

## ROLE OF YASHTIMADHU RASAYANA ON AGNI W.S.R.T. JARA

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### ABSTRACT

In *Ayurveda* the term '*Jara Vyadhi*' i.e. Geriasis is coined as a natural phenomenon. *Acharya Sushruta* has classified it as a *Swabhava Pravritta Vyadhi*. *Rasayana* therapy is specifically advocated for the management of *Jara* i.e. Geriasis. In fact *Rasayana* is defined as a *Jara Vyadhi vidhamsaka* i.e. a drug destroying the *Jara Vyadhi*. The present article takes review of study of *Yashtimadhu Rasayana* therapy in the light of *Agni*.

**KEYWORDS:** *Rasayana*, *Yashtimadhu*, *Jara*, *Agni*, *Ayurveda*, *Glycyrrhiza glabra*.

### INTRODUCTION

Geriatric is evolving as a perplexing problem of 21<sup>st</sup> century, as the population of aged people is increasing not only in India but throughout the world, it has both medical and sociological problems.<sup>[1]</sup> '*Jara Chikitsa*' is an ancient subject being studied since thousands of years as a part of *Ayurveda*. It comes among 8 branches of *Ayurveda*.<sup>[2]</sup> '*Ayurveda*' literally means the 'Science of life'. All the deeds that enhance the quality and longevity of life comes under *Ayurveda*.<sup>[3]</sup> So, Geriatrics and Gerontology was a full-fledged branch of the Indian traditional medical science that was studied by specialists and scholars in ancient times i.e. about 5000 years ago.<sup>[4]</sup> *Ayurveda* has considered the process of ageing and the stage of old age to be '*Swabhavika*' meaning 'Natural'. Senescence occurring at chronologically right time that is the '*Kalaja Jara*' is *Nishpratikarya* i.e. inevitable. Conditions like hunger, thirst, senescence i.e. old age, sleep, death etc. all are the result of power of time and nature i.e. *Kala krita* and *Swabhavika*. So they can only be maintained, they cannot be destroyed.<sup>[5]</sup>

#### Ayurvedic Concept of Geriatric

The word geriatric has a close link with the Sanskrit word '*Geeryadi*', which means degenerated. *Ayurveda* usually gives priority to geriatrics and is called as '*Vridhopacharya neeyam*' and is considered to be a boon to geriatrics, protecting the human systems against the

diseases.<sup>[6]</sup> *Ayurveda* has tried to explain what exactly happens when the same person crosses two stages of life or age that is *Balyavastha* and *Youvanavastha* i.e. childhood and youth and enters the last, the third one the *Vridhnavastha* i.e. Old age.<sup>[7]</sup> The Old age is a stage in which there is predominance of *Vatadosha*, due to this dryness & digestion at macro and micro level gets hampered, resulting into indigestion and formation of *Amadosha* (undigested nutrient which is toxic in nature). The bodily tissues are deprived of proper nutrients resulting into weakness and toxic of micro nutrient gives rise to many diseases.<sup>[8]</sup>

#### Concept of Rasayana in Old Age

*Ayurveda* defined *Rasayana* as '*Vayasthapanama*' i.e. arrest ageing, '*Ayushkaram*' i.e. increase life span, '*Meda*' i.e. increase intelligence and '*Bala*' i.e. increases strength. '*Rasayana Chikitsa*' is a specialized and important section of *Ayurveda* which deals with the preservation and promotion of health by revitalizing the metabolism and enhancing immunity.<sup>[9]</sup> According to *Ayurveda* human body consists of *Saptadhatu* i.e. seven dhatus. The *dhatus* get degenerated due to the body's prolonged structural changes.<sup>[10]</sup> During old age the capacity of *dhatu* cannot be enhanced but it can be protected and rejuvenated by the use of *Rasayana* therapy. The branch of *Jara Chikitsa* is also called as *Rasayana Tantra* in *Ayurveda*. *Rasayana* is defined as the way to build up all the tissues and make them work

most efficiently. The term *Rasayana* actually means as the action of any drug that enhances the longevity of life, memory, cognitive functions of brain, rejuvenates the body, its aura, strength, voice, sensory functions, etc. Overall, the drugs those replenish and revitalize all the energy production and consumption systems of cells in different ways are said to be having *Rasayana* property.<sup>[11]</sup>

