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Role of Ayurveda in Graceful Ageing w.s.r. to *Dincharya*, *Ratricharya* & *Ritucharya*

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ABSTRACT

Background: In present time, looking young is something which is needed by everyone. The beauty standards have been definitely increased which certainly only amount to external beauty. The market of the cosmetic industry has grown a lot in the past year because of the increased consumer which is definitely not gender oriented. **Aim:** To demonstrate the role of ayurveda with special reference to ageing. **Objective:** To study the importance of *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya* & *Ratricharya*. **Material & methods:** The material will be collected from the *Bruhatrayee* & *Laghutrayeesamhita*. And any scientific studies related with above will be obtained from the google scholar, pubmed or any other online source. **Discussion:** *Acharya* has mentioned the importance of *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya* in the *Samhitas*. There is a specific criterion which is to be followed in accordance to *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya* & *Ratricharya* because of the distribution of *Tridoshas* accordingly. **Conclusion:** Looking young with great skin even at old age doesn't define being young. People need to change their perspective on how they look at ageing. And that's where the regime of ayurveda can help in ageing gracefully the one where everyone is disease free physically, mentally & emotionally and cover all the aspect of being 'Swastha'. Only healthy eating doesn't define our health. There are other factors described well in the ayurveda to create a balance in *Dosha*. *Dincharya*, *Ratricharya* & *Ritucharya* play an important role in maintaining *Swasthya* by controlling the external factors which are equally important for internal dosha balance & thus longevity in long run.

Key words: Ageing, Ayurveda, *Dincharya*, *Ritucharya*

INTRODUCTION

Acharya Sushrut & *Charaka* has mentioned *Jara* (ageing) under the category of *Swabhavik* & *Kalaj Roga* i.e., *Jara* is something which will naturally come at a time and cannot be avoided. Therefore, what is left is to age graciously with time by following the steps of

science of life i.e., though *Ayurvedic* principles.

Aging can be defined as the time-related deterioration of the physiological functions necessary for survival and fertility. The characteristics of aging - as distinguished from diseases of aging (such as cancer and heart disease) - affect all the individuals of a species.^[1]

At the biological level, ageing results from the impact of the accumulation of a wide variety of molecular and cellular damage over time. This leads to a gradual decrease in physical and mental capacity, a growing risk of disease and ultimately death.^[2]

Common conditions in older age include hearing loss, cataracts and refractive errors, back and neck pain and osteoarthritis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, depression and dementia. As people age, they are more likely to experience several conditions at the same time.^[3]

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Older age is also characterized by the emergence of several complex health states commonly called geriatric syndromes. They are often the consequence of multiple underlying factors and include frailty, urinary incontinence, falls, and delirium and pressure ulcers.^[4]

A longer life brings with it opportunities, not only for older people and their families, but also for societies as a whole. Yet the extent of these opportunities and contributions depends heavily on one factor: health.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Ayurvedic text was collected mostly from *Bruhatrayee & Laghutrayee*. For *Dincharya*, *Charaka Samhita & Ashtanga Hrudaya* were referred. *Ritucharya* was obtained from the *Charaka Samhita* in *Sutrasthana*. For concepts of ageing in *Ayurveda*, google search was done with topics like 'ageing & *Ritucharya*', 'ageing & *Dincharya*' or 'role of *Ayurveda* in ageing'.

Role of Ayurveda

There is a reason why *Ayurveda* is called the science of life. *Ayurveda* is a combination of two words *Ayu & Veda*. It is a text which helps us in guiding about the knowledge of *Ayu*. It answers all the questions related to *Ayu* using terms *Sukha*, *Asukha*, *Hita*, *Ahita*, *Pramana*, *Apramana*. Through this text of *Ayurveda*, knowledge of *Ayushya* or *Anayushya Dravya*, *Guna*, *Karma* is obtained. And the whole text is about the things which can be beneficial or malefic.^[5]

We know we are going to age somehow eventually, and need to understand simple daily life which can be approached to avoid diseased filled ageing without being accustomed to diseases.

Dincharya

Dincharya basically is a daily regime that needs to be followed in everyday life to keep the diseases at bay and build a good immunity factor with time. A day is started with waking up in the *Brahamuhurat* which *Acharya Vagbhat* has told.^[6] *Brahamuhurat* is the time period of 48 minutes before sunrise. After that there are various 'Karma' such as *Mala-Utsarga*, *Dhatun*, *Gandush*, *Nsaya*, *Abhyanga*, *Dhoompan* etc. as mentioned in table no. 1.

