

## Significance of Chatuska Methodology of Charak Samhita - A Literary Review

Shriwas HK<sup>1\*</sup>, Dutta Sharma GKS<sup>2</sup>, Chandrakar R<sup>3</sup>

DOI:10.21760/jaims.10.7.38


<sup>1\*</sup> Hari Krishna Shriwas, PhD Research Scholar, Sri Sri College of Ayurvedic Science and Research Hospital, Sri Sri University, Cuttack, Odisha, India.

<sup>2</sup> G K S Dutta Sharma, Professor and HOD, Dept of Samhita and Siddhanta, Sri Sri College of Ayurvedic Science and Research Hospital, Sri Sri University, Cuttack, Odisha, India.

<sup>3</sup> Rupendra Chandrakar, Associate Professor, Dept of Samhita and Siddhanta, Govt Ayurvedic College, Raipur, Chhattisgarh, India.

The Caraka Samhita the best and superior text of Chikitsa, is the store of pearls, which needs a polish just to prove its significance and utmost importance in today's context, in order to earn the profit of perfect management. The baseline survey of Catuskas is conducted which revealed the facts that the Chatuska Methodology, the unique contribution of Caraka, as the building block of Sutrasthana. Catuskas act as the directory, which collects the verses as important as Mantras sorting them in seven subjects and making them easy to remember. The Catuskas are designed in particularly aiming to the fulfilment of the Ayurveda Prayojana Dvaya - Swastharaksana and Vikara Prasaman this base was found for the division of Chatuska. The Slokasthana is explained as head or Uttamanga of the text. In this verse the Catuskas are donated as Madhura = Maha + Artha. The Maha and Artha both terms elaborates the vitality of Catuskas more than that the Artha is a synonym of heart this word appropriately narrates the exact position and importance of Chatuska in Samhita. These Catuskas are as the heart of the text providing the nourishment to rest of Samhita. The Catuskas are not just presenting a unique scribing methodology but are the evidences of the practical approach of Caraka Samhita as a text of Kayachikitsa School of thoughts.

**Keywords:** Samhita, Swasthya, Chatuska, Chikitsa, Charaka Samhita

Corresponding Author	How to Cite this Article	To Browse
Hari Krishna Shriwas, PhD Research Scholar, Sri Sri College of Ayurvedic Science and Research Hospital, Sri Sri University, Cuttack, Odisha, , India. Email: <a href="mailto:drharikrishna1987@gmail.com">drharikrishna1987@gmail.com</a>	Shriwas HK, Dutta Sharma GKS, Chandrakar R, Significance of Chatuska Methodology of Charak Samhita - A Literary Review. J Ayu Int Med Sci. 2025;10(7):255-259. Available From <a href="https://jaims.in/jaims/article/view/4417/">https://jaims.in/jaims/article/view/4417/</a>	

**Manuscript Received**  
2025-05-13

**Review Round 1**  
2025-05-24

**Review Round 2**  
2025-06-04

**Review Round 3**  
2025-06-14

**Accepted**  
2025-06-24

**Conflict of Interest**  
None

**Funding**  
Nil

**Ethical Approval**  
Not required

**Plagiarism X-checker**  
12.33

**Note**



© 2025 by Shriwas HK, Dutta Sharma GKS, Chandrakar R and Published by Maharshi Charaka Ayurveda Organization. This is an Open Access article licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/> unported [CC BY 4.0].



## Introduction

The *Chatuska* methodology for describing knowledge possesses its seed in Vedic literature. The Vedas are also 4 in numbers. Viz. 1- Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, Atharvaveda; and each Veda consists four parts regarding their presentation viz. – *Samhita*, *Vidhi*, *Aranyaka* and *Upanisada*.

The entire knowledge is divided mainly into three classes regarding their perceiving or grasping procedure viz. 1. Pratyaksha 2. Anumana 3. Aptopadesa. 4. Yukti

The *Caraka* and *Susruta* have its own specialty in compare to *Astanga Dwaya* (viz. *Samgraha* and *Hrdaya*), because they are after all a *Samgraha Grantha* follow the line of thinking of previous *Samhitas*. The accomplishment of *Pratijna* of *Susruta* is merely based on *Pratyaksa*. On the other hand "The *Caraka Samhita*" has accomplished the *Dirghanjivitiyam*[1] merely by making base of "Agama" in compare to other *Pramana*. Apart from this, the *Caraka Samhita* was written in the *Upanisada Kala* advocates the *Chatuska* methodology may be adopted from Vedic period. This methodology is also seen in some other text such as -

1. Patanjala Yoga Sutra
2. Astadhyayi of Panini.

Here, one question arises, what is the actual reason behind the adaptation of *Chatuska* methodology by our *Arsa Acaryas*. A humble effort is made here to answer this question.

