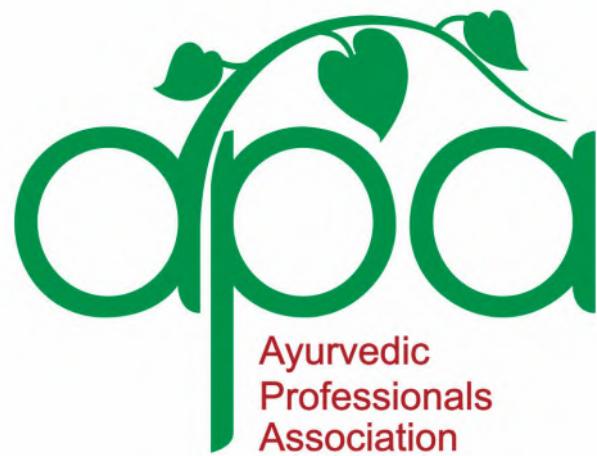


NEWSLETTER



MAY 2024

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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to another new edition of the APA Newsletter. As always we have another great edition for you, with lots of interesting articles and links to up and coming events.

A big thank you, once again, to all of the contributors to this edition. If you have an article you would like to share, please do send it in for future editions of the Newsletter. As we aim to produce at least six issues per year, we are constantly in need of new article submissions.

The next edition of the APA Newsletter will be out on the 15th July, so please try and make sure your submission reaches us by the beginning of July.

Send to: info@neterapublishing.com

Andrew Mason

Disclaimer: The information contained in this Newsletter is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. The views and opinions expressed here are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views or official policy of the *Ayurvedic Professionals Association*.

YOUR ARTICLE - COULD GO HERE!



YOUR DOSHIC CLOCK & THE CIRCADIAN RHYTHM

By Colette Park



Just as the flowers and leaves of plants open and follow the course of the sun during daylight, closing again at night time, so too do our bodies respond to different times of the day. In the 5000 year old system of Ayurveda, our own inner biological clock is understood by dividing the shifting energies of daytime and night time among the three Doshas (bio-energetic principles):

- 2-6am and 2-6pm are dominated by the lightness of airy Vata
- 6-10am and 6-10pm are dominated by the stability of earthy Kapha
- 10am-2pm and 10pm-2am are dominated by the drive of fiery Pitta

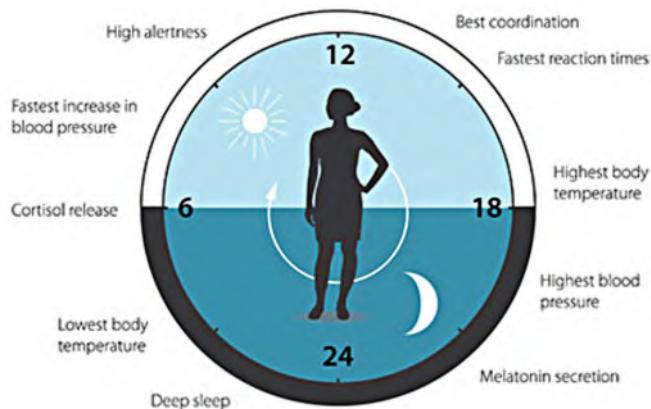
Circadian Rhythms

The Circadian Rhythm, also known as the body clock, came into focus in 2017 when The Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine was awarded to three scientists who discovered genes and molecular mechanisms within cells that control the circadian rhythm. This vital inner clock is

TIME	DOSHA	TENDENCIES	NATURAL ACTIVITIES
2-6am	Vata	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early morning hours ruled by the 'space' element of Vata bringing inspiration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Awake before sunrise• Ideal time for meditation, prayer or journaling
6-10am	Kapha	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical body is at its strongest after a good night's rest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ideal time for physical exercise, or physical work• If you sleep past 6am into the Kapha time, you will feel more sluggish in the morning
10am-2pm	Pitta	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The fire of Pitta brings clarity and focus• Strength of digestive system (our inner 'Agni' or fire) peaks when the sun (outer 'Agni' or fire) is highest in the sky	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on work or projects that require analysis and critical thinking• Make lunch your largest meal of the day, as your metabolism is at its strongest
2-6pm	Vata	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'Space' element of Vata brings creativity• Vata energy is irregular which can cause an energy slump, hence our love for the very English 4pm biscuit and tea as a pick-me-up if we did not have a proper lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work on/Communicate new ideas, write a blog, do some art, socialise, meditate• Have a small and light dinner before going into Kapha time
6-10pm	Kapha	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The heavy and slow qualities of Kapha slows the metabolism and helps us to switch off	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not eat a heavy meal after sunset, as the body and metabolism starts to slow down• Do some light stretching or exercise• Slow down and get ready for bed by 10pm
10pm-2am	Pitta	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The transformative and fiery energy of Pitta dominates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• During sleep the body uses the transformative energy of Pitta for detoxification and cellular repair. Mentally, this energy is used to digest your experiences and emotions of the day• If you're not in bed by 10pm, Pitta can give you a '2nd wind' and create hunger late at night – the cause of the famous midnight feast!

YOUR DOSHIC CLOCK & THE CIRCADIAN RHYTHM

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understood to regulate a variety of functions in the body, including metabolism, sleeping patterns, hormones, blood pressure and behaviour.¹

Your Doshic Clock

Our bodies are programmed to adapt to the different phases of the day as the earth revolves around its axis. The Ayurvedic understanding of the body clock gives us beautiful instruction on how to spend our day [see diagram above]

The natural times for daily activities

The timings and lengths of the 4 hour cycles in the above diagram changes according time of sunrise and sunset, with the sunrise and sunset initiating the start of the morning and evening Kapha phases respectively.

Dinacharya

In addition to observing the daily phases of time, Ayurveda recommends very specific morning and evening routines called *Dinacharya* ('dina' or daily routine) and *Ratricharya* ('ratri' or night routine) to help cleanse and nourish the body and senses. These include grounding practices such as self-massage and the nourishment of the sense organs. After all, our quality of life is largely dependent on the strength and clarity of our sense organs – Ayurveda therefore recommends cleansing and nourishment of each sense organ on a daily basis.

These practices can act as an inner compass, keeping us calm and on an even keel throughout the day. By aligning ourselves with these shifting phases of the day, we bring a sense of ease to the body, allowing it to function optimally.

