A Review on *Sharangadhara Samhita* - Pharmaceutical treatise of Ayurveda

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**ABSTRACT**

Among the standard references for Ayurveda medicine, the *Brihattrayee* (greater triads) namely *Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Sangraham / Ashtanga Hridayam* and *Laghutrayee* (lesser triads) namely *Madhava Nidana, Sharangadhara Samhita* and *Bhavaprakasha* occupy the top positions. In this article, an attempt has been made to discuss in detail about Acharya Sharangadhara and his work *Sharangadhara Samhita* which is a one among the *Laghutrayee*.

**Key words:** Acharya Sharangadhara, Sharangadhara Samhita, Laghutrayee.

**INTRODUCTION**

Human Basics of Ayurveda including the description of diseases and treatment lie embedded in many Ayurvedic treatises which have been written, re-written and revised since many centuries. Additions have been made to the older treatises by the newer authors along the timeline. New medicines, new diseases, new treatments and new formulations have been added to enrich this ancient medical science so as to provide it with fullness and comprehensiveness.

*Sharangadhara Samhita* is one of the best books on Ayurvedic medicine written by Acharya Sharangadhara. The *Samhita* is a part of *Laghutrayee*.

*Acharya Sarangadhara*[^1][^2]

*Acharya Sharangadhara* has written a popular treatise on Ayurvedic medicine by the name *Sharangadhara Samhita*. It has been categorized under *Laghutrayee* or the lesser triad of Ayurveda along with *Madhava Nidana* and *Bhavaprakasha*. He has also written a treatise on *Neeti Shastra* known as *Sharangadhara Paddhati*.

**Family details of Acharya Sharanghadhara[^3]**

In *Sharangadhara Paddhati* – Acharya *Sharangadhara* has given the particulars of his family and his family tree. According to this reference, the family details of *Sharangadhara* are as below mentioned. *Sharangadhara* was the eldest son of *Damodar* and the grandson of *Raghavadev*.

*Raghavadev*, the grandfather of *Sharangadhara* was a great poet in the court of the king of *Hammir*, who ruled the country *Shakambari* in the 13th century AD. *Raghavadev* was also the author of *Mahaganapati Stotra*. Even today, *Shakambari Devi Temple* is seen to be situated in Ambala Mandal, Haryana State near Kurukshetra.

*Sharangadhara Samhita* was one of the products which originated from the concept of simplification of Ayurvedic treatises. *Brihattrayi* textbooks were very voluminous works and were difficult for the general practitioners of Ayurveda to read and follow. Hence the authors and scholars of Ayurveda belonging to a later period felt that the important aspects and basics
need to be extracted from these voluminous texts and simplified. They felt the need of writing down the short treatises which could help in Ayurvedic practice. Keeping this in view, most of the authors tried to compose short treatises from the 10th century onward, thus the Laghutrayees originated. Sharangadhara also adopted the same principle and wrote his work on medicine which later got popular as ‘Sharangadhara Samhita’. Sharangadhara was not only a good physician and author; he was also a good poet.

*Sharangadhara Samhita*[^4],[^5]

Sharangadhara Samhita is one of the best books on Ayurveda medicine. Written by Acharya Sharangadhara, the Samhita is a part of Laghutrayee.

The whole treatise consists of 3 divisions, 32 chapters, and 2,600 verses.

**Poorva Khanda**

It is the 1st division of the Samhita and comprises of 7 chapters. It deals with the types of medicinal formulations, examination of pulse, processing the food items, numerology of diseases, technical terminology, anatomy, physiology, etc.

**Madhyama Khanda**

It is the 2nd division of the Samhita and comprises of 12 chapters. It deals with Panchavidha Kashaya Kalpana (5 types of preparations), Swarasa (fresh juices of herbs), Kalka (paste of medicinal herbs), Kwatha (hot decoctions of medicinal herbs), Sheeta (cold infusions) and Phanta (hot infusions). Preparations of various types of medicinal formulations like Churna (herbal powders), Vati (tablets), Lehyas (confections), Tailas (oils), Asava and Arishta (fermented herbal preparations), Rasa Aushadhas (minerals and metallic preparations) etc. are described in this section.

**Uttara Khanda**

It is the 3rd division of the Samhita and comprises of 13 chapters. This section deals with details of Panchakarma (5 basic treatments of Ayurveda i.e. Vamana i.e. therapeutic emesis, Virechana i.e. therapeutic purgation, Asthapana Vasti i.e. decoction enemas, Anuvasana Vasti i.e. oil enemas and Nasya i.e. nasal medications, Swasthavritta (hygienic principles), Lepadi Karmas (external applications), Anjanadikriyas (ophthalmic treatments) etc. are explained.

