

“INTEGRATIVE UNDERSTANDING OF GERIATRICS THROUGH AYURVEDA: A REVIEW”**Dr. Ashwini Dravyekar ¹, Dr. J. D. Gulhane ², Dr. Darshan Mahulkar ³**

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ABSTRACT:

The main aim of *Ayurveda* is to cure the disease and to prevent the disease condition. Ageing occurs when *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Agni* starts to demolish. For preventing ageing *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Agni* should be maintained. Therapies like *Rasayana* also helps in preventing ageing. *Panchakarma* is an important tool for Geriatric care. *Yoga* and dietary management factors along with medicine helps in Geriatric care.

KEY WORDS:- Dosha, Dhatu, Agni, Panchakarma, Yoga.

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INTRODUCTION

Ageing is a complex and inevitable process. This process starts before the birth and continues towards the death. By 2050, one fifth of world will be older than 65 years^[1]. *Rasayana* is the branch of *Ayurveda* which is very helpful in the process of delaying ageing. *Rasayana* treatment helps in *Jaravyadhinashanam*^[2] *Rasayana* (rejuvenation) delays *Vruidhavastha* (ageing) and reduces geriatric degeneration. *Vruidhavastha* starts from age 60-70 year^[3] In each decade one physiological factor declines. So, for delaying ageing process and promotion of health, *Panchakarma* is an important treatment. In geriatric care preventing disease, promoting health and providing strength and immunity is important.

Many diseases such as Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson disease, Depression, Diabetes Mellitus, Hypertension, Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia, Macular degeneration are increasing in old age. According to government of India statistics cardiovascular disorders account for 1/3rd of elderly mortality, Respiratory disorders account for 10% mortality, while infections including TB account for another 10%, neoplasm account for 6%, accident poisoning violence constitute less than 4% of elderly mortality with more or less similar rates for nutritional metabolic gastrointestinal genitourinary^[4]

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1. To elaborate the understanding concepts of geriatrics through *Ayurveda* principles.
2. To improve the quality of life through ayurveda in geriatric care.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

For understanding the concept of *Jara* (*Geriatrics*) searched the literatures in *Samhitas* like *Bruhatrayi's*, *laghutrayi's*, text books, research articles, internet available information etc. All the relevant literature including classical text with commentaries explored for the concept of *Jarajanya Vikaras*, *Rasayana*, *Vajikarana*, *Ojakshaya*, *Dhatukshaya* etc. to establish the pathogenesis and electronic databases including Google Scholar, Pub Med, different government health agencies, websites and google search were also searched for the relevant data by keywords like; *Jarajanya*, *Dhatukshaya*, *Ayurveda*, *Ojas*, *Ojakshya*, *Vridhhavastha*, traditional medicine etc.

CONCEPTUAL STUDY

Common illnesses in geriatric stage (*Vruddhavastha*)

Following are the common physiological disorders in old age.

- 1) Hypertension, myocardial infraction.
- 2) Osteoporosis, spasm, Asthma, Bronchitis.
- 3) Dyspepsia, Nocturia, Prostate enlargement, Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid arthritis, Gout, Senile Cataract, loss of hearing, Insomnia, Hair loss, Baldness, cancer.
- 4) Dementia is the common problem in old age people, depression is also common problem.
- 5) Due to nuclear families, that is changing phenomenon in India elderly people are suffering from loneliness and that's why they suffer from depression.
- 6) For active life style there should be active involvement of elderly person in religious activities. Religious and spiritual person tends to recover from disease quickly^[5]

Physiological changes of ageing according to Ayurveda

- 1) According to *Acharya Sushruta* old age is above 70 yrs.^[6]
- 2) According to *Acharya Charaka* old age is above 60 yrs.^[7]
- 3) *Vata* is predominant *dosha* in old age^[8]
- 4) *Sharangdhara* explains loss of different biological factors during different decades^[9]

Age related loss of biological factors

0-10	Loss of childhood
11-20	Loss of growth
21-30	Loss of complexion
31-40	Loss of intellect
41-50	Loss of skin texture
51-60	Loss of vision
61-70	Loss of virility
71-80	Loss of strength
81-90	Loss of cognitive power
91-100	Loss of locomotive ability