¹ The Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine 2017. NobelPrize.org. Nobel Media AB 2020. Mon. 13 Apr 2020. <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/medicine/2017/press-release/>

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EMF - DOES IT AFFECT YOUR HEALTH?

By Atsuko Mason



Have you ever noticed feeling uncomfortable, your head feeling like its wrapped in a 'brain fog', your neck numb or just achy, like the kind you get after long bus journey? I'd been experiencing all this for probably more than 5-6 years.

It can be difficult to explain to people who have a good resistance to the radiation emitted from many of our new gadgets and household electric appliances. There are many whose body does not cope so well, those who fight to survive in a growing fog of EMF's (electromagnetic frequency).

Have you ever heard of Electromagnetic Hyper-sensitivity or EHS?

EMFs notoriously come from devices like mobile phones, laptops and keyboards, Wi-Fi routers and other electronic devices. If its wireless, its probably emitting EMF's.

More and more, in the modern world, we are less able to function without Wi-Fi. Instead of putting some sort of preventative measure to lower the amount of global electro-pollution, our bodies are being subject to ever increasing exposure through the use of more Wi-Fi/ Bluetooth gadgets etc. Even in our cars we are being bathed in EMF's.

EMF working group for the European Academy for Environmental Medicine (EUROPAEM), published a document to help doctors diagnose and treat their patients with EMF-related health problems and illnesses (Belyaev et al. 2016).

This document is a must read for physicians and health care professionals who want to improve their understanding of electro-smog and other related illnesses. The thirty five page report has more than three hundred references and topics that include current state of the scientific and political debate about EMF-related health problems from a medical perspective; worldwide statements of organizations regarding EMF; EMF and cancer, genotoxic effects, neurological effects, infertility and reproduction, electromagnetic hypersensitivity (EHS), and other diseases that require attention with respect to EMF exposure. When helping a patient, yet unable to get satisfactory levels of treatment/cure, perhaps it is worth investigating a clients 'exposure to EMFs?

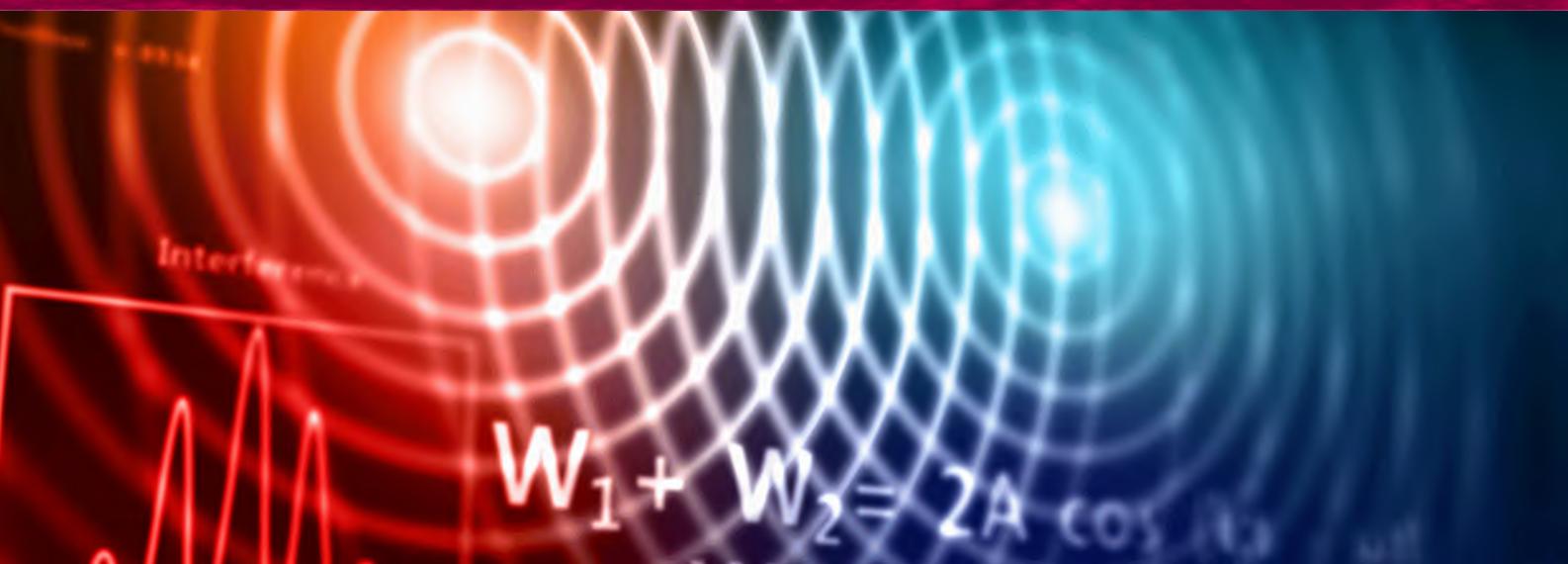
A quick look online shows there are many people trying to help others with their continuous study and searches into the reduction of EMF exposure:
<https://tinyurl.com/4tcxn6w9>

Nutrition and Integrative Medicine

According to Aruna Bakhru in Nutrition and Integrative Medicine, published in 2016, the

EMF - DOES IT AFFECT YOUR HEALTH?

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Methods of EMF mitigation include the following:

- Using a wired internet source, over a wireless one. When I work at home, on my laptop and desktop PC, I turn off the Wi-Fi function and use a long Ethernet cable to connect it to my router. I also use the wiring within the house to carry the signal to other computers, as this is already in place and works very well, in most cases better than a wireless connection.
- It's good practice to make sure your phone is switched off after 10PM, unless necessary, and to ensure that any Bluetooth are turned off, unless you really required that function, such as in your car when making calls etc.
- Carrying your phone in a bag (and not your back pocket) is also a good step in the reduction of EMF's as well as putting your smartphone into 'Airplane mode' whenever you're carry it, although this means it will not connect to internet and you will need to remember you've effectively switch it off.
- The use of grounding mats, when working at a table is quite effective, as well as the removal of electric appliances from your bedroom, unless battery powered, like alarm clocks.
- Taking off your shoes and socks and walking outside in the garden barefoot is excellent as well as paddling in the sea for a short while, if you are lucky enough to live

near the seaside. If you feel embarrassed to do either, you can simply put your hands onto the ground or grass and feel your accumulated static charge, simply flow away, into the ground.

