

Useful Ayurvedic Drugs in the Prevention of Aging

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Abstract:

The global pursuit of effective strategies for age prevention has led to a growing interest in traditional medicinal systems, with Ayurveda emerging as a prominent contributor to holistic healthcare. This abstract provides an overview of the useful Ayurvedic drugs and practices employed in the prevention of aging. Ayurveda, an ancient Indian system of medicine, views aging as a natural process influenced by various factors, including lifestyle, diet, and environmental influences. The preventive aspect of Ayurveda focuses on maintaining a balance of the three doshas - Vata, Pitta, and Kapha - to promote overall well-being and longevity.

Key Ayurvedic drugs highlighted in this paper include rejuvenating herbs such as *Ashwagandha*, *Shatavari*, *Amalaki*, etc. renowned for their adaptogenic properties and ability to enhance vitality. These herbs are commonly used in formulations aimed at balancing bodily functions, reducing oxidative stress, and promoting cellular rejuvenation. Furthermore, Ayurvedic practices like Panchakarma, a detoxification therapy, are discussed for their role in eliminating accumulated toxins and promoting a harmonious balance within the body. Lifestyle recommendations, emphasizing a balanced routine, suitable dietary habits, and mindful practices, are integral components of Ayurvedic anti-aging strategies. The abstract concludes with the potential integration of Ayurvedic principles into mainstream preventive healthcare, highlighting the need for further research and collaboration between traditional and modern medicine for comprehensive approaches to aging gracefully.

Keywords: *Dirghayu, Jara, Rasayan*

Introduction

Ayurveda, an ancient system of medicine that originated in India, offers a holistic approach to health and wellness. In *Brihatrayi*, *Rasayana* is considered among the *Ashtangas* of Ayurveda and Acharya Vagbhata named it *Jara* which is nowadays called 'Geriatrics' in modern medicine. As we all know aging is a natural phenomenon and we can't stop the process but Ayurveda has mentioned a large number of drugs to prevent and delay the process of aging. Ayurvedic approaches to aging focus on maintaining balance in the body and mind, reducing stress, and supporting the body's natural functions. There is no satisfactory management for the same in modern medicine, so in this context, ayurvedic drugs are the best preventive tools.

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Ayurveda recognizes three doshas - *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* - which represent different combinations of the *Pancha Mahabhuta* i. e. *Prithvi*, *Jala*, *Aap*, *Vayu*, and *Akasha* are in the body. Balancing these *doshas* is essential for maintaining overall health. Aging is considered a natural process of the *Vata dosha*, and imbalances may accelerate aging. Ayurvedic practices aim to balance the *doshas* through diet, lifestyle, and herbal remedies.

Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of a balanced and personalized diet based on *Prakriti* and *Vikriti*. Antioxidant-rich foods, fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and herbal teas are recommended to nourish the body and combat oxidative stress, which is associated with aging.

Benefits of *Rasayana*¹

दीर्घमायुः स्मृतिं मेधामारोग्यं तरुणं वयः।

प्रभावर्णस्वरौदार्यं देहेन्द्रियबलं परम्॥ च चि 1-1-7

Dirghamayu, *Smriti*, *Medha*,...etc are some benefits gained by the consumption of *Rasayana*. But some drugs are capable of doing these activities separately e.g. *Shankhapushpi*² for *Medha*, *Yasthimadhu*² for *Swara* (voice).

- ***Dirghamayu***

The drugs essential for increasing the longevity of life of different varieties, such as:

Ayushya - *Amalaki*^{3,4}, *Mandukparni*², *Haritaki*⁵.

Vayahsthapana - *Amruta*⁶, *Sthira Punarnava*

Jivaniya - *Jivaka*, *Mudgaparni*, *Mashparni*, *Yasthimadhu*².

