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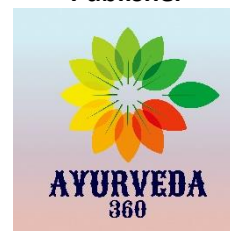
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A Comprehensive Review of Rasayana In Ayurveda: Enhancing Longevity and Wellness

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ABSTRACT

Introduction:

Rasayana is a vital concept in Ayurveda that aims to promote longevity, enhance vitality, and delay aging. Rooted in classical Ayurvedic texts like the *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Rasayana* therapy involves a holistic approach that combines herbal treatments with lifestyle and mental discipline to maintain health and prevent disease.

Methods:

This review explores the theoretical foundations of *Rasayana* therapy, drawing on classical Ayurvedic texts and contemporary biomedical findings. It examines *Rasayana*'s role in balancing the body's *Dhatus*, enhancing immunity, and its antioxidant and adaptogenic properties.

Results:

Rasayana therapy, which includes herbs like *Ashwagandha*, *Brahmi*, *Amlaki*, and *Shankhpushpi*, is shown to possess rejuvenating, neuroprotective, and immune-boosting effects. Its benefits are aligned with modern concepts of preventive healthcare, highlighting its adaptiveness to individual constitution (*Prakriti*), age (*Vaya*), season (*Ritu*), and region (*Desha*).

Discussion:


Rasayana's multi-targeted approach makes it relevant in addressing contemporary health challenges such as premature aging, lifestyle disorders, and reduced immunity. Its application ranges from inpatient (*Kutipravesika*) to outpatient (*Vatatapika*) methods, reflecting Ayurveda's flexibility. However, clinical

validation and evidence-based research are required for mainstream integration into modern healthcare systems.


Conclusion:

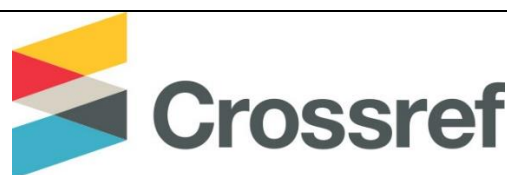
Rasayana offers a comprehensive, time-tested approach to promoting longevity and health, combining herbal treatments with lifestyle interventions. Its potential as a preventive and therapeutic tool in modern healthcare warrants further research.

Keywords: *Rasayana*, Ayurveda, Longevity, Immunity, Rejuvenation, Preventive Health

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Introduction

Rasayana plays a pivotal role in maintaining and promoting health. In contemporary times, people lead hectic lives, juggling work and family responsibilities, which often leads to various health-related issues, especially in the later stages of life (old age). Despite the advancements in modern medicine, it has not been entirely successful in addressing the complexities of aging and its associated disorders. Modern healthcare also acknowledges the challenges posed by aging and its related ailments. However, the growing interest in *Ayurveda* and *Yoga* indicates the enduring value of these ancient therapies in improving the quality of life.

Yoga is known for its ability to control and enhance the mental state, while *Ayurveda* offers a holistic approach to better living through practices such as *Dincharya*, *Ratricharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Sadvritta*, *Aachar-Rasayana*, *Rasayana*, *Vajikaran*, and dietary recommendations. Among these, *Rasayana* is a particularly significant therapy in *Ayurveda*, known for its effectiveness in maintaining vitality and longevity.

The concept of *Rasayana* is deeply embedded in *Astanga Ayurveda*, one of the eight branches of *Ayurveda*, as propounded in various classical Ayurvedic texts. Like the other branches of

Ayurveda, *Rasayana* serves the fundamental purpose of *Ayurveda*: “*Swasthasyaswasth rakshamanum aaturasaya vikarum prashmanum ch*,” as set forth by *Acharya Charaka* [1]. This principle emphasizes maintaining health in the healthy person and alleviating diseases in the sick.

Acharya Sushruta defines *Rasayana Tantra* as “*Rasayantantrum nama vayasthapanayurmedhabalkaraam rogaapharansamartham ch*,” which refers to the branch of *Ayurveda* dedicated to promoting longevity, enhancing intelligence and mental strength, and boosting immunity to prevent various disorders [2].

Rasayana therapy aims to preserve and improve health by optimizing cellular nutrition, thus promoting longevity. *Sushruta* describes a *swastha purusha* (healthy person) as one who maintains equilibrium in the *doshas* (*sama dosha*), normal digestive function (*sama agni*), balanced state of the seven *dhatus* (*sam dhatu*), normal excretion (*sam malkriya*), and a blissful state of the *atma* (soul), *indriyas* (sense organs), and *mana* (mind) [3].