Final thoughts

I leave readers with the following comments made by Nicolas Pineault. If you have not listened his YouTube video prior to this article; here are his thoughts in summary:

It's true that a lot of the information published online about EMF dangers is incorrect, hyperbolic, and sometimes straight-up fear mongering. As a topic, it's also extremely complex, and requires a lot of nuance. All of this leads to some people feeling that it isn't serious, or that it's only relevant to dark corners of the Internet filled with 'tin foil hatters'.

To see his video please visit: Grounding - The Documentary about 'Earthing': <https://tinyurl.com/bddd2evx>

SPINACH AND LENTIL PANCAKES RECIPE

By Laura Bridge - Instagram: [@AyurvedaAdventuress](https://www.instagram.com/AyurvedaAdventuress)



Ingredients x8 pancakes

- 200 g red lentils
- 500 g water
- 200 g spinach
- Optional: Garlic salt, dill, parsley
- A teaspoon of salt
- Ghee or olive oil for cooking

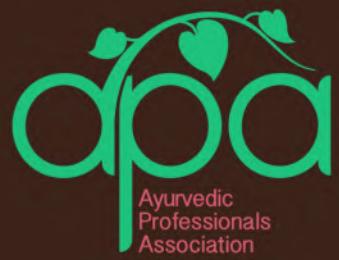
Method:

1. Put the lentils and water in a jug and soak overnight.
2. The next morning put it into a large blender (or use a stick blender) with the spinach and salt, and additional herbs if using.
3. Blend until smooth.
4. Lightly oil a large nonstick frying pan or ideally a flat griddle over a low flame. Spread A ladle of the mixture into the pan and carefully use a spatula to even out the mixture into a round wrap shape.
5. Ensure the heat is not so high that the pancakes start browning the gorgeous green colour. After around two minutes, flip the pancake and cook for a further one to two minutes.
6. Fill The pancakes with a mixture of your choice.



APA WEBINAR

Exploring the use of Leech therapy in Traditional Ayurveda practice & its modern applications



Saturday, 8th June 2024
5.30 pm - 7 pm (BST)
via Zoom



The APA will discuss and look at the use of Leeches in Ayurvedic medicine. Dr Vinayak will provide a brief overview of the historical use of leeches followed by a panel discussion.

- History of Leech Therapy and its application in traditional Ayurveda
- Mechanism of Leech Therapy in its application for disease management
- Comparative analysis of Ayurvedic and modern medical use of Leech Therapy
- Scope and limitations of Leech Therapy in the uk
- Indications and contraindication of Leech Therapy in Ayurveda and Modern Medicine
- Regulations on the use of Leeches for therapy and Leech Therapy for disease management.

Dr Vinayak Abbott, Dr Vijay Murthy, Dr Kanchan Sharma, Angela Hope-Murray and Andrew Mason.

Booking Link: <https://leechtherapy.eventbrite.co.uk>



SHILAJIT - REAL DEAL OR FAKE

By Andrew Mason



Close up shot of Shilajit rock

'There is not curable disease in the universe which is not effectively cured by Silajatu (Shilajit) when administered at the appropriate time, in combination with suitable drugs and by adopting the prescribed method. When administered to a healthy person, with similar conditions it produces immense energy.'

Caraka Samhita - Cikitsasathanam

2004



When I was training in Sri Lanka, back in 2004, the local Ayurvedic market in Colombo sold boxes of Shilajit resin (known also as *Silajatu*) in prepacked cardboard boxes or in big cloth sacks for mere rupees. If you were really lucky, you might even be able to buy the resin purified. Most of the material I purchased, was literally a big bag full of sticky black stones, micaceous limestone and soft fine sand.

Having separated the rocky part out and boiled it all down in hot water, you would roughly end up with 1/3 of the original material, in the form of a sticky and smelly black goo. This black goo was Shilajit, better known as *Adrija* in *Rasa Shastra* (Indian Alchemy). Indeed, *Adrija* was highly prized for its rasayana properties, a term we will explore later on. For the purposes of this article, I will keep with the name Shilajit, as this is the moniker it is more commonly referred to.

The word Shilajit has a number of interpretations, with many relating to unconquerable, conquer of mountains, stone-breaker, mountain-stone or making one *like a stone*. As Shilajit is typically understood to have excellent building and rejuvenation properties, all of the aforementioned seem appropriate. Needless to say, this black resinous substance was and is taken singularly or appears in a number of popular Ayurvedic formulae.

Generally, Shilajit is recommended to be consumed with warm sweetened milk. The end effect of which produces a slightly grey-brown coloured drink, which is sort of palatable, yet leaves one with a slightly unpleasant and astringent feeling, after swallowing. However, this unpleasantness is considered a small price to pay for its medicinal benefits.

2024

Fast-forward to 2024, it seems everyone and their dog, is talking about Shilajit. You can even buy it on eBay and Amazon, how the times have changed!

Today, Shilajit commands high prices, the average being around £200-300 per 1kg. In some cases more, depending upon its packaging or how the seller promotes their particular variety i.e.: *This Shilajit is from the highest mountains in India, Nepal or Pakistan.* If you are really lucky: *This Shilajit comes from a hidden mountain in Tibet.*

SHILAJIT - REAL DEAL OR FAKE

By Andrew Mason



Impurities in Shilajit after filtration

When it comes to Shilajit, its sales pitch (no pun intended) largely places emphasis on its grade and purity. Much is made of this, with frequent remarks made about fakery in the market. Unfortunately, being a black resin, it is easy to hide adulteration within its impenetrable black mass.

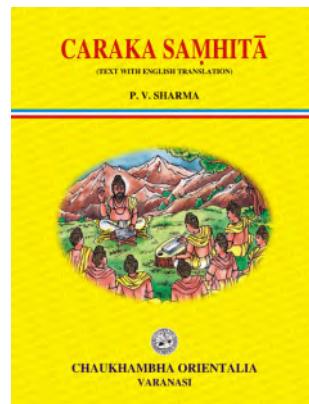
Many times, adulteration, of one sort or another, comes in the form of other more abundant plant resins, or sugars. If you are really lucky, higher grade resins, such as guggulu might be in the mixture. Other times, you might be more unlucky have it cut with impure iron oxides, clay, stones, calcium powder, plant materials and other low quality resins.

