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Review on conceptual study of *Jara Avastha* mentioned in *Brihatrayee*

Manjula V. Kurahatti

Associate Professor, Department of Sanskrita Samhita Siddanta, B.V.V.S Ayurveda Medical College and Hospital, Bagalkot, Karnataka, India.

ABSTRACT

Vaya, which means Age, represents state of body depending upon the length of time that has passed since birth of a human being. Considering a total life span of 100 years, *Acharya Charaka* and *Sushruta* has described old age after 60 years and 70 years respectively. The present study reveals that the process of ageing was elaborately described in Ayurveda. In order to prolong the life span and to promote longevity a separate discipline called *Rasayana Tantra* was developed. The silent features of this study are described in this article.

Key words: *Tri Doshas, Saptha Dhatus, Agni, Jara Laxanas, Rasayana, Ayurveda.*

INTRODUCTION

Ageing is the process that reduces the number of healthy cells in body. Therefore, the body loses its ability to respond to a challenge (external or internal stress) to maintain homeostasis. *Ayurveda* science has addressed geriatric health issues under heading "*Jara*". In *Astanga Ayurveda* "*Jara*" is incorporated at 7th number among its eight branches. "*Rasayana Tantra*" a special branch of medicine in *Ayurveda*, exclusively devotes to "*Jara Janya Vyadhi*". *Ayurveda* science basically aims at promotion of health of individual and management of diseases. That's why the foremost classic of *Ayurveda*, the *Charaka Samhita* begins its *Chikista Sthana* with *Rasayana Chikitsa*. Use of

Rasayana therapy in "*Jara Janya Vyadhi*" works at primary level of our biological system as well as it saves the patient from side effects of modern medicine.^[1]

Ageing is a process of physical, psychological and social change in multi-dimensional aspects. The world population of the elderly is increasing and by the year 2050, adults older than 65 years will comprise 1/5th of the global population. In India 3.8% of the population are older than 65 years of age. According to an estimate the likely number of elderly people in India by 2016 will be around 113 million.^[1] "According to the report of the Technical Group on Population Projections for India and states 2011-2036, there are nearly 138 million (13.8 crores) elderly persons in India in 2021 comprising 67 million males and 71 million females," the NSO study elderly in India 2021 said on 15 Aug 2021.

The Leading causes of mortality among aged people comprise respiratory problems, heart diseases, cancer and stroke. Significant causes of morbidity among this group are chronic inflammatory and degenerative conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, osteoporosis, depression, psychiatric disorders, Parkinson's disease and age-related urinary problems.^[2]

Ayurveda, the Indian traditional holistic health science has got the potential for prevention of diseases by

Address for correspondence:

Dr. Manjula V. Kurahatti

Associate Professor, Department of Sanskrita Samhita Siddanta, B.V.V.S Ayurveda Medical College and Hospital, Bagalkot, Karnataka, India.

E-mail: drmschooli@gmail.com

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promotion of health and management of diseases occurring in old age. It has a focused branch called *Rasayana* (Rejuvenation) which deals with the problems related to ageing and methods to counter the same. Geriatrics or *Jara Chikitsa* or *Rasayana* in *Ayurveda* is a unique therapeutic methodology to delay ageing and to minimize the intensity of problems occurring this degenerative phase of one's life. Ayurvedic literature record numerous single and compound plant-based medicines, herbo mineral, herbo metallic formulations for general wellbeing and in disease specific conditions relating to geriatrics.^[3]

Rasayana Chikitsa is mainly used for maintaining the health of healthy individuals although it can be used for diseased also. Ayurveda and other Indian traditions considered the total span of life over one hundred years. The vedic hymns proclaim an active, healthy life of hundred years.

Important Factors in Jara Avastha

1) Age Classification

Chandogyopanishad emphasizes that a man enjoys 116 years of life. The total life span has been divided into three categories.

Childhood - *Balyavastha* - 24 years

Youth - *Yuvavastha* - 44 years

Old age - *Vrddhavastha* - 48 years

Sushruta gives an elaborate and systematic classification of age.

1) *Balyavastha* (Childhood) - Before 16 years.

- Ksirapa* (milkfed)
- Ksirannada* (weaning)
- Annada* (food)

2) *Madhyavastha* (Middle Age) = 16-70 years.

- Vrdhi* (growth or evolution) = upto 20 years
- Youvana* (youth) = 21- 30 years
- Sampurna* (completion of the body with all the *Dhatu*s, *Indriyas*, Strength and *Veerya*) = 31-40 years

d) *Hani* (Involution or decline) = 41-70 years

3) *Vrddha Vaya* (old age) = 71-100 years

Dhatu, *Virya*, *Indriya*, *Bala* and *Utsaha* decrease day by day. Alopecia, wrinkling of whole body, cough, breathlessness etc occur by increase in Ageing.^[4]

