

Ayurveda modality towards the geriatric care: A critical review

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Abstract

Ayurveda is one of the oldest systems for the management of health that includes several branches for various health purposes, Kayachikitsa being one of them. This system has evolved over the course of civilisation. The use of internal medicine and its main concepts and techniques are covered in the Kayachikitsa. The primary goal of branch Kayachikitsa is to cure the body (Kaya) using Ayurvedic medicine and principles. In this context, Ayurveda indicated many ways for geriatric care, including use of internal medicine. The ageing process or issues associated with old age also need to be taken care of. In cases of ageing or geriatric health difficulties, the usage of natural carpets together with basic Ayurvedic principles delivers health advantages

Considering this point here we summarize an Ayurveda aspect towards geriatric care W.S.R. to Kayachikitsa.

Keywords: Ayurveda; Kayachikitsa; Geriatric; Oldage; Vardhakya

1. Introduction

Kayachikitsa is branches of Ayurveda that considers various aspects such as; Nidana, Shamana, Shodhana and Satwawajaya for the management of diseases and overall health restoration. The Kayachikitsa not only support towards the maintenance of physical health but also restores mental health status. The approaches of Kayachikitsa such as; medications, counseling and use of detoxification measure, etc. helps to manage good health status[1].

The aging is biological process that mainly associated with diminish state of Dhatu, Balya and Tridosha. It is believed that Vata Dosa initiate degenerative activity during old age due to which Agni becomes weak, Srotamsi & Ojabala diminishes and deterioration at Doshic level take places. Ayurveda Kayachikitsa mentioned different practices towards the potentiating of Agni, Oja and Dhatu thereby balances Doshas at biological level. These all approaches not only help to cure symptoms of early ageing but also boost overall immunity thus prevent from acute infections. Ayurveda drugs such as; Arjuna, Guggulu, Puskarmula, Brahmi, Triphala and Amrita, etc. provides many good health effects that prevent adversity of ageing. Figure 1 depicted approach that cures early ageing.

2. Kayachikitsa for geriatric care

The medicine and other approaches belong from Kayachikitsa modality provides following health benefits that cure ageing

- The medicine of Kayachikitsa boosts Agni thus enhances metabolic activity in geriatric person.
- The Rasayana drugs potentiate Dhatu thus maintain physical integrity and general appearance.

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- The drugs that enhance immunity help to reduce frequency of general infections which are very common in elderly. The drugs that balances Dosha improves overall physiological functioning of body and prevent prevalence of pathological conditions.
- The detoxifying drugs eliminate waste thus open up channels and normalize excretory process.
- Rasayana drugs impart rejuvenation effects, provide longevity and improve sexual vitality.
- The drugs also help to restore normal circulatory process therefore prevent chances of hypertension and stroke.
- The internal medicine directly pacifies Rasa, control obesity, purify Rakta and empower Asthi/joint in elderly person thus prevents common health problems related to ageing.

2.1. The drugs can be used for geriatric care are as follows [5-10]

2.1.1. Guggulu

Guggulu reduces fats thus control symptoms of obesity, its anti-inflammatory property suppress joint pain, acts as anti-oxidant and boost circulations.

2.1.2. Guduchi

Guduchi in geriatric person can revive skin tissues and enhances immunity thus prevent prevalence of common infections for which elderly are very susceptible.

2.1.3. Amalaki

Amalaki acts as antioxidants due to the presence of Vitamin-C, helps from age related degeneration and cataract. It boosts digestion and restores circulatory activities.

2.1.4. Ginseng

Ginseng stimulate skin metabolism thus enhance skin appearances, help form free radicals damage, prevent skin damage induce by pollution and sunlight. It also known to possess sexual stimulant activity.

2.1.5. Turmeric

Turmeric exerted good anti-ageing effect, its anti-inflammatory properties relieve pain, its antioxidants action help in oxidative damage and enhances immune power.

2.1.6. Brahmi

Brahmi acts as memory enhancer especially in case of age related memory loss, it enhances overall mental activity and refreshes brain.

2.1.7. Ashwagandha

Ashwagandha enhances cell regeneration, give rejuvenation, delay signs of ageing and maintain texture of skin.

2.1.8. Shilajit

The drug helps in Alzheimer's disease, fatigue, insomnia and treats age related health problems. The constituent of Shilajit; fulvic acid act as an antioxidant thus prevents oxidative damage of tissue. It enhances physical strength, sexual stamina and empowers digestive power.

2.2. Drugs used for specific purpose in geriatric care are as follows

- Drugs improve skin luster and complexion: Bhringaraja and Somaraji
- Drugs improve Drishti (Vision): Saptamrtalauha and Kataka
- Drugs improve Shukra (sexual strength): Ashwagandha, Kapikacchubija and Musali
- Drugs used for cardio functioning and heart: Arjuna and Pushkarmula
- Drugs used for hearing improvement: DashamulaTaila and ApamargaTaila Drugs for respiratory care: Vardhaman pippali
- Drugs for digestive system: Long pepper & Haritaki
- Drugs cure nervous system: Calamus & Shankhapushpi
- Drugs boost excretory system in elderly: Vidanga and Punarnava

3. Conclusion

The complete management of health/body comes under approaches of Kaya Chikitsa that mainly involves diagnosis and treatment of health ailments using medicine and other modalities. These therapies help to maintain balance of Vata, Pitta and Kapha, potentiate Dhatu, enhance nourishment, regularize circulatory process and detoxify body thus prevent disease prevalence and also combat against adverse effects of degenerative ageing. Ayurveda imparts longevity thus offers great response in geriatric care. Kaya Chikitsa involves uses of various internal medicines for the management of ageing or geriatric care. Ashwagandha, Musali, Arjuna, Haritaki, Shankhapushpi, Vidanga, Shilajit, Ginseng and Turmeric, etc. are some drugs that helps in age related health problems. The drugs and other approaches of Kaya Chikitsa improve skin luster, Drisht, Shukra, cardio functioning, metabolic activities, functioning of nervous system and regularizes excretory system in elderly person. Finally, it can be concluded that ayurveda medicine can be used as an alternative approach for geriatric care without any adverse effects.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors declare that there was no conflict of interest regarding the publication of manuscript.

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