

Rasayana: An Endowment of Ancient Knowledge in Combating COVID-19 Pandemic

तलाभोपायो हि शस्तानां रसादीनां रसायनम्॥ (Cha. Chi-1/1/8)

Rasayana (*Rasa*-indicating *dhatu*; *Ayana*-indicating nourishment) is the process to nourish, regenerate, revive and revitalize all the *dhatu* (body tissues). Considering its strength and role in preventive health Ayurveda dedicates *Rasayana* as specialized branch. This major specialty was in practice under the super vision of dedicated physicians with special clinics (*Vatatapika rasayana*) and privileged hospitals (*Kutipravesika rasayana*). This novel therapy was deliberately designed to influence the fundamental elements of the body (*Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Agni* and *Oja*) for maintaining and boosting vigor, restoring youth, improving memory as well as preventing diseases. But unfortunately man made civilized world slowly but surely forget such rehabilitation along with conduct of nature. For attaining the momentary happiness and gains, the society not only gradually indulged into *Mithya ahara* and *Vihara* (improper diet and lifestyle), but also caused devastation to the Mother Nature.

Ayurveda laid emphasis on such environmental hazards and *Acharya Charaka* under the concept '*Janapadoddhamsa*' (*Janapada*= community; *Dhamsa*= Destruction) broadly described the pandemics. The keen observation of *Acharya* clearly affirmed that the vitiation of *Vayu* (air pollution), *Udaka* (water pollution), *Desha* (earth/land pollution), *Kala* (season) are the prime causative factors of *Janapadoddhamsa Vyadhi* (global pandemic disorders). While explaining the line of treatment of such pandemic *Acharya* emphasized on *Dinacharya* (proper lifestyle and diet habit) and *Rasayana* (adjuvant therapy).

The current brutal outbreak of novel corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19), has already destroyed several millions of lives and prospects of many countries and globally the efforts are being made to find the eventual solution to overcome this crisis. Thus this is the crucial time to comprehend the ancient elixirs of life and invigorate the world. Evidence suggests that respiratory failure from acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) is the foremost cause of mortality in novel corona virus disease (COVID-19) and a cluster of patients with severe COVID-19 infections might have a cytokine storm syndrome. *Rasayana* therapy in Ayurveda is one such appraisal to reinforce the both innate and cell mediate immunity, which might makes the body so well-built that it can defy variety of infectious agents. Numbers of the medicinal herbs and plant based principles treasured in Ayurvedic *Rasayana* for their restorative potential have been scientifically documented with potential outcome. The *Rasayana* therapy can act competently in biosystem and microcirculation stratum to rejuvenate the body and mind.

The Council is putting its tremendous efforts to bring out these ancient elixirs in the mantle of contemporary scientific evidence. Various *rasayana* herbs are now under scanner to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council has already undertaken a clinical study to evaluate the prophylactic use of *Giloy* extract (*Guduchi ghana vati*) as *rasayana* for COVID-19. Also, under Ministry of AYUSH has collaborated with CSIR, where in *Ashwagandha* extract is being tested for prophylaxis and extract of *Yastimadhu* and *Guduchi* with *Pippali* are under trials for management of COVID-19. Expectantly these initiatives may bring forth an effective solution for COVID-19.



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