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## Role of Yashtimadhu as Rasayana

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### Abstract

The literal translation of Ayurveda is "Science of life." Ayurveda encompasses all actions that prolong and improve life quality. Consequently, geriatrics and gerontology were fully developed fields of study inside the Indian traditional medical system about 5000 years ago, when experts and academics researched the subject. According to Ayurveda, the aging process and the old age stage are "Swabhavika," or "Natural." Senescence that occurs at the appropriate period in history—the Kalaja Jara—is Nishpratikarya, or unavoidable. Situations such as thirst, hunger, old age, senescence, sleep, and death, among others Acharya Charaka mentions Yashtimadhu (*Glycyrrhiza glabra* Linn.) as one of them for these purposes.

Keywords: medhya, rasayana, jara, yashtimadhu

### Introduction

Intelligence may be narrowly defined as the capacity to acquire knowledge and understanding, and used in different novel situations. It is this ability, or capacity, which enables the individual to deal with real situations and profit intellectually from sensory experience. Although it is difficult to define intelligence, indeed it appears to have no formal definition, there is, nevertheless, at least one particularly apposite definition: The capacity to learn and understand <sup>[1]</sup>. In the Ayurvedic classics, the word "Buddhi" is used in many contexts. On studying its literally meaning, (Nirukti and Vyutpatti) it can be understood as the psychological faculty for reasoning and logic. However, after critical analysis of classics, it is evident that at many places it has been used as an advance stage or as a process leading to a true knowledge. Buddhi is described as Jnana (knowledge) <sup>[2]</sup>. The word "Medha" has been used mainly in two ways viz. Grahana Shakti (grasping power) and Dharana Shakti (retention power) <sup>[3]</sup>. Besides this, Buddhi, Smriti, Dhi, etc., words have been used in a similar sense at many places. Concept of improving cognitive functions like intelligence and memory is relatively very new to current modern system of medicine. The first drug discovered to enhance cognitive functions known as "Nootropics" were in 1972 <sup>[4]</sup>. Knowledge of natural herbal drugs possessing cognitive enhancing activity dates back to thousands of century back. "Medhya Rasayana" is a specific group of four, time-tested classical preparations for promotion of mental health and well-being <sup>[5]</sup>.

### Drug Review

Botanical name: *Glycyrrhiza glabra*

Family: Leguminosae

Gana: Kanthya, Jivaniya, Sandhaniya, Varnya, Kandughna, Mutra Virajaniya, Sonitasthapana, Chardinigrahana, Snehopaga, Vamanopaga, Asthapanopaga (Charaka).

Kakolyadi, Sarivadi, Anjanadi (Sushruta).

Classical names: Madhuka, Yashtimadhu, Madhulika, Yasthahya, Madhu, Klitaka, Klitanika,

Yasthi Hindi names: Jethimadh, Mulhatti, Muletu, Mithilakdi.

Sanskrit names: Jalayasti, Klitaka, Madhuka, Madhusrava, Madhuyashti, Yashti, Yashtyawa, Yastika, Yashtimadhuka,

Yashtimadhu, Yashtikam, Madhukam, Madhuyashtika, Lakshmana. Synonyms: Yasti, Madhu, Yastimadhuk, Kalitak, Mulathi.