I recall a batch of Shilajit I purchased a few years back, and found a clear jelly-like substance within it. I kept it in a pot in the garden for a long time and was surprised to see it remain totally unaffected by the changing elements, to date it remains unidentified.

I did manage to buy a very small quantity of quality stones from a dealer and on the back of this ordered a larger batch. When it arrived, it turned out to be mostly fine sand and stones. After filtration, this batch reduced down to less than 50% of its original weight. This is the way it is, some you win, some you lose. These latter failures show the importance of purification and how a few simple steps can save lots of problems later on.

The importance of purification in texts

In the classical Ayurvedic text *Caraka Samhita*, we are advised that the mountainous exudate/resin be firstly impregnated by drugs that reduce Vata, Pitta and Kapha. This is done by immersing the stones in hot (boiled) decoctions of said drugs, and cooked down. At this point, more decoction is added. This process is repeated seven times. Upon completion, iron calx (Loha bhasma) is added to the mixture. Shilajit prepared according to this method produces a sturdiness of body, prevents ageing, improves intellect and memory, while increasing ones wealth. While taking this Shilajit, it is recommended to consume only milk.



Other texts recommend the shilajit rock be soaked in Triphala decoction, without the application of heat. In this latter operation, soaked Shilajit slowly forms a crust on the surface of the decoction. This crust can then be scraped off and dried. In addition, alchemical texts speak about the extraction of Sattva, through high temperature operations.

This latter operation is achieved by mixing resin with *Panca-mitraka*, or five friends. When heated to over 1000 degrees, reduce to a medicinal ash.

Shilajit, having its source in rock and soil, naturally contains a cocktail of minerals and other types of organic matter. Purification through dilution, into herbal decoctions, helps remove Nano-particles and other contaminates, allowing the heavier elements to settle out and be filtered. Shilajit is water-soluble, and when poured through cloth, can then be placed in the sun to evaporate, leaving only the purest form of the resin. This filtration practice is quite common in Ayurveda, and is very effective at sifting out extraneous matter, be it metals, minerals or plant based materials that are not required.

SHILAJIT - REAL DEAL OR FAKE

By Andrew Mason



Evaporating decoction of triphala from Shilajit



Sample of alpine rock, high in mica content

Types of Shilajit

In Caraka Samhita, Shilajit is described as a cure all. It was observed to favour mountain rocks that also contained ores. It was its association with these metals that gave it different medicinal properties, saying:

- Shilajit, from rocks containing copper produces a resin that is peacock blue in colour, bitter, heating and pungent upon digestion.
- Shilajit, from rocks containing silver produces a resin that is pungent, cooling and sweet.
- Shilajit, from rocks containing gold produces a resin that is sweet and bitter, looking like the flower of Japa (*Hibiscus rosa*).
- Shilajit, from rocks containing iron (particularly magnetic), produces a resin that is bitter, salty and cooling. This type of Shilajit is of the highest medicinal quality.

Caraka Samhita describes the exudate as looking like guggulu, tasting bitter and salty. It should be cooling in effect (should its rock be rich with iron). It should also smell like the urine from a cow.

Note: in addition to gold, silver, copper and iron, *Susrutha Samhita* (another classical Ayurvedic text) mentions Shilajit may also be found in rocks that contain tin and lead. Both

types of Shilajit are also acceptable for the treatment of disease and rejuvenation.

Kapura-Shilajit (white Shilajit)

There is a white variety of Shilajit, sometimes referred to as Kapura-shilajit, alum-earth or stone-oil. The former, is sold as a bhasma or alchemical ash, and is probably a type of Shilajit Sattva. These powders are obtained by high temperature calcination of the resin mixed with borax, ghee, guggulu, jaggery and honey.

Undergoing chemical analysis, these ashes have been found to contain: Ca (calcium), Al (aluminium), Mg (magnesium), Na (sodium) and K (potassium). The resultant white powder is usually suspended in honey or some type of syrup, and taken internally as medicine.

Alum-earth/Stone oil is another type of residue seen to emanate from some mountainous rocks. This latter material, where analysed, appears to be a natural mixture of sodium and calcium, intermixed with elements such like silicon, manganese, sulphur and phosphorus.

I have not come across the latter material and so cannot really comment on it. That being said, a few years back I was in the Swiss Alps and came across some odd white stones, some hard, others brittle, yet all contained mica. Some of the striated rocks reminded me of talc stone, and one could see this might easily reduce to a whitish powder.

SHILAJIT - REAL DEAL OR FAKE

By Andrew Mason



Rock rich in Shilajit resin

Tar Tunnels (UK)

Coalbrookdale, near Telford, boasts a tourist spot called Iron Bridge and as part of the ironworks tour, visitors are also invited to explore a 1000 yard tunnel that burrows into the Gorge, across which the Iron Bridge spans. The aptly named *Tar Tunnel*, oozes a bitumen exudate, that in years gone by was also marketed as a medicine.

While access to the tarry tunnel is now restricted, you can find plenty of images of this curiosity, on-line. One of the popular remedies associated with the tar tunnel was a liniment. This was recommended to be applied to painful joints, to reduce inflammation and help in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis.

The use of bitumen's and tars was very popular in the ancient world. These types of materials have been used medicinally for thousands of years. Material such as birch tar and *mumio* are two notable examples. The latter is a mineral pitch used to bind the wrappings of mummies in Ancient Egypt. In more recent times, exhumed mummy wrappings (both human and animal), that were impregnated with the tar were sold and ground as longevity elixirs. This practice was eventually stopped, due to the loss of archaeological specimens.

Modern methodology

In practice, most modern Ayurvedic pharmacies firstly boil stones rich in Shilajit in water. The

stones are slowly cooked down at temperatures of less than 80 degrees. The remaining black resin is then mixed with triphala decoction. The latter can be substituted with either milk or cow urine. All have the ability to purify Shilajit, it only remains which is more abundant or easily procured. Caraka Samhita mentions that milk, buttermilk, soup (meat or vegetable), water or urine, are suitable to boil or soak Shilajit in.

Note: modern poor quality material is similarly soaked or boiled in cow urine, making it smell more like real Shilajit. Yes - Shilajit, in its raw state does smell a bit like cow urine. I am happy to report, this becomes less pronounced, when consumed. As an aside, it is said that - when consuming Shilajit, one should avoid both pungent and heavy foods. Kulattha (horse gram) and Kapota (meat of pigeon) are especially bad. Oddly, milk is considered heavy, but it is also sweet and cooling. Milk it seems has been indicated to be the best food to accompany the taking of Shilajit.

