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# Rasayana: Preventive measures for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

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## ABSTRACT

The most valuable possession we may have ourselves is good health. Everyone aspires to live a healthy life. One of the obstacles to achieving them is non-communicable diseases. Due to their high mortality rate, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are a growing worry for society, national governments, and the entire world. Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which account for 41 million deaths every year globally and 74% of all deaths, are the leading cause of death. The self-management, genetic, environmental, medical conditions and sociodemographic categories can all be used to group the primary risk factors for NCDs. Every medical system places a strong emphasis on curing diseases, but in *Ayurveda*, the goal of healthcare programs is always to maintain and preserve health rather than curing diseases. Previous studies demonstrated that practicing *Atulyagotravivah* and *Putreshti Yagya* before conception, *Masanumasika*, and *Garbhini Paricharya* throughout pregnancy and during the developing stage of adolescence, might reduce the risk of NCDs in children. Other research studies show that *Rasayana* contains antioxidants that reduce free radicals, which are thought to be a risk factor for NCDs. Studies affirm *Rasayana* practices rejuvenate mind-body systems. Integrating *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Shodhana*, and *Rasayana*, including *Achar Rasayana* and *Sadvritta*, alongside *Yoga* and *Rasayana*, partly prevents NCDs. *Rasayana* enhances immunity, *Agni*, tissue enrichment, and synthesis.

**Key words:** Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), *Rasayana*, Antioxidants, Lifestyle factors, Preventive healthcare

## INTRODUCTION

Our health is the most valuable asset we may own. Everyone wants to have a healthy lifestyle. Ayurveda is a medical system that strongly emphasizes prevention over treatment. A sedentary lifestyle, inactivity, stress at work, and to some extent ignorance all contribute

to increased health problems. Non-communicable diseases (NCDs), also known as chronic diseases, are medical conditions that are associated with long durations and slow progress.

Due to their high mortality rate, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are a growing worry for society, national governments, and the entire world. Every year, 41 million people die from noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), which account for 74% of all fatalities worldwide.<sup>[1]</sup>

Every medical system places a strong emphasis on curing diseases, however in *Ayurveda*, maintaining and sustaining health is the major goal of healthcare strategies rather than curing diseases. *Ayurveda* mentions daily and seasonal routines, dietary guidelines, and social behavior codes to accomplish this goal, along with the implications of *Rasayana*. *Rasayana Chikitsa* is a unique branch of *Ayurveda* that

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nourishes and revitalizes the body in addition to aiding in detoxification. *Rasayana's* ultimate goal is to enhance a healthy person's health.<sup>[2]</sup> According to *Ayurveda*, *Rasayana* enhances *Ojas* by fostering the growth, development, and optimal function of each of the seven *Dhatus* (excellence of tissues). Both the body and the mind are affected by rejuvenation therapy, which also reduces the effects of early aging and increases the body's resistance to illness.<sup>[3]</sup>

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To assess the influence of lifestyle factors on NCD prevalence and management, while examining the feasibility of incorporating *Rasayana* into contemporary healthcare for NCD prevention and management.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The foundational knowledge base of this study draws upon ancient *Āyurvedic* texts such as the *Susruta Samhita*, *Caraka Samhita*, and other renowned classics, along with their accompanying commentaries. These texts, collectively known as the *Brihatrayee* and *Laghutrayee*, provide the conceptual framework essential for this research. Additionally, a comprehensive review of contemporary publications, scientific textbooks, research papers, and seminar proceedings has been undertaken to enrich the understanding of the subject matter and facilitate a meaningful comparison with modern scientific principles.

### Classification of *Rasayana*

- *Rasayana* based on Diet and Lifestyle.
- *Rasayana Chikitsa* as a source of Antioxidants.
- *Rasayana* therapy based on Place.
- *Rasayana* therapy based on Need.

### *Rasayana's* mechanism of action in Non-Communicable Disorders

- Unhealthy diets and behaviors are the primary causes of non-communicable diseases. Adopting a healthy lifestyle is the only viable alternative. So following *Rasayana Chikitsa* is regarded as a useful

preventive approach for non-communicable diseases.

- *Rasayana* therapy works at the level of *Rasa*, *Agni* and *Srotas*, enabling the organism to develop the best qualities of different *Dhatus*. The stimulation of *Agni* and an increase in tissue production fortifies the body's immunological system.
- It is a comprehensive regimen capable of extending life and improving mental abilities rather than a single pharmaceutical treatment.

### *Rasayana* based on Diet and Lifestyle<sup>[4]</sup>

#### 1. *Ahara Rasayana*

*Ahara* is counted as one among *Trayoupasthamba* and as *Mahabheshaja* too. Drug administration alone won't benefit a patient in a diseased state. It is stated in *Vaidyaka Jeevana* to illustrate the significance of *Aahara* that "If a person practices *Pathya Aahara*, they do not need to take medicine; conversely if they do not practice *Pathya Aahara*, they do not need to take medicine either" because there is no value in taking medicine without *Pathya Aahara Sevana*. The importance of food to health cannot be overstated. It includes intake of certain diets having *Rasayana* effect on a regular basis such as intake of *Nitya Sevaniya Dravyas* like milk and ghee, honey, *Amalaki*, *Yava*, etc.

#### 2. *Aushadha Rasayana*

As a part of *Aushadha Prayoga*, the *Acharyas* described several single and compound compositions to uphold health and avert disease.

E.g.: *Chyavanaprasha Avleha*, *Amalaki Rasayana*, *Triphala Rasayana*, *Bhallataka Rasayana*, *Pippali Vardhamana Rasayana*.