- ***Smriti* (memory tonics)**

Drugs that are used as memory (power of recollection) boosters have *Smritiprada* properties & on regular intake, they prevent memory loss. These are *Jyotishmati*⁷, *Mandukparni*²,

¹ Pandit Kashinath pandey, Dr.Gorakhnath Churvedi, Charak Samhita Savimarsh Vidhyotani Hindi commentary Ch.Chi.1/7pg.no. 5, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

² Pandit Kashinath pandey, Dr.Gorakhnath Churvedi, Charak Samhita Savimarsh Vidhyotani Hindi commentary Ch.Chi.1-3/30-31, pg.no. 39, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

³ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Haritkyadi varga shlok No. 39, pg.no.10, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

⁴ Pandit Kashinath pandey, Dr.Gorakhnath Churvedi, Charak Samhita Savimarsh Vidhyotani Hindi commentary Ch.Su.25/40 pg.no. 66, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi

⁵ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Haritkyadi varga shlok No. 19, pg.no.5, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

⁶ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Guduchyadi varga shlok No. 8, pg.no.257, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

⁷ Dr. J.L.N. Sastry Dravyaguna Vijnana Dhanwantri Nighantu pg.no.130, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

Brahmi^{2,1}, and *Aparajita*.²

- **Medha**

Drugs useful for *Medha* (grasping power) are called *Medhya* which maintains the grasping power of an individual. These are *Shankhapushpi*², *Dadima*^{3,4}, *Pippali*⁵, *Shatavari*⁶, *Yava*⁷, and *Haritaki*.

- **Prabha, Varna Audarya**

Drugs increasing the complexion of skin comes under *Varnya* property. These drugs prevent early wrinkles on the face, such as *Kamal*, *Taruni*⁸, *Darvi*⁹, *Ashok*, *Manjishta*¹⁰, and *Sariva*¹¹.

- **Swara Audarya**

Drugs useful for maintaining a normal pitch of voice are called *Swarya* drugs. Such as *Draksha*¹², *Vacha*¹³, *Vasa*¹⁴, and *Kakmachi*¹⁵.

- **Deha Bala**

Regular use of *Balya* drugs improves mental & physical fitness as well as immunity

¹ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Guduchyadi varga shlok No. 280, pg.no.446, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

² Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Guduchyadi varga shlok No. 112, pg.no.327, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

³ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Amradiphala varga shlok No. 103, pg.no.570, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

⁴ Dr. J.L.N. Sastry Dravyaguna Vijnana Kaiyadev Nighantu pg.no.235, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

⁵ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Haritkyadi varga shlok No. 54, pg.no.15, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

⁶ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Guduchyadi varga shlok No. 187, pg.no.378, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

⁷ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Dhanya varga shlok No. 28, pg.no.628, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

⁸ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Pushpa varga shlok No. 23, pg.no.474, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

⁹ Dr. J.L.N. Sastry Dravyaguna Vijnana Shodal Nighantu pg.no.56, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

¹⁰ L.N. Sastry Dravyaguna Vijnana Shoda Nighantu pg.no.280, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

¹¹ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Guduchyadi varga shlok No. 238, pg.no.411, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi

¹² Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Amradiphala varga shlok No. 110, pg.no.573, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

¹³ Dr. J.L.N. Sastry Dravyaguna Vijnana Kaiyadev Nighantu pg.no. 550, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi

¹⁴ Dr.J.L.N. Sastry Dravyaguna Vijnana Kaiyadev Nighantu pg.no.297, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi

¹⁵ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Guduchyadi varga shlok No. 246-247, pg.no.423, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

development of the body. These are *Bala*, *Ashwagandha*¹, *Kapikachhu*, *Kharjur*, *Godhuma*, *Masha*, *Vidari*, *Kushmanda*², *Gokshura*, and *Shatavari*.

- **Indriyabala**

The drugs are beneficial for specific *Indriyas* (senses), such as:

For eyes - *Netrya/Chakshushya...Kataka*³, *Vibhitaka*, *Yashtimadhu*², *Haritaki*⁴.

For skin- *Tvachya...Bakuchi*, *Beejaka*, *Bhringraja*

This means *Dirghayu*, *Smriti*, *Medha*, *Indriyabala*, etc. are ultimate benefits gained by *Rasayan Sevana* but drugs alone are capable of doing these properties separately.

Ageing-related signs/symptoms& their prevention:

In the gradual process of ageing lot of signs & symptoms are observed which are given below with their preventable drugs.

1. *Palitya/Khalitya*

This is the first & primary sign of aging. Regular use of *Bhringaraja*⁴, *Sahachara*, *Krishna Tila*, *Japa*, *Nilini*, *Shleshmataka*, *Vibhitaka*, and *Yashtimadhu*² prevents earl hair fall and whitening of hairs.

2. *Drishtimandya*

Weak eyesight is also a typical sign of the gradual process of aging. Regular consumption of *Mudga*, *Amalaki*³, *Yashtimadhu*², *Lodhra*, and *Triphala Churna*⁵ with honey & ghee improves eyesight & protects against early cataract formation.