According to *Acharya Vagbhata*, *Rasayana* involves nourishment through food, medicine, or activities that enhance the quality of the *dhatus*, leading to optimal health [4]. *Acharya*

Singh, A. & Singh, D. Review of Rasayana In Ayurveda

effects of aging, and increase functional capacity. In other words, *Rasayana* promotes longevity by preserving and enhancing health, helping to prevent diseases, and ensuring a long and healthy life [7].

- Swasthyaurjaskara
- Jaravyadhināsak
- Jara-vyādhividhvanshi Bhesaj
- Jara-vyādhi uttapatti
pratibandhak
- Vyay-sthapaka
- Sarwopghatprasamniya
- Rasadidhatu-labhopaya
- Aayurmedha-balakar
- Swasthyaswasth-rakshanam
- Rogaapharan-samarth
- Aartsya roganut

- ## Need for Rasayana

In today's world, where the desire to stay young and live longer is prevalent, *Rasayana* offers a promising solution [9]. The aging process, characterized by natural degeneration and lifestyle factors, accelerates tissue breakdown, diminishing vitality. In addition to natural aging, poor dietary habits, environmental pollution, and mental stress further exacerbate this process. The modern lifestyle requires detoxification and rejuvenation to restore harmony between the body, mind, and soul, making *Rasayana* therapy more essential than ever.

Traditionally, *Rasayana* was used to maintain the health of a healthy individual. However, it has now expanded to treat various illness conditions. As a science of nutrition, *Rasayana* nourishes the seven *Dhatus* and slows the breakdown of these tissues, thereby enhancing the vitality and *Sara* (essence) of each *Dhatu* [10].

In the modern world, with increasing disparities in food habits, mental behavior, and personal conduct, a large number of individuals suffer from both physical and mental illnesses. *Vyadhikshamatva*, or immunity, is continuously decreasing due to stress and lifestyle factors. Despite the availability of modern medicines, their side effects are a growing concern. In such circumstances, *Rasayana* therapy emerges as a more effective and holistic approach to combat the effects of aging and restore vitality.

Evidence of Achara Rasayana

Achara Rasayana has been explained by *Acharya Charaka* in the *Charaka Samhita*. In recent times, due to altered food habits and lifestyle changes, immunity levels have decreased, leading to premature aging in many individuals. To counteract these effects, *Rasayana* may serve as a milestone for longevity and delaying the onset of old age. Nowadays, due to hectic lifestyles, stress, hormonal imbalances, excessive use of electronic

gadgets, and social media, various physical and mental disorders arise, potentially disrupting digestive enzymes and leading to physiological, pathological, and psychological imbalances. To address this, it is essential to follow a regular routine, as prescribed by various *Acharyas*, which includes daily exercise, *yoga*, *pranayama*, and a seasonal diet that nourishes the body. This helps build inner strength and enhances the immune system. Additionally, all forms of prayer, as prescribed by different religions, can be beneficial when accompanied by proper digestion for maintaining a healthy body.

Aim of Rasayana [11]

The main objective of *Rasayana* is *Jaranashana* (prevention of aging) and *Vyadhinashana* (prevention of diseases).

Benefits of Rasayana Therapy

Acharya Charaka and *Acharya Vagbhata* describe numerous benefits of *Rasayana* therapy, which include enjoying a long, healthy life, enhancing intelligence, memory, strength, youthfulness, luster, and the sweetness of the voice, as well as enhancing physical and mental vigor throughout life. *Rasayanas* improve metabolic processes, resulting in optimal biotransformation and the production of high-quality bodily tissues. *Rasayana* therapy primarily targets the wear and tear the human body suffers due to daily life and the unwanted

ill effects of infirmities encountered during the same [12,13].

Ayurveda, true to its essence as the science of life, has always emphasized the factors that promote or hinder a healthy lifestyle. The failure to follow daily living practices as prescribed by *Ayurveda* not only accelerates aging but also predisposes individuals to various lifestyle disorders [14].

Acharya Sharangdhara has stated that *Rasayana* includes the use of certain *dravyas*, such as *Rudanti*, *Guggul*, and *Haritaki*, which help prevent early aging (*Jara*) and protect against opportunistic infections [15]. Similar descriptions are found in the *Bhaishajyaratnavali*, where *Rasayanas* are referred to as rejuvenating measures aimed at ensuring a youthful life free from disease and infirmity. Other *Rasayanas*, aimed at enhancing the composition or functionality of particular tissues, are also mentioned, such as *Medhya Rasayana* for optimum mental vigor (e.g., *Shankhpushpi*, *Ashwagandha*, *Brahmi*, *Mandookaparni*) and *Dristiprada Rasayana* for maintaining visual acuity (e.g., *Jyotishmati*, *Chakshusya*) [16].

