



A Role of Rasayana Therapy In Shalakyia Tantra

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Abstract

The role of Rasayana therapy in the present era is increasingly significant. As humanity faces a growing burden of diseases, Rasayanas offer a means to **protect and strengthen the body**. Rasayana is a therapeutic approach that not only enhances the normal functioning of bodily systems but also improves the overall quality of life. In **Shalakyatantra**, Rasayana therapy is emphasized for its ability to **nourish and clarify the sense organs**, enhancing their function and resilience. Incorporating Rasayanas into daily life can help maintain **strength, vitality, and optimal functioning of the sensory organs**, while also providing preventive benefits against various diseases. Through their rejuvenating and adaptogenic properties, Rasayanas serve as an essential component of holistic health, promoting longevity, immunity, and overall well-being.

Key Words: Rejuvenation, ENT, Shalakyia

Introduction

Rasayana is considered one of the **Ashtangas of Ayurveda** and plays a pivotal role in maintaining health and promoting longevity. It can be understood as a therapeutic approach aimed at achieving **homeostasis**, thereby **slowing the aging process** and preventing the onset of diseases. In Ayurveda, aging is viewed as a natural degenerative process, and Rasayana therapy focuses on **preventing premature aging** while promoting healthy and balanced aing.

Ayurveda emphasizes the principle of “*Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam, Aturasya Vikara Prashamanam*”, which highlights the dual goal of **maintaining the health of a healthy individual** and **alleviating disease in the sick**. Rasayana therapy aligns perfectly with this principle, as it not only strengthens physiological functions but also enhances immunity, vitality, and resistance to disease.

Classical texts provide detailed insights into Rasayana. In the **Charaka Samhita**, Rasayana is discussed in the initial chapters of *Chikitsa Sthana*, emphasizing its preventive and rejuvenative properties, while in the **Sushruta Samhita**, it is elaborated in chapters 27–30 of *Chikitsa Sthana*. The **Ashtanga Hridaya** also describes Rasayana therapies, highlighting their significance in nourishing tissues, improving organ function, and supporting overall well-being.

Thus, Rasayana therapy represents a holistic approach that **integrates prevention, rejuvenation, and disease management**, making it highly relevant in modern times for promoting health, longevity, and quality of life.

Although Rasayana does not occupy a prominent position in the *Chikitsa Sthana*, being described only briefly in the 39th chapter of *Uttar Tantra*, its significance in classical Ayurveda is undeniable. This limited emphasis reflects a gradual decline in the focus on Rasayana therapy during the later Samhita period. The golden era of Rasayana Tantra, prominent in the Charaka and Sushruta periods, slowly diminished as the prevalence of ailments increased. Particularly, **indoor Rasayanas** lost popularity, and Rasayana gradually came to be regarded as a component of general *Chikitsa*, especially *Kayachikitsa*, rather than an independent specialty.

Rasayana therapy is known to **strengthen the Indriyas**, and its application during the antenatal period can prevent congenital abnormalities such as *Badhira* (deafness), *Mooka* (mute), and *Andhatva* (blindness) in the offspring. In **Shalakya Tantra**, which focuses on the health of the sensory organs (*Gnanendriyas*), Rasayana interventions—including *Medya*, *Brimhana*, and *Tarpana*—are essential to restore normal function and prevent disease.

In the present era, maintaining the health of the **ear, nose, and throat regions** has become increasingly important, as these organs are highly exposed to microorganisms, making them vulnerable to infections and other disorders. Rasayana therapy for ENT organs is therefore **invaluable**, as it helps preserve the normal physiological functioning of these organs and maintains the **integrity of the mucosal flora**, which is crucial for preventing disease. Regular and appropriate use of Rasayana preparations can provide both protective and rejuvenative benefits, reinforcing the classical principle of promoting long-term sensory and overall health.