Part Used: Root Rasapanchaka

Rasa-Madhura

Guna-Guru, Snigdha

Virya - Sheeta

Vipaka Madhura

Prabhava-Vata - Pitta Shamaka

Actions and Therapeutic Uses of Madhuka mixed with honey or Pippali mixed with fine sugar. Thirst: Thirsted caused by wasting is quenched with Ghrita extracted from milk meat-soup or decoction of Madhuka. It is considered as Chakshushya, Bala, Varnakrita, Snigdha, Shukrala and Keshya. It is used in Rakta dushti, Vrana, Sotha, Visha, Chardi, Trishna, Glani and Kashaya. It is used as a Vamanopaga Dravya in Vamana Karma and above all it has been considered Rasayana by Acharya Charaka. Piles: After application of Kshara, Ghrita mixed with Yashtimadhu should be applied haemorrhoids. Local Application: In case of pain in head, sides and shoulders the parts should be sprinkled with milk and decoction of Madhuka. Hoarseness of voice: Payasa (rice-milk) prepared with Yashtimadhu and mixed with Ghrita should be taken. On Heart disease: Paste of Yashtimadhu and Katuka should be taken with sugar water. Enema of oil cooked with Madhuka and mixed with honey should be given. Hiccough: Pressed snuff should be used. Erysipelas: The affected part should be sprinkled with Ghritascum, cold milk and decoction of Madhuka or Panchavalka. Anaemia: One should take decoction of Madhuka or powder of the same with honey.

Vatarakta: Satapakamadhuka taila. (Ch.Chi.29.117- 18) In Vatarakta predominant in Vata, goat milk mixed with half oil and Madhuka 10gm should be given. Rasayana nourishes each and every cell of the body and hence contributes to the integrity and replenishment of Saptadhatus. Also it helps in the promotion of memory and intelligence, provide immunity against disease and maintain optimum strength of body and mind. So Rasayana alleviates exertion, lassitude, exhaust and debility. Generally most of the Rasayana are micro-molecular nutrients having Balya, Medhya, Agnivardhaka, Ojovardhaka and Vayasthapana properties and had been also proven the pharmacological properties like immunomodulator, adaptogenic, anti-stress, anti-anxiety, anti-depressant, anti-oxidant and nutrient tonic. It is considered as Chakshushya, Bala, Varnakrita, Snigdha, Shukrala and Keshya. It is used in Rakta dushti, Vrana, Sotha, Visha, Chardi, Trishna, Glani and kshaya. It is used as a Vamanopaga Dravya in Vamana Karma and above all it has been considered Rasayana by Acharya Charaka

## Discussion

### Concept of Rasayana in Old Age

Ayurveda defined Rasayana as Vayasthapanama i.e. arrest ageing. Ayushkaram i.e. increase life span, Medai.e. increase intelligence and 'Bala' i.e. increases strength [6]. Rasayana Chikitsa is specialized and important section of Ayurveda which deals with the preservation and promotion of health by revitalizing the metabolism and enhancing immunity. According to Ayurveda human body consists of Saptadhatus i.e. seven dhatus. The dhatus get degenerated due to the body's prolonged structural changes. During old age the capacity of dhatu cannot be enhanced but it can be protected and

rejuvenated by the use of Rasayana therapy. The branch of Jara Chikitsa is also called as Rasayana Tantra in Ayurveda. Rasayana is defined as the way to build up all the tissues and make them work most efficiently. The term Rasayana actually means as the action of any drug that enhances the longevity of life, memory, cognitive functions of brain, rejuvenates the body, its aura, strength, voice, sensory functions, etc. Overall, the drugs those replenish and revitalize all the energy production and consumption systems of cells in different ways are said to be having Rasayana property.

