

**Review Article**

**Role of Rasayan therapy by various Acharyas in Netra Rog**

Ashlekha Sharma <sup>1\*</sup>, Chandana Virkar <sup>2</sup>

P. G. Scholar <sup>1</sup>, Professor and HOD <sup>2</sup>, Department of Shalakya Tantra  
College of Ayurved and Research Centre, Nigdi, Pune, Maharashtra, India.

\* **Corresponding Author:** Dr. Ashlekha Sharma, E-mail: [sharmaashlekha@gmail.com](mailto:sharmaashlekha@gmail.com)

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**ABSTRACT:**

Ayurveda is the most ancient medical science in the world and being 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 disease. Rasayan therapy is employed for fulfilling both of them. Rasayan chikitsa is one of the eight branches of Ayurveda. It is the best means of keeping the Rasa and other Dhatus in excellent condition. Rasayan aid in increasing natural immunity, enhancing general wellbeing, improving the functioning of all fundamental organs of the body. The main Rasayanas adopted in Netra chikitsa are Naimitika Rasayana and Achara Rasayana. The appropriate use of chakshushya and rasayana dravyas will help to maintain the health of the netra and prevents age related eye diseases. This article presents Rasayana dravyas by various acharyas in Netra Rog.

**KEY WORDS:** Rasayan, Netra, naimitika rasayan, rasayan dravyas, chakshushya

**INTRODUCTION:**

Ayurveda has two aims i.e. prevention and promotion of health and secondly cure from the disease.<sup>1</sup> Everyone wants to be young forever and increase lifespan by staying healthy. But various cells and tissues of the body undergo changes as age advances. In the present era, physical and mental health of each individual is disturbed because of changing lifestyle with regard to food, daily activities and mental stress. These kind of ahita ahara and viharas cause vitiation of doshas and further it will lead to diseases of body and impairment of sense organs. Among all the sense organs Netra is the pradhana indriya because knowledge can be gained only through proper vision. In the current scenario, the prevalence and incidence of blindness is that there are 37 million blind people and 124 million with low vision, comprising a total of over 161 million individuals with visual impairment in the world.<sup>2</sup> In our classical ayurvedic text books Acharyas has mentioned about various netra rogas, their nidana, Samprapti and the effective treatment modalities and plenty of chakshushya drugs which have both curative and preventive effects.

**Aims and Objectives:**

1. To find the drugs mentioned in the classical Ayurvedic text books which are beneficial for Netra roga.
2. To explore the classical Ayurveda and allied literature for understanding the fundamental concept of Rasayana chikitsa in Netra.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS:**

Classical Ayurveda text books, modern textbooks, journals related to rasayana chikitsa and the rasayana drugs related to netra were analyzed for understanding the benefits of rasayanas in netra.

**Rasayan for Netra in various Samhitas :**

**1. Yogratnakar:**

According to Yogratnakar<sup>(3)</sup> the beneficial diet for netra consists of, shashtika shali (*Oryza sativa*), Patola (*tricosanthes diocia*), shigru (*Moringa oleifera*), draksha (*Vitis vinifera*), vastuka (*Chenopodium album*), Karavellum (*Momordium charantia*), Amra (*Mangifera*

*indica*), Dhatri (*Embllica officinalis*), Dadima (*Punica granatum*), Matulungam(*Citrus medica*), Narikela (*Coccus nucifera*), tail takra and karpoor.

## 2. Sushrut Samhita:

a) If a person consumes puraana ghrit, triphala, shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus*), Patola (*Tricosanthus dioica*), Mudga (*Vigna radiate*), Amalaka (*Phyllanthus embilica*) and Yava (*Hordeum vulgare*) everyday then the person will not have the fear of dreadful Timira.<sup>(4)</sup>

b) Payasa (milk pudding) prepared from shatavari alone or that prepared from Amalaka or Yavudana mixed with ghee, consumed followed by drinking Triphala kshaya cures Timira.<sup>(5)</sup>

c) Leaves of Jivanti(*Leptadenia reticulata*),

sunisannaka (*Marsilea quadrifolia*), Tanduliyaka (*Amaranthus viridis*), Vastuka(*Chenopodium album*) and meat of birds and animals of arid regions are all good for eyesight.<sup>(6)</sup>

d) Leaves of Patola(*Tricosanthus dioica*), Karkotaka (*Momordica dioica*), Karavella(*Momordica charantia*), Vartaka(*Solanum melongena*), Karira(*Capparis decidua*), Shigru(*Moringa oleifera*) and Artagala (*Bareria cristata*) cooked with ghee are also good for eyesight.<sup>(7)</sup>

## 3. Charak Samhita:

Acharya Charaka explained about Rasayana chikitsa in four Padas, a person undergoing rejuvenation therapy attains Deha and Indriya Bala.

