INTRODUCTION

He who makes use of this Rasayana (Rejuvenation) therapy, according to the prescribed procedure, not merely enjoys long life in this world, but also after death enjoys the auspicious life of the devas and rishis and gets submerged in immutable Brahmand.¹

Urja term is applied in the context of prolongation and promotion of life (jivane), augmentation of bala, Energy, enthusiasm etc. in various Sanskrit koshas. So the substances or drugs those are meant for longevity and enhanced efficiency of the Immune system by fighting against all diseases or reducing the recurrences in episodic diseases are known as urjaskara. Urjaskara or rasayana is that which provides optimum quality of the body tissues due to which it provides both physical and mental health, prevents ageing and disease thus enables to live for a longer period of youthfulness.

Classical Review

Acharya Caraka has clearly mentioned the urjaskara as the type of bhashaja (medicine) for healthy persons² in the first chapter of cikitsa sthana i.e. Abhayamalaki rasayanam Ist pada of rasayana as svasthasya urjaskaram kinchit. Cakrapani has simplified by commenting that in a healthy person it alleviates natural ailments like jara (ageing) and replenishes the lost shukra because of sexual indulgence and ultimately increases essence part in body³.

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a vedic science of life evolved from the Atharvaveda and propagating the holistic and integrated approach to understand svastha (healthy person) and svaasthya (health). A healthy person is known by the vigor or Urja he carries in himself to sustain life, to survive the struggles of existence, and ultimately coming out as the best creature of this universe. The diets, regimens, practices enriching the Urja of a person are known as urjaskara. Urjaskara or Rasayana means causing strength of the body, sense organs, mind and soul i.e. boosting of bala or rejuvenating the vitality. Man has always wished to live an immortal and incredible life like Gods. But Ojas depleting living conditions of body, mind and climate i.e. vayu, jala, desha and kaala have deprived him of quality life and extracting the stigma of life from all the subsequent life promoting agencies inducing stress and resentment all over the world. In such adverse conditions of distressed life when auto immune diseases, immune deficient diseases and Allergic diseases are on rise, Ayurveda is the only boon that can play an active role in the public health services by urjaskara or rasayana therapy to improve the quality of life i.e. deerghayu and sukhayu.

Keywords: Urjaskara, Rasayana, Ojas, bala, Immunomodulators
The first part clearly reflects the functioning of rasayana where as the second part denotes vajikarana. Kinchidartasya is for the alleviation of diseases primarily and in general. Both the functions i.e. urjaskara and roga shamana are carried by both the types of drugs but the name specify the chief function. Even some examples are quoted w.s.r.to some systemic diseases like PANDU and kshatkseena. In PANDU ROGA Acharya Caraka has prescribed yogaraja and in kshatakseena, sarpiguda has been chosen as best drug. Both these drugs serve dual purpose i.e. alleviation of disease associated with rejuvenation. Acharya Yogendranatha has defined it as bala varnadyupachaya krit.

Vagbhata has also followed the same classification by accepting two types of bheshaja - urjaskara and rogaghn. Urjaskara is again of two categories, rasayana and vajikarana. In the present context rasayana is the recommended reference. The medicines belonging to this category invigorate a healthy person. Equally they are effective in the cure of many diseases as is evident from the instances scattered in the classics. In the ancient times this Rejuvenation therapy was equally beneficial as ambrosia was to Gods and nectar was for serpents. This miraculous therapy made them free from old age, weakness, disease and death and they lived for thousands of years.

So in the present context type of rejuvenating drugs are concerned those have properties to eradicate disease as well. Urja or bala or vyadhikshamattva (Immunity) is the effect of substratum termed as ojas in the body. So urjaskara drugs increase the ojas in the body by attainment of excellent dhatus rasa, rakta etc. and this can be visualized in the form of vyadhikshamattva (immunity) i.e. resistance against diseases.