Rasa Shastra and Rasayana

Rasa Shastra (Indian Alchemy) mentions Shilajit as an important alchemical material. It appears in Maha Rasa (greatest materials), indicating (1) its potency and (2) its abundance were both high. Indeed, Shilajit is still largely extracted in the Himalayan region. Other Maha Rasa materials include: mica, pyrites and copper sulphate, all associated minerals and metals found in association with Shilajit samples.

Rasa Shastra describes *rasayana* materials as those promoting immortality. This comes from the meaning of the word to indicate one following the path of Rasa - mercury (Hg). In this context, *Rasa* is one of a number of synonyms for the liquid metal. Here the word, *ayana*, is taken to mean the pathway one is required to follow to attain the benefits given by mercury. The name Rasa Shastra therefore might be considered to be the *knowledge of alchemy*.

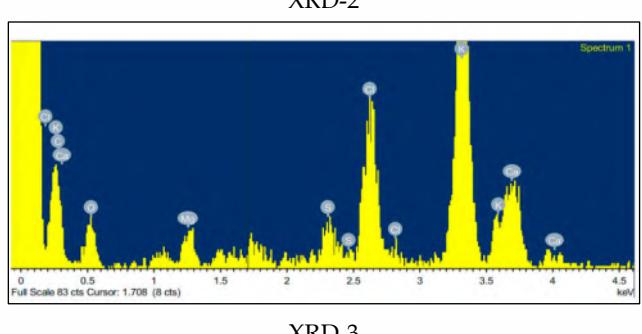
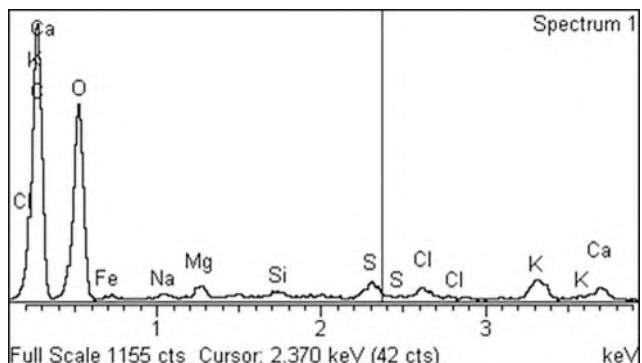
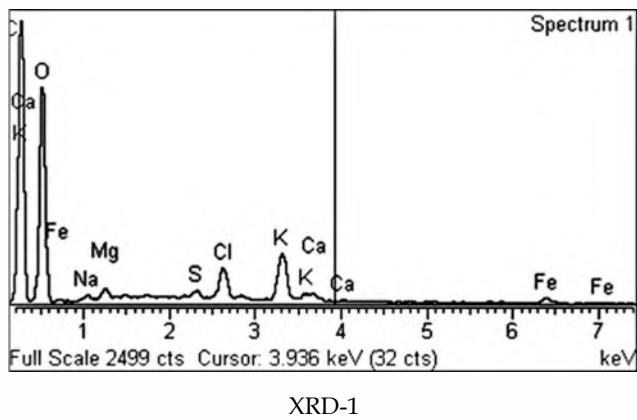
SHILAJIT - REAL DEAL OR FAKE

By Andrew Mason

Shilajit is understood to have excellent rasayana (rejuvenation) properties. It has a strong affinity with the kidneys and urinary tract, indeed, one of the names for Shilajit translates to stone-lac, due to its lithotriptic properties. The analogy to lac is meant to conjure up the idea of immortality and fixedness, both likened to the durability lac and red colour.

Note: There are those who claim that Shilajit has the ability to remove impure mercury toxicity, from the body.

What is Shilajit?



It is not easy to say what Shilajit is, as its individual contents vary a bit, according to their sampled sources. There are of course similarities, but what can be said is that it is found in the mountainous areas of India, Nepal and Pakistan, extending as far as the Himalayan foothills or Altai mountain range.

In the XRD graphics presented here, I tested batches of Shilajit in the UK. Both show similar results, with only the trace elements varying. Where an unexpected element show up, it is either a contaminant, or just appears on the same element spike. This usually indicates the presence of a rare earth element, in a very small quantity.

When we examine the XRD more closely, the elements of calcium, carbon, iron, sodium, oxygen, silicon, manganese are present. The most common elements in Shilajit tend to be Ca

(calcium), C (carbon), S (sulphur) and Mg (magnesium). As I say, the trace elements vary due to the sample locale. Note: higher concentrations of sulphur (S) tend to lead to less water soluble types of Shilajit.

Mineral or Plant?

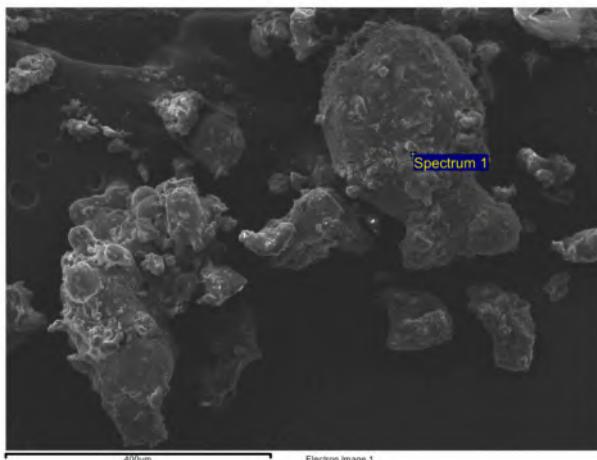
As the weather warms in mountains and the sun beats down upon the rock, some start to weep this black resin. Shilajit can also be dug out of the rock and the resin extracted from pieces of rock. When placed into water, the rocks slowly dissolve, turning the water black. This initial reaction is also a good purity test, as it shows how water soluble the material will be.

From the overall composition of Shilajit, it looks more organic, but it can also depend upon how long it has been within the rock. While some claim Shilajit is millions of years old and mainly the result of intense geological activity, others assert it is the recent end product of plant, earth and mineral interactions, hastened on by low temperatures, high altitude and oxygen levels.

