

## A REVIEW ON ACTION OF RASAS

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## ABSTRACT

The two main objectives of *Ayurveda* are

प्रयोजनं चास्य स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्यरक्षणमातुरस्य विकारप्रशमनं च ।। (च०सू० 30/26)

❖ To protect the health of a healthy person.

❖ To eradicate the diseases (mind, body or both) that manifest in a person. These two objectives can be achieved with the help of *Dravya* (substance).

*Acharya Charaka* defined *Dravya* as:

यत्राश्रिताः कर्मगुणाः कारणं समवायि यत् तद् द्रव्यम् ।। (च०सू० 1/51)

i.e. a substance which possesses *Guna* (property) and *Karma* (action) with inheritance relation is known as *Dravya*.

For the fulfilment of therapeutics in *Ayurveda*, the knowledge of *Dravya* is must. As explained by *Acharya Sushruta* that the imbalance of the *doshas* in the body can be treated with the help of *Panchabhautika Dravyas*.

Therefore, the knowledge about the properties of *Dravya* is very important as these explains the therapeutic action of a particular *Dravya*. These properties of *Dravya* include *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya*, *Vipaka* and *Prabhava*. The following review highlights the therapeutic actions of different *Rasas* which plays an important role in determining the mode of action of *Dravya* so that *Rasas* can be clinically utilized for treatment purposes.

**KEYWORDS:** *Dravya*, *Guna*, *Rasa*, *Panchabhautika*, *Prithivi*, *Amla*, *Madhura* etc.

## INTRODUCTION

Literally *Rasa* means taste, but it has also other meanings like *Rasadhatu*, *paradha* etc. In *Ayurveda*, it is a property or *Guna* which is perceived by the *Rasanendriya* (tongue). In other words *Rasa* action occurs immediately after exposure to *Rasanendriya* (tongue). *Acharyas* have explained six *Rasas* i.e.

*Madhura*, *Amla*, *Lavana*, *Katu*, *Tikta* and *Kshaya*.

*Rasa* is borne from *Apya* (water element) and is not manifested in the beginning. Due to six seasons, the basic elements (*Mahabhautas*) combine in varying proportions to form particular *Rasa*.

## Panch-bhautika, properties and action of rasas

| RASA    | Panch-Bhautika Composition | Properties            |
|---------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Madhura | Prithivi + Jala            | Cold, unctuous, heavy |
| Amla    | Prithivi + Agni            | Hot, light, unctuous  |
| Lavana  | Jal + Agni                 | Hot, unctuous         |
| Katu    | Vayu + Agni                | Rough, hot, light     |
| Tikta   | Vayu + Akasha              | Rough, cold, light    |
| Kshaya  | Vayu + Prithivi            | Rough, cold, heavy    |

## Effect of Rasas on Doshas

| Rasa    | Effect on doshas                          |
|---------|---|
| Madhura | Vata, Pitta Pacifying & Kapha Aggravating |
| Amla    | Vata Pacifying, Pitta & Kapha Aggravating |
| Lavana  | Vata Pacifying, Pitta & Kapha Aggravating |
| Katu    | Kapha Pacifying, Vata & Pitta Aggravating |
| Tikta   | Kapha & Pitta Pacifying, Vata Aggravating |
| Kshaya  | Pitta Pacifying, Vata Aggravating         |

## Action of Rasas

## 1) Madhur rasa

"तत्र, मधुरो रसः शरीरसात्म्याद्रसरुधिरमांसमेदोस्थिमज्जौजःशुक्राभिवर्धन आयुष्यः

षडिन्द्रियप्रसादनो बलवर्णकरः पित्तविषमारुतघ्नस्तृष्णादाहप्रशमनस्त्वच्यः केश्यः कण्ठ्यो

बल्यः प्रीणनो जीवनस्तर्पणो बृंहणः स्थैर्यकरः क्षीणक्षतसन्धानकरो घ्राणमुखकण्ठौष्ठजिह्वाप्रह्लादनो दाहमूर्च्छाप्रशमनः षट्पदपिपीलिकानामिष्टतमः स्निग्धः शीतो गुरुश्च"।

शरीरसात्म्याद् – Accustomed by body since birth.