The two most popular culture of world are the western (occident) and the Indian (oriented) in the present era. One can realize through their study that, the Western culture is oriented on basis of the objects and the Indian culture is oriented on the basis of subjects. The human being is called as subject in respect to substance existing in entire universe and are termed as object. The permanent happiness (the *Satcittanand*) is the prime aim of human society from ancient time. Great thinkers of each culture create particular line of thinking for achieving it.

### **Etymology and definition of Chatuska**

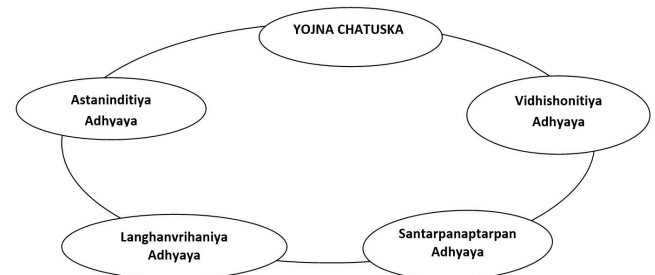
- The one, which is comprised of four parts.
- It is a collection of 4 different subjects led of one group.

- A necklace of 4 strings.

In different *Tantra*, the *Chatuska* word is used with different angles.

The *Caraka Samhita* = "The *Dirghanjivitiyam Tantra*" has mentioned "The *Chatuska*" word with a specific word "Artha".

The knowledge of a subject with different angles (form) reveals deep thinking of its particular subject through their (*Catuskas*) respective study. This meaning indicates *Chatuska*[2] as a necklace of 4 strings. For example,



**Figure 1: Yojna Chatuska chapters.**

Their synonyms of "The *Chatuska*" as per quoted by *Caraka* are –

1. Catuspada (Ca. Su. 30/58)
2. Adhikara (Ca. Ci. 6/5)
3. Adhyaya (Ca. Ci. 3/215)

Finally, the term *Chatuska* is referred to the group of 4 chapters having a compilation of knowledge related to a specific subject and possessing the *Adhikara* all over "The *Tantra*"

### **Why this Methodology adopted only in Sutrastana?**

*Sutrasthana* acts as the *Uddesa* of *Samhita*. It is the collection of *Sutras* which are to be applied to all over the *Samhita*. Each *Sthana* explains some part of it, so it is not possible and also not necessary to divide each *Sthana* in that manner. In spite of this, one humble interpretation regarding above topic is also considerable. The 8 numbers are used several times in the *Samhita*. The *Asta Prakrita Dhatu* (i.e., *Avyakta*, *Ahankara*, *Buddhi*, and *Panca Tanmatras*) are the representative of eight number and can be considered as one of the appropriate interpretations for the generation of *Sodasa Vikara Dhatus*. (i.e., *Eleven Indriya* and *Panca Mahabhuta*) under influence of *Visesatmaka Samkalpa*. The complete innate form of *Asta Prakrita Dhatu* leads to a situation where the complete *Dhatusamyata* exists.

For that, the complete compilation of the necessary procedures is narrated in each *Sthana* by concentrating on one particular *Prakrta Dhatu* with other *Prakrta Dhatus*. In fact, each *Sthanas* describes knowledge for conversion of *Vikrita Sodasa Vikara Dhatus* in to their *Prikrika Avastha* in respect to particular *Prakrta Dhatu* with the help of other *Sthanas*. Because, these *Dhatus* are sustained with "The *Samavaya Sambhandha*". Hence, their knowledge can be obviously highly interacted, which can be brought out by the respective study of the *Sthanas*. [3]

### Sequence of the *Catuskas*

The understanding behind the sequence of *Catuskas* is necessary for their utility. The sequence according to the *Tantrakara*.

Several opinions regarding sequences of *Catuskas* are quoted in the previous work of *Catuskas*. Hence some of the reasoning is explained in this topic to add some more elaboration to sequences of *Catuskas*.

