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## Review on 'Swastyā' - Principles of Charaka Samhita as explained in Dinacharya and Rutucharya

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### ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is explained by Acharya Caraka as science of life. The primary motive of Ayurveda is maintenance of positive health of an individual and treatment of the diseased; in order to attain four Purusharthas, which is possible only if a person is healthy. Ultimately the benefit of studying the Caraka Samhita is to achieve Dhātu Saamya (equilibrium of body components). The concept of Swastyā is explained in every Sthana of Caraka Samhita which explains the significance or existence of concepts of personal health and well-being. Through concepts of promotion of health and personal well-being exceptionally said, Charaka Samhita thus may be considered as textbook of tagline, adding life to years and not merely years to life.

**Key words:** Charaka Samhita, Swastyā, Health, Swastha Chatushka, Swastha

### INTRODUCTION

The word 'Swastha' comprises of 'Swa' meaning one's own and 'Stha' means staying or being in one's own natural state. The condition in which the person is devoid of any abnormality or disease is said to be Swastha.<sup>[1]</sup> The feeling of wellness is Swastha.<sup>[2]</sup>

Person endowed with well-formed muscles, compactness, strong sense organs, not afflicted with strong diseases and can with stand Ksuth, Pipasa, Atapa, Shita and Vyayama, the food gets digested and gets assimilated properly, resulting in proper nourishment

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of Mamsa and all Dhātu is said as Swastha.<sup>[3]</sup>

### Health

The word 'Health' derives from Old English 'hal' of Germanic origin, which means to say 'whole' or 'a thing that is complete in itself'.

According to World Health Organisation, Health is defined as 'State of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'. Spiritual, emotional, and vocational dimensions have also been proposed in defining health.

'A state of relative equilibrium of body forms and function which results from its successful dynamic adjustment to forces tending to disturb it. It is not passive interplay between body substance and forces impinging upon it but an active response of body forces working towards readjustment'. (Perkins)

Sustainable health is a personal commitment by maintaining and taking responsibility for your own health, through preventive (proactive) means.

Wellbeing is a positive outcome that is meaningful for a person and for many sectors of society, where it tells

us that, individual perceives that their lives are going well.

In general, *Swastha* and health remain to have the same meaning even though explained in two different aspects of medical science. So, in further discussion of the topic both terms are considered alike.

Discussion on promotion of health and prevention of disease in *Charaka Samhita*, is conducted in an elaborative way under 1). *Dinacharya* 2). *Ritucharya*, 3). *Sadvritta* 4). *Dharaniya - Adharaniya Vega* 5). *Trayopastamba* 6). *Acharya Rasayana*. The habits, attitudes, tastes, moral standards, economic level etc together constitute the lifestyle of an individual which is reflection of the community he is part of. Following the pros and cons of criteria mentioned above, maintenance of health in its complete sense can be understood.

#### **Dinacharya**

Integrated personal healthcare is a part of *Dinacharya* as per *Charaka Samhita*. A well equipped daily regimen is essentially an inseparable branch of preventing disease and promotion of personal health. The word '*Dinacharya*' is composed of *Dina* and *Charya*. *Dina* means 'a day' or 'day time' or 'day today'. '*Charya*' means 'duties', 'regimens' or 'actions' to be carried. Thus *Dinacharya* may be defined as duties and regimens to be carried out in a day.

**Brahma Muhurta:** To be specific, *Acharya Charaka* has not given direct reference for *Brahma Muhurta*. Instead, he mentions that one should wake up during *Upavusha* - when still a part of night is left. While describing the qualities of *Shishya*, he says that disciple should get up early in the morning or last quarter of night for *Adhyayana*.<sup>[4]</sup> According to modern science, melatonin which has a pivotal role in circadian rhythm of a person is at its peak during night and ebb by the time the sun rises. Being a mood stabilizer it enhances cognition too.

**Danthadhavana<sup>[5]</sup>, Jihvanirlekhana<sup>[6]</sup>, Asyadharya<sup>[7]</sup>:** One should do teeth cleansing with twigs of *Kashaya*, *Katu*, and *Tikta Rasa* plants like *Karanja*, *Karavira*, *Arka*, *Malati*, *Kakubha* and *Asana* etc. Brushing the

teeth twice a day (morning and evening) without injuring the gums eliminates foul smell and tastelessness.

