

Review article

Rasayana In Geriatrics

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ABSTRACT:

The growth of any country or society depends on the number of youth dwelling in that country but according to recent statistical data we soon will have older people more than children and more people at extreme old age than ever before. The world population of the elderly is increasing significantly and by the year 2050, adults older than 65 years will comprise 1/5th of the global population. Rasayana is one important branch of Ayurveda among its eight branches. The concept of Rasayana is based on two principles of conservation and transmutation of energy. Aging is a persistent decline in an individual's physiological and structural attributes with time. The rejuvenation therapy aims normal functioning of enzymes in the tissue cells. It keeps the nerves and the mind in a state of tranquillity and soothes the bones as well. Three factors that affect the life span are Heredity, Diet and Ionizing Radiation changes with the age are universal intrinsic, progressive and deleterious. *Jara chikitsa* in Ayurveda is a method to slow down/arrest the ageing process in human being during the degenerative phase in one's life. Present article have many references regarding how to enhance concept of Geriatrics through principles of Ayurveda with respect to disorders in *jara avastha* and Rasayana therapy.

KEY WORDS: Aging, Rasayana, Rejuvenation, Ayurveda, *Jarachikitsa*, Geriatrics

INTRODUCTION:

Ageing is a process of physical, psychological and social change in multi-dimensional aspects. The world population of the elderly is increasing and by the year 2050, adults older than 65 years will comprise 1/5th of the global population. In India 3.8% of the population are older than 65 years of age. In today's developing countries chronic non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes reflects changes in lifestyle and diet, as well as aging. *Ayurveda* the science of life deals mainly with all the aspects of life in relation of health and prevention of disease. so for promotion of life and prevention of disease there are certain codes conducts and therapies have been mentioned and *Rasayana* therapy not only works on physical aspect but also on mental aspect. Geriatrics is a branch of modern medical science which aims at promotion of health by preventing, treating diseases and disabilities in older adults. So to fulfil the aims of geriatrics *Rasayana* therapy is

considered to be the main line of treatment as it prevents most of the geriatric diseases.

Jara Chikitsa in Ayurveda -

Jara chikitsa is a branch of medicine dealing exclusively with the problems of aging and the diseases of elderly. Ayurvedic literature record numerous single and compound plant based medicines, herbo-mineral, herbo-metallic formulations for general wellbeing and in disease specific conditions relating to geriatrics. When we look in to Ayurvedic prospective our Acharyas have given prime importance to and considered it one among *Astanga Ayurveda*. *Vridhavadha* or old age is one who has already attained *Vridhhi*. *Acharya Charaka* has considered age above 60 years to be *vridhavadha* but *Acharya Sushruta* and *Vagbhata* considered it as age more than 70 years which is characterised by

diminution of tissues sense faculties, strength, vitality and diminution in enthusiasm day after day, person develops wrinkles, grey hairs, baldness, occurrence of secondary disorders such as cough, dyspnoea, inability to perform all activities. As per *Acharya Vagbhata*, *vata dosha* is predominant in old age and it is also considered as Hani Avastha. so there will be more of catabolic activities taking place in body which further leads to many of the chronic diseases dementia, parkinsonism, hypertension and cerebrovascular diseases etc. By following proper principles such as Dinacharya, Rutucharya, Ratricharya, not suppressing *Dharniya vegas* and following of *Rasayana* one can preserve his health and delay the aging related problems.

Rasayana Chikitsa -

Rasayana is a word taken from the Sanskrit language, which means: Path (*ayana*) of the essence (*rasa*). It is a science of increasing life expectancy as per early *ayurvedic medicine*. *Rasayana chikitsa*; also known as Rejuvenation therapy aims to restore body's vitality to its fullest. *Rasayana* is one important branch of *Ayurveda* among its eight branches. The concept of *Rasayana* is based on two-principles of conservation and transmutation of energy. As per *Acharya Dalhana*, *Rasayana* is one which leads to continuous nourishment of *Rasadi Dhatus* there by replenishing them. *Acharya Sushruta* defined *Rasayana* as *Vayasthapaka* which retards aging process, as per *Acharya Sharangdhar* *Rasayana* can be defined as the one which cures diseases arising due to old age. *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned are *Rasayana* is one which increases longevity, which increases *smriti*, *Medha* and one which helps in maintaining health, which enhances *Prabha*, *Varna* etc.

