RASAYANA THERAPY: MODE OF ACTION OF RASAYAN DRAVYA’S

Pallavi N. Mane¹, Renuka R. Gayal²

¹Final Year PG, ²Professor
Kayachikitsa Depatment, BSDT Ayurvedic Mahavidyalaya, Wagholi, Pune, Maharashtra, India

Email: pulsemane@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The nutritional and nourishment deriving function of particular drugs are known as ‘Rasayana’ in Ayurveda. The term Rasayana as (Rasa+ Ayan) that means path of obtaining good quality of Rasa. In Ayurveda, Rasayana have a 2 folder aspect of improving immune system (Ojaskarbhava) and helpful in treatment modalities. It seems that Rasayana drugs acts at 3 levels of bio-system to promote nutritional aspects: 1) At the level of Agni by promoting digestion and metabolism. 2) At the level of Srotas by promoting microcirculation and tissue perfusion. 3) At the level of Rasadidhatus by acting as direct nutrition. Rasayanahas an effect of immunomodulator, Adoptogenic, Anabolic, Nootropic, Anti-oxidant and Anti-aging etc. on body and psyche. Thus the Rasayana remedies can be concluded as nutritional dynamic and rejuvenation therapy for body and psyche.

Keywords: Rasayana, Ayurveda, Immunomodulator, Anabolic, Nootropic

INTRODUCTION

“Rasayana” is among eight branches of Ayurveda with high importance in Ayurvedic therapeutics with objectives like rejuvenation, regeneration, anti-ageing, better cognitive functioning and immunomodulation. The term “Rasayana” gives a broad explanation as immunomodulator as well as disease curing as described by Charak Samhita.1Rasayana consist of two words ‘Rasa’ and ‘Aayan’ which means way of obtaining good quality of Rasa, stat of this Rasa in the body directly governs the stat of health of individual, so it means obtaining optimum standard of Rasa is known to be Rasayana. Rasayana has multiple benefits viz longevity, memory, intelligence, health, luster, better sensory and motor abilities etc.

Acharyacharaka has described Rasayana as a means of obtaining the best quality of Rasadihatus, Best quality of Rasa dhatu leads to formation of good quality of other dhatu. Consequently ‘Rasayana’ helps as an effect of Regeneration all body tissue.1

Aacharya Sushruta defines as ‘Rasayana’ a measure to promote a young age, to prolong longevity, develops health and mental func-
tion; impart resistance and immunity against disease.2
The effect of Rasayana—considering Ayurvedic concepts of physiology Rasayana agent promotes nutrition through following mode-by direct enrichment of the nutritional quality of Rasa (Nutritional plasma) - Shatavari, Milk and Ghee and by promoting nutrition through improving (Digestion and Metabolism) as Bhallataka, Pip-pali, and by Promoting the competence of strotas (Microcirculatory channels in the body) as Guggulu etc. By proper use of Rasayana a person can get a happy healthy long life.

AIM:
To describe and elaborate the mode of action of Rasayana Dravya.

Objective:
To explore newer dimensions of Rasayana Dravya’s as Immunomodulator, Adoptogenic, Anabolic, Nootropic, Anti-oxidant and Anti-aging etc. on body and psyche.

Classification of Rasayana: 4
1) According to mode of action of Administration of Rasayana:
   a) Kutipraveshika Rasayana: In this form of Rasayana the person is made to stay in a specially designed chamber for a certain period and is given Rasayana preparations.
   b) Vatatapika- In this form the person can carry out his normal work and still undergo Rasayana.
   c) DroniPraveshika

2) According to purpose of Administration:
   a) Kamya Rasayana- These is promoter of normal health. They boast body energy levels, immunity and general health hence the Rasayana.
      ▪ Pranakamya- Promoter of vitality and longevity.
      ▪ Medhakamya- Promoter of intelligence.
      ▪ Srikamya- Promoter of complexion.
   b) Nimitta- Mean’s things listed for a short and specific period, used for treating disease.
   c) Ajasrika Rasayana- Is using food substances on regular basis for nourishment body.

3) According to mode of Action:
   a) Samsodhan Rasayana
   b) Samashaman Rasayana

4) AacharaRasayana: This means how the person should behave while moving in the society.

