



ROLE OF RASAYAN DRUGS IN AYURVEDA: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Ayurvedic medicine has many rejuvenating herbs, traditionally known as Rasayana, which improve health, immunity, vigor, vitality, and longevity, as well as protect against stress and help in boosting immunity power. Rasayana Tantra is one of the eight major divisions of astanga Ayurveda. The beneficial actions of Rasayana herbs have been scientifically proven through experimental as well as clinical studies. Rasayana herbs keep enzymes in the cells in their normal state of function. These cells are revitalized and their composition is changed. The present article intends to brief about the various medicinal plants used in the rasayana therapy, their active ingredients and the scientific studies carried out on them with reference to their biological activities.

Keywords: Rasayana Therapy, Medicinal plants; Biological Activities, Active compounds

INTRODUCTION

Rasayana therapy is one of the eight major divisions of Ayurvedic sciences. 'Rasa' means essence of nutrition, 'ayana' means body tissues elements, and Rasayan therapy means the treatment methods that enrich the body tissue elements through nutrition in effective way^[1,2]. According to Ayurveda the rasayan therapy improves memory, health, intelligence, complexion, voice, motor and sensory strength^[3]. The present article intends to brief about the various medicinal plants used in rasayan therapy. Ayurveda has provided guidelines for slowing down the ageing process 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 damaging the 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.

MATERIAL AND METHOD:

MEDICINAL PLANTS USED IN RASAYANA THERAPY

The usage of single plants and formulations has been well reported in the rasayana therapy ^[4,5].

Table 1: Commonly used Medicinal plants in Rasayan Therapy

Sr. No.	Common name of plants	Sanskrit	Scientific name
1	Amalaki		Emblica officinalis
2	Ashwagandha		Withania somnifera
3	Haritaki		Terminalia chebula
4	Bibhitaki		Terminalia bellirica
5	Bramhi		Bacopa monnireri
6	Bhringaraj		Eclipta alba
7	Bala		Sida cordifolia
8	Pippali		Piper longum
9	Jyotishmati		Celastrus paniculatus
10	Atmagupta		Mucuna Prurita
11	Kashmari		Gmelina arborea
12	Shatavari		Asparagus racemosus
13	Chitraka		Plumbago zeylanica
14	Guduchi		Tinospora cordifolia
15	Rasona		Allium sativum
16	Manjishta		Rubia cordifolia
17	Tuvaraka		Hydnocarpus laurifolia
18	Sankhapushpi		Convolvus pluricaulis
19	Guggulu		Commiphora wightii
20	Haridra		Curcuma longa
21	Vidanga		Embilica ribes

Table 2:**Medicinal Plants Used In Rasayan Therapy And The Details Of Their Active Compounds And Biological Activities**

Herbs	Active compounds	Reported biological activities
<i>Emblica officinalis</i>	Bleeding disorders, jaundice, antidiabetic, gastritis	Ascorbic acid, chebulinic acid, gallic acid
<i>Withania somnifera</i>	Withaferine A, Withanocytes	Strength promoting, Immunomodulator, adaptogenic
<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	Tannin	Purgative
<i>Terminalia bellerica</i>	Tannin, ellagic acid, gallic acid	Purgative, bronchitis, antifungal, antimalarial
<i>Sida cordifolia</i>	Filariasis and bleeding piles	Ephedrine, vasicine vasicinone
<i>Bacopa monnieri</i>	Antipyretic, antidiabetic, antiinflammatory	Bacoside A
<i>Eclipta alba</i>	Hepatoprotective, dyspnoea	Wedelolactone, dimethylwedelolactone
<i>Celastrus pauciculatus</i>	Linoleic, linolenic and palmitic acids	Memory enhancing, skin affections
<i>Mucuna prurita</i>	L-3,4 dihydroxy phenylalanine (L-dopa)	Anti Parkinsonian and aphrodisiac
<i>Piper longum</i>	Alkaloids piperine, piperilongumine	Antibacterial, Antifungal, antihelmenthic
<i>Asparagus racemosa</i>	Steroidal glycosides shatavarine, polycyclic alkaloid	Duodenal ulcer, immune modulatory effects
<i>Gmelina arborea</i>	Linoleic acid	Cardiac diseases, disurea
<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i>	Plumbagine, 3-chloroplumbagine	In colic and appetizer
<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	Tinocordifolioside, sesquiterpene tinocordifolioside	Immunomodulatory, hepatoprotective
<i>Emblica ribes</i>	Embilin	Contraceptive and anthelminthic

NEED OF RASAYANA

The death of cell in body is possible due to varied factors that leads to physical metabolic and psychological impairments thus setting foundations of various ailments with rasayana therapy it is possible to prevent or delay damage.

