ROLE OF RASAYANA AS IMMUNOMODULATOR IN DISEASES

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the life science and an ancient system of Medicine. The main purpose of it is to maintain the health of healthy individuals and cure the disease of diseased one. To fulfill both these purposes Bhesaja is mainly divided into two types. To maintain the health of healthy person Swasthastyorjaskara Bhesaja is given which includes Rasayana and Vajikara a Cikitsa and to cure the disease of sick person Artasya Roganuta Bhashaja is given which include the other diseases and its treatment. A disease produced due to specific infectious agent or its toxic products, capable of being directly or indirectly spread from man to man, animal to animal or environment to man or animals. Ayurveda has described a large number of Rasayana, which can provide protection against toxic substances and diseases. They promote physical health, improve the status of the Dhatu (tissues), confer immunity and rejuvenate the system. Concept of Naimittika Rasayana is a unique concept in Ayurveda, proved for its beneficial role in the patients suffering from communicable diseases in promoting vitality, and ability to withstand the devastating effects of these diseases. This concept brings a new dimension into the health-care, and promotes an integrated approach between different modalities in the field of public health. The paper will discuss about the approach in the management of communicable disease through rasayana therapy with appropriate examples.

Keywords: Rasayana, Immunomodulator, Communicable diseases

INTRODUCTION

Rasayana Tantra is one which deals with delaying of ageing process, increasing of intellect and strength, prolongation of life and curing of disorders.¹¹ Dalhan says that vayasthapan means prolonging the life upto hundred years. “Rasayana” means the way of obtaining good quality of Rasa. The word rasa represents the seven dhatus because they all are nourished by rasa yield of aahararasa (digestive product of food).¹² The quality of the rasa in the body directly governs the state of health of an individual. So the meaning of obtaining optimum standard of Rasa is to be Rasayana. Rasayana is the method of treatment by which the excellent form of rasa is maintained in the body. The purpose of Rasayana is to obtain strength, immunity, ojas, vitality, will power and determination and it also strengthen the senses. One of the results of Rasayana is oja, which is the factor responsible for VyadhiKsham-tav, (Immunity). So that people will not be suffered from any communicable diseases.

Classification of Rasayana

Based on the aim
(1) Naimittika rasayana: Used for a particular cause, which cause a disease. eg. Pippli (piper longum) rasayana for Rajyakshma, Mandooparni (Centella asiatica) rasayana for medha, Triphala rasayana for chakshu.
(2) Ajasrika rasayana- It is used to maintain good health and improve the quality of life through a healthy lifestyle, diet, or exercise in daily routine. Eg. Milk, Ghee, Honey, adopting the principles of Aachar rasayan.
(3) Kamya rasayana- It is used to fulfil a desire or to serve a special purpose. It is of four types:
   ➢ Prana kamya- achieves or maintains the best quality of prana in the body.
   ➢ Medha kamya- enhances the memory and intellect.
   ➢ Ayush kamya- increase longevity.
   ➢ Chakshu kamya- maintain healthy eyes

Based on mode of action
(1) Samsodhan – ‘Dosasya samsodhanadi samsodhanam’
(2) Samsamana – ‘Samasamanam nagab-ladi prayogadikam’
samsodhana and samsamana both are curative in nature samsodhana type of Rasayan expels the aggravated dosas whereas samsamana type pacifies the accumulated ones.[3][27/1-2]

Susruta has classified into four types
➢ Sarvo paghata Sammiya
➢ Medhayuskamiya
➢ Svabhavavaydhi Pratisedhaniya
➢ Nivrtta Sanapiya

In this, sarvopaghata samaniya deals with counteract the diseases process. medhayus-kamiya is one of by which an individual can increase his intellect and prolong his life. svabhavavayadhi pratisedhaniya is one which delays the onset of svabhavika vyadhis like kshut, pipasa, jara, mrtyu, etc. and nivrtta santapiya Rasayana rebuilds the physical and mental faculties following their disturbance due to diseases process.

Based on method of administration[4]
(1) Kutipraveshika – It is indoor administration. In which the person lives in a specially prepared cottage for a long period, where provided various Rasayana preparations. This therapy cannot be followed in routine life due to strict rules. dronipraveshika is similar to kutipraveshika with slight modification wherein the individual is made to stay in a Droni (made out of Palasa) for six months consuming the juices of special herbs having rasayana qualities.
(2) Vatatapika- It is better for people who engaged in their busy life schedule. Rasayan is administered with patient exposed to Vata and Atapa. e.g. Brahma rasayana , Shilajitu rasayana, Amalaki rasayana, Haritaki rasayana, Pippali rasayana, Lohadi rasayana. A total of 63 combinations of various rejuvenation formulae are described in charak samhita.

