



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 2 - Issue 1

Jan-Feb 2017

Journal of **Ayurveda and Integrated Medical Sciences**

www.jaims.in

JAIMS



Charaka
Publications

Indexed

Concept of *Rasayana* for a Better Health - A Review

Nirmala Joshi,¹ Swati S Bedekar.²

¹Post Graduate Scholar, ²Professor, Department of Shareera Rachana, Shri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara College of Ayurveda and Hospital, Hassan, Karnataka, India.

ABSTRACT

Rasayana, or rejuvenation therapy, is one of the eight main branches of Ayurveda and is recommended to increase *Ojas* (life force) after detoxification programmes. The *Rasayana* drugs and formulations provides longevity, memory, intelligence, freedom from diseases, youthful age, excellence of luster, complexion and voice, optimum strength of physique and sense organs, respectability and brilliance. It is good for all age groups for the elderly, pregnant women, children. *Rasayana* therapy prevents the effects of early ageing on both, and increases the body's resistance to disease. Tonic food and herbs that nurture *Ojas* tend to be heavy and nourishing, and can be hard to digest, so that the state of *Agni* (digestive fire) needs to be considered first. *Rasayana* therapy is particularly good for *Vata* types during the autumn, to give them weight and strength and help them endure the long, cold winter. It is contraindicated in any condition associated with *Ama* (toxins), for obese people, and during colds and flu, congestive disorders, fevers, infectious diseases and allergies. For 5,000 years or so, the wisdom of Ayurveda has provided guidelines for slowing down the ageing process (*Jara*) by increasing *Ojas*. Modern scientific evaluation of *Rasayana* plants and other treatments used in Ayurveda have borne out the fact that rejuvenative tonics have the ability to protect the body against the ravages of age and the damaging effects of the environment in which we live, by enhancing the body's ability to fight off disease-carrying organisms through non-specifically activating the immune system. Use of rejuvenative foods, oils, herbs and behavioral rejuvenation is very important in making a life longer, disease free and happy.

Key words: *Rasayana*, *Ojas*, *Jara*, *Ayurveda*, Rejuvenative food.

INTRODUCTION

Rasayana, or rejuvenation therapy, is one of the eight main branches of Ayurveda and is recommended to increase *Ojas* (life force) after detoxification programmes. It is also excellent for the elderly, pregnant women, children, those who are nervously run - down, debilitated or emaciated, when

convalescing after childbirth, and for anemia and *Vata* conditions. *Rasayana* therapy is particularly good for *Vata* types during the autumn, to give them weight and strength and help them endure the long, cold winter.

It is contraindicated in any condition associated with *Ama* (toxins), for obese people, and during colds and flu, congestive disorders, fevers, infectious diseases and allergies. For 5,000 years or so, the wisdom of Ayurveda has provided guidelines for slowing down the ageing process (*Jara*) by increasing *Ojas*.

Modern scientific evaluation of *Rasayana* plants and other treatments used in Ayurveda have borne out the fact that rejuvenative tonics have the ability to protect the body against the ravages of age and the damaging effects of the environment in which we live, by enhancing the body's ability to fight off disease-carrying organisms through non-specifically activating the immune system.

Address for correspondence:

Dr. Nirmala Joshi

Post Graduate Scholar. Department of Shareera Rachana, Shri Dharmasthala Manjunatheshwara College of Ayurveda and Hospital, Hassan

E-mail: nirmalajoshi07@gmail.com

Submission Date : 11/02/2017

Accepted Date: 28/02/2017

Access this article online

Quick Response Code



Website: www.jaims.in

DOI: 10.21760/jaims.v2i1.7512

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Rejuvenating Body and Mind

Many *Rasayana* herbs have adaptogenic properties, enhancing our resilience to stress, whether it is physical (in the shape of overwork, pollution, the use of alcohol and drugs, for example) or emotional (from grief, anxiety and so on).

Many of these herbs contain antioxidants, which help to prevent the damage caused by free radicals. According to Ayurveda, *Rasayanas* bring about proper nourishment, growth and enhanced function of all seven tissues (*Dhatus*).