2) Ageing And Tridoshas

Vata, *Pitta* and *Kapha* are the three basic constituents of living human body. A balanced state of the structure and function of these three *Doshas* maintains the healthy life and their imbalance is the basis of pathology according to Ayurveda. As per fundamental principles of Ayurveda, *Kapha* is the predominant *Dosha* during childhood, *Pitta* during the adulthood and *Vata* during old age. *Kapha* is the principal humor responsible for the vigour and vitality of youth. *Vayu* according to its fundamental properties it performs all the actions of body. As a function of ageing, with advancing age *Kapha* gets gradually depleted and *Vata* increases spontaneously. It is postulated that the following could approximate Doshic set up to aging.^[5]

Dosa	Balyavastha (child hood)	Madhyavastha (middle age)	Vrddhavastha (old age)
Vata	+	+	+++
Pitta	++	+++	++
Kapha	+++	++	+

3) Ageing and Saptadhatu

There is tendency of gradual rise of all *Dhatu*s, *Indriyas* and the *Ojas* upto the age of 16 years which is followed by the phase of maturity which continue upto the age of 70 years according to *Sushruta*. This is followed by the gradual decline or involution of all the *Dhatu*s, *Indriyas* and *Ojas*. In early age *Kapha* predominates and accordingly the *Dhatu*s also remain well formed and nourished. In old age *Vata* predominates which precipitates the *Shoshana* and *Kshaya* of different *Dhatu*s.^[6]

4) Ageing and Agni

Thirteen types of *Agnis* described in Ayurveda represent the digestive and metabolic fire in the body

which consists of the digestive juices and different kinds of hormones, enzymes and co-enzymes participating in the metabolism. Digestive capacity and the metabolic rate are highest in young adults which is also the period of increased activity of *Pitta*. The optimum activity of *Agni* maintains the vigor and vitality of an individual and also keeps up the growth and development of the day. With the advancing age on one hand the *Vata* increases which induces involuntary changes while on the other hand the depleted *Agni* leads to decreases in the vigor and vitality with decay and atrophy due to defective metabolism.^[7]

5) Jara Laxanas – Decade Wise Ageing Process

Vagbhatta was the first one to record such an observation, which was followed later by *Acharaya Sharangdhara*. It is clear that ageing does not occur simultaneously in all the tissues. Different body tissues are affected ageing at different time period. Gradual declination of a particular faculty takes place in each decade of life and by the end of decade, that particular faculty is lost.

Chief complaints

- 1) *Twak Parushata* (Dryness of skin)
- 2) *Slatha Sara* (Flabbiness of the body)
- 3) *Slatha Mamsa* (Decreased muscle tone)
- 4) *Slatha Asthi* (Bone Weakness)
- 5) *Slatha Sandhi* (Flaccid joint)
- 6) *Dhatu Kshaya* (Loss of Tissues)
- 7) *Kayasya Avamanam* (Bending of the body)
- 8) *Vepathu* (Tremors)
- 9) *Khalithya* (Falling of hair)
- 10) *Vali* (Wrinkling)
- 11) *Palithya* (Graying of hair)
- 12) *Kasa* (Coughing)
- 13) *Swasa* (Short breath)
- 14) *Medha Hani* (Decreased functions of Intellect)
 - a) Like *Grahana* (grasping)

- b) *Dharana* (retention of power)
- c) *Smarana* (memory power)
- d) *Vachana* (speech)
- e) *Vijnana* (knowledge)

- 15) *Utsaha Hani* (Decreased enthusiasum)
- 16) *Parakrama Hani* (Decreased physical strength)
- 17) *Paurusha Hani* (Decreased virality)
- 18) *Prabha Hani* or *Chhaya Hrasa* (Changes in complexion)
- 19) *Shukra Kshaya*
- 20) *Dristi Hrasa* (Diminished vision)
- 21) *Karmendriya Hani* (Decreased locomotor activities)
- 22) *Buddhi Hani* (Deterioration in wisdom) etc.^[8]

6) Classification of Vaya according to Ayurvedic Acharyas^[9]

Acharyas	Balyam	Madhyama m	Vardhakya m
<i>Charaka Charya</i>	By birth to 30 yrs 1. Aparipakwa dhatu- Birth to 16 yrs 2. Vivardhamana dhatu- 16 to 30 yrs	30 to 60 yrs	60 to 100 yrs
<i>Sushrutacharya</i>	Birth to 16 yrs 1. <i>Kshreerapa</i> Birth to 1yr 2. <i>Ksheerannada</i> 1 to 2 yrs. 3. <i>Annada-2</i> to 16yrs.	16 to 70 1. <i>Vridhhi</i> 16 to 20 2. <i>Yauvana</i> 20 to 30 3. <i>Sampurna</i> 30 to 40	70 onwards

		4. <i>Hani</i> 40 to 70	
<i>Vagbhatacharya</i>	Birth to 34 yrs 1. <i>Kaumara</i> birth to 16 yrs 2. <i>Yauvana</i> 16 to 34 yrs.	34 to 70 yr	70 onwards

7) Ageing process : A modern view

Geriatrics: Greek word “geros” mean the old age, “iatric” mean the medical treatment. This is the branch of medicine concerned with the problems of Ageing, including physiological. Pathological and psychological problems.

