

Vayahsthapan Mahakashaya: An Ayurvedic Rejuvenative Formula with Anti-Aging Potential

Dr. Shambhu P. Patel¹, Dr. Nidhi Sachan², Dr. Satender Khatri³, Dr. Rajiv Bansal⁴

¹Associate Professor, Dept. of Dravyaguna, Vivek College of Ayurvedic Sciences & Hospital, Bijnor UP

²Associate Professor, Dept. of Dravyaguna, Prem Raghu Ayurvedic Medical College & Hospital, Hathras, UP

³Assistant Professor, Dept. of Dravyaguna, Santushti Ayurvedic Medical College & Hospital, Hinauti, Mirzapur UP

⁴Assistant Professor, Dept. of Dravyaguna, Om ayurvedic medical college, hospital and research center Roorkee, Haridwar

Abstract: The ancient Ayurvedic herbal group known as Vayahsthapan Mahakashaya (also called Vayasthapan Dashakaya or Vayahsthapan Gana) is one of the ten main Mahakashaya (herb groups) that are used to promote health and prevent premature aging and is documented in the Charaka Samhita. By balancing the doshas and supporting tissue nourishment (Rasayana), these medicines are historically thought to increase longevity (Ayushya), strength (Balya), intelligence (Medhya), and youthfulness (Taruna Vayah). A normal yet intricate biological process, aging (Jara) is marked by a progressive loss of immunity, tissue regeneration, cognitive function, and physiological functioning. According to Ayurveda, aging results from the depletion of Ojas, Agni mandya, Dhatu kshaya, and Vata predominance. According to recent review articles, its pharmacological potential includes immunomodulatory, metabolic regulatory, and antioxidant properties that may prevent age-related deterioration, senescence, and preserve young by Rasayana activity. The current essay examines Vayahsthapan Mahakasaya as a comprehensive anti-aging intervention, including its ancient references, pharmacodynamic basis, Ayurvedic mechanisms, contemporary scientific connections, and research prospects.

Keywords- Vayahsthapan, Mahakasaya, Rasayana, Aging, Jara, Anti-aging Ayurveda, Longevity, Dhatu Poshana.

I. INTRODUCTION & CLASSICAL BACKGROUND

The ancient Indian medical system known as Ayurveda categorizes herbs according to both their

aggregate Gana or Mahakashaya designations, which represent their therapeutic functions, and their individual pharmacology. One such group is Vayahsthapan Mahakashaya, which is mentioned in the Rasayana portion of the Charaka Samhita (Sutra Sthana). Rasayana essentially strengthens the immune system, or Oja, the vital energy of life, and aids in maintaining good health.¹ The literal meaning of vayahsthapan is "that which stabilizes age," which is understood to mean reviving vitality, postponing aging, and increasing longevity by maintaining bodily tissues and essential processes. This group is mentioned by Acharya Charaka in treatments that function through rejuvenation (Rasayana) to obtain long life (Deergha Ayu), better intellect (Medha), enhanced memory (Smriti), ideal health (Arogya), youthfulness, appealing skin, and sound voice (Swara). While aging is unavoidable, Ayurveda suggests that premature aging, or Akala Jara, can be avoided. Vatadosha is physically prominent in old age, while Rasadi dhatus, or body tissues, are in a deficient state.² In contrast to contemporary medicine, which mostly sees aging as cellular deterioration, Ayurveda regards aging as a functional imbalance including Agni, Ojas, Dhatu, and Doṣa. Rasayana medications demonstrate their anti-stress, antioxidant, and immune-stimulating qualities.³

Acharya Charaka classifies drugs into Mahakasayas based on their predominant therapeutic utility. Among these, *Vayahsthapan Mahakasaya* is specifically dedicated to:

- Preservation of youth (*Vayah Sthapana*)
- Enhancement of longevity (*Ayuhkara*)
- Maintenance of physical, mental, and sensory strength

This Mahakasaya forms a cornerstone of Ayurvedic geriatrics (*Jara Chikitsa*).