#### 1. *Bhesaja Chatuska*

*Bhesaja* constitute the instruments or tools for achieving the *Dhatusamyata*. Without that, *Vaidya* cannot be able to perform his duty i.e., treatment. Beside this, it is the demand of emergency

#### 2. *Swastha Chatuska*

After getting knowledge of *Karana (Bhesaja)*, it is necessary to know the causes of disease without that; one can not even imagine the nature of the *Dhatuvaisamyata*, because each disease possesses its own particular collection of causative (aetiological) factors. However, the major portion of the *Chatuska* describes the various procedures essential for the maintenance of health. Besides this, with help of "*Viparyaya*" Ty. One can consider the improper conduction of these procedures (i.e., *Dinacarya*, *Rtucarya* etc.) as a cause for the disease. For that reason, The *Swastha Chatuska* is described right behind the *Bhesaja Chatuska*.

#### 3. *Nirdesa Chatuska*

The causative factors responsible for the maintenance of *Dhatusamyata* (Health) and for the generation or *Dhatuvaisamyata* (Disease) has been described in previous *Chatuska*. The knowledge regarding their disease is important for treatment.

The *Nirdesa Chatuska* gives complete diagnostic methodology right from the qualities of the physician to the characteristics features of *Prakrta* and *Vikrta Dosas*. That's why the *Nirdesa Chatuska* is placed after the *Swastha Chatuska*.

#### 4. *Kalpana Chatuska*

It is necessary to have knowledge regarding administration of appropriate formulations and procedures of a selected drug. (obtained by *Swasthivrtta Viparyaya*) and characteristic (diagnosed by *Nirdesa Chatuska*) of disease. To solve that necessity, the *Tantrakara* placed the *Kalpana Chatuska* in the fourth sequence.

#### 5. *Roga Chatuska*

The determination of formulations and procedures depends upon the principle of management, and the principle of management lies upon the understanding of pathogenesis. The *Roga Chatuska* provides complete fundamental understanding of pathogenesis in concise manner, hence it is placed on 5th sequence.

#### 6. *Yojana Chatuska*

After having an understanding of the pathogenesis, the appropriate selection of drug and its formulation with procedures according to pathogenesis requires some mediatory understanding. These necessities is also called as "*Rogabhaisajya Yojana*" determination of principle of management provided by *Yojana Chatuska*. So, it is placed after the *Roga Chatuska*. [4]

#### 7. *Annapana Chatuska*

Appropriate application of previous six *Chatuska* brings the state of *Dhatusamyata*. After that, the proper production and maintenance of *Dhatus* mainly requires complete knowledge regarding dietary regimen. For that purpose, *Annapana Chatuska* is described after *Yojana Chatuska*.

#### 8. The *Samgraha Dwaya*

The state of *Dhatusamyata* and *Vaisamyata* is basically dependent upon the state of *Prana Ayatanani* - i.e., Vital Organs of body. Reason is, integrity of whole body is mainly dependent upon their condition. Thus, it is necessary to understand above seven *Catuskas* in respect to *Pranayatanani* to achieve *Dhatusamyata*. In addition, for that purpose 30th chapter narrates topics (chapters) of other *Sthanas*.

It explore that other *Sthanas* are connected to *Sutrasthana* for contributing their knowledge to *Pratijna*. On basis of above explanation, *Dwaya Samgraha* is described at last. The comprehended above is based on learning of Ayurveda in succession. In other words, one can able to learn Ayurveda through this sequence of *Chatuska*.

### Clinical application of Chatuska

Curative aspect of medical science occupies prime importance from the ancient times. Hence, to bring out the clinical utility of *Catuskas*, it is necessary to understand them in respect to their clinical application. A humble effort is carried out to solve this problem in current topic.

In routine clinical practice, the two types of people are approach a physician. First type wants to maintain his health and the second are those who suffer from the various types of diseases. In other word, peoples with two types of condition of *Dhatu* - i.e., *Samya* and *Vaisamya*[5], come to the physician to acquire the state out *Dhatusamyata*. There for, the two types of treatment are carried out. In clinical practices viz. to sustain *Prakrta Dhatu* in *Prakrta* state and to obtain *Prakrta Dhatu* by alleviating the disease. How, these two types of treatment can be administered with help of the *Catuskas* are described through the following schematic presentation. Before that the ultimate subject of behind description of each *Catuskas* with their appropriate succession for the proper clinical application can be narrated as follows, which can also help to comprehend the chart.

SN	Chatuska	Methodology to Comprehend (prime subject)
1.	Bhesaja	For the selection of appropriate drug.
2.	Swastha	For deciding probable etiological factors.
3.	Nirdesha	For make perfect diagnosis of Dhatusamya.
4.	Kalpna	For selection of appropriate formulation and procedure of drug.
5.	Roga	To understand Pathogenesis.
6.	Yojna	To determine the principle of management
7.	Annapana	For decide Wholesome diet and liegeman.
8.	Samgrah Dvaya	To evaluate condition of Pranayatanani Samgraha.

