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RAJONIVRUTTI IN AYURVEDA: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT
Rajonivrutti in Ayurveda, represents a natural physiological transition marking the cessation of menstruation and reproductive capacity in women. Classical texts describe Rajah as an upadhatu of Rasa Dhatu, manifesting at menarche and ceasing around fifty years of age. While not considered a disease, Rajonivrutti is categorized as a Swabhavika Vyadhi, akin to aging, hunger, and sleep. This review article provides an Ayurvedic overview of Rajonivrutti, synthesizing classical references, etiological factors, and clinical manifestations with modern perspectives.The causative factors of Rajonivrutti include Kala (time), Swabhava (natural decline), Vayu, Dhatu Kshaya, Karma and environment, and Abhighata. These factors collectively lead to depletion of dhatus, vitiation of vata, and cessation of artava. Rajonivrutti is further classified into Kalaja (timely, natural) and Akalaja (premature or delayed) types, with Akalaja often linked to lifestyle errors, trauma, or environmental influences. The samprapti involves generalized dhatu kshaya, vatavriddhi, and kaphakshaya, resulting in artava kshaya and vasomotor disturbances.Clinically, Rajonivritti manifests with doshaja lakshanas, predominantly vataja, such as hot flushes, sweating, disturbed sleep, dryness, and psychological instability. Ayurveda emphasizes the importance of Shuddha Rajah for reproductive health, and its cessation marks the end of fertility. Modern science parallels this with ovarian decline and estrogen deficiency, highlighting vasomotor and psychosomatic symptoms.This review underscores the holistic Ayurvedic perspective on Rajonivritti, integrating classical wisdom with modern understanding. It emphasizes the role of Rasayana therapy and lifestyle regulation in managing menopausal symptoms, offering a safe and comprehensive alternative to conventional hormone replacement therapy.

KEYWORDS : *Rajonivrutti , Rajah , Akalaja Rajonivrutti , Kalaja Rajonivrutti , Menopause*

IMPORTANCE OF *SHUDDHA RAJAH*

After understanding the concept of *Rajah,* due consideration has to be paid to the importance of *Rajah* in female body. It can be categorized into two main aspects i.e. physiological point of view and pathological point of view. Under physiological aspect Shuddha Rajah is the indicator of Dhatu Paripurnata and it also marks the starting of reproductive life for a female. Rajah is considered as main factor for reproduction and it should be understood that a fully mature body (*Dhatuparipurnata),* would only able to reproduce the other body. *Acharya Kashyapa* also quoted that Rajah will not be manifested in immature (i.e. Hina Yoni). It is considered as an indicator for starting of reproductive life. Not today, since thousand years before, age of Menarche is given as approximately 12 years, which varies individually and Acharyas have mentioned the age limit according to this concept only, and not to be forgetting *Rajah* is a main factor in reproduction. Coming to the pathological part, any vitiation of *Rajah* hampers the ultimate goal of human body i.e. reproduction. Classics too, have given various conditions in which Rajah is vitiated and it results into sterility, which may cause various kinds of complications for a female, may be social, cultural and psychosomatic aspect.

RAJONIVRUTTI

Rajonivrutti is not described separately as a pathological condition or severe healthproblem in Ayurvedic classics. The ancient Acharyas termed it as a normal physiology. But these physiological changes causing major health changes at the psychological level also which is of major concern.

ETYMOLOGY

Rajah is been addressed with various terminologies like Raja, paraga, renu etc. carryin specific meaning as per context. Here, in this context the meaning of *Rajah* like *Artava* and *Stripushpa* i.e. menstrual blood is taken into consideration.

Nivritti

Acharya Hemachandra has coated the synonyms of the word *Nivrutti* like *Apravritti, Uparama, Virati, Vyparati, Uparati* etc. Meaning cessations or completion Thus, the whole term *Rajonivritti* means end of Artava Pravritti or cessation of menstruation.

RAJONIVRITTI KALA :- (AGE OF MENOPAUSE)

50 years is mentioned as the age of *Rajonivrutti,* when the body is fully in grip of senility. *Acharya Arundatta* opines that the age mentioned above is a probable age and not a fixed one. Many wnvir , physical and physiological factors influence the age of *Rajonivritti* [1].

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NIDANA OF RAJONIVRITTI

Apart from the individual prakriti other following factors also acts as the *Rajo Nivrutti* hetus.

