

# The Impact of Rasayana in Geriatrics

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## Abstract:

Ageing is a process of physical, psychological and social change in multi-dimensional aspects. In Ayurveda the human body has been described as a living subject where the wear and tear is a continuous and perpetual phenomenon. Regeneration and degeneration go simultaneously right from the neonatal life to young age where growth and development occurs, after wards this process is altered and degeneration takes upper hand. Rasayana therapy helps in combating major of the age related diseases and preventing from illness. There are few classical Rasayanas that are mentioned in the Ayurveda texts which help in fulfilling most of the needs. Rasayana therapy enriches nutritional quality of Rasa, enhances digestion and metabolism by normalizing agni or body fire, and promoting the competence of channels.

**Keywords:** Ageing, Rasayana, Regeneration, Degenration, Geriatrics

## I. INTRODUCTION:

Ageing is a process of physical, psychological and social change in multi-dimensional aspects. World's elderly population is increasing, by 2050, one-fifth of the world will be older than 65 years.[1]

Jarachikitsa or Rasayana is a unique therapeutic methodology to delay ageing and to minimize the intensity of problems occurring this degenerative phase of one's life. Future aging can be reduced before the occurrence of old age. In fact the ideal time for treating the geriatric problems is youth. Adherence to discipline in youth keeps the geriatric problems away. By adopting a healthier lifestyle, the risk of noncommunicable chronic disease can be reduced [2]

In Ayurveda the human body has been described as a living subject where the wear and tear is a continuous and perpetual phenomenon. Regeneration and degeneration go simultaneously right from the neonatal life to young age where growth and development occurs, after wards this process is altered and degeneration takes upper hand. As the age advances body becomes fragile, digestion and metabolism gets weakened and the body succumbs to various diseases. Ageing is a process of physical, psychological and social change in multidimensional aspects. According to the Ayurveda, ageing is outcome of kala or parinama.

Dosha dosha is the most important factor in the pathophysiology of ageing obviously because of its natural predominance at that stage of life.[3]

Basically Vaya has been divided into 3 stages

BALAAVASTHA	MADHYAMAVASTHA	VRIDHAVASTHA
Upto 16 years	16-60 years	More than 70 years

**2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:** To see the effect of Rasayana in geriatrics.

**3.Objectives:** 1) To understand the concept of ageing. 2) To understand and elaborate preventive measure in Geriatrics – 1) Daily regimen (Dinacharya) 2) Seasonal Regimens (Ritucharya) 3) Tripods of Life (Trayopastambha) 4) Samshodhana (Panchakarma) 5) Rasayana.

**3.1 Concept of Vriddhavastha (later stage of life)** Vriddhavastha is the last part of the lifespan and is mainly characterized by degenerative changes. Aging refers to a multidimensional process of physical, psychological, and social change. The changes are always degenerative in nature. [4] According to Ayurveda the lifespan of an individual is divided into three parts known as Vaya. These are Balavastha (childhood), which lasts up to the age of 16 years; Madhyavastha (young and middle age), which lasts from the age of 16 years to 60–70 years; and Vriddhavastha or Jirnavstha (old age), which refers to the period after 60 or 70 years.[5] Thus, every person will pass through a period when various decaying changes will take place, and this time period is known as Vriddhavastha . This stage is characterized by decay in the body, Dhatu (various bodily tissues), perception power of the Indriya (sensory and motor organs), potency, strength, speech, various mental and cognitive functions (e.g., memory, intellect, reception, retention, analytic ability, etc.). During this phase there is predominance of vata dosha (one of the three physiological body factors). The major physical changes seen at this time are wrinkling of skin, graying of hair, baldness, and a diminishing ability to do physical work.[6] The diseases that complicate this stage are Kasa (cough), shvasa (asthma), and so on.[7,8] Vriddhavastha may be of two types: Kalaja jara (if it manifests after the age of 60 – 70 years) or untimely. [9] Akalaja jara may result due to aggravation of dosha and pitta dosha. Therefore, excessive utilization of all the causes of vata–pitta aggravation may lead to untimely aging. Some instances are causes of rajayakshma (a syndrome with deficient immunity), carelessness regarding prescribed regimen of trayopstambha (diet, sleep, and coitus), and causes of ojokshaya (deficient immunity), excessive and single use of Amla, lavana, katu, tikta, and kashaya rasa in diet.