5) According to Age- 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age groups in years</th>
<th>Desired Effect</th>
<th>Rasayandrugs</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>Balya (Childhood)</td>
<td>Suvarnabhasma, Vacha, Kasmir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>Vriddhi (Growth)</td>
<td>Bala, Shatavari, Ashwagnadha</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>Chavi (Beauty)</td>
<td>Amalaki</td>
</tr>
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<td>31-40</td>
<td>Medha (Intellect)</td>
<td>Bramhi, Shankhapushpi, Vacha, Suvarna</td>
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<td>41-50</td>
<td>Twaka (Health of Skin)</td>
<td>Jyotishmati, Priyal, Bringaraj</td>
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<td>51-60</td>
<td>Drasti (Vision)</td>
<td>Triphala, Shatavari, Jyotishmati</td>
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<td>61-70</td>
<td>Sukra (sex)</td>
<td>Atmagupta, Vajikaran Drugs</td>
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<td>71-80</td>
<td>Vikrama (Physical)</td>
<td>Bala, Aamalki</td>
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<td>81-90</td>
<td>Buddhi (Wisdom)</td>
<td>Brahami, Shankhapushpi</td>
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<td>91-100</td>
<td>Karmedriya (locomotors activity)</td>
<td>Ashwgangha, Bala</td>
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According to Deha Prakruti
a) Vata Prakruti - Bala, Ashwagagnha, Guduchi, Shankpushpi, Ghee, Milk, Gold.
b) Pitta Prakruti - Shatavari, Amalaki, Brahmi, Chyavanprash, Milk, Ghee, Silver.
c) Kapha Prakruti - Vacha, Bakuchi, Brahma Rasayan, Haritaki, Triphala, Honey.

According to RituSaatmya-
=a) Aadankala - Sitavirya and Laghuguna Dravya (Amalaki).
b) Visarga Kala - Ushnavirya, Guru gunadravya (Bhallatak).

Mode of Action of Rasayana Dravya’s:
Rasayana’s are used for preservation of positive health. Aacharya Sushruta defines a healthy man as one who has equilibrium of Doshas, normal function of Agni, normal condition of seven dhatus, beside his soul, the sense organs and mind should be happy and cheerful. Rasayana stands as an answer to solve the problem of healthful longevity including mental development and resistance against disease. Rasayana is a specialized type of treatment influencing the fundamental aspects of the body i.e. Dhatu, Agni, and Srotas. It is possible that different Rasayana drugs may act with predominance effect at different levels. These comprehensive effects are brought about with the help of the varied Pharmaco dynamics properties of these drugs. Rasayana effect is not a specific pharmacological action but it is a complex phenomenon operating through a comprehensive mechanism involving the fundamental factors like Rasa-Samhana, Dhatu, Agni and Srotas. It may ultimately be leading to the achievement of comprehensive effect as stated by Aacharya Charak “Labhopayo Hi Shastanam Rasadinam Rasayanam”3. It Produces the Rasayana effects mentioned in term of Vayasthapana and Ayushkara, Medhakara, Urjaskara so that Rasayana Dravya’s acting at the level of Rasa by improving specific nutritional values of Poshak Rasa. Probably Rasayana Dravya’s are having Madhura, Guru, Snigdha and Sheeta properties act as Rasayana at the level of Rasa by promoting the nutritional value of Rasa which in term help in obtaining the best quality of Dhatu. The example of such drugs may be Shatavari, Madhuyasti, Bala, Dugdha, Ghrita etc. Rasayana Dravya’s have a fundamental effect at the level of Agni or digestion and Metabolism. The Rasayana Dravyas possessing the Ushna, Laghu, Ruksha and katu, Tikta, Kashaya Rasa may be acting at the level of Agni, Vitalizing the organic metabolism leading to an improved structural and function pattern of Dhatu, may cause Srotoshodhana and production of the Rasayana effects. Dravya’s such as Pippali, Guggulu, Rasona, Bhallata, Rudanti mainly acts at the level of Agni so improve the digestion and create excellence of Saptadhatus. The Rasayana’s like Vidang, Chitrak and Haritaki are experienced to enhance Agni at the level of Jatharagni. Similarly Amalaki, Amrita, Pippli, Kumari are supposed to act on Dhatu. Rasayana-dravy’s which influence Oja are supposed to induce Bala and Vyadhikshamatva or Immunity.

Anabolic effects-
Initial investigations of Rasayana drugs were designed to elicit their role on metabolism and tissue building. Dravya’s like Aamalaki, Gambhari, Pippali, Shatavari, Guduchi, Shilajatu has shown a positive hint in this direction regular administration of such drugs was found to improve nitrogen balance and thus promote tissue building.

Anti-Stress and Adaptogenic Effect-
The process of living is subjected to many paradoxical situations. One such a paradox is Stress. To be precise, every living organism in this universe is positioned in some or other kind of stressful situation. It is practically difficult to
define the normal and abnormal values for stress and it will be highly variable. What matters the most is ones own threshold of tolerance. If you have a good tolerance it is easy to fight against any kind of stress. Therefore we look at the means of improving our own tolerance and a Rasayana drug could come to your rescue to some extent.

