

## Review of Ayurvedic ageing theories and importance of Achara Rasayana on Jara

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**Abstract** - From very ancient time humans want to live long and maintain healthiness and same was described in various places in ancient Indian text. It was also observed very earlier that degenerative changes are the natural phenomena. Ayurveda is holistic science and world most oldest medicinal system developed by Indian shires basis of his practical bases observation. Ayurveda describes various regimens like Dincharya, Ritucharya, Achar Rasayan etc for the maintain healthiness and to cure the ailments from the society. Ayurvedic therapies showed excellent role to slow down the degenerative process. Ayurvedic procedure like Rasayan Chikitsa is likely to rejuvenating therapy. Moreover, Ayurveda emphasis timely purification of biological wastes from our body along with special therapy as per humans diseases requirements to maintain good health of mind body and soul. In Ayurvedic text *Rasaayan* therapy is described which helps to Maintaining health, Prevention of diseases, avoid the recurrence of diseases and also delaying of degenerative change known as *Jarachikitsa*. In this manuscript author wants to conceptualized all considerations and doctrines related to Jara Chikitsa along with effect of Rasayan therapy on humans life describes in Ayurvedic texts

**KEYWORDS:** Ayurveda, Rasayana (Rejuvenation Therapy), Jarachikitsa (Geriatric disorder management)

### INTRODUCTION

Ayurvedic seers and sages were well aware of think problems of ageing since long back. Old age (jara) is described as a spontaneous disease in Ayurvedic texts. It is characterized by gradual weakening of normal physiological functions, lowered metabolic activities and also gradual loss of body strength. This can be accompanied with disturbance in mental faculties. Man starts thinking that this is inevitable and he must reconcile with old age. But it has been observed, that the above mentioned symptoms of senility manifest as early as in forty or fifty years of age. This sort of premature aging is definitely a stage when one must think of adopting some prophylaxis so that he may save himself from getting in grip of old age.

Age of human being is interesting as well as complex and challenging issue since *Vedic* period. There were many more examples in ancient period those who wanted immortality and wished live as long as they could. In present this is a serious issue although nobody is wishing immortality but every one want to live long and healthy. As ancient classics and *Ayurvedic* text has described classification of life span-

Acharya Charak (In years)			Acharya Susrut (In years)			
Bal	Yuva	Vruddh	Bal	Vruddhi	Sampurnata	Hani
0 -30	31 - 60	61 -100	0 - 16	16 - 20	31 - 40	40 -70

But in present stressful lifestyle and unwholesome food lifespan of human being is decreasing healthiness day by day and symptoms of aging are occurring before time called premature aging. That's why it was realized in medical world to work for it and establishment a separate geriatric branch for the same. But in Ayurveda there is a concept of *Jarachikitsa* since *Vedik* era<sup>1</sup>.

### JARA

This term is used for aging in Ayurvedic classics. Jara has been derived from Sanskrit root "*Jrish*

*Vayohonow*"<sup>2</sup> which can be explained as "*Vayah Krta Slata Mamsadayavasta Visesa*"<sup>3</sup> which means the muscles and other tissues are loosened under the influence of aging. Means the jara indicates of the loss in period of lifespan. Synonym of Jara "*visrasa*" is derived from the word "*Sramsudahpatne*" which means a degradation or retardation in physical, physiological and psychological wellbeing. Our *Acharyas* has described stages of Kshaya during the lifetime as a function of aging in different decades as below<sup>4</sup>-

Decades	Yeas	Vagbhata	Sharangadhara
First	1-10	Balya	Balya
Second	11-20	Vruddhi	Vruddhi
Third	21-30	Prabha	Chavi
Fourth	31-40	Medha	Medha
Fifth	41-50	Tvacha	Tvacha
Sixth	51-60	Shukra	Drusti
Seventh	61-70	Drusti	Shukra
Eight	71-80	Srotendriya	Shukra
Ninth	81-90	Mana	Buddhi
Tenth	91-100	Sparsendriya	Karmendriya

