



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 7 · Issue 10

November 2022

Journal of
**Ayurveda and Integrated
Medical Sciences**

www.jaims.in

JAIMS

An International Journal for Researches in Ayurveda and Allied Sciences



Maharshi Charaka
Ayurveda

Indexed

Chikitsa Siddhanta with special reference to Panchakarma

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ABSTRACT

Chikitsa Siddhanta or the basic fundamental principles involved in treatment are very vital in any science. Ayurveda is a science known for its principles. It has stood the test of time owing to its treatment principles. It guides a physician to accordingly choose the various aspects of treatment such as methods, drugs, etc. *Panchakarma* is a very effective tool of *Ayurveda* to not only combat diseases but also to promote health. Thus, it becomes very important to understand the principles concerned with respect to *Panchakarma*. This article aims at understanding some of the most important principles that form the base of *Panchakarma* that shapes its utility in treatment.

Key words: *Panchakarma, Chikitsa, Siddhanta, Principles, Shodhana*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a medical science known for its principles. Success of treatment in *Ayurveda* is based upon understanding of the basic principles that govern the body as well as the skill to practically apply such principles while treating. As disease or pathophysiology is understood in different regards, the treatment approach will correspondingly differ. This calls for a need to understand the different principles in treatment which is called as *Chikitsa Siddhanta*.

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Submission Date: 12/09/2022 Accepted Date: 23/10/2022

Access this article online

Quick Response Code



Website: www.jaims.in

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The term *Chikitsa Siddhanta* is made up of two words, *Chikitsa* and *Siddhanta*. *Chikitsa* basically means treatment. *Charakacharya* says that *Chikitsa* is the *Pravṛtti* that aims at bringing the *Dhatu* from an imbalanced state (which is the root cause for the manifestation of a disease) to their normal state of equilibrium and its success is achieved by the 4 supporting factors or the *Chikitsa Catushpada*, (i.e.) *Bhishak, Dravya, Upasthata* and the *Rogi*.^[1]

The word *Siddhanta* means principles. *Siddhanta* is that which is scientifically established after verifying through multiple examinations and assessments.^[2] Every science, philosophy or school of thought has respective fundamental principles that form the foundation. For example, *Tridosha Siddhanta* is the fundamental principle of *Ayurveda* that helps to understand and comprehend health, pathology and treatment in terms of *Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha*.

In *Ayurveda*, *Chikitsa Siddhanta* are innumerable when it comes to general practice. Most common among them would be *Dosha Pratyānika Siddhanta*, *Vyādhi Pratyānika Siddhanta*, *Srotoduṣṭi Siddhanta*, *Āvaraṇa*

Chikitsa Siddhanta, *Pāñcabhautika Siddhanta*, *Sāmānya Viśeṣa Siddhanta*, etc. However, in this regard, the basic principles that are essential in clinical practice of *Panchakarma* are highlighted.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Various *Siddhanta* were reviewed in the classical literature of *Ayurveda* and were compiled as follows.

1. Chikitsa Siddhanta based on the status of Roga and Rogī

Status of the *Roga* and *Rogī* is important while planning *Shodhana*. This is mentioned in plenty of diseases. For example, in *Raktapitta*, *Shodhana Chikitsa* is not always done. It is indicated only if the following criterias are met:

1. State of *Dosha* is *Bahu Dosha Avasthā*
2. Person is *Balavān*
3. There is no *Bala Kṣaya* and *Māṃsa Kṣaya* observed
4. The nature of origin of the disease is *Santarpaṇa Janya*
5. The subject is *Shodhana Arha*

Only if the above criteria are met, then *Shodhana* is advocated in appropriate *Kāla* by *Vamana* in *Adhoga Raktapitta* and *Virecana* in *Ūrdhvaga Raktapitta*.^[3]