One more Rasayana variety has been mentioned in Charak samhita, i.e. Acara Rasayana, which is a non-pharmacological form and in this Sadvrtta and Swasthavrtta followed strictly and gets the beneficial effects. It is a just like a code of good conduct and habit.[6]

Communicable diseases – A diseases due to specific infectious agent or its toxic products, capable of being directly or indirectly spread from man to man, animal to man, environment to man.[7] eg. AIDS, PTB etc.

Materials and methods:-
The related references have been collected from different Ayurvedic texts and its available commentaries, related websites. The collected references have been critically observed, compiled and discussed thoroughly.
DISCUSSION

Rasayana – Vyadhi-kshamatva (Immunity): Rasayana therapy works as immunomodulator for prevention of various communicable diseases. Rasayana is a specialized treatment infusing the fundamental aspect of the organs i.e. dhatus, agni and srotamsi, leading to overall improvement in the organism, which affords prevention of ageing, resistance against diseases, bodily strength and improvement in mental faculties. Ayurveda conceives an unique concept of Ojas, which is the essence of all dhatus and responsible for vital strength of the body and resistance against the diseases i.e. immunity, Says surrate: Tatrasadinaamshukrantaanaam dhatunaam yat param tejas tat khalu Ojas, tadeva balamiti uchyate swa shastra siddhantaat.[8]

S.No.1:- Hypothesis depicting relation of Rasayana and Ojas[9]

vyadhi- kshamatava (natural resistance) is not of the same order constitution i.e.it varies with individuals.It also depends upon nutritional, environmental and individual factors –both physical and mental. The vyadhi-kshamta or Bala is stated to be of three types.
1. Sahaja Bala- It is genetic and inborn resistance to diseases, which exists since birth.
2. Kalaj bala - This type of immunity is said to be influenced by seasonal traits and the age of the person.
3. Yuktikrit bala-this type of sarir bala refers to modulation of body’s resistance against diseases by resort to appropriate ojo vardhak diet, physical exercise, restorative and Rasayana therapies in keeping with seasonal needs.[10]

Pharmacodynamics of Rasayana [11]
Rasayana drugs have varied pharmacodynamic properties. Probably there is no much relation with their properties of Ras, Guna, Veerya, Vipaka.
1. Rasayana may act at the level of Rasa- By improving the nutritional status of rasa and in turn by improving tissue nourishment. Probably Rasayana drugs having madhura, guru, snigdha, and sheeta guna may act at this level by promoting the nutritional value of poshaka rasa, which in turn
helps in obtaining the best qualities of dhatus. e.g. Shatavari, milk, ghrita, amalki, yastimadhu.

2. Rasayana may act at the level of Agni – The Rasayana drugs possessing the Ushna, laghu, ruksha, guna and katu, tikta, kashaya rasa may be acting at the level of agni (digestion and metabolism) by improving the digestive capacity and by vitalizing the metabolic activities (improving jatharagni and dhatwagnis) of the body. e.g. Pippli (Piper longum), haritaki (Terminelia chebula), chitraka (Plumbago zeylanica).

3. Rasayana may act at the level of Srotas – Similarly the drugs with katu, tikta, kashaya rasa ushna veerya, katu vipaka, vishada, ruksha and laghu gunas may produce the classical Rasayana effect at the level of srotas by improving sukshma samvahn and the quality of deepan and pachan. These drugs cause srotoshodhan (cleansing of channels) and thus allow efficient blood circulation and improve tissue nourishment and there by maintains its structural integrity and functional capacity. e.g. Guggulu (Commiphera mukul), rasona (Allium sativum), bhallatak (Semicarpus anacardium).

S.No.-2 Schematic representation of probable pharmacodynamics of rasayana drugs

- **At the level of rasa** enriches the nutrition
- **At the level of agni** (improve digestion)
- **At the level of Srotas** (Improve microcirculation)

- Improved tissue nourishment
- Improved quality of Tissues

- **Rasayana effects**

- Body
- Mental
Rasayana is believed to promote the process of dhatuposhana and enrich ojas leading to vyadhikshamatva. The defence mechanism present in the body allows us to survive in the potentially hostile world of infectious agents. This constitutional order is immune system. Any change in this order can lead to diseases.