1. *KALA*
2. *SWABHAVA*
3. *VAYU*
4. *KARMA / ENVIRONMENT*
5. *DHATUKSHAYA*
6. *ABHIGHATA* etc.

Above factors can be grouped under two major headings i.e. General factors, which are also mentioned as "*Rajah utpatti* hetu", and specific factors like *Dhatukshaya, Abhighata*, Environment etc.

[1]. *KALA*

the characteristics of particular age or the changes taking place in different stages of age have to be attributed to the same factor i.e. Kala. Acharya Charaka also beautifully explains that the same foetus after passing of sometime becomes child, young and old[2]. On the basis of Kala, female body manifests "Rajonivritti" at the age of 50 years. The importance of Kala further elaborated by Acharya Vagbhatta [3] , Acharya Sushruta [4] and Acharya Dalhana [5] quoting an example of a bud which has all the characters of a flower. Similarly, artava is in avyaktavastha in childhood, but under the influence of Kala, it makes its appearance at Tarunavastha. The same thing is true in Rajonivritti also, that it take place at Praudhavastha.

[2]. SWABHAVA

Rajah which is manifest at a particular age of around 12 years. It is a swabhava of tarunavastha or dhatuparipurna avastha of female to produce “Rajah”. Adding to this, it is a Swabhava of body to degrade every moment.Rajah is also a physiological entity, which is having swabava of degradation and ultimately manifests in Rajonivritti. Moreover according to the Swabhavoparam vada, (Theory of natural destruction) a substance, which is produced and got an existence, will deteriorate and ultimately get vanished naturally. Nothing is eternal in this universe. So, Rajah too produced and manifested at a particular age and it will be vanished by nature termed as Rajonivritti.

[3]. VAYU

In human body, out of five types of Vayu, "Apanavaya" and "*Vyan vayu"* are mainly responsible for the functions related to artava. All the body functions are under the control of "Vyana Vayu". So, normal functions of yoni and Garbhashaya are also carried out by *Vyana Vayu.* [6] As *artava* is related to "*Artavavaha srots*" which comes under the activity field of Apanavayu. Apana vayu helps in all excretory activities like *Mala, Mutra, Shukra, Artava* and *Garbha niskramana*, and also, helps to control these activities during the conditions of stress.[7] So, it can be concluded that combined effect of these two vayus are responsible for *Rajah utpatti* as well as its cyclic expulsion at every month. So, it can be considered as a causative factor for *Rajah nivrutti* also, and any vitiation of these factors may alter this process.Vitiated stage of vayu in the body is very well understood in the case of Rajonivritti.Factors like *Vriddhavastha,* generalized *Dhatukshaya*, generalized *rukshata* and *shosha* will lead to *vata vriddhi*. So, a vicious cycle will come into play and all the functions of vata will be affected including Rajah utpatti, which may be manifested as Rajah nivritti. In this way vayu is responsible for Rajonivritti.

[4]. DHATUKSHAYA

For human being, reproduction is ultimate goal, in balavastha, this cannot be achieved because the condition of dhatus are not mature, and so that the Rajah and Shukra are also not. But, in or Yuva avastha, Dhatu attains the stage of paripurnata or maturity and manifested as Rajodarshana, which marks the starting of reproductive life for a woman. The same thing is true for Rajonivritti also, which manifests at Jarapakva awastha. With the advancement of age, the condition of Dhatus deteriorates day by day. (i.e. Dhatukshaya) and neither they can be able to nourish the body nor hold the body in a same manner as that of Yuvavastha. As a result, Upadhatu artava also not formed in a normal way and gradually ceased, so that the quality of reproduction is also vanished, which is termed as Rajonivritti. So, it can be concluded that, immature stage of dhatu, which is characteristic of childhood and deteriorating stage (Kshaya) of dhatu, which is characteristic of vriddha awastha both are manifested as absence of Artava. Acharya Kashyapa also supports the above statement by quoting. [8]