2. Dosha Pratyānīka Chikitsa Siddhanta

Dosha are the first and foremost factors responsible for the manifestation of the disease. Based on factors such as which *Dosha* is involved, the state of the *Dosha*, etc., specific lines of treatment are to be employed. Following are aspects of treating the disease with respect to the *Dosha* involved.

a. Nānātmaja Vyādhi

Nānātmaja Vyādhi are diseases that specifically arise due to one particular *Dosha*, and accordingly the line of treatment has been mentioned. In general, the 80 *Vātaja Nānātmaja Vyādhi* are best treated by *Vasti* (*Āsthāpana* and *Anuvāsana*), the 40 *Pittaja Nānātmaja Vyādhi* are best treated by *Virecana* and the 20 *Kaphaja Nānātmaja Vyādhi* are best treated by *Vamana*. *Vāgbhaṭācārya* also says that the best modes

of treatment for *Vāta*, *Pitta* and *Kapha Dosha* are *Vasti*, *Virecana* and *Vamana* respectively.^[4-7]

b. Anukta Vyādhi

In treating a disease that is not mentioned in the classics, the modern Ayurvedic physician would be often in a dilemma. It puts forth an opportunity to venture into a new arena of treatment, but carries with it the risk of not being able to comprehend in its entirety, a condition previously unknown to science. It is not possible to name all the diseases due to the infinite permutations and combinations of the factors involved in disease manifestation such as *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, etc. Thus, the assessment of these factors becomes key in understanding and the disease in detail. However, *Ācārya Vāgbhaṭa* gives assurance that giving due importance to the *Samīkṣya Bhāva* in assessment of the disease, patient as well as treatment plan ensures that the physician does not fail in his attempt owing to incompetence.^[8]

3. Dosha Avasthā Anusāra Chikitsa Siddhanta

a. Sāmānya Chikitsa Siddhanta

The 4 states of the *Dosha* are enumerated as *Ksīṇa* (emaciated), *Kupita* (agitated), *Vṛddha* (aggravated) and *Sama* (equilibrium). Based on this the treatment principle differs. *Dosha* which are *Ksīṇa* are to be subjected to *Bṛṃhaṇa Chikitsa*. *Praśamana* (pacification) is advised for *Kupita Dosha*, whereas measures of *Nirharāṇa* (elimination) are advocated if the *Dosha* are *Vṛddha*. In *Sama Avasthā* the principle of *Paripālana* is ideal.^[9]

As per this *Siddhanta*, *Vṛddha Dosha* are indicated for *Shodhana*. *Ācārya Ḍalhaṇa* clarifies that there are two types of *Vṛddhi* - *Caya* and *Prakopa*. *Caya* is the *Samhitā Rūpa Vṛddhi* (accumulation of *Dosha*) whereas *Prakopa* is the *Vilayana Rūpa Vṛddhi* (*Dosha* attaining liquefaction and moving out of its place). *Dosha* which have attained the latter stage, (i.e., *Prakopa*) are to be removed from the body by means of *Shodhana*. He further adds that the *Kopa* can be either *Caya Pūrvaka* (preceded by accumulation of *Dosha*) or *Acaya Pūrvaka* (not preceded by accumulation of *Dosha*). *Caya Pūrvaka Prakopa* is indicated for *Śodhana*.^[10]

b. Kriyākāla

Manifestation of disease is understood as a process involving 6 milestones. These milestones, known as *Kriyākāla* (stages of disease manifestation and its management), not only help in understanding the stage of disease, but also provide opportunities of intervention.^[11] As the disease progresses from one stage to the next it becomes more stronger and thus more difficult to treat.^[12] Hence, they are also considered as *Chikitsa Avasara* or opportunities for intervention. Although it is said that *Dosha* must be attended to at the first stage of *Chaya* (accumulative stage) itself,^[13] *Shodhana* is ideally done in the stage of *Prakopa* or thereafter.

c. Naturally occurring *Prakopa* of *Dosha* with *Ṛtu* and corresponding *Ṛtu Shodhana*

With the influence of time, specifically the climate, the environment is responsible for variations in the *Dosha*. The respective seasons responsible for *Caya*, *Prakopa* and *Praśamana* of the *Tridoṣa* as an effect of climatic changes is depicted in the table below.

