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Review Article

Ayurveda Perspective on *Rasayana* Therapy and its Role in the Management of Mental Disorders

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the traditional science of medicine which described many principles related to the longevity. *Rasayana* therapy is one of them improves process of rejuvenation, delay ageing, boost immunity, imparts vitality and treat many diseases including mental problems. The use of *Rasayana* therapy in mental disorders is very common phenomena in Ayurveda practice. *Rasayana* drugs can be recommended in various neurological and psychiatric problems like; loss of memory, impaired mental functioning, cognitive deficits and depression etc. *Mandukparni Swaras*, *Shankhapushpi Kalka*, *Yashtimadhu churna* and *Guduchi swaras*, etc. are some *Medhya Rasayana* used for the management of various mental problems. Considering these all aspects present article explore importance of *Rasayana* drugs in various mental disorders.

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Introduction

Ayurveda is the system of well-being and longevity which encompasses various principles of traditional knowledge including theoretical aspects of *Atharva Veda*. Ayurveda described different therapies for the management of diseases and it also provides knowledge about the prevention of diseases. Ayurveda restore normal health and cure human diseases by establishing balances amongst the elements of life; body, mind, intellect and soul [1-5]. Ayurveda approaches maintained homeostasis of body by balancing *Doshas*; *Vata*, *Kapha* and *Pitta*. Balance state of *Vata* help to regulates catabolic activity, *Kapha* synthesizes new tissues while *Pitta* assimilates nutrients into tissues. The ayurveda drugs offer *Dosha Prashamana*, *Dhatu Pradushana* and *Svasthavrittakara* effects thus helps to maintains overall physical and mental health.

The *Rasayana* is one of the important aspects of ayurveda science which is considered as rejuvenative therapy that enhances longevity, intelligence, memory, youthfulness, luster, complexion, strength and immunity. The *Rasayan chikitsa* is considered as rejuvenation therapy which not only restores physical health but also maintain mental health. These drugs promote mental health by enhancing *Dhi* (intellect), *Dhriti* (retention power) and *Smriti* (memory). *Rasayan chikitsa* also stimulates *Grahanshakti* (grasping power) and *Vivekshakti* (discrimination power) [4-9].

The mental disorders (depicted in **Figure 1**) has become now major health issues due to the diversified life style pattern therefore it is needed to explore therapy which boosts mental health status. Thus here in this article we have summarizes role of *Rasayana* therapy for the prevention and management of mental disorders.

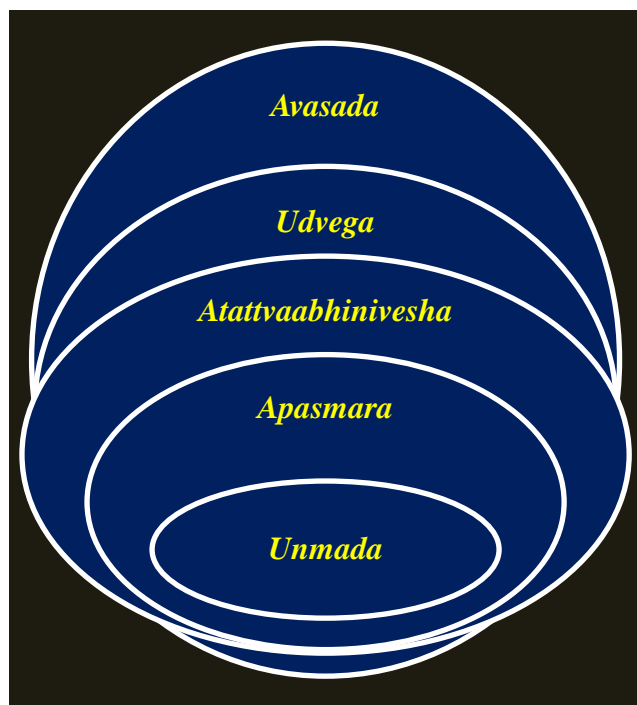


Figure 1: Some common mental disorders.

Types of Rasayana therapy:

1. Naimittika rasayana

Naimittika is considered as curative *Rasayan* which prevent causes of disease. *Mandookaparni rasayana*, *Triphala rasayana* and *Brahmi rasayana*, etc. are the some examples of *Naimittika rasayana*.

2. Ajasrika rasayana

Ajasrika rasayana is also termed as *Vayasthapan Rasayan* which improves health and quality of life through balanced pattern of lifestyle and diet, etc.