Rasayana therapy, or rejuvenation therapy, is designed to promote holistic excellence in an individual, encompassing physical, sensory, and mental domains. A person undergoing Rasayana treatment is said to attain longevity, improved memory, enhanced intellect, freedom from diseases, and maintenance of youthfulness. Additional benefits include radiant complexion, luster, and voice quality, as well as the development of optimal potentiality of the body and the sense organs.

Classical texts describe that Rasayana enhances the quality of Rasa, the nourishing fluid produced after digestion, which supports overall tissue nutrition and vitality. By improving the function of Rasa, Rasayana not only strengthens the physical body but also enhances psychic faculties, such as sharp memory, focus, and cognitive resilience. Furthermore, it is believed to confer Vak-Siddhi—the excellence of speech—along with respect, brilliance, and overall vitality.

Through these multifaceted effects, Rasayana therapy aligns with the Ayurvedic principle of maintaining both body and mind in optimal health, reinforcing the individual's resistance to diseases while promoting long-term well-being. Its impact on the sense organs, cognitive abilities, and systemic health underscores its relevance in modern preventive and integrative medicine, particularly in fields such as ENT and neurology, where sensory and neural functions are critical.

Shira and Rasayana Therapy

In Ayurveda, **Shira (head)** is regarded as an **Uttamanga**, the most important part of the body. It is the seat of **Prana Vayu** and houses the sensory organs (*Indriyas*), making it central to both physiological and neurological functions. Clinical applicability is well explained by **Acharya Vagbhata**, who compares the head to the **root (Moola) of a plant**, with the limbs representing the trunk. Just as damage to the root affects the entire plant, disturbances in the head can have widespread effects on the body.

Several lifestyle and environmental factors contribute to **Shiroroga (head disorders)**. Improper diet, irregular sleep patterns, excessive exposure to wind, and overconsumption of water are recognized causes. In addition, **stress** has become a predominant factor in contemporary society, contributing to a range of conditions from **headaches and migraines to hair loss and cognitive disturbances**.

Rasayana therapy plays a pivotal role in managing these disorders. By **strengthening the head and the sense organs**, enhancing tissue nutrition, and improving the function of Prana Vayu, Rasayanas help **prevent and alleviate prevalent Shirorogas**. These rejuvenative therapies not only restore physiological balance but also enhance **immunity, cognitive function, and vitality**, making them highly relevant in the prevention and management of modern lifestyle-related disorders.

Disease-Specific Rasayanas

Ayurvedic classics provide numerous Rasayanas targeted to specific ENT and head disorders:

- **Pippali Rasayana** (*Charaka Chikitsa 1-3/32-35*): Recommended for **Galamaya, Vairasya, and Peenasa**.
- **Pippali Rasayana** (*Ashtanga Hridaya Uttara 39/101-102*): Effective in **Galagraha**.
- **Vardhamana Pippali Rasayana** (*Ashtanga Hridaya Uttara 24/27*): Indicated for **Dushta Pratishyaya (chronic sinusitis)**.
- **Satapaka Bala Taila** (*Sushruta Chikitsa 15*): Used in **Karna Roga (ear disorders)**.

- **Bala Taila Nasana** (*Sushruta Uttara 23/9*) and **Varunadi Ghrita** (*Sushruta Uttara 26/9*): Recommended for **Shiroroga (head disorders)**.

General Rasayanas

Several general measures and therapies support the **maintenance of sensory organ health and immunity**:

- **Early morning intake of water**: Prevents **Galaroga, Shirashula, and Karnashula** (*Cakradatta*).
- **Ghrita Pana** (*Sushruta Uttara 21/3, 23/11, 24/18*): Useful for **Karna Roga, Nasashosha (dryness of nose), and Pratishyaya**.
- **Intake of Ghrita or Taila after milk**: Helps in **Shiroroga** (*Sushruta Uttara 26/3*).
- **Rasala**: Beneficial in **Pratishyaya** (*Charaka Uttara 40*).

