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AYURVEDIC REVIEW ON RASAYANA

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Abstract: Ayurveda is the science of life through which a prolonged, happy and healthy life can be attained. *Rasayana* is definitely the only mean to accomplish it. *Rasayana* is explained in all classical treatises in great details. It is a distinct branch in *Ashtanga Ayurveda* and indicates its importance in treatment. All classical treatises have explained *Rasayanas* in great details. Creators of *Bruhatrayi* and *Laghutrayi* have dedicated separate chapters for explaining *Rasayanas*. Different definitions and *Niruktis* help in clarifying basics of *Rasayana*. Commentators such as Acharya Chakrapanidatta, *Gangadhara*, *Yogindranath Sen*, *Dalhana*, *Arundatta*, have also put forward different aspects of *Rasayana* and have brought forward different facets. The purpose of Ayurveda is maintenance of *Swasthya* (health) and treatment of the *Aatura* (diseased person). Practical application of *Rasayana* at both the levels help in serving the purpose. Classification of *Rasayana* in different ways help in understanding its use in different indications. As age progresses we suffer from some loss from time to time. Replenishment of these losses needs use of different rejuvenating agents at different age groups. Use of *Rasayana* also means escalation of *Satva Guna* of mind and that can only be achieved by simultaneous use of *Acharhara Rasayana*. With advancement in modern sciences, the age old concept is also studied using newer techniques and parameters and is proven to be effective rejuvenator and has added a lot of information. Hence, use of *Rasayana* is for all. It is equally important in treatment of diseases as well as in maintaining health. Use of different medicines as per disease is useful in correcting *Dhatu Vaishamy* and attaining *Dhatu Samya*. In view of this plethora of information it can be correct to state that *Rasayana* is a boon given to the world by *Ayurveda*.

KEYWORDS: *Rasayana*, Rejuvenation, Immunity, *Ayurveda*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the ancient system of Medicine in the world. *Ayurved*, the science of life deals with every aspect of life. Ayurveda has two aims i.e. prevention and promotion of health and secondly cure from the disease. *Rasayana* may be employed for fulfilling both of them i.e. protection and promotion of health and curing the diseases. *Rasayana* is one of its eight branches being practiced since time immemorial. *Rasayana* therapy has been described in Ayurved as a systematic and scientific medical discipline. *Rasayana* drugs are those medicines which are capable of imparting superior *Rasas* and *Dhatu*s to the body and toning up the system of healthy persons. *Rasayana* aid in increasing natural immunity, enhancing general wellbeing, improving the functioning of all fundamental organs of the body and keep the signs of early aging at bay. The main purpose of *Rasayana* therapy is to impede the aging process and to delay the degenerative process in the body. *Rasayana* is the term given to special herbs, fruits or any other form of medication that are known to promote positive health and longevity. After taking *Rasayana* we can learn how to maintain a balance between the material and spiritual aspects of life and help others also to understand it. This will help in establishing the peace, happiness and love. The description of *Rasayana* comes in ancient lines as an important specialty aiming at rejuvenation and geriatric care. In fact, *Rasayana* is one of the eight branches of Ayurveda. *Rasayana Chikitsa* has importance from both the preventive and curative aspect of the disease. So much importance is given to this particular branch that the chapters of *Rasayana* find foremost place in the *Charaka samhita Chikitsa* sthana. Whereas *Charaka Samhita* describes *Rasayana* in the first padas of *Chikitsa* Sthana in *Sushruta Samhita* it is pushed back to chapters 27-30 of *Chikitsa* sthana. In *Astang Hridaya* *Rasayana* does not find a special place in *Chikitsa* sthana

and is described only briefly that in the Uttar Tantra¹. This reflects on the declining importance of Rasayana therapy in the Samhita period itself. Basic principle of ayurveda is to intenance of health of healthy person and is to cure diseases; Ayurveda has some special treatment options for many classified diseases like; Rasayan chikitsa; Rasayana therapy involve clinical effects like; *Vaya Sthapana*, *Ayushkara*, *Medhakara*, *Balakara* and *Jara Vyadhi Nashana* effects. *Rasayan* therapy performs work like rejuvenation and promotes healthy life by preventing the diseases. The ultimate aim of rasayan therapy is to correct *dosha* disturbances & improve *agni* and *dhatu* function which overall improves strength, immunity, *ojus*, vitality, longevity, memory, intelligence and excellence of luster. The current scenario of lifestyle is very much responsible for the *tridosha* imbalance along with dhatu disturbances thus need of rasayana therapy becomes essential to increases the essence of each Dhatu, starting from Rasa .

Types of Rasayana Therapy

1. *Naimittika Rasayana*
2. *Ajasrika Rasayana*
3. *Kamyas Rasayana*

1. *Naimittika Rasayana*

It is the type of rasayan therapy utilized for specific curative purpose. It has the recovery from prevailing diseases. Some examples of this *Rasayana* are *Dhatri rasayana*, *Mandookaparni Rasayana*, *Brahmi Rasayana*, and *Triphala Rasayana*.

2 *Ajasrika Rasayana*

It is used to improve health and maintaining good healthy lifestyle, diet or exercise. It involves utilization of milk, ghee, honey and maintannace of discipline life style.

3 *Kamyas Rasayana*

It is used to improve function like; *kama* desire. It also improves prana (life energy), *medha kamyas*; used for enhancing the memory and intellect.eg. *Shankhapushpi*. *Ayush Kamyas*; used for increasing longevity².

