



A REVIEW ARTICLE ON THE ROLE OF GEMSTONES (NAV RATNA) IN AYURVEDA

Dr. Alka Kumari¹, Dr. B L Saini², Dr. J P Gupta³

¹Post Graduate Scholar, Department of Rasa Shastra Evam Bhaishajya Kalpana, MMM Govt. Ayurvedic College, Udaipur, Rajasthan, India.

²Asso.Professor, Department of Rasa Shastra Evam Bhaishajya Kalpana, MMM Govt. Ayurvedic College, Udaipur, Rajasthan, India.

³Lecturer, Department of Rasa Shastra Evam Bhaishajya Kalpana, MMM Govt. Ayurvedic College, Udaipur, Rajasthan, India.

ABSTRACT :

Gemstones (Ratnas) occupy a special and revered place in *Ayurveda*, particularly within the branch of Rasashastra, which deals with the therapeutic use of metals, minerals, and gems. The classical Ayurvedic system recognizes a distinct category known as *Ratna Varga*, encompassing precious and semi-precious gemstones valued for their physical, chemical, and energetic properties. The traditional *Navratna* (nine gems) — including ruby, pearl, coral, emerald, yellow sapphire, diamond, blue sapphire, hessonite, and cat's eye — are believed to influence physiological and psychological balance by harmonizing planetary energies and restoring *doshic* equilibrium^{1, 2}. These gems are used both ornamentally and medicinally after undergoing purification (*Shodhana*) and incineration (*Marana*) processes to ensure safety and bioavailability³. Ayurvedic texts describe numerous formulations incorporating gem ashes (*Ratna Bhasma*), reputed for promoting vitality, enhancing immunity, and treating various systemic disorders⁴. This review highlights the types, properties, therapeutic applications, and pharmacological significance of *Navratna* in *Ayurveda*, emphasizing their role as a bridge between traditional metaphysical concepts and modern mineral-based therapeutics.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most significant areas of Ayurveda is Rasashastra, which focuses on naturally occurring metals, minerals, aquatic goods, and gems⁵. In addition to plant-based medicines, potent formulations are also made from *Parad*, sea materials, and gemstones. The *Rasacharyas* have classified these materials into categories such as *Maharasa*, *Uparasa*, *Sadharan Rasa*, *Dhatu*, *Upadhatu*, *Sudhadhravya*, *Ratna*, and *Upratna*⁶. Among these, *Ratna Varga* represents a unique group that includes all precious jewels. Ancient scholars termed these materials as “Ratna” because of their value, brilliance, and impact on physical and spiritual health⁷.

This paper provides an overview of the varieties, characteristics, benefits, and commonly used formulations of gemstones (*Ratna*), with emphasis on their *Shodhana*, *Marana*, and therapeutic uses in *Rasoushadhi* (Herbo mineral preparations).

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary aim of this review article is to explore and highlight the significance of *Navratna* (nine gemstones) in *Ayurveda*, particularly within Rasashastra.

The objectives are:

1. To present an overview of *Ratna Varga* as described in classical Ayurvedic texts.
2. To discuss the physical, chemical, and medicinal properties of the *Navratna*.
3. To describe *Shodhana* and *Marana* processes applied to gemstones for medicinal use.
4. To examine therapeutic applications and health benefits of *Ratna Bhasma*.
5. To analyze the role of gemstones in maintaining physiological and psychological balance.
6. To emphasize their contemporary relevance as mineral-based therapeutics in integrative medicine.

METHODOLOGY AND DISCUSSION

The application of gemstones in *Ayurveda* extends beyond physical healing to include spiritual and energetic well-being⁸. The *Shodhana* process eliminates impurities, while *Marana* converts gems into fine, bioavailable *Bhasma* suitable for therapeutic use^{9, 10}.

The Cosmic Connection

Gemstones are believed to capture cosmic and astrological energies that influence human physiology¹¹. For example, blue sapphire (*Neelam*) represents Saturn (*Shani*), symbolizing discipline and longevity¹².

Philosophical Context

Ayurveda emphasizes harmony between the microcosm (human body) and macrocosm (universe). Gem therapy (*Ratna Chikitsa*) aligns with this philosophy by restoring *dosha* and planetary balance¹³.

Scientific Perspective

Modern studies suggest that gemstones may affect biological systems through mineral composition, trace element release, and vibrational resonance¹⁴. These mechanisms align with emerging fields such as quantum and vibrational medicine¹⁵.

