



Review Article

POSITIVE IMPACT OF AACHAR-RASAYANA ON HEALTH

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ABSTRACT

The first and foremost aim of Ayurveda - "Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam Aaturasya Vikara Prashamanam Cha" is to maintain a healthy state of life and to remain free from the burden of diseases and sufferings so as to accomplish the ultimate goal of human life. To achieve this objective, Ayurveda has advocated certain percepts and rules which can ensure the normal functioning of human body without any hindrance. Ayurveda has suggested schedules of Swasthivritta including Dincharya, Ratricharya, Ritucharya, Rasayana, and Sadvritta as some of the practices and methods that leads to a happy, healthy and long life. In Ayurveda general principles to prevent psychic disturbances, practices preventing psychosomatic disturbances, practices regarding codes of general ethics in diet, behaviour, study, self-control etc are explained as parts of Sadvritta. True efforts made for the observation of these schedules and conduct give rise to the effects of rejuvenation therapy called Aachar Rasayana that promotes longevity without any attack of diseases. Rasayana is one of the comprehensive disciplines of Ayurveda, which comprises a specialized use of herbs, herbo-mineral formulations, food articles and lifestyle along with self-discipline with social etiquette to achieve the optimum state of tissues that there is least effect of etiological factors on body. A careful analysis of qualities of Aachar Rasayana reveals that most of them are related to Mana, Dhi, Dhriti, along with good conduct. It inculcates the discipline related to mind, character, social, religious and personal life, so as to accord with the happiness and good of the individual and the society as a whole.

INTRODUCTION

The term "Aachar" signifies the physical and mental conducts of a man and it has been designated as a Rasayana- a vitalizer agent for the entire span of life. This is a measure having no involvement of drug and if it is sincerely taken into practice, it may replenish and maintain the total life process free from ailments^[1]. Being a holistic science of life rather medicine, Ayurveda describes a type of Rasayana for psychological and spiritual health called as Aachar Rasayana. Ayurvedic expertise Acharya Charaka introduced this unique concept of Aachar Rasayana under Rasayana chapter of Chikitsa sthan^[2].

Acquired human health is the result of environmental conditions and lifestyles. It plays a significant role in alleviating some potential diseases and even in the occurrence of epidemics. This is a review to present the impact of Aachar Rasayana on health. One's happiness depends upon the quality of his/her thoughts.

Most medical epidemiologists agree that an unhealthy lifestyle is a major cause of most modern diseases. No one can deny indeed that fast food, excessive consumption of different drinks, over-eating, lack of exercise, and race of competition in this modern era, have considerable influence on one's well-being. Doctors and counselors at CMC, Vellore, have researched on patients to prove that several physical elements are directly related to emotional roots, which causes resentments, hostility, guilt, anger, and enmity resulting in diseases related to the heart, lungs, ear, nose, throat etc.

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Lifestyle means "the way people live". Health requires promotion of a healthy lifestyle; thus, it could be said that "Lifestyle is a Determinant of Health".

In the current scenario, many health problems like obesity, coronary heart diseases, lung cancer, drug addiction, etc are associated with faulty lifestyles. In general, public lifestyle disorders are due to lack of sanitation, poor nutrition, customs, and elementary cultural patterns. But all lifestyle factors are not harmful; many lifestyles can promote health and prevent diseases as well. A lot of such daily regimens are described in our ancient texts. A few of them which are easy to follow, are as follows^[3]:

- Get-up early in the morning (around 4.30 a.m.) and do your routine cleansing, yoga and exercise, bath with lukewarm/cold water (according to season), prayer and then have a healthy breakfast. With a happy mood start your day and see the result ^[4].
- In the evening again do cleansing of your body and mind, take light food around 7.30 p.m. and go to bed in a happy mood, forget every bad thing of your past, recollect good deeds, be like an innocent child. All these will help to bring good sleep.

Obesity and emaciation, happiness and sorrow, strength and weakness, knowledge and ignorance, life and death all are dependent on adequate or inadequate sleep.

All dimensions of health like mental, social, spiritual, emotional, vocational, and others like environmental, cultural dimension, etc. are fulfilled through adapting *Aachar Rasayana*.

- *Aachar Rasayana* is a special contribution of *Acharya Charak* in the field of Ayurveda. *Acharya Vagbhata* has not exactly mentioned the term *Aachar Rasayana* but explained some topics in "*Rasayana vidhi adhyaya*"^[5]. *Acharya Sushruta* did not mentioned about *Aachar Rasayana*. Follow *Aachar Rasayana*, which are conducts that positively affect body and mind at all levels of physiology. Such conducts are as follows ^[6]:

- Be truthful
- Follow non-violence
- Avoid anger and over-strain
- Speak softly
- Trust no-one without an analysis
- Be peaceful calm and composed
- Do good things like prayer, donation etc.
- Speak pleasant for others and never speak rough
- Keep patience
- Respect elders, teachers, seniors, priests, etc.
- Be kind and forgive all
- Take balanced sleep
- Eat milk and ghee daily
- Avoid egoism
- Have good moral characters

- Keep yourself in a good circle of honest friends, believe in God, religion and have the quality of *Seer/Sant*.