3. Kamyas rasayana

Kamyas rasayana helps to fulfill desire, *Kamyas rasayana* further classified into sub-categories which are as follows:

a. Prana Kamyas: offers *Prana* (life energy) to the body.

b. Medhya Kamyas: improves memory and intellect.

c. Ayush Kamyas: provides longevity.

As discussed above *Medhya Rasayanas* offers mental health benefits therefore can be used for the management of various types of mental disorders. In this regards Ayurveda recommended use of *Rasayanas* drugs such as; *Mandookaparni*, *Yashtimadhu*, *Shankhpushpi*, *Guduchi* and *Satavari*, etc.

Therapeutic properties of Rasayanas drugs which used for mental problems:

The *Rasayana* acts on mental functioning mainly offers two Ayurveda properties; first one is *Shita Virya* with *Madhura Vipaka* and second one is *Ushna Virya* and *Tikta Rasa*. The *Rasayana* drug which possesses *Shita Virya* with *Madhura Vipaka* (*Bramhi*, *Yashtimadhu* and *Sankhpushpi*) enhances *Dharana Karma* by promoting *Kapha*. The *Rasayana* drug which offers *Ushna Virya* and *Tikta Rasa* (*Guduchi*, *Jyotishmati* and *Vacha*) enhances *Smarana* and *Grahana Shakti* by promoting *Pitta*.

Mandukaparni (Centella asiatica)

- **Rasa:** Tikta
- **Guna:** Laghu
- **Virya:** Sita
- **Vipaka:** Madhur

Mandukaparni offers *Kapha-Pitta Shamak* properties, improves behavioral activities, possesses neuroprotectives properties, promote brain growth and prevent memory impairment.

Yashtimadhu (Glycyrrhiza glabra)

- **Rasa:** Madhur
- **Guna:** Guru & Snigdha
- **Virya:** Sita
- **Vipaka:** Madhur

Yashtimadhu (Glycyrrhiza glabra Linn.) offers *Vata Pitta Shamak* properties, improves CNS circulation, and enhances learning capabilities and memory. *Yashtimadhu* also provides beneficial effects in case of dementia and depression.

Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia)

- **Rasa:** Tikta, Kasaya
- **Guna:** Guru & Snigdha
- **Virya:** Usna
- **Vipaka:** Madhur

Guduchi possesses *Tri-Dosha Shamak* properties, acts on learning and memory power, offers antioxidant & anti-stress properties, improves cognition function, useful in *Bhrama* (vertigo), treat behavior disorders and boost mental strength.

Shankhpushpi (Convolvulus pleuricaulis)

- **Rasa:** Tikta
- **Guna:** Snigdha, Picchil
- **Virya:** Sita
- **Vipaka:** Madhur

Shankhpushpi offers *Vata- Pitta Shamak* properties, offers health benefits in *Hittodvega* (anxiety disorders), control tendency of social isolation, nullify stress, increases motor activity and improves memory in growing children.

Vacha (Acorus calamus)

- **Rasa:** Katu, Tikta
- **Guna:** Laghu, Tikshna
- **Virya:** Usna
- **Vipaka:** Katu

Vacha offers *Kapha-Vata shamak* effect, it is considered as nervine, restorative and mental tonics. It improves grasping power, intellect, memory and speech. It also corrects mood and behavioral activities of person.

Jatamansi (Nardostachys jatamansi)

- **Rasa:** Tikta, Kasaya Madhur
- **Guna:** Laghu, Snigdha
- **Virya:** Sita
- **Vipaka:** Katu

Jatamansi offers *Tri-Dosha Shamak* effects, it helps to treat impaired mortar performance, control epilepsy, it also possesses antidepressant activity, provides neuroprotection and enhances learning ability [6-10].

Conclusion

Rasayana therapy provides several health benefits since it enhances regenerative process, improves immunity, delay ageing and offers longevity. The *Rasayana* therapy commonly employed for the mental illness such as; memory loss, impaired mental functioning, depression and cognitive deficits etc. *Rasayana* used as rejuvenative therapy and promote mental health by empowering intellect, retention power, discrimination power and memory. The article concluded that *Rasayana* therapy is very useful for the strengthening of mental health. *Rasayana* drugs such as; *Bramhi*, *Yastimadhu*, *Sankhpushpi*, *Guduchi* and *Jyotishmati*, etc. can be used for the management of various mental illness such as; *Avasada*, *Udvega*, *Atattvaabhinivesha*, *Apasmara* and *Unmada*, etc.

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