After the discovery of antibiotics it was thought that the man has occupied infectious diseases. But their limitation surfaced. At that time it was relieved that rather than having war these diseases, preventive defence mechanism is batter. Treating diseases with synthetic immunomodulator still looks like distant dreams. The concept of strengthening of inherent defence mechanism in our body exists in rasayana therapy.

Communicable diseases are caused due to the agantuka karanas and coming under the adhibhautika and adhidavika, which is an aupasargika, roga. Sushruta has clearly mentioned regarding aupasargika roga. Hence communicable diseases is aupasagika in origin, imitating boots or living creatures or viruses etc are the causative agents and the diseases can be transmitted from one person to another.

Diseases are of two types’ viz. niza and agantuka. In niza vyadhis the doshas are vitiated first and they are responsible for formation of the disease by causing derangements in dushyas, srotas and agni. Therefore the clinical manifestation also depends on these factors like dosha, dushyas, srotas and agni. In case of agantuja vyadhis the doshas get involved later in the diseases process and the clinical manifestations accordingly will be produced at the large stage. Whatever the doshas get involved following the involvement of dushyas, srotas and agni.

In different Samhita granthas description about living organism like Krim is are also mentioned. It is mentioned that different like Kushta, Shosha, Netrabhishyanda etc. are produced by the Krimis, which are Aup-sargika (communicable) in nature and can be transmitted from one person to another. Even though the ancient Acharyas were well known about various pathogenic organisms, they have not given much important to them during treatment. The Beejas (living pathogens) are omnipresent and their entry to the body cannot be checked. The environmental conditions in our body are of greater importance. Because, if the environmental condition in our body is suitable for the pathogenic organism, they can grow inside and produce diseases, otherwise not.

The internal environment of our body is controlled by the Doshas. Whenever the Doshas will be in normal conditions, they maintain the body properly by keeping the Dushyas, Srotas as well as Agni in normal position. But when the aggravation of Doshas occurs they lead to the derangement of the Dushyas, Srotas, and Agni there by causing the diseases. Acharya Charak also has mentioned that-

Nidana dosha dooshya visheshebhya vikaravighata bhavaabhava prativisheshah bhavanti

The vikara vighata bhava (factors responsible to oppose the manifestation of diseases) and vikara vighata abhava (the absence of vikara vighata bhava) are depending on three factors like Nidana, Doshas and...
Dushyas. Among these three factors Doshas is important because it controls the internal environment of the body. As it is said-

Teshaaam sarveshaameva vata pitta shleshmaanah pradushta dooshaitaro bhavanti dosha svabhavaat iti.\[^{16}\]

Derangement of internal environment of the body occurs, when doshas get aggravated by taking the suitable Nidanas (Ahita ahara viharas). If the internal environment of the body is maintained properly, it will not be suitable for growing up the Beeja (pathogens) to produce the diseases. This depends on the vikara vighata bhava otherwise known as Vyadhikshamatva of the body. Vyadhikshamatva is interpreted as vyadhi-bala virodhitva (antagonistic to strength and virulence of diseases) and vyadhi utpa-dapravandhakatva (the capacity to inhibit or neutralise or resist or overcome diseases causing agents).\[^{17}\] This vyadhikshamatva depends on the presence of bala or Oja in the body. Oja is the sara or essence of Dhatus.

### S.No.-3 Etiopathogenesis (samprapti) of communicable diseases (Aupsargika) can be made hypothetically as

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Agantuka</th>
<th>Vitiation of shareeradhas</th>
<th>Agni vikriti</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vitiation of dooshyas and srotamsi</td>
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<td>Aupsargika roga</td>
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It has been previously stated that Rasayana are worked at various levels including Dhatu, Agni and Srotas. Consequently, Vydahikshamatav of the body is being improved and thus internal environment is also improved and maintained. This condition is totally unfavourable to growth and cultivation of microbes, results in healthy people and healthy society.

**CONCLUSION**

The paper can be concluded as:

1. Ayurveda is aimed for the maintenance of Dhatusamyaand it is basically achieved by preservation of health.
2. Concept of Rasayana a is designed for both conditions i.e. health as well as diseased.
3. Rasayana works at various levels in the body and overall result is an absolute state of Vyadhikshamataya. 4. Here more emphasis is given on the improvement of internal environment rather the cure and destruction of disease agent; and rasayana is capable to fulfill this aim.
5. Results of various studies on Rasayana show that it works as an immunomodulator in both the conditions i.e. health and diseased.

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