## Discussion

When the patient approaches the physician, it is the prime duty and necessity of him to accurately diagnose the disease. For that purpose, he needs a complete clinical diagnostic methodology, which is provided by *Nirdesa Chatuska*, Nevertheless, the *Nirdesa Chatuska* plays a dual role of guide a physician to diagnose the *Dhatusamyata*; because the absence of *Dhatuvasamya*[7] state is the state of *Dhatusamyata*. Later the physician requires to know that of particular etiological factors of a disease. This requirement is fulfilled by getting comprehensive knowledge of *Swastha Chatuska Viparyaya / Arthapatti*. Each disease has a specific collection of improperly conducted procedure/ regimen of *Swasthavritta* in the form of etiological factors in classics. Further, the methods of understanding the pathogenesis is necessary to know entire pathology of the disease. The *Roga Chatuska* fully contributes to that necessity. In addition, the assessment of the vital organs is also important. Reason is, the degree of severity and chronicity of the diseases is dependent on the vital organs. This can be carried out by application of *Dwaya Samgraha*. Thus, the *Naidanika* part includes three *Chatuska* and the *Samgraha Dwaya*.

The next step is to arrange the appropriate treatment regimen. For that, first the determination of principle of management can be determined through protocol described in the *Yojana Chatuska*. It directs us as to which drug is worth to alleviate particular type of pathology. But it depends upon the knowledge of drug with its various types of classification. The *Bhesaja Chatuska* fulfill this need. After that, the selection of proper formulation and procedure (such as route of administration etc.) is also important accordingly to particular principle of management by keeping the pathology in mind. This selection can be done with the help of the *Kalpna Chatuska*. Thus, the *Cikitsya* part possess mainly three *Chatuska* viz. *Yojana*, *Bhesaja* and *Kalpna*. [6]

Along with that the knowledge of *Pathya* i.e., wholesome regiment for patient according to disease is needful. The *Pathya* can be constituted by the *Annapana Chatuska* and by the *Swastha Chatuska* of-course, requires some modified understanding of the above two *Catuskas* according to the principle of management.

## Conclusion

The *Chatuska* Methodology, the building block of *Sutrasthana* is the unique scribing as well as teaching and learning methodology, providing the directory of important aphorisms categorized in seven parts, in order to fulfil the bifold aim i.e., *Swasthyaraksana* by means of *Swastha* and *Annapana Catuskas* and the utilization of *Bhesaja* on *Roga* by means of *Nirdesa*, *Kalpana* is the *Yojana* of *Vikara Prasamana*. Among the classics of Ayurveda, *Chatuska* Methodology appears solely in *Charaka Samhita*. The origin of *Chatuska* methodology could be traced in Vedic literature but Agnivesas and Charakas contributions, evidenced in *Samhita* could not be discriminated and so definite conclusion about whose originality lies in this contribution of *Chatuska* could not be stated.

## References

1. Shastri KP, Pandeya GS, editors. The Charak Samhita of Agnivesha, revised by Charak and Drudhabala with Ayurved Dipika commentary by Chakrapanidatta and Vidyotini Hindi commentary. Part I. 7th ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan; 2002 [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]
2. Trikamji Y. Charaka Samhita, Chakrapani Ayurveda Deepika Commentary, Sutrasthan. 14th ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan; 2014. [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]
3. Senagupta N, Senagupta B. Charaka Samhita, Gangadhar Rai Jalpakalpataru Commentary, Sutrasthan. Vol. 1. 3rd ed. Delhi: Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2009 [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]
4. Gaud BL. Charaka Samhita, Ayurved Deepika Hindi Anuvad 'Eshana', Sutrasthan. Vol. 1. 1st ed. Delhi: Rashtriya Ayurved Vidhyapitha; 2014 [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]
5. Tewari PV. Charaka Samhita, Ayurveda Deepika Commentary English Translation, Sutrasthan. Vol. 1, Pt. 1. 1st ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Vishvabharati; 2019 [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]
6. Sengupta KJ. Charaka Samhita, with Āyurveda-Dīpikā commentary of Cakrapāni Dutta and Jalpakalpataru commentary of Gangadhar Roy. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia; 1991. . [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]
7. Sharma PV, Das B. Charaka Samhita, English Translation. Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office; 1976. . [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]

Disclaimer / Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of Journals and/or the editor(s). Journals and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.