[5]. *KARMA* / ENVIRONMENT

Like other factors, Ayurveda has considered karma as a generalized factor for any activity. Karma is considered by two ways. First is *Purvajanmakrita* and other is, *Ajanmakrita* (Karma of this life). The prior is responsible for many things, because the science believes in the concept of Atma and *Punarjanma*. The later one has a direct relationship between *Karan* and *Karya*, which includes all the Pragyaparadhas for diseased condition and vice versa. In *Rajah,* the importance of karma is described by acharyas in various contexts [9]. In *Rajonivrutti* also, this factor can be considered, along with the second factor. Pragyaparadhas consumption of etiological factors (including *Aaharaj* and *Viharaj*) may affect the *Rajonivrutti*. So, on this basis it can be concluded that Karma too has an important in producing *Rajonivritt*i. Unnaturally before the age due to Mithya ahara and Vihara, and unable to enjoy a healthy and full span of life. These same nidanas may become a cause for *Akalaja Rajonivritti*. From above description it can be inferred that some of the favourable and unfavourable circumstances also plays an important role for Rajonivritti. It is little for imagination that a woman living under un favourable conditions is likely develop aging earlier and get *Rajonivrutti* also earlier. Modern science also believed that severe malnourished women or women who are living in high altitude get an earlier menopause.

[6]. *ABHIGHATA*

Acharya Sushruta has mentioned that the Viddhata of the roots of Artavavaha srotus i.e. Garbhashaya and Aartavavahi dhamanis will lead to Artavanasha [10]. This Viddhata may take place due to any direct or indirect trauma (*Abhighata*) to *Artava Vaha srotas*, which will directly lead to *Artavanasha* and will manifests as *Akalaja Rajonivrutti*. These can be further explained by some studies carried out by modern science that the premature ovarian failure can occur in women who have previously undergone abdominal hysterectomy or endometrial

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ablation presumably due to compromising condition of ovarian vascular flow. Here, hysterectomy or endometrial ablation or any surgical trauma can be correlated with "Viddhata of *Garbhashaya* or *Artavavahi Dhamanis*. Dr. N.G. Joshi has considered ovary, and ovarian vessels as *Artaravaha srotas* (Ayurvedic concepts Gynecology). So, any trauma or Viddhata to ovary or ovarian vessels (i.e. oophorectomy etc.) will lead to Akalaja Rajonivritti or surgical menopause.

TYPES OF *RAJONIVRITTI*

Ayurvedic science has divided all diseases into 4 major types. Agantu, Sharira, Manas and Swabhavika [11] . Concentrating on 'Swabhavika' type; it is described that this type includes all those conditions, which are naturally occurring. Acharya Sushruta has mentioned a group of naturally occurring diseases under the heading of swabhavabala pravritta [12] includes Kshudha (Hunger); Pipasa (Thirst), Nidra (Sleep), Jara (Aging) and Mrityu (Death) Further Acharya Dalhana has commented over it as, Although these disease are naturally occurring diseases, but sometimes they are being acquired also, which is described as "Doshaja". So, they are further divided into two types viz. Kalakrita and Akalakrita. In the same manner, Rajonivritti too is a naturally occurring condition in every woman as that of Jaravastha etc. Swabhavika Vyadhies. So Rajonivritti also can be divided into two types. [13]

1. Kalaja Rajonivritti 2. Akalaja Rajonivritti

1) *Kalaja Rajonivritti*

If Rajonivritti occurs at its probable age70 (i.e. around 50 years of age) it is called as Kalaja Rajonivriti. According to Acharya Sushuruta, the timely Rajonivritti (i.e. natural diseases like aging) occurs only when the protective measurements of health care are being practiced. This condition is Yapya by Rasayana etc.

2) Akalaja Rajonivritti

If *Rajonivrutti* occurs before or after its probable age (i.e. around 50 years) it is termed as *Akalaja Rajonivrutti*. *Akalaja Rajonivritti* takes place due to absence of the protective measurements of health care. In this type of *Rajonivrutti,* symptoms are very acute and medical attention should be given to avoid its hazardous effects. According to *Acharya Dalhana* [8], they should be treated on the basis of nature of illness (Roga) surfaced due to pathology of *Rajonivritti* and on the basis of dosha involved in it. This *Akalaja Rajonivritti* is more likely treatable than *Kalaja Rajonivritti*. This magnitude of Kalaja and *Akalaja Rajonivritti* bound to vary from person to person on the basis of Prakriti as noted by Acharya Charaka himself in Vimana Sthana. Therefore, ultimately the responsibility of deciding Kalaja or *Akalaja Rajonivritti* is shouldered upon physician's experience

PROBABLE SAMPRAPTI OF *RAJONIVRITTI*

As the pathogenesis of *Rajonivrutti* is not elaborately described in as such Ayurvedic text, few points should be taken into consideration (including nidanas which are already described previously) in this regard. First of all classics have quoted the age around 50 years as the probable age for *Rajonivrutti.* This age limit is dominated by "*Vata dosha*" and obviously it easily is get vitiating during this time .