Table 1. Benefits of following *Dincharya*

SN	<i>Dincharya</i>	<i>Astanga Hrudaya</i>	<i>Charaka Samhita</i>
1.	<i>Bhram Muhurta</i> ^[7]	<i>Raksartham Ayushya</i>	N.A
2.	<i>Mala Utsarga</i> ^[8]	-	-
3.	<i>Danta Pavanam</i>	N.A	<i>Nihanti Gandham Vairasy Jivaha Danta Malam, Ruchi, Dant Visodhanam</i> ^[9]
4.	<i>Jivaha Nirlekanam</i>	N.A	<i>Jivaha Moolgat Malam Ucchvasa Avarodhi Durgandham Jivaha Nirlekeht</i> ^[10]
5.	<i>Anjanam</i>	<i>Sauvira Ajnam Nittyam Hittam Akshno</i> ^[11]	<i>Sauvira Ajnam Nittyam Hittam Akshno</i> . ^[12]
6.	<i>Navan</i>	N.A	<i>Prevents Chakshu, Nasa & Karna, Shveta-Kapila of Shamshru & Keshha, Keshha Prapatan. Manyastambha, Shitra Shola Ardit, Hanusamgraha, Peenasa, Ardhavabhedaka, Sira Kampa, Prasanna Mukha, Snigdha Swara</i> ^[13]
7.	<i>Dhoompan</i>	N.A	<i>Prevents Shirasa Gauravam-Shoolam, Peenasa, Ardhavabhedak, Karna-Akshi Shola, Kasa, Hikka, Kshvasa, Galagraha, Dantadaurbalaya, Kshotra, Ghrana, Akshi Doshaj Strava,</i>

			Putigrahana Gandha, Dantashoola, Arochak, Hanu- Manyagraha, Kandu, Krumiroga, Mukha Pandu Kshleshma Praseka, Vaiswarya, Galashundi- Upjivihika, Khalitya, Pinjara & Keshha Patanam, Shohta, Atitandra, Budhi-Moha Atinidra. ^[14]
8.	Gandush	N.A	Hanu-Bala, Swara- Bala, Vadan Upchaya, Rasagyan, Ruchi, Mukha & Kantha Shosha, Osta Sfutan, Dant- Kshaya, Dantharsha Doesn't Occur ^[15]
9.	Tambool Sevan		Vaishdya-Ruchi- Saugandhya ^[16]
10.	Abhayanga	Jara-Kshram- Vataha, Drishti Prasada, Pusta Ayu, Svapn- Sutwak ^[17]	Susparash, Upachita Aang, Balvaan, Priya Darshan, Alpa Jara ^[18]
11	Vyayam	Laghavam, Karma Samarthayam, Dipto Agni, Meda Kshaya ^[19]	Laghavam, Karma Samarthyam, Sthairya, Dosha Kshay, Agni Virdhi ^[20]
12.	Udwartan	Kaphhar, Meda Vilayan, Sthiranga, Tvak Prasadkaram ^[21]	N.A
13.	Snana	Dipanam, Vrush yam, Ayushya, Urja-	Pavitram, Virsyam, Ayusyam, Saram

		Balapradam, Ka ndu-Mala- Kshrama- Sveda-Tandra- Trushna-Daha- Papamajita ^[22]	Sveda Mala Aapham, Sharer Bala Sandhan, Ojaskaram Param. ^[23]
14.	Sada Shira Tail Dharana	N.A	Shira-Shoola, Khalitya, Palitya, Keshha Prapatan, Doesn't Occur, Nidra Labha. ^[24]
15.	Karna Taila Dharana	N.A	Vatjanya, Karna Roga, Manyastambha, Hanustambha, Ucchaishrutina, Badhirya Doesn't Occur ^[25]
16.	Nirmalambar Dharan	N.A.	Kamya, Yash, Ayushya, Alakshmighanam, Harshnam, Shrimadparishada m ^[26]
17.	Sugandh Lepa & Mala Dharan	N.A.	Vrushya, Saugandh Ayushya, Kamya, Pushtibala, Saumanasya Alakshmighanam ^[27]
18.	Ratna- Abhushan Dharan	N.A.	Dhanya, Mangalya, Ayushya, Harshanam, Kamya, Ojasya ^[28]
19	Pada & Mala Marga Shuddhi	N.A	Medhya, Pavitra, Vrushya, Ayushya, Alakshmi & Kalinsnam ^[29]
20.	Kshaur Karma	N.A	Paushtik, Vrushya, Ayushya, Shuchi ^[30]
21.	Padatra Dharan	N.A	Chakshushya, Balya Parikrama