For the purpose various rasayana and ojovardhaka remedies are described in Ayurveda. These drugs act locally as well as systemically. Among these important ones are as following: Brahma rasayana, Cyavanaprasha, Aamalaki, Haritakyadi yoga, Nagabala rasayana, Bala rasayana, Atibala rasayana, Amrita rasayana, Abhaya rasayana, Mukta rasayana, Jeevanti rasayana, Shatavari rasayana, Mandukparni, Compounds of Bhallataka, Aindra rasayana, Pippali vardhamana, Triphala rasayana. Besides jeevaniya (invigorators), brihiniya (nourishing), balya (strength promoters), vayasthapaniya (Rejuvenators) decoctions are prescribed in Caraka samhita. Various drug components of these decoctions are as following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Jeevaniya</th>
<th>Brihaniya</th>
<th>Balya</th>
<th>Vayasthapaniya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Jeevaka</td>
<td>Ksheerini Minusops hexadra</td>
<td>Aindri Citrullus colocynthis</td>
<td>Amrita Tinospora cordifolia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Meda</td>
<td>Ashwagandha Withania somnifera</td>
<td>Atirasa Asparagus racemosus</td>
<td>Dhatri Emblica officinalis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Mahameda</td>
<td>Kakoli</td>
<td>Rishyaprokta Teramnus labialis</td>
<td>Mukta, Pearl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Kakoli</td>
<td>ksheerakakoli</td>
<td>Payasya Ipomoea paniculata</td>
<td>Shveta, White variety of Clitoria ternatea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Acharya Dalhana has categorized these *rasayana* into three classes in his commentary as *kaamyam, naimittikam and ajasrikam*. *Kaamyam rasayana* are used to get the desired effects like longevity, beauty etc. *Naimittikam* type of drugs are administered with consideration of specific disease. *Ajasrikam* is the category that incorporates a large group of dietary substances which we take or must be taken for the sustenance of life in a better and rejuvenative way. *Acarya Charaka* has supported this category by emphasizing on regular intake of those substances which is conducive to the maintenance of good health and prevent attack of diseases in future. Diets are considered as representatives of *prana* in the body because of their life sustaining properties. *Acarya Charaka* has repeatedly quoted the terms *hita, satmya, pathya* etc. with reference to diets.

Also there are mentioned the rejuvenating effects of *Achara rasayana* (good conduct). This particular type of *rasayana* reflects the internal *Adhyatmika* (spiritual) constitution of a person with certain noble qualities following a scripturally prescribed way of life with multifaceted approach. Although *Caraka Samhita* is clustered with this type of good conduct in *svastha catushka* and importance of mental well being is scattered at number of places yet this specific reference of *achra rasayana* has strengthened the theory of psycho-somatic constitution.

It is better to use the term *rasayana regimens* than *rasayana* drugs, those incorporate all the wholesome diets, drugs and conduct. Their application increases the *ojas* in the body that further stimulates *bala* or immune system to function in a better and effective way. *Ojas* is defined as the quintessence of the seven *dhatus* and holds the same position and functions in the body as *bala*. *Ojas* and *bala* are two terms applied in the classics but carry same meaning and bear an interdependent relationship. *Ojas* is the substance responsible and *bala* the effect seen. Most of the time these are used synonymously. It is present in all the tissues of body and its complete loss leads to the degeneration of body resulting in death.
ble to perform functions in an ojas deficient body\textsuperscript{39}. Mental happiness is the chief augmenting force for ojas. So mind must be protected from the all kinds of grievances\textsuperscript{40}. There must be deliberate maintenance of favorite diets and environment those are pleasing and comfortable for mind\textsuperscript{41}. Acarya has specifically emphasized more intake of rasayana and vajikarana remedies\textsuperscript{42}. Sweet, Unctuous, cold, light, wholesome and others factors those enhance ojas must be prescribed\textsuperscript{43}. Drugs of the jeevaniya gana, milk; mamsa rasa etc. must be given generously for its augmentation\textsuperscript{44}.