This dominant Vatadosha will have effect all over the female body including all anatomical as well as physiological factors by virtue of its characters i.e. "*Laghuta"* and "*Rukshata*". At the age about 50 years, the decline process starts in female body due to Jaravastha as a natural process. So, considering these all points, the probable *samprapti* can be drawn under two main headings.

1. *Kalaja samprapti 2. Akalaja samprapti.*

Kalaja samprapti

Kalaja samprapti is or naturally occurring Rajonivritti like Jaravastha and can be constructed on the basis of Swabhavika Vyadhi. Considering, Kala, Vayu, Swabhava and Jaravastha as biological stimulants, which are common for both Jara and Rajonivritti.This factors will generalized Dhatukshayka and vise a versa to generalized *Vatavriddhi* and *Kaphakshaya*. Both these condition together, will produce particular Rasa-Rakta dhatukshaya. So, this main nourishing Rasadhatu will be decreased both qualitatively and quantitatively and ultimately resulting in its *upadhatu Artavakshaya*. Due to this factor along with generalized *Vatavriddhi* (increased *laghu, rksha, khara guna*) and *Kaphakshaya* (decreased *Gura, Snigdha, Drava Guna*); *Rukshata* and Shosha of artavavaha srotas take place and all these things will lead to Artavanash and manifest as Rajonivritti.

Akalaja samprapti:-

For Akalaja Samprapti, few etiological factors are responsible which can be grouped under two broad headings i.e. Karma or environment and Abhighatadi. Under this Samprapti, etiological factors like karma or environment will lead to Dhatukshaya Awastha and again the same samprapti follows which has already been described in Kalaja Samprapti and ultimately lead to Artavanasha and menifest as Rajonivritti. Moreover, another etiological factor i.e. Abhighata will directly lead to Viddhata of Artavavaha Srotas resulting into Artavanasha and ultimately manifests as Rajonivritti.

LAKSHANAS OF *RAJONIVRITTI*

As there is no direct reference available regarding lakshanas of Rajonivritti in the Ayurvedic classics, the clinical symptoms manifested by the patients of Rajonivritti have to be considered and can be grouped under following Ayurvedic parameters.

A) *Doshaja lakshanas:-*

According to available symptoms, differentiation can be done as Vataja lakshanas, Pittaja lakshanas and Kaphaja lakshanas. As this condition is characterized by generalized vata vriddhi, the Vataja lakshanas are more dominantly observed than other two (Pittaja and Kaphaja) lakshanas.

Table no 4 showing *Doshaja lakshanas*

Vataja	*Pittaja*	*Kaphaja*
Shira Shula *Bala Kshaya* *Admana* *Atopa* *Vibandha* *Anidra* *Bhrama* *Katishula* *Sandhi Vedana*	*Daha* *Ushananubhuti* *Ratrisweda* *Trisha* *Mutradaha* *Glani* *Yoni Daha*	*Hrid Dravatva* *Bhrama* *Angamarda*

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B) ***Dhatukshayaja lakshanas***

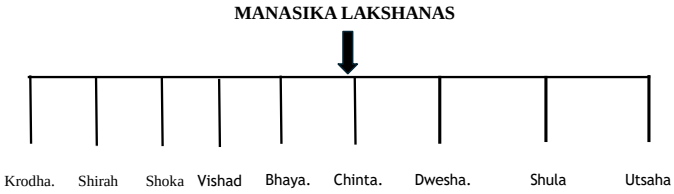
As this condition is a sequel of generalized Dhatukshayajanya avastha, the symptomsof Dhatukshaya are also observed in the patients of Rajonivrittri, which can begrouped according to the individual Dhatukshayaja lakshanas as follows.