### Concept of Agni in Old age

Agni is one of the ten factors which are required to be examined before initiating the treatment of a patient. Its importance is very much because all the internal disease is caused by vitiation of this Agni. It plays a prime role in maintenance of health and causation of disease as well as decay. In old age, the food only nourishes for maintenance of life i.e. to keep the tissues alive and working and not for anabolism, because of complete maturity of all the tissues in this stage of life i.e. Paripakwa sharira. Also in old age people Vatadosha is physiologically in a dominant stage and Rasadhi dhatus in derived condition. Because of the dominance of vatadosha it affects the agni which convert in the form of vishamata known as vishwagni. This vishwagni fluctuating the agni in two forms hypo functional form i.e. mandagni which work on the food in improper manner formed Ama. This Amadosha is considered in Ayurveda to be responsible to produce all types of the internal disease. Ama later forms dushtirasa which blocks the srotasa known as srotoavrodha. In other second stage hyper functional of agni i.e. tiksnagni which causes dhatuxosha balakshayn. In this mechanism mainly jatharagni, bhootagni and dhatawagni is disturbed. Yashtimadhu rasayana accounts Madhura rasa, Snigdha guna, Guru guna & Sheeta virya. Due to its madhura rasa & snigdha, guru guna it pacifies vatadosha, and also it decreases other qualities of vatadosha like laghu and ruksha guna. Due to this nature and properties, this leads to Vishmagagninasha. Owing sheeta virya it pacifies vitiated Pittadosha and normalizes pittadosha that leads to Mandagninasha. Also due to sheeta virya, the gunas of pitta like ushna and teekshna are decreases and leads to Teekshnagninasha. Overall Yashtimadhu rasayana acts on vishmagagni, mandagni, teekshnagni by acting on vitiated vata and pitta dosha and their associated properties which is usually aggravated in Old age people due to Swabhavika nature. Hence by acting vishmagagni, mandagni, tikshnagni normalizes agni that leads to samagni. Thus by the samagni all the saptadhatus gets nourished. Glycyrrhizin, a triterpenoid compound, accounts for the sweet taste of licorice root. Madhura rasa specifically acts on all the seven dhatus for nutrition point of view with enhancing the activity of sense organ including mana and provide immunity against disease. These bioactive constituents contribute to the Yashtimadhu roots anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant activity has various pharmacological activities like anti-bacterial activity, anti-thrombotic effect, anti-convulsant effects, cerebro-protective effect, anti-dyslipidaemic activity, memory enhancing activity, antioxidant potential activity, hair growth promoting activity etc. According to Bhavaprakasha Nighantu the therapeutic uses of Yashtimadhu are described in terms of good for vision, provides strength and fine complexion with luster to body, and improves the hoarseness of voice,

beneficial in diseases like Gulma, wound, Krimiroga, Udararoga, Vomiting, Poisoning etc. Acharya Charaka in Churaka Samhita Chikitsasthana has mentioned specifically Yashtimadhu as Medhya rasayana.

Herbals, Journal of Research in Ayurveda and Siddha; 2007:75-86.

### **Probable mode of action of Rasayana- Yashtimadhu Rasayana**

Acharya Dalhana has described that Rasayana act through Rasa, Guna, Virya, Vipaka and Prabhava on the Saptadhatu and stabilizes the strength of the individual. The word Rasayana (Rasa+Ayana) essentially refers to acquisition, movement or circulation of nutrition needed to provide nourishment to the body tissues and tissue perfusion. Such a phenomenon is essential for the promotion of the qualities of Dhatus. The improved nutritional status and the better qualities of Dhatus lead to a series of secondary attributes of Rasayana such as longevity, immunity against diseases, improved mental and intellectual competence etc. By virtue of its Madhura Rasa it promotes the formation of Ojas and it also pleases the sense organs (including Manas), it pacifies Pitta-Vata, it potentiates Jala-Prithvi Mahabhuta, it nourishes all the Dhatus (Rasa, Rakta, Mansa, Meda etc.). As depicted by Acharya Sushruta that Ojas helps in both external and internal sense organs in performing their natural functions normally, so the formulation ultimately promotes the mental functioning. Drugs having Madhura Rasa are considered best in providing Snigdhatva and Sheetalta which are most required for Manas to work better.

### **Conclusion**

In order to preserve youthfulness, Jara Ayurveda describes rasayana, which balances Agni, purifies Srotas, and supplies nourishment through a Rasa. Yashtimadhu Rasayana is a key component in preserving the states of agni, srotasa, and rasa through appropriate metabolism and digestion, improved tissue-level microcirculation, and provision of nourishment in Jara awastha. Yashtimadhu Rasayana has demonstrated noteworthy outcomes with respect to symptoms such as emotional state, sense of wellbeing, adjustment in life, sleeping pattern, fear, self-confidence, attitude and thinking, memory, willpower, tolerance, satisfaction, judgment, and happiness, all of which are critical in promoting mental health. Based on observation, the following conclusion can be made.

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