



Basic Concept of Rasashastra, General Consideration and its Role in Health Management

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Abstract

The ancient literature of Indian system of medicine belongs from Ayurveda science which mentioned various principles and theories for the maintenance of general health. Amongst the many concepts of Ayurveda the concept of Rasashastra is one of the prime importance which helps in the management of different diseases. The Rasa Dravyas mainly prepared with the classical approaches of Ayurveda like Sodhana, Putta and Marana, etc. Rasashastra merely deals around mineral, metal and herbomineral formulations. The formulations of Rasashastra possess anti-stress, rejuvenating, anti –

oxidant, aphrodisiac, anti-ulcers and hepato-protective effects, etc. These properties of Rasa Dravya impart great therapeutic utility in the management of different pathological conditions. Present article emphasizes general considerations and therapeutic utility of Rasashastra.

Keywords

Ayurveda, Herbo - mineral, Mercurial, Rasashastra, Minerals.

Introduction

The history of Indian civilization encompasses great knowledge of various approaches

utilized for health management. The historical origin of Rasa Shastra evidenced from Buddha period. The Rasa Shastra is one of the main streams of Ayurveda which utilizes procedures like Murchana, Niyamana, Jarana and Samkramana, etc. for the preparation of Rasa formulations. These formulations prepared from

specific procedures possess unique properties therefore can be employed in the treatment of enormous health ailments. The principles of RasaShastra help to convert non-compatible forms of metal and mineral into compatible/consumable forms for different therapeutic purposes (**Figure 1**).

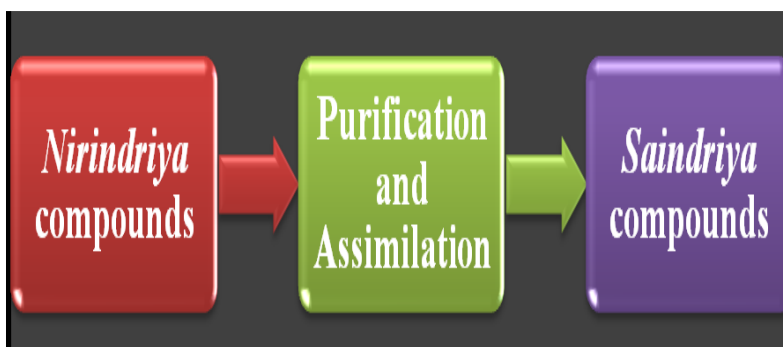


Figure 1: Process of RasaShastra transformed incompatible forms of compounds into compatible forms.

There are many ayurveda literatures which also described various perspectives related to the Rasa Shastra these literatures are as follows:

- Rasa Hridaya Tantra
- Rasendra Mangala
- Rasa Prakasha Sudhakara
- Rasendra Chudamani

The various processes of Rasa Shastra like

purification, detoxification, particle size reduction and incineration, etc. not only convert incompatible elements into compatible elements but also enhances therapeutic properties, improves absorption and imparts palatability. Some unique formulations of ayurveda based on principles of Rasa Shastra depicted in **Figure 2**.



Figure 2: Formulations of Ayurveda based on principles of RasaShastra.

The concept of RasaShastra originates from the preparations of Parada which is considered as

Rasa element. The presence of Parada or other metals and mineral in Rasa formulation make them drugs

which are to be used or prepared with great care. The improper preparation and utilization of such formulations can lead to adverse effects like; skin reactions, hypersensitivity, allergy and palpitations, etc. Therefore it is recommended that physician should be very attentive while prescribing such drugs, similarly chemist should pay attention while preparing such drugs so that desired qualities achieved up to the optimum level.

Manufacturing Techniques of Rasa Shastrai Shodhana

Mineral and metal in raw forms purified by Shodhana which involves various procedures such as; Achushana, Shoshana, Bhavana, Bharjana, Galana, Prakshalana, Prithakikarana and Parishravana, etc.

Bhavana

Bhavana involves grinding of materials with liquid media. This process converts coarse compounds into finer state and qualities of liquid media transferred to the active components.

Marana

Marana mainly convert impure compounds like; Parada into pure compatible form. The metals or minerals components treated with herbal juices followed by heat treatment to obtain Bhasma like appearance.

Jarana

Jarana involves conversion of Parada like elements into their natural form without using Galena process. Properties of Parada get enhanced when it treated with Gandhaka.

Murchhana

Murchhana involves conversion of mercury into compatible, for this purpose sometimes sulphur may be employed for treating mercury. Murchhana are two types Sagandha and Nirgandha Murchhana,

Sagandha murchhana involves utilization of Gandhaka for treating mercury while in Nirgandha murchhana mercury treated without Gandhaka.