Table no : 5 showing *Dhatukshayaja lakshanas*

Rasa kshaya	Rakta kshaya	Mamsa kshaya	Meda kshaya	Asthi kshaya	Majja kshaya	Shukra kshaya
Shabda asahatva Hriddravatva Shula Shrama Shosha Trishna	Twaka ruksha ta Sira shaithilya	Sphik-ganda-adi shushkata Toda Ruksha ta Glani Sandhi sphutana Vedana Dhamani shaithilya	Angaruksha ta Shrama Shosha Krushata Sandhi shunyata	Danta-Nakha-Kesha-Roma rukshata/shatana Sandhi shaithilya	Asthi saushirya Asthi toda Dourbalya Bhrama Tamodarshana	Yoni vedana Shrama Dourbalya Pandu ta

C) ***Manasika lakshanas***

certain psychological symptoms also commonly observed due to vitiation of Manovaha srotas. So these symptoms can be grouped under the heading of Manasika lakshanas as follows:-



These symptoms are very troublesome to the patients as well as for physician. Some times that disturbed the whole family happiness of the patients. So, it is very necessary to treat these symptoms with proper medical help as well as counselling and family support too.

PROBABLE PATHOGENESIS BEHIND VARIOUS SYMPTOMS

After describing the clinical features of Rajonivritti, it is very important to understand the probable pathogenesis behind these symptoms. So, here an attempt has been made on the basis of few basic principles to know the pathogenesis of every symptom under the heading of Doshaja, Dhatukshayaja and Manasika lakshanas.

A) Probable pathogenesis is behind various "*vataja lakshanas" of rajonivritti*

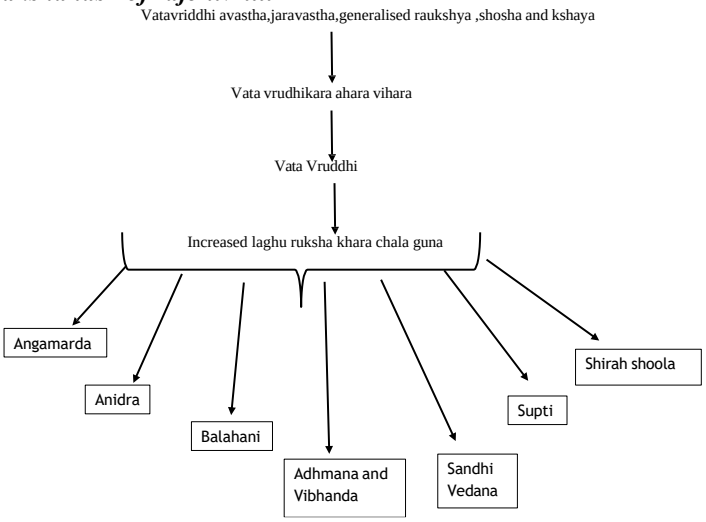


Figure no 3 showing pathogenesis of "vataja lakshanas" of rajonivritti

B) PROBABLE PATHOGENESIS BEHIND VARIOUS "*PITTAJA LAKSHANAS" OF RAJONIVRITTI:-*

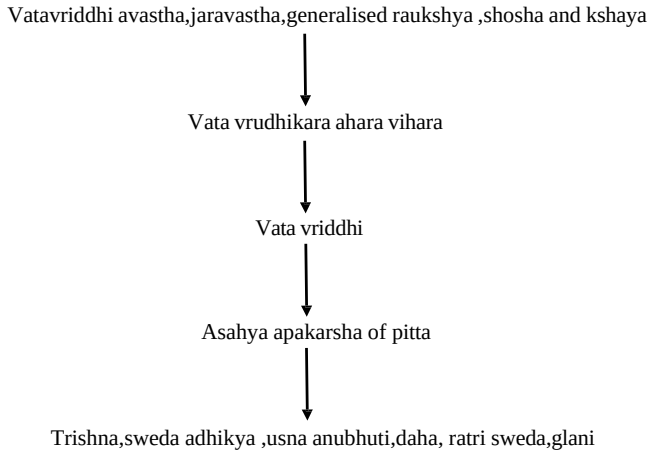


Figure No 4 Showing Pathogenesis Of "Pittaja Lakshanas" of Rajonivritti:-

C) PROBABLE PATHOGENESIS BEHIND VARIOUS "*KAPHAJA LAKSHANAS" OF RAJONIVRITTI:-*

Again the same factors will lead to Vatavriddhi, and the increased Laghu, Ruksha, Khara, Chala etc. guna acts against Guru, Snigdha Sthira etc. guna of kaphadosha. So that generalized Kaphakshaya will lead to various symptoms like Raukshya, Angamarda, Hriddravatva, Bhrama.

