



RASAYANA - CONCEPT TO CLINICAL W.S.R. TO MODERN VIEW

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ABSTRACT

The term 'Rasayana' is described as a medicine to prevent old age and prolong life. It is one of the eight specialties of Ayurveda that aims to preserve health. [Cha.Sa.Sutra Sthana 30/28] It aims at proper nourishment and transportation of nutritive fluid (rasa), blood (rakta) etc. [Dalhana on Su.Sa. Sutra Sthana 1/7] The primary objectives of knowledge of life (Ayurveda) are preserving health and preventing diseases. Rasayana treatments are important in the preservation of health, prevention of diseases, speedy recovery and rehabilitation from disease conditions. In current practices, antioxidant, immunomodulatory, adaptogenic, anabolic, nutraceuticals, anti-ageing therapies are considered forms of rasayana therapy. Ayurveda advises body purification before administration of rasayana therapy to achieve optimum benefits. Rasayana Chikitsa has importance from both preventive and curative aspect of the disease. To achieve healthy and longevity in life, there are various types of Rasayana described in Ayurveda. The Rasayana therapy has to be practiced with a number of prerequisites such as Vaya (age), Prakruti (constitution), Satmya (adaptability), and the status of the Doshas, Dhatus, Agni, Ojas, Strotas and others. The Rasayana therapy has principal object to promote rejuvenation, retard ageing process, defend body from various diseases, regulate metabolism and provide physical and mental strength.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Rasayana, Dhatus, Rejuvenation, Anti-oxidants, free radical.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the ancient science of life through which a prolonged, happy and healthy life can be attained. The main aim of this ancient holistic science is to maintain the health of a healthy individual and to alleviate disorders of the diseased. Two fold aim of Ayurveda can be furnished through the special branch Rasayana. The Rasayana drugs and formulations provides longevity, memory, Intellectual power, freedom from the diseases, youthful age, excellence of luster, complexion and voice, optimum strength of physique and sense organs, respectability and brilliance. It is good for all the age groups like elderly, pregnant women, children and old ages.

Rasayana therapy prevents the effects of early ageing, develops resistance and immunity in the body to counteract the diseases and also helps in alleviating the Prakupita doshas in the body.

Ayurveda has provided guidelines for slowing down the ageing process (Jara) by Increasing Ojas. Modern scientific evaluation of rasayana plants and other

treatments used in Ayurveda have borne out the fact that rejuvenative tonics have the ability to protect the body against the ravages of age and the damaging effects of the environment in which we live, by enhancing the body mechanism, ability to fight off disease-carrying organisms through non-specifically activating the immune system. Use of rejuvenative foods, oils/ghee, herbs and behavioral rejuvenation is very important in making a life longer, disease free and happy.

NEED OF RASAYANA

Cell death in body is possible due to varied factors leading to physical metabolic and psychological impairments thus setting foundations of various ailments with Rasayana therapy it is possible to prevent or delay this damage by Nourishes and maintains the cell life (Nutriceutical action)., Encourages the growth of new cells (Regenerative action). Prevents recurrent infection, expelling the damaged cells (Immunomodulatory action). Eliminates the toxic metabolites and pollutants (Antioxidant action). Maintains the balance between mind and body (Adaptogenic). Rasayana drugs act at the subcellular level.

MECHANISM OF ACTION

Rasayana Corrects the structural deformity of the dhatus there by normalizing the functions Strengthens the dhatus. Prevents the instinct of recurrence, Prevents the instinct for secondary diseases, Prevents early ageing process.

It is described by all classics of Ayurveda on priority.

Rasayana is one of the eight branches of Ayurveda (Ashtang Ayurveda) and it encompasses: Rejuvenative