रसरुधिरमांसमेदोस्थिमज्जौजःशुक्राभिवर्धन – It nourishes ras, rakta, mamsa, meda, asthi, majja and sukra dhatus.

आयुष्यः – Promotes life span.

षडिन्द्रियप्रसादनो – Promotes normal functioning of sensory organs including mana.

बलवर्णकरः – Promotes strength and lustre.

पित्तविषमारुतघ्नस्तृष्णादाहप्रशमन – Pacifies pitta and vata dosha, acts as antidote for poison, thirst alleviating and acts as refrigerant by pacifying the burning sensation.

स्त्वच्यः केश्यः कण्ठ्यो बल्यः – - Beneficial for skin, hairs, throat and strength.

प्रीणनो जीवनस्तर्पणो बृंहणः स्थैर्यकरः – Nourishing, vitalizer, saturating, bulk-promoting and stabilizer.

क्षीणक्षतसन्धानकरो – Promotes reunion of tissues of chest which are fractured or torn.

घ्राणमुखकण्ठौष्ठजिह्वाप्रह्लादनो – Pleasing (Gladdening) for nose, mouth, throat, lips and tongue.

दाहमूर्च्छाप्रशमनः – Pacifies burning sensation and alleviates fainting.

षट्पदपिपीलिकानामिष्टतमः – Liked by bees and ants.

## SYSTEMIC ACTIONS OF MADHURA RASA

| SYSTEMIC ACTIONS      | DESCRIPTION  | POSSIBLE INDICATIONS   |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| NERVOUS SYSTEM        | Pleasing, promotes normal functioning of sense organs including manas (mind). Intellect promoting. Is satiating. | Headache, anxiety, syncope, stroke, motor neuron disease, epilepsy, migraine.                                    |
| DIGESTIVE SYSTEM      | Pushes impurities into its natural. Thirst alleviating.  | Acid peptic disorders, constipation, peptic ulcers, polydipsia.  |
| BLOOD VASCULAR SYSTEM | Wholesome for promoting union and heart, promotes formation of blood.  | Anaemia, anxiety.  |
| RESPIRATORY SYSTEM    | Beneficial for throat, eyes etc.   | Chest trauma, dysphonia.   |
| URINARY SYSTEM        | Diuretic.  | Urinary tract infections.  |
| REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM   | Semen promoting (aphrodisiac). Fetus stabilizing. Galactagogue.  | Infertility, nutritional deficiency disorders, abortions,  |
| SKIN                  | Decreases burning sensation. Beneficial for skin and hairs. Promotes complexion.                                 | Rosacea, pruritis, eczema, alopecia, premature greying of hairs, vitiligo, tanning of skin, wrinkles and ageing. |

## 2) Amla rasa

"अम्लो रसो भक्तं रोचयति, अग्निं दीपयति, देहं बृंहयति ऊर्जयति, मनो बोधयति, इन्द्रियाणि दृढीकरोति, बलं वर्धयति, वातमनुलोमयति, हृदयं तर्पयति, आस्यमासावयति, भुक्तमपकर्षयति क्लेदयति जरयति, प्रीणयति, लघुरुष्णः स्निग्धश्च"।

भक्तं रोचयति – Promotes desire for food and relish.

अग्निं दीपयति – Stimulates the digestive fire.

देहं बृंहयति ऊर्जयति – Promotes the bulk of the body and gives energy to it.

मनो बोधयति – Awakens mind.

इन्द्रियाणि दृढीकरोति – Makes the sense organs firm.

बलं वर्धयति – Promotes strength.

वातमनुलोमयति – Initiates the proper flow of vata i.e. carminates the wind.

हृदयं तर्पयति – Saturates heart.

आस्यमासावयति – Promotes salivation.

भुक्तमपकर्षयति क्लेदयति जरयति – Carries down, moistens and digest the food.

प्रीणयति – Provides satisfaction.

