

A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW ON RASAYANA DRAVYA FROM BRIHATRAYEE

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ABSTRACT

The problem of longevity has always intrigued man. Not only he wishes to live longer, but also desires to enjoy all pleasures of life. It is biologically possible for a man to live to the age of 125-150 years and there are records of persons who lived beyond the limits that exist today. The primary causes of ageing are genetic and these are unavoidable. Genetically one has a predetermined life span, morphological and physiological constitution and therefore an average rate of metabolism characteristic of given individual. The secondary causes are avoidable and they comprise of infections, diseases, deficiencies of vitamins, enzymes, hormones and other vital factors. These causes may not threaten life but affects the length of life span by producing irreparable damage to the tissues. Rasayana Chikitsa is one of the important branches of Astanga Ayurveda especially formulated to improve the health of the individual and at the same time cure the disease by promoting the strength and vitality. It contributes to the integrity of the Rasadi Sapta Dhatus and thus increases the longevity. The Rasayana by virtue of its capacity to modify the metabolic changes enable the man to fully utilise the possibilities, that nature has endowed him with. It not only prolongs the life but also improves the quality of life.

Keywords: Rasayana, Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga hridaya

INTRODUCTION

Ageing is a natural physiological process which is characterised by gradual weakening of the vital functions, lowering in the activity of metabolic process etc., People become old at different times and ageing is not necessarily accompanied by disease. Changes in the tempo of life which inevitably accompany all progress also have an adverse effect on man's health and life.

Rasayana Chikitsa is one of the important branches of Ashtanga Ayurveda, formulated to improve the health of the healthy people and at the same time to cure the disease by promoting the strength and

vitality. Various measures comprehended by Rasayana Therapy conduce to the replenishment of Rasa and other Dhatus. They are broadly two types of Rasayana Chikitsa from management point of view: 1) Kuti Pravesika and 2) Vatatapika. Further, the Rasayana Chikitsa is divided into 3 categories from the specific utility point of view.

They are:

- 1) Kamyā Rasayana (Target oriented, undertaken with a specific purpose).
- 2) Naimittika Rasayana (Restorative tonics used after the recovery of illness) and

3) Ajasrika Rasayana (used daily to maintain health)

There are number of Single drugs and compound drugs mentioned as Rasayana drugs in various texts of Ayurveda. But the present paper is limited to the screening of different Rasayana Drugs described in Brihatrayee.

RASAYANA DRUGS FROM CHARAKA SAMHITHA:

Charaka has given ‘Vayasthapana Varga’ consisting of ten drugs namely, Amrita, Abhaya, Amalaki, Aparajita, Rasna,

Single Drugs:

Jeevanti, Shatavari, Mandukaparni, Sthira and Punarnava. Acharya has stated ‘Amalaki’ to be the best among them (Ch.Su.4/18,25/42). Even though the best and potent Rasayana Dravya is Soma, but Amalaki is considered best probably because of its procurability without difficulty and within the reach of every human being. Among the non-medicinal group, Ghee obtained from the milk and Brahmarcharya are considered as the best Rasayana measures.

S.No.	Sanskrit Name	Botanical Name	Form of usage
1	Manduka parni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	Swarasa(fresh juice)
2	Yastimadhu	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>	Churna(powder)
3	Guduchi	<i>Tinospora cardifolia</i>	Swarasa(fresh juice)
4	Sankha Pushpi	<i>Convolvulus pluricaulis</i>	Kalka(fresh paste)

Compound Preparations:

S.No	Sanskrit Name	Botanical Name	Formulations
5	Haritaki	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	1. Brahma rasayana,
6	Vibhitaki	<i>Terminalia bellirika</i>	2. Chyavana prasha
7	Amalaki	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	3. Amalaki rasayana 4. Haritakyadi rsayana 5. Amalaka chitra 6. Amalakavaleha 7. Amalaka churna 8. Amalakayasabrahmi rasayana 9. Triphala rasasyana 10. Haritakyadi yoga
8	Vidanga	<i>Embelia ribes</i>	Vidangavaleha
9.	Naga bala	<i>Sida humilis</i>	Nagabala rasayanam

10	Bhallataka	<i>Semicarpus anacardium</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bhallataka sarpi 2. Bhallataka Ksheera, 3. Bhallataka kshoudra 4. Bhallataka yusha 5. Bhallataka tailam 6. Guda bhallataka 7. Bhallataka palalam 8. Bhallataka lavanam 9. Bhallataka tarpanam 10. Bhallataka saktu
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Groups of Drugs:

11. Vayasthapana Varga: (Ch.Chi. 1-2/12)

Sanskrit Name	Botanical Name	Sanskrit Name	Botanical Name
Bala	<i>Sida cordifolia</i>	Aguru	<i>Aquilaria agallocha</i>
Atibala	<i>Abutilon indicum</i>	Tinisa	<i>Ougeina dalbergiodes</i>
Swetha	<i>Operculina turpetum</i>	Khadira	<i>Acacia catechu</i>
Chandana	<i>Santalum album</i>	Simsapa	<i>Dalbergia sissoo.Roxb.</i>
Dhava	<i>Anogeissus latifolia</i>	Asana	<i>Pterocarpus marsupium</i>

These drugs are consumed with milk.

