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Review

## Improving Quality Of Life In Geriatrics Through Ayurveda



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	<b>Abstract</b>
Published on: 25 Oct 2024	<p>Ayurved has explained about longevity and vitality in terms of Jarachikitsa and Rasayana. Geriatrics is emerged as a main challenging specially because of over growing population of aged people all over the world including India. Jara is caused by onset of deterioration of cell structure in the body. Shushrut defines Rasayana as a measure which prolonged with provides positive health, improve mental state as well as immunity against disease. To improve the average life span of individuals and measures are like whole some diet in proper quantity, dincharya, rutucharya, panchkarma, sadvrittapanan, practice of yoga, rasayan etc being planned accordingly.</p>
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 <p><a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.</a></p>	<p><b>Keywords:</b> Geriatrics, jarachikitsa, rasayana, Geriatrics care</p>

## INTRODUCTION

Ageing is a process of physical, psychological and social change in multi-dimensional aspects. The world's elderly population is increasing. By 2050, one-fifth of the world will be older than 65 years. In India, they will be about 113 million elderly by 2016. Ayurveda has the potential for disease prevention by health promotion and noncommunicable disease prevention. The focused branch Rasayana (rejuvenation) or Jarachikitsa promote healthy longevity. Jarachikitsa and Rasayana methodologically delay vrudhastha (ageing) and reduce geriatric degeneration. Vrudhastha begins at 60-70 years.

### **Problems in vrudhavashta**

Advancement of age usually creates numerous problems in the individual. Geriatric problems may be mainly divided into three categories:

#### **Physical Problems**

- Cardiovascular - hypertension, MI, CCF
- Respiratory - asthma and bronchitis
- Musculoskeletal - osteoporosis, spasm, drooping shoulder
- Gastro-intestinal - dyspepsia and flatulence
- Genito-urinary - nocturia, prostate enlargement
- Locomotor system - osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, gout
- Ophthalmic - senile cataract and glaucoma are very common in old people
- Hearing - loss of hearing and hard hearing are the major hearing problems of old age.
- Nervous - insomnia is commonly found old age problems
- Problems of hair - hair loss and baldness
- Cancer - Cancer incidence and severity increases with age
- Menopausal - in addition to all these, ladies experience menopausal health disorders

#### **Psychological Problems**

Dementia is often noticed in old people.

Depression is the most harmful and widely noticed psychological complaint of the senior citizens.

#### **Emotional Problems**

Marital status, financial status, work history, education, responsibilities, living atmosphere, Loss of key support like death of spouse/siblings, retirement, relocation and financial deterioration.

Nuclear family system and urban migration of the people, Absence of family support. In addition, physical abuse, psychological abuse, neglect, financial abuse are common on elderly patients

#### **Preventive and curative measures for geriatrics**

Acharya Charak says “He, who treats the disease before its commencement or at an early stage, experiences long-lasting happiness”. Geriatric problems are best confronted by preventive measures than curative ones. Therefore geriatrics has to be treated much before the commencement of old age. The ideal time for treating the old age problems is youth. Discipline in young age prevents geriatric problems. By adopting a healthier lifestyle, the risk of a whole range of diseases can be reduced. These factors are diet and nutrition, exercise, weight, smoking and alcohol, social activities.

#### **Diet And Nutrition**

With increasing age, people become more prone to malnutrition for many reasons including -Arochaka (Anorexia), Smritinash (Dementia), Manoavasada (Depression), Stroke, Kampavata (Parkinson disease) and other neurological disorders, delayed gastric emptying. The diet should be regulated taking into account the habitat, season, age, and according to one’s digestive capacity

Following points may be considered while planning/advising dietary and other life style regimen.

- The food should be tasty, nutritious, fresh and good in appearance.
- Too spicy, salty and pungent food should be avoided.
- It should neither be very hot nor very cold.
- Liquid intake should be more frequent and in small amount. Heavy food can be prescribed in a limited quantity.
- Heavy food should not be given at night. The proper time for night meals is two to three hours before going to bed. After dinner, it is better to advice for a short walk.
- Heavy physical work should be avoided after meals.
- Mind should be peaceful while eating.
- Eating only whenever hungry and avoidance of over eating. Inclusion of sufficient amount of vegetables and fruits in diet.
- Daily intake of vegetable soup and fruit juices

### Concept of Rasayana (rejuvenation)

Rasayana has broad meaning indicating qualitative and quantitative improvement of dhatu (tissues). Vayasthapana are specialized rasayana drugs that reverse degenerative changes, increase life span with quality health. The main utility of Rasayana therapy is in functional and degenerative disorders that have a chronic or long standing nature.

Some evidence based research

- Guduchi as immunomodulatory agent
- Sallaki in Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA)
- Guggulu in hyperlipidemia
- Ashwagandha on the process of aging
- Management of hemiplegia by panchakarma
- Multi-faceted protective role of Chyawanprasa Anti-anxiety effect Mandukaparni, Yastimadhu and Jatamansi.

### Exercise

Exercise helps to control weight, improve emotional well-being and relieves stress, improve blood circulation, flexibility. Regular yogic exercise from youth limits the effects of old age. Benefits of the geriatric yoga:

- Yoga provides a good balance, blood stream and tissue liveliness thanks to the enhanced flexibility and core stabilization. If the person attends the Geriatric Yoga program regularly, many problems, which are caused by age, can be prevented
- It is possible to reload the most essential brain functions with the relaxing characteristic of Yoga
- The person gains experience with his own existence, body and mental performance during the sessions in Yoga practices. He learns to control his body. He analyzes his emotional status about his problem. He gains ability to cope with the symptoms faced
- It reduces sympathetic activity with relaxing techniques. Pain, fatigue, depression and stress decrease with relaxing response. Memory becomes retentive

### CONCLUSION

Human beings have led to an emergence of varied problems for the elderly in India. It is obvious that the process of ageing was elaborately described in ayurvedic texts and a separate medical discipline called Rasayana tantra was developed which described a variety of methods and measures to promote healthy longevity. Undoubtedly, it is the strength of ayurveda in the context of geriatric care Rasayana is a therapy which bestows excellent rasa which ultimately results in promotion of longevity, alleviation of old age and diseases so as to enjoy the full span of life. Government of India has also launched a national campaign to popularize the strength of Ayurveda and Yoga in geriatric health care. It is the demand of the hour to develop an effective holistic protocol for geriatric care by combining Rasayana, Panchakarma, Dietetics, Ayurvedic medicines and lifestyle and Yoga.

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