Pharmacological investigations on drugs like Aswagandha (Withaniasomnifera) and Shilajatu point to this unique biological effect of Rasayana drugs. Accordingly a drug with Rasayana quality can benefit the user in two distinct ways Firstly it can neutralize the negative effects of stress on physiological and restore homeostasis. This effect is generally termed as anti-stress effect. Secondly a long term administration of such drugs may enhance one’s own tolerance levels and help to cope up with stress better. This particular effect is termed as Adaptogenic effect.

Immunomodulatery Effect-

Immunity (Vyadhikshmatva) is another biological phenomenon with varied implications. At its first place immune system works to fight back any kind of external invasions on the body e.g. invasions by microbes. Immune system is a multi-locational, multi-component defense system guarding the body as a whole. Again as by today’s understanding immune system may also play a paradoxical role in the body. For example when it works in a balanced manner, it quads the body from invasions by microbes. When this defense system mechanism goes weak the body suffers infections. One may need a drug which can stimulate the immune cells to work more effectively. On the contrary, immune system under selected circumstances may start doubting our own tissues and invade them ruthlessly. Such an abnormal phenomenon may lead to development of a class of disease entities lead to development of a class of disease entities called “Auto-Immune Disorder”. In such kind of complex problems, one may need to suppress the Hyper-acting immune complex.

Rasayandravyas are being continuously explored for their effect on immune system. Available evidences show that, these drugs can be used to modulate the immune function. At one hand they may work to enhance immune function and build you firm deep within, or they might pacify an angry immunity cell to be in its limits on the other. This Rasayana drug favor’s the host in both ways.

Nootropic Effect:

Ayurveda was fascinated with the idea of enhancing mental capabilities. Rasayana which are specific to brain and nervous system are known by the name of Medhya Rasayan (Nootropic). They include a specific group of herbs, which are used to boost up the cognitive functioning like memory, concentration and retention and so on. An improved cognitive ability can have better influence on psychological aspects like mood, thinking skill and ability to cope with stress. Some of these Medhya Rasayanas can be enlisted as Mandukaparni (Centellaasiatica), Yashthinadhu (Glycyrrhizaglabra), Guduchi (Tinosporacordifolia), Shankhapushpi (Convolvulus pluricals), Ashwagandha (Withaniasomnifera), Vacha (Acoruscalamus), Jyotishmati (Celastruspaniculata), Brahmi (Bacopamonneri) and Jatamamsi (Nardostachysjatamansi).

The cognition-promoting effect of Medhya Rasayana is best seen in children with memory deficits, or when memory is compromised following head injury or a prolonged illness and in old age. These drugs are judiciously used in different conditions to prevent and manage mental illnesses. In old age, Medhya drugs are used in single or in formulations to attain delaying of senile degenerative process. Most of these are known to balance the deranged Vata.
Anti-oxidant Effect-
Oxygen creates another paradoxical situation for a living cell to face with. There has been a tremendous understanding today on the rampaging effects of oxygen free radicals if generated in excess free radicals, by producing certain kinds of enzymes to some extent. When these natural mechanisms become inadequate, the concentration of free radicals goes up in the tissues and lead to various diseases. Today oxygen free radicals are implicated in wide range of diseases starting from minor allergies to cancers.

Rasayana drugs are now discovered to help the physiological in overcoming such oxidative injury. Present understanding goes that a Rasayana drug enhances the natural enzymatic defense mechanism of the body.

Anti-aging Effect-
Administration of Rasayana drugs appears to be associated with prevention of aging also. There have been only few investigations in this direction and they are too inadequate to prove or disapprove ancient thought. Available evidences faintly indicate that Rasayana drugs could influence the secretion of a hormone Dihydroxy phenyl Alanine (DHEA), the deficiency of which is implicated in the process of aging. Neurotransmitter substances such as Norepinephrine, Acetyl chlorine or Dopamine (DHEA) are released in stress conditions. Repeated stress on every cell causes aging process. Rasayana therapy is thus, associated with multidimensional effects on the physiology.

CONCLUSION
At last it can be concluded that Rasayana therapy is a wonderful treatment procedure of Ayurveda. By its proper use, a person can live healthy and happy long life. Rasayana therapy is not a simple drug therapy but is a specialized therapeutic procedure implicating the fundamental concept of Ayurveda. Science of Rejuvenation deals with recipes which enable a man to retain his manhood or youthful vigor up to good old age and which generally serve to make the human systems invulnerable disease and decay.

The Rejuvenation therapy has unimaginable and wonderful effects. It promotes life, maintains positive health, and preserves youth and cure morbid sleep, drowsiness, physical as well as mental fatigue, laziness and weakness. It maintains proper balance amongst Vata, Pitta and Kapha. It produces stability, cures stiffness of muscles, stimulation of muscles, stimulate Digestion and Metabolism. Therefore persons desirous of attaining long life, vitality and happiness should practice Rejuvenation therapy with complete devotion according to the prescribed procedures.

REFERENCES

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