			<i>Sukham, Vrushya</i> ^[31]
22.	<i>Chatra Dharana</i>	N.A	<i>Ite Prashaman, Balya, Gupta Avarana, Shankaram, Gharma-Anil-Rajo-Ambughnam</i> ^[32]
23.	<i>Danda Dharana</i>	N.A	<i>Avasthambhan, Ayushya, Bhayaghna</i> ^[33]

Ratricharya

Ratricharya is the regime which we need to follow at night. It plays equal role in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. All is well that ends well clearly state the reason why we should end our day with discipline as mentioned in table 2 as per *Acharya's*.

Table 2: Ratricharya

<i>Sushurta</i>	<i>Ashtanga Samgraha</i> ^[35]	<i>Bhavprakash</i>
After meals one should sit comfortably like a king until the heaviness and discomfort of food is relieved; then walk for 100 steps and should lie down on bed by left side. ^[34]	One should sleep after taking light and wholesome food with peaceful, fair minded and having accounted entire activities of the day and after offering prayers to the God in his own bed. Light, nutritious and wholesome food particularly in early part of night will facilitate easy digestion and keep gastro intestinal tract unloaded. The sleeping place should be spacious in	According to <i>Bhavaprakasha</i> , after having food one should do <i>Achamana</i> , remove the remnants of food particles residing between the teeth with tooth pick. ^[36] One should take dinner during the first part (<i>Prathamaprahara</i> - 3 hours) of night and it should be lesser in quantity in comparison to day time but it should not be heavy and troublesome in digestion. After food, hands should be washed well with water and the eyes should be touched with moist hands,

	length and breadth, furnished with suitable pillows which is soft, even and comfortable. The cot which is to be for lying down should possess the height up to the knee and well covered with soft mattresses. The head should face towards east or south direction and legs should not be stretched towards teachers or elders. <i>Paniprakshalana</i> - one should thoroughly wash his hands until the food particles are completely washed off the hands. <i>Dantashodhana</i> - the teeth should be cleansed by brushing; the food particles residing in between the teeth should be removed with toothpicks; if any sticking is there, gargle then mouth to remove the coating, smell and greasiness. <i>Netrasparshana</i> - one should touch the eyes	this will cure blindness quickly. ^[37]
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	<p>with the moist finger tips after hand washing.</p> <p><i>Tamboolasevana</i> - one should make the mouth clean and pleasant by chewing betel leaves.</p> <p><i>Dhoomapana</i> - one should inhale medicated smoke to remove upward accumulation of kapha.</p> <p><i>Gamana</i> - Before going to bed one should walk for <i>Paadashata Matra</i> (100 steps)</p> <p><i>Samveshana</i> - After <i>Gamana</i> one should sleep on left lateral position</p>	
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Ritucharya

In the beginning of *Visarga Kala* and ending of *Adana Kala*, that is, during *Varsha* and *Grishma*, there is depletion in the ‘*Bala*’. In the middle of the solstices, that is, during *Sharad* and *Vasanta*, ‘*Bala*’ remains in moderate and in the end of *Visarga Kala* and in the beginning of *Adana Kala*, that is, during *Hemanta* and *Shishira*, maximum ‘*Bala*’ is seen.^[38]

This was the method that the ancient sages set up for various seasons based on analytical reasoning to obtain *Swastha* (health) and prevent the diseases.

A human clinical study was carried out by Mallika et al. to assess the biophysical and biochemical changes occurring due to *Ritusandhi*. Clinical study shows provocation of *Tridosha* with the dominance of *Vata* and *Kapha* provocation. In this study during *Ritusandhi* frequently, *Jwara*, *Pratishyaya*, and *Alasya Lakshnas*

were met with in the same way to adapt the changes between two seasons, *Ritusandhi* is mentioned by *Vagbhata*. According to *Vagbhata*, time of seven days at the end and commencement season is known as *Ritusandhi*. During this period regimen of previous season should be discontinued gradually and that of subsequent season should be adopted gradually i.e., diet and regimen of previous *Ritu*, which have become accustomed should be discontinued by quarter and quarter, similarly diet and lifestyle of incoming *Ritu* should be made use of (gradually) with intervals of one, two or three days.^[45]

But with the knowledge of *Ritucharya* we can surely avoid these by practicing regimen in accordance with the *Ritu* to maintain the harmony of the *Tridosha* and to stay healthy ever.