Rasayana Use and Age

Acharya Sushruta [17] and *Acharya Vagbhata* [18] recommend the use of *Rasayana* in early or middle age: "*Purve vayasi madhye va.*" Both *Acharyas*

emphasize that *Rasayana* should be preceded by body purification or detoxification, typically achieved through *Panchakarma* methods. The use of *Rasayana dravya* (medicinal agents) is advised based on the individual's age, location (*desha*), time (*kala*), constitution (*prakriti*), digestive strength (*agnibala*), and other factors.

Classification of Rasayana

Rasayana is highly effective due to its *Satvika* properties. It can be classified into two main categories:

1. *Dravyabhoota Rasayana*: This type of *Rasayana* involves the use of specific *dravyas* (substances). It includes *Naimittika Rasayana* and *Aajsrika Rasayana*, among others.
2. *Adravyabhoota Rasayana*: This type does not involve the use of specific *dravyas* but focuses on practices like *Achara Rasayana* and *Sadvritta* (good conduct).

Acharya Charaka has described two main types of *Rasayana* based on their management [19]:

1. *Kuti Praveshika Rasayana* (Indoor Management): This method is considered superior. According to *Acharya Charaka*, a special sanatorium is constructed for this treatment, referred to as "*Vistarotsedhsampannam Trigarbha Sukshalochnam*" (*Ch.Chi.1/1/19*). A person enters this facility under strict

guidance and follows all Ayurvedic procedures to gain the full benefits of *Rasayana*. While effective, this method is complex and not recommended for everyone [20].

2. *Vatatapika Rasayana* (Outdoor Management): This method is considered inferior compared to *Kuti Praveshika Rasayana*. It can be practiced by the general population and is compatible with normal daily life. The treatment involves exposure to *Vata* (wind) and *Aatap* (sunlight), hence the name *Vatatapika Rasayana*. This method has minimal complications, apart from the regular intake of prescribed medicines [21].

3. *Drauni Praveshika Rasayana*: This ancient method involved sleeping in a boat made from the humid *Palash* tree, after consuming *Aushadh Swarasa* to its full capacity. After six months of this treatment, individuals would experience the full benefits of *Rasayana*. This method is no longer in use today [22].

4. *Achara Rasayana*: This is a form of *Adravabhoota Rasayana*, with the daily consumption of milk and clarified butter being a part of the routine. It focuses primarily on good conduct and specific behaviors. *Achara Rasayana* emphasizes the importance of ethical living and practices, such as truthfulness, control of anger, celibacy, non-violence, proper rest,

and serving others, among other virtuous behaviors [23].

Acharya Dalhana classifies *Rasayana* into three categories based on their purpose and use [24]:

1. *Kamyā Rasayana*: This type of *Rasayana* is used to fulfill a specific desire or to promote physical and mental health. It is divided into three subtypes [25]:

- *Prana Kamyā Rasayana*: For maintaining the vitality of life energy (*prana*).
- *Medha Kamyā Rasayana*: For enhancing memory and intellect.
- *Shree Kamyā Rasayana*: To promote complex wellness.

2. *Naimittik Rasayana*: This type addresses specific causes or diseases in the body, such as:

- *Agastya-Haritaki*: For *Kasa*, *Kaphaj Hridroga*.
- *Amlaki Rasayana*: For *Kaphaj Hridroga*.
- *Bhallataka Rasayana*: For *Kaphaj Roga*.
- *Chyavanprash*: For *Swas-Kasa*, *Kshaya Roga*, *Kaphaj Hridroga*.
- *Pippali Rasayana*: For *Swas-Kasa*, *Kshaya Roga*.

3. *Aajshrik Rasayana*: This includes routine use of food-based *Rasayana* like milk, *ghruta*, honey, and seasonal fruits.

Drugs Used for Rasayana

constitution, and seasonal suitability [26].

Rasayana drugs should be selected according to factors such as age,

The following drugs are prescribed based on age:

Table 1: Age-wise effect of Rasayana Drug

Age Range (Years)	Effect (Prabhava)	Rasayana Drug
1 - 10	Baalya	Vacha, Kashmari, Swarna
11 - 20	Vridddhi	Kashmari, Ashwagandha, Bala
21 - 30	Chhavi	Loha, Amlaki
31 - 40	Medha	Sankhpuspi, Brahmi, Jyotismati
41 - 50	Twaka	Jyotismati, Priyala, Somraji, Bhringraja
51 - 60	Dtisti	Jyotasmati, Triphala, Loha, Satawari, Amlaki
61 - 70	Shukra	Atmagupta, Vajikara Dravyas
71 - 80	Vikrama	Rasayana not applicable in this age
81 - 90	Buddhi	Rasayana not applicable in this age
91 - 100	Karmendriya	Rasayana not applicable in this age