Rejuvenation therapy affects body and mind at the same time. It prevents the effects of early ageing on both, and increases the body's resistance to disease. According to the Ashtanga Hridiya, *Rasayana* includes nourishing the body with 'milk, raw sugar, ghee and honey, with oil enemas, by sleeping and resting freely, by oil massage, by baths and comfortable lifestyle'. In fact any herb or diet that enlivens the body and mind and enhances immunity is considered to be rejuvenative.

In *Rasayana* therapy it is recommended that excess work (physical and mental) should be reduced; you should go to bed early, sleep as much as you desire, reduce sexual activity, avoid stimulation from mass-media entertainment, practice *Pranayama* (breathing exercises) and gentle exercise like yoga or spend time in nature, such as by the sea, in a mountain cabin or in a beautiful and peaceful place.

Ojas

The substance known as *Ojas* is central to rejuvenation. It is said to be the eight tissues, or the essence of all the body tissues. It is the ultimate product of digestion and the nutrition of all seven *dhatus*, as well as the prime energy reserve of the entire body. It provides the vitality, bodily strength that gets us through life. It is the subtle essence of all *Kapha* in the body, and specifically the essence of the reproductive fluid. *Ojas* reflects the condition or excellence of the body as a whole. Our immunity, fertility, longevity, strength and resistance depend on the quality and quantity of *Ojas*. Illness and loss of

immunity arise from *Ojas* depletion. All rejuvenation therapies are therefore targeted at improving our *Ojas*.

Rejuvenating Foods

Tonic food and herbs that nurture *Ojas* tend to be heavy and nourishing, and can be hard to digest, so that the state of *Agni* (digestive fire) needs to be considered first. Tonifying foods are similar to those that calm *Vata*, but the diet can be modified according to the balance of *doshas* in each individual.

- *Khchari* is one of the best basic foods for tonification, and can often be digested when nothing else can.
- Dairy product is good for debility and convalescence and is considered to strengthen *Ojas*. Ghee is said to be the best food for restoring vitality, nourishing the nerves and increasing the *Ojas*.
- Nuts and seeds strengthen the nerves, improve vitality and are excellent meat substitutes. Nut butters are good. Also walnuts, pine nuts, coconut, black sesame seeds and lotus seeds.
- Grains are strengthening, although not as much as nuts and seeds. Wheat, oats and brown rice are said to be best.
- Beans are good meat substitutes, but hard to digest for *Vata*, so they are better for *Pitta* and *Kapha*. Black gram, chickpeas, mung beans and tofu are best.
- Most fruits and vegetables are too light to provide strength, but sweeter-tasting ones can improve vitality and help rebuild tissues - for instance, dates, raisins, figs, pomegranates, black grapes okra, potatoes, sweet potatoes, yams and onions cooked in ghee.
- Garlic, ginger, cinnamon and long peppers are warming and strengthening and can improve energy, especially when combined with oils such as ghee. They help to maintain good digestive fire. Black pepper, cardamom, cloves, fennel, cumin, coriander, asafetida and a little cayenne are useful cooked in ghee with other tonic foods.

- Raw sugar gives strength and helps to build body tissues, Jaggery (pure cane sugar) is best, as it is rich in minerals and easiest to digest. Also good are honey, raw sugar, maple syrup, rock candy, malt sugar, lactose and fructose.

Rasayana Oils

Rasayana oils have properties that go beyond the realm of physical healing. They are capable of healing deep emotions and improve the harmony of the mind.

- **For Vata:** aloe vera, ginger, rose, saffron, sandalwood, cedarwood, geranium, calamus, angelica, vetiver, lotus, jatamansi, jasmine.
- **For Pitta:** aloe vera, cedarwood, gotu kola, jasmine, lotus, saffron
- **For Kapha:** angelica, calamus, rose, saffron, cedarwood, aloe vera.

Rasayana Herbs

The world of herbs is replete with amazing plants that nourishes us, increase our physical strength and stamina and enhance our immunity. As such, they can enliven both mind and body and help counter the effects of ageing.