#### 3. *Aachara Rasayana*<sup>[5]</sup>

Numerous routines, such as *Dincharya* (daily regimen), *Ritucharya* (seasonal regimen), *Sadvritta* (rules & norms of ideal routine), and *Aachara Rasayana* (code of conduct), are crucial to upholding a person's healthy and happy sociopsychological well-being.

*Aachara Rasayana* includes

- 1. Personal behavior** - Avoidance of alcohol, sexual indulgence, violence, sleep, and wake-up time should be regular, over exhaustion, and should be peaceful and pleasing in speech.
- 2. Satvika behavior** - Includes *Japa*, *Tapa*, the practice of charity, studying scriptures, being free from ego, and *Aastika* behavior.
- 3. Social behavior** - It includes the worship of gods, cows, *Brahmanas*, teachers, preceptors, and old people.

#### **Rasayana Chikitsa as a source of Antioxidants<sup>[6]</sup>**

Antioxidants are essential for slowing down the aging process, preventing disease, and lowering the risk of cancer. *Rasayana* medications having antioxidant capability have advantages such as *Vayasthapana* (delaying aging), *Balakara* (body strengthening), and *Roga-apaharana* (improving immunity). *Ayurveda* listed many *Rasayana* medications, including *Amla*, *Ashwagandha*, and *Guduchi*, which have immediate antioxidant activity. *Haritaki* is also said to be best for *Vayasthapana* and the intake of *Haritaki* with different *Dravyas* according to the *Ritu (Ritu Haritaki)* is one of the best examples of *Rasayana*. It is thought that *Rasayana* medications boost the creation of collagen fibrin, iron absorption, and levels of natural antioxidants, which lowers the danger of oxidative stress and, consequently, the generation of free radicals.

#### **Rasayana therapy based on place**

##### ***Kutipravesika Rasayana<sup>[7]</sup>***

It entails resolute adherence to the diets, medications, and regimens that methodically have *Rasayana* qualities while residing in a cottage that has been particularly built. It is a cutting-edge method that detoxifies the entire body by getting rid of impurities and reactivating the body's entire metabolic process.

Included in the *Kutipravesika Rasayana* are the *Brahma Rasayana*, *Chavanaprasha*, *Amalaki Rasayana*, and *Haritakyadi Yoga* varieties.

##### ***Vatatapika Rasayana<sup>[8]</sup>***

The *Kutipravesika Rasayana* is difficult to perform in the current environment due to the hectic pace of

society. It is an outdoor *Rasayana* therapy that is currently very well-liked and can coexist with daily living. Because it has a reasonably simple administration process without any onerous prerequisites, this kind of *Rasayana* is particularly significant in the current situation. *Rasayana* therapy is more useful for functional and degenerative problems that are chronic or enduring in character. *Sitodaka*, *Amalaki Churna*, *Triphala Rasayana*, *Haritaki Yoga*, Honey, and Ghee are all included in *Vatatapika Rasayana Yoga* in an asymmetrical ratio.

#### **Rasayana therapy based on need**

##### ***Kamya Rasayana<sup>[9]</sup>***

*Kamya Rasayana*, which promotes normal health, is a type of *Rasayana* that is utilized to satisfy a strong need or longing.

- 1. Pranakamya** - *Triphala Rasayana*, *Nagabala Rasayana*, *Lauhadi Rasayana*
- 2. Medhakamya** - *Mandukaparni*, *Sankhapuspi*, *Guduchi*, *Yastimadhu*
- 3. Srikamya** - *Amalakirasayana*

##### ***Naimittika Rasayana***

*Naimittika Rasayana* is the one that aids in the prevention of a particular disease.

Examples are *Pippali Vardhamana Rasayana* in *Pleeha Roga*, *Arjuna* in *Hridroga*, *Lauha* in *Pandu*, *Shilajatu* in *Prameha*, and *Tuvaraka* in *Kushta*.

##### ***Ajasrika Rasayana<sup>[10]</sup>***

It refers to *Rasayan Dravyas* that are frequently used as food, such as milk, ghee, fruits, etc.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

In the modern period, severe climatic change, diet and lifestyle choices, increased mental stress, newly emerging pathogens, and metabolic illnesses have all had an impact on human existence. The largest obstacle in this constantly changing world is keeping up with life's pace, which can only be done with sufficient immunity. NCDs are the biggest challenge to health systems in contemporary culture. The control of risk

factors is crucial to the prevention and treatment of NCDs. The management of NCDs necessitates a variety of approaches from many angles and at various levels, including the individual and national levels.

According to *Ayurveda*, aging is a condition brought on by the natural process of deterioration, therefore rejuvenation should aim to stop premature aging and promote healthy aging. *Ayurveda* uses terms like *Ritucharya*, *Dinacharya*, *Ratricharya*, excellent conduct, moral obligations, soft demeanor, etc. to express rules and regulations that are extremely successful in society and promote both physical and mental health. These basics are known as *Sadvritta* and *Aachara Rasayana*. The *Rasayana* is a method for maintaining homeostasis, decelerating the aging process, and assisting in disease prevention. *Rasayana* can be viewed as a nutritional dynamic for the renewal of the body and mind when it is in good health. The majority of *Rasayanas* work to promote *Agnibala*, which acts as a direct nutrient, and through *Sroto-Prasadan* (the purification of bodily channels), which results in an enhanced nutritional state that further improves the quality of *Dhatus* or body tissues.

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