

**RASA DRAVYA AND THEIR USE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF LIFE STYLE DISEASES:
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ABSTRACT

Rasa Shastra, an integral part of Ayurveda deals with *Rasa* (mercury) and other minerals, metals, herbal poisonous plants and aquatic origin substances. The *Rasa aushadhi* so prepared offers potent immunization, has rejuvenating effect and is used in the treatment of the diseases as they have low dose, swift action, long shelf life, palatability and high efficacy. These days major burden is of Lifestyle diseases, whose occurrence is primarily due to inappropriate relationship of people with their environment. The main factors contributing to lifestyle diseases include inappropriate dietary habits, physical inactivity, pollution, radiation and stress. Different treatment modalities are mentioned in Ayurveda for the management of life style disorders like *Rasa aushadhis*, *Kashtha aushadhis*, *Panchkarma* etc. *Rasa aushadhis* along with certain changes in lifestyle are helpful in the management of diseases such as; *Sthoulya*, *Madhumeha*, *Vatarakta*, *Grahani*, *Kushtha* etc.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, *Rasa Shastra*, *Rasa Aushadhi*, Rejuvenation.**INTRODUCTION**

Modern day lifestyle is associated with activities such as; consumption of junk food, physical inactivity, stress and exposure to polluted environment. All these conditions act as exacerbating factors for various diseases like diabetes, hypertension, obesity, anxiety etc. Ayurveda provides better solution in the form of proper dietary management, lifestyle advises, Ayurvedic formulations and rejuvenation therapies. Ayurvedic formulations are classified into two groups:

- Kashtha aushadhi*: Only plant material is used in formulations.
- Rasa aushadhi*: Predominantly metals and minerals are used in formulations.

Rasa Shastra, an integral part of Ayurveda chiefly covers the entire field of inorganic pharmaceutical preparations (metallic and non-metallic compounds) of Ayurvedic Materia Medica. Different types of kalpanas (formulations) like *Kharliya Rasa*, *Bhasma*, *Pishti*, *Parpati*, *Potali*, *Kupipakva Rasayanas* are made out of various minerals and organic poisons mentioned under various groups: *Rasa*, *Maharasa*, *Uparasa*, *Sadharana Rasa*, *Ratna*, *Upratna*, *Visha*, *Upvisha*. Manufacturing procedure of *Rasa aushadhis* is very exhaustive and involves complicated steps like *Shodhana*, *Bhavana*, *Mardana* and *Marana* as internal administration of metals and minerals in unprocessed or misprocessed

form can prove toxic. *Rasa aushadhis* are appreciated as they are therapeutically effective in *Alpa matra* (low dose). The *Rasa dravya* swiftly undergo various Pharmacodynamics and Pharmacokinetics in our body called *Sanskara* and have high efficacy. The herbo-mineral formulations possess longer shelf life due to their micronized preparation.

This article presents uses of *Rasa dravya* towards the management of life style diseases W.S.R. to *Sthoulya*, *Madhumeha* and *Vatarakta*.^[1-4]

Rasa Aushadhis and Lifestyle diseases

The *Rasa dravyas* can even transport through the minute channels (*strotas*). So, nanotechnology was made use of by *Acharyas* in ancient times as well. Different types of *Rasa* formulations are mentioned for various diseases such as; *Godanti bhasma* for cold, cough, fever; *Shankh bhasma* for acidity and ulcer; *Loha bhasma* for anemia; *Swarna makardhwaj rasayan* for diabetes and infertility; *Hridyarnava rasa* for heart diseases (*Hrudroga*) and *Laxmivilas rasa* for respiratory tract disorders.

Heart diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hemamruta rasa • Hrudayarnava rasa
Obesity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medohar vidangadi lauha • Aarogyavardhini vati
Diabetes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vangeshwara rasa • Bahumootrantaka rasa
Gout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ramabana rasa • Nityananda rasa
Acidity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sootshekhar rasa • Kamdugdha rasa

Figure 1: Some Rasa Dravyas for life style disorders.