12. Aindri Rasayanam (Ch.Chi. 1-3/24-29)

Sanskrit Name	Botanical Name	Sanskrit Name	Botanical Name
Aindri	<i>Citrillus colocynthis</i>	Brahmasuvarchala	-----
Matsyakshya	-----	Pippali	<i>Piper longum</i>
Brahmi	<i>Bocopa monnieri</i>	Sankha pushpi	<i>Convolvulus pluricaulis</i>
Vacha	<i>Acorus calamus</i>	Visha	<i>Aconitum heterophyllum</i>

Saindhava Lavana, Swarna Bhasma, Cow's Ghee are also included in this group

13. A group of drugs stated by Indra (Ch.Chi. 1-4/6)

Sanskrit Name	Botanical Name	Sanskrit Name	Botanical Name
Aindra	<i>Citrillus colocynthis</i>	Punarnava	<i>Boerhaavia diffusa</i>
Brahmi	<i>Bocopa monnieri</i>	Nagabala	<i>Sida humilis</i>
Payasya	<i>Holostemma rheedianum</i>	Sthira	<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>
Ksheera pushpi	-----	Vacha	<i>Acorus calamus</i>
Sravani	<i>Sphaeranthus indicus</i>	Chhatra	-----
Mahasravani	-----	Atichhatra	-----
Vidari	<i>Ipoemea digitata</i>	Meda	-----
Satavari	<i>Asparagus adscendens</i>	Mahameda	-----
Jeevanthi	<i>Dendrobium macraei</i>	& Jeevaniya gana	

14. Minerals:

Sanskrit Name	Latin Name	Formulations
Loha	Ferrum	<i>Lohadi Rasayana</i> <i>Amalakayasa Brahmi Rasayana</i>
Swarna	Aurum	<i>Aindri Rasayana</i>

15. A group of 9 drugs are also indicated by indra stated to highly potent and sustainable to Rishis only as the ordinary person will not be able to withstand the potency of these drugs . a) Brahma Suvarchala b) Aditya Parni c) Nari or Aswabala d) Kashthagodha e) Sarpa f) Soma g) Padma h) Aja i) Neela (Ch.Chi.1(4)/13-26)

Of the above drugs Soma is considered the best. These drugs are used in the method of Dronee Pravesika Rasayana.

16. Another Rasayana is also stated to be explained by Indra which contains mainly Balya Varga, Jeevaniya Varga, Brimhaneeya Varga, Vayasthapana Varga and some other drugs (Ch.Chi.1(4)/13-26)

Rasayana Drugs in Susruta Samhitha (Chikitsa Sthana 27-30 Chapters) :

S.No	Sanskrit Name	Botanical Name	Formulations
1	Vidanga	<i>Embelia ribes</i>	Vidanga rasayana Vidanga kalka
2	Kashmarya	<i>Gmelina arborea</i>	Kashmarya kalpa
3	Bala	<i>Sida cordifolia</i>	Bla kalpa

4	Atibala	<i>Abutilon indicum</i>	Atibala kalpa
5	Nagabala	<i>Sida humilis</i>	Nagabala kalpa
6	Vidari	<i>Ipomoea digitata</i>	Vidari kalpa
7	Satavari	<i>Asparagus adscendens</i>	Satavari kalpa, Satavari ghrita
8	Varahikanda	<i>Dioscoria sativa</i>	Varahi kalpa
9	Avalguja &	<i>Psoralea corylifolia</i>	-
10	Sanabeeja	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	Mandukaparni rasayana
11	Mandukaparni	<i>Bocopa Monnieri</i>	Brahmi Rasayana
	Brahmi		Brahmi kalpa
12	Vacha	<i>Acorus calamus</i>	Vacha Rasayana
			Sata paka vacha ghrita
13	Bilva	<i>Aegle marmelos .Linn</i>	Roots are used
14	Mrinala	--	
15	Suvarna	--	
16	Soma	<i>Ephedra gerardiana</i>	24 Varieties

Soma has been classified into 24 species according to the differences in their habitats, structures, epithets and potencies.