## SYSTEMIC ACTIONS OF AMLA RASA

| SYSTEMIC ACTIONS      | DESCRIPTION   | POSSIBLE INDICATIONS  |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| NERVOUS SYSTEM        | Causes clarity and happiness of manas (mind). Produces stability in organs.                   | Hypertension, stress, anxiety.  |
| DIGESTIVE SYSTEM      | Salivation promoting. Relishing. Stomachic. Digestive. Pushes impurities into natural course. | Anorexia, loss of appetite, indigestion, constipation, IBS, colitis, peptic ulcers. |
| BLOOD VASCULAR SYSTEM | Wholesome for heart. Rakta-pitta aggravating.   | Epistaxis, scurvy, piles, MI, hypercholesterolemia.                                 |
| URINARY SYSTEM        | Diuretic.   | UTI, renal calculus,  |
| SKIN                  | Beneficial for skin   | Wrinkles, ageing, acne-vulgaris, tanning of skin.                                   |

## 3) Katu rasa

"कटुको रसो वक्त्रं शोधयति, अग्निं दीपयति, भुक्तं शोषयति, घ्राणमासावयति, चक्षुर्विरेचयति, स्फुटीकरोतीन्द्रियाणि, अलसकश्वयथूपचयोददाभिष्यन्दस्नेहस्वेदक्लेदमलानुपहन्ति, रोचयत्यशनं, कण्डूर्विनाशयति, व्रणानवसादयति, क्रिमीन् हिनस्ति, मांसं विलिखति, शोणितसङ्घातं भिनत्ति, बन्धांश्छिनत्ति, मार्गान् विवृणोति, श्लेष्माणं शमयति, लघुरुष्णो रूक्षश्च"।

वक्त्रं शोधयति – Cleanses mouth.

अग्निं दीपयति – Stimulates digestion.

भुक्तं शोषयति – Absorbs food.

घ्राणमासावयति चक्षुर्विरेचयति – Causes secretion from the nose and eyes.

स्फुटीकरोतीन्द्रियाणि – Makes the sense organs clear.

अलसकश्वयथूपचयोददाभिष्यन्दस्नेहस्वेदक्लेदमलानुपहन्ति – Alleviates alasaka, swelling, corpulence, urticarial patches, channel-blocking, uncton, sweating, moisture and dirt.

रोचयत्यशनं – Gives relish to food.

कण्डूर्विनाशयति – Destroys itching.

व्रणानवसादयति – Depresses wounds.

क्रिमीन् हिनस्ति – Kills worm.

मांसं विलिखति – Scrapes muscles.

शोणितसङ्घातं भिनत्ति – Checks the coagulation of blood.

बन्धांश्छिनत्ति – Cuts the bindings.

मार्गान् विवृणोति – Opens the channel.

श्लेष्माणं शमयति – Pacifies kapha.

## SYSTEMIC ACTIONS OF KATU RASA

| SYSTEMIC ACTIONS      | DESCRIPTION  | POSSIBLE INDICATIONS  |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| NERVOUS SYSTEM        | Sense organs stimulating. Resuscitating.   | Epilepsy, conjunctivitis.   |
| DIGESTIVE SYSTEM      | Mouth cleansing and refreshing. Stomachic. Digestant. Anthelmintic. Promotes desire for food and relishing. Promotes functions of grahani. | Indigestion, anorexia, bloating, IBS, ascariasis, amebiasis, diarrhea, obesity. |
| BLOOD VASCULAR SYSTEM | Cardiac stimulant. Increases blood oozing.   | Hypercholesterolemia,   |
| RESPIRATORY SYSTEM    | Kapha eliminating.   | COPD, rhinitis, sinusitis, cough, other URTIs.                                  |
| URINARY SYSTEM        | Anti-diuretic.   | Diabetes, enuresis.   |
| REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM   | Non-aphrodisiac.   |   |
| SKIN                  | Anti-leprotic. Anti-pruritic.  | Urticaria, pruritis, psoriasis and other skin disorders.                        |

## 4) Tikta rasa

"तिक्तो रसः स्वयमरोचिष्णुरप्यरोचकघ्नो विषघ्नः क्रिमिघ्नो मूर्च्छादाहकण्डूकुष्ठतृष्णाप्रशमनस्त्वङ्मांसयोः स्थिरीकरणो ज्वरघ्नो दीपनः पाचनः स्तन्यशोधनो लेखनः क्लेदमेदो

वसामज्जलसीकापूयस्वेदमूत्रपुरीषपित्तश्लेष्मोपशोषणो रूक्षः शीतो लघुश्च”।

स्वयमरोचिष्णुरप्यरोचकघ्नो – Though itself non-relishing, it destroys disrelish.

