

**A CONCEPTUAL REVIEW OF LITERATURE OF RASAYANA**

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**INTRODUCTION**

Every human beings wishes to attain long & healthy life without any ailments and to have shatayusha i.e. to live for more than hundred years. Vedas have dealt with the problems of aging and its delaying. "Jivema Sharadah Shatam" (Rigveda 10/39/8)

Ayurveda is divided into eight branches, which are collectively called as Aṣṭāṅga Ayurveda. Rasayana Chikitsa (Rejuvenation therapy) is the branch of Ayurvedic science, which deals with various aspects of preventive health care. Rasayana Chikitsa plays an important role in promotion of health & prevention of disease.

Rasayana Chikitsa (Rejuvenation therapy) is the branch of Ayurvedic science, which deals with various aspects of preventive health care which aims at achieving a long and healthy life. To improve quality and quantum of life Rasayana' has been explained in Ayurveda. Rasayana is indicated in the healthy individuals as well as in diseased state. Rasayana Chikitsa is a specific method of treatment which has direct effect on the basic aspect of the body i.e. Agni, Srotas and Dhātu's. Rasayana increases strength of body tissues, builds up resistance power and prevents the diseases. Rasayana Chikitsa literally means rejuvenation therapy. Rejuvenation means to sustain youthfulness i.e to preserve normal physiological condition.

Rasayana (Rejuvenation therapy) is described elaborately in four padas of the first chapter in Chikitsa sthana of Charaka samhita. In the beginning of Rasayana therapy Charak AcArya explains the term Bheshaja i.e. drugs and its two types as follows. (Ch.Chi.1/1/3.)

**Bheshaja are of 2 types**

1. Swasthasyaurjaskara i.e. those which improve or enhance the state of health in healthy individuals (Ch.Chi.1/1/4)
2. Kinchit Artasya Rognut i.e. those which are useful in diseased conditions (Ch.Chi.1/1/4)

Methods to promote health and prolong life span include Vajikaran and Rasayana therapies.

The Ayurvedic Samhita's have defined Rasayana as a therapy to protect the Dhātu's i.e. structural entities of the body up to their natural state of health, integrity & functionality, so as to achieve a healthy body with renewed development, growth and Bala (strength). Rasayana thus can be understood as ideal therapy for Dhātu's i.e. regeneration of the body's structures.

Rasayana Chikitsa should primarily pose qualities of preserving life and developing structures i.e. Dhātu's. Rasayana Chikitsa also should have food-values, in terms to be newly mixed with Rasa Dhātu to nourish the body and build the other Dhātu's at different metabolic processes. The reconstruction of the body is based on these metabolic processes which start at Rasa Dhātu. That's the prime reason for the complete therapy to be termed as Rasayana where Rasa being the prime objective for success of the therapy.

Conceptual review

**ETYMOLOGY**

The term Rasayana is formed from two words viz. Rasa and Ayana. The word 'Rasa' is formed from 'Ras Gatau' Dhātu and 'Ac' Pratyaya. AcArya have given various meanings for Rasa at different contexts. Some of the common are

1. Rasa is one that is experienced by Rasanendriya.
2. The one that nourishes Rasa, Rakta, etc. Dhātus (continuously) daily is called Rasa.
3. The essence of the digested foodstuff is known as Rasa.

4. The one that traverses throughout the body due to its liquidity is termed Rasa.
5. Rasa is one that moves all over the body continuously.

The word Ayana has various meanings as given in ShabdhaKalpa Druma and Vachaspatyam. They are pathway, movement, road, place, site, abode, a way of entrance, an entrance etc.

Rasayana means the pathway for essence of food substances towards all body tissue elements so as to nourish and replenish them. V.S. Apte, famous grammarian, in his Sanskrit English Dictionary, states that Rasayana is - an elixir of life (elixir vitae) - any medicines supposed to prolong life and prevent old age - serving as an elixir vitae i.e., that which gratifies or regales. The classics have given the synonym Rasayani for Srotas which means Channels which carry nutrients for vivid body tissues.

#### Vyutpatti – Nirukti of Rasayana

Etymologically the term Rasayana comprises of two components viz., Rasa and Ayana. Rasa - Rasa is derived from the root „ras“ meaning gatou or to move. The fluid that always moves from one place to another is termed as Rasa. This word is used liberally in various senses like Mercury, a taste, water, sap or juice, essence, essential fluid of the body etc. The word meaning of Rasa in Rasayana is the body fluid necessary for the nourishment of the entire body.

Ayana is derived from „Aya“ meaning to flow i.e. through which the movements of materials take place. Literally Ayana gives the three meanings such as Jnana (knowledge), Gamana (movement) and Prapti (attainment). Rasayana means Rasa Prapti.

#### Bheda (types)

Following is the classification of Rasayana According to the effect of Rasayana

1. **Samshodhana Rasayana**
2. **Samshamana Rasayana**
- A. **Samshodhana Rasayana:-** There are certain Rasayana drugs which when used may induce vama, virechana karma in the body and thus the body gets purified. Vitiated doshas are expelled from the body. These are called Samshodhana Rasayana.
- B. **Samshamana Rasayana:-** Samshamana group of Rasayana drugs produces Rasayana effect in the body restoring dosasamyam or internal homeostasis and metabolic constancy.