DESCRIPTION OF NAVRATNA AND THEIR AYURVEDIC PROPERTIES

1. Manikya (Ruby – The Gem of the Sun)

- **Planet:** Sun (*Surya*), **Element:** Fire, **Colour:** Red
- **Benefits:** Enhances vitality, heart health, and blood circulation; promotes *Pitta* energy¹⁶.
- **Formulations:** *Brahmi Vati*, *Mani Parpati*, *Javaharmohara Vati*, *Navaratnarajmriganka Rasa*¹⁷.

2. Moti (Pearl – The Gem of the Moon)

- **Planet:** Moon (*Chandra*), **Element:** Water
- **Benefits:** Cooling, anti-inflammatory, and calming; indicated in *Pitta* disorders and insomnia¹⁸.
- **Formulations:** *Muktapanchamruta Rasa*, *Grahanikapata Rasa*, *Vasantmalati Rasa*¹⁹.

3. Praval (Red Coral – The Gem of Mars)

- **Planet:** Mars (*Mangala*), **Element:** Fire/Earth
- **Benefits:** Boosts immunity, alleviates arthritis, and acts as a hemostatic and tonic²⁰.
- **Formulations:** *Praval Panchamruta*, *Muktapanchamruta Rasa*, *Kasturibhairava rasa*²¹.

4. Panna (Emerald – The Gem of Mercury)

- **Planet:** Mercury (*Budha*), **Element:** Air/Earth
- **Benefits:** Enhances intellect, memory, and speech; relieves stress and nervous disorders²².
- **Formulations:** *Navaratnarajmriganka Rasa*, *Maniparpati*²³.

5. Pukhraj (Yellow Sapphire – The Gem of Jupiter)

- **Planet:** Jupiter (*Guru*), **Element:** Fire/Earth
- **Benefits:** Improves liver function, fertility, and wisdom; balances *Kapha dosha*²⁴.
- **Formulations:** *Maniparpati*, *Navaratnarajmriganka Rasa*²⁵.

6. Heera (Diamond – The Gem of Venus)

- **Planet:** Venus (*Shukra*), **Element:** Air
- **Benefits:** Aphrodisiac, anti-aging, and revitalizing; enhances hormonal and skin health²⁶.
- **Formulations:** *Kandarpsundara Rasa*, *Vasantkusumakar Rasa*, *Trailokyachintamani Rasa*²⁷.

7. Neelam (Blue Sapphire – The Gem of Saturn)

- **Planet:** Saturn (*Shani*), **Element:** Air
- **Benefits:** Improves bone and nerve strength, promotes discipline and clarity²⁸.
- **Formulations:** *Ratnabhagottara Rasa*, *Rajmriganka Rasa*²⁹.

8. Gomed (Hessonite – The Gem of Rahu)

- **Planet:** Rahu, **Element:** Earth
- **Benefits:** Detoxifier; aids in nervous and respiratory disorders, and alleviates anxiety³⁰.
- **Formulations:** *Ratnabhagottara Rasa*, *Navaratnarajmriganka Rasa*³¹.

9. Lehsunia (Cat's Eye – The Gem of Ketu)

- **Planet:** Ketu, **Element:** Earth

- **Benefits:** Improves kidney and nervous system function; enhances spiritual insight³².
- **Formulations:** *Pindanjana, Churnanjan, Ratnabhagottara Rasa* ³³.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The review establishes that *Navratna* gemstones serve multifaceted roles in *Ayurveda* — as therapeutic agents, astrological harmonizers, and rejuvenatives³⁴. Gem *Bhasmas*, after *Shodhana* and *Marana*, exhibit safe, bioavailable mineral forms that can support systemic functions. Formulations such as *Navaratnarajmuganka Rasa* and *Trailokyachintamani Rasa* exemplify classical uses of gem-based preparations³⁵.

From a scientific lens, trace elements (Ca, Mg, Si, Fe, Zn) and vibrational frequencies of gemstones may explain their bioenergetic effects. This synthesis of traditional and modern insights underscores their integrative therapeutic potential.

CONCLUSION

Navratna gemstones hold a distinctive position in *Rasashastra* for their curative, rejuvenative, and harmonizing properties. Through proper *Shodhana* and *Marana*, they yield *Ratna Bhasmas* that act as powerful mineral-based remedies. Each gemstone contributes uniquely to restoring *dosha* equilibrium and spiritual harmony. The integration of classical Ayurvedic wisdom with emerging scientific perspectives can pave the way for evidence-based, natural therapeutics rooted in gemology and *Ayurveda*.