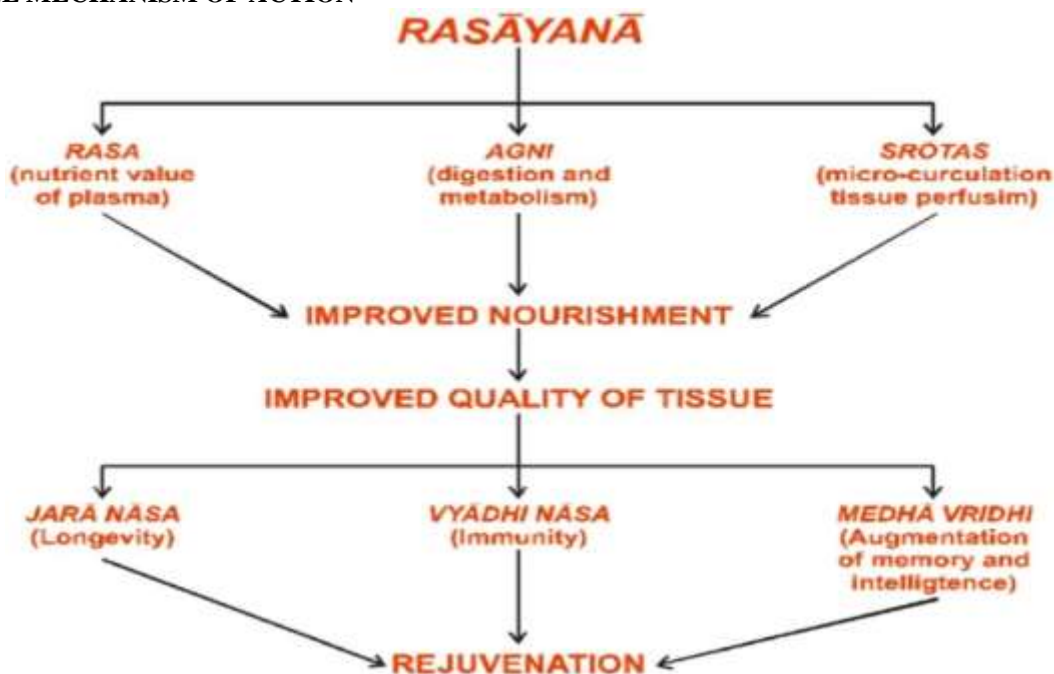
life style, Healthy dietetics, Use of rejuvenative herbomineral nutraceuticals. Rasayana stands as an answer to solve the problem of healthful longevity including.

Mental development and resistance against disease.

Susruta defines rasayana as a measure which.

Prevent aging, Prolongs longevity, develops positive health, improves mental faculties and provides resistance and immunity against diseases.

POSSIBLE MECHANISM OF ACTION



It is a specialized type of treatment influencing the fundamental aspects of the body viz., Dhatus (body tissues), Agni (the metabolic activity) and Srotas (micro circulation) and helps in the prevention of aging. Rasayana is the Science of Nutrition aiming to procure the best qualities of body tissues (Dhatus) leading in turn to: longevity, immunity, resistance against disease, improved mental faculties, Ideal Social Environment.

Who can use Rasayanas?

Ideally use of rasayana should be started before onset of old age. But one can start the practice of same at any age. For maximum benefit of same bio purification of body should be achieved. ▶ Selective Rasayana can be used for selective benefit. People desirous of achieving of highest physical and mental health should use Rasayana.

Classification of Rasayana

A. As Per Scope of Use

1. Kamyā Rasayana (Health Promoting).
 - a. Prana Kamyā for Vitality and Longevity.
 - b. Medhā Kamyā for Mental Competence.
 - c. Sri Kamyā for Bodily Lusture and Complexion.
2. Naimittika Rasayana (Disease Specific).

Special Indication

B. As Per Method of Use

1. Vatatapika (Outdoor Regimen)
2. Kutipravesika (Intensive Regimen) Indoor Regimen)

C. As Per Contents

1. Acara Rasayana (Life Style Rasayana).
2. Ajasrika Rasayana (Dietary Rasayana).
3. Ausadhi Rasayana (Drug Rasayana).
4. Divya/Soumya Rasayana (Divine Rasayana).
5. Tissue and Organ Specific Rasayana.

Possible Attributes

Subtle Nutrition, Anti-oxidant Effect, Anti-Aging Effect, Immune Enhancer, PsychoneuroStability, Nootropic Effect, Anti-Stress Effect, Adaptogenic Effect, Anti-Cancer Effect.

Table 1: Need and Rasayana Medicine According to Age Groups according to Sharangdhara Samhita.