II. METHODOLOGY

In order to comprehend the idea and content of *Vayahsthan Mahakashaya*, the study included a review of traditional Ayurvedic books. The formulation was made in accordance with traditional methods, and its *Rasayana* and anti-aging properties were assessed using pharmacognostical, phytochemical, and experimental methods.

Global health situation for older adults

Fertility is gradually declining in the twenty-first century, and as life expectancy rises, society will have to deal with concerns related to longevity. Heart disease, cancer, stroke, and respiratory issues are the main causes of death for the elderly. Chronic

Composition of *Vayahsthan Mahakashaya*:

अमृताऽभयाधात्रीमुक्ताश्वेताजीवन्त्यततरसा मण्डूकपर्णीतथिरापुननवा इतत दशेमातन वयःथिपनातन भवतन्तत ॥ च. सु. ४/१८⁶

Based on classical texts and modern reviews, *Vayahsthan Mahakashaya* comprises ten medicinal agents (*Dashakaya*):

1	Amṛta	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i>	Rasayana, Tridoṣaghna
2	Abhaya	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	Vayasya, Agnideepaka
3	Dhatri	<i>Emblica officinalis</i>	Vṛṣya, Rasayana
4	Mukta	Pearl (organic mineral)	Pittahara, Medhya
5	Sveta	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i> (white)	Medhya, Vatahara
6	Jivanti	<i>Leptadenia reticulata</i>	Jivaniya
7	Atirasa	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i>	Br̥mhaṇa, Rasayana
8	Maṇḍukaparṇi	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	Medhya Rasayana
9	Sthira	<i>Desmodium gangeticum</i>	Balya, Vatahara
10	Punarnava	<i>Boerhavia diffusa</i>	Sothahara, Rasayana

These plants- predominantly sweet (*Madhura*) in taste and with *Rasayana* properties -work synergistically to nourish tissues (*Dhatus*), balance *Doshas*, and regulate metabolism.

Ayurvedic Pharmacological Profile (*Samanya Guna*)⁷

Predominantly Madhura Secondary: Tikta, Kashaya, Amla	Guru Snigdha Laghu (some drugs)	Mainly Sita Some Uṣṇa (Abhaya, Punarnava)	Mostly Madhura	Vatahara (primary) Pitta-samaka Kapha-santulana
--	---------------------------------------	--	----------------	---

inflammatory and degenerative diseases such as arthritis, diabetes, osteoporosis, Alzheimer's disease, depression, psychiatric disorders, Parkinson's disease, and age-related urine issues are major sources of morbidity in this population.⁴

Concept of Aging

The multifaceted process of physical, psychological, and social changes is known as aging. In *Vridhnavastha*, numerous degenerative alterations occur. After the age of sixty, a person is considered elderly. In old age, *dhatu* (body tissues), sense organ strength, vitality, masculinity and bravery, comprehension of power, memory, speech, and fact analysis gradually diminish.⁵

Etymological Meaning

- *Vayah* – Age
 - *Sthapana* – Stabilizing / maintaining
 - *Mahakasaya* – A major therapeutic group
- Vayahsthan* = “That which stabilizes age and prevents its degeneration.”

Ayurvedic Concept of Aging (Jara)⁸

Causes of Aging According to Ayurveda

1. Vata Prakopa
2. Dhatu Kshaya
3. Agni Mandya
4. Ojas Kshaya
5. Diminished Rasadhatu formation

Types of Aging

- Kala Jara – Natural aging
- Akala Jara – Premature aging (preventable)

* *Vayahsthapan Mahakashaya* is mainly indicated in Akala Jara.

Pharmacodynamic & Pharmacokinetic Properties^{9,10}

Ayurvedic Actions

According to classical interpretations and modern analyses:

- Rasayana (Rejuvenative): Primary action that promotes longevity and vitality.
- Balya (Strength-promoting): Enhances physical stamina.
- Medhya (Nervine tonic): Supports cognitive functions.
- Hridya (Cardiac nourishment): Supports heart health.
- Vrushya (Reproductive tonic): Enhances reproductive health.
- Deepana & Pachana: Improves digestion and *Agni* (digestive fire).
- Tridosha balancing: Pacifies *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*.