I am inclined toward both being important factors, meaning that, different types of resin are

SHILAJIT - REAL DEAL OR FAKE

By Andrew Mason



SEM - electron microscope image of Shilajit



Dola Yantra of Shilajit rock

the end product of many processes and ingredients. For instance, in some of the rocks I purified, there was a high degree of mica, silicon and calcium. Certainly, some grades are quite brown in colour and can end up being more solid and are able to be powdered. Other batches remain resinous, black and sticky, no matter how you process.

Note: I have not seen Shilajit in association with any ores being present (as described in Caraka Samhita), but the taste of Shilajit can be quite astringent, and iron-like.

Purification methods in detail and identification

As previously touched upon, there are a number of ways to purify Shilajit, the most common is to boil the impregnated rocks inside a cotton bag. These bags are then suspended in a device known as a *Dola Yantra* or swing device. This is a basic piece of equipment that suspends bags into a decoction without it touching the bottom of the pot (see diagram).

Having boiled the rocks for a few hours, the bags are removed from the water and tapped lightly, to further break up their contents. The bags are then placed back into the water and any remaining resin is fully extracted. Finally, the bags are removed, and the water reduced until a thickened black residue remains. Any remaining material in the bags is discarded.

Next, triphala decoction or cow's urine is prepared/collected, and the remaining resin is again cooked or soaked in these liquids. This process can be very slow and take a few days to complete.

As odd as it sounds, cow's urine works rather well as a purification medium, and is abundant (if you happen to have cows). It is also fairly easy to collect. Cow urine has a known affinity with Loha (iron) in Rasa Shastra, making its use highly recommended, when purifying iron.

The final resin is usually stored in a glass jar, being warmed prior to use, then mixed with sweetened milk. If heated, the resin becomes a black powder at around 300c, but this is not something I would recommend as it can be a smoky and smelly operation.

Boil or sun dry

One of the biggest criticisms I receive, is talking about 'boiling' Shilajit. This is strange, as this method has been given in Caraka Samhita, and is known as *Agni-tapta*. However, there are those who say no heat should be used, a method called *Surya-tapta* is preferred and is said to be the better method. I have prepared both and find either effective.

Many pharmacies will boil Shilajit to prepare as the natural evaporation process is time consuming and more labour intensive. They also

SHILAJIT - REAL DEAL OR FAKE

By Andrew Mason



Shilajit being purified in cow urine

tend to use milk as the purifying medium as it is more available and cheaper. If you are interested in seeing the process, I made a short YouTube video. It can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/3254nrpr>

Medicinal use and a word of caution

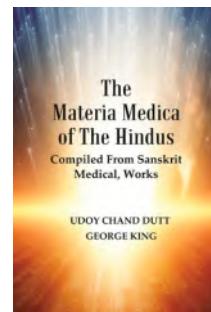
Shilajit is primarily being used as a modern day tonic and aphrodisiac. Providing its source is genuine, the use of Shilajit can be quite safe, however, it should be kept in mind the potential to adulterate is high. With every passing year Shilajit grows every more profitable and so to does the temptation to cut corners or cheapen the mix.

Like any medicine, Shilajit should not be self-prescribed, as there are possible side effects. Dosage also remains a disputed topic, with some advocating high doses, whereas others are generally more cautious.

This resin does have a heating property, and can also aggravate the urinary tract (in some individuals). It is also quite astringent and so creates some level of dryness. This is why milk, a substance that effectively contains its opposite properties, is recommended as its anupana or vehicle. Conversely, milk as an anupana, facilitates Shilajit's access to deeper bodily tissues and so impurities will be taken deeper into the tissues.

Note: Milk has a strong affinity with the deepest tissues in the body, ie: *Shukra Dhatus* (reproductive tissue).

I end with the following recommendations, taken from the *Hindu Materia Medica*.



'The extract of Shilajit is regarded as a powerful alterative tonic, and is considered especially useful in urinary diseases, diabetes, gravel, anaemia, consumption, cough, and various skin diseases. The extract is usually given in doses of six to twelve grains (1 grain = 65mg). In cases of painful urination, it is given with honey or with a decoction of gokshura. As an alterative tonic, it is used in combination with iron and silver bhasma (calx), triphala, ginger, black pepper, long pepper, vidanga and sugar.'



HOW TO PREPARE AMAZAKE - FERMENTED RICE SYRUP

By Atsuko Mason



Amazake is made of rice malt, it's non-alcoholic, so even children can drink it. It has the mild sweetness of *Koji* (malted rice) so there is no need to add sugar. As fermentation progresses and saccharification occurs, it becomes a porridge-like paste. Because of its rich nutritional content, it is called a "drinking drip".

It is also a nice drink to warm the body in the winter, and a nutritional tonic in the summer. It was once useful as a simple nutritional supplement during the hot summer months when appetite decreased, but in modern times people don't consider this property so much.

The glucose component relieves brain fatigue, so drinking it before bed is said to improve the quality of your sleep. However, it is usually recommended as a morning drink, when intestinal activity is slower. This is also the time when you want to increase your energy level. When consumed it should be around 35 to 40 degrees, this increases its rich enzymatical effect.

Ingredients / tools required:

1. Rice malt 200g. You can purchase from KANPAI London <https://kanpai.london/>
2. Water (hot) 200g. Filtered or bottled water is recommended
3. Cooked rice - 100g
4. A rice cooker or yogurt maker, a cooking thermometer and a glass jar to keep the Amakzake in. The ratio of rice malt, cooked rice, and water should be 2:1:2.

Method:

Place rice malt and cooked rice in a heat-retainable container, like electric yoghurt maker. Pour hot water (about **60 degrees**) and mix thoroughly so there are no lumps.

Next, keep the water at the same temperature for about 5 to 6 hours, but if you don't have any suitable items, you can use a rice cooker's *keep warm mode*. At this time, cover the rice cooker pot with a cloth and close the lid to maintain the temperature at 60 degrees. When the time is up, mix well and the Amazake is complete.

Amazake will be ready when you can smell a mild sweetness. This means the rice grain has begun to breakdown. Overcooking will turn Amazake sour and so will lose its natural sweetness!

How to store:

Transfer Amazake into a clean airtight container and put it in the refrigerator, it will keep for about a week. If you want to keep it longer than that, freeze it. However, it should be consumed within three months.

If you want to buy Amazake instead of making it, I recommend Cleaspring, as they make an orgaanic Amazake.