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D) ROBABLE PATHOGENESIS BEHIND VARIOUS *DHATUKSHAYATMAKA LAKSHANAS OF RAJONIVRITTI*

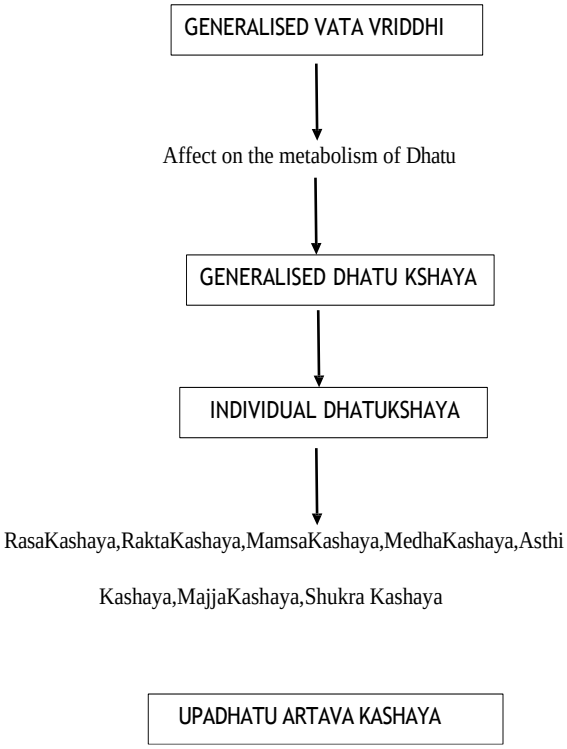


Figure No 5 Showing Pathogenesis Dhatukshayatmaka Lakshanas of Rajonivritti

E) PROBABLE PATHOGENESIS BEHIND VARIOUS *MANASIKA LAKSHANAS OF RAJONIVRITTI*

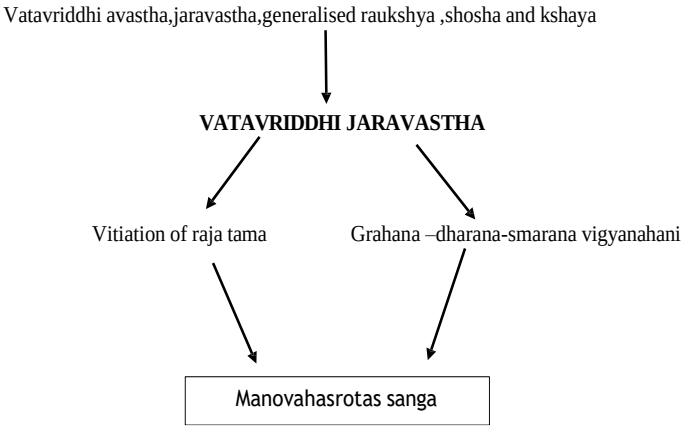


Figure No 6 Showing Pathogenesis Manasika Lakshanas of Rajonivritti

These both condition will vitiate the Manovaha sroats due to Sthansamshraya and as a result, symptoms like Krodha, Shoka, Bhaya, Chinta etc.manifest.

F) PROBABLE PATHOGENESIS BEHIND VARIOUS *SHARIRIKA PARIVARTANA DURING RAJONIVRITTI*

Because of the same etiological factors and dominant vayu; Laghu, Ruksha, Khara,Chala, Shukshma etc. guna also markedly increase in the body and resulting into various anatomical changes

