

A REVIEW ARTICLE ON MEDHYA RASAYANA WSR TO DRAVYA GUNA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has main two aims – to conserve the health of a healthy individual and to treat a diseased person. To meet first goal of Ayurveda, Rasayana chikitsa has a significant role to play. Rasayana chikitsa is also a part of Ashtanga Ayurveda that itself presents its importance. Rasayana are drug or medicine or food which when used in right quantity and at right time promotes restoration and rejuvenation. It accelerates formation of new Dhatus and retards ageing. In this way it comprehences vital energy of our body and boosts immunity. Rasayana are not good for body but also for mind. Medhya Rasayana's are medicinal plants described in Ayurveda with multiple benefits specifically with regards to improve memory, grasping and intellect. Acharya charak has given a vivid explanation on four Medhya Rasayana viz. sankhapushpi kalka, Swarasa of mandukparni, Yashtimadhu along with milk and Guduchi kwatha. This article is an attempt to highlight present update on Medhya Rasayana.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Medhya Rasayana, Dravya guna.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda has two main aims, one is to maintain health & the second is to cure disease. The branch Rasayana or rejuvenation is one of the eight specialised branches of Ayurveda that deals with maintenance of health. Medhya Rasayanas are group of medicinal plants described in Ayurveda with multi fold benefits, specifically to improve memory & intellect by Prabhava. Recently there is tremendous urge to explore medicinal plants globally for improving cognitive function owing to their less adverse effects. Ayurveda provides a list of herbs known for nootropic activity as well as their multi dimensional utility in various conditions. Thus brief review was carried out by analysing classical text books and peer reviewed papers to focus on updates on pharmacological properties, major chemical constituents, therapeutic actions & possible mode of action of selected herbs from Medhya Rasayana group and their evaluation and analysis according to Ayurvedic and Modern aspect. The focal basis of Rasayana is accelerated and appropriate nutrition to improve biological competence of body.

The Rasayana remedies of Ayurveda are essentially molecular nutrients and nutrition enhancing agents acting through three basic mechanisms.

1. Rasa enhancing or direct nutrient effect.
2. Agni enhancers or promoters of digestion and metabolism.
3. Srotas purifying agents or promoters of microcirculation and tissue perfusion.



All these three events singly or jointly lead to improved nutritional status in body leading further to formation of best qualities of cells and tissues which sustain aging and stress. Rasayanas could be age specific as they promote nutrition relevant to the natural bio losses occurring at different phases of life span. All Rasayanas are nutrition promoters in general but there are certain organ and tissues specific Rasayanas viz. Medhya Rasayana for brain, Hridya Rasayana for heart, Chaksusya Rasayana for eyes and so on. Those specific to brain tissues called Medhya Rasayana, are claimed to promote cognitive functions of the brain and helps in regeneration of neural tissues besides producing anti-stress and memory enhancing effect and retard brain ageing. Childhood is the period in which all body tissue or 'Dhatus' are immature and are in the process of maturation i.e. growth

& development, so giving Medhya Rasayana in this age is very effective to increase I.Q. of children.

Rasayana

Rasayana drugs are which diminishes ageing and diseases. Rasayana is nutritional transportation in the body. It refers to acquisition, movement or circulation of nutrition to nourish the body and enrich tissue perfusion. The procedure which imports superior type of Rasadi Dhatus (prashasta dhatu) in the body or the means by which an individual gets the excellence of Rasadi Dhatus is known as Rasayana. Commenting on this Chakrapani quotes that apart from prashasta dhatu utpatti, it is also responsible for Smriti. Dalhana describes it as one which stabilise youthfulness and prolongs life with activities through its Rasa, Vipaka, Virya and Prabhava.

Concept of Medha

Medha is a faculty of Buddhi, which means unobstructed, uninterrupted perception, retention and very deep knowledge gained by all the senses.

Buddhi

Buddhi is a phenomenon which motivates a person to work in a particular fashion. It gives an initiative to work, to come to final conclusions after proper analysis.

Smriti

It is the term used to denote a wide array of higher intellectual faculties including memory, cognition, past sense perception, mastery in higher sciences hence is also used in metaphysics. It is explained by Chakrapani that it is one of the functional components of Buddhi. It directs oneself by recollecting the past experience. Smriti is recognised as one of the characteristic features of cognizance and it is inferred by recollection. After critical examination of Buddhi, Medha and Smriti it could be pointed out that these are the steps of same process. One is incomplete without the rest. The process of recollection takes place properly only and only after the Buddhi, Medha and Smriti unites. So in this sense they are undifferentiated.