**Bala** is the manifestation of ojas as an effect phenomenon and is very clearly defined as synonym of Ojas by Acarya Susruta\textsuperscript{45}. Caraka has presented its threefold description\textsuperscript{46} as Sahajam or innate - Congenital psycho-somatic strength, Kaalajam or Temporal- status of bala in particular seasons and the age of a person\textsuperscript{47}. Visarga kala and young age are the peak periods for the best of ojas and YuktiKritam or Acquired-achieved by the combination of diet and other regimens\textsuperscript{48}. This is attained by planned combination of the intake of wholesome food like ghee, meat etc. and other regimens like proper rest, sleep, exercise etc. and also the use of elixirs\textsuperscript{49}. Besides there are other Bala Promoting Factors\textsuperscript{50} like Balavatpurushe deshe janma, Balavatpurushe kale janma, Sukhashcha kala yoga, Beejakshetragunasampacca, Aharasampacca, Sharirasampacca, Satmyasampacca, Sattvasampacca, Svabhavasansidghishca, Yauvanam ca, Karma ca, Sanharshanceti i.e. birth in an age of strong men., happy conjunction of time, Qualitative efficacy of seed and soil i.e. sperm ovum and womb, Having quality foods and drinks, having a good body, Having a higher grade of assimilability, Having a higher stage of mind, Dispensation of nature, Youth, Acts and Cheerfulness are means of increase of strength in a person.

**DISCUSSION**

In the scientific light the urjaskara factors or the rasayana can be termed as immunomodulators. Latter are the substances those bring alteration in the status of immune system. This modulation or alteration could be either enhancement or diminution of the immunity. In the present context this term is specifically employed in the former perspective i.e. enhancement. This can also be equally related with the immunotherapy. Immunomodulators can be of natural origin (from plants) or synthetic substances those help regulate or normalize the imbalanced immune system. Natural immunomodulators are less potent than synthetic ones and also less likely to cause side effects. It is assumed that Immunomodulators bind to the IgE antibody thereby preventing from binding to receptor sites on mast cells and basophil cells. Our immune system plays a pivotal role in the pathogenesis of allergic, immune deficient and auto-immune disorders. Modification and balancing such immune responses offer therefore a huge potential for the development of health promotion by immunomodulators. Many ingredients of the drugs interact with the functioning of our immune system. Such interactions may help to balance and stabilize our immune responses and to mitigate immune related physical disorders. On the other hand rasayana in particular acts more on the nutritional dynamics rather than pharmaco dynamics.

In the recent time research is emphasized more on preventive and promotive aspects of health. As per the
Pubmed information 23 drugs are researched out of which Withania somnifera and Asparagus racemosus are the most studied rasayana plants. It was observed the free radical scavenging activity was most studied in the researches followed by immunomodulatory effects. The disease preventive action of the Rasayana drugs is researched by studying the inhibition of free radical stress. The studies indicate that Rasayana drugs hold the potential for decelerating the ageing process and enhancing the youthfullness and longevity. Their role is also been studied in the management of disease by anti-oxidant approach.

Different modes of Urja administration mentioned earlier in the review like good conducive diet, sleep, good personal and social conduct fellowships i.e. Achara rasayana, bala promoting agencies even in prenatal stages and mind care regimens and many more all put an immunomodulatory effects in the preventive as well as curative stages of a disease.

CONCLUSION

It might be rewarding to investigate the Ayurvedic concepts of rasayana tantra in terms of modern concepts of immunology. Attempts are being made to examine the immunomodulatory effects of rasayana and other urjaskara factors. New methodologies should be explored that focus on the nutritional dynamics as the basis of immunomodulatory effect of a rasayana. Recent studies on opiates have uncovered the structural basis of neuro-hormone-immune axis and added a new dimension to the understanding of the action of adaptogens/tonics that are very close to rasayana drugs of Ayurveda. The knowledge of structure and function of chemical constituents of Ayurvedic drugs would give better understanding of the pharmaceutical practices of Ayurveda.

REFERENCES


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