



IMPORTANCE OF RASAYANA IN RASASHASTRA.

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ABSTRACT:

Rasayana is a Sanskrit word with literal meaning Path (Ayana) of essence (Rasa). In Rasashastra the word *Rasayana* has been used in two senses, one for medicine as a whole, for example *Kapipakwa rasayana* and for whole group of medicine having mercury or other mineral in them. Rejuvenation is another meaning of *rasayana*. So going through Rasashastra texts, we find an extensive description of *rasayana* with better herbomineral combination. There is need to go through role of *rasayana* in changing environment with modernization during the developing era at Rasa chikista as it is more of value in present context since the statistics of occurrence at diseases like AIDS, Tuberculosis and Diabetes mellitus etc. are still uncontrolled. Moreover latest techniques of drug analysis have been developed so in present scenario.

KEY WORDS: Rasayana, Rejuvenation, RasayanaChikista, Antiaging

INTRODUCTION:

Ayurveda, the science of life is the oldest health science, it is divided into eight branches and rasayan is one of them. Rasayana is formed by union of two words, Rasayana= Rasa (Rasa Dhatu-Nutrition)+ Ayan (circulation and promotion). So from the literary meaning of rasa and ayan, it can be drawn that rasayana is a regimen or substance with the help of which one can attain, metabolize and channelize the better quality of rasa and other dhatus up to smallest unit of body. According to charakchikistasthana, which give strength and act as vrishya for healthy person is called Rasayana. Some drugs which cure the diseases and give strength to human being which means which act as Roganashaka (Disease curing) and rasayan (Rejuvenate). For example Acharya Chakrapani mentioned some drugs in "KshataKsheena" disease those are ghruta and guda and some oushadha yogas which act in disease as Rasayana eg. Agashtya

hareetaki and Yograja in Pandu, thusacharya has given example for the same.

The oushadhas which eradicate the vyadhi (disease) are not Rasayana but the oushadhas which give Shareera Dhrudatwa, dheergayu and roganirodaka Shakti (body immunity) are called Rasayana. Which gives dheergayu, smriti, medhasarogya, youvana, shareeraprabh & varna, swarya andvakshuddhi to human being and give strength to deha and Indriyas is called Rasayana. According to sharangdhar, rasayan is the medicine, which increases the Ojas in healthy person, prevents diseases (vyadhinivartaka) and also delays ageing (Jara Nirvataka). In rasaoushadhi kalpanas we will get few Rasayans e.g.-

- A) Khalwi Rasayana: Rasaoushadhi which are prepared in Khalwa Yantra called Khalwi Rasayana.

- B) Parpati Rasayana: Rasaoushadhi which are prepared by using Banana leafs and cow dung called Parpati Rasayana.
- C) Pottali Rasayanas: Rasaoushadhi which are prepared by using Pottali (Pouch) called as Pottali Rasayana.
- D) KupipakwaRasayana :Rasaoushadhi which are prepared by using Kachakupi (Glass bottle) called as KupipakwaRasayanas.

Aim of Rasayana:

The Rasayana therapy has principal aim to promote rejuvenation, retard ageing process defend body from various diseases, regulate metabolism and provide physical and mental strength.

Objects of Rasayana:

1. JaraNivartaka (Delay ageing Process) and DeerghaAyushkara (Provide Longevity of Life)
2. Vyadhi Nivartaka (Prevents diseases)
3. PrashastaDhatu(Promotes Health)

Important Rasayanas:

A. Herbal and Medicinal Plants:

Amla (emblica officinalis),
Harad (Terminaliacheula),
Guduchi (tinosporacordifolia),
Ashwagandha (withaniasomnifera),
Nagbala(grewia hirsute)

B. Natural Resources(Elements):

1. PARADA:

There are large number of potent medicines in rasa shastra which are described as Rasayana. Parada (Mercury) is considered to be a very powerful medicine. Generally Rasa word used for Parada. When parada is properly processed, it balances all three doshas, has soothing effect on the body and prevents diseases and old age. It nourishes all the vital parts of the body and increases the strength of the eyes. It is vrishya (aphrodisiac), balya (tonic),snigdha,rasayana and vranashodhan and ropan(wound cleaner and healer),and krimighna(antimicrobial) and yogvahi. Parada is said to given a firm physique, a stable mind, and to be the best destroyer of the disease.

In Rasashastra not only Parada but also other dravyas like abhraka, gandhaka, kampilaka etc. are

under their respective groups like Maharasa, Uparasa and Sadharanarasa. Most of Rasa granthas have been mentioned rasa as Parada, but they considered remaining dravyas in Uparasa group. Whatever it may be, in Rasashastra we use the word Rasadravya not only for Parada n=but also other Rasadravyas, at the same time Rasaoushadha(metalo-herbi-mineral formulation) means, the oushadha which is not only prepared with Parada, but also with other Rasadravyas (Metalo-mineral drugs).

2. SUVARNA:

Apart from Parada there are a lot of minerals and metals with rasayana properties. Just as herbs have their rasa, so minerals, For example, suvarna is madhur(sweet) and kashaya in rasa, snigdha and laghu in guna, sheeta in virya, and madhur in vipak. Its actions are vishaghana, varnya, rasayana, brinhana, ruchikara, deepana, medhya, smritivardhaka and vrishya. It checks wasting of the body tissues, improves body complexion and act as an antimicrobial and antipyretic.