How to prepare Amazake

Ingredients

- 150g Amazake
- 150g Water or Milk of any kind
- Pinch of salt
- Optional: add sweetner or $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp freshly grated ginger

HOW TO PREPARE AMAZAKE - FERMENTED RICE SYRUP

By Atsuko Mason



Method

1. Mix the Amazake and water in a saucepan and bring to the boil.
2. Sieve, if desired, to remove the Amazake bran then stir in the grated ginger. Adjust water quantity for a thinner consistency if preferred.

<https://tinyurl.com/4zhmur3w> How to reheat

Amazake: A tasty tonic to stimulate the circulation and create a warm, relaxed feeling. Serve hot on cold winter days, or refreshing and chilled in the Summer. A tasty tonic to stimulate the circulation and create a warm, relaxed feeling. Serve hot on cold winter days, or refreshing and chilled in the Summer.

CELEBRATING HERBAL MEDICINE IN THE BRISTOL CHINESE HERB GARDEN

A unique day in the Bristol Chinese Herb Garden for RCHM and Herbal Alliance Members.

All profits generated go to the Herbal Alliance

- Take a guided tour of the Chinese herbs in the garden with founder Tony Harrison and see the peonies in bloom
- Learn from RCHM President, Martin John, about the connection between Chinese herbs and the microbiome
- Explore the Western herbal medicine plants in the garden with Simon Mills
- See the three herbal traditions of Ayurveda, Chinese and Western Herbal Medicine come together with a roundtable discussion focused on the clinical use of herbs

Help raise money for the Herbal Alliance

A day provided by the Register of Chinese Herbal Medicine for RCHM members and members of the Herbal Alliance



Celebrating Herbal Medicine in the Bristol Chinese Herb Garden

19th May 2024



SCHEDULE

10:00 AM: Chinese Herb Garden Tour with Tony Harrison

To kick off the day, Tony will guide you through the garden sharing his knowledge of plants, from their unique personalities, to horticulture, to western pharmacological properties to how they are used in the clinical practice of Chinese herbal medicine. See the peonies in bloom.

11:15 AM: Tea Break

11:30 AM: Talk: Chinese Herbal Medicine & the Microbiome with RCHM President, Martin John. In this talk, Martin will share the fruit of his deep investigation into the effects of Chinese herbs on the microbiome. You will learn the incredible discoveries that have been made in this area from the latest research.

12:30 pm: Herbal Alliance Presentation

1PM - 2PM: Lunchbreak. Bring your own packed lunch or food available to purchase at the Bristol Herb Garden cafe.

2pm-3:15pm: A tour of the Western Herbal Medicine plants in the garden with Simon Mills. A perfect complement to Tony's Chinese herbal tour in the morning, Simon will take you on a guided tour of some of the Western herbs in the garden.

3:15Pm - 3:30pm: Teabreak

3:30pm-4:30pm: A view across traditions - Roundtable discussion with Ayurveda, Chinese and Western herbal medicine practitioners - Alex Jacobs, Simon Mills & TBD. Practitioners of herbal medicine traditions have different kinds of inheritances and apply different kinds of thinking to the practice of herbs. Here three practitioners from different traditions will discuss herbs that the three traditions have in common and how they are applied in practice. Herbs to be discussed will include turmeric, frankincense, ginger, licorice, cinnamon, mint and fennel seed.

Booking link: <https://www.eventcreate.com/e/celebratingherbalmedicine>

URHP Summer Gathering 2024

JULY 5TH - 7TH 2024

Beechwood Court CEHC, Mountain Road, Conwy, North Wales LL32 8PY

'Moving Forward Together'

A Conference for Qualified Herbalists & Herbal Students

We are excited to be able to welcome you all, in person, to this year's URHP conference. This will be an amazing and exuberant weekend blending a whole diversity of expertise. This is an opportunity to share and learn from the wealth of wisdom, knowledge and experience in our herbal community. Along with the set programme, there will be 'open space' for spontaneous discussion and skill sharing. The conference begins Friday afternoon and finishes after lunch on Sunday.

SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

Cassie Sheriff – *Medieval Music & Medieval Herbalism*

Rachel Boon – *Women's Health – Perimenopause*

Barbara Wilkinson – *A walk on the wild side & Case Presentation*

Anne Stobart – *Creating a Medicinal Forest Garden*

Note: speakers may be subject to change at short notice.

The URHP can aid any member who requires financial support.

Please add this to the booking form.

Book your place with Liz Lyder treasurerurhp@gmail.com

Places are limited at Beechwood Court, please book before the end of April.

There is a £50 deposit whether you are a day delegate or staying for one night or the whole weekend. Full payment by 15th May 2024. Please go to booking-form/ Conference fee £230 with Ensuite and £200 Standard with shared bathroom.

See booking form for further options including dietary requirements.

This venue is Alcohol free and wheelchair accessible.

BOOKING LINK: <https://pay.sumup.com/b2c/QC67L7L6>

URHP Summer Gathering 2024

JULY 5TH - 7TH 2024

Beechwood Court CEHC, Mountain Road, Conwy, North Wales LL32 8PY

'Moving Forward Together'

A Conference for Qualified Herbalists & Herbal Students

Conference Programme

Friday 5th July

16.00 – 17.00	Registration
17.00 – 18.00	URHP - Members Informal Chat welcome
18.00 – 18.30	Opening Conference by URHP Chair & Mistress of Ceremony
18.30 – 19.30	Dinner
	Open Fire Ceremony
20.00 – 21.00	Oath & Sharing of Intentions/Gratitude Cassie Sheriff – Medieval Music & Medieval Herbalism

Saturday 6th July

08.00 – 09.00	Breakfast
10.00 – 11.10	Rachel Boon - Women's Health - Perimenopause
11.10 – 11.25	Tea Break
11.25 – 11.45	Rachel Boon - Q & A Women's Health – Perimenopause
11.45 – 12.30	Free Time
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch
14.00 – 15.30	Barbara Wilkinson– A Walk on the Wild Side Case Presentation
15.30 – 16.00	15.30 – 16.00 Tea Break
16.00 – 18.00	16.00 - 18.00 AGM
18.30 – 19.30	18.30 – 19.30 Dinner
19.30 – 23.30	19.30 - 23.30 Social gathering

URHP Summer Gathering 2024

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Conference Programme

Sunday 7th July

08.00 – 09.00	Breakfast
10.00 – 12.00	Anne Stobart - Creating a Medicinal Forest Garden
12.00 – 12.30	Close Conference - Thank delegates, attendees and Venue
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch
14.00	Farewells
	Open Space

At this year's Conference there will be an Open Space throughout the event. This is simply an alternative program that anyone at the Conference can create at any time.

