



UNDERSTANDING LASUNA AS RASAYANA – A CRITICAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The Medicinal use of Garlic is not new to the world today. Garlic plays important role in daily diet and also helps in maintaining good health that's why it is widely suggested by physicians. *Lasuna* is a most potent herb used in many conditions mainly used as a *Rasayana* in *Vatavyadhi*, *Amavata* etc. The essential chemical components of Garlic are helpful in daily routine for making physic fit and it acts over Hypercholesterolemia. The wide range of Garlic, health benefits come mainly from its main ingredient, Allicine. This widely researched component of garlic is highly therapeutic and is used in various drugs and pharmaceuticals. Many Acharyas used this potent herb in many formulations like *Lashoonadi vati*, *Lashoona ksheera paka* etc. Rejuvenation therapy enhances the energy and the person's mental and physical capabilities. A number of studies suggest that rejuvenation therapy is effective in improving the skin complexion, texture, in modulating the voice and in increasing the sensing capacity of the sense organs. *Rasayana* is that which provides optimum quality of the bodily tissues due to which it provides both mental and physical health, prevents ageing and disease, thus enables to live for a longer period of youthfulness. In current article importance of Garlic is shown as *Rasyana*, as its indication and properties of Garlic as per Ayurveda suggest its work as *Rasayana*.

KEYWORDS: *Lashuna*, *Allium sativum*, *Rasayana*, Indications, *Utapatti*.

INTRODUCTION

Garlic (*Allium sativum*) is one of the most traditionally used plants as a spice and herb. Garlic has been using for a variety of reasons which most of them has been approved scientifically: anti atherosclerosis, anti microbial, hypolipidemic, anti thrombosis, anti hypertension, anti diabetes and etc¹.

Ayurveda is a science not only deals with diseased, but also with *Swastha* condition. *Rasayana chikitsa* play a big role in maintains the human health. Different methods and types of *Rasayana* mentioned in our classics for maintaining the channel of body. *Lasuna* has more than 45 species which are used as medicine in different parts of the globe. *Lashuna* is used extensively used as medicine all over the world. *Lashuna* or Garlic, as it is more commonly known, is a potent herb helpful in preventing Hypercholesterolemia. In Caraka Samhita² it is explained *Guru paki* and *Vrushya*, and it acts on *Krimi*, *Gulma*, *Vatavikara*. According to Ashtanga Sangraha³ *Lasuna* leaves are alkaline and sweet, while middle part is sweet and smeary; the bulb is sharp, hot, *Katu* in taste and *Vipaka* and its laxative. Sushruta⁴ also tell about its *Vrushya guna* tells its indication in *Jeerna jwara*, *Kushta*, *Arsha*, *Gulma* and it is *Balavardhaka* also. In Caraka Samhita⁵ and Susruta Samhita, *Lashoona* is mainly advocated in *Vataja* disorders, and its *Vrushya* also.⁶

Ayurveda, the discipline of existence, explained the two types of *Bhesaja* viz. *Svasthanasya Urjaskara* and *Athurasya Roganuth*. Among them *Rasayana karma* comes under *Svasthanasya Urjaskara*. (ca.chi1-1/4)

Latin Name: *Allium sativum* Linn.

Family : Liliaceae

English Name / Common Name: Garlic

Sanskrit / Indian Name⁷: *Lashuna*, *Rasona*, *Ugragandha*, *Mahaushadha*, *Yavaneshta*, *Arishta*.

***Lashuna utpatti*⁸**

Rahu stole the nectar obtained by churning the sea and swallowed it, he was immediately beheaded by god Vishnu, thus the drops of nectar fell over earth and became *Lasuna*, since it is born from the body of *Rakshasa*, the *Brahmanas* do not eat it. Since it is born out of nectar, it is a best *Rasayana*.

According to *Kashyap Samhita*⁹

When wife of *Indra* did not achieve conception even for hundred years, then *Indra* made her to eat this nectar. Then *Indra* told to *Saci*, you will become endowed with so many Children. This Nectar will also become *Rasayana* (rejuvenating substance) on Earth. Due to defect of place, will have bad smell and will not be used by *Brahmanas*. On Earth the name of this nectar will become *Lasuna*. In this way this is born.

Properties of *Lashuna*¹⁰

Rasa - *Lashuna* is having panchar⁹asa. Except *Lavana* Rasa.

Different parts have different Rasa like *Patra* is having *Kashaya Rasa*; *Pushpanala* is having *Lavana* and *Tikta pradhana Rasa*.

