



A CRITICAL STUDY ON TANTRA GUNA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SWASTHA CHATUSKA OF CHARAKA SAMHITA

Dr. Rashmi S. Chavan*

Assistant Professor, Samhita Siddhanth and Sanskrit Department, Bhimashankar Ayurveda College, Wadgaon, Kashim Beg, Pune, India.

***Corresponding Author: Dr. Dharmesh P. Nahata**

MS (Strirog-Prasutitantra), Director, Om Hospital & Maternity Home, Ghoti-Igatpuri, Nashik, India.

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda, an ancient wisdom, epitomizes on the science and philosophy, representing a holistic guide to life. This profound knowledge, believed to be divine, was transmitted through generations via oral traditions and written texts, enriching the lives of countless individuals. The repository of authenticated Ayurvedic wisdom includes various *Samhitas*, among which the *Charaka Samhita* holds a paramount position. Its *Sutrasthana* embodies the quintessence of all the other divisions. *Charaka Samhita* described the term *Chatuska* that denotes a collection of four parts or subjects, forming a cohesive group which includes *Swastha Chatushka*, *Annapana Chatushka*, *Bhesaja Chatushka*, *Roga Chatushka*, *Nirdesa Chatushka*, *Kalpana Chatushka* and *Yojana Chatushka*. Through a meticulous study of the *Charaka Samhita* and its accompanying commentaries, with a particular focus on the *Sutrasthana*, this study aims to unravel the unique presentation style and evidence-based practicality inherent in the *Chatuska* methodology with special reference to *Swastha Chatuska*.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda, Charaka Samhita, Chatuska, Swastha Chatuska.*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda represents a remarkable fusion of scientific understanding and philosophical insight, serving as the oldest indigenous medical system born from the intellectual acumen of our ancestors. Ayurveda aims to safeguard the well-being of both the healthy and the ailing, emphasizing maintenance of health through a lifestyle modification, employment of natural herbs and dietary guideline. The comprehensive concept of Ayurveda finds its essence primarily encapsulated within different *Samhitas*. The three pivotal authoritative texts of classical Ayurvedic literature is collectively known as *Brihatrayee*, namely the *