There are various theories regarding the pathophysiology of aging in modern medicine, but we will limit ourselves to the Ayurvedic point of view. Growth, development, and maintenance of the anatomy and physiology of the body is completely dependent on four factors: Kala (time), Svabhava (nature), ahara/diet (which should be excellent in the terms of nutrients), and vighata abhava absence of obstructive factors in the growth and development of the body

**4. DISCUSSION:** Vridhavastha stage is characterised by decay in the body, dhatu, perception of indriya, potency, strength, speech, various mental and cognitive function like memory, intellect reception, retention etc.

1. Kalaja jara-manifests after 60-70 years i.e timely ageing
2. Akalaja jara-results due to aggravation of vata and pitta, not following regimen of tryopastambha(aahara,nidra,bramhacharya)

Maintaince of physical and mental health of the body depends upon 4 factors.

- 1.Kala
- 2.Swabhava
- 3.Ahara
- 4.Vigata abhava

Ayurveda, the ancient Indian tradition system of medicine, carries a treasure of pro-nature holistic geriatric health care modalities. In focuses on longevity with the goal of healthy ageing and long life to achieve the purushartha chatustaya. Considering age is swabhava i.e sequential loss of strength or tridosha, central focus strength of Ayurveda geriatrics care swings around the concept of Rasayana. :

According to Ayurveda, ageing is the outcome of Swabhavabalapravrittvyadhi diseases which are produced by the diminished strength of natural factors such as Kshudh ,Nidra etc[10]

दीर्घमायुःस्मृतिमेधामारोग्यंतरुणवयः।प्रभावर्णस्वरौदार्यदेहेन्द्रियबलंपरम्॥७॥

वाक्सिद्धिप्रशक्तिकान्तिलभतेनारसायनात्।लाभोपायोहिशस्तानारसादीनारसायनम्॥८॥

## C CH 1.1/7,8

The benefits of Rasayana are told by Acharya Charaka in the Rasayana Pada Adhyaya by concentrating on the effects rendered on the body. The general benefits of Rasayana include longetivity , memory , youth , intellect , positive health , good complexion and strength of sensory and motor organs. Rasayana if properly implemented helps to build a society of healthy people with youthful vigour. They include pleasing effects to both body and mind. To maintain the efficacy and the long standing retainment of the Rasayana phala , Prayoga of Mahakashaya Vargas can be done respectively for the rejuvenation effect.[11]

### 4.1 Activity of the Rasayana and the Mahakashaya Varga can be told as,

- **Deergam Ayu** – for the longetivity of life span, Rasayana prayoga is well told amidst the Mahakashaya varga, **Jeevaniya Varga** is told to be used.
- **Smriti and Medha**- The use of Medhya Rasayana, Brahma Rasayana, Aindri Rasayana and others which improve intellect can be achieved through the **Sanjasthapana varga** of Mahakashayas.
- **Tarunam vaya** – For delaying ageing, concept of Geriatrics being told as a part of Rasayana are achieved by **Vayasthapana Gana**
- **Prabha, Varna** – For a better complexion of skin and glowing effect , prasadana of rakta and twak is necessary, which can be achieved by **Varnya Gana** by using it in the form of external therapy and internal medication.
- **Swara audharya**- For a better tone of voice, good control over the organs in the throat and better efficacy of functions of **Udana Vayu, Kantya varga** is being told for usage.
- **Deha Indriya Balam**- To render the strength for shareera and manas, to maintain the swastyata and the bala of kaaya, used.
- **Agnisandhukshana** - the concept of Ayurveda is in treating the Agni and protecting it. During its ksheena Avasta, measures taken to increase the digestive fire are mainly from the prayoga of **Deepaniya Gana Dravyas**.
- **Sramahara**- To relieve stress, to make a person tension free and to rejuvenate the body, **sramahara dravyas** are used.[12]

Hence the Phalashruthi of Rasayana are achieved by the prayoga of Dravyas mentioned in Mahakashaya Vargas.