Basic Principles of Ayurveda and Role of Rasayana

Ayurveda suggest that body consisted of five elements; ether (space), air, fire, water and earth. These elements also contribute towards the nature like human body. Ayurveda believe that imbalance of these elements leads to many diseases. The combined rational effects of these elements are responsible for *Vata Dosha*, *Pitta Dosha* and *Kapha Dosha*; these three are represents as “*Tridosha*” of ayurveda which play vital role for diagnostic as well as treatment purpose of many disorders. As per traditional ayurvedic text *Rasayana* Therapy play important role of treating many diseases by correcting the imbalance of *Tridosha*. *Rasayan* improve movement by correcting *Vata Dosha*, also improve metabolism through balancing of *Pitta Dosha* and improve growth and protection mechanism by correcting *Kapha Dosha*. Some therapeutics importances of *Rasayana*

A. *Vayasthapak Mahakashay* (Great Extractives)- Anti Aging Drugs³.

Mahakashay is an ayurvedic formulation comes under the ctagory of rasayana used as age stabilizer it also cures various diseases and improve aphrodisiac power. This type of formulation contains many herbs like; *Guduchi* *Tinospora cordifolia*, *Haritiki* *Terminalia chebula*, *Amalki* *Emblica officinale*, *Shweta* *Clitoria ternatea*, *Jeewanti* *Leptadenia reticulata*, *Atirasa* *Asperagus racemosus*, *Mandookparni* *Centella asiatica*, *Punarnava* *Boerhaavia diffusa*, etc *Rasayana* for Neuro-Protection A study confirms effect of Ayurvedic *Rasayana* as neuro-protector in Alzheimer’s disease. Study was based on the fact that *Amalaki rasayana*, prepared from Indian gooseberry fruits, and *Rasa-Sindoor*, an organo-metallic *Bhasma* prepared from mercury and sulphur improves general well-being. Study showed that dietary supplement of either of these formulations substantially suppressed neurodegeneration in Alzheimer’s disease. The suggested mode of action may involve prevention of accumulation of inclusion bodies and heat shock proteins, suppression of apoptosis and improvement of protein clearance in affected cells. Study confirmed the potential of these two Ayurvedic formulations *Amalaki rasayana* and *Rasa-Sindoor* in providing a holistic relief from the common neurodegenerative disorders⁴.

B. *Rutu Haritaki Rasayana* :In *Amlapitta Rasayan Chikitsa* involves utilization of various herbs like *Amalaki*, *Bhringaraj*, *Ashwagandha*, *Punarnava*, *Chitraka* and *Haritaki*. *Rutuharitaki Rasayana* describes the *Rasayana* effect of *Haritaki* taken along with different *Anupana*. *Amlapitta*, a disease of *Annavaha strotas* related with the gastric problem. *Haritaki* alongwith *Guda* (Jaggery) having curative properties for all types of gastric disorders⁵. It possesses properties like; *Dipana*, *Anulomana* and *Tridoshashamak* which relieves *amlapitta*. A study conducted proves effect of *haritaki Rasayana* in *Amlapitta* clinically. Study suggests that gastric problem like heartburn, nausea and vomiting contribute greatly for *amlapitta*. As

per ayurveda the *amlapitta vyadhi* is caused due to *Viruddhashana* and *Pittaprapakopa bhojana* and *pana*. The symptoms of *Amlapitta* involve *avipaka*, *klama*, *utklesha*, *amlodgar* and *aruchi*. Ayurveda claim *Haritaki* as effective treatment option for *amlapitta*. As per traditional ayurvedic text.⁶

C. *Rasayana for Rajonivritti Janya Lakshana (Menopausal Syndrome)*

Rajonivritti (Menopause) condition occurs due to hormonal changes in middle age women. Ayurveda suggests *Rasayana Chikitsa* is an effective tool for the management of *Rajonivritti*. Study proves effectiveness of various *Rasayana Chikitsa* like utilization of *Rasayanakalpa Vati* for the treatment of *Rajonivritti*.⁷ A study was conducted to proven the clinical efficacy of *Rasayanakalpa Vati* in *Rajonivritti*. *Rasayanakalpa Vati (Anubhuta)* contains dried powdered of many herbs like; *Haritaki (Terminalia chebula Retz)*, *Amalaki (Emblis officinalis Gaerth)*, *Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia Willd)*, *Mandukaparni (Centella asiatica Linn)*, *Jatamansi (Nardostachys jatamansi DC)*, *Suddha Guggulu (Commiphora mukul)* and *Pravala Bhashma (Corallium rubrum)*. Study observed significant effect in duration of one month. Study established *Rasayanakalpa Vati* as a potent therapeutic agent for the treatment of *Rajonivritti*⁸.

E. *Bhasma as Rasayan*

Bhasma are Herbo-mineral formulations of ayurveda, very important composition of *Rasashastra*. These formulations take on different valence states and have different crystal structure and physical properties. The advantage of *Bhasmas* is that this formulation having small size and thus provides better therapeutic effects⁹. Studies have claimed the superiority of *Bhasmas* over other formulations. Utilization of metals and minerals of aquatic and soil origin in ayurveda is the basis of *bhasma* these metals and minerals after several process of purification and calcination forms nanosized fine powders as *bhasma*. *Bhasma* performed many vital function as *rasayan* such as stimulant, antioxidant, improves strength, immunity, longevity, memory and intelligence etc. Many traditional ayurvedic text mentioned *bhasma* as significant formulary of *Rasayan Chikitsa*¹⁰.

Conclusion

Rasayana Chikitsa is a basic therapy for rejuvenation since it attains longevity, memory, intellect, freedom from disease, youth and excellence of lusture. This review articles describes significant informations regarding various options of *Rasayana Chikitsa* as per ayurveda including herbs, combinations of herbs in the form of traditional formulation and *bhasma*. *Rasayana* contributes significantly as the treatment component of ayurveda for curing various diseases and maintaining healthy life style.

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare that there was no conflict of interest regarding the publication of manuscript

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