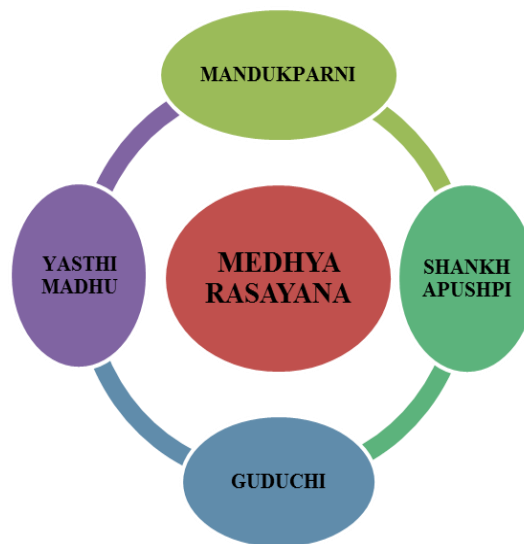
Medhya Rasayana

The term Medhya is defined as, which is beneficial for medha. Medhya Rasayanas are group of medicinal plants described in Ayurveda with multi-fold benefits, specifically to improve memory and intellect by Prabhava (specific action). Medha means intellect and/or retention and Rasayana means therapeutic procedure or preparation that on regular practice will boost nourishment, health, memory, intellect, immunity and hence longevity. Description of the Medhya Rasayana found in Samhitas indicates Special utility of these types of rasayanas apart from rasayana in general. In Charak Samhita there is no direct mentioning of medhya rasayana as an independent type. But there is mentioning of four drugs, they are Mandukaparni (Centella asiatica Linn.), Yastimadhu (Gly-cirrhiza glabra Linn.), Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia (Wild) Miers) and Shankhapushpi

(Convolvulus pleuricaulis Chois), specially mentioned with wide range of applications on different systems. Among these Shankhapushpi (Convolvulus pleuricaulis Chois) is considered as medhya vishesh. In Sushruta Samhita more information about medhya drugs are available such as different formulations with their mode of use etc. The chapter named 'Medhayushkamiya adhyaya' is meant for description of same.

Dravya which boosts brilliance or intellect are called as medhya dravya. Intellect is related to nervous system is place of mind, so all medhya dravya acts primarily on nervous system. Acharya Charak has explained four dravyas under Medhya Rasayana –

1. Mandukaparni (Centella asiatica Linn)
2. Yasthimadhu (Glycyrrhiza glabra Linn)
3. Shankhapushpi (Convolvulus pluricaulis Linn)
4. Guduchi (Tinospora codifolia Willd Miers)



Acharya Susruta has explained medhya dravya under Medha Ayushkamiya Rasayana Adhyaya. Medhya Rasayana explained by Acharya Susruta other than that explained by Acharya Charak are following -

1. Swate avalguja
2. Chitraka mola
3. Manduk parni
4. Bramhi
5. Vacha

Acharya P. V. Sharma has also explained other medhya dravya. These are following

1. Endri
2. Jyotishmati
3. Kushmanda
4. Vacha
5. Jatamanshi

In current time, all the above described are designated and used as a Rasayana dravya. Brief explanation of Medhya Rasayana

Mandukparni

Acharya Charak has explained this drug under Tikta Skandha, Prajasthapana and Vayashapana. Acharya Susruta has placed this drug under Tikta Varga. Synonyms are manduki, Divya, Twastri and Mahausadhi. Leaves of mandukparni possess glycoside Asiaticoside and alkaloid named Hydrocortylone. These chemical are responsible for neuroprotective and antioxidant properties exhibited by mandukparni.

Shankhpushpi

Synonyms of Shankhpushpi are Mangalya kuma, Ksheerpushpi, Shankhpushpi. It possesses alkaloids like Kaempferol, arecoline, convolvine and Shankhpushpin. The constituent convolvine is responsible for blocking M2 and M4 cholinergic muscarinic receptors. It boosts effect of arecoline, a muscarinic memory enhancer that ameliorates cognitive defects in Alzheimer's disease.

Guduchi

Guduchi has been described under Vayahsthapana, Dahaprashamana, Trishnanigrahan, Stanya sodhana, Triptighna Mahakasaya of Charak Samhita and Guduchyadi, Araghvadi, Kakolyadi, Patoladi, Valli panchamula of Susruta Samhita. Synonyms are Madhuparni, Chinnamula, Cakralakshanika, Amritavalli, Chinna, Amrita, Vatsadani, jivanti, Tantrika, Kundalini, Vayastha etc. Major constituent of guduchi is berberine which reduces A beta levels by modulating APP (amyloid precursors) processing in human neuroglioma cells without toxicity.

