

GERIATRIC HEALTH CARE THROUGH AYURVEDA**Dr. Vipin Kumar***

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ABSTRACT

Geriatrics is a branch of medical science deals with problems of ageing & diseases of elderly. Ageing is a natural process. No research/ development with any tools of medical science can not save humanity from ageing so far. There are so many physiological as well psychological changes in the elderly persons. Extra fear of disease, sorrow & death were observed in this age group by many studies about this group. Normally this age is recognised as pain/disease of so many systems.. Due to so many causes the population of old age increase rapidly in the developing conditions. So its a big challenge to provides the medical facilities for such a large population specially our country with limited medical services. By applying positive attitude about life, this age, one can remain free/ healthy even in this stage. Ayurveda may be more applicable & success for the providing better healthy life specially in elderly age group.

KEY WORDS: Geriatrics, *Ayurveda*, Physiological, Medical facilities.

Ageing is a progressive state begaining from conception & ending with death. Over the past few years, the world's population has continued on its remarcable transition pathway from a state of high birth rate & low death rates due to improvement in health services & standard of living. As a result the population of elderly persons going on increasing in the society. Such a rapid & large ubiquitous growth has been never seen in the history of civilization. Gerontology- A branch of science that look into the social aspect of ageing including its related policy.

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDY

The population of aged persons going on increasing rapidly worldwide probable due to increase the living standard & decrease in mortality due to betterment of medical facilities. In year 2000 there are 9.9% of aged group (>60 years), while in year 2015 this no was 12%, Which is accepted upto 15% in the year 2021. While in Indian scenario in year 2001 there are 76.6 millions population in this age group, which was increased upto 98.47 millions in the year 2011 & this number will be approximately upto 143.4 millions in the year 2021.

Socioeconomic demographic profile of elderly in India are very black & horrible picture as follows 75% elderly population lives in rural areas , 73% illiterate & dependent, 66% lives under Below Poverty Line(BPL) & 66% population are in vulnerable conditions even without food. So its a large burden of our economy&

medical health care due to limited health systems in our country in the ratio of greater number of population.

Bernard Isaacs 1975 described the “**Giants of Geriatrics**” Incontinence, Immobility, impaired cognitive function & Instability. The Giants are disabilities that lower the quality of lives. Multiple causes, chronic nature, reduced independence & hence no simple cure & finally elderly became dependents on the others.

In our country with the population more than one billion the condition of is severe of geriatric health care due to no health insurance & health policy of elder persons health care the burden of health care might be unbearable as our medical centres already overcrowded with the patients of so many communicable & non communicable diseases, trauma of younger & middle generation patients. Besides it fashion of nuclear family, poor health care in rural parts, migration of middle generation to urban parts, lack of education & poverty making the conditions more severe.

Common Geriatrics problems in elderly cataract & visual impairment-88%, Arthritis & locomotory disorders-40%, Cardio vascular disease (CVD)-18%, Hypertension-18%, Neurological problems-18%, Respiratory diseases including chronic bronchitis-16%, GIT problems -09%, psychiatrics problems-09%.

Gastro Intestinal Tract (GIT) problems – Common factors responsible for the reducing the efficacy in elderly are poor denture, hampered digestive functions, appetite & gut absorption, intestinal dysmotility, decreased mucosal immunity barrier, weakness of pelvic floor, reduced sphincter control & these leads to common digestive problems such as flatulence, indigestion, constipation etc.

Drugs- Bilwa – *Aegle marmelos*, Hareetiki- *Terminalia Chebula*, Amaltas- *Cassia fistuala*, Kutaj- *Holarrhena antidysentrica*, Kalmegh- *Andrographis paniculata*, Katuki- *Picrorhiza kurroa*, Bhumyamliki- *Phyllanthus niruri*, Shatawari- *Asparagus racemosus*, Mulethi- *Glycyrrhiza glabra*, Ginger- *Zingiber officinale*.