#### According to the mode of administration

1. **Kutipraveshika Rasayana**
2. **Vatatapika or Saura-marutika Rasayana**
1. **Kutipraveshika Rasayana:-** It is a type where samshodhana karma is essential. After Samshodhana patient enters into a specially constructed therapy

chamber. He has to follow specific code and conduct of life with strict diet control. It is said that if Kutipraveshika Rasayana is carried out as per the norms laid down it leads to complete bio-physical transformation of man.

2. **Vatatapika Rasayana:-** It is indicated in those patients who do not have enough resources and who cannot afford intensive rejuvenative care. This therapy is used while leading normal life. Samshodhana karma is not essential in such cases.

#### Special Rasayana drugs and measures

1. **Medhya Rasayana**
2. **AchAra Rasayana**
1. **Medhya Rasayana:-** Some Rasayana possess medhakara effect and hence they are specially known as medhya Rasayanas. Medhya means anything that is beneficial for medha, which is responsible for Dhi (intelligence), dhriti (retention power) and smriti (memory).
2. **AchAra Rasayana:-** It means rejuvenating life style with such social and personal conducts by which one can acquire the Rasayana effect. It includes improved personal behavior, social behavior and Satvika Ahara. AchAra Rasayana is essentially a non-pharmacological approach to social and mental health care leading in turn to positive health and longevity.

#### According to the objective

- 1) **Kamyia Rasayana**  
i) Pranakamyia ii) Medhakamyia iii) Shrikamyia
- 2) **Naimittika Rasayana**
- 3) **Ajasrika Rasayana**
1. **Kamyia Rasayana:-** Kamyia Rasayana is that which is used in healthy persons for maintenance and promotion of positive health.
2. **Pranakamyia:-** It promotes longevity and lifespan.
3. **Medha kamyia:-** It improves mental faculties.
4. **Shrikamyia:-** It improves beauty and luster of the body.
5. **Ajasrika Rasayana:-** It is used in the form of Sattvika ahara consisting of Ghrita, Ksheera etc. Constant use of such nourishing diet produces non-specific Rasayana Prabhava in the body.

#### DISCUSSION

Indications of Rasayana Rasayana is indicated to be administered only after appropriate Samshodhana Karma followed by Samsarjana Karma. It can be used according to the necessity but several factors should also be considered such as Vaya, Satmya, Desha, Prakruti, Kala, DhAtu and Vyadhi.

AchArya Suśruta have indicated that Rasayana to be administered in Poorva Vaya and Madhyama Vayas30 which are 16-30 years and 30-60 or 70 years respectively, to get maximum benefit and it is said to be not useful in Vriddhavastha and in children. Commentator Gangadhara clarifies that this is because they cannot tolerate the Samshodhana therapy and

persons who are fit for shodhana are also eligible for Rasayana therapy<sup>31</sup>. Also, there are specific Rasayanas for specific age groups that help in restoring the loss of specific bio values of the respective ages.

It should be administered to the suitable persons who are devoid of grief and possess required Bala. Generally Rasayana is contraindicated in these persons who are Alasi, Daridra, Pramadi, Vyasani, Papakrud, Bsheshajapamani, and also the persons with evil designs, who is not free from diseases and who has no faith in this therapy. Rasayana therapies produce effects in persons whose mind and body are pure and self- controlled.

#### Time for Rasayana drug

Suśruta Acharya advices to use Rasayana dravya's in middle age, as it is more beneficial in middle age. The administration of Rasayana dravya's during this period of life will stimulate tissue growth and retard degenerative changes.

#### Need For Rasayana in Swastha Purush (Rejuvenation therapy for healthy person)

1. Hita and sukha Ayu
2. Promotion of positive health
3. To achieve chaturvidha Purushartha
4. To avoid Akalaja jara and to delay

#### Rasayana and Vyadhikshamatva

Rasayana by virtue of their qualities, actions and prabhava promote Oja. Oja is considered as the quintessence of all Dhatus of the body. It is this Oja which is responsible for imparting Bala in an individual.

Bala or resistance or Vyadhikshmatva is responsible for an individual to guard himself against diseases and infection. Vyadhikshmatva is classified into two types namely, vyadhi utpadaka pratibandhatva and Vyadhi bala Virodhitva. The first type is Bala or resistance of a person against the onset of a disease. It is produced by general Rasayana in the body. The second type is achieved by the timely administration of Naimittika Rasayana.

There are various levels of actions of the effect Rasayana Chikitsa in general on nutritional aspects. Some Rasayana Dravya's may have beneficial effect on certain targeted Dhatus and organs like brain (Medhya Rasayana), lungs, eyes etc. It may be assumed that they provide specific medicinal nutrients for the respective cells & tissues and promote growth & development of specific peculiar healthy functions. Similarly Naimittika Rasayana explained in classics for each disease have some medicinal nutrients for respective tissues and Srotas and promote Bala or Vyadhi Bala Virodhaka type of resistance to that particular Srotas.

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