### Recent theories about aging

There are many theories of aging accepted in modern science. Some of them are mutually supporting each other. Some of the few theories of aging accepted in modern science are<sup>5</sup>

#### 1. Cellular theories

- Wear and Tear
- Free radicals
- Cross-linking
- Age pigment

#### 2. Genetic molecular theories

- Gene regulation
- Somatic mutation
- Codon restriction
- Error theories

#### 3. System level theories

- Neuro-endocrinal control
- Immune control

### The theory of free radicals

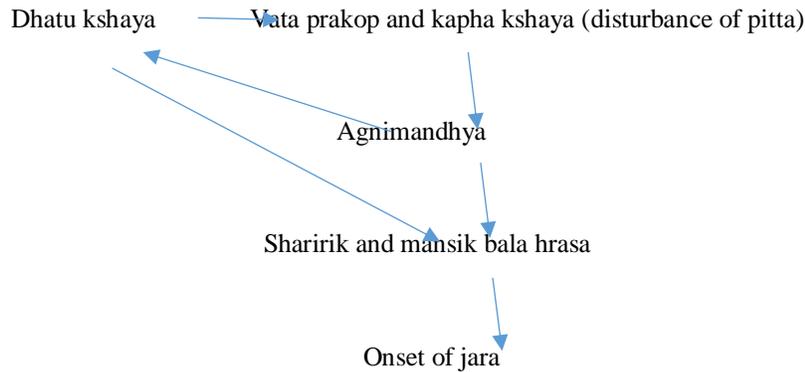
Dr. Derham Harman of the University of Nebraska stated that one of the important cause of aging at a cellular level in excessive liberation of free radicals. Free radicals are unstable variation of Oxygen atom, having an extra electron in its outermost orbit. They become stable by binding with molecules, which are generally cellular structures, and causes cell damage. To protect themselves from damage, cells produce enzymes to neutralize or detoxify the free radicals. These enzymes are known as free radicals scavengers or antioxidants. Thus, an imbalance between free radicals and antioxidants results in disease.

### SAMPRAPTI OF JARA

According to *Ayurveda* body consist of *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Malas*<sup>6</sup>. Equilibrium of these three units maintain

health and nourish the body. But according to occurrence of aging this equilibrium disturbed and resulting onset of *Jara*. As sushrut clarified in classification of *Ayu*, *Hani* begins after age of 40 years means *Dhatu Kshaya* starts which results as

*Prakop of Vata*<sup>7</sup>. Because of *Vata Prakop* and *Dhatu Kshaya*, *Kapha* also decreases and disturbs state of *Pitta*, results as *Agnimandhya*. Due to *Agnimandhya* *dhatu kshaya* occurs<sup>8</sup>. These both conditions are mutually responsible for each other.



### TYPES OF JARA

*Acharya sushrut* mentioned *Jara* in a group of naturally occurring diseases named *swabhavik bala roga*. he meant that *jara* is a natural phenomenon of human body. It divided into two types i.e. *Kalaja Jara* and *Akalaja Jara*<sup>9</sup>.

**Kalaja Jara** – The manifestations of age related symptoms are reflected after certain age with less intensity and slow process and doesn't trouble the person who is going to be aged. This type of aging is possible after following *Dincharya* and *Ritucharya* described in *Swasthavritta*. That's way *Kalaja Jara* is known as *Parirakshana Krita*.

**Akalaja jara**- If *Dincharya* and *Ritucharya* is not followed then manifestation of age related symptoms are reflected before certain age with more intensity and rapid process and create troubles. This is known as *Akalaja Jara* or *Aparirakshan krita Jara*.

### FACTORS AFFECTING JARA

There are many factors affecting *jara* like viz. *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Sadvritta Palana*, *Ahar*, *Vihar*, *Rasayana*. *Rasayana* are also many type of, but this study will focused on *achara rasayana* therapy.

