

ROLE OF RASAYANA IN HYPOTHYROIDISM

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ABSTRACT

Rasayana Chikitsa is a unique branch of Ayurveda. *Rasayana* concept is useful to overcome challenging diseases to modern medicine. Hypothyroidism is a commonly prevailing disorder in adult Indian population. It is second only diabetes mellitus as the most common endocrine disorder. It is a clinical syndrome resulting from deficiency of thyroid hormones due to their insufficient synthesis which in turn result in a generalized slowing down of metabolic process. Hypothyroidism is a common condition with various cause autoimmune, iatrogenic, transient thyroiditis, iodine deficiency congenital, secondary hypothyroidism, but autoimmune disease and thyroid failure following surgical treatment for over 90%, except in areas where iodine deficiency is endemic. Women are affected approximately six times more frequently than men. This review focuses on Ayurvedic drugs like plants, minerals in single or compound form in various research institutes and articles. A list of Ayurvedic drugs related beneficial in treatment of Hypothyroidism is compiled. These include *Lahsuna*, *Shilajita*, *Bhallataka*, *Chitraka*, *Punarnava* etc.

Keywords: *Rasayana*, Hypothyroidism, endocrine disorder, Ayurveda.

INTRODUCTION

In today's world Thyroid gland disorders are the common disorder. Prevalence about 200 million in the world have thyroid disease. Thyroid disorders are most common in all endocrine disorders. The function of thyroid gland under normal condition is to maintain body metabolism. The failure of these hormones to maintain normal metabolic rate in body produced two most common conditions either hypothyroid or hyperthyroid. Hypothyroid is a most common of thyroid disorders. In Hypothyroidism,

production of thyroid hormones reduces which decrease body metabolism and rise to many sign and symptoms like, dry skin and hair, weight gain, constipation, joint and muscle pain, fatigue, depression, etc. Thyroid hormones maintain proper metabolism in the body, it can be correlated with the action of *Agni*. Normal *Agni* is maintaining the body metabolism. *Agni* is 3 types i.e., *Jatharangi* (digestive fire) is a maintain digestion and absorption of food. *Bhutagni* is responsible for a transformation of het-

erogeneous substances and *Dhatwangi* located in the body tissue. Normalcy of body is depending upon proper metabolism of body. [1]

Hypothyroidism significantly increases free radical production. [2] These free radicals interact with body material and destruction occurs. In Hypothyroidism metabolic insufficiency occurs due to low thyroid hormone, so that excessive production of free radical occurs. *Rasayana* interact with these free radicals and oxidation decreases and we feel fresh. *Rasayanas* like *Chitraka*, *Bhallataka* are effective against free radical and also increases *Agni* so that it can be useful in hypothyroidism

Rasayana Chikitsa

According to *Acharya Charak*, equilibrium of *Agni* of *Dhatu*, *Vayu*, and *Srotas* are essential factors for maintaining normal strength, colour and longevity of the body. [3]

The aim of *Rasayana Chikitsa* is to nourish blood, lymph, flesh, adipose tissue and semen. This prevents the individual from chronic degenerative diseases. The therapy influences the fundamental aspect of body viz., *Dhatu*, *Agni*, *Srotansi* and *Ojus*. In *Rasayana* therapy, the *Bheshja* (medicine) is divided into two types: [4]

1. *Swasthasyauryajaskara*-toning up the health of a healthy person
2. *Kinchit Artasya Rognut*-treating the ailments of the patients

Rasayana Drugs

As per *Acharya Charak*, *Rasayana* is defined as the means of achieving the finest quality of *Rasadidhatus* (body tissues) where it increases life span, improves *Medhya* (intelligence), cures disease, stabilizes youthfulness, improves complexion, voice and makes body and senses strong and healthy etc.

Rasayana drugs acts as

a. Immunomodulator- By augmenting the ability of the immune system.

b. Adaptogen- Increases the ability of an organism to adapt to environmental factors e.g. *Ashwagandha*, *Tulsi*, *Haridra*, *Pippali*, *Amalaki*, *Guduchi*, *Shatavari*.

c. Antioxidant- Circumvent the damage caused by oxygen free radical.

d. Nootropic- Promote intelligence and functions of brain e.g., *Medhya Rasayana* drugs (namely- *Mandookparni*, *Guduchi*, *Yashtimadhu* And *Shankhpushpi*).

Types of Rasayana (Rejuvenation) therapy

According to *Ayurvedic texts Rasayana* is of three types:

1. ***Naimittika Rasayana*** (*Nimitta-* Sanskrit for “cause”) – is also known as *Rogapaharan* or Curative type of *Rasayan*. It is used to combat or balance a specific cause responsible for the disease in the body. Few examples include *Dhatri rasayana*, *Mandookaparni rasayana*, *Brahmi rasayana*, and *Triphala rasayana*.
2. ***Ajasrika Rasayana*** - is used to maintain good health and improve the quality of life through a healthy lifestyle, diet, or exercise. It is also called as *Vayasthapan Rasayan*.