POSSIBLE MECHANISM OF ACTION:

Nourishes and maintains the cell life . Encourages the growth of new cells.Prevents recurrent infection, expelling the damaged cells . Eliminates the toxic metabolites and pollutants. Maintains the balance between mind and body.

CLASSIFICATIONS^[6]

BASED ON CONSUMPTION^[7]

- 1.Kuti praveshika Rasayana- Method of consuming Rasayan by entering into an isolated and specially constructed cabin and staying therein until the completion of therapy. (minimum 4 weeks).
2. Vatapika Rasayana (outdoor)- There will be isolation, no special construction or instructions and restrictions to be followed. The person can lead a normal day to day life and yet take the rasayana.

BASIS OF UTILITY

- 1.Kamyas Rasayana (used to fulfill a desire or to serve a special purpose)
2. Naimittika Rasayana (used for particular disease)

BASED ON MODE OF ACTION

Samshodhana- Dosasya samshodhanadi samshodhanam

Samsamana- samsanadi nagabaladi prayogadikam

ACCORDING TO MAHARSHI SUSHRUTA ^[8]

Classified into four types

Medhayuskamiya

Sarvopagatha samaniya

Nivrtta santapiya

Svabhavavyadhi pratishedhaniya

BASED ON SPECIAL VARIETIES^[9]

Medhya Rasayana -which are memory power enhancer and cures mental disorders.

Acharya Rasayana –explained about sadvritta

RASAYANA DRUGS FOR SPECIFIC DHATU OR TISSUES^[10]

Rasa (plasma): Khajura, kasmari, draksha

Rakta (blood): amalaki, bhringaraj, lauha, palandu

Mamsa (muscle): Bala, Ashwagandha, salaparni, nagabala

Meda (adipose): guggulu, shilajit, amrita, haritaki

Asthi (bone): Laksha, sukta, sankha, vamsalochana

Majja (marrow): lauha, vasa

Shukra (reproductive tissue): kapikacchu, Ashwagandha, shatavari

AYOGYA FOR RASAYANA SEVANA^[11]

Anatmavan-mentally weak

Pramadi-carelessness

Alasi- lethargic

Vyasari- addict

Beshajaapamani-dishonour for medicine

Papakari-troublesome nature

ANTIOXIDANT ^[12]

All the rasayana drugs are having anti oxidant property. Identified antioxidants are:

Tocoferol

Vitamin C

Retinol

Selenium

Lycopene

In addition rasayana drugs provides specific nutrients which helps preserve the health of specific tissue like brain, skin etc.

DISCUSSION:

Rasayan therapy is indicated for the prevention as well as for curing of such type of diseases. It is emphasis on restoration and revitalization , strengthening of tissues and body systems, concentration on mental and spiritual health. The diseases of the annavahastrotas (Gastro-intestinal tract) seem to have been very frequent in ancient India as is evidenced by vivid descriptions on various gastrointestinal tract diseases in the treatises of charaka, sushruta, vagbhata etc. Aniyamit ahar sevan kal, ahitkar aahar sevan causes Aannavaha srotas dushti. Due to Annavaha srotas dushti, Mukhpak, Annabhilasha, Aruchi seen in this Geriatric age group.Rasayan used in Annavaha Srotas dushti :Panchkol especially marich, kapardik, Shankh Bhasma, parpati kalp, Hing, Nagkeshar are the drugs used for increase the immunity against the various infections. Charak samhita mentions that functional diminution of dhatu, oja, strength of sense organs, power of cognition, strength of body and valor are gradually decreasing during old age , so, the effect of therapy of rasayana affords comprehensive physiologic and metabolic restoration and gives important contribution to minimize these difficulties including mental development and resistance diseases among elders.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda has described a larger number of Rasayana, which can provide protection against toxic substances and diseases. Rasayan drugs provide a person longevity, immunity, resistance against diseases, strength, happiness and intellect promotion in the mind. Various plants and plant products are used in the rasayana treatment along with prescribed diet and lifestyle. Preventing or retarding the onset of diseases has become a more attractive and cost effective strategy in the medical arena. Ayurveda Rasayana formulations can do neutraceutical qualities, both as preventive and curative.

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