

SPOTLIGHT ON AYURVEDA

YOGA'S SISTER SCIENCE

THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

The Rasayana treatments: the way of anti-ageing
By Dr Palitha Serasinghe

Ageing is considered as a natural disease that occurs throughout the day, weeks, months and years of our life. Hence, it is impossible to stop. However, it is possible to correct the ageing process and to avoid premature ageing.

First, let's look at the different ways of measuring age. There is chronological age, which measures how many years have passed since the birth of a person; and then there is the biological age, which tells us about the health condition of the cells, tissues, body, and the mind of a person. In effect, chronological age tells us how long we've been alive, and the biological age tells us how long we've got left.

The *Rasayana* treatments from the world of ayurveda help us to improve our biological age and rejuvenate the body and the mind. Ayurvedic terminology uses a Sanskrit word '*jara*' to denote ageing which means 'deterioration'. It describes that the cells and tissues of the body are deteriorating and decaying all the time. Hence, treatment is needed to regain and rebuild youthful vitality by using the ayurvedic modalities mentioned.

Rasayana is a unique and special area of the ayurvedic system of medicine. It facilitates the assimilation of proper nutrients by the cells and tissues (known as '*dhatu*') and prevents ageing and disease by improving youth and vitality and enhancing the immune mechanisms through improving the quality of physiological essence known as '*Ojas*'. The *Rasayana* therapies can be used at various levels such as: daily regimens, seasonal regimens or undergoing a selective signature detoxification and rejuvenation treatment programme, known as *panchakarma*, by a healthy individual. In the case of a person having any illness, the *Rasayana* treatments are prescribed at the appropriate stage of the disease. These *Rasayana* treatments are specific to the disease condition. Diabetes mellitus is an example where *Rasayana* treatments would be beneficial for the better management and to prevent the advancement of the disease. Infertility is another example where the vitality of the reproduction cells and tissues has to be detoxified and helped to rejuvenate. This can be beneficial even to improve the success rate in IVF treatments.

Where to start?

You can start your own *Rasayana* programme by yourself at home. Start with eating natural, fresh and satvic food, according to your body constitution. Eating more vegetables and fruits, drinking organic milk, almond milk or soya milk, doing exercise, yoga and meditation, is a good and simple way to start your daily *Rasayana*.

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One of the best methods that should be included in your regular *Rasayana* programme is the self *abhyanga* (massage). The body should be massaged with cured sesame oil by one's self for 15-20 minutes. If you are finding it difficult to do the massage regularly, at least massage the feet daily. Sesame oil is considered to be the queen of oils according to ayurveda science. It contains high levels of antioxidants that help detoxify and rejuvenate the body; they also help to enhance the brain, nerve and immune functions.

A consultation with an ayurvedic practitioner can be the next step in order to determine your body constitution and its condition. Moreover, this can help you to understand your diet and lifestyle more completely, in which a bespoke *Rasayana* programme could be prescribed for you. Receiving a *panchakarma rasayana* programme once a year is also advisable for those who are more serious about healthy ageing and preventing diseases related to old age.

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