3. *Kamya rasayana-*

This is described as to fulfil a wish or desire or to serve a special purpose (*Kama* - desire).

It is of four types:

1. *Prana Kamya-* best quality of *prana* (life energy) in the body.
2. *Medhya Kamya-* enhancing the memory and intellect. e.g., *Shankhpushpi Rasayan*. [4]
3. *Ayush Kamya-* increasing longevity.
4. *Chakshu Kamya-* maintaining healthy eyes.

According to mode of Administration- It is of two types: [6]

1. ***Kutipraveshika*** (*Kuti*–cottage, *Pravesha*–enter)- It is an indoor management in which the person lives in a specially prepared cottage for a long period while taking various *rasayana* herbs.
2. ***Vatatapika-*** Where “*Vata*” means air, and “*Atapa*” means heat or sun (good for people who are engaged in everyday life activities). It is an outdoor management and involves taking *Rasayana*, while a person remains exposed to air

and heat. It includes *Chyavanaprasha*, *Brahma rasayana* *Shilajitu rasayana*, *Amalaki rasayana*, *Haritaki rasayana*, *Pippali rasayana*, *Lohadi rasayana* and *Loha shilajitu rasayana*.

According to modalities– It is of three types:

1. **Achar Rasayan** (Behavioural modalities) - describes a type of *Rasayana* for psychological and spiritual health. It focuses on the body, mind, and soul, Ayurveda also.
2. **Ahar Rasayan** (Dietary modalities)- includes rules relating to eating, sleeping, and celibacy create rejuvenation in a person, following a *Sattvik* diet and life style, speaking the truth, practicing non-violence, living in harmony with the nature, following social ethics and conducts, are all included under this category of *Rasayana*.
3. **Dravya (Aushadha) Rasayan**- includes some herb and food types that are indeed beneficial for the optimum functioning of the body as well as the brain.

Rasayan in Hypothyroidism:

Agnimandya at *Koshta* level can be addressed by *Agnideepana Kalpanas* like *Choornas* and *Kwathas* but dealing of *Agnimandhya* at deep seated *Dhatu* level is not so easy with only these *Kalpanas*. Here comes the relevance of *Rasayana* drugs. *Rasayans* work at *Dhatwagni* level correcting *Dhatwagni-mandhya* which are seen in hypothyroidism like endocrine disorders. *Rasayana* drugs can be given in suitable formulations considering the *Dosha* status and *Vyadhiavastha* of the patient. *Ksheerapaka*, *Ghritha* and even *Choorna Kalpanas* of following *Rasayana* drugs are given in hypothyroidism depending upon the clinical presentation and patient considerations.

Lasuna (Allium sativum) -

Lasuna is *Theekshna*. A good fighter against *Manda Guna* of *Kapha* in hypothyroidism. Best *Avaranahara* drug with excellent property of *Srothosudhi*.^[7]

Bhallathaka (Semecarpus anacardium)-

Bhallathaka is *Kaphahara* and *Srothosudhikara* in nature. Best among *Medhya* and *Vibandhahara*.

Vibandhahara will remove *Sanga* in the hormone pathway.^[8]

Chitraka (Plumbago zeylanica)-

Chitraka is an effective drug in *Dhatugatha* stages. *Vatashamanas* and *Rasayana*. Remove *Mala-sanchaya* in *Madhyamarogamarga* because of its *Deepana-Pachana* property.^[9]

Shilajathu (Asphaltum punjabianum)-

Shilajathu is *Chedana* in nature thereby removing *Sanga* in the *Sookshmasrothus*.^[10]

Punarnava (Boerhavia diffusa)-

Punarnava is ideal *Shophahara* drug which is effective in myxedema stages of hypothyroidism.^[11]

DISCUSSION

Hypothyroidism is a deficiency of thyroid hormone. The less production of thyroid hormone reduces body metabolism and gives rise to many signs and symptoms of hypothyroidism. India has high prevalence of hypothyroidism. Thyroid hormones maintain proper metabolism in the body, it can be correlated with the action of *Agni*. Hypothyroidism significantly increases free radicals in the body; these free radicals interact with body material and causes destruction. *Rasayana* interacts with these free radicals and helps to reduce body destruction. *Rasayanas* are effective against free radicals and also increases *Agni* so that it can be useful in hypothyroidism.

CONCLUSION

Rasayana chikitsa is to maintain equilibrium of *Doshas*. This state of equilibrium, along with Proper *Dhatvagni* and *Srotomukha Sodhanam* are essential factors for maintaining normal strength, memory, youth, longevity of the body and also help to increase metabolism of the body, effective against free radicals so that it can be useful in Hypothyroidism. *Rasayana chikitsa* plays a useful role in hypothyroidism.

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