The do’s and don’ts according to different *Ritu* is mentioned in table no. 3.

Table 3: Ritucharya

Ritu	Aahar	Vihara
<i>Hemant</i> ^[39]	Do - <i>Amla, Lavana, Madhura, Guru</i> and <i>Snigdha Dravya</i> , New rice and Wheat, Fats and Oils, Black Gram and its products, Milk and its products, Sugarcane products, Warm Water, Honey, <i>Anupa</i> (animals of marshy land) and <i>Audaka</i> (aquatic animals) <i>Mansa</i> , Liquor. Don't - <i>Laghu</i> and <i>Vatala Dravya</i> , <i>Pramitahara, Udmantha</i>	Do - Protection from cold by warm cloths and beddings, Living in warm house, Regular use of shoes, Bathing with warm water, <i>Abhyanga, Utsadana, Vyayama, Atapa Sevana, Maithuna</i> . Don't - <i>Diwaswapna</i> , Direct Air.
<i>Shishir</i> ^[40]	Do - similar to <i>Hemanta Ritucharya</i> Don't - Avoid <i>Katu, Tikta, Kashaya, Laghu, Sheeta</i> and <i>Vatala Dravya</i> .	Specially live in warmer house and protect from direct air.
<i>Basant</i> ^[41]	Do - <i>Katu, Tikta</i> and <i>Kashaya Dravya, Ruksa, Laghu</i> and <i>Ushna</i>	Do - <i>Kavala dharana, Anjana, Dhumpana, Vyayama,</i>

	<p><i>Dravya</i>; Old Wheat, Rice and Barley; Water medicated with Ginger, <i>Khadira</i>, Musta and Honey; <i>Jangala Mansa</i>, Liquor.</p> <p>Don't - <i>Madhura</i>, <i>Amla</i>, <i>Guru</i>, <i>Snigdha</i> and <i>Sheeta Dravya</i>, Curd.</p>	<p><i>Udvertana</i>, <i>Chandan</i> and <i>Agaru Lepa</i>, <i>Maithuna</i>, <i>Vamana</i> & <i>Nasya</i></p> <p>Don't - Direct sunlight, <i>Diwaswapna</i>, Sleeping under Dew</p>
Grishma ^[42]	<p>Do - <i>Madhura</i>, <i>Drava</i>, <i>Sheeta</i>, <i>Laghu</i> and <i>Snigdha Dravya</i>, <i>Mantha</i> with Sugar, Ghee, Milk, Shali Rice, <i>Jangala Mansa</i> (meat of terrestrial animals).</p> <p>Don't - <i>Lavana</i>, <i>Amla</i>, <i>Katu</i> and <i>Ushna Dravya</i>, Curd, Liquor.</p>	<p>Do - <i>Diwaswapna</i>, Living and sleeping in cold place, Protection from heat, bathing with cold water, <i>Chandan Lepa</i>, Wearing of light clothes.</p> <p>Don't - <i>Vyayama</i>, <i>Atapa Sevana</i>, <i>Maithuna</i>.</p>
Varsha ^[43]	<p>Do - <i>Madhura</i>, <i>Amla</i>, <i>Lavana</i>, <i>Snigdha</i> and <i>Ushna Dravya</i>, Old Wheat, Rice and Barley, Yusa, Food with Honey, Boiled & cooled Water, <i>Jangala Mansa</i>, Liquor.</p> <p>Don't - <i>Ushna</i> and <i>Ati-Drava Dravya</i>, <i>Udmantha</i>, River water</p>	<p>Do - Living in dry place, Wearing of light clothes, <i>Pragharshan</i>, <i>Udvertana</i>, <i>Vasti</i>, <i>Virechana</i>, <i>Vamana</i>, Use of flowers and perfume.</p> <p>Don't - <i>Diwaswapna</i>, <i>Vyayama</i>, Living under dew, Eastern wind, Excessive Sunlight exposure, <i>Maithuna</i></p>
Sharad ^[44]	<p>Do - <i>Madhura</i>, <i>Tikta</i> and <i>Kasaya Dravya</i>, <i>Laghu</i>, <i>Ruksa</i> and <i>Sheeta Dravya</i> Wheat, Rice, Barley and Mudga, Milk, Sugar and Sugarcane, <i>Tikta Sarpi</i>, River water, <i>Hansodak</i>, <i>Jangal Mansa</i>.</p> <p>Don't - <i>Amla</i>, <i>Katu</i>, <i>Tikshna</i> and <i>Ushna Dravya</i>, <i>Kshara</i>, Oils and Fat, Curd, Ginger, <i>Anupa</i> and <i>Aaudak Mansa</i>, Liquor</p>	<p>Do - <i>Virechana</i>, <i>Raktamokshana</i>, Living under Moon light, Wearing of flowers, pearls, clean cloths.</p> <p>Don't - <i>Diwaswapna</i>, <i>Vyayama</i>, Eastern wind, Living in dew, <i>Atapa Sevana</i>.</p>