Definition of Ageing

“The processes that occur during life which culminate in changes that decrease an individual’s ability to cope with biological changes.”

Some theories of Ageing are given below

1. Waste Accumulation Theory: It is also called as Garbage accumulation theory decline in immune regulation leading to an increase in autoimmune diseases.
2. Limited number of Cell Divisions Theory: It is known as decrease in the number of cell divisions.
3. Hay flick Limit Theory: Decreased secretion of GH which governs protein synthesis and cell division. Steroid loss contributes to osteoporosis.
4. Death Hormone Theory: Decrease in growth hormone secretion observed with aging is associated with changes in body composition, physical and psychological function that are similar to those seen in younger adult patients with growth hormone deficiency.
5. Somatic Mutation Theory: Accumulation of a sufficient level of mutations in somatic cells
6. Errors and Repairs Theory: Mitochondrial DNA mutation.

7. Cross Linkage Theory: Apoptosis seen in neurones during Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s disease and also in ageing prostate.
8. Autoimmune Theory: Diminished antibody production reflecting vulnerability to infections.
9. The Rate of Living Theory: Decline in immune regulation leading to an increase in autoimmune diseases.
10. Cell ageing Theory: Adult tissues respond to injury or physiologic demand usually with enlargement of pre-existing cells (hyper trophy) rather than cell division (leading to hyperplasia). Telomerase has shortening of chromosomes.
11. Neuro Endocrine Theory or Weak link Theory: Neuronal loss occurs in selective areas of brain like locus cerulus, *Substantia Nigra*.
12. Free Radical Theory of Ageing: Free radicals are highly reactive and cause oxidative alteration in collagen, elastin and DNA.^[10]

8) Rasayana Chikitsa In Jara Avastha

1. Use of *Rasayana*.
2. Use of balanced diet with code and conduct.
3. Use of *Pancha Karma*.
4. Follow of *Dinacharya* and *Rutucharya* mentioned in Ayurvedic Literature.
5. Follow of *Sadvrutta Palana* as mentioned in Ayurvedic Literature.
6. Yogic practices and meditation practices.
7. Medication of specific *Jaravastha* born diseases.^[11]

Concept of Rasayana

“*Rasasya Ayanam Rasayanam*”

The Therapy, which gives the benefit of good *Rasa*, is *Rasayana*. Hence it is the therapy by which one gets the *Rasa, Rakthadi Dhatu*s of optimum quality.

9) Probable mode of action of Rasayana

Rasayana basically promotes the nutrition through four modes. They are:

1. By directly enriching the nutritional intake of the body through increasing the consumption of *Amalaki, Satavari*, milk, ghee etc.
2. On *Agni*: By improving Agni i.e., digestion and metabolism through *Ballataka, Pippali* etc. there by promoting nutrition.
3. *Shrothovishodhana*: By promoting the capacity of *Srotas* or microcircularity channels in the body, through herbs like *Haritaki, Guggulu, Tulsi* and so on.
4. By its *Vishgna* property: It avoids different types of diseases and promotes healthy long life.

In short *Rasayana* gives

- Long life
- Delays Ageing and death
- Increase intelligence, memory and luster
- Excellence in the body tissues
- Increases the Immunity
- Removes diseases
- Gaining “*Moksha*” (Final entity) and *Mukthi* from this life. etc.^[12]

DISCUSSION

The Rejuvenative approaches in Ayurveda have notable potential to afford significant complementary therapeutic care in a range of diseases of the elderly and the same needs to be known to the practicing physicians of all the streams. The drugs called *Arjuna, Guggulu* and *Pushkaramoola* as cardioprotective in cases of Ischaemic heart disease, in this way so many drugs are going to be used in *Jara Avastha*. The Ayurveda - based package of geriatrics care may consist of use of *Dashvidha Pariksha, Sadvritta, Swasthavritta, Satvik* diet, Yoga, Meditation, Geriatric *Panchakarma* and *Rasayana* Therapy. Population Ageing and the increasing number of elders in the population is a matter of great significance because of its likely impact on public health and socioeconomic growth of a nation. Ayurveda, being the science of life and longevity, offers a treasure of geriatric care. It

deliberates on the science and philosophy of life and longevity with the goal of healthy ageing and long life to achieve the *Purushartha Chatustaya - Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha*. It considers ageing as *Swabhava* of life and describes in details the pattern of sequential losses of biological strength with advancing age in relation to the doctrine of *Tridosha* and advocates the management of ageing and diseases of ageing on principals of *Samanya- Vishesha Siddanta*.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be pointed out that there is no single and complete concept on the ageing process in modern medicine. Different theories have been put forth, which have been discussed. The ultimate cause of ageing is deterioration of *Jeevaparamanus* i.e., *Dhatu, Shrotas, Malas, Indriyas* which are under constant interaction with the *Tridoshas*. In the context of *Jarajanyavikaras, Vatadosha* is predominant, *Pitta* is irregular, while *Kapha* is in a depleted state. This cascade of events targets the “*Vyadhikshamatva*” as well as *Satwa* of the *Viruddha*, submerging him in disease.

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