They include: *Gotu Kola, Shatavari, Bacopa, Amalaki, Pippali, Bala, Guduchi, Ashwagandha*, turmeric, *Tulsi*, aloe vera, *Vidari, Gokshura* and the formula *Triphala, Shilajeet, Bhallataka*.

Behavioural Rejuvenation

There are many activities that promote health and happiness, known as behavioral *Rasayanas (Achara Rasayanas)*. They strengthen our life force by stimulating positive emotions and experiences, which promote the production of *Ojas*. Uplifting emotions and a positive approach to life are qualities that can be engendered over time. The most important trigger is the regular experience of our inner life, the self or pure consciousness. Ayurvedic texts mention a number of behavioral *Rasayanas*;

- Encourage positive emotions and experiences, and do not give too much space to negative emotions. Pure joy is the best recipe for eliminating mental *Ama*.

- Choose to be with wise people, who inspire you to strive for greater knowledge, wisdom, love, and consideration of others, compassion and charity.
- Be truthful, but always speak the truth with kindness.
- Maintain your personal integrity, which enhances your self-esteem.
- Maintain cleanliness in all things: mental, physical and environmental. A clean and beautiful environment will uplift you, engendering positive emotions and a sense of well-being that is health-inducing.
- Be charitable and generous. Give money, knowledge, advice and encouragement to others.
- Follow your own spiritual beliefs, devoting time to spiritual practices that provide a channel enabling love to flow.
- Sit quietly and watch the breath, or choose your own kind of meditation or contemplation.
- Do what you love to do and experience pure joy, without hurting anyone else – for instance, by painting or watching nature.
- Cook for your family with love and respect. If you are eating out, say prayers over your food to remove any negativity.
- Observe silence, for it is very nourishing.
- Marinating cleanliness is considered important to living a long life.

CONCLUSION

Rasayana is a science of rejuvenation of whole body for its objective of prolongs life span without disease and remarkable (sharp) memory, intellect, youth, excellence of luster, complexion, voice, health of vital organs of the body. *Rasayana* deals with recipes which help to restore the health of individual, vigour up to good old age which makes a strong immune system against different diseases. The *Rasayana* therapy has remarkable and wonderful impact on body. It promotes healthy life, maintains positive health, and retains youth and cure for certain diseases of old age. Therefore person desirous of long healthy

life, happiness and vitality should practice *Rasayana* therapy with full devotion according to the things described above. Rejuvenation of body and mind increases longevity with uses of different ayurvedic herbs, oils, foods and mental conduct.

REFERENCES

1. Bhagwan Das. Charaka Samhita, Chaukhambha Orientalia, Varanasi, Section 6 Chikitsasthanam, Chapter 1, Qtr 1, 1998;p.3-4, Shloka 7-8.
2. Bhagwan Das. Charaka Samhita, Chaukhambha Orientalia, Varanasi, Section 6 Chikitsasthanam, Chapter 1, Qtr 1, 1998;p.4-5, Shloka 16-24.
3. P V Sharma, Charaka Samhita, 4th Edition, 1998 Chaukhambha Orientalia Varanasi, Section 6 Chikitsasthanam, Chapter 1,Qtr 1, pp 12, Shloka 78-80.
4. P V Sharma, Charaka Samhita, 4th Edition, 1998 Chaukhambha Orientalia Varanasi, Section 6 Chikitsasthanam, Chapter 1, Qtr 1, pp 9, Shloka 62-74.
5. P V Sharma, Charaka Samhita, 4th Edition, 1998, Chaukhambha Orientalia Varanasi, Section 6 Chikitsasthanam, Chapter 1, Qtr 1, pp 7, Shloka 41-57.
6. A Mcintyre, The Ayurveda Bible, Octopus Publishing Group Ltd, 2012;p.370

How to cite this article: Nirmala Joshi, Swati S Bedekar. Concept of Rasayana for a Better Health - A Review. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2017;1:209-212. <http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.v2i1.7512>

Source of Support: Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.