**Table No. 1: Four Rasayan Pada describes in Charak Samhita**

Abhayamaleeyam Rasayan padam		
Chyavanaprasha	Balamindriyanam	Ch.chi.1.73
Amalaka Rasayanam	Indiyabala Samudhita	Ch.Chi.1.75
Haritaki Rasayana	Sareerendriya Budhibala	Ch.Chi.1.76
Pranakameeyam Rasayan Padam		
Amalaka Ghrita	Sthirendriyam cha Atibalendriyam	Cha.chi.2.5
Karaprachiteeyam Rasayana		
Amalakayasa Brahma Rasayanam	Indriya Balapradam	Cha.Chi.3.6
Lauhadi Rasayanam	Ati Balendriyam	Cha.Chi.3.21
Ayurvedasamudhaneeyam Rasayan Padam		
Dwiteeya Indrokta Rasayanam	Indriya Balapradam	Cha.Chi.4.27

## 4. Ashtang Hridayam:

People who are fond of their eyes, though healthy should always adhere to following grains such as Yava (*Hordeum vulgare*), godhuma(*Triticum aestivum*), Shali(*Oryza sativa*) Swastika (*Marsilea minuta*), Kodrava (*Paspalum scrobiculatum*), Mudga

(*Vigna radiate*) etc. which are old and which mitigate Kapha and Pitta mixed with more ghee; vegetables and meats of animals of Jangala desha, having similar properties: Dadima(*Punica granatum*), Sita, Saindhava, Triphala, Draksha(*Vitis vinifera*) and rain water drinking.<sup>(8)</sup>

Chyavanaprasha	Balamidriyanam	A.H.Ut. 39.41
Langali Rasayanam	Upachitapruthu Gatra Shrotra Netradi Yuktam	A.H.Ut. 39.268

## Gadanigraha:

Triphala in the form of paste, decoction and powder is useful in all visual disturbances. Triphala mixed with honey helps to eliminate Kaphaja diseases; with ghee eliminates Pittaja diseases and in Vataj diseases with oil.<sup>(9)</sup>

## Bhavprakash:

According to Acharya Bhavprakash the beneficial diet for eyes include shali (*Oryza sativa*), mudga (*Vigna radiate*), Yava(*Hordeum vulgare*), jangala mriga, pakshi mansa, Vastukam(*Chenopodium album*), Naveen vartaka all cooked in ghee and also sweet and bitter drugs.<sup>10</sup>

**DISCUSSION:**

Rasayan chikitsa is one of the best treatment modalities in Ayurveda which helps to cure the diseases as well as prevent the occurrence of diseases and helps to maintain youthfulness. The dravyas used in rasayan contains antioxidants which inhibits oxidation process and the production of free radicals which cause damage to the cells. Ayurvedic samhitas has mentioned about various chakshushya dravyas for indriya bala wardhanam and indriya prasadam as they promote normal functioning of the sense organs.

In our body each cell membrane is soluble and most of our rasayanas have ghrith/sneha in one or the other form therefore they can cross the blood aqueous barrier and thus reach each and every cell of ocular tissue.

**Commonly used Netra Rasayan Dravyas:****Kastha Dravyas:**

Triphala<sup>11</sup> is the wonderful preparation which is used in different forms in almost all the netra rogas. Being Kaphapittaghna, chakshushya and rasayana it helps to nourish the chakshurendriya. Being an antioxidant it acts as a free radical scavenger which is helpful in the maintenance of transparency of lens fibers. Vitamin C helps to maintain the normal level glutathione which helps in normal metabolism of the lens.