Tongue scraper made with *Swarna*, *Rupya*, *Tamra* which is smooth and curved should be used. The dirt collected at the root of the tongue causes obstruction to the respiration and also produces foul smell thus; this should be removed by scrapping the tongue.

The one desirous of cleanliness, relish and fragrance should hold fruits of *Jati*, *Katuka*, *Puga*, *Lavanga* and *Kakkola*, leaves of betel, exudates of camphor, etc. for *Asyadharya*.

**Anjana<sup>[8]</sup>:** *Anjana* is mentioned first, as the eye is most important sense organ. As *Chakshu* has predominance of *Tejas* and *Sleshma* has predominance of *Aap*, the eyes are more vulnerable for affliction of *Kapha*. *Acharya Jatukarna* has also said that *Anjana* increasing discharges should be used in the night. It shows results in other supra clavicular diseases too. Daily use of *Rasanjana* and *Sauviranjana* improve the perspicuity of vision.

*Chakrapani* opines that after removal of dust, the exogenous factors etc., and clarity of vision comes naturally. Though *Aschotana* is not mentioned in the context, effect of both being similar, it is included. Even *Putapaka* etc. also perform the same action.

**Nasya<sup>[9]</sup>:** Being the entry to head, all *Urdhwajatru Vikara* can be treated using *Nasya*. *Anutaila* is indicated for daily use and is beneficial as *Sira*, *Shirakapalсандhi*, *Snayu* and *Khandara* attain greater strength, being nourished by nasal drops. Face becomes cheerful and corpulent, voice becomes stable and deep. *Anutaila* is a *Tridosha Shamaka*. Use of *Anutaila* even in one's advanced age, senility does not find strength in *Uttamanga (Shiras)*.

**Kawala<sup>[10]</sup>:** *Kawala* and *Gandusha* have the same affect and is used to alleviate the *Kapha Dosha* that is aggravated. Medicated decoctions, oils or liquids kept in oral cavity provides *Bala* to *Hanu* and *Shabdha*, brings *Prabha* to *Vadana* and increases *Kshut* and *Ruchi*.

**Abhyanga<sup>[11]</sup>:** *Shiroabhyanga* and *Padaabhyanga* are explained in the context of *Abhyanga*. Practise of *Shiroabhyanga* helps in attaining *Bala* of *Shira Asthi*, thickens and strengthens *Keshamula*. Gives clarity to *Indriyas* and gets sound sleep and happiness. *Soukumaryata*, *Bala*, *Sthirata* and *Drishti Prasada* are the benefits of *Padaabhyanga*.

**Snana<sup>[12]</sup>:** *Snana* has benefits like purifying, aphrodisiac, provides longevity of life, nourishes and strengthen the body and is the best enhancer of *Ojas*.

**Vyayama<sup>[13]</sup>:** Symptoms of *Samyak Vyayama* include *Swasavridhi*, *Laghava* and it also improves one's *Sthairya*, *Dukha Sahishnuta*, *Jathargni* and acts as *Tridosha Shamaka*.

**Vastradharanam<sup>[14]</sup>:** Clean attire or apparels enhances charm, longevity of life, fame. It is said to remove poverty and brings elegant beauty. Preferentially, people can wear gems etc. which again give the same outcome, mentioned above.

### Ritucharya

*Ritu* means 'to go'. An individual who follows proper *Ahara* and *Vihara* for every *Ritu* possesses good *Aharabala* and *Varna*.<sup>[15]</sup> Main aim of *Tasyashitiya Adhyaya* where *Ritucharya* is elaborated is to give awareness for adoption of apt methods to live suitably with the aim of *Deerghayu* without disturbing the equilibrium of *Dhatu*, *Dosha* and knowing the wholesomeness for the season and get adapted to the environment.