Table 1: Season in which *Caya*, *Prakopa* and *Praśamana* of respective *Dosha* occurs, corresponding season and method for *Śodhana*^[14-16]

<i>Dosha</i>	<i>Vāta</i>	<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Kapha</i>
<i>Caya</i>	<i>Grīṣma</i>	<i>Varṣa</i>	<i>Śīśira</i>
<i>Prakopa</i>	<i>Varṣa</i>	<i>Śarat</i>	<i>Vasanta</i>
<i>Praśamana</i>	<i>Śarat</i>	<i>Hemanta</i>	<i>Grīṣma</i>
<i>Ṛtu for Shodhana</i>	<i>Prāvṛṭ</i>	<i>Śarat</i>	<i>Vasanta</i>
<i>Shodhana</i>	<i>Vasti</i>	<i>Virecana</i>	<i>Vamana</i>

As mentioned above, the *Chaya* of the *Dosha* happens in respective season and the *Prakopa* occurs in the next season. Thus, this can be considered as *Caya Pūrvaka*, for which *Shodhana* is mandated. *Prakopa* of *Vāta* (in *Grīṣma Ṛtu*), *Pitta* (in *Śarat Ṛtu*) and *Kapha* (in *Vasanta Ṛtu*) naturally occurs by the influence of time in various seasons. By the effect of the changes happening in the environment, Considering that this change is inevitable

and can occur even if an individual resorts to a healthy seasonal regime, there is a need to accordingly eliminate the respective *Dosha* that attains *Prakopa*. In this regard, *Ṛtu Shodhana* is applicable as a prophylactic practice wherein, respective modes of *Shodhana* of respective *Dosha* is done in its respective season of *Prakopa*, i.e., *Vasti* is done for *Vāta Prakopa* in *Grīṣma Ṛtu*, *Virecana* is done for *Pitta Prakopa* in *Śarat Ṛtu* and *Vamana* is done for *Kapha Prakopa* in *Vasanta Ṛtu*.

4. *Dhatu Anusāra Chikitsa Siddhanta*

a. *Āśraya Āśrayī Bhāva*

The *Dosha* and *Dhatu* are very closely interrelated to one another in *Āśraya Āśrayī Bhāva*, which also means that they have an effect on each other. The *Āśraya Āśrayī Bhāva* are as follows:

Table 2: *Dhatu* or *Ashraya* of respective *Dosha* or *Ashrayi*^[17]

<i>Dosha (Ashrayi)</i>	<i>Dhatu (Ashraya)</i>
<i>Vata</i>	<i>Asthi</i>
<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Sveda, Rakta</i>
<i>Kapha</i>	all other <i>Dhatu</i>

Thus, an effect on one can lead to the effect on the other. *Pitta* and *Kapha* are in direct relation with their respective *Āśraya*, whereas *Vāta* is inversely related with *Asthi*. Thus, the *Vṛddhi* or *Kṣaya* of *Pitta* and *Kapha* cause a corresponding *Vṛddhi* or *Kṣaya* in their respective *Āśraya*, while *Vṛddhi* of *Vāta* causes *Kṣaya* of *Asthi* and vice versa.^[17] This principle is used in the treatment of *Dhatu* (by treating the *Dosha* that is associated with the respective *Dhatu*).

b. *Dhatu Pradoṣaja Chikitsa Siddhanta*

Specific treatment principles are mentioned for diseases pertaining to certain *Dhatu*. The respective *Shodhana* methods indicated for pathology in respective *Dhatu* are as follows:

Table 3: Shodhana methods employed for respective Dhatu Pradoṣa^[18]

Dhatu Pradoṣa	Chikitsa
Rasa	Lañghana
Rakta	Virecana, Raktamokṣaṇa
Māmsa	Samśodhana
Asthi	Panchakarma, Tiktaka Kṣira Sarpi Vasti

5. Doshā-Gatī-Mārga Anusāra Chikitsa Siddhanta

a. Sāmānya Chikitsa

When the normal *Gati* of *Dosha* is affected in its own *Sthāna* it is corrected by *Chikitsa*.

