



ROLE OF INDIGENOUS MEDICINE AND RASAYANA FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF DISEASE

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the traditional system of health management which comprises of different branches; *Kaya Chikitsa* is one of them. *Kaya Chikitsa* deals with the use of internal medicine. *Vyadhis* (diseases) are an outcome of vitiation of *doshas* viz. *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha*. *Vyadhis* are categorized as; *Agantuja* (extraneous), *Sharirik* (somatic), *Mansik* (psychological) and *Swabhavik* (innate). *Kaya Chikitsa* involves diagnosis and treatment of diseases using various drugs. Ayurveda prescribed use of different treatment modalities for the management of various diseases using indigenous herbs and *Rasayana* drugs. This article summarized role of indigenous herbs and *Rasayana* drugs for the management of different disease such as; Mental disorders, ENT disorders, skin diseases and diabetes.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Kayachikitsa, Rasayana, Disease.

INTRODUCTION

Kaya Chikitsa is one of the principle branches of Ayurveda which deals with the use of general medicine for the management of various diseases. *Kaya Chikitsa* involves basic principles related to the pathogenesis and treatment of the disease. Ayurveda believes that doshic imbalances cause various disorders and basic treatment approach involves stabilizing doshic imbalance. The concept of *Kaya Chikitsa* considered *Prakruti* as an important aspect for *Rogi pariksha* to identify dosha disturbances as composition of *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha* differ as per *prakruti* of an individual. All the three doshas in balanced state form a specific *prakruti* of an individual and are thus responsible for physical, biological and mental attributes of a person. All three of them have different characteristics and express their attributes in the individual. Thus in balanced state these doshas help in normal functioning and growth of mind and body and in imbalanced state (caused by improper diet and lifestyle, infection, trauma, stress etc.) they cause various diseases. Therefore treatment approach varies for different individuals suffering from the same disease and Ayurveda mentions use of indigenous herbs and specific *Rasayana* drugs for their management. As per the properties and imbalance (increase, decrease or vitiation) of doshas various indigenous herbs have been mentioned in Ayurvedic texts like *adrak* to pacify *kapha*, *neem* to pacify *pitta*, *haridra* to pacify *vata* etc. *Rasayana*

drugs like; *ashwagandha*, *tulsi*, *haridra*, *pippali*, *amalaki*, *guduchi*, *shatavari* and many others are traditionally recommended for the management of various diseases along with other indigenous herb formulations.

Table 1: Doshas and their attributes.

DOSHAS	LOCATION IN THE BODY	FUNCTIONS	EMOTIONS CONTROLLED	PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES	REMEDIES
VATA	Lower part of the body- Large intestine, urinary bladder, urinary tract, spine, thighs and legs.	Governs physical movements of the body, controls respiration, speech, intestinal movements, evacuation, excretion of digestive juices, controls creation, growth and disintegration of all organisms.	Fear, stress, sadness, impatience.	Rough, dry, light, mobile, cool and subtle.	Oil massage, hot fomentation, ghee, regular sleep, hot, sweet, sour and salty foods, herbs like ashwagandha, hingu, adrak, haridra, guggul, etc.
PITTA	Middle part of the body- Stomach, liver, duodenum, gall bladder, bile, small intestine, pancreas, heart, retina, skin and blood.	It is responsible for all the metabolic and chemical reactions occurring in the body, digestion, formation of blood, temperature regulation, reflection of skin lustre, vision.	Anger, stress, anxiety, hatred, jealousy.	Hot, sharp, oily, light, fleshy-smelling, spreading, liquid, acrid and acidic.	Coconut water, milk, cool, sweet, bitter and astringent foods, fruits like melons, apples, ghee, herbs like neem, kutki, amlaki, chandan etc.
KAPHA	Upper part of the body- Lungs, throat, larynx, nose, heart brain, eyes, synovial joints and stomach.	It is responsible for structures to stick together (cohesion), provides stability to body and mind, lubrication within joints, moistens food, shock absorbing liquid around vital organs, nutrition and support within the body.	Patience, mental stability, slowness, more retaining abilities.	Cool, heavy, slow, unctuous, smooth, sticky, soft, static and sweet.	Exercise, hot fomentation, hot, pungent, bitter and astringent foods, herbs like haridra, dalchini, lavang, adrak, tulsi, pippali etc.

Rasayana Chikitsa

Acharyas described Dhatus, Doshas and Srotas as very vital components of the body which help to maintain normal physiological functioning and longevity of the body. Furthermore the traditional text of Indian medical system emphasized use of Rasayana to strengthen functioning of Dhatus, Doshas and Srotas. Rasayana drugs increase life span, delay aging, modulate immunity, act as brain tonic, cure diseases and improve complexion & luster. Rasayana drugs possess adaptogenic properties and thus increase ability to adopt environmental modifications. It also acts as antioxidant and prevents damage caused by free radicals, while nootropic effects of Rasayana drugs promote mental health.

Ayurveda recommends use of various Rasayana drugs for different purposes such as;

- ❖ Medhya Rasayana for the brain.
- ❖ Hrudya Rasayana for the heart.
- ❖ Twachya Rasayana for the skin.

