"RASAYANA" WAY OF REJUVENATION AND LONGEVITY

1*Dr. Preetesh Kumar Agnihotri, 2Dr. Pawan Kirar, 3Dr. Srinarayan Tiwari and 4Dr. Omprakash Shukla

1M.D. Scholar, 2(M.D. Ph.D.) Assistant Professor, 3(M.D. Ph.D.) Associate Professor, 4(M.D) Assistant Professor,
Department of Samhita-Siddhant, Govt. Ayurved College Rewa (M.P.).

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the ancient system of medicine in the world. It has two aims i.e. prevention and promotion of health and secondly cure from the diseases. rasayana may be employed for fulfilling both of them i.e. protection and promotion of health and curing diseases. It is the path of rejuvenation and a science of revitalisation. After birth, growth and senility ultimately leading to death are inevitable processes. It is correctly stated that aging before birth and continues throughout life at different rates, in different races for different individuals and for different tissues of the body. It involves two opposite process that simultaneously come into operation i.e. growth and atrophy. Aging represent structural and functional changes of an organism over its entire life span. Rasayana therapy has been described in ayurveda as a systematic and scientific medical discipline. Rasayana drugs are those medicines which are capable of imparting superior rasas and dhatus to the body and toning up the system of healthy person. Rasayana essentially means nutrition at all levels from macro to micro cellular level. Rasayan therapy replenishes the vital fluids of the body, boost the ojas (vital force of life) and the immune system, thus keeping away from diseases and prevents against ill effects of advance age.

KEYWORDS: rasayana, health, rasas, immune system, aging, prevention.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda the science of life and longevity has been practised in india since inception in an astang from through its eight speciality branches. One of the eight branches is specially
devoted to uplift of nutrition, immuno-modulator and longevity. It is called as rasayana chikitsa. The term rasayana refers to the procurement of nourishment for formation of best qualities of dhatus or body tissue which leads in turn to improved physiological state, immunity, bio-strength, mental competence and longevity.

**Classification of rasayan**

In ayurveda rasayana is not mere remedy or a recipe. It is a rejuvenative regimen and is an approach to positive health. Rasayana is practised as a routine open life style form or an intensive indoor regimen depending upon the need and the feasibility for a client. The rasayana therapy can be categorised in the following manners.

**Based on method of use**

Vatatapika rasayana or outdoor practice
Kutipraveshika rasayana or intensive indoor regimen (inclusive of panchkarma)

**Based on application**

Kamya rasayana: For the promotion of health of the healthy. Further sub categorised as
Sri kamya: To promote lusture and beauty
Prana kamya: To promote longevity
Medha kamya: To promote mental competence

Naimittik rasayana: To impart bio-strength in a diseased person to fight better with his existing diseases.

Ajasrika rasayana: Daily dietary rasayana approach consuming sattvika nourishing elements of diet viz. Ghee, milk, milk product, fruits and vegetables etc.

**Based on mode of action**

Sanshodhan rasayana
Sashamana rasayana

Achara rasayana: Healthy rejuvenative life style and conduct.

**Mode of action of rasayana**

Rasayana are used for preservation of positive health. Acharya shusruta defines a healthy man as one who has equilibrium of doshas, normal function of agni, normal condition of
seven dhatus, besides 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 disease. Rasayana is a specialized type of treatment influencing the fundamental aspect of the body i.e. dhatu, agni and srotasa. All rasayana measures and remedies produce their effect in mind-body system through one or all of the following three modes.

1. At the level of rasa dhatu by directly acting as a nutrient in itself enriching the nutrient value of poshak rasa in the plasma, the examples are a range of nutrient rasayana like shatavari, sharkara, milk, ghrita, praval, mukta etc.

2. At the level of agni by promoting the bio-fire system of the body with positive digestive and metabolic function in turn promoting nutrition such as pippali, sunthi, chitrak etc

3. At the level of srotas (micro-circulation) by inducing srotoprasadan effect improving the competence of inner transport system. Micro-circulation and tissue perfusion such as guggulu.

By acting through the above modes rasayana karma establishes a positive nutritional status in the body, help in healthier tissue formation, stronger immune system status, improve mental power and long life. All this put together amount to rejuvenation or kayakalp of course in a limiting meaning.

Planning age specific rasayana

Aging is the svabhava or the nature of a living –being. The physical body-mind system has been designed to stay for a time bound tenure approximately 100 years. During the life span, the body undergoes progressive involution and decay leading ultimately to decadence and death. Ayurveda deliberates on the process of ageing and sequential senile changes in different contexts such as balyavastha, Madhya avstha and vriddhavastha hallmarked by kaph, pitta and vata activities respectively. Vata is drying and decaying force and is the master dosha in the aging process.

Vagbhatta and sharangadhara describe an unique scheme of biological aging in ten decades frame speculating the specific sequential loss of certain bio-values specific to respective decades of life. This information open to possibility of developing specific rasayana to restore the likely losses of the particular decade. If rasayana therapy is planned in relation to age there is a possibility of retarding the aging process. The following table describes the pattern of age related biolosses and proposes rasayana for the purpose.
**Tissue and organ specific rasayana**

