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# A Critical Review of Importance of *Sharirsthana* by Acharya Charak

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## ABSTRACT

*Ayurveda* is a traditional system of medicine originated ancient *Vedic* times of India in the ancient *Vedic* times of India. In the literature of *Ayurveda*, *Charak Samhita* is considered as one of the best literature and hence it has been and given the status of *Brihatrayi*. According to *Ayurveda*, *Dharma* (virtuous arts), *Artha* (wealth), *Kama* (desire) and *Moksha* (final emancipation) are four important components of health.<sup>[1]</sup> *Charak Samhita* stands at the top of the Indian ancient texts representing the School of Medicine in *Ayurveda*, describes not only physical and mental health, but also spiritual health. *Charak Samhita Sharir Sthana* is one of the unique *Sthana* (section), where all the aspects of health, physical, mental and Spiritual health are well explained.

**Key words:** *Ayurveda*, *Charak Samhita*, *Sharir Sthana*

## INTRODUCTION

While talking about the *Acharyas /Samhitas Acharya Charak*, while writing the *Pratisanskaran* of *Agnivesha Tantra* for the first time has explained the Concept of *Sthana's* by dividing the knowledge given by *Agnivesh* in different *Sthana's* according to the concerned area.

*Charak Samhita* is divided into total eight *Sthana's*. *Sharir Sthana* is the fourth *Sthana* of *Charak Samhita*. In this *Sthana* eight *Adhyaya* (chapters) are described.

According to *Acharya Charak*, *Sharia* (body) is narrated

from all the perspectives i.e., *Daivi* (supreme divinity level) and *Manusha* (human level), in the series of eight chapters and hence called *Sharir Sthana*.<sup>[2]</sup> One of the famous commentators of *Charak Samhita*, *Acharya Chakrapani* has explained about the sequence of *Sharir Sthana* after *Nidan* and *Viman Sthana*.

He has explained that after describing diseases in *Nidan Sthana* and quantification of vitiation of *Dosha* and other factors responsible for causing diseases in *Viman Sthana*, *Sharir Sthana* is explained.<sup>[3]</sup>

As therapeutics is concerned with human body and unless it is known with complete details, one can't treat it properly. Hence *Sharir Sthana* is meant to deal the science relating to human body in respect of its cause, origin, maintenance, growth etc.

The most important aspect is *Purusha*, who is the object of treatment and at the same time leads to liberation from all the miseries and that is why the opening *Adhyaya* of this section is devoted to him.

In *Sharir Sthana*, *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned everything related to 24 *Tatwatmakpurush* (human body) as he observed to or he examined in *Rogi's* by

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*Pratyaksha* or *Anumanapramana*, So Whatever has been told by *Acharyacharak* is based observation.

The first *Adhyaya*, *Katidha Purusha Sharir*, holds several concepts not mentioned in modern medical science. The similarities between the foundation of Universe and mankind at microscopic level as well as at macroscopic levels are explained by *Acharya Charak* through the concept of *Purusha*. Salvation (*Moksha*) which is the main purpose of human birth, for this purpose *Naishathiki Chikitsa* is explained.

### Concept of Yoga and Moksha

*Moksha* is possible by the absence of *Rajas* and *Tamas*, destruction of the potent past deeds, and detachment from the all sources of conjunction.<sup>[4]</sup>

*Charkas Samhita* is the only *Ayurveda* text where we get the explanations of ways of attaining *Moksha*.

*Acharya Charak* explains that all Sensations cease to exist in the state of *Yoga* (union with self) and *Moksha*. In *Moksha*, the cessation is complete while *Yoga* leads to that.<sup>[5]</sup>

### Atulyagotriya Sharir

*Acharya Chakrapani*, in his commentary states that when a person gets married in the Same *Kula* or *Gotra*, it will be considered as '*Adharma*' because their children will be affected with genetic deformities.<sup>[6]</sup>

Procedures and rituals described in this *Adhyaya*, into the current lifestyle to produce physically, mentally, healthy and disease-free progeny and to reduce the possibilities of genetic abnormalities in children.

On this very ancient scientific concept, recent researches are also proving connection between consanguinity and their hazardous effects on progeny.

### Khuddika Garbhavakrantisharir

*Matrujabeeja* (maternal gamete), *Pitrujabeeja* (paternal gamete), *Rasa* (dietary nutrients), *Satmya* (foetal adaptations), *Atmaj Bhava* (spirituality) of the *Garbha*, *Satva* (behavioural development) of the *Garbha*, development of the *Garbha* (foetus) are the main and important components of human foetal development.<sup>[7]</sup>

In this *Adhyaya*, *Acharya Chakrapani* has explained that the outcome of pregnancy is the overall effect of quality of sperm, ovum, maternal diet, environment and life style of mother during gestational period.