The content of polyphenols and tannins are responsible for radio protecting ability in the diseases like pterygium, cataract and catarrhal conjunctivitis. Presence of cysteine helps to repair the protein present in the lens and zinc helps to store vitamin A In retina.

Amalaki contains Pyruvate and vitamin C which is found to inhibit AR and reduce lens sorbitol levels.<sup>(12)</sup> Amalaki is a potent inhibitor of lipid peroxide formation and scavenger of superoxide and hydroxyl radicals in vitro and is capable to prevent dyslipidemia and oxidative stress in aging process.<sup>(13)</sup> The antioxidant activity of amalaki is superior to vitamin C due to the presence of low molecular hydrolase tannins-emblicanin A and emblicanin B. It is capable to induce lens regeneration.<sup>14</sup>

Haritaki exhibited anti lipid peroxidation, anti superoxide radical formation and free radical scavenging activities in experimental animals.<sup>15</sup> Methanolic extract of the drug has been suggested to

play a major role in the relief of long term complications of DM in experimental animals due to oxidative stress.<sup>16</sup> Vibhitaka showed anti diabetic and antioxidant properties in vivo.<sup>17</sup> *Emblica officinalis* showed greater efficiency in lipid peroxidation and plasmid DNA assay while *T. chebula* has greater free radical scavenging activity. Thus their mixture Triphala is expected to be more effective due to the combined activity.<sup>18</sup>

Honey contains almost all micro nutrients, twenty fold antioxidant capacity than vitamin C and richest supplier of anti oxidant.<sup>19</sup>

Navaneeta and ghrita are extremely rich in Vitamin A and choline with good amount of Vitamin E, riboflavin, Niacin and pantothenic acid; Vitamin K, foliate and Vitamin B12 in small amount. Anti Stiffness factor present in butter prevents hardening of arteries and cataracts.<sup>20</sup>

Various Chakshushya Dravyas mentioned in our classics are rich sources of macro and micro nutrients like Vitamin A, Vitamin E, Vitamin C, Vitamin K, Vitamin B1, B2, B6, B12 and vitamin D, glucose, fructose, glycogen, glutathione and zinc which helps in maintaining normal functional and structural integrity of the eye. So the proper usage of Rasayana Dravyas enlisted in our classical Ayurvedic samhitas will help to improve eyesight by strengthening ocular tissues and protect the eyes from free radical damage and prevents age related diseases like cataract and macular degeneration.<sup>21</sup>

**Rasaushadhis:**

Commonly used rasoushadhis such as swarna bhasam i.e. gold, rajata bhasam i.e. silver bhasma have antioxidant, immune modulatory actions, Yashada i.e. zinc helps to store vitamin A in retina, Abhrak bhasam(Mica) has cellular regenerative, nerve stimulant and immune modulator properties. Bhasmas of these Rasoushadhis also possess analgesic, anti bacterial and anti inflammatory activity.<sup>22</sup> By the virtue of their sukshma guna they can easily penetrate in to deeper tissues by passing through minute channels and quickly bring about the desired effects.

**CONCLUSION:**

A healthy person is one whose humours and metabolic state are in equilibrium whose functional activities of the tissues and excretory products are in balance, the soul senses and the mind feels well. With

regards to this rasayan plays an important role in all aspects of attaining health, which is the main motto of Ayurveda.

Because of the changing lifestyle in the modern era more no. of people are suffering from degenerative disorders of the eye. Globally estimated no. of blindness(%) due to cataract is 17.6 million(39%) followed by glaucoma 4.5 million(10%) and ARMD 3.2 million(7%). A person can attain excellent potentiality of body and sense organs by the usage of rasayanas, by the virtue of their cellular regeneration and immune modulatory qualities. Chakshushya rasayan dravyas help to delay the degenerative process in the retina and the lens and nourishes the ocular structures and hence helps to get rid off degenerative conditions. Rasayan chikitsa is essential to treat nutritional deficiency disorders like xerophthalmia, nutritional optic neuropathy etc. It is also beneficial in certain eye diseases which require immune modulatory action like uveitis, keratitis etc. Therefore usage of rasayanas has an important role in curing as well as in preventing eye diseases which in turn contributes to the prevention of global blindness.

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