The advantageous properties of Rasa Shastra formulations

- High potency
- Diversified pharmacological activities
- Long shelf life
- Palatability
- Low dosing frequency

Mineral/Metals Used as Rasa Dravyas

- Parada
- Gandhaka
- Suvarna
- Maakshika
- Rajata
- Loha

Metal/mineral based Ayurveda formulations

- Mandura Vataka
- Muktaadya Churna
- Navaayasa Churna
- Dwitiya Brahma Rasaayana

Therapeutic Importance of Rasa Dravyas

The RasaShastra provides health benefits in heart diseases since the formulations possess Laghu Guna therefore they enhance blood flow and strengthen heart muscles by virtue of their potency.

The hot potency of Rasa Dravyas helps to reduce symptoms of cold & wheezing since these drugs not only liquefy cough but also facilitate its removal from respiratory tract.

Madhura action of Rasa drugs helps to eradicate skin problems like; dermatitis, psoriasis, acne and itching.

Tikshna and Tikta properties of Rasa drugs possess Deepana and Pachana effects thus enhance

appetite thereby potentiate Dhatus and maintained good physical and mental health.

The Ayurveda properties of Rasa drugs control degenerative process of body thus prevents adverse effects of early aging.

These drugs reduce formation of skin wrinkles, maintained elasticity and compatibility of skin texture therefore improves glow and physical appearance of body.

The effect of Rasa drugs on metabolic and hormonal activities balances body fat and consumption of energy therefore reduces chances of obesity or other metabolic diseases.

The detoxifying effect of drugs helps to eliminate toxins/Ama from body therefore provides relief in feeling of heaviness, lethargies, constipation and gastric troubles.

The vitalizing action of Rasa Dravyas imparts aphrodisiac activities therefore such types of medicines helps to relieve sexual problems like; erectile dysfunction and infertility.

Rasa Dravyas in the Management of Infectious Diseases

Varnya effect of these drugs improves process of healing and regeneration, Brimhana effect imparts immunity while Ushna property helps to removes microbial toxins from body. Rucikara effects boost process of nourishment while Medhya effects provide strength therefore helps in the management of microbial infections.

Probable Mode of Action of Rasa Dravyas towards General Health Benefits

Rasa Dravyas possess Varnya, Medhya, Brimhana and Dipana effect thus improves internal strength. Vrisya and Vayasthapana properties of these drugs prevent degenerative effects therefore restore

stamina. Balya property of Rasa Dravyas improves immunity thus provides resistance against infections. Rucya action boost appetite thus maintains nutritional supply to the body. Vatapitta Hara action prevents loss of enthusiasm, boosts digestive functioning and relives body aches. Krimighna effects prevent invasion of microorganism thus improves resistance against infectious diseases.

Anxiolytic property of drugs suppress mental stress and cures depression. Hepato-protective action reduces anorexia. The hormonal balancing capacity of Rasa Dravyas helps in metabolic diseases like diabetes. Analgesic property reduces pain and swelling caused by inflammatory consequences. Detoxifying property of Rasa Dravyas cleans body organs and clear passages of Srotas thus restore circulatory process of body. The anti-allergic property of Rasa drugs prevent allergic manifestation and provide relief in skin ailments.

Toxic Effects Rasaushadhies: Precautionary Measures to be Considered

- Inappropriate use of Paarada may lead skin allergy, burning sensation and vomiting.
- Gandhaka may cause adversity of skin irritation and hyperthermia.
- Hingula associated with kidney problems.
- Manasila can cause constipation and urinary calculi.
- Suvarna may lead symptoms of nausea, vomiting and dyspepsia.
- Taamra associated with problem like mental irritation.
- Vanga may cause cardiac trouble, polyuria, dyspnoea and hemorrhoids.
- Yasada can leads symptoms of polyuria and skin problems.

➤ Loha may causes problems of renal calculi and skin disorders.

Conclusion

Rasashastra is fundamental aspect of Indian medical system Ayurveda, Rasashastra deals with Rasa formulations which offer many therapeutic benefits. These formulations possess palatability, compatibility and long shelf life. Rasa Aushadhis offers health benefits in various diseases such as arthritis, obesity, anemia, skin problems, gastric trouble, stress, sexual dysfunction, respiratory diseases and allergy, etc. The vitalizing and rejuvenating effects of these drugs helps to mental normal health status and prevent manifestation of early ageing. The article suggested that if Rasa Aushadhis prepared and prescribed appropriately then they can offers beneficial effects in many acute as well as chronic diseases.

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