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An overview of *Chikitsa Chatushpada*

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a very distinct medical science and has some unique features. Ayurveda gives ample emphasis on the preventive aspects and helps in promotion and prolongation of a healthy and happy life. *Chikitsa* (treatment) is the outcome of efforts and proper employment of *Chatushpada* (four pillars of treatment). Ayurveda believes that success of any treatment is totally depends upon *Chatushpada* of *Chikitsa*. *Chatushpada* are *Bhishag* (physician), the *Upastha* (Medical Attendant), *Rogi* (patient) and *Dravya* (medicine). These four factors are mutually dependant on each other. These four pillars are considered mandatory to provide relief to the patient. Absence of any one of these, the treatment would not be possible. Each of the four factors possesses four qualities essential for a treatment to be successful. When all these four factors are favorable, then the treatment will be successful. Therefore, this review article attempts to explain the importance of *Chikitsa Chatushpad* in detail as mentioned in Ayurvedic literatures.

Key words: *Bhishag, Dravya, Rogi, Upastha, Chatushpad of Chikitsa, four pillars of treatment, Quadruple of therapeutics.*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda always guides man to keep the body and mind fit to attain these *Purusharthas*. *Ayurveda* is used to cure diseases caused by the imbalance of the three *doshas* and maintain health by preventing diseases. Aim of *Ayurveda* is to maintain the health of healthy persons and to eradicate the disease of diseased persons.^[1] To eradicate the disease, *Chikitsa* of imbalance *Doshas* is very necessary. In *Ayurveda*, the success of *Chikitsa* depends totally upon four factors which are known as *Chikitsa Chatushpada*. These *Chatushpada* includes *Bhishag, Upastha, Rogi* and *Dravya*.^[2,3,4]

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

This is conceptual type of study. All sorts of references have been collected and relevant material is compiled from various available *Ayurvedic* classics texts like *Charak Samhita, Sushruta Samhita* and *Ashtanga Hridaya*) and available commentaries on it. Research articles are also searched from various websites. All Compiled matter is reorganized and critically analyzed for the discussion and attempt has been made to draw some fruitful conclusions.

Guna of Vaidya^[5,6] (Qualities of Physician)

According to *Acharya Charak*, ideal physician should possess the following four qualities.

Shastra (having detailed knowledge about diseases and the treatment)

1. *Drushtakarma* (having extensive practical experience)
2. *Daksha* (alert or Dexterity)
3. *Shuchi* (purity of mind and body)

According to *Acharya Sushruta*, A *Vaidya* (physician), who is well versed in the science of *Ayurvedic* medicine and *Drushtrakarma* (who has attended to

the demonstrations of surgery procedure), and who seen the treatments being performed, and gained experience by doing it by himself, *Shuchi* (clean), courageous, *Laghuhasta* (firm and light in hand), *Shur* (brave), fully equipped with medicine, surgical instruments and *Visharad* (who is intelligent to manage any critical situations), well read, and is a man of ready resources, endowed with all moral virtues, is alone fit to be called a *Vaidya*.^[7]

Guna of Upastha^[8] (Qualities of medical attendant)

According to *Acharya Charak*, the attendant attending on the patient should possess following four qualities.

1. *Buddhiman* (Intelligent enough to understand the physician's instructions and act accordingly)
2. *Daksha* (Alert or active)
3. *Anurakta* (Affection or attachment towards patient)
4. *Shuchi* (purity of mind and body) According to *Acharya Sushruta*^[9]

A person is fit as a *Paricharak* (medical attendant) who is *Snigdho* (affectionate), desirous of protecting the patient, who is cool-headed and pleasant in his demeanour, does not speak ill of any body, *Balwaan* (strong) and attentive to the requirements of the patient and strictly and indefatigably follows the instructions given by the physician.

Guna of Rogi (Qualities of Patient)

The patient undergoing treatment should possess the following four ideal qualities. He should be

1. *Jnapaka* (Good memory)
2. *Bhishagvashya* (Obedient to his physician)
3. *Satvavaan* (Having good strength to tolerate disease and treatment) Fearlessness or courage
4. Patient should able to describe all symptoms about time disorder

According to *Acharya Sushruta*, person who is *Aayushman* (long life), *Satvawan* (strong will power), *Saadhyo* (suffering from curable disease), *Aadya* (Rich or wealthy enough to afford the treatment) *Aastiko*

(who believes in a kind and all-merciful Providence) and possesses an everlasting fortitude and strong vital energy, and who is not greedy (control over himself), *Vaidyavakyastho* (strictly obeying the instructions of the physician) is proper patient for treatment.