Respiratory System diseases- Common causes of respiratory health problems in elderly are Decrease mucosal protection & ciliary mucosal clearance of the respiratory tract, Increased residual pulmonary volume & decreased chest mobility, elasticity of alveoli & physical exercise, all these factors leads to recurrent infections like Chronic bronchitis, bronchiectasis, empyema, emphysema, pneumonia & difficulty in breathing on mild exertion. Smoking & different types of pollutions increase the severity. Avoid any kind of smoking & regularly breathing, aerobic exercise as pranayam, anulomvilom & kapalbhati may be helpful to maintane pulmonary health & better ventilation & gaseous exchange. In elderly recurrant respiratory tract infections should not ignored but pay attention promptly treatment. Daily use of Pratimarsh nasya (02 drops of mustard oil as a nasal drop) highly beneficial in the moisture, mucosa & prevention of allergens in allergic & asthmaticus persons.

Drugs- Haridra -*Curcuma longa*, Yashtimadhu- *Glycyrrhiza glabra*, Shunthi- *Shyzygium aromaticum*, Maricha- *Piper nigrum*, Pippali- *Piper longum*, Shrishha – *Albizia lebbek*.

Bone & Joints diseases- One of the common geriatrics health problem is locomotory system. The common problem is pain & unable to do perform daily activities. Common causes for it are as decreased muscless mass & bone marrow density, power tone, bony degeneration lack of physical exercise, fractures & spondylosis. For the maintane of bone & joints in healthy conditions regularly walking, oiling, stretching exercise. Risk factors of falling such as watery slippery ground, stairs uneven ground etc should be monitored carefully.

Drugs- Ashwagandha (*Withenia somniferous*), Giloy (*Tinospora cardifolia*), Shunthi (*Shyzygium aromaticum*), parwal bhasm, shudh Kupilu (*Strychnos nuxvomica*), sallaki (*Boswolia serrata*) Guggulu yograj, lakshaadi, tryodashang, oleation with mahanarayan oil, panchgun oil etc.

Neurological diseases- Common problems in elderly are senile dementia, Parkinsonism, Alzheimer's disease, Insomnia, regression of brain functions causing incordination of motor activities, tremor, cerebellar ataxia. Higher sense functions impaired.

Medhya rasyana- as Brahmi – *Bacopa monnieri*, Shankhpushpi – *Convolvulus pluricaulis*, Manukparni – *Centella asiatica*, Jyotishmati- *Celastrus paniculatus*, Giloy- *Tinospora cardifolia*. Company with similar habits & age group, Engaged in religious activities. Helpful in pacify the symptoms & disease.

Urogenital diseases- These problems are more common in elderly. Poor power of kidneys, poor derusor function, BPH in males causes increased urinary frequency, incontinence, retention of urine, urgency of Micturation, recurrent desire of urination, feeling of fullness of bladder, recurrent urinary tract infection. Condom catheter & adult diaper helpful in keeping dry. Plenty of water in day time helpful in cleaning of tract & remain free from infections & pelvic floor exercise.

Drugs- Trinpanchmool kwath, varunshigru kwath, chanderprabha vati, goksharadi guggulu, Kapikacchu- *Mucuna pruriens*, Ashwagandha- *Withenia somnifera* are some common drugs for this system disease.

Cardiovascular diseases- Hypertension, insufficient rt. ventricular function, cardio megaly, dilated cardiomyopathy, cardiac asthma, heart block, conduction defects are the common medical problems of this age group. Arjun bark – *Terminalia arjuna*, Pushkarmuala- *Inula racemosa*, Karveer- *Nerium indicum*, Rasona- *Allium sativum*, Tagar, Jatamansi, Drakshaarishta, Punarnava – *Boerhevia diffusa*, Jaharmohra pishti, Akeek pishti, Muktapishti,

Skin & Appendages- Skin become lax & thin with increasing age. Decreased subcutaneous fat, loss of skin appendages hairs, nails. These factors leads to recurrent skin infection, pruritis, dermatitis, xerosis.

Drugs- Chironji - *Buchanania lanzan*, jyotishmati- *Celastrus paniculatus*, Bhringraj- *Eclipta alba*, Daily oiling with mustard oil, cocconut oil with camphor & olove oil beneficial in all skin conditions. Aloe vera gel & vitamin A & D are helpful to keep skin moist & healthy.

Nutritional Care- Requirement of balanced & divided diets in a day. Roughage, green vegetables, milk, curd, seasonal fruits, adequate amount of protein, almond, walnut are essential part of diet. Approximately 20 % of calorie should be from fat & rest from carbohydrates & proteins. More focus on Calcium & vitamins should be concentrated. Food intake should be supervised as skip of food may be extreamly harmful specially in diabetics.

