



Rasayana and Vajikaran: An effective remedy in male climacteric

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Abstract

Physiologically, a lot of noticeable changes occur in men around the ages of 40, 50 or even 60 depending on factors such as heredity, body constitution and even the environment. Impotence and loss of libido are the most devastating blows to hit men during climacteric. Be that as it may, for many men a loss of erection is equivalent to loss of life itself. Middle age normally constitutes the most stressful time for all men. Family responsibilities grow at this stage. The prominent symptom of male climacteric - reduced sexual drive is well defined by Ayurvedic scholars as the state of Jaravasthajanya Klaibya. Ayurveda has great potential in the management of health problems of the aged effectively, because it has got one separate branch termed as Jara Chikitsa or Rasayana tantra.

Keywords: Rasayana, Vajikarana, Male Climacteric, Shatavari

Introduction

Cessation of menstrual flow is the hallmark of female menopause, when significant changes take place in the women's life. Similar significant changes do take place in the cause of men, which are not easy to perceive in view of the absence of any drastic changes such as the cessation of menstrual flow in women. Literary circles are aware of the phrase - the grand climacteric which generally means the sixty third year supposed to be a critical period for men. Physiologically, a lot of noticeable changes occur in men around the ages of 40,50 or even 60 depending on factors such as heredity, body constitution and even the environment. In climacteric phase a person may show signs of breakdown. The individual commonly makes declarations of health and virility that are at odds with his observed behavior. He rejects the need to maintain a reasonable balance between high endeavor and relaxation, and sees no need to increase his fitness in preparation for periods of unusual effort. Impotence and loss of libido are the most devastating blows to hit men during climacteric. Be that as it may, for many men

a loss of erection is equivalent to loss of life itself. Acharya Sharngdhara has described the declining functions and characters of the living human body according to the advancement of the age –

Between the age of 40 to 60 years, the degradation of Medha (mental function), Twak (Ras Dhatu features), Drishti (vision) and Shukra (sexual potency) starts. These features are mainly noticed in male climacteric. (Vagbhata 1993, Agniveasa 1992, Bhavamisra 1999,

The climacteric changes resemble the symptoms of Kalaja Jara as described in various Ayurvedic texts. Rasayana and Vajikarana therapy provide good quality of dhatus, promote strength and energy in the healthy. These special measures maintain the youthful age of men for a longer period, provide physical strength and improve mental faculties. Thus Rasayana and Vajikarana therapies can be used as dependable and effective remedies for meeting out the adverse developments of male climacteric.

Material and methods

Male Climacteric : Signs and Symptoms

Middle age normally constitutes the most stressful time for all men. Family responsibilities grow at this stage. Concurrently, social obligations increase, job responsibilities also reach their peak and the

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fear of superannuation, a word which in itself is frightening as it means unfit for any work; all add up to an individual's problems during middle age. At this stage some physiological and degenerative changes also hit the men who are passing through climacteric. The signs and symptoms of male climacteric can be divided into mental and physical categories.

Mental signs and symptoms;

1. Stress and strain
2. Loose temper
3. Continual grumbling
4. Longer hours worked but less achieved
5. Repeated minor sicknesses
6. Procrastination
7. Losing sight of long term aims
8. Feeling of frustration and persecution by colleagues
9. Loss of original thought

Physical signs and symptoms;

1. Impotence
2. Loss of libido
3. Erectiledysfunction
4. Restlessness
5. Insomnia
6. Palpitation

Results and Discussion

Jarajanya Klaibya and Male Climacteric

The prominent symptom of male climacteric - reduced sexual drive is well defined by Ayurvedic scholars as the state of Jaravasthajanya Klaibya. Four types of Klaibya are described in Ayurveda- Beejopaghataja, Dhvajopaghataja, Jaranjanya and Kshayaja.

It is observed that some older adults experience a decrease in sexual activity with age but many individuals remain sexually active. Erectile dysfunction, though common with age (occurring in 52% of all men aged 40-70 and >95% of diabetic men >70), but also indicates underlying organic decrease. The stages of sexual response change will ageing, although these changes do not preclude sexual activity. These changes can be well understood by the following table (Table 1). Some of the physiologic changes have been shown to be reversible (such as VO₂ max declines with ageing that can improve with exercise). Mental agility can be preserved well even into ripe of old age by constant practice and by keeping one's mind active.