In the similar manner, the concept of **Rasa+Ayana** is understood through nourishing **Rasa Raktadi Dhatus**. Hence Rasayana Therapy includes the methods producing the best quality of Sapthdhatus and Charaka's Ganas are well placed in the process of nourishment too.[13]

**DHATU- GANAS**

**Rasa** - Jeevaniya, Sthanyajanana

**Rakta** - Jeevaniya, Sonithasthapana

**Mamsa** - Brumhaniya

**Medas** -Lekhaniya

**Asthi** - Sandhaniya

**Majja and Shukra** - Sukrashodhana, Shukrajanana, Prajasthapana

**Table 1. Various Rasayana for Various disease [14]**

1.	Aamalaki, Haritaki	Kustha, Udarroga, Hridyaroga, Pandu, Premeha, etc.
2.	Brahma Rasayana	For attains long and excellent age.
3.	Cyavanprasa	Kasa, Svasaroga, Jaranasak, Hridyaroga, Mutravikara.
4.	Pippali Rasayana	Kasa, Svasa, Hikka, Gulma, Pandu, etc.
5.	Triphala Rasayana	For long life span.
6.	Nagabala Rasayana	For long life span
7.	Aindri Rasayana	Kustha, Gulma, Udarroga, for increase memory.
8.	Bhalataka Rasayana	Kapha Roga

**5.1 Discussion :**

**Benefits of Rasayana :** The main purpose of Rasayana therapy is to retard the aging process and to delay the degenerative process in the body It enhances the intelligence, memory, body strength, luster of the skin, and modulation of voice It nourishes the blood, lymph, muscles, tissues, semen, and thus prevents Chronic degenerative disorders like Arthritis. Improves metabolic process and quality of body tissues and eradicates diseases of old age Helps to attain optimal physical strength and sharpness of sense organs. Rasayana has marked action on reproductive organs and also nourishes shukra dhatu (semen) Rasayana nourishes the whole body and improves Immune system and hence the natural resistance to infections will be more. By following Achara Rasayana one can be more Satwik and surge ahead in the spiritual field by

his pure daily routines like speaking truth, not getting angry, by having control over his sense organs and calmness [15]

**CONCLUSION:** Ayurveda promotion of health and prevention of diseases with different measures like wholesome diet in proper quantity, Sadvrittupalana, Achara Rasayana, Dharaneeya and panchakarma and regular use of some herbal drugs like Ashwagandha. An individual has to adopt these measures to prevent from Akalaja Jara.[16]

Rasayana therapy enriches nutritional quality of Rasa, enhances digestion and metabolism by normalizing agni or body fire, and promoting the competence of channels.

For improving longevity Rasayana used for longer period of time on a regular basis. For improving brain function specific Rasayana is used prepared from medhya dravyas. For improving action of the tissues Rasayana plays a major role. For improving action of the channel systems the subtle action of Rasayana is well maintained. For improving action of the senses proper nourishment to the brain and the prasadana of indriyas are done.[17]

To enhance body tissues, To increase digestive power, To increase the metabolic process at a tissue level or to improve endocrine gland function, To remove waste products or to remove excess tissues in the body, To increase the functional capacity of the brain, To increase the strength and immunity of the body and to destroy disease and establish homeostasis of energy, which prevents early aging. [18]

The term Rasayana means rejuvenation or promoter of vitality. Thus, Naimittika type of Rasayana can be defined as Rasayana specific to a disease which will improve the vitality of individual towards the specific disease. "Naimittikam Vyadhinimittam". According to Ayurveda, diseases are produced because of the Dhatu-Vaishamya. Hence Naimittika Rasayana can be utilized in the correction of Dhatu-Vaishamya which having sufficient strength to protect body from disorders due to some specific diseases. It improves the state of Dhatu Vaishamya in chronic or Yapyvyadhi (which cannot be easily cured by medicine). Rasayana also known as Urjaskara, i.e giving strength towards the specific disease, by improving the resistance i.e. Immunity, or "Apunarbhava" (which does not allow the recurrence of the diseases). The word Rasayana essentially refers to acquisition and circulation of nutrition needed to provide nourishment to the body and tissue perfusion. Hence it may be presumed that a Rasayana agent acts at any of the following three levels which are Rasa (plasma), Srotas (Channels), Agni (digestive fire).[19]

We can say that probable mode of action of Rasayana therapy are as per follows,

1. Antioxidant action – Amalaki.
2. Immunomodulatory action – Guduchi.
3. Haematopoietic effect – Amalaki, Bhringaraja, Mandura, Lauha Bhasma.
4. Adaptogenic action- Ashwagandha.
5. Antiaging action – Ashwagandha, Bala.
6. Anabolic action – Vidarikanda.
7. Nutritive function – Gritha, Ksheera.
8. Neuroprotective action – Ashwagandha, Swarna Bhasma, Rajata Bhasma.[20]

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