Close Monitoring of diabetes mellitus, hypertension, deafness, dementia, depression, Alzheimer's disease, oral & genital hygiene, cataract, regular check up of vision, early detection of malignancy specially in BPH cases & other malignancy too.

NPHCE- National Programme of Health Care for Elderly started in feb. 2018 by Ministry of health & family welfare In which role of Ayurveda due to Slow & safe medicine, Can be used for a longer time, Chronic nature of Geriatrics problems, Close to nature, Easy, Cost effective & affordable.

Table No. 1: Different Geriatrics diseases.

| S. No. | Broad Areas | Specific Disease Conditions |
|--------|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Healthy Ageing Rasayana Tantra | Preventive & Promotive Measures in Geriatrics |
| 2. | Musculo-skeletal Disorders | (a) Rheumatoid Arthritis, Osteoarthritis\ Spondylitis (b) Osteoporosis |
| 3. | Digestive Disorders | (a) Poor Appetite, Indigestion (b) Constipation (c) IBS |
| 4. | Respiratory Disorders | (a) Chronic Bronchitis, COPD (b) Asthma etc. |
| 5. | Neurological Disorders | (a) Depression, Insomnia (b) Alzheimer's disease, Dementia , Ataxia, (c) Parkinsonism |
| 6. | Urogenital disorders | (a)BPH (b) Recurrent UTI (c) loss of libido |
| 7. | Cardiac disorders | (a) Hypertension (b) Cardiomegaly (c) CAD (d) Atherosclerosis |

Rasayana: The Rejuvenation Therapy

"Yadjaravyadhi vinashanam tadrasayanam"

The branch of Ayurveda which remove the fear of disease & delay the ageing process is Rasayana. In Ayurved the three most important rasayana as follows

Milk with cow ghris, Amalki (*Embellica officinale*), Achar rasayana (Good Conduct & behavior).

"Balyam Vridhi Chhavir medha twak drishti shukra vikramo, budhi karmendriyam cheto jivitam dashetahriseta." (*Sharangdhar samhita purva khand 6/20*).

Table No. 2: Age related degenerations & accordingly preventable rasayanans.

| S. No. | Decades | Age related bio-losses | Restorative Rasayanans |
|--------|----------|----------------------------|--|
| 1. | 0-10 yrs | Loss of Corpulence Balya | Vacha, Gambhari, Suvarna |
| 2. | 11-20 | Loss of Growth (Vridhi) | Gambhari, Bala, Ashwagandha |
| 3. | 21-30 | Loss of Lusture (Chhavi) | Haridra, Kumari, Louha |
| 4. | 31-40 | Loss of Intellect (Medha) | Sankhapuspi, Brahmi, Jyotishmati |
| 5. | 41-50 | Loss of Skin glow | Jyotishmati, Chironji, Bhiringraj |
| 6. | 51-60 | Loss of Vision (Drishti) | Triphala, Jyotismati, Shatavari ,Saptamrit Louha |
| 7. | 61-70 | Loss of Virility (Shukra) | Kapikacchu, Aswagandha |
| 8. | 71-80 | Loss of Strength (Vikram) | Bala, Shilajeet, Ashwagandha |
| 9. | 81-90 | Loss of Cognitive power | Brahmi, Mandukaparni |
| 10. | 91-100 | Loss of Locomotive ability | Bala, Aswagandha |

CONCLUSION

Ageing is a natural process. Aged persons are boon for a family & country. They had much & more experiences & younger generation can be benefit from them. In world in last 2 decades population of this elderly group increasing due to many causes. India is a developing country & country of villages, our aged group persons in rural areas are ignored & in helpless condition due to changing many familial & social causes. Geriatrics health care are in worst position due to the limited medical services in

response to large population of our country. Nuclear family, costly health services, ignorance of elderly generation, poverty are the other factors making the conditions more & more poor. Ayurveda, the natural healer can play a cornerstone in this field since it resides in the soul of India. The Ayurveda is not only a medical science but a life science too. Ayurvedic drugs are comparatively chief, easily available, safe for the aged & mostly known to everybody. According to our ancient mythological book, Rigveda, One can live healthy till the

age of 100 years. In Ayurveda there are tools for the same purpose are by exercising healthy life style & regular taking of Rasayana from the middle age of life. Besides it NGO's can play important role to aware the older generation for walk in fresh air & open discussion about their problems with the same age group, healthy discussion on the other topics.

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