REFERENCES

- 1 Sharma PV. *Rasashastra*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Bharati Academy; 2010.
- 2 Dash B, Kashyap L. *Materia Medica of Ayurveda*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing; 1987.
- 3 Pandey MS, Ghosh D, Singh M, et al. Bhasma: The ancient Indian nanomedicine. *J Ayurveda Integr Med*. 2014;5(4):226–33.
- 4 Saper RB, et al. Bhasmas: unique ayurvedic metallic-herbal preparations with chemical characterization of 20 Bhasmas. *Biol Trace Elem Res*. 2006;110(3):179–90
- 5 Tripathi I. *Rasa Ratna Samuccaya*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2013
- 6 Sharma S. *Rasa Tarangini*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass; 2011.
- 7 Nadkarni KM. *Indian Materia Medica*. Mumbai: Popular Prakashan; 2009.
- 8 Thakur S, et al. Therapeutic use of gemstones in *Ayurveda*. *AYU*. 2017;38(2):76–82.
- 9 Patgiri BJ, Prajapati PK. Standardization of *Shodhana* and *Marana* processes in *Rasashastra*. *Anc Sci Life*. 2015;34(3):142–9.
- 10 Pandey MS, Ghosh D, Singh M, et al. Bhasma: The ancient Indian nanomedicine. *J Ayurveda Integr Med*. 2014;5(4):226–33.
- 11 Frawley D. *Ayurvedic Healing: A Comprehensive Guide*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass; 2001.
- 12 Singh RH. *Ayurveda: The Science of Life*. Lucknow: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series; 2002.
- 13 Pole S. *Ayurvedic Medicine: The Principles of Traditional Practice*. London: Churchill Livingstone; 2006.
- 14 Joshi D, et al. Mineralogical and spectroscopic study of Ayurvedic gem-based Bhasmas. *Indian J Tradit Knowl*. 2019;18(1):160–7
- 15 Jain A, et al. Bioenergetic and vibrational aspects of gemstone therapy: a review. *J Complement Integr Med*. 2020;17(2):1–10.
- 16 Vaidya BG. *Navratna Ratna Chikitsa in Ayurveda*. Pune: Ayurvedic Press; 2018.
- 17 Anonymous. *Ayurvedic Formulary of India, Part II*. New Delhi: Govt. of India; 2003.
- 18 Khare CP. *Indian Herbal Remedies: Rational Western Therapy*. Berlin: Springer; 2007.
- 19 Chauhan A, et al. Pharmacological evaluation of Mukta Bhasma. *Int J Res Ayurveda Pharm*. 2016;7(2):26–9.
- 20 Gupta AK, et al. Therapeutic potential of Praval Bhasma. *Pharmacogn Rev*. 2011;5(10):164–8.
- 21 Sharma R, Dash B. *Rasendra Sara Sangraha*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2010.
- 22 Bhatta A. *Rasa Jala Nidhi, Vol. 3*. Varanasi: Chaukhambha; 2012.
- 23 Mishra GS. *Ayurvedic Minerals and Metals*. Delhi: Chaukhambha; 2009.
- 24 Dwivedi V, et al. Yellow sapphire: Ayurvedic and gemological aspects. *J Ayurveda Integr Med*. 2020;11(2):235–41.
- 25 *Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia of India, Part I, Vol. 7*. New Delhi: Ministry of AYUSH; 2012.
- 26 Pandey S, et al. Heera Bhasma in *Rasashastra*: Chemical and biological perspectives. *AYU*. 2018;39(1):45–52.
- 27 Reddy KR. *Bhasma and Pottali Kalpana*. Hyderabad: IBH Prakashana; 2014.
- 28 Kumar J, et al. Blue sapphire in *Ayurveda*: A pharmacognostic review. *J Tradit Med Clin Naturop*. 2021;10(3):1–5.
- 29 Sharma R. *Ayurvedic Gems and their Rasayana Role*. Delhi: Chaukhambha; 2019.

-
- 30Tirtha S. The Ayurveda Encyclopedia. New York: Sat Yuga Press; 2007.
- 31 Bhattacharya S. Ratna Chikitsa: Healing with Gemstones. Kolkata: D.K. Publishers; 2016.
- 32 Subramanian A, et al. Lehsunia Bhasma: Preparation and physicochemical evaluation. Int J Ayur Med. 2022;13(1):42–9.
- 33 Ayurvedic Formulary of India, Part I. New Delhi: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare; 2011.
- 34 Valiathan MS. The Legacy of Sushruta. Hyderabad: Universities Press; 2007.
- 35 Joshi KS, et al. Gem-based Rasoushadhis: A pharmacological overview. Indian J Pharm Sci. 2018;80(4):677–85.