



Rasayana is the Ayurvedic term for all rejuvenation therapies that slow down biological aging processes and keep body and mind healthy.

Ayurveda contains comprehensive knowledge for a long and healthy life. This knowledge is described in great detail in Charaka Samhita and other classical texts. A considerable part of these traditional treatises describes Rasayana therapies, which may involve specific medicinal herbs, nourishing oils, or also certain foods or behavior patterns.

This is the first part of an article about two rejuvenating treasures you can find in your own kitchen and how to use them for your health in daily life. The second part is about honey as a Rasayana, and will be available soon.

Rishi Atreya Punarvasu said: Oh ye desirous of vital breath!

Listen to me explaining Rasayana therapy, which is like another nectar for the immortal sons of Aditi, having incomprehensible miraculous effects, prolongs life span, provides health, sustains age, relieves excessive sleep, drowsiness, exertion, exhaustion, lassitude and emaciation, restores Tridoshika balance (of Vata, Pitta, Kapha), brings stability, alleviates laxity of muscles, kindles internal fire and imparts excellent luster, complexion and voice.

– **Charaka Samhita** , Chikitsa Sthana, Chapter 1, part 2

Ayurvedic Rasayanas at Home: Almonds and Honey – Part I

Among those miraculous Rasayanas are also almonds, one of the most valuable medicines and foods. They are first mentioned in a medical treatise from the first century AD. Many centuries ago, almonds were actually an important staple food for people in subtropical regions..

The almond tree, just like the peach tree, belongs to the stone fruit trees and has been cultivated for over 4000 years. With a protein content of about 20%,

almonds are valued as a rich source of protein. In addition, almonds contain numerous unsaturated fatty acids and important minerals such as magnesium, calcium and copper, as well as vitamins E and B.





Ayurvedic Rasayanas at Home

60 grams of almonds a day

The beneficial qualities of almonds have been the subject of many studies. They have an extremely beneficial effect on the metabolism and on widespread diseases such as diabetes type II, high cholesterol levels, overweight, and osteoporosis. But even without those disorders, it's worthwhile to include almonds regularly in one's menu.

Benefits of taking almonds daily

- Almonds have a prebiotic effect, i.e. they nourish the intestinal bacteria and thus support the development of a healthy intestinal flora.
- Almonds prevent diabetes and are also helpful in existing diabetes by increasing our body cells' responsiveness to insulin. Diabetics could significantly reduce their diabetes medication after just 4 months of taking 60 g of almonds daily.
- 60 g of almonds, consumed on a daily basis, also reduced the cholesterol level within 4 weeks. This can be explained by their high fiber content as well as the high proportion of antioxidant secondary plant substances.
- Eating almonds can increase bone density: fewer bone-destroying cells (osteoclasts) are formed and therefore less calcium is released from the bone.
- Another positive effect of a daily intake of 60 g of almonds as part of a calorie-reduced diet was on body weight: 62% greater reduction in body mass index, smaller waist size, and lower fat mass over a 6-month period.

- Almonds are metabolized as alkaline (anti-acidic) in the organism and contain many important nutrients supporting a healthy cardiovascular system. Patients with high blood pressure who consumed 20 g of almonds daily for 6 months showed an 11% reduction of their systolic blood pressure.
- Daily consumption of almonds thus has an overall positive effect on metabolic syndrome, associated with obesity, high blood pressure, prediabetes and elevated blood lipid levels.
- Even taking almonds 3–4 times a week significantly lowered the risk for a heart attack.

Almonds in Ayurveda

For all these reasons, almonds are highly valued in Ayurveda, utilized as a source of energy and considered a Rasayana. They give vitality, strengthen the heart and the eyesight. They support the functioning of the nervous system, including the brain; they strengthen bone tissue. They are also applied as a power booster during pregnancy, after giving birth, and for menstrual problems.

Depending on how you prepare them, almonds have quite different effects on the Doshas, and they can be easier or harder to digest.





Ayurvedic Rasayanas at Home

Something for every Dosha

Increasing Vata Dosha:

- Dry, unskinned almonds
- Almonds, skinned in hot water

Pacifying Vata Dosha:

- Almonds soaked in water for 12 hours and then skinned.
- Fresh almond milk with soaked dried fruits and aromatic spices

Pacifying Vata and Pitta, increasing Kapha Dosha:

- Almond paste in small amounts. Qualities: hard to digest, producing mucus, blocking the Srotas (the subtle transport channels in the body).

Recipe for fresh almond milk (K+) V-, P-

Almonds and dried fruits provide the best nutrients if you buy them in organic quality.

Soak unskinned almonds overnight in a container with water. Take about 10 to 15 almonds, depending on the desired consistency.

Also soak half a handful of dried fruits such as dates, apricots, figs or raisins in 300 ml of water. Use a second bowl or the blender jug. Keep the soaking water of the dried fruits!

The next morning, skin the almonds (if necessary, rinse them briefly with hot water), rinse well and add to the soaked dried fruits.

As desired, add aromatic spices (e.g. cardamom, cinnamon, saffron) and puree everything in a blender.

For an almond paste, soak the almonds for about 12 hours, skin, then mortar, or chop them with a mixer. Add a few drops of the soaking water.

Attention: Almond paste is hard to digest. It increases Kapha Dosha and mucus and it can block the Srotas (the fine transport channels in the body). It pacifies Vata and Pitta Dosha.

Almonds contain:

- 54 – 60% fat, mostly monounsaturated oleic acid and some polyunsaturated linoleic acid
- 20% protein
- Carbohydrates
- Many enzymes
- Antioxidant polyphenols
- Minerals including magnesium, calcium and copper; vitamins E and B.

