MEDHYA DRAVYA IN AYURVEDA – A CRITICAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has two main aims - one is to maintain health and the second is to cure disease. The branch of Rasayana or rejuvenation is one of the eight specialized branches of Ayurveda that primarily deals with the maintenance of health. Rasayana is defined as any herb, food, or activity which confers youthfulness and cures diseases. If taken in a proper way, the Rasayana prevents early aging and keeps you young and active both physically and mentally. Medhya Rasayanas are group of medicinal plants described in Ayurveda with multi-fold benefits, specifically to improve memory and intellect by Prabhava (specific action). Medha means intellect and/or retention and Rasayana means therapeutic procedure or preparation that on regular practice will boost nourishment, health, memory, intellect, immunity and hence longevity. Medhya Rasayana is a group of 4 medicinal plants that can be used singly or in combinations. This paper will highlight the present update on Medhya Rasayana ausadhi.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Medhya, Rasayana

INTRODUCTION

The branch Rasayana is one of the most important branches among Astanga Ayurveda; Rasayana prevents early aging and keeps you young and active both physically and mentally. Medhya Rasayanas are group of medicinal plants described in Ayurveda with multi-fold benefits, specifically to improve memory and intellect by Prabhava (specific action). Medha means intellect and/or retention and Rasayana means therapeutic procedure or preparation that on regular practice will boost nourishment, health, memory, intellect, immunity and hence longevity. Medhya Rasayana is a group of 4 medicinal plants, they are Mandukaparni (Centella asiatica Linn.), Yastimadhu (Glycyrrhiza glabra Linn.), Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia (Wild) Miers) and Shankhapushpi (Convolvulus pleuricaulis Chois)\(^1\), specially mentioned with wide range of applications on different systems. Yet in practice few more handful drugs used with same aim are mentioned elsewhere in the Ayurveda classical textbooks. They are Aindri (Bacopa monniera), Jyothishmati (Celastrus paniculata), Kushmanda (Benincasa hispida), Vacha (Acorus calamus) and Jatamansi (Nardostachys jatamansi). Medhya Rasayana is used either in polyherbal preparations or alone.

Characteristics of drugs having the Medhya Rasayana property

1. Mandukaparni (Centella asiatica Linn. Family – Umbelliferae):

   This Plant is described in Tikta skandh, Prajastapana and Vayasthapana mahakashaya of Charak Samhita and Tikta varga of Shusruta Samhita. The Synonyms
Table 1: Properties of different Medhya ausadhi

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<tr>
<th>Drug</th>
<th>Rasa</th>
<th>Guna</th>
<th>Virya</th>
<th>Vipaka</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mandukaparni</td>
<td>Tikta</td>
<td>Laghu</td>
<td>Sita</td>
<td>Madhur</td>
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<td>Yastimadhu</td>
<td>Madhur</td>
<td>Guru, Snigdha</td>
<td>Sita</td>
<td>Madhur</td>
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<td>Guduchi</td>
<td>Tikta, Kasaya</td>
<td>Guru, Snigdha</td>
<td>Usna</td>
<td>Madhur</td>
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<td>Shankhpushpi</td>
<td>Tikta</td>
<td>Snigdha, Picchil</td>
<td>Sita</td>
<td>Madhur</td>
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<td>Aindri</td>
<td>Tikta</td>
<td>Laghu</td>
<td>Usna</td>
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<td>Jyothishmati</td>
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<td>Katu</td>
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<td>Kushmanda</td>
<td>Madhur</td>
<td>Laghu, Snigdha</td>
<td>Sita</td>
<td>Madhur</td>
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<td>Vacha</td>
<td>Katu, Tikta</td>
<td>Laghu, Tikshna</td>
<td>Usna</td>
<td>Katu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jatamamsi</td>
<td>Tikta, Kasaya Madhur</td>
<td>Laghu, Snigdha</td>
<td>Sita</td>
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**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

Dravyas those increases the Medha is known as ‘Medhya’. Although this function is related with Mana, and due to Nadisansthan is the visistha adisthana of presence of Mana; this Medhya Karma is related with Nadisansthan. Nadisansthan are connected with Brain that’s why the Medhya dravya also known as brain tonic.

The medhya karma is considered as Prabhava jayna because some medhya dravya are sita virya, madhura rasa and madhur vipaka e.g. Yastimadhu; and some are tikta rasa and usna virya e.g. Guduchi. These medhya dravya have more medya karma present rather than a samanya dravya, so medhya karma is prabhava janya.

Graham shakti (power of aquieition), Dharan shakti (power of retention) and Smriti (power of recollection) all three are included in Medha. Pitta is ashu and tikshna so it is helpful in vishaya graham and Smriti, that’s why Medha is included in prakrit karma of Pitta. Vata is also necessary for association of ideas in the process of smriti. Kapha provides Dhriti (Dharan) and stability that’s why Sthirita and Dhriti are included in prakrit karma of Kapha. Due to all these reasons the usna virya and sita virya draya should be mehy. But usna virya dravya mainly for vishaya graham and Smriti rather than sita virya for Dharan shakti.

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