Table 1 : Showing changes in Human Sexual Response with Aging

Phase	Male	Female
Excitement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced scrotal vasocongestion • Decreased testicular elevation • Delayed penile erection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced breast and genital vasocongestion • Diminished vaginal secretions • Delayed arousal
Plateau	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolonged • Diminished pre-ejaculatory secretions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced elevation of uterus and labia majora
Orgasm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short duration • Reduction in prostatic and urethral contraction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Duration • Fewer and weaker uterine and vaginal contractions
Resolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid detumescense and testicular descent • Prolonged refractory period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid reversal to prearousal stage



Just as physical exercise keeps skeletal muscles healthy, mental exercise keeps the mind alert. Learning something new regularly even when one has turned old is one of the ways of keeping one's mind young and healthy. Certain changes produced in the body with advancement of age are irreversible e.g. graying of hair, wrinkling of skin and deterioration in vital functions of body etc. Similarly sexual potency also declines with advancement of age. But it can be maintained for a longer period with appropriate use of Rasayana and Vajikarana Therapy as described in Ayurveda.

Rasayana Therapy in Male Climacteric

Ayurveda has great potential in the management of health problems of the aged effectively, because it has got one separate branch termed as Jara Chikitsa or Rasayana tantra. This branch deals with the science of rejuvenation. Rasayana therapy is mainly devoted for the promotion of both physical and mental health and prevention of Jara. Rasayana is a special type of treatment containing various methods of rejuvenation. By providing energy and required elements to the body and making homeostasis of the physiological actions, Rasayana therapy prevents old age, restores youthfulness, improves the complexion and the voice, increases physical strength and immunity. It strengthens memory, intelligence and also improves other mental faculties. Rasayana therapy can be divided into two major groups –

1. Medicinal
2. Non medicinal

In medicinal group there are various herbal, mineral metallic and compound drugs, which are mentioned to be containing Rasayana effects. The use of these drugs is being made for attaining the complete general benefits of Rasayana and also differentiated to the purposeful practice. Different Rasayana drugs may be used for the improvement of different functions –

- 1) Amalaki, Haritaki, Guduchi - for improving longevity (Vayasthapana)
- 2) Brahmi, Shankhapushpi, Guduchi, Mandukparni - for improving mental faculties (Medhya)
- 3) Bhallataka, Vidanga, Shatavari - for improving cellular activities and as Naimittika Rasayana

- 4) Guggulu, Shilajeet - for cleansing micro circulatory channels

In non-medicinal group of Rasayana there are three main constituents -

- 1) Dietary measures (Aahara)
- 2) Mental status (Vichara)
- 3) Conductary measures (Achara)

Vajikarana Therapy in Male Climacteric

Vajikarana therapy is a branch of Ayurveda which deals with the science of sexual enjoyment and the capacity of reproduction of men. Since the sexual impairment is the common complaint of a person passing through climacteric phase, Vajikarana procedures and drugs may be much helpful to him. Vajikarana drugs and compounds produce mental pleasure (Preeti), enable one to reproduce (Apathya) and impart physical and mental power (Bala). Following drugs may be used in male climacteric phase

- 1) Ashwagandha
- 2) Shweta moosali
- 3) Kroanch
- 4) Shatavari
- 5) Shilajeet
- 6) Narsingh choorna
- 7) Kamchudhamani rasa etc.

Conclusion

There are three types of disorders seen in male climacteric - sexual, mental and general health related problems. Rasayana and Vajikarana therapies as described in Ayurveda revitalize all body tissues, improve mental faculties, produce good quality of dhatus, prevent various diseases and delay ageing process. Thus the Judicious use of Rasayana and Vajikarana therapies may be of great use in male climacteric and various health related problems during this phase. A healthy mind is as important as a healthy body. The mind influences many physiological functions. Ayurveda prescribes certain rules for maintaining a healthy state of mind. They are called the 'Ethical Regimen' (Sadvritha). Due to their health oriented properties, these procedures are included in Rasayana therapy. This type of Rasayana termed as Achara Rasayana. Achara Rasayana consists principles of right conduct that are applicable to all people of all times and places. Practicing them gives balance and



peace to the mind and in turn helps in providing health of an individual.

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