Life Style disorders & Role of Rasa Dravyas

- ❖ *Madhumeha*
- ❖ *Sthoulya*
- ❖ *Vatarakta*

MADHUMEHA (Diabetes Mellitus)

Madhumeha is mentioned as *Maharoga* in Ayurvedic texts and *Mithya Ahaar-Vihaar* (inappropriate dietary habits, physical inactivity) is said to be responsible for the disease pathogenesis. *Rasa aushadis* help to normalize blood glucose levels. Herbal and herbo-mineral formulations are of significant therapeutic value in the treatment of *Madhumeha*. *Ayurveda* mentions use of *Rasayana Dravya* in *Madhumeha* such as; *Shilajeet*, *Vanga Bhasma*, *Vasantkusumakar* & *Chandraprabha vati*.

➤ *Shilajeet*

It is considered *Naimittika Rasayana* and has *Ojovardhaka* and *Pramehaghna* properties. The *Rasayana* drugs help to stabilize vitiated *Doshas* i.e., *Kapha*, *Pitta*, *Vata* and *Dushyas* i.e.; *Ojas*, *Rasa*, *Vasa*, *Majja*, *Meda*, *Mamsa* etc. which are mentioned as factors responsible for *Madhumeha*. The *Rasayana* drugs nourish *Sapta Dhatus*, promote insulin production due to rejuvenating effect, improves metabolism and due to above cumulative effect improves immune system as well. *Rasayana* drugs such as; *Emblica officinalis*, *Tinospora cordifolia*, *Asparagus recemosus*, *Bacopa monnieri* and *Centella asiatica* also offer significant relief in *Madhumeha*. *Rasa aushadis* like *Vanga bhasma*, *Vasant kusumakar rasa*, *Chandraprabha vati* are of great therapeutic value.^[5]

➤ *Vanga bhasma*

It is one of the important *Rasa dravya* which offers beneficial effects in *Madhumeha*. *Vanga bhasma* relieves symptoms of *Madhumeha* such as; *Prabhutnutrata*, *Kshudhadrhikya*, *Avilamutrata*, *Trishnadrhikya* and *Pindikoudveshtana*. It possesses *Tikta rasa*, *Laghu* & *Ruksha Guna*, *Ushna Virya* & *Katu Vipaka* thus helps in the management of *Madhumeha*.

➤ *Vasant kusumakar rasa*

It is rejuvenation & aphrodisiac *rasa*, it pacifies *Tridoshic* balance: *Vata*, *Pitta* & *Kapha*. It also offers beneficial effects for various organs such as; nerves, bladder, reproductive organs, pancreas, heart, brain & lungs. It helps to reduce blood sugar levels and improves metabolic process.

➤ *Chandraprabha vati*

It is an Ayurvedic formulation mainly employed for the management of *Prameha*, *Sthoulya* & metabolic syndrome. It consists of *Chandraprabha*, *Vacha*, *Musta*, *Bhunimba*, *Amruta*, *Daruka*, *Haridra*, *Ativisha*, *Darvi*, *Pippalimoola*, *Chitraka*, *Dhanyaka*, *Haritaki*, *Vibhitaki*, *Amalaki*, *Chavya*, *Vidanga*, *Gajapippali*, *Shunthi*, *Maricha*, *Pippali*, *Vida lavana* & *Shilajeet*. These all herbs relieve clinical symptoms of *Madhumeha* such as; *Prabhutnutrata*, *Avilamutrata*, *Trishnadrhikya*, *Kshudhadrhikya* and *Pindikoudvestana*.

STHOULYA (Obesity)

Sthoulya means excessive deposition of *Medo dhatu* (fat). It is associated with impaired BMI (body mass index) due to the disturbed metabolism. In Ayurvedic texts *Tridosha* i.e.; *Kapha*, *Pitta*, *Vata* and *Dushya* i.e.; *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa* and *Medo dhatu* are said to be responsible for *Sthoulya*. The modern day life style involves excessive consumption of junk food (*santarpana*) which further leads to metabolic disturbances and thereby *medodhatu vruddhi*. Obesity is a disease associated with disturbed lifestyle pattern. *Rasa dravya* offer beneficial effects in obesity. *Rasa dravya* increase lipid metabolism, decrease production of fat cells, inhibit excess fat deposition and also stimulate the functioning of thyroid gland and thereby boost metabolism.