3. RAJATA:

Rajata (silver) has kashaya and amla rasa. It gives strength to the brain, heart and stomach. It is indicated for bhrama (vertigo) and unmada (insanity), palpitation, premature ejaculation and mada (intoxication)

Other natural Rasayana:

Parad, Abhrak, Vaikarant, Suvarna, Makshika, Shilajeet, Sasyaka, Gandhaka, Manshila, Hingula, suvarna, Rajat, Loha, Vanga, Hiraka.

C. Food Ingredients:

Honey, cow's milk, desi ghee, (clarified butter)

Ayurvedic Medicinal Formulations:

Chyanprashavleha, amrita Rasayana, abhya Rasayana, bhramarasayana, punarnavarasayana etc.

MordernCorelation of Rasayana:

Rasayana chikitsa means rejuvenation therapy i.e. Return to youthful condition or to the normal from diseased state. It helps to promote and preserve health and to cure diseased condition.

Rsayanachikitsa enhances mental and physical capability of healthy person. It is known to have improved skin complexion and texture, modulated the voice and increases sensing capacity of sense organs.

Rasayana chikitsa is supposed to nourish blood, lymph, flesh, adipose tissue and semen, and thus prevent freedom from chronic degenerative diseases like Arthritis and disorders of senility.

Rasayana is thought to improve metabolic processes which result in best possible biotransformation and produce the best quality tissue and eradicated senility and other diseases of old age.

It helps to build natural resistance against infection. It invigorates the body in general by sustaining the required balance between anabolism and catabolism.

The possible mechanisms by which action of Rasayana can be interpreted with modern aspects is follow :

1. Antiaging Action
2. Antioxidant action
3. Immunomodulatory action
4. Hemopirotic Effect
5. Anabolic Effect
6. Nutritive Effect

1. Antiaging Action

Aging is progressive change related to passage of time. By age 50-60 age related changes to begin to reflect like reduced power of muscle, reduced vision, memory, locomotion function, there is gradual decline in homeostasis and immune function predisposes them to infection, digestive problem and malignancy.

Free radicals cause oxidative damage to various biological molecules e.g. hydroxyl radicals can damage cell membrane and lipoproteins by a process called lipid peroxidation which may contribute to aging process. Certain Rasayana drugs like Ashwagandha inhibits copper induced lipid peroxidation and also inhibits oxidative protein modification. Rasayana also acts as Antioxidants so they help in delaying Aging.

2. Antioxidant Action

Rasayana drugs acts as Antioxidants. Antioxidants are substances that reduce oxidative damage such as that caused by free radicals. Free radicals are highly reactive chemicals that attack molecules by capturing the electrons and thus modifying chemical structures. Well known Antioxidants include a number of enzymes and other substances such as vitamin C, Vitamin E and beta carotene (which is converted to vitamin A) that are capable of counteracting the damaging effect of oxidation. Antioxidants are also commonly added to food products like vegetable oils and prepared foods

Antioxidants are having role in preventing heart diseases and also in diabetes mellitus. Taking Antioxidants rich food especially vitamin E, may lower risk of Type II DM. Antioxidants may possibly reduce the risk of cancer and age related macular degeneration. Many Rasayana drugs like Amla, Ashwagandha acts are Antioxidants. Main constituents of Amla are vitamin C, carotene, and riboflavin. It is having a role in cellular oxidation reduction. They have also a role in collagen fibrin synthesis, helps in formation at fibrin, Absorption of iron.

3. Immunomodulatory Action

Rasayana drugs also acts as immunomodulator. An immunomodulator is a drug used for its effect on the immune system. Clinical problems that require an evaluation of immunity include chronic infections, recurrent infection, unusual infecting agents and certain autoimmune syndromes. The type of Clinical syndrome under evaluation can provide information regarding possible immune defects

Certain Rasayana drugs at as Immunomodulator strengthening of immunity is done in various ways – by promoting bodily defense Mechanisms like increasing the WBC count, improving immune function. Bodily defense mechanism is promoted. Certain Rasayana drugs also increase number of immune cells known as T cells & B cells helping to fight infections.

CONCLUSION:

Rasayana therapy helps to attain optimal physical strength, sharpness of senseorgan, qualities of dhatus, longevity, immunity(Bala) and mental competence. It nourishes the whole body and improves immunue system and hence the natural resistance to infection will be more. Along with its antioxidant, haematogenic, anabolic and nutritive properties, compensation of essential elements, minerals and other nutritive substances cannot be ignored. This was the need of day in changing environment with mordernization during development era of Rasa Chikitsa and it is more of value in present context as statistics of occurrence of diseases like AIDS, Tuberculosis And Diabetes Mellitus etc. are still uncontrolled. Now a days better techquies of drug analysis have come up which can help us in authenticating the rasayana and their effects on health. If such beneficial branch of Rasashatra and Rasayana therapy of Ashtang Ayurveda gets standardized, it will bring a revolution in Ayurveda and remarkable glory in society.

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