Single-Drug Rasayanas

Individual herbs also provide targeted benefits for ENT and head-related conditions:

- **Guduchi** – general immunity and rejuvenation
- **Tejohva** – improves **Kanta (throat) health**
- **Yashtimadhu** – for throat and **upper respiratory tract disorders**
- **Jyotishmati** – for head-related disorders
- **Guggulu** – alleviates **pain**
- **Shalaparni** – head and upper respiratory tract disorders
- **Bakuchi** – hair (Keshya) and ear disorders
- **Haritaki, Amalaki** – general rejuvenation
- **Bringaraja** – hair health, upper respiratory tract, and head disorders
- **Jatamansi** – head disorders
- **Soma** – Pratishyaya
- **Tejapatra, Patramla** – taste disorders (Ruchi)
- **Saireyaka** – hair applications (Kesharanjana)
- **Tila** – hair health (Keshya)

These Rasayanas, whether single-drug therapies or compound preparations, are tailored according to the **dosha involvement, disease severity, and individual constitution**, highlighting Ayurveda's **personalized approach to preventing and treating ENT and Shiroroga**.

Amalakka Rasayana - (Ca.Chi.11/75) (A.H.U.39/28-32)

Haritakyadi Yoga - (Ca.Chi.11/ 76,77-78)

Amalakagritha (Ca.Chi.12/46)

Amalaka Avaleha (Ca.Chi.12/7,10)

Amalaka Churna- (Ca.Chi.12/8)

Vidangavaleha - (Ca.Chi.12/ 9)

Nagabala Rasayana - (Ca.Chi.12/ 11)

Kevalamalaka Rasayana - (Ca.Chi.13/ 14)

Lauhadi Rasayana - (Ca.Chi.13/15-23)

Abhayamalaka Rasayana - (A.H.U.39/24-27)

Triphala Rasayana (A.H.U.39/42,42)

Pippali Rasayana (Ca.Chi.13/32- 35)

Rasayana Herbs for Shalakya Disorders

Hair (Keshya) Health:

- **Sleshmataka, Bijaka, Nirgundi, Nili, Rajika, Bibitaki** – strengthen hair and prevent hair-related disorders.

Ear (Karna) Health:

- **Silhaka, Karpasa** – maintain ear structure and function.

Throat (Kanta) Health:

- **Shanapushpi, Patala, Kantakari** – support throat and upper respiratory tract health.

Oral and Dental (Danta) Health:

- **Bakula, Khadira** – enhance dental and oral mucosal integrity.

Nose, Respiratory, and Swasa Disorders:

- **Rasona, Agarar, Pippali, Punarnava, Sharapunga** – manage upper respiratory tract conditions, sinusitis, and Swasa-related disorders.

Head (Shira) and Neurological Health:

- **Rasna, Mundi, Shankhapushpi, Mandukaparni, Aparajita** – improve cognitive functions, reduce headaches, and support neurological health.

Voice (Swara) Health:

- **Vasa, Shankhapushpi** – enhance voice quality and strength of the vocal apparatus.

Taste (Ruchi) Health:

- **Lavanga** – improves taste perception.

Miscellaneous / General Rejuvenation:

- **Draksha, Brahmi, Ashwagandha, Varahikanda** – provide systemic rejuvenation, strengthen sensory organs, and enhance overall immunity.

Pharmacological and Systemic Effects of Rasayana

Rasayana therapy in Ayurveda operates through comprehensive and multi-level mechanisms, rather than a single specific pharmacological action. Its effects are mediated via fundamental physiological factors such as Rasa-Samhana (plasma nourishment), Dhatus (tissues), Agni (metabolic fire), and Srotas (body channels). Acharya Charaka describes the ultimate aim of Rasayana as the attainment of holistic benefits: “Labhopayo Hi Shastanam Rasadinam Rasayanam”, signifying that Rasayana enhances longevity, vitality, and the overall quality of bodily tissues.