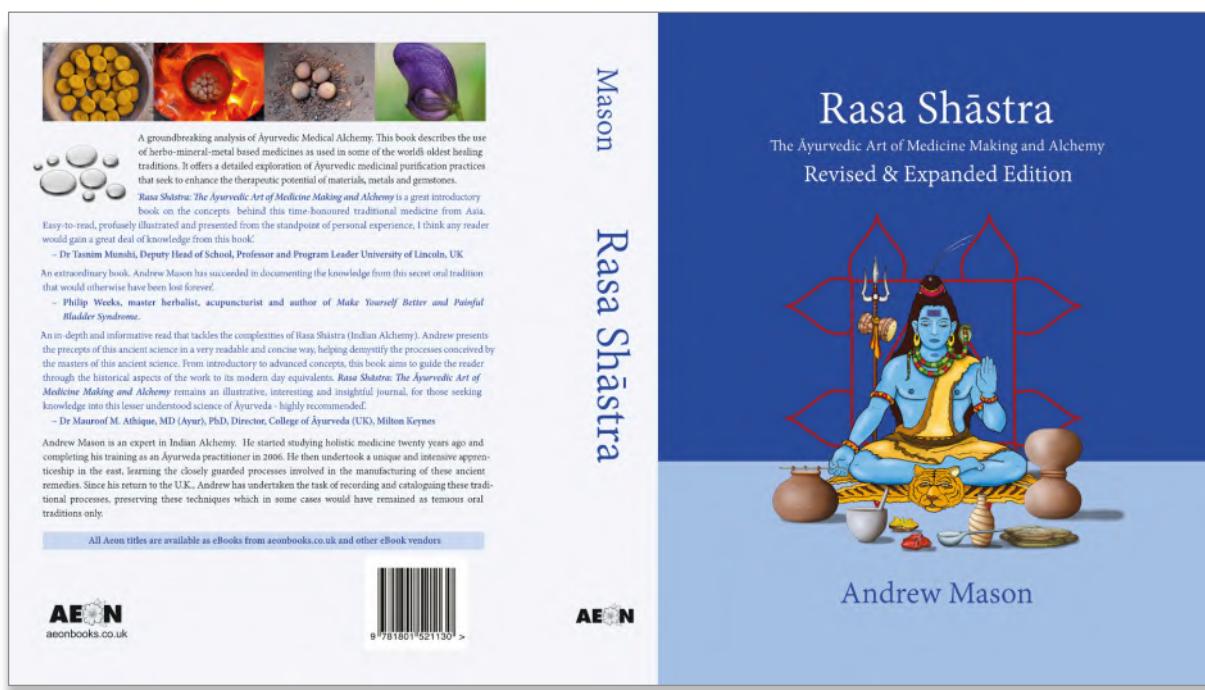
The way this works is that if anyone wants to facilitate a discussion or group activity, they can announce this on the Open Space Notice Board saying what, where and when. This can be as an additional option to the scheduled Seminars, during meal breaks or in the evening.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT SPEAKERS MAY BE SUBJECT
TO CHANGE AT SHORT NOTICE**

BOOKING LINK: <https://pay.sumup.com/b2c/QC67L7L6>

RASA SHASTRA - REVISED AND EXPANDED EDITION

By Andrew Mason



I am delighted to share that the publication of "Rasa Shastra: The Ayurvedic Art of Medicine Making and Alchemy" is approaching this month. **AEON** books are providing an early promotional deal with a 20% discount if you use the code **RS20**. At the moment, the book is available for pre-order and the promotional discount code is valid until May 31st, 2024.

Here is the accompanying text for the book, and link to purchase:

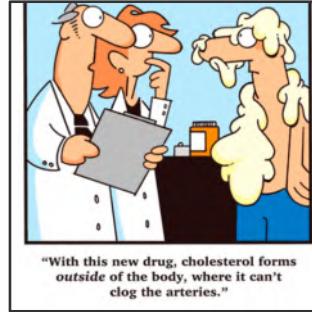
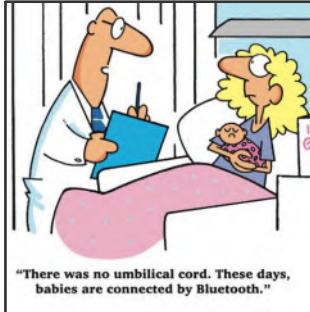
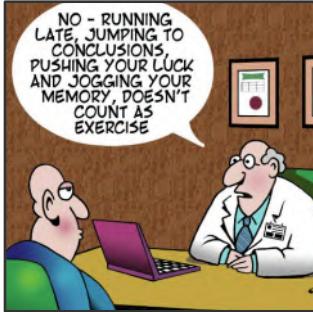
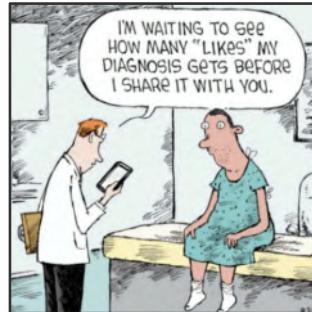
<https://tinyurl.com/2s3a5y49>

In this revised and expanded edition of his seminal text, Andrew Mason explores the branch of Ayurveda, involving the traditional ancient Indian medicine called Rasa Shastra in which various metals, minerals and other substances are purified and combined with herbs to treat illnesses.

Based on years of observation and practice in Sri Lanka, Mason offers a detailed exploration of this medicinal purification practice that seeks to enhance the therapeutic potential of materials, metals and gemstones, as well as offering a concise overview of traditional and modern equipment and methods used in the manufacture of these medicines.

The author's unique and fascinating account of the hidden alchemical arts also explains some of the historical background behind the on-going quest amongst Asian alchemists for immortality.

The new edition of Rasa Shastra includes a reformatting of tables; reevaluating the processing and utilisation of materials; a comprehensive account of the purification process in the section on Parada; a new 'Essentials in the Pharmacy' sections'; an expanded 'materials' section with a comprehensive section on Lavana and important types of salt; additional plants, such as Langali; and an enriched 'Materials' chapter.



Ayurvedic Professionals Association
Office contact: info@apa.uk.com

PHOTO CREDITS

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