These combined effects encompass prevention of age-associated decline in physiological functions, support of immune competency, and maintenance of metabolic homeostasis.

Modern Pharmacological Perspectives^{11,12}

Although direct clinical trials on *Vayahsthapan Mahakashaya* as a whole are limited, literature reviews and analytical studies suggest the following:

Antioxidant & Anti-Oxidative Effects

Many individual herbs in this group (e.g., *Embolia officinalis*, *Tinospora cordifolia*, *Centella asiatica*) are rich in antioxidants, which protect cells from oxidative stress - a major contributor to biological aging.

Immunomodulatory Action

Herbs like *Tinospora cordifolia* exhibit immune-enhancing effects in published studies, which may contribute to better defense against infections and age-related immune decline.

Metabolic and Digestive Support

Components like *Punarnava* and *Terminalia chebula* may support liver function and digestion - crucial for nutrient assimilation and metabolic balance, foundational concepts in Ayurveda for long-term health.

Mechanism of Action (Ayurvedic View)¹³

1. Rasayana Effect

- Improves quality of *Rasa Dhatu*
- Enhances sequential nourishment of all Dhatus

2. Agni Deepana

- Maintains Jatharagni and Dhatvagni
- Prevents Ama accumulation

3. Ojas Vriddhi

- Improves immunity and vitality
- Prevents degeneration

4. Vata Shamana

- Slows degenerative changes
- Supports neuromuscular and sensory functions

Mechanisms of Anti-Aging (Modern)^{14,15}

According to Ayurvedic belief, aging (Jara) is an inevitable stage that is impacted by reduced Agni, Dhatus depletion, and Dosha imbalance (mostly Vata dominance). To combat these, *Vayahsthapan Mahakashaya* plans to:

- Restoration of *Agni* (digestive/metabolic fire) - improving nutrient absorption and tissue quality.
- Strengthening *Dhatus* & *Ojas* - *Ojas* being the essence of body strength and immunity.
- Balancing *Doshas*, especially *Vata* - reducing degenerative changes associated with aging.
- Cellular protection via antioxidant compounds - potentially preventing oxidative damage in tissues.

According to recent studies, they are equivalent to immunomodulation, antioxidant protection, anti-inflammatory actions, and metabolic regulation all of

which may work together to prevent age-related physiological deterioration.

Modern Scientific Correlation¹⁵

Rasayana	Anti-oxidant, adaptogenic
Ojas	Immunity, vitality
Dhatu Poshana	Tissue regeneration
Vata Shamana	Neuroprotective, anti-degenerative

Documented Actions of Individual Drugs¹⁶

- Amalaki – Potent antioxidant (Vitamin C, polyphenols)
- Guduchi – Immunomodulatory
- Mandukaparni – Neuroprotective, cognitive enhancer
- Shatavari – Anti-aging endocrine support
- Punarnava – Anti-inflammatory, detoxifying

Clinical & Research Evidence

Review literature supports the Vayahsthapan Mahakashaya formula's conceptual and practical relevance in geriatrics and longevity science, despite the lack of direct clinical trials on the entire formula. The theoretical underpinnings of this traditional formulation have been reinforced by studies that have assessed individual herbs and similar Rasayana groupings therapeutically for metabolic benefits, immunological strengthening, and cognitive support.