विषघ्नः क्रिमिघ्नो – Is anti-poison, anthelmintic.

मूर्च्छादाहकण्डूकुष्ठतृष्णाप्रशमन – Alleviates fainting, burning sensation, itching, leprosy (including all skin disorders) and thirst.

स्त्वङ्मांसयोः स्थिरीकरणो – Provides firmness to skin and muscles.

ज्वरघ्नो – Is antipyretic.

दीपनः पाचनः – Acts as appetizer and digestive.

स्तन्यशोधनो – Acts as galacto-depurant.

लेखनः – Has scraping property.

क्लेदमेदोवसामज्जलसीकापूयस्वेदमूत्रपुरीषपित्तश्लेष्मोपशोषणो – Absorbent of moisture, fat, muscle-fat, marrow, lymph, pus, sweat, urine, feces, pitta and kapha.

#### SYSTEMIC ACTIONS OF TIKTA RASA

| SYSTEMIC ACTIONS      | DESCRIPTION   | POSSIBLE INDICATIONS  |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| DIGESTIVE SYSTEM      | Desire for food and relish promoting. Thirst alleviating. Anthelmintic. Stomachic, digestive. Anti-diarrhoeal by checking frequency and liquidity of stool. | Anorexia, flatulence, constipation, peptic ulcers, bloating, diarrhea, ascariasis, amebiasis and other intestinal worm infestations, liver disorders. |
| BLOOD VASCULAR SYSTEM | Blood purifying. Un-wholesome for the heart.  | Acne-vulgaris, allergy.   |
| RESPIRATORY SYSTEM    | Kapha eliminating.  | Cough, cold, tuberculosis, COPD.  |
| URINARY SYSTEM        | Anti-diuretic.  | Diabetes, enuresis.   |
| REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM   | Non-aphrodisiac. Galacto-depurant.  |   |
| SKIN                  | Anti-diaphorating. Anti-pruritic. Anti-leprotic. Alleviates burning sensation. Stability promoting.   | Urticaria, pruritis, psoriasis and other skin disorders, Rosacea, eczema, acne.   |

#### 5) Kshaya rasa

“कषायो रसः संशमनः सङ्ग्राही सन्धानकरः पीडनो रोपणः शोषणः स्तम्भनः श्लेष्मरक्त पित्तप्रशमनः शरीरक्लेदस्योपयोक्ता रूक्षः शीतोऽलघुश्च”।

संशमनः – Pacifying.

सङ्ग्राही – Astringent.

सन्धानकरः – Union-promoting.

पीडनो – Compressing.

रोपणः – Healing.

शोषणः – Absorbing.

स्तम्भनः – Checks the discharge.

श्लेष्मरक्तपित्तप्रशमनः – Pacifies kapha, rakta and pitta.

शरीरक्लेदस्योपयोक्ता – Utilizes the body fluid.

**SYSTEMIC ACTIONS OF KSHAYA RASA**

| SYSTEMIC ACTIONS      | DESCRIPTION   | POSSIBLE INDICATIONS  |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| DIGESTIVE SYSTEM      | Checking or holding or refrigerating.                           | Diarrhea, peptic ulcers, ulcerative colitis.                    |
| BLOOD VASCULAR SYSTEM | Wholesome for promotion of union.<br>Unwholesome for the heart. | Myocarditis.  |
| RESPIRATORY SYSTEM    | Kapha eliminating.  | Cough, cold, tuberculosis, COPD.                                |
| URINARY SYSTEM        | Anti-diuretic.  | Diabetes, enuresis.   |
| REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM   | Non-aphrodisiac.  |   |
| SKIN                  | Promotes wound-healing. Restores normal pigmentation.           | Urticaria, pruritis, psoriasis, acne vulgaris, tanning of skin. |

**CONCLUSION**

This review shows that a particular Rasa has physical and mental effect on the body. Each Rasa affects the Doshas. So, by utilizing the knowledge about the actions of the Rasas, they can be effectively used for therapeutic purpose and thereby the state of health can be achieved easily.

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