The presentation and content and chronology of written material in Sharangadhara Samhita were different from that of other treatises. As a result, many commentaries were written on this work by various scholars like Adhamalla, Kasiram Vaidya, Rudra Bhatt etc.

**Specialty of Sharangadhara Samhita**[^6],[^7],[^8],[^9]

- The seasons are classified according to constellations.
- Examination of pulse or Nadi Pariksha has been described in detail.
- Definitions of various terminologies like Deepana, Pachana etc. have been detailed.
- Detailed classification of the diseases has been given.
- The methods of Shodana (purification), Marana (preparing the ash) procedures of minerals have been explained in detail.
- Panchakarma techniques and their importance in treatment have been explained.
- Single herb formulations have been given.

**Commentaries and Commentators on Sharangadhara Samhita**

The below mentioned are the commentaries and commentators of Sharangadhara Samhita.

- **Dipika - commentary by Adhamalla**

Adhamalla wrote a popular commentary on Sharangadhara Samhita by the name ‘Dipika’ Adhamalla was the court physician of Jaitrasimha, the king of Hastikantapura, situated on the banks of river Charmavati. He also belonged to the native place of Sharangadhara i.e. Hammirapura in the Shakambhari kingdom.
The uniqueness of Adhamalla’s explanation

It is inferred that Vaidya Adhamalla belongs to 14th century AD. Adhamalla in his commentary Dipika interpreted the verses of Sharangadhara in a different way. Example, in the context of respiration Sharangadhara, quotes ‘Hridayam Chetana Sthanam’ in Purva Khanda 5/47-50 verses. But it was interpreted for the functions of the central nervous system by Adhamalla in his commentary.

- **Gudardha Dipika - commentary by KashiramVaidya**

Kashiram Vaidya was one of the best commentators of Sharangadhara Samhita. His commentary is known by the name ‘Gudardha Dipika’. Kashiram belonged to the period of king Sahasa Lema, son of Shershaw, who ruled approximately around 1550 AD. Hence it is inferred that Vaidya Kashiram belongs to 16th century.

Kashiram Vaidya has quoted references from Madana Vinoda (14th century AD), Pathya Nighantu (15th century AD) and Bhavaprakasha (16th century AD). Thus it can be inferred that Kashiram Vaidya belongs to 17th century AD.

- **Ayurveda Dipika - commentary by Rudra Bhatt**

The commentary written by Rudra Bhatt on Sharangadhara Samhita is known as ‘Ayurveda Dipika’. Rudra Bhatta was the son of Kinnera Bhatt, the royal physician of Abdul Rahim.

The work of Rudra Bhatta is not available in full form. The work only up to Madhyama Khanda was available with Vaidyaraj Yogeshwara Sharma. It was not published. Rudra Bhatta also wrote a commentary on Vaidya Jivana by the name ‘Dipika’. Vaidya Jivana was written by Lolamba Raja. Rudra Bhatta wrote a voluminous treatise on medicine also. Krishna Bhatt, grandfather of Rudra Bhatt wrote a commentary on Charaka Samhita. Rudra Bhatta belongs to 17th century AD.

- **Commentary by Vopadeva**

Acharya Vopadeva was a great scholar who was well versed in Ayurveda, Vyakarana (grammar), Jyotisha (astrology) and allied subjects. He wrote a commentary on Sharangadhara Samhita. Vopadeva was the son of Keshava, a great physician and a friend of Hemadri. Hemadri was the commentator of Ashtanga Hridaya. He was the disciple of Pandit Dhanesa. He was the royal physician of Mahadev, king of Devagiri.

Vopadeva also wrote a commentary on Siddha Mantra, a work of his father. Vopadeva also wrote Shatashloki. He also wrote a commentary on his own work. Hemadri wrote commentaries on the other 2 works of Vopadeva namely ‘Muktaphala’ and ‘Harileela’. Vopadeva has a number of works on his name in various subjects. He belongs to 14th century AD.

Vopadeva also has composed a Nighantu by the name ‘Hridaya Dipika’ which was edited and published by Acharya Priyavrata Sharma. Vopadeva belonged to Vedpur, capital of king Simharaj, on the banks of River Varda.

**CONCLUSION**

*Sharangadhara Samhita* is an important reference text for Ayurvedic doctors. Its uniqueness in explaining and presenting certain topics like Nadi Pariksha, measurements, Kashaya Kalpanas, terminologies, Ayurvedic formulations, etc. makes it an important treatise.

**REFERENCES**

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