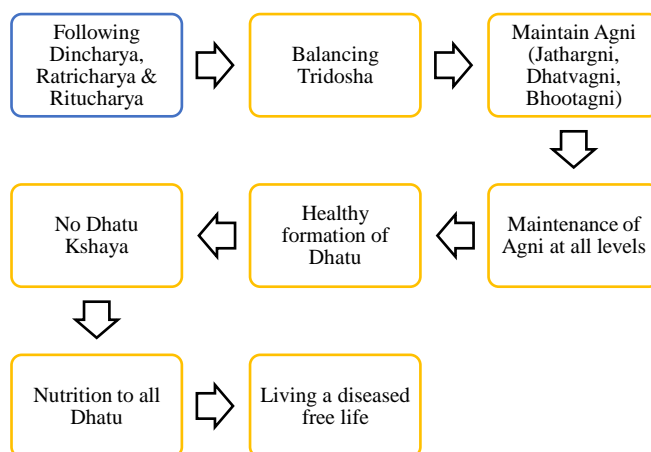
DISCUSSION

To maintain internal well-being, we need to focus on the type of *Prakiti*, along with *Aahar* which is a very well-established fact. *Ayurveda* is already the science of life. The role of *Ayurveda* in preventing ageing is well understood through the terms of *Aahra*, *Vihara*, *Nidra*, *Abhyanga*, *Panchakarma* etc.

Whereas for external well-being we are required to understand and focus on our *Dincharya*, *Ratricharya* & *Ritucharya*. Starting with *Dincharya*, waking up in *Brahama Muhurata* is *Ayusshya*. Similarly other routines such as *Nasya*, *Anjana*, *Dhoompan*, *Gandush* etc, help in preventing various diseases of body. *Snan*, *Nirmal Ambardharan*, *Sugandh Lepa* & *Mala Dharan*, *Ratna-Abhushan Dharan*, *Pada* & *Mala Marga Shuddhi*, *Kshaur Karma* are *Ayushya* for an individual.

In *Ayurveda*, the knowledge of *Ritucharya* is a firsthand guide to the concept of *Kriya-Kala*, which describes the modes and stages of the development of diseases, with regard to the state of different *Doshas* - *Vatu*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* in accordance with the changes of time. A good understanding of it is very much essential for early diagnosis and prognosis for adopting preventive and curative measures.

A brief *Samprapti* of how *Dincharya*, *Ratricharya* & *Ritucharya* could help in preventing ageing and maintaining health can be seen in flowchart 1.



Flowchart 1: Preventing ageing through *Dincharya*, *Ratricharya* & *Ritucharya*

CONCLUSION

There is a difference between living and living a healthy life which has been beautifully explained in *Ayurved*. *Ayurveda* itself signifies the word *Ayu* which is used for life. The way we can embed the concepts of *Ayurveda* in our life could be understood through external & internal well-being. We human beings thrive in an environment. So, it's important for our internal body to adjust according to external environment. It teaches us that we are not single entity but rather part of ecosystem.

It's been pretty much proved through researches that not following a daily healthy regime give rise to various *Vyadhi's*. At opd levels along with *Shaman & Shaman Shodhan* therapies, there need to be a focus on *Aahar & Vihar* of a person. Following the *Ayurveda* regime we are uninviting the '*Kha*' *Vaigunya* from entering the *Strotas* & stopping the *Vyadhi Utpatti* at first "*Kriya Kaal*", thus living healthy a little longer. We realise that following these regimes is useful to delay aging by adjusting to changes that occur through the year & a day.

Also, there is increment in seasonal diseases which can be avoided by following the *Dincharya, Ratricharya & Ritucharya* by strengthening the immunity.

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