For example, *Udāvarta* is characterised by *Vāta* being vitiated in its own *Sthāna*. This is treated by *Nirūha Vasti*.^[19] Here, considering *Pakvāsaya* as the main *Sthāna* of *Vāta*, *Guda Mārga* is selected for treatment and *Vasti* is administered.

b. Anya Sthāna Gata (Sthānāntārgata) Dosha Chikitsa Siddhanta

When one *Dosha* is lodged in the *Sthāna* of another *Dosha* the former is known as *Āgantu Dosha* and the latter is known as *Sthāyi Dosha*. This situation calls for comparing the strength of either *Dosha* and the decision for order of treatment is made as follows:

- If *Āgantu Dosha* is more in *Bala*, then it is treated first.
- If *Sthāyi Dosha* is more in *Bala*, then that is treated first.
- If both are equally vitiated, *Sthāyi Dosha* is given preference.^[20]

Management of *Tamaka Śvāsa* and *Amlapitta* are examples that highlight this principle. In *Tamaka Śvāsa*, *Kapha Dosha* and *Vāta Dosha* involvement is seen but the *Sthāna* affected is that of *Pitta*. Thus, giving due importance to the *Sthāna*, “*Vātaśleşmaharairyuktaṃ Tamake Tu Virecanam*” is said. Here, *Virecana* (prime treatment line for *Pitta Sthāna*) with drugs having *Vātahara* and *Kaphahara* property is advocated.^[21]

Ūrdhva Deha Sthita Amlapitta is treated by *Vamana* and *Adhaḥ Deha Sthita Amlapitta* is treated by *Virecana*.^[22] This highlights the due consideration given to *Sthāna*, and accordingly choosing the mode of *Shodhana*.

c. Sāma Dosha Chikitsa Siddhanta

If *Sāma Dosha* is spread all over the body then it must not be removed at once. Once the body is subjected to *Pācana*, *Dīpana*, *Snehana* and *Svedana*, measures of *Shodhana* can be employed giving due importance to *Kāla* (time or season), *Āsanna Mārga* (nearest natural orifice for elimination) and *Bala* (strength of the patient).^[23]

d. Āsanna Mārga Nirharaṇa of Tiryak Gata Dosha

When the *Dosha* are located in the diverse channels of the body they cause chronic imbalance in the body. Under this circumstance, immediate *Shodhana* of these *Dosha* must not be done. Instead, these *Dosha* can be treated by *Śamana* alone or after successfully manoeuvring the *Dosha* towards the *Koṣṭha* (using *Pācanādi Karma*) they should be removed from the nearest route (*Āsanna Mārga*).^[24]

In the attempt to remove the *Dosha* from the body, the appropriate *Mārga* or channel must be selected. Table [4] shows the *Āsanna Mārga*, referring to the nearest route selected for elimination of *Dosha* situated in respective locations.

Table 4: Āsanna Mārga for respective Dosha based on their location.

Location of the Dosha	Āsanna Mārga
Āmāsaya	Vaktra / Oral route
Ūrdhva Jatru	Ghrāṇa / Nasal route
Pakvādhāna	Guda / Rectal route. ^[25]

e. Pratimārgaharaṇa Chikitsa Siddhanta

The term *Pratimārgaharaṇa*, implies removal (*Haraṇa*) of *Dosha* in the opposite direction (*Pratimārga*). It is an exception to the above-mentioned rule of *Āsanna Mārga Dosha Haraṇa*, applicable in certain conditions such as *Raktapitta*.

