ROLE OF RASAYAN CHIKITSA ACCORDING TO PRINCIPLES OF
AYURVED

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ABSTRACT

Rasayana chikitsa is a glorious 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.\textsuperscript{[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 diseasesd 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.\textsuperscript{[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.\textsuperscript{[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’.\textsuperscript{[5]}
According to Acharya Charak, the substance which invigorate a healthy person by producing the best quality of Rasa Raktadhatu and other dhatus 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, aperson 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 apetite.
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 maintainance 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) **Kutipraveshika** - (Kuti-cottage, pravesha-enter).

It is made up of two words kuti means ‘cottage’ and pravesha means ‘enter’. 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.

2) **Vatatapika** - Where ‘vata’ means air and ‘atapa’ means heat or sun.

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

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 atype 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 rating, 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 vatadosha, pittadosha & kaphadosha.

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*, *sarvadoshaghnna* and *vruhya*.[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 & hypolipidemic 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* & *haritaka*. *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*, *klamna*, *uktlesha*, *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 *rasayanachikitsa* as per *Ayurveda* including herbs and its combination. *Rasayana* contributes significantly as the the treatment component of *Ayurveda* for curing various disease and maintain healthy life style.

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