### ACHARA RASAYANA

Being a holistic science with equal focus on the body, mind and soul *Ayurveda* also describes a type of *Rasayana* for psychological and spiritual health, called as "*Achara Rasayana*" *Charaka* the first and only *Samhitakar* introduced the unique concept of *Achara Rasayana*. *Achara Rasayana* is mentioned as a code of socio behavioral conduct, it teaches us a preferred life style with defined do's and don'ts<sup>10</sup>. In other words following proper *achara* plays a key role in maintaining the equilibrium state of mankind. By following some rules and regulations complete physical, mental and social well-being can be obtained. Adoption of ethical element like:

- Serving elderly people.
- Speaking the truth - lying has been found to boost blood pressure and stress.
- Free from anger - chronic anger, irritability produces elevation in blood pressure and it can be a serious risk factor for CHD. Anger not only creates *Ama* and *Amavisha*, flooding the body with harmful hormones, but it also burns *Ojas*. *Charaka* has mentioned in *Vimana Sthana*, If an individual is affected with grief, fear, anger, sorrow, excessive sleep & excessive vigil, wholesome food consumed in proper quantity may not be properly digested.
- Devoid of Alcohol and sex indulgence.

- *Ahimsa* (nonviolence).
- *Prashanta* (peaceful).
- Sweet speech.
- *Japa sauchparam* (who practice *japa* and cleanliness).
- *Dhira* (stable and Steady).
- *Dayanityam tapasvinam* (regularly practice charity & *tapa*).
- *Devgobrahmanacharyaguruvrdharchane Ratam* (who regularly offer prayers to god, cows, *brhamana*, teachers, preceptors, and old people).
- *Aanrishansya param nityam* (absolutely free from Barbarous acts).
- *Nityam karunavedinam* (compassionate)
- Period of awakening and sleep should be regular. Happiness, misery, nourishment, emaciation, strength, weakness, virility, sterility, knowledge, ignorance, life and death all these occur depending on the proper or improper sleep. Like a night of destructions, untimely and excessive sleep and prolonged vigil take away both happiness and longevity. The same sleep if enjoyed properly brings about happiness and longevity in human beings as the real knowledge brings about *Siddhi* (spiritual power) in a *Yogi*. According to Ayurveda one should awake at *Brahmi muhurta* (before sunrise) and should not sleep during day time. Sleeping during the day time and vigil during the night time causes vitiation of *kapha-pitta* and *vata* respectively. Recent research has proved Behavioral sleep deprivation results in alterations in glucose metabolism, up regulation of appetite and reduced energy expenditure.
- Take ghee and milk daily. Ghee and milk are *Saatvik*, meaning they are pure and convert easily to *Ojas*. They are *Medhya*, supporting the physical brain, and enhancing the coordination of mental functions, such as *Dhi*, *Dhriti* and *Smriti* (learning, retention

and recall). *Tamasa* foods are the opposite of *Saatvik*, they break down the coordination between mind and body