As mentioned before, if certain conditions are met in a person suffering with *Raktapitta*, *Pratimārgaharaṇa Chikitsa* is advocated in appropriate *Kāla* by *Vamana* in *Adhoga Raktapitta* and *Virecana* in *Ūrdhvaga Raktapitta*.

When *Atiyoga* is seen as a complication of *Virecana*, *Vamana* with *Taṇḍulāmbu* is mentioned.^[26] *Vamana* induces an upward force to counter the downward movement. Similarly, during the *Atiyoga* of *Vamana*, *Virecana* is mentioned,^[27] which will exert a downward force to counter the upward movement. In both of these, the principle of *Pratimārgaharaṇa* and its utility in *Shodhana* can be appreciated.

Application in *Raktapitta* is well known. But the *Pratimārgaharaṇa* used for treating *Vamana* and *Virecana Vyāpat* is the concept relevant to *Panchakarma*.

DISCUSSION

Diseases are innumerable and ever evolving. There is a constant change in the food and lifestyle of human beings along with change in environmental conditions. For example, with the birth of industrialization and technology, the dynamics of living has entirely changed over the years with change in diet as well as lifestyle of individuals. Pollution in the environment and the cascade of events that follow it such as global warming, has led to a decline in the ability of nature to nurture and safeguard health. Instead, newer diseases are formed due to the harsh polluted environment such as Ischemic Heart Disease, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder, etc. These factors give rise to a wide variety of diseases.

This emphasizes that pathology can take multiple forms along the years. Many of the new diseases can be correlated to diseases mentioned in classics (for example, cancer as *Arbuda* or *Gulma*) and their respective *Chikitsa Sūtra* can be used in treating them. *Chikitsa Sūtra* often indicates the best possible methods to eliminate the pathology with the help of the science available at that particular point of time. Thus, it may be upgraded with time.

Importance of adhering to *Chikitsa Siddhanta* behind the *Chikitsa Sūtra*

Chikitsa Siddhanta could be understood as the goal and the journey required in tackling a disease while *Chikitsa Sūtra* often indicates the methods to achieve (which could be more understood as the road taken).

However, understanding the pathology and correcting it accordingly remains to be the goal of *Ayurveda*. (to return the *Dhatu* to equilibrium).^[28] Keeping this as the primary goal, it is paramount that a physician should choose to adhere to the principles (*Siddhanta*) of treatment behind the methods (*Sūtra*).

There may pose a need to deviate from the said protocol based on the underlying principles. For example, the *Sūtra* indicates that *Vamana* must be carried out in *Vasanta Rtu* to eliminate *Kapha Dosha* but the *Siddhanta* clarifies that it must be done only if there is *Caya Pūrvaka Nidāna* of *Kapha*.

Similarly, *Tamaka Śvāsa* is indicated for *Virecana* with *Kapha-Vātahara Dravya*. The underlying criteria here is that *Virecana* cannot be employed directly if the patient has *Vṛddha Kapha* state. In such cases, *Vamana* has to be done priorly and then *Virecana* can be employed. Multiple *Siddhanta* such as *Dosha Avasthā Anusāra Chikitsa Siddhanta*, *Anya Sthāna Gata Dosha Chikitsa Siddhanta*, etc. come into play.

CONCLUSION

Chikitsa Siddhanta is the fundamental principle behind the different modalities or approach of treatment. *Panchakarma* being the crown jewel of *Ayurveda* promises many things that seem too good to be true like disease-free state of the body, increased longevity, non-recurrence of diseases, etc. But for this to be true the approach needs to be clear and precise. This is where the importance of *Chikitsa Siddhanta* is highlighted. Considering this, *Panchakarma* which offers the means or the path along with *Chikitsa Siddhanta* which gives direction, makes a physician well equipped to tackle any disease.

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How to cite this article: Unni Nilanjan, Madhushree H.S., Ganesh Puttur. Chikitsa Siddhanta with special reference to Panchakarma. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2022;10:175-181.

Source of Support: Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.