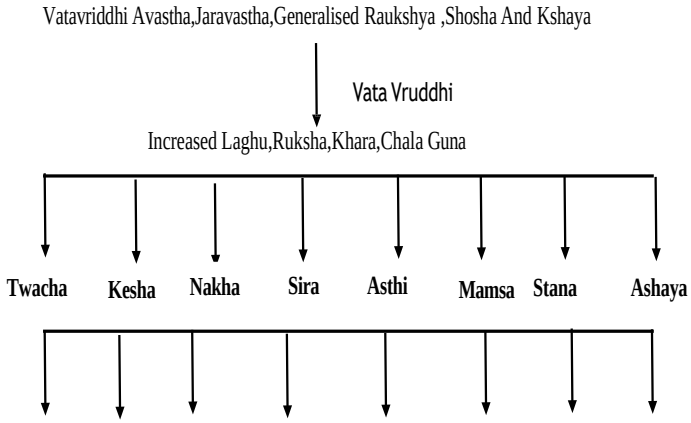


Figure No 7 Showing Pathogenesis Sharirika Parivartana During Rajonivritti :-

SADHYASADHYATA

Sadhyasadhyata of Rajonivritti is not mentioned separately in classics, but as mentioned earlier, Rajonivriti is a Swabhavika Vyadhi as that of Jara and Mrityu. Acharya Charaka considered them as, swabhavonikramiyatha i.e. by nature they are incurable or having no treatment [14] . Acharya Chakrapani while commenting on this verse mentions that the word "Nish Pratikriya" means ordinary treatment and measures have no effect on aging (Rajonivritti) but it is "Yapya" by Rasayana treatment. Acharya Dalhana also comments that there exists not any treatment to Kalakrita. They may be made "Yapya" by Rasayana, dietetics etc.

TREATMENT

Rasayana: Charaka, while describing dhatupaka encapsulated the continuous degenerative process occurring in the human body in the statement. It indicates the irreversibility of this process. [15] Rasayana is the therapy which destroys age related diseases. Charaka has elaborated the scope of rasayana therapy thus. [16] Incidentally the aim of modern geriatrics also is on the same lines, the essence of which is:

1. To enable the aged to lead full & active lives.
2. To prevent disease.
3. To mitigate debility.
4. To minimize pre-death dependence.

***Rasayana aushadha* as per age group:**

Since the degradation or parihani avastha starts at age 40 itself, according to susrutha, rasayana dravyas specific to age & kind of loss of biological features encountered, as per sharngadhara are given below: [17]

Table No -06: showing Rasayan aushadha according to age

Age group	Specific Deficiency	Aushadha Yojana
40-50	Twak	Somaraji, Bhringaraj
50-60	Drishti	Triphalarasayana, Saptamrita loha.
60-70	Sukra	Kapikachu & vajeekarna dravyas

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70-80	Vikarma	Kapikachu & vajeekarna dravyas
80-90	Buddhi	Amalaki rasayana & vayasthapana aushadhis
90-100	karmendriya	

Among the various rasayanas mentioned in charaka samhita, sushruta & astanga hridaya, the following classification may be made.

Vyadhi Pratyaneeka:

Vatashamana, asthimajja dhatupushtikara, vedanasamana on long term basis:

1. Snehapana with ksheera bala tailam with sukoshna dugdha.
2. Sarvanga abhyangam with maha narayan tailam.
3. Combination of sudhavargeeya dravyas like kapardika bhasma & dhatupaushtika choorna with milk.
4. Diseases due to the vitiation of asthidhatu (bone tissue) can be treated by the pancakarma (five elimination therapies). Specially enema, milk and ghee medicated with bitter drugs. [18]

Ashraya-ashrayee

The drugs which control the vata will increases its ashraya(i.e. asthi) & those which aggravate vata will decreases the asthi because, the asthi vriddhi is possible only by santarpana chikitsa which in turn is vatahara. [19]

Psychological symptoms treatment:

Insomnia

Sleep appears to deteriorate in many ways as one grows old. 26-45% of old age people complain of sleep disturbance (Insomnia). Studies indicate that sleep becomes shorter, lighter and more broken, with greater difficulty in getting back to sleep again. Disturbing Factors: Anxiety, depression, pain, restlessness, forgetfulness & unrealistic expectations. Vyadhi pratyaneeka:

Regulation of sleep timings, Dhara, Satwavajaya.

1. Advice: To rise early at a regular hour, to maintain activity during day time, to avoid coffee/tea during the evening not to go to bed hungry, and half-empty or too early, to take warm milk in the evening.
2. Samana: Regular use of Medhyarasayanas like Brahmi, Jatamamsi, Shankhapushpi etc.
3. Dhara: Amalaki & Takra dhara.
4. Satvavajaya: methods like prayer, dhyana, in the evenings promotes inner strength of the individual and bestows and bestows tranquility.

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