#### EFFECT OF ACHARA RASAYAN

*Achara rasayana* therapy involves the psychological connection to physical health. A statement of *Acharya Charak* supports this view, he stated that mental and physical health mutually affects each other. There is a constant mutual relation between *Sharirik* and *Manasik Vikara*<sup>11</sup>. *Achara Rasayana* and *Sadvritta palana* nourishes mental strength of individual which convey positive message for physical health, diseases resistance and it maintains equilibrium of *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala*. By practicing *Achara rasayana* one will stay free from guilt of doing something wrong, anxiety, anger, stress. It make his mind strong and boost up his physical health. As *Acharya* describe all these factors cause of *Ama* formation but stay away from stress etc<sup>12</sup>. There is no *Ama* formation and *Samyak Pakva Ahara* forwards a chain of *Sama Dhatu*, *Sama Dosha*, *Sama Mala*. It enhance the excellance of *Dhatu* i.e. *Ojas*. Taking of Ghee and milk daily accordingly *Achar rasayana* also enhance *Ojas* and *Sattvik chetas* of ones<sup>13</sup>. *Ojas* itself a big cause of slowing of aging<sup>14</sup>. *Ghee* is good *agnideepak*<sup>15</sup> *Deeptagni* prevents *Ama* formation<sup>16</sup> and thus maintains equilibrium of pure *Dhatu*. This is the rejuvenating power of *Achara Rasayan*. On other side as various *Acharya* described that excessive anger, anxiety, fear, worry are responsible for production of *Ama* and this *Ama* acts like poison for human body<sup>17</sup>. It disturbs naturally seated *Dosha*, vitiates *Dhatu* and creates *Sanga* in *Srotas* and *Agnimanddhya*. Due to *Agnimanddhya*, *Dhatu Kshaya* and *Balahrasa* occurs which results many types of disease, body aching, hair graying, wrinkles, joint pain and many more sing of aging before its natural timing. Here a resemblance seems between *Ama* and free radical in many characteristics<sup>18</sup> which supports free radical theory of aging. Similarities are:

Characteristics	<i>Ama</i>	Free radicals
Causes of production	Stress, anger, anxiety, worry, fear, produces because of <i>Agnimandhya</i> and after production also causes	Stress etc. Free radical are said to be produced in the body in abundance when equilibrium between its generation and

	<i>Agnimandhya.</i>	body's primary defense is disturbed which includes the activity of certain enzymes like superoxide dismutase, catalase and glutathione peroxidase.
General identification	<i>Ama</i> is incomplete digested food which is responsible for many diseases.	The root cause of many diseases in contemporary science
<i>Ama</i> and <i>visha</i> formation	<i>Ama</i> is produced by <i>Vishaja Dravya</i> like biological toxins, <i>Gara visha</i> and <i>Viruddha ahara</i>	Certain toxic substance like heavy metal produces free radical.
Type of classification	There are 13 type of major Agni in body and after considering <i>Dosh Dushya Anshaansha Kalpana</i> there many type of <i>Ama</i>	Depending upon the site and method of production many different forms of free radicals are produced.
Intermediate metabolite	<i>Ama</i> is also an intermediary metabolite in the process of digestion.	Certain enzymes produce radicals as intermediary substances, which are supposed to go into further metabolism. But they somehow jump out of the normal metabolic.

#### Another theory -

Because of any emotional and behavioral changes like stress, anger, anxiety, painful condition (*Himsa*) stimulates hypothalamus and also triggers ANS. As hypothalamus controls anterior pituitary, adrenal cortex, adrenal medulla and ANS, it send messages them for secretion and activation of neurotransmitters. At a gross level body starts up a defense mechanism. In response of immune function phagocytosis causes inflammation, release of cytokines. Some cytokines can cross blood brain barrier and affect brain, result as sickness behavior, lack of energy, aching joint, anorexia, etc<sup>19</sup>. In whole due to stress various system acts as one unit in the urgent defense of body. Practice of *Achar Rasayana* subsides stress, make people happy and joyful<sup>20</sup>. Practice of milk and Ghee detoxify body and stops chain of free radical formation<sup>21</sup>. Thus nourishes tissues enhance life and functions of cells. Thus slowdown process of aging.

#### CONCLUSION

*Ayurveda* holds that there is no magical remedy or short cut for healthy living. Instead, strict and staunch regulation of *Ayurveda*. Also a comment concept reveals that outcome of your thought resembles with food you have consumed and another one is your face and personality shows your behavior<sup>22</sup> means if u eat righteous food your thought will positive and intellect will excellent. If you will be well-behaved you will look young and cheerful. This study supports this view, practice of *Achar Rasayana* not only makes your mind strong but also nourishes body, keeps ones diseases free and young.

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