Rasayana drugs and Indigenous Herbs for Brain Disorders

- Mandukaparni (*Centella asiatica* Linn.) helps to treat learning impairment caused by bilateral common carotid arteries occlusion. *Centella asiatica* improves cognition and memory and thus play significant role

in Parkinson's disease. *Centella asiatica* possess anti-oxidant, anti-apoptotic mechanisms, neuro-protective effect; prevent oxidative stress and cognitive dysfunction.

- Yashtimadhu (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* Linn.) possesses neuro-protective effect, anti-convulsant potential, anti-oxidative effect; prevents memory impairment, has antidepressant effect and memory strengthening activity.
- Guduchi (*Tinospora cordifolia*) offers neuro-protective activity, helps in the management of Parkinson's disease, has antidepressant-activity, antioxidant potential and it also offers beneficial effects in ischemic brain damage.
- Shankhapushpi (*Convolvulus pluricaulis*) boosts memory, intellect and offers beneficial effects in epilepsy. It helps to treat anxiety, cerebral abnormalities and insomnia. It also possesses neuro-protective effects and antioxidant effects.
- Haridra (*Curcuma longa*) & *Lashuna* (*Allium sativum*) were found to possess preventive effect towards neuronal cells damage. It normalizes vitiated *vata* in elderly age which helps to maintain normal functioning even in elderly age. It helps to prevent neural degenerative changes during old age.

Rasayana drugs and Indigenous Herbs for ENT Disorders

Amalaki, Paribhadra and Bala possess anti-aging properties and high nutrition value thus offers relief in ENT disorders. Bilvataila, Ksharataila & Ksheera bala taila etc. are also used in such diseases. Paribhadra, Bala, Sariva and Gokshura also offer beneficial effects in tinnitus. Amalaki Rasayana & Shatapaka bala Taila help to manage various ENT disorders where surgical intervention is not required.

Herbs like Bee Balm, Cayenne, Eucalyptus, Goldenrod, Lantana, Lavender, Poppy, Rosemary and Caraway offer beneficial effects in earache. Eucalyptus, Calendula, Garlic, Green Tea, Goldenrod, Lantana and Radish relieve flu associated with throat infection. Marjoram, Chamomile, Marjoram, Ground Ivy and Plantain are used for sinusitis. Ginkgo relieves vertigo and tinnitus while Echinacea is used for swollen throat infection.

Rasayana drugs and Indigenous Herbs for Skin Disorders

Rasayana drugs such as; Gandhak rasayan offers symptomatic relief in skin diseases such as; psoriasis. Rasayana drugs are deepak, pachak, kaphaghna and vishaghna therefore reduce itching, kleda, vasa and lasika secretions. Rasayana drugs helps to manage various skin manifestations due to following properties; swedaghna, kandooghna, kushthagha, dahprashmana and sthirikarana.

Formulations containing Rasa aushadhi such as; Chandraprabha Vati, Khageshwara Rasa, Galitakasturi Rasa, Medani Sara Rasa, Kushtebhakesari Rasa, Tarakeshwara Rasa, Pittala Rasayana and Vijayeshwara Rasa offer relief in Shwet Kushtha & other skin diseases. Vitiating of vata and bhrajaka pitta may be considered as cause of Shwet Kushtha and these Rasa ausadhis help to pacify vata and bhrajaka pitta which resides in the twak and thus provides relief in Shwet Kushtha.

Rasayana drugs also have psycho-dermatological action in the management of Kushtharoga. Rasayana drugs such as; Guduchi (*Tinospora cordifolia* Willd), Shunthi (*Zingiber officinale* Rosc.), Haritaki (*Terminalia chebula* Retz.), Amalaki (*Embolica officinalis* Gaertn.) and Chitraka (*Plumbago zeylanica* Linn.), etc. offer anti-inflammatory and immune-modulating effect and thus help in the management of skin diseases.

Aloe vera is used for wound healing and has anti-inflammatory properties due to presence of constituents such as; gibberlinn and auxin. It offers soothing properties and thus reduces itching and blisters, also used in psoriasis and eczema.

Sandal Wood and *Triphla* possess antimicrobial properties therefore used for infectious skin diseases.

Turmeric helps to purify blood, nourishes the skin and offers antimicrobial effect towards various infectious diseases.

Azadirachta indica (Neem) is traditionally recommended for the treatment of skin diseases due to its antimicrobial and antifungal properties. It pacifies vitiated kapha and pitta which are the major causes of the skin diseases. It promotes process of wound healing and also offers astringent properties. It reduces itching, irritation & roughness in various skin diseases.

Rasayana drugs and Indigenous Herbs for Diabetes

Rasayana drugs such as; Guduchisatva has nourishing and rejuvenating properties and thus maintain normal functioning of enzymes & other tissues, boost metabolic activity, control weight, improve digestive fire and balance hormonal regulation thus offer great relief in metabolic disorders such as; diabetes.

Butea leaves possess anti diabetic properties and therefore are recommended in case of glycosuria, the leaves can be administered directly or used as decoction.

Cinnamon acts as insulin stimulator and therefore offers relief in the treatment of diabetes. It helps to maintain blood sugar level and *cinnamon* along with *cloves*, *turmeric* and *bay leaves* provides better result in diabetes.

Curry leaves act as herbal tonic and may be used for the management of diabetes. It helps to prevent diabetes of a hereditary predisposition and also helps to reduce weight which mainly results from diabetes complications. Consumption of Jamun seeds and Neem leaves paste in water also offers relief in diabetes.

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