### Adana Kala and its effects

Sun and wind during this period with their sharp momentum and dryness, absorb moisture from earth's surface. Specifically, wind during *Shishira*, *Vasanta* and *Greeshma Ritu* boosts the *Rukshata* in the atmosphere and dominated by qualities of *Agni* which in turn increases *Tikta*, *Kashaya*, *Katu Rasa* and this lead to depletion of *Shareerabala* in individual.<sup>[16]</sup>

### Effects of Visarga Kala on the body

*Varsha*, *Sharad*, *Hemantha Ritu* comes under *Visarga Kala*. Sun moving to *Dakshina* gets reduced with its power with wind in due course of time but moon is not

affected, which increases the moisture content of earth through rain. *Madhura*, *Amla*, *Lavana* which imparts *Snigdha Guna* in body and enhances one's strength.<sup>[17]</sup>

### Ahara and Vihara suggested for different Ritu

#### Shishira

Predominant *Rasa* and *Mahabhuta* are *Tikta* and *Akasha* respectively. *Bala* remains less but *Agni* is high. So, *Shami* and *Shuka Dhanya*, *Ardra*, *Lashuna*, *Haritaki*, *Ikshu* are advised. Body massage with *Taila*, *Churna*, *Kalka* and *Ushnodaka Snana* are to be followed in *Vihara*.

#### Vasanta

Predominant *Rasa* and *Mahabhuta* are *Kashaya* and *Prithvi*, *Vayu*. Vitiation of *Kapha Dosha* occurs, *Agni* remains in *Manda* state. *Laghu Ahara* like *Purana Shali*, *Mudgaa*, *Madhu*, *Shasha Mamsa* has to be consumed. *Udvartana* with *Chandana*, *Kavala*, *Dhooma*, *Anjana* and *Shodhana* therapies such as *Vamana*, *Nasya* is suggested. *Divaswapna* is strictly contraindicated in this season.

#### Grishma

More of *Katu Rasa* and supremacy of *Agni* and *Vayu* is seen in *Grishma*. Due to *Vata Vridhi*, person has *Hina Bala* along with *Mandagni*. *Madhura Rasa Pradhana Ahara* along with good quantity of water and other cold liquids are suggested. Excessive exercise, sexual indulgence and alcoholic preparations are strictly prohibited.

#### Varsha

Dominance of *Amla Rasa* along with *Prithvi* and *Agni Mahabhuta* is the feature of *Varsha Ritu*. The vitiation of *Vata* along with *Pitta* makes person feels weak and so is *Agni*. Among cereals, old barley, rice, wheat, meat, *Yusha* soup etc. are to be included in diet. *Ushnajala* is indicated. *Ushnodaka Snana*, *Basti* can be considered for a perfect *Vihara* during this season.

#### Sharat

Predominant *Rasa* is *Lavana* and *Mahabhuta* are *Aap* and *Agni*. *Madhyama Bala*, with pacified *Vata Dosha*

but aggravated *Pitta Dosha* is present with increase in *Agni*. So *Ghoduma*, *Madhu*, *Jangala Mamsa* are preferable to be consumed when hunger is felt. *Shodhana* procedures like *Virechana*, *Rakta Mokshana* etc. is apt to be taken in this season.

### Hemanta

*Prithvi* and *Aap Mahabhuta* along with *Madhura Rasa* take the lead in *Hemanta*. *Uttama Bala* along with well-maintained *Agni* is in advantage to individual, so that he can consume *Nava Shali*, *Masha*, *Kshira*, *Ikshu Rasa* etc. *Vyayama*, use of *Ushna Jala*, *Atapa Sevana* sexual indulgence are recommended.

### CONCLUSION

One who follows principles of life style laid down by Caraka Samhita will always stay healthy. Adopting the lifestyle to changing seasons is the key to maintain the equilibrium of *Dhatus* and *Doshas*. Understanding and addressing of health inequities between people themselves wherever they live plays is also very essential. As the definition of health is, I come to an opinion that, wellbeing of a person in all aspects is not merely the responsibility of oneself or the health sector alone, rather it involves the cooperation of all disciplines of human development which in terms of *Acharya Charaka* is 'Deergham Jeevitham'.

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