Clinical Utility

Indications

- Premature aging
- General debility
- Geriatric disorders
- Memory decline
- Immunodeficiency
- Stress-related degeneration

Mode of Administration¹⁷

- Churna
- Kwatha
- Ghrita
- Avaleha
- Rasayana formulations

Scope in Geriatric Ayurveda

- Preventive geriatrics

- Anti-aging therapy
- Lifestyle disorder management
- Neurodegenerative disease support
- Reproductive aging

III. DISCUSSION

According to Ayurveda, aging (Jara) is a Swabhavika yet controllable biological phenomenon where Vata predominance, Dhatu kshaya, and Agni mandya cause degeneration. Ayurveda places a strong emphasis on preventing and delaying premature aging (Akala Jara) with Rasayana therapy, even though chronological aging (Kala Jara) cannot be avoided. A key component of Ayurvedic geriatric and preventative medicine, Vayahsthapan Mahakasaya is a traditional herbal group that was created especially to regulate age, maintain youth, and retain vitality, according to Acharya Charaka. Vayahsthapan Mahakasaya's medications have Rasayana, Balya, Medhya, and Jivaniya qualities, all of which work at the Agni, Dhatu, and Ojas levels. According to Ayurveda, aging starts with weakened Jatharagni impairing Rasadhātu production, which leads to incorrect nutrition of successive Dhatus. The majority of medications in this Mahakasaya contain Snigdha Guna, Madhura Rasa, and Madhura Vipaka, which promote tissue regeneration and directly assist Rasadhātu Poshana. This clarifies their function in preserving physiological equilibrium and postponing tissue deterioration.

Vata dominance, which causes dryness, instability, degeneration, tremors, cognitive decline, and muscular weakness, is a common characteristic of aging. These degenerative effects are countered by the prevalence of Vatahara and Tridoṣa-samaka medications like Amāta, Sthira, Punarnava, and Sveta. Vayahsthapan Mahakasaya inhibits the development of degenerative diseases, such as neurological and musculoskeletal degeneration, that are frequently seen in the aged population by calming Vata. Ojas Kshaya is another important aging factor mentioned in Ayurveda. It shows itself as weakened immunity, exhaustion, mental stress, and heightened vulnerability to illness. Well-known Rasayana medications that enhance Ojas include Amalaki, Guduchi, and Jivanti. The traditional idea of Ojas preservation as a crucial tactic in healthy aging is validated by their immunomodulatory and

adaptogenic effects, which are backed by contemporary pharmacological research.

A significant aspect of aging is cognitive deterioration, which is strongly associated with reduced Majja Dhatu and increased Vata. The presence of Medhya Rasayana medications like Sveta (*Clitoria ternatea*) and Maṇḍukaparnī emphasizes this Mahakasaya's neuroprotective purpose. In line with Ayurveda's holistic approach to health, these medications promote memory, intelligence, and mental stability, suggesting that Vayahsthapan Mahakasaya treats both the psychological and physical aspects of aging. According to contemporary science, oxidative stress, persistent inflammation, mitochondrial malfunction, and immunological senescence are linked to aging. Numerous medications that make up Vayahsthapan Mahakasaya have been shown in experiments to have neuroprotective, immunomodulatory, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant properties. These results offer a scientific justification for the traditional Rasayana theory, indicating that the Mahakasaya may function through improving cellular repair processes, lowering oxidative damage, and preserving metabolic homeostasis. There are few direct clinical investigations on the combination Vayahsthapan Mahakasaya, despite strong classical justification and encouraging pharmacological data. Instead of the synergistic combination outlined in the classics, the majority of existing investigations concentrate on individual medications. The need for standardized formulations, carefully planned clinical trials, and biomarker-based aging studies to scientifically evaluate its efficacy is highlighted by this substantial research gap.

Overall, *Vayahsthapan Mahakasaya* represents a preventive, promotive, and rejuvenative approach to aging, emphasizing quality of life rather than mere longevity. Its multidimensional action on *Agni*, *Dhatu*, *Ojas*, and *Doṣa* balance underscores its relevance in modern geriatric care and integrative medicine. With appropriate scientific validation, this classical Mahakasaya holds immense potential as a natural, holistic strategy for healthy aging.

IV. CONCLUSION

The traditional Ayurvedic rejuvenative herbal group Vayahsthapan Mahakashaya is intended to promote holistic health, increase energy, and postpone aging.