They are:

a)Ansuman b) Munjavan c) Chandrama d) Rajata Prabha e) Durvasoma f) Kaniyan g) Svetaksha h) Kanaka Prabha i) Pratanavam j) Tala Vrinta k) Karavira l) Amsavam m) Swayam Prabha n) Mahasoma o) Garudabrita p) Gayatrya q) Traisthubha r) Pamkta s) Jagata t) Samkara u) Agni-shtoma v) Raivata w) Yathokta x) Udupati.

Soma plant is considered as the lord of all medicinal plants. It is furnished with 15 leaves. The Himalayas, Arbuda, Sahya, Mahendra, Malaya, Sri Parvata Devagani, Deva Sunda are the habitats of the Soma plants. (Su.Ch.29/3,4)

11) A list of eighteen different kinds of drugs of high potency has been given

Susruta. Their mode of use and therapeutic effects are identical with those of Soma plant.

Sveta Kapoti b) Krishna Kapoti c) Gonasi d) Varahi e) Kanya f) Chhatra g) Ati-Chhatra h) Karenu i) Aja j) Chakraka k) Aditya Parnine l) Suvarchala m) Bramha Suvarchala n) Sravani o) Maha Sravani p) Golomi q) Ajalomi r) Maha Vegavati (Su.Chi.30th Chapter).

Rasayana Drugs in Astanga

Hridaya:

The Soma Species and certain other drugs are not mentioned in Ashtanga Hridayam.

Vagbhata states that Acharya had intentionally omitted those highly potent drugs which are difficult to procure.

(Ah.UH.39/177)

Single Drugs

S.No.	Sanskrit Name	Botanical Name	Form of usage
1	Manduka parni	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	Swarasa(fresh juice)
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3	Guduchi	<i>Tinospora cardifolia</i>	Swarasa(fresh juice)
4	Sankha Pushpi	<i>Convolvulus pluricaulis</i>	Kalka(fresh paste)
5	Somaraji	<i>Psorelia coryilfolia</i>	
6	Punarnava	<i>Boerhaavia diffusa</i>	
7	Satavari	<i>Asaparagus adscendens</i>	
8	Aswagandha	<i>Withania sominifera</i>	
9	Bringaraja	<i>Eclipta alba</i>	Swarasa(fresh juice)
10	Lasuna	<i>Allium sativum</i>	Swarasa(fresh juice)

Compound Preparations:

S.No	Sanskrit Name	Botanical Name	Formulations
11	Brahmi	<i>Bacopa monnieri</i>	Brahmyadi rasayana
12	Nagabala	<i>Sida humilis</i>	Nagabala rasayana
13	Gokshura & Varahi	<i>Tribulus terrestris</i> <i>Dioscoria sativa</i>	Varahi Rasayana
14	Vidari	<i>Ipomoea digitata</i>	Vidarikanda Rasayana
15	Bhallataka (A.H.U. 39/66-83)	<i>Semecarpus anacardium</i>	Bhallataka kashaya Bhallataka swarasa Bhallataka taila
16	Tuvaraka	<i>Hydnocarpus wightiane</i>	Tuvaraka rasayana Tuvaraka taila Tuvarakataila with khadira
17	Pippali	<i>Piper longum</i>	Pippali rasayanam

18	Sunthi	<i>Gingiber officinale</i>	Vardhaman pippali yoga Sunthyadi prayogam
19	Langali	<i>Gloriosa superb</i>	Langalyadi gutika yoga
20			Narasimha ghritam

Minerals Preparations:

S.No	Sanskrit Name	Latin Name	Formulations
21	Shilajatu	Asphaltum/Black bitumen	Silajatu yoga
22	Loha	Iron/Ferium	Loha Bhasma along with other drugs like vidanga

The vata prakriti people are advised to take MILK, Pitta Prakriti people the GHEE, the Kapha Prakriti individuals HONEY and regularly before meals only for producing desired Rasayana effect and to prevent Senile Decay.

Discussion and Conclusion:

On screening Brihatrayee, many drugs like, herbal, mineral, herbo-mineral, animal origin have possess rasayana karma. Processing of these drugs also necessary, so wherever necessary these processing techniques are explained in brihatrayee. Many drugs mentioned as rasayana dravya in samhitas are need to be identified. More research has to be conducted to identify those drugs.

While treating any chronic disease these rasayana drugs have prime importance. Because these rasayana drugs have capacity to act on re-occurrence of the disease.

By undergoing through the *Rasayana* method of treatment, an individual draws benefits of longevity, heightened memory and intelligence, health, youthfulness, excel-

lence of luster, complexion and voice, optimum strength of body and senses, utterances that always get fulfilled, the reverence of people body glow. *Rasayana* re-establishes youth, strengthens life and brain powers and is capable of removing diseases.

Rasayana enhances the immunity. The administration of the *Rasayana* drug connate the process of longevity through immunomodulation in terms of resisting the disease process or even arresting the production of the disease caused due to infection.

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