Vipaka – Madhura

Madhura, Tikta, and Katurasa are *Balavana* gradually. It is *Sneha yukta*, so it's having *Bruhmana* effect also.

Botanical description¹¹: A bulbous herb, 60cm high. Leaves – long, flat, acute, sheathing the lower half of stem. Flowering scape slender, smooth, shining; spathes long, beaked, flowers – small, white, prolonged into leafy points.

Nutritive composition¹²: The drug contains carbohydrates (arabinose, galactose), vitamins (folic acid, niacin, thiamine, Vit. c), amino acids (arginine, asparagic acid, methionine), enzymes (allinase), volatile compounds (allyl alcohol, allylthiol, allylpropyl disulphide), prostaglandins A₂, D₂, F₂, and E₂. Mn 23.5%, Vit B6 17.5%, Vit C 14.7%, tryptophan 6.2%, selenium 7.5%, Ca 5.1%. P 4.5%, Vit b 14%, Cu 4%, protein 3.6%.

Lashuna Bheda

There are two types of *Lashuna* explained according to *Kashyap samhita*.¹³

1. *Girija*
2. *Kshetraja*

Out of these two types *Girija* is said to be *Amrita Samana*. In its absence second one i.e., *Kshetraja* should be taken. (Ka.sam.kal. *Lashunakalpna*)

In *Nighantus*¹⁴ two types of *Lashoona* is mentioned one is *Lasuna (Allium sativum)* and the other one is *Mahakanda / Grnjana (Allium ascalonium Linn)*.

Lashuna sevana Vidhi¹⁵ (A.H.U. 39/116-118)

Person should go under *Shodhana* first, before consuming *Lasuna*. Best *Rutu* for collection is *Vasantha rutu*. Outer cover is removed and kept in *Madiradi dravya's* for overnight. On next day *Kalka* is removed and is squeezed for *Swarasa*, then mixed in 3 parts of *Sura, Madya, Taila* and *Dadimanda* or *Kanji*. It can be also taken with *Taila Ghrita, Majja, Ksheera*, or *Mamsarasa* according to *Roganusara*. *Keval Lashuna swarasa* is taken it does *Kantanadi shuddhi*. *Surarahita Lashuna rasa matra* is 1 *Kudawa* and *Kalka matra* is 1 *Pala*.

If *Pitta prakopa* takes place by using *Lasuna Rasayana* for longer duration again *Mrudu Virecana* should be administered.

In case of complication¹⁶ (AHU 39/120)

During administration of *Lashuna* if *Shoola* and *Vedana* occur then *Swedana* should be done, and if *Vamana* and *Murccha* occur then *Sheetambu Seka* should be performed. After relieving from above mentioned symptoms, remaining *Lashuna* can be taken again.

Lasuna Matra¹⁷ (Ka.sam.kal, *Lashunakalpna/37-38*)

Kashyapa Samhita in *Kalpa sthana* explain three different *Matra*.

- *Avara matra* - 4 *Pala*
- *Madhyama matra* - 6 *Pala*
- *Uttama matra* - 8 *Pala*

Ideal dose in the *Sita kala* (cold season) it is 4 *Pala* or 50 number while in *Hemanta* it is 6 *Pala* or 60 numbers and in *Sisira* it is 8-19 *Pala* or 100 numbers. The duration of the treatment recommended is a minimum of 15 days and maximum of 6 months.

Lashuna rasayana Varija (AHU. 39/127)

Except in *Pitta* and *Rakta Lashuna sevana* should be avoided. Where as in all *Avarnajanya Vataroga* or *Shuddha Vatavikara* there is no other better medicine as *Lashuna Rasayana*.

Indication¹⁸ (Ka.sam. *Lashunakalpna /37-38*)

It is indicated in all *Vataroga*, mainly in *Asthichyuti, Asthibhagna, Asthigatavata*. It shows its efficacy in *Arthavasambandhi roga, Veerya sambandhi roga, Bhrama, Kasa, Kustha, Krimi, Gulma, Kilasa, Kandu, visphota, Vaivarnya, Timira, Mutrakriccha, Ashmri, Jeernajwara, Sosha, Vatarakta*.

The person who consume this become *Drida, Medhavi, Deerghayu* and *Sundara, Santanyukta*, It promotes *Shukravridhi* and *Maithunashakti vrudhi*.

The drug is used as '*Rasayana*' (meaning circulation of "*Rasa*" - the nutrient in Sanskrit). The ancient Indian physician, *Kashyapa* described that, *Lashuna* is born from nectar hence the *Rasayana* property. *Rasayana* properties are, increased life span, promotion of intelligence, improved memory, freedom from diseases, strengthens the teeth, flesh, nails, beard and hair. The drug clears the channels (*Srotas*), produces *Sukra* (sperm and spermatid fluid) produce *Sonita* (ovum and ovarian hormones) and nourishes the breast.