The followers of these above said *Sadvritta* will reap all the benefits of *Rasayana* therapy.

Our ancient regimes are a series of uncountable and beneficial practices and the 21st century is reviving them tremendously. Persons who practice these regimes of *Swasthavritta* realize its benefits and never spend their day without following them. *Charak* has mentioned persons who are physically and mentally pure and who are self-controlled can achieve the good effects of rejuvenation formulations and that have been prescribed in the medical science for the promotion of longevity and prevention of decrepitude and disease ^[7]. Different researches and data are coming day by day based on all such lifestyles. Some collections are as follows:

- Stay calm, it reduces stress and promotes cheerfulness, thus increasing efficiency.
- A research published in a European Journal of Aging, says that economically weak persons get older earlier (as they are not satisfied and unhappy hence not composed too.)
- A research of London- Positive thinkers lives longer, in 70% cases and there is a low risk of different diseases in optimistic persons.
- Release resentment, practice forgiveness.
- A troubled conscience never allows us to live in peace and that makes us stern. But to achieve inner peace the only way is to release ourselves from anger and resentment, learn to let go of hatred, and practice forgiveness.

Forgiveness sets us free; it allows us to start afresh, to do better next time. It allows us to be freed from grievances, penalties, and shakers of post-mistakes. It heals one who forgives and one who is forgiven.

Medical experts tell us that anger accelerates the aging process, causes insomnia and researcher even revealed a relationship between unresolved anger and cardiac arrest. Insomnia is tied to an increased risk of heart attack (Reuters Health) and even brain stroke (due to increasing BP in cases of insomnia).

DISCUSSION

Ayurveda emphasizes more on preventive aspects than curative ones such as *Aachar Rasayana*. *Acharya Charak* has intended to follow control on mind, senses, remain calm and give up the triggers of intellectual blasphemy. For the preventive aspect of behavioural problems, *Aachar Rasayana*, *Sadvritta* are very much essential in today's era. Health is dependent on both physical and mental aspect, these two can inter-relate with each other if not taken care at appropriate time. Therefore, good conduct, diet and deeds are essential to remain healthy.

Achar Rasayana acts as cost effective therapy in reducing the global burden of chronic diseases stemming from stressful life resulting from unhealthy lifestyle. The Code of Conduct if implemented wisely in our lives it can make us healthy, wealthy and a disease-free society. It not only prevents the disease in the first place but also reverses the stage of disease process. Some of the facts published in daily news paper exhibiting the importance of *Achar Rasayana* are given:

- ❖ Sleep is considered as a vital part of life. It protects the cardiovascular system and immunity as well. It is considered the most important sub-pillars of *Trayoupstambh* [8].
- ❖ It is mentioned in the *Kathopanishad*- a person who is always inattentive with the mind (when the mind is defiled or uncontrolled) cannot experience the objects of senses, and his sense organs become uncontrolled like culpable horse of a charioteer [9].
- ❖ *Guru* pours all higher wisdom and disciple in gloomy mind.
- ❖ Purify your mind first then only one can color it with happiness.
- ❖ All humanity's problems stem from man's inability to sit quietly in a room alone, which leads to stress and anxiety, it is suggested to give yourself at least 15 mins which is your self-time. Thus, rejoice in Quietude Enrich your life.
- ❖ Purity of the heart is an essential quality.
- ❖ Certain data reveals that nightshift duty causes sleep disorders and metabolic syndrome like diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, stroke, depression etc.
- ❖ **A magazine Nature Communication, Melbourne**- Sleep disturbs social life as it causes stress and bad mood.
- ❖ Beijing University Research says behavioral therapy can decrease insomnia and thus problems like heart attack and stroke.
- ❖ A survey suggests if a person sleep less than 5 hrs. in a day, there is 52% more risk of a heart attack.
- ❖ Good sleep enhances immunity.
- ❖ Different researchers have established that 7-9 hours sleep is standard sleep, less than 6 hours and more than 9 hours sleep is harmful to health.
- ❖ Besides all these, variation is everywhere. But if the above conducts are observed regularly, one can transform an ordinary '*Jivatma*' to '*Mahatma*' and achieve a deathless mind and ageless body.

You only have to want it. Full yourself with sincere action, pure heart, and clear thinking.

- ❖ If you are kind, it may bring you to a long and healthy life.
- ❖ Study religious and ancient pieces of literature, which will bring to know yourself and thus positiveness may be achieved by removing negative elements inside you. (*Swadhyaya*/self-study)

CONCLUSION

In today's lifestyle of hurry, worry and curry stress is increasing day by day. *Achar Rasayana* and *Sadvritta* are of greater relevance in today's highly mobile society than it was when proposed by our ancient seers. By following *Sadvritta*, mind and senses of person gets controlled gradually and he is capable of avoiding the indulgence of causative factors. For all the deeds of a man the root cause is *Manas* as said "*Manava manushyanaam karanam bandha mokshayoh bandhaya*" [10]. The principles of *Achar Rasayana* have become the need of hour. It goes into the heart of the issue we are trying to overcome in order to be mentally well and healthy. Environmental degradation and the stratification we are adapted to, have intimidated our lives. We have reached the threshold that we can no longer live according to this false view of who we really are.

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