PREVENTIVE AND CURATIVE MEASURES FOR GERIATRIC

- 1) **Sadvrutta Acharana** as mentioned in *Charaka Samhita* should be adopted in younger age to avoid the diseases in geriatric age. According to *Acharya Charaka* he who treats the disease before its commencement or at early-stage experience long lasting happiness. So geriatric diseases are included in preventive disease category.
- 2) **Diet and Nutrition** -Diet should be taken by following *Ahar vidhi vidhan* and *Ashtavidha ahara vidhi vishesh ayatana*. Spicy and heavy food should be avoided.
- 3) **Exercise** -This helps to control weight and relive stress improves blood circulation. *Yoga* is an exercise if attended regularly many problems in geriatric age can be prevented.^[10]
- 4) Avoiding smoking and alcohol. These are related to liver diseases, lung diseases and cardiac diseases. So, they should be avoided.
- 5) **Rasayana** -It includes rejuvenation from *Adya dhatu* i.e., *Rasa dhatu* to further *Dhatus*. This therapy also increase immunity provide strength to the body.
- 6) **Panchakarma** - As in geriatric age more people are suffering from Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid arthritis and many other diseases. Therapies like *Janu Basti*, *Kati Basti*, *Snehan Swedana treatment* are helpful in these conditions. Therapies like *Shirodhara*, *Nasya* helpful for depression and insomnia problem which geriatric population is facing.
- 7) **Medicines** -Various immunity booster drugs are available in ayurveda like *Guduchi*, *Guggulu*, *Amalaki*, *Triphala Rasayana*, *Chyavanprasha* Such medicine should be taken for geriatric care.

Some facts which are very important in ageing phenomenon-

- 1) **Swabhavoparamavada**- *Charaka* has mentioned theory of natural destruction. Process of deterioration occurs naturally. *Swabhava* can be considered as responsible for causation of *Jara*. (*Cha.sutrasthana* 16/27-28)
- 2) **Environmental and other factors**- *Daiva* (work of previous life) and *Purusakara* (work of present life) life span of a person depends on these two factors. (*cha.vi.3/32-35*)

- 3) **Kala-Parinam** is the sequence of changes which takes place under the influence of kala. (cha.sha.3/8)
- 4) **Sharir Vruddhikara Bhava Abhava-** Charaka has given some factors which are promotive of growth. These are *Kala Swabhavsamsiddhi, Aharsaushthava, Aharvidhividhanam, Avighata*. The lack of above factors decreases the growth of person.
- 5) **Role of Tridosha in Ageing** – In old age *Vata Dosha* is more prominent.
- 6) **Role of Agni in ageing** – At old age due to the *Vata Dosha Prakopa Vishamagni* is more prominent.
- 7) **Role of Dhatus in ageing** -As ageing occurs there is decline in *Dhatus*.

Benefits of ayurvedic medicine for geriatric care

- 1) *Ayurvedic* medicine boots *Agni* and helps in regulating metabolic activity in geriatric person.
- 2) *Rasayana* therapy in Ayurveda helps in rejuvenation. It helps in rejuvenation of *Dhatus*. Immunity decreases as ageing proceed So geriatric people commonly suffers from infection, Ayurveda drugs increase immunity helps in preventing disease condition.

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DISCUSSION

Although ageing is a natural occurrence, everyone struggles with the fact that they don't want to get old. Every situation (regardless of how temporary or prolonged) that causes a disruption in homeostasis is referred to as a sickness in Ayurveda^[11,12,13] Since it falls within the category of natural disorders, *Vridhavashta* has also been classified as a sickness. These innate illnesses are brought on by nature and rely on kala (time). Examples of natural diseases are thirst, hunger, old age, mortality, and similar conditions^[14,15]. No one can escape these diseases, but they can be changed. A person can avoid ageing and death if they can successfully overcome the constraints of time via the practise of yoga and samadhi.

Therefore, we must only take into account measures that a typical person and a doctor can follow. In addition, these measures must also be feasible. With these steps, premature ageing

can be avoided, the ageing process can be slowed down, this phase can be managed with palliative care, and *Vriddhavastha* can also be treated with traditional Ayurvedic techniques.

Thus, it is evident that the old Ayurvedic scriptures provide a thorough explanation of ageing, as well as its prevention and cure. The initial step on the road to knowledge acquisition is aptopadesha (textual knowledge). So let us advance in the light of Aptopadesha and extend our assistance to humanity.

CONCLUSION

Geriatric is an unavoidable phase in every person's life so proper geriatric care is important for increasing longevity and disease-free old age. Ageing is a normal process because the body is constantly decomposing, as evidenced by the word's etymology, *Shiryate Iti Shariram*. If the Ayurvedic principles are carefully followed, premature ageing can be completely avoided. Correct food planning can slow down the ageing process because the pathophysiology of ageing is mostly dependent on diet. Palliative care can be used to manage *Vriddhavastha*. Even better, according to the *Swabhavavyadhipratishedhiya* chapter of *Sushruta Chikitsasthan*, it is feasible to treat *Vriddhavastha* using *Rasayana* principles. *Panchakarma* and *Rasayana* are the two important treatment that should be taken in old age (for disease condition) as well as younger age (for preventing disease condition). Along with proper diet and yoga also helpful. Although simply a conceptual investigation, the data can be applied to a variety of experimental and clinical trials. So, it is concluded that Ayurvedic medicine, therapies, diet, *yoga* helps in geriatric care.

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