3. *Dantavikriti*

Regular use of *Jati*, *Khadira*, *Krishna Tila*⁶, and *Bhringaraja* in the form of gargles strengthens gums & teeth and also, prevents dental caries & loosening of teeth.

4. *Asthivikriti (Osteological problems)*

Osteological problems are very common in the elderly. To overcome this problem one should regularly use *Asthisamharaka*, *Kharjura*, and *Godhuma*.

5. *Mutravikriti (Urinary problems)*

Regular use of *Panasbeeja*, *Draksha*, *Gokshura*, *Trapusha*, *Varuna*, *Gambhariphal*, and

¹ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Guduchyadi varga shlok No. 190, pg.no.379, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

² Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Shak varga shlok No. 54-55, pg.no.666, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

³ Dr. J.L.N. Sastry Dravyaguna Vijnana Dhanwantri Nighantu pg.no.849, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi

⁴ Dr.J.L.N. Sastry Dravyaguna Vijnana Raj Nighantu pg.no.297, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

⁵ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Haritkyadi varga shlok No. 42-43, pg.no.12, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

⁶ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Dhanya varga shlok No. 63-65, pg.no.638-639, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

Dugdhika promotes physiological formation & excretion of urine without any disturbance.

6. *Malavarodha* (Constipation)

Routine intake of Grapes, *Amalaki*³, *Haritaki*⁴, and *Aragvadh* allows proper bowel movements & prevents constipation.

7. *Shwasa, Kasa* (Respiratory problems)

Regular intake of *Ela*, *Draksha*, *Brihati*, and *Vasa* provides immunity to the respiratory tract & prevents asthma-like problems.

8. *Agnimandya* (Loss of appetite)

The use of *Deepana*, and *Pachana* drugs such as *Mishreya*, *Aadraka*, *Chitraka*, *Maricha*, and *Rasona* improves appetite and cures indigestion.

9. Mental Health

Prasannatmendriyamanah is also essential for *Swasthya* (complete health), so mental well-being is also an important part of our health. Due to aging, a mental disturbance occurs so regular use of *Kushmanda*¹⁹, *Yava*, *Shankhpushpi*², *Tagara*, and *Jatamansi* gives proper nourishment & balances the mental status of the body.

Mode of Action:

➤ *Rasayana* Therapy:

Rasayana herbs are considered rejuvenating and are often recommended for their anti-aging properties. Examples include *Amalaki*, *Triphala*, *Haridra*, *Shunthi*, *Guggulu*, *Ashwagandha*, and *Shatavari*.

- *Ashwagandha*: *Ashwagandha* is an adaptogenic herb known for its ability to help the body adapt to stress. Chronic stress is often linked to accelerated aging, and *ashwagandha* may help mitigate the effects of stress on the body.
- *Triphala*: *Triphala* is a combination of three fruits: *Amalaki*, *Bibhitaki*, and *Haritaki*. It is known for its detoxifying properties and is believed to support digestive health, which is crucial for overall well-being.
- *Haridra*: Curcumin, the active compound in turmeric, has potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties. Inflammation and oxidative stress are implicated in the aging process, and turmeric may help combat these factors.
- *Shunthi*¹: *Shunthi* is another herb with anti-inflammatory properties. It may help support joint health and reduce inflammation, contributing to a sense of well-being.
- *Guggulu*: *Guggulu* is known for its potential to support healthy cholesterol levels. Maintaining cardiovascular health is considered important in Ayurveda for promoting overall vitality.

¹ Padma Shri prof.Krishna Chandra chunekar Bhav Prakash Ni. Haritkyadi varga shlok No. 44-48, pg.no.12, Chaukhambha publication, Varanasi.

- *Tila Taila*: Ayurveda often recommends the use of *Tila Taila* for *Abhyanga*. Massaging the body with warm *Tila Taila* is believed to nourish the skin, promote relaxation, and support overall well-being.

Conclusion: Ayurveda, the ancient system of medicine from India, offers a holistic approach to health and wellness, with an emphasis on balance and harmony in the body and mind. While Ayurveda does not promise to prevent aging, it provides principles and herbs that are believed to support healthy aging. The use of Ayurvedic drugs in the prevention of aging is rooted in the concept of *Rasayana* therapy, which involves the use of rejuvenating herbs to promote overall well-being.