At the level of Rasa, Rasayana drugs—typically possessing Madhura (sweet), Guru (heavy), Snigdha (unctuous), and Sheeta (cool) qualities—improve the nutritional content of the plasma, which in turn nourishes all Dhatus, ensuring optimal tissue quality and function. Certain Rasayana dravyas with Ushna (hot), Laghu (light), Ruksha (dry), Katu, Tikta, and Kashaya properties act primarily at the level of Agni, enhancing metabolic activity and promoting proper tissue formation and functional balance. By purifying the Srotas, these drugs facilitate efficient nutrient distribution and support structural and functional integrity across the body.

Anabolic Effects

Experimental observations have shown that Rasayana herbs like Aamalaki, Pippali, and Guduchi promote tissue building and repair. Regular administration prevents or delays tissue degeneration, resulting in improved function of the sense organs and overall vitality.

Anti-Stress Effects

Modern life exposes individuals to a variety of stressors, which can adversely affect physiological and psychological balance. Rasayana therapy improves stress tolerance and resilience, helping the body maintain homeostasis under adverse conditions. By enhancing both physical and mental endurance, Rasayana drugs play a vital role in maintaining health, cognitive function, and sensory acuity.

In essence, the pharmacodynamics of Rasayana is holistic, integrative, and multi-targeted, promoting longevity, tissue rejuvenation, and optimal function of the sensory organs while providing resilience against stress and degenerative processes.

Immunomodulatory Effects of Rasayana

Immunity represents a fundamental biological mechanism that protects the body against external insults, including microbial invasions and environmental stressors. The immune system is a **complex, multi-component, and multi-locational defense network**, working continuously to maintain the integrity of the organism. Rasayana therapy has been shown to exert **immunomodulatory effects**, enhancing both innate and adaptive immune responses.

Rasayana drugs act by **strengthening the body's defense mechanisms**, improving resistance against infections, and maintaining homeostasis. Experimental and clinical evidence indicates that these herbs can **stimulate immune cells, modulate cytokine production, and enhance antibody response**, thereby improving overall immunological competence. By fortifying the immune system, Rasayana not only aids in preventing disease but also **supports recovery and resilience**, making the body better equipped to handle internal and external challenges.

In addition to their immunostimulatory properties, Rasayana herbs contribute to **tissue nourishment and rejuvenation**, which indirectly supports immune function by maintaining optimal cellular and organ health. Continuous use of Rasayana therapy is believed to **build deep, sustained immunity**, ensuring long-term protection against infections and degenerative processes.

Thus, the immunomodulatory role of Rasayana integrates **Ayurvedic holistic principles with modern understanding of immune enhancement**, emphasizing its relevance in preventive, therapeutic, and restorative healthcare.

Antioxidant Effects of Rasayana

Modern research highlights the damaging role of **oxygen free radicals** when their concentration exceeds the body's natural defense capacity. Free radicals can cause cellular damage, leading to a wide spectrum of diseases ranging from minor allergies to chronic degenerative disorders and cancers. While the body produces **endogenous antioxidant enzymes** to neutralize these radicals, their natural mechanisms can become insufficient under stress, environmental toxins, or aging.

Rasayana drugs have been shown to **enhance the body's intrinsic antioxidant defenses**, supporting the neutralization of excess free radicals and minimizing oxidative stress. By promoting enzymatic activity and stabilizing cellular structures, Rasayana herbs **prevent tissue damage, delay degeneration, and improve overall cellular function**. Their antioxidant action contributes not only to the **prevention of disease** but also to the **maintenance of health, longevity, and vitality**.

In essence, Rasayana therapy strengthens the body's physiological resilience against oxidative injury, complementing its **rejuvenative, anabolic, immunomodulatory, and anti-stress effects**, thereby providing a **holistic protective mechanism** for both sensory organs and systemic health.

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