Decade	Loss of features	Desirable Rasayanas
First (0-10yrs)	Balyavastha (Childhood)	Swarna (Gold)
Second (11-20yrs)	Vruddhi (growth)	Bala (<i>Sida cordifolia</i> Linn)
Third (21-30yrs)	Chavi (luster)	Amalaki (<i>Emblica officinalis</i> Gaertn)
Fourth (31-40yrs)	Medha (intellect)	Shankapuspi (<i>Convolvulus pluricaulis</i> Choisy)
Fifth (41-50yrs)	Twak (Complexion)	Jyotismati (<i>Celastrus paniculatus</i>)
Sixth (51-60yrs)	Drusti (Vision)	Jyotismati (<i>Celastrus paniculatus</i>)
Seventh (61-70yrs)	Shukra(reproductive power)	Ashvagandha (<i>Withania somnifera</i> L)
Eighth (71-80yrs)	Vikram (Courage)	Bala (<i>Sida cordifolia</i> Linn)
Ninth (81-90yrs)	Buddhi (intelligence)	Brahmi (<i>Herpestis moniera</i> HBK)
Tenth (91-100yrs)	Karma Indriya (motor organs)	Bala (<i>Sida cordifolia</i> Linn)
Eleventh (101-110yrs)	Chetas/Manas(mind)	Rasayana may not be effective
Twelfth (111-120yrs)	Jivan (ceasation of life)	Rasayana may not be effective

Functions/Action of Rasayana**1) Anti-Oxidants**

Can be defined as substance whose presence in relatively low concentrations significantly inhibits the action of free radicals. All the Rasayana drugs are having anti-oxidant property. Identified anti-oxidants are: Vitamin C, Tocoferol, Retinol, Selenium, and Lycopene. In addition Rasayana drugs provide specific tissue nutrient which helps preserve the health of specific tissue like brain, skin, etc.

2) Free Radicals

A free radical has been defined as "any species capable of independent existence that contains one or more unpaired electrons." If these are not removed from tissues they have potential to damage tissues and cause premature loss. As the body ages or is subjected to environmental pollutants, such as cigarette smoke, over exposure to sunlight, or smog, stresses and strains, phases of anaerobic metabolism, excessive production or delayed excretion of metabolic wastes, Inadequate sleep leading to poor repair time, the body become overwhelmed by free radicals. Rasayana acting as Free Radical scavengers help removal of these free radicals from the body there by protecting body tissue from any possible damage.

3) Anti-Aging

A physiological state, in which there is a progressive decline in organ functions, delay in regeneration, and development of age-related diseases, is a multifactorial process. Free radicals are proposed to initiate/enhance aging, and antioxidants and phytochemicals have been shown to possess anti-aging properties. These drugs are also believed to be good tonics, rejuvenates, immune stimulators, and adaptogens. Regular consumption of these drugs is considered to enhance physical strength, increase sex drive, and improve the complexion. They are mostly polyherbal in composition, and are comprised of medicinal plants, minerals, pearls, and Coral. properties of commonly u drugs such as Amalakayas ay

Triphala, Chyawanprash, Amalaki Rasayana, Amrita Rasayana, Brahm Rasayana, Ashvagandha Rasayana, Narasimha Rasayana, Brahmi Rasayana Amritaprasham, Amala churna, and Amalkadi Ghrita with emphasis on the possible mechanisms responsible for the beneficial effects of these drugs.

4) Immunomodulatory Action

Rasayana have immunomodulatory potential. Studies have shown that use of Rasayana modulates immune phenomenon which help in having appropriate immunological response to a situation. This helps not only in providing adequate immune response what also avoids autoimmunity.

5) Nutraceutical Action

Rasayana therapy which includes ideal dietetics is supposed to provide best required nourishing fluid to body tissue. It only requires excellent power of digestion and patency of body channels to achieve this objectives. Rasayana has potential to reverse degenerative processes in cells by their restorative and free radical scavenging properties Rasayana like Amalaki, Ashvagandha, Shilajeet has this potential.

6) Rasayana as Adaptogenics

Rasayanas helps to maintain the balance between mind and body. This is based on anti-stress practices in daily life (Aachar Rasayana) and use of rasayana like Ashvagandha, Amalaki, Brahmi, etc. for maximum benefit.

7) Rasayana as brain booster (Medhya)

Categorized as Medhya Rasayana, The drugs are known to act as medicinal neuro-nutrients and promote memory and intelligence and retard mental aging. The prominent Medhya Rasayanas are Brahmi, Mandukaparni, Ashvagandha and Jyotismati besides several others.

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