### Mahatigarbhavakranti Sharir

Growth and development of foetus in month wise manner during embryonic life is explained as '*Mahatigarbhaavakranti Adhyaya*.'

Specific definition of the term '*Garbha*' (embryo) is explained here as the union of *Shukra* (sperm), *Shonit* (ovum) and *Atma* (soul) in the *Garbhashaya* (uterus).<sup>[8]</sup>

Following fertilization only '*Kalala*' or 'mass of cells' is formed in the first month of pregnancy. According to *Acharya Charak*, sex differentiation of foetus occurs in the second month of gestation.<sup>[9]</sup>

There is a manifestation of all the sense organs and multiple systems abruptly and simultaneously during the third month of gestation.

Manifestation of foetal heart occurs in the fourth month. From this month, the mother will be called as '*Dauhridini*' or 'the one with two hearts.'<sup>[10]</sup> Increase in the muscle Mass of foetus and blood volume is the characteristic of fifth month of gestation.

There is improvement in the complexion and strength of foetus in the sixth month of gestation.<sup>[11]</sup> One of the interesting facts about the manifestation of *Buddhi* (intellect) during 6th month of intra-uterine life, may be of great importance to understand the development of brain and cognitive functions in foetal stage.

In seventh month of embryonic development all the body tissues attain maturity.<sup>[12]</sup>

It is said that during eighth month, there is instability in vital functions and foetal viability, therefore, the child taking birth in eighth month has suspicious viability and life.<sup>[13]</sup>

Ninth month onwards it is said to be *Prakrit Prasava*.

### Purusha Vichaya Sharir

*Loka Purusha Samya Siddhanta* i.e., 'Whatever is in the universe, is represented in a person' is the essence of this *Adhyaya*. Human is the creation of universal force

and hence all the external factors show resemblance with human characters and this consideration/ theory is said to be in *Loka Purusha Samya Siddhant* in *Charak Samhita*.<sup>[14]</sup> This *Siddhant* can be translated as “Man is a miniature of the Universe.”

#### Sharir Vichaya Sharir

*Sharir* means a human body and *Vichaya* means to analyse, which deals with analysis of body parts is *Sharir Vichaya Adhyaya*.

Analysis through the *Gurvadiguna*, *Sharinavruddhikara Bhava* (factors responsible for, growth of body), *Balavruddhikara Bhava* (factors responsible for Strength of body), *Aaharparinamkar Bhava* (factors responsible for transformation of food) are the peculiarities of this *Adhyaya*.

#### Sankhya Sharir

*Sankhya* means a number.

Counts of different body parts, organs, and structures are explained in detail in this *Adhyaya*.

Measurement of liquid constituents of body, *Panch Bhautik Sanghatan* (five basic elemental constitution) as well as *Mahabhautik* predominance in different body parts is explained in detailed in this *Adhyaya*.

#### Jatisutriya Adhyaya

It mentions about the menstrual health, procedures for maintaining gestation, diet or drugs responsible for miscarriage, *Garbhini Paricharya* (month wise regimen for pregnant lady), measures causing easy delivery, measures to prevent and manage post-partum complications, immediate new born Care including *Pranapratyagamana* (Resuscitation), cutting of umbilical cord, cleaning of body, *Raksha Karma* (Disinfectant care) *Prakriti Parikshan*, *Dhatri* (wet nurse), qualities of breast milk and measures for purification and increase in breast milk *Sutikagara* (Delivery and partum area), *kumaragar* (Room for infants), toys for child are mentioned in detailed in this *Adhyaya*.

#### DISCUSSION

*Charak Samhita* is the only *Samhita*, where along with spiritual dimension of human, physical, mental and

spiritual health is widely described, that is why *Charak Samhita Sharir Sthana* is of immense importance.

Also, to understand the concepts of *Dharma* and *Moksha* described in *Ayurveda* literature, there is a need of increasing academic as well as clinical approach towards *Charak Samhita Sharir Sthana*.

#### CONCLUSION

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that in *Charak Samhita Sharir Sthana*, all the aspects of health i.e., physical, mental and spiritual health have been explained in detail and more importance is given for Spiritual health. Approach of *Acharya Charak* towards reproductive, maternal, neonatal and child health is sequential, scientific and shows resemblance with today's genetics, embryology, maternal care, neonatal care, which proves the preventive and curative approach of ancient, health system of *Ayurveda*, towards reproductive, maternal and neonatal care.

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