➤ *Loha Bhasma*

Loha bhasma is considered beneficial in reducing weight as it rectifies the vitiated *Rakta Dhatu* which is one of the *Dushya*. So *Loha Bhasma* by working on *Rakta dhatvagni*, improves the whole metabolic process and *Sapta Dhatus* mentioned in *Ayurveda* function rhythmically which thereby reduces obesity. Best *Anupana* (vehicle) for *Loha Bhasma* is honey.

➤ *Shilajeet*

Shilajeet is a drug which has *lekhaniya* (scrapping out) effect on body so it helps to remove belly fat and improves metabolism as well.

➤ *Arogyavardhini Vati*

Arogyavardhini vati improves liver functions chiefly, due to presence of *Kutki* (*Picrorrhiza kurroa*) in this formulation and thus enhances metabolism. It also has *lekhaniya* effect due to the presence of *Tamra dhatu* and so helps in reducing obesity.

➤ *Varunadi Kashayam*

It increases fat metabolism, is effective for fatty liver, improves lipid profile other than improving circulatory functions.

➤ *Triphala guggul*

It not only helps to control obesity but also reduces other problems associated with obesity. *Triphala Guggul* is therapeutically beneficial for cardiovascular system and due to its *Rasayan* properties boosts immune system. It burns fat by improving metabolism and enhances systemic transportation of nutrients thus helps to maintain the normal physiological functioning of the body.

VATARAKTA (Gouty Arthritis)

Ayurveda considered *Vata rakta* as *Sandhigat Roga* which is a joint disease and involves *rakta*, *asthi* and *majja dhatus' dushti*. The disturbed life style is one of the most important etiological factors of disease along with other factors such as; Trauma, consumption of incompatible food, excessive intake of fatty, salty, sour and sea food. Bad conduction of *Dinacharya* and *Rutucharya*; consumption of unhealthy junk food, improper sleep, long vehicle riding & exhaustive physical stress these all factors increase progression of *Vatarakta*. Injury, jumping and excessive physical activities in hot climates aggravates *Vata* associated with *Rakta Dushti*. This also causes *Vatarakta*. *Vatarakta* is considered a disease of *Sammurchhana* of *Vata & Rakta*. *Vatarakta* is correlated with Gouty arthritis in modern medical science.

➤ *Guduchyadi kwath*

It is a decoction of *Guduchi* mixed with *Guggulu* which offers relief in *Vatarakta*. It helps to maintain *Tridoshic* balance, pacify *Dushya Rasa & Rakta*. It also removes aggravation of vitiated *vata*, reduces burning sensation and pain. *Rasa Dravya such as; Guduchi kwatha* offer properties such as; *balya*, *tridosha-shamaka*, *shotha-hara* and *vata-shonithara* thus relieve symptoms of *Vatarakta* such as; *Sandhishoola*, *Sandhigraha*, *Vaivarnya* and *Sparshasahatva*.^[9-11]

➤ *Rambana rasa*

It contains *shudh gandhak*, *shudh parad*, *shudh vatsanabh*, *lavang*, *marich* and *jatiphal* processed in *tintidak swaras*. It should be taken with honey. It improves digestion and assimilation thus is useful in impaired digestion. Due to this property it helps to increase *rakta dhatvagni* thus relieving swelling and pain. It also acts as a *rasayan* and thus helps when disease is in chronic condition or deep seated.

➤ *Kaishore guggul*

It acts as aging skin health promoter, joint health promoter and natural blood cleanser. Due to this property it purifies *rakta dushti* which is the chief cause of *vatarakta*. It contains *triphal*, *amruta*, *guggul*, *vidang*, *danti*, *trivrit* and *trikatu*. It also acts as anti

inflammatory, aids digestion, lowers cholesterol and uric acid in blood and also as *rasayan* on long term usage.

SUMMARY

Ayurveda describes ways to prevent and manage various lifestyle disorders. It clubs *Ritucharya* (involves *Ahaar-Vihaar* regimen according to different seasons) and various formulations to achieve the state of well-being. Considering present scenario of huge burden of life style diseases *Ayurveda* has huge role to play and further literary and clinical study should be done in this direction to serve humanity better.

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