Classification of Rasayana -

Classification of *Rasayana* by Sharma A. K. and Singh R. H. 1992.

Rasayana is primarily divided into two types-

1. Dravyabhuta Rasayana
2. Adravyabhutas (Achara Rasayana)

As per method of use-

1. Kuti praveshika
2. Vatatpika rasayana

As per scope of use-

1. kamyas Rasayana

- a. Prana Kamyas
- b. Medha Kamyas
- c. Shri Kamyas

2. Naimittika Rasayana
3. Ajasrika Rasayana

According to prabhava -

Dalhana mentions two types of *Rasayana* in *sarvopaghata shamaniya* chapter of *Chikitsasthana*,

1. Samshodhana Rasayana
2. Samshamana Rasayana

Mode of Action and Effect -

The *Rasayana* remedies described in *Ayurveda* are claimed to possess special nutritional supplement effect. The *Rasayana* drugs are likely to be nutrient tonics, antioxidants, anti-stress, adaptogen and immuno-modulators. The net effect of all these attributes is the anti-aging effect. *Rasayana* works on *Agni* which leads to proper formation of *Rasadi Dhatus*. Hence it plays a role in prevention of aging.

Rasayana therapy as per science is as follows -

- 1) Immunomodulatory Action - *Guduchi*
- 2) Antioxidant Action - *Amalaki*
- 3) Antiaging Action - *Ashwagandha, Bala*
- 4) Adaptogenic Action - *Ashwagandha*
- 5) Haematopoietic effect - *Amalaki, Mandura, Bhringaraja, Lauha Bhasma*
- 6) Anabolic Action - *Vidarikanda*
- 7) Nutritive function - *Gritha, Ksheera*
- 8) Neuroprotective action - *Ashwagandha, swarna bhasma, Rajata bhasma.*

DISCUSSION:

The *Rasayana* are primarily of promotive value and are essentially meant to rejuvenate the body and mind to impart longevity against ageing and immunity against disease. The *jara lakshana* and *jarajanita Vyadhis* one has to follow *Rasayana* therapy on daily basis which in turn leads to good qualitative life. *Acharya Sharangdhara* has mentioned the *Hani* in accordance, to decades of life.

Sr. No.	Action	Decades of life	Indicated Rasayana
1	Balyam	childhood	Vachayla, swarna
2	Medha	sharpness in perception	shankhapushpi
3	Vridhhi	Growth and development	Kasmira & Bala
4	Twak	skin and Appendages	Bhringraj, Jyotishmati
5	Chavi	Luster	Amalaki, Lauha
6	Drishti	Visual Acuity	Triphala, Shatavari
7	Triphala, Shatavari	Intellect and cognitive functioning	Brahmi, Mandukaparni
8	Vikram	Valour	Amalaki, Bala
9	Shukra	potency and fertility	Atmgupta Ashvgandha
10	karmendriya	physical capacities	Bala, Ashwagandha.

Table No. 1 : Herbs and their action (*Rasayana effect*)

The herbs which have been mentioned in table have specific action eg. *Amalaki* is a very good source of vitamin c and has antioxidant so it has been mentioned as *chakshusya* also counteract the damage done to eyes and vision by age related degeneration. Hence these drugs have critically analyzed and mentioned in specific age related situations.

CONCLUSION:

As the prime aim of *Ayurveda* is *Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshnam* so to maintain the healthy state of a person one should follow the *swasthavritta* principles. therapy is one among them, in present world persons follow sedentary life style and faulty food habits which is the main cause for metabolic imbalance which leads to aging to start early than its schedule. These *Rasayana* therapies are critically analyzed by our *Acharyas*. Therefore person desirous of attaining long life, vitality and happiness should *practice Rasayana* therapy with complete devotion according to the prescribed procedure.

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