Although *rasayana* in general is a holistic restorative and rejuvenative modality, one can visualise some *rasayana* remedies and recipes for specific promotion and protection of certain specific tissue and organs. Such *rasayana* can be prescribed in need based manner for promotive or even for curative purposes for organ protection. Some examples are proposed in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.no.</th>
<th>Rasayana quality</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Suggested remedies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><em>Medhya rasayan</em></td>
<td>Promotion of brain and cognitive function</td>
<td><em>Brahmi, sankhpushpi, madukparni</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><em>Hridya rasayana</em></td>
<td>Cardioprotective</td>
<td><em>Arjun, puskarmula</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><em>Mutra rasayana</em></td>
<td>Nephroprotective</td>
<td><em>Punarnava, gokshur</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td><em>Tvachya rasayana</em></td>
<td>Skin health</td>
<td><em>Haridra, somaragi</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td><em>Chakchusya rasayana</em></td>
<td>Eye health</td>
<td><em>Triphala, jyotismati</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td><em>Kanthya rasayana</em></td>
<td>Throat and speech</td>
<td><em>Vacha, yastimadhu</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td><em>Vrishya rasayana</em></td>
<td>For virility</td>
<td><em>Asvagandha, kapikacchu</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td><em>Stanya rasayana</em></td>
<td>To promote lactation</td>
<td><em>Satavari</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td><em>Srotoprasadan</em></td>
<td>To promote inner transport</td>
<td><em>Guggulu</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td><em>Nasya rasayana</em></td>
<td>To help nose and sinuses</td>
<td><em>Katphal, apamarga</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Disease specific rasayana**

Although *rasayan* therapy is primarily a promotive and preventive health care modality, a concept of disease specific *rasayana* therapy has been projected by *shusruta* and his commentator *Dalhan* under the term *naimittik rasayana* i.e. *vyadhi-nimitta rasayan*. *Shusruta* gives only two example for *naimittik rasayana* namely *shilajatu* and *tuvarakarasayana* for
prameha (diabetes) and kustha (leprosy) respectively. However in contemporary contexts, one can visualise using a range of other rasayanas for different diseases. The naimittik rasayana is really not a specific treatment of a disease entity, rather is a rasayana for promoting the strength and immunity of a patient to fight with his existing disease a few naimittik rasayanas are suggested in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected diseases</th>
<th>Suggested naimittik rasayana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes mellitus</td>
<td>Shilajatu, haridra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leprosy and dermatoses</td>
<td>Tuvarak, haridra, somaraji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bronchial asthma</td>
<td>Haridra, shirisha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertension ans IHD</td>
<td>Sarpagandha, puskarmula, arjun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urinary disorders</td>
<td>Punarnava, goksura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthritis</td>
<td>Bhallatak, eranda, guggula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neurodegenerative diseases</td>
<td>Brahmi, asvagandha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dementia</td>
<td>Brahmi, shankhapuspi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immunodeficiency</td>
<td>Amalaki, guduchi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Achar and ajasrika rasayana**

Achar rasayana is an unique concept in ayurveda which implies that a moral, ethical and benevolent conduct viz. truth, nonviolence, personal and public cleanliness, mental and personal hygiene, devotion, compassion and yogic life bring about rejuvenative state in body-mind system. A person who adopts such a life-style and conduct gains all benefits of rasayana therapy without physically consuming any material rasayana remedy and rasayana recipe. All form of sadvritta, achar and practice of yoga and spirituality produce such a quantum rasayana effect in a non-pharmacological way. This can be practiced alone or combine with material substance rasayana therapy.

The term ajasrika rasayana refers to daily rejuvenative dietetics with adequate quantity of nourishing satvika elements of diet viz. ghee, milk, fruits, vegetables. Ajasrika rasayana is used alone or along with material rasayana remedies.

**Samsodhana for rasayana therapy**

Besides achara and ajasrika components another important requirement for use of material rasayana therapy is samsodhan through appropriate panchakarma procedures. Ayurveda emphasis that a rasayana remedy yields its full effect only when the body has been therapeutically purified by langhan, dipan, pachn, snehan, svedan, vaman, virechan, basti, shirovirechan etc. If the srotamsi i.e. micro-channels of the body are clean and competent with their physiological integrity at the time of administration of the rasayana remedy. It is
fully utilized by the systems and its bioavailability is ensured. Hence samsodhana karma should be planned accordingly. The most appropriate choice of age for use of rasayana therapy is purva-vaya or Madhya-vaya i.e. young or adult age, not the actual old age when irreversible senile changes might have already occurred.

**Guidelines to select a rasayana**

In all procedures of rasayana therapy a physician is expected to take due consideration of many individual and environmental factors while selecting a rasayan remedy for a particular client. Few of the factors to be considered are mentioned below:

1. **Vaya** – age group of individual
2. **Prakriti** – constitution of the individual
3. **Agni-bala**- digestive and metabolic status
4. **Dhatu status** – consideration of the status of sapta dhatu
5. **Oja bala and ojo dosha** – vitality and immune status as well as immune disorders if any.
6. **Srotas status** – status of functioning of the inner transport system and micro circulation.
7. **Desh satmya** – climatic variation viz. Sadharan desha, jangal desha, anoop desha
8. **Ritu satmya** – consideration of six ritus as well as adaan and visarga kala of the year.
9. **Vyadhi and vyadhi bala** - disease status if any
10. **Manobala** or mental stamina

Person with different categories and features of the above mentioned factors would need different rasayanas in consideration of their biological features to yield best results. Some decades of life are associated with different specific biological losses due to aging and hence there is a need to compensate these losses with specific rasayana remedies as mentioned earlier in this article using sarangadhara’s scheme of aging as a guideline.

**CONCLUSION**

The context of rasayana therapy and its ajasrika, achara and divyaausadhi components are largely unexplored part of ancient wisdom. However, the prevalent rasayana procedures and recipes are of great current value in promotive, preventive and therapeutic aspects of aging health care. There is a great need to acquaint the professionals as well as the public about the use of rasayana remedies and recipes besides the pro-rasayana dietetics and life-style regimen described in ayurvedic texts.
REFERENCES


