in nature.

*Lasuna* is described in *Atharva Veda* and other contemporary texts. The term '*Lasuna*' is more used than '*Rasona*' by the *Brhatrayi*. It is extensively described for *Vataroga Chikitsa* and as *Rasayana*. However, it is not included in the *Ganas* and *Vargas* of *Brhatrayi*. Its synonym *Yavanesta* probably indicates that it is an exotic plant.

- **Indications**

In *Ayurveda*, all diseases are considered *Tridoshaja* and *Rasayanas* are *Tridosha Shamaka*. In *Tridosha*, maximum diseases are due to *Vata Dosha*. Many drug combinations and single drug prescribed for it, among which *Lasuna* is mentioned for *Vatavyadhi* as a *Rasayana*. *Acharya Vagbhata* and *Kashyapa* have given detailed description about *Lasuna*. *Acharya Vagbhata* describes *Lasuna* as *Rasayana*<sup>[10]</sup> but *Acharya Kashyapa* separately maintained a chapter for *Lasuna* in *Kalpasthanas* as *Lasunakalpa*<sup>[11]</sup> It cures *Vata Dosha* in both sex but mainly in females' i.e. gynecological disease. It also cures common diseases, enhances longevity, strength, skin complexion, eye sight. It is a digestive, immune and memory booster and aphrodisiac. It is beneficial for hairs too. Its regular use makes a person *Dardh* (Strong), *Medhavi* (Intelligent), *Dheerghayu* (Long lived), *Sukrdhaari* (Attractive & potent). It is common adjuvant which is used in medicine as well as food articles in India.

- **Contraindications**

*Lasuna* is contraindicated in *Pittaja* and *Kaphaja Roga* like *Kamla*, *Atisara*, *Arsha*.

- **Dose**

Dose of *Lasuna* is 4 *pal* for *Avra*, 6 *pal* for *Madhyam* and 8 to 10 *pal* for *Pravara Satva Purusha* as per classics.

Commonly used dose of *Kand* and leaves paste 3-6 gm; oil 1-2 drops.

- **Do's & Don'ts**

After *Lasuna Sevana*, *Yush* is advised for many days as *Pathya*. *Bhavaprakash*<sup>[12]</sup> allow to use the following while consuming garlic: *Madya* (Alcohol), *Matsya* (Fish), *Amla* (Sour substances) and forbidden to use *Atapa* (Exposure to hot sun), *Vyayama* (Heavy exercise), *Rosha* (Anger), *Ati Ambupana* (Excessive intake of water), *Payaha* (Milk) and *Guda* (Jaggery).

*Lasuna* is given in patients whose digestive system and *Bala* is in normal condition. It is given in *Posha* and *Magh* month mainly. *Acharya Vagbhata* indicated<sup>[13]</sup> in *Sishir* and *Hemanta Ritu*. For *Kapha* dominant disease, it can be used in *Vasanta Ritu* and in *Vrisharitu* for *Vata* dominant disease.

- **Anupana<sup>[14]</sup>**

- *Pittaja Vikara* – Sugar
- *Kaphaja Vikara* – Honey
- *Vataja Vikara* – Ghee

- **Uses**

- Useful in malarial fever (*Vishama Javara*)
- Insanity (*Unmaada*) and epilepsy (*Apasmara*)
- Hiccough (*Hikka*) and asthma (*Tamka swasha*) – juice of *Rasona*
- Muscle wasting (*Manspeshi Daurbailya*)
- *Gulma*, flatulence (*Udawarta*), sciatica (*Gridhrashi*), cardiac disease (*Haridhya vikara*), abscess (*Vidhardhi*), edema (*Shotha*)
- Splenomegaly (*Pleeha Vraddhi*)
- *Vatavyadhi* like facial paralysis, joint pain, jaw lock,
- Rheumatoid arthritis (*Amvata*)
- Wound healing (*Vrana Ropana*)
- Ear ache (*Karnashoola*) and another ear disease
- Useful to promote of lactation (*Stanayajanana*)
- Useful as a *Rasayana* – with ghee, honey, milk with diet of milk and rice. For one year of period time. It provides health and longevity.
- *Visuchika* – *Lasunadi vati* is useful
- Useful for female genital problems (*Streeroga*)
- Urinary disorder (*Vaatika Mutrakruccha*)
- Spermetogenesis (*Sukrajanana*), Oogenesis (*Aartava Janana*)
- *Skin disease* (*Kustha*)

- **Therapeutic uses**

- *Amavata- Rasona, Sunthi* and *Nirgundi* as decoction.
- *Yoni Roga-* Juice of garlic is given early in the morning with milk and meat soup as the diet.
- *Pliha Vraddhi- Lasuna, Pippalimula, Haritaki* are given with cow's urine.

- **Important Preparations:** - *Lausunadi Vati, Rasona Kalka, Lausunadi Ghrit, Lasuna Ksheear, Rasonaastaka, Lasuna Kalpa.*

## CONCLUSION

*Lashuna* is a very commonly used adjuvant of dietary preparations in all over India and worldwide. It contains a good amount of nutrients and is rich in medicinal properties. The regular use of garlic results in good health and long life. Being very cost effective and easy availability is additional property of this plant. It can be used as a single *Dravya* also as a *Rasayana*.

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