According to Prakriti [27]**Table 2: Rasayana Dravya according to Prakriti**

Prakriti	Rasayana Drug
Vataja	Haritki with Ghrita and Lavana
Pittaja	Haritki with Guda and Sharkara
Kaphaja	Haritki with Pippali and Madhu

According to Ritu-Satmya [28]**Table 3: Rasayana Dravya according to Ritu/Kala**

Ritu/Kala	Rasayana Drug
Shishira, Vasanta, Grishma / Aadana Kala	Sheetvirya and Laghu Dravyas like Amlaki
Varsha, Sharada, Hemanta / Visarga Kala	Ushnvirya and Guru Dravyas like Bhallataka

Discussion

In the contemporary world, where the pursuit of medicines that enhance quality of life is at the forefront, the concept of *Rasayana* in Ayurveda offers a holistic, time-tested approach to maintaining health, delaying aging, and enhancing vitality. Rooted in the *Ayurvedic Samhitas*, *Rasayana* is not confined to the administration of herbal

preparations; rather, it encompasses a comprehensive lifestyle and mental discipline, ensuring nourishment at both physical and psychological levels.

Classical texts such as the *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya* establish *Rasayana* as an independent and integral branch of Ayurveda. Its central goal aligns with the fundamental tenet of Ayurveda—

“*Swasthasya swasthya rakshanam, aturasya vikara prashamanam*”—that is, maintaining health in the healthy and alleviating disease in the sick. *Rasayana* therapy acts primarily on *Rasa Dhatu*, optimizing nutrition at the cellular level, promoting *Dhatu* balance, and enhancing *Vyadhikshamatva* (immunity). This mechanism serves as the foundation for both disease prevention and vitality enhancement.

The antioxidant, adaptogenic, and immunomodulatory effects of *Rasayana* herbs resonate with modern biomedical concepts. Drugs such as *Ashwagandha*, *Brahmi*, *Amalaki*, and *Shankhpushpi* are supported by scientific evidence for their neuroprotective, rejuvenative, and anti-stress properties. Importantly, Ayurveda prescribes their use based on individualized factors such as *Prakriti* (constitution), *Vaya* (age), *Ritu* (season), and *Desha* (region)—a precision approach that modern personalized medicine seeks to emulate.

Another distinctive feature of *Rasayana* therapy is its flexibility. It ranges from the highly specialized *Kutipravesika Rasayana* (inpatient therapy requiring strict regimen) to the more practical *Vatatapika Rasayana* (adaptable for day-to-day life). Furthermore, its classification into *Kamyā Rasayana* (promotive), *Naimittika Rasayana* (therapeutic), and

Ajasrika Rasayana (nutritional) ensures wide applicability—from health promotion and disease management to lifestyle support.

A crucial prerequisite emphasized by the Acharyas is *Shodhana* (purification) through *Panchakarma* before administering *Rasayana*. This step ensures the proper functioning of *Agni* (digestive fire) and *Srotas* (channels), thereby maximizing therapeutic efficacy.

In the context of rising lifestyle disorders, premature aging, declining immunity, and psychosomatic illnesses, the significance of *Rasayana* is profound. Modern healthcare faces challenges such as adverse drug reactions, antibiotic resistance, and chronic stress disorders—areas where *Rasayana*, with its holistic, multi-targeted approach and minimal side effects, offers sustainable solutions. However, mainstream integration demands rigorous clinical validation, standardization of formulations, and outcome-based documentation. Interdisciplinary research combining Ayurveda, pharmacology, nutrition science, and molecular biology holds great promise in bridging the gap between ancient wisdom and modern medicine.

Conclusion

Rasayana Chikitsa is an invaluable Ayurvedic strategy for nourishing and replenishing the body, mind, and spirit.

Its therapies are beneficial across different stages of life and can be incorporated even by healthy individuals as part of their diet and lifestyle for promoting longevity and preventing disease.

As emphasized in the classical texts, *Rasayana* is not merely a therapeutic branch, but a comprehensive philosophy of life. By addressing the root causes of degeneration and disease through nourishment, purification,

mental discipline, and ethical conduct, it provides a truly holistic path to health.

In light of the growing global interest in preventive and integrative medicine, *Rasayana* emerges as a timeless blueprint for sustainable health and longevity. By harmonizing physical vitality, mental clarity, and ethical living, it offers an effective and enduring solution to the health challenges of the modern era.

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