Rasayana, Balya, Medhya, and other beneficial properties related to tissue feeding and longevity promotion are present in its ten constituent medications. These herbs' antioxidant, immunomodulatory, and metabolic properties are highlighted in contemporary reviews, bridging the gap between conventional wisdom and the state of science about aging. To validate mechanisms and standardize therapeutic applications in contemporary healthcare, more empirical research is required, particularly controlled clinical trials.

REFERENCE

- [1] Charmi S. Mehta and Vimal R. Joshi 1 International Journal of Green and Herbal Chemistry (IJGHC); 2012, Vol.1, No.1, 61-74. Anti ageing drugs in Ayurveda.
- [2] Sureshbabu S. Geriatrics in Ayurveda.1st ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2001.p.8.
- [3] Mishra et al. World Journal of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences (wjpps) Vol 4, Issue 06, 2015. 382.
- [4] [HTTP://WWW.researchgate.net/publication/215564627Ayurveda and Siddha for Geriatric care- Aninsight on strengths of Ayurveda and Siddha forGeriatric Care.](http://WWW.researchgate.net/publication/215564627Ayurveda_and_Siddha_for_Geriatric_care-Aninsight_on_strengths_of_Ayurveda_and_Siddha_forGeriatric_Care)
- [5] Sastri KN, Caturvedi GN, editors Charaka. CharakaSamhita (Vidyotini Hindi Commentary), Vol.1.1st ed. Varanasi: Caukhambha Bharati Academy; 2001. Vimanasthana, 8.p. 781-782.
- [6] Sastri KN, Caturvedi GN, Charaka. Charaka Samhita (Vidyotini Hindi Commentary), Vol.1. editors. 1st ed. Sutrasthana Varanasi: Caukhambha Bharati Academy; 2001., 16.p.323-324.
- [7] Dravyaguna vijnana vol 2 by prof. P.V. Sharma reprint year 2006; Chaukhamba Bharti, Varansi.
- [8] Sebastian P, AYURVEDIC MEDICINE the Principles of Traditional Practice., Part Two, London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers; 2013. 126,187,189, 194, 246, 271 p
- [9] Sharma P. V, Caraka Samhitā. Volume II, Chikitsasthana, 1st Chapter, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2014. 3-4 p, 13p
- [10] Sharma P.V, Susruta Samhita. Vol. II, 28th Chapter, Varanasi: Chaukhambha Visvabharati; 2010. 531-537

- [11] Vaidya A. B., Vaidya R. A., “Ancient insights and modern discoveries in the process of aging—an overview,” *Indian journal of medical sciences*, vol.1, 10, pp. 349–363, 1997.
- [12] Tripathi Brahmanand, Agnivesha, Charak Samhita, Elaborated by Charaka & drudhabala, Charaka Chandrika Hindi Tika, Chaukhamba Surbharti Prakashan Varanasi 6th Edition 1999 First Part Vimana Sthana 8/122
- [13] Agraval Vivek, An Ayurvedic insight towards Aging with its preventive measures, *Int.J.Res.Ayurveda Pharm.*, Jan.Feb.2013, 4(1), Pg.no.31-33.
- [14] Sharma PV. Dalhana and his comment on drugs. Published by manoharlal publishers, New Delhi, India, First edition, 1982; P-112, 13
- [15] Shanker Lal Burdak, Nisha Gupta, “A Review of Preventive Health Care in Geriatrics through Ayurveda” *International Journal of Ayurvedic Medicine*, 2015, 6 (2), 100-112.
- [16] Gray N, Alcazar Magana A, Lak P, Wright K, Quinn J, Stevens J et al. Pharmacological Review on *Centella asiatica*: A Potential Herbal Cure-all, *Indian Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences* [Internet]. 2010 [cited 25 April 2021];72(5):546–556 Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3116297/>
- [17] Vaghela B, Buddhadev S, Shukla L. Pharmacological activities of *Desmodium gangeticum*: An overview. *An Int J Pharm Sci* 2013; 4:264-78. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318308121_PHARMACOLOGICAL_ACTIVITIES_OF_DESMODIUM_GANGETICUM_AN_OVERVIEW