In *Caraka samhita*, the drug has been indicated in skin diseases (*Kustha, Kilasa*), *Vataja* disorder (neurological disorder), and it increases the sperm count and sperm motility (*Vrusya*).

*Vagbhata*¹⁹ considered *Lasuna* as the best among the *Vatahara dravyas*. He emphasized the role of *Lashuna* as a *Rasayana* in the treatment of *vata Avaranas*.

Pathya – Apathya

Pathya: *Shali, Shastika Anna, Dadi, Takra, Yusha Pana, Shukta Pana, Mudaga, Manda Sevana*.

Apathya: *Virudha anna, Vidaha shaka, Abhishyandi anna, Mamsa, Ikshu Marga gamana, Maithuna, Chinta, Shoka, Vyayama*.

Other Updravya's

During *Lashuna sevana kala* if *Sneha* and *Sheeta* *Upachara* is taken then *Jalodara* will manifest. The other *Upadravas* are *Grahani, Kamla, Shoola, Atisara, Admana, Hrillasa, Chardi, Arochaka, Hikka, Visuchika, Swasa*. (Ka.sam. *Lasunakalpa*)

Uses of Lasuna

Vatavyadhi (neurological disorder): Oil cooked in *Lashoona* juice was reportedly cures *vata*²⁰, the drug is best remedy for *Vataja* disorder²¹ additionally the drug is used as a *Rasayana* to cure all types of *Avarana* except *Pitta* and *Rakta*²² *Amavata* (Rheumatoid arthritis): alcoholic preparation of *Lashoona (Rasona sura)* is indicated in Rheumatoid condition²³. Paste of *Lashoona* promotes lactation²⁴. As *Rasayana* - paste of *Lashoona* mixed with ghee and honey taken for a period of one year provides health and longevity²⁵. Disorders of female genital tract the juice of *Lashoona* should be taken in the morning²⁶. *Lashoona* processed with milk indicated in

Gulma, Vatarakta, fever, cardiac disorder, abscesses and oedema.²⁷

Classical Preparations of Rasona

Lashuna yoga, Lashunadya taila, Lashuna ksheerpaka, Rasona kalka, Rasona sarpi, Rasona pinda, Lashunadi vati.

Other facts about Garlic

Garlic promotes the actual well-being of the heart and immune systems with antioxidant properties. Helps to maintain healthy blood circulation. One of garlic's most potent health benefits that includes the ability to enhance the body's immune cell activity. The active component in garlic is in fact, the sulfur compound called Allicin. Allicin is the chemical produced when garlic is chopped and chewed, or bruised. Allicin inhibits the more ability of germs to grow and reproduce. In fact, it's said that the 1 milligram of Allicin has a potency of 15 standard units of penicillin.

The Physiological Effects of Garlic

Garlic lowers the blood pressure. Garlic lowers the LDL Cholesterol. Garlic helps to reduce atherosclerotic build up (plaque) within the arterial system. One recent study shows this effect to be reasonably greater in women than men. Garlic lowers or helps to get regulate blood sugar. Garlic helps to avert blood clots from forming, thus reducing the overall possibility of strokes and thromboses (It may not be good for hemophilia). Garlic helps to prevent the cancer, especially of the digestive system, prevents for certain tumors from growing larger and reduces the size of certain tumors. Garlic helps to remove the heavy metals such as lead and mercury from the body.

Raw Garlic is a potent and natural antibiotic and, while far less strong than modern antibiotics, can still kill some strains of bacteria that have then become immune or resistant to modern antibiotics. Garlic has the anti-fungal and anti-viral properties. Garlic has anti-oxidant properties and is a great source of selenium.

CONCLUSION

Ayurvedic science not only deals with diseased condition. *Swastha* condition can be achieved by taking proper *Shodhana* and *Rasyana*s. These *Rasayana* can be chosen in daily diet of either patient or *Swastha*. Proper methods of application of different *Rasyana* plays important role in eradication of disease and maintaining *Swastha*. Other *Samhitas* also focus on *Rasona* or *Lasuna* but not as detailed explanation done by *Kashyapa Samhita* and *Ashtanga Hridayam*. *Rasayana* help us to lead healthy life. There are many other *Rasayana*'s explained in our classics and *Lasuna* can also adopted as *Rasayana* as regular use in daily diet.

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