Yashtimadhu

Yashtimadhu has been described under Kanthya, Sandhaniya, Varnya, Kandughna, Vamanopaga, Jivniya, Asthapanopaga, Mutravirajaniya Mahakasaya of Charak Samhita and Kakolyadi, Sarivadi, Brhatyadi, Ambasthadi, Anjanadi, Utpaladi Gana of Susruta Samhita. Major constituent found in Yashtimadhu is glabridin which is useful in improving brain function. Chemically it is a flavonoid polyphenol which is proven to attenuate cerebral injuries in stroke as it is neuroprotective.

Other Medhya Dravya**Jyotishmati**

Celastrus panniculata Wild Family – Celastraceae Jyotishmati is described under Shirovirechnopaga Mahakashaya in Charak Samhita and Shirovirechan, Adhobhagagara in Susruta Samhita. Synonyms are Kakandaki, Malkangani, Kaguni, Parvatpadi. Properties of Jyotishmati are Katu, Tikta in Rasa, Tikshna in Guna, Ushna in Virya and Katu in Vipaka. Dosh Karma is Kapha-Vata Samak.

Vacha

Acorus calamus Linn, Family - Araceae Vacha is described in Lekhniya, Arshoghna, Virechan, Triptighna, Asthapanopaga, Sangyasthapana, Tikta Skandh and Sirovirechnana Mahakasaya in Charak Samhita and

Pipalyadi, Mustadi and Vachadi and Adhobhaghara in Susruta Samhita. Properties of Vacha are Katu, Tikta in Rasa, Laghu Tikshna in Guna, Ushna in Virya and Katu Vipaka. Dosh Karma of Vacha is Kapha-vata Shamak.

Jatamansi

Nordostachys jatamansi DC, Family – Valerianaceae Jatamansi is described in Sangyasthapana mahakashaya of Charak Samhita. Synonyms are Bhutjata, Jatila, Tapasvini, Nalda and mansi. Properties of Jatamansi are Tikta, Kasaya, Madhur in Rasa and Laghu, Snigdha in Guda, Sita in Virya and Katu in Vipaka. Dosh Karma of Jatamansi is Tridosh Samak.

Endri

Bacopa monniera Linn. Family – Scrophulariaceae Endri is described in Balya and Prajaisthapana Mahakashaya in Charak Samhita. Properties of Endri of Tikta in Rasa, Laghu in Guna, Usna in Virya, Katu in vipaka. Dosh karma is Kapha-Vata shamak.

Kushmanda

Benincasa hispida Thunb. Family – Cucurbitaceae Kushmanda is described in Shaka varga of Bhav prakash Nighantu. Synonyms are Puspaphala, Pitapushpa, Brihatphala. Dosh karma of Kushmanda is Pitta samak.

DISCUSSION

All drugs or medicine which boosts intellect power are called as Medhya Rasayana. All the above discussed medhya drug are madhur vipaka and shita virya (except guduchi). Medhya Karma is considered predominantly as Prabhava janya because some medhya dravya are shita virya, madhura rasa and madhurs vipaka e.g. Yashtimadhu but some are tikta rasa and ushna virya e.g. Guduchi. These Medhya dravya have more medhya karma present rather than a samanya dravya inspite of having common gunas, so medhya karma is predominantly prabhav janya. Medhya can be catagorised into 3 catagories.

- (a) Grahan shakti (Power of Aquesion)
- (b) Dharana shakti (Power of retention)
- (c) Smaran shakti (Power of re-collection)

All medhya dravya exhibits combination of above three properties. Due to Ashukari and Tikshna pre-dominant gunas, pitta stimulate satva (Mana) and is help for perception of knowledge and as it stimulate post experiences it is helpful in memory intellect, as is also one of the natural function of pitta dosha. Vata dosha is also helpful in process of memory by performing association of ideas. Kapha dosha as has stable properties helps in retention of knowledge and memories. Due to above fact it is clear that both kaphaja and pittaja dravya are Medhya. Ushna virya dravya are mainly boost intellect whereas shita virya dravya mainly boosts memory.

CONCLUSION

1. Medhya dravya like Mandukparni, Yastimadhu, Guduchi and Shankhpushpi can be used as single drug or in combinations to effectively boost memory and recall power, brilliance and intellect.
2. Medhya karma is predominantly prabhava janya because some medhya dravya are shita virya, madhura rasa but some are tikta rasa, ushna virya and moreover medhya dravya exhibits effects rather than their chemical composition.
3. Medhya karma is shown mainly by kaphaja and pittaja dravya.
4. Ushna virya dravya are mainly boost intellect whereas shita virya dravya mainly boosts memory. In other word we can say that ushna virya dravya boosts grahan and smaran shakti, whereas shita virya dravya boosts dharana shakti.

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