Guna of Aushodhi (Qualities medicine)

According to *Acharya Charak*, the *Aushodhi* to be administered to the patient should possess the following four ideal qualities.

1. *Bahuta* (It should be available in abundant quantity)
2. *Yogyatam* (It should be effective)
3. *Aanekvidha Kalpana* (Various pharmaceutical forms or multiple use)
4. *Sampat* (Richness in efficacy or potency)

Importance of Vaidya (Physician)^[10]

All four *Chatushpad* equipped with their sixteen qualities are responsible for the success in any type of treatment. Yet the *Vaidya*, by the virtue of his keen knowledge, administrative position and by prescribing capacity occupies the most important position among them. As the vessel, fuel and fire are the helping factors for the cook in the process of cooking and for the victory, a conqueror needs favorable topographical position, army and weapons, similarly in the success of treatment, the patient, attendant and medicine are helpers only to the physician. In the simile of cooking, the patient is likened to the vessel, the attendant to the fuel and the medicament to the fire and in the victory the patient has been compared with land, the army with the attendant and the weapons with the medicine. The clod of mud, the stick, the wheel and the thread etc. are not able to make pot without the help of the potter similarly without the presence of the physician, other three factors of treatment (the patient, the medical attendant and the medicine) are useless for the treatment purpose.^[11] Medicine, patient, nurse all these three limbs of the treatment along with a fourth one of a good quality physician cause cure of even the severe disease in a short time. Without a good *Vaidya*

even if the remaining three limbs are of good quality the treatment becomes unsuccessful. Only a learned physician having good qualities always rescues many patients from the ocean of diseases. According to *Acharya Sushruta*^[12] the *Vaidya* possessing good qualities alone can save the patient life always, just as the navigator alone can save the boat in water even without other assistant with him. From these statements we can say that physician plays the most important role in the process of treatment. In *Charak Samhita*, *Acharya Charak* gives clear picture of different types of physician such as *Raja Vaidya* (royal physician), *Pranabhisara* (an excellent physician), *Bhishak Chadhamchar* (pseudo physician / who pose themselves as a physician), *Siddhisadhita* (feigned physician / who boast themselves as a successful physician) *Vaidyagunayukta* (genuine physician) and *Murkha Vaidya*^[13]

DISCUSSION

Bhishag, *Upastha*, *Rogi* and *Dravya* are four components of treatment, when they are having requisite and specific qualities can successfully re-establish the homeostasis of *Dosha* and *Dhatu*s in the event of their equilibrium being disturbed in disease condition. In other words, four components are responsible for cure of the diseases. A *Vaidya* must have witness of therapies, gained practical experience by performing them himself for several times, and also pure, clean in (body, mind and speech). He should be expert and light handed in performing the acts necessary for the treatment. He also possesses all the necessary equipment and medicine essential for the treatment. He should also be brave in performing the necessary acts and should be of sharp intellect, clever, industrious, kind in speech and a true follower of medical ethics. While prescribing the medicine to patient, desire effect, unwanted reaction of medicine and its dose everything is considered by the physician. Such type of physician is regarded the best. The drug is 'an agent' which a physician employs as an instrument in restoring the equilibrium of the body tissues Therefore *Bhaishaja* (Medicine) should be abundantly and easily available in required quantity, should have better quality (requisite potency) and

physician or medical attendant could prepare many preparations (multiple forms) from original ingredients are considered as ideal. It is necessary that medical attendant must possess adequate knowledge of nursing, expert in delivering nursing care and able to work according to the situation, who is affectionate (faithful) towards patient, having no hate for a patient and who possess purity of mind and body and having faith in the orders of the physician. At last, the patient must possess good memory and be obedient towards physician and attendant, fearless and who express what he feels about his illness (disease). A patient must have confidence in the competence of their physician and must feel that they can confide in him or her. The patient needs to follow his personal guidelines in order to achieve and maintain his ideal healthy state. A patient should have a long-life time, truthful, curable disease, having sufficient wealth to undergo treatment, having good friends and believer of God. At last, the patient must possess good memory and patient must be cooperative.

CONCLUSION

According to *Ayurveda*, all *Chatushpad* equipped with their sixteen qualities are responsible for the success in treatment. Still the *Vaidya*, by the virtue of his keen knowledge of medical science, administrative position and by prescribing capacity occupies the most important position among them. The success of a physician lies in identifying the disease in the most appropriate way and prescribing the most effective drug. Drug plays a key role in the success of treatment. The drugs are the tools of a Physician. So, it is rightly called as the weapon of the *Vaidya*. Three limbs endowed with good qualities are available with fourth limb the physician possessing good qualities will be able to cure any kind of difficult diseases. From above all references, we can say that, to get success in treatment four pillars are very important.

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