### Concept of Agni in Old age

*Agni* is one of the ten factors which are required to be examined before initiating the treatment of a patient. Its importance is very much because all the internal disease is caused by vitiation of this *Agni*. It plays a prime role in maintenance of health and causation of disease as well as decay.<sup>[12]</sup> In old age, the food only nourishes for maintenance of life i.e. to keep the tissues alive and working and not for anabolism, because of complete maturity of all the tissues in this stage of life i.e. *Paripakwa sharira*.<sup>[13]</sup> Also in old age people *Vatadosha* is physiologically in a dominant stage and *Rasadhi dhatus* in derived condition.<sup>[14]</sup> Because of the dominance of *vatadosha* it affect the *agni* which convert in the form of *vishamata* known as *vishwagni*. This *vishwagni* fluctuating the *agni* in two form hypo functional form i.e. *mandagni* which work on the food in improper manner formed 'Ama'. This *Amadosha* is considered in *Ayurveda* to be responsible to produce all types of the internal disease. *Ama* later forms *dushtirasa* which blocks the *srotasa* known as *srotoavrodha*. In other second stage hyper functional of *agni* i.e. *tiksnagni* which causes *dhatusosha* or *balakshaya*. In this

mechanism mainly *jatharagni*, *bhootagni* and *dhatuagni* is disturbed. For the correction and stabilization of *agni*, *Rasayana* plays a key role to behave as nourishment to *dhatus* and regulates the *ama* by its *Deepana* and *Pachana* property.<sup>[15]</sup> So, the functioning of *agni* is normalizing to maintain effect on *Samana vayu* in his own *sthana*. By the major activity of *Rasayana* all the *dhatus* are formed in systemic manner and its product is *oja* which provides immunity to body to resistance against the diseases. The internal transport system of the body, represented by *srotasa* has been given a place fundamental importance in *Ayurveda* both in health and disease stage. It has mechanism to circulates the *ahardravayas*, a headily suitably deals with by *jatharagni* and *bhootagni pakas*, carry towards to *dhatuagni paka*. This *paka* has two aspects first is *kitta paka* and another one is *prasada paka*. The final products arising out of *prasada paka* are then transformed to the *dhatus* through their respective *srotamsi*. But due to *hetu sevana* in old age which vitiated the *vatadosha*, decreased the *kaphadosha*, and irregularities in *pittadosha* which arises a phenomenon called *khavaigunya* or *srotodushti*. In case of *pachakagni dushti* i.e. impairment of the *pachakpitta*, the *ama* of this *pitta*, contributed to *dhatus* also suffer *dushti*. This condition leads to the impairment of the functions of *srotamsi*, also resulting in consequence in *srotorodha* or obstruction of the *srotasa*. At this stage of *dhatuagni dushti kitta paka* and *dushti prasada* is formed this mechanism alter the structural and physiological function of *dhatus*.<sup>[16]</sup>

### Yashtimadhu Rasayana Review<sup>[17]</sup>

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Family</b>                              | Leguminosae   |
| <b>Sub Family</b>                          | Fabaceae  |
| <b>Latin Name</b>                          | Glycyrrhiza glabra  |
| <b>Gana according to Classical Samhita</b> | <i>Kakolaydi</i> , <i>Sarivadi (Charaka)</i><br><i>Kanthya</i> , <i>Jeevaniya</i> , <i>Varnya (Sushruta)</i>  |
| <b>Synonyms</b>                            | <b>Sanskrit-</b> <i>Yashtimadhu</i> , <i>Yastika</i> , <i>Madhuka</i> , <i>Madhuyasti</i><br><b>Hindi-</b> <i>Mulethi</i> , <i>Mulathi</i> , <i>Muleti</i> , <i>Jethimadhu</i><br><b>English-</b> Licorice root |
| <b>Properties</b>                          | <b>Rasa-</b> <i>Madhura</i><br><b>Guna-</b> <i>Guru</i> , <i>Snigdha</i><br><b>Virya-</b> <i>Sheeta</i><br><b>Vipaka-</b> <i>Madhura</i>  |
| <b>Useful Part</b>                         | Root  |
| <b>Chemical Composition</b>                | Glycyrrhizin, glycyrrhizic acid, glycyrrhetinic acid, flavonoids, triterpene, triterpenoid, amino acids, pectins, saponins, polysaccharides, mineral salts, asparagine, simple sugars, resin and starch.        |
| <b>Dosha effects</b>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Guru</i>, <i>Snigdha</i> and <i>Madhura vipaka</i>- <i>Vata shamaka</i></li> <li>• <i>Madhura</i> and <i>Sheeta</i>- <i>Pitta shamaka</i></li> </ul>                |

In the traditional system of medicine, the roots and rhizomes of *Yashtimadhu* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* Linn) have been in clinical use for centuries. The term *Glycyrrhiza* has been derived from ancient Greek word *glykos*, meaning sweet and *rhiza* meaning root. *Yashtimadhu* is a perennial herb with a thick rootstock

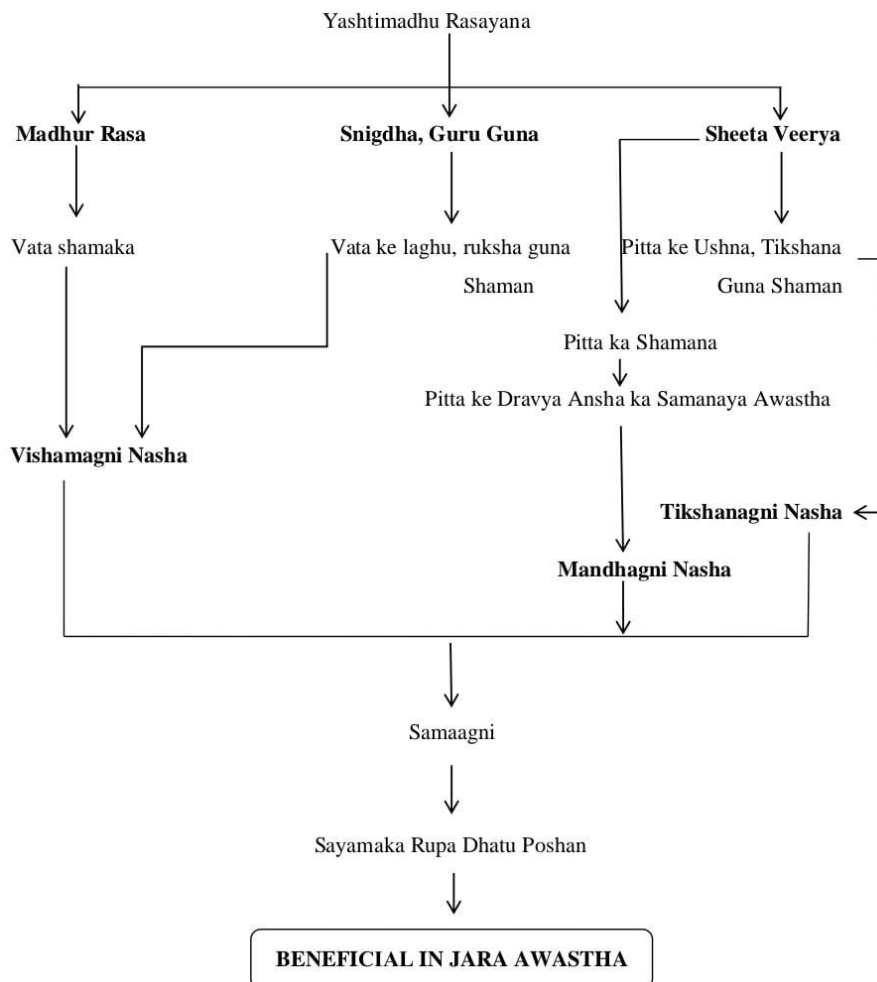
passing below into long, straight, cylindrical, slightly tapering, smooth, flexible, slightly branched roots, about 1.25 cm in diameter, red or orange-brown on the surface, pale yellow within, and giving off at the top long horizontal subterranean stolon. Intake of *Madhuka*

powder with milk acts as *Rasayana* particularly intellect-promoting.<sup>[18]</sup>

*Sharangadhara, Bhavaprakasha nighantu samhita*, Published research articles, google scholar were referred.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this review article, *Charka samhita, Sushruta samhita, Ashtanga hrudayam, Ashtanga Sangraha*,



**Fig. 1: Beneficial of Yashtimadhu Rasayana in Jara awastha.**

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

*Yashtimadhu rasayana* accounts *Madhura rasa, Snigdha guna, Guru guna & Sheeta virya*. Due to its *madhura rasa & snigdha, guru guna* it pacifies *vata dosha*, and also it decreases other qualities of *vata dosha* like *laghu* and *ruksha guna*. Due to this nature and properties, this leads to *Vishamagninasha*. Owing *sheeta virya* it pacifies vitiated *Pittadosha* and normalizes *pittadosha* that leads to *Mandagninasha*. Also due to *sheeta virya*, the *gunas* of *pitta* like *ushna* and *teekshna* are decreases and leads to *Teekshnagninasha*. Overall *Yashtimadhu rasayana* acts on *vishamagni, mandagni, teekshnaagni* by acting on vitiated *vata* and *pitta dosha* and their associated properties which is usually aggravated in Old age people due to *Swabhavika* nature. Hence by acting on *vishamagni, mandagni, tikshnagni* normalizes *agni* that leads to *samagni*. Thus by the *samagni* all the *saptadhatu*s gets nourished [Fig 1]. Glycyrrhizin, a triterpenoid compound, accounts for the sweet taste of

licorice root.<sup>[19]</sup> *Madhura rasa* specifically acts on all the *seven dhatu*s for nutrition point of view with enhancing the activity of sense organ including *mana* and provide immunity against disease.<sup>[20]</sup> These bioactive constituents contributes to the *Yashtimadhu* roots anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant activity has various pharmacological activities like anti-bacterial activity, anti-thrombotic effect, hepato-protective effect, anti-convulsant effects, cerebro-protective effect, anti-dyslipidaemic activity, memory enhancing activity, antioxidant potential activity, hair growth promoting activity etc.<sup>[21]</sup> According to *Bhavaprakasha nighantu* the therapeutic uses of *Yashtimadhu* are described in terms of good for vision, provides strength and fine complexion with luster to body, and improves the hoarseness of voice, beneficial in diseases like *Gulma*, wound, *Krimi-roga*, *Udararoga*, Vomiting, Poisoning etc.<sup>[22]</sup> *Acharya Charaka* in *Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana* has mentioned specifically *Yashtimadhu* as *Medhya rasayana*.<sup>[23]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

For the management of 'Jara' Ayurveda describe about *rasayana* to maintain youthfulness by stabilising the *Agni*, purified the *Srotas* and provide nutrition has a *Rasa*. *Yashtimadhu Rasayana* play major role to maintaining the status *agni*, *srotas*, *rasa* by proper digestion and metabolism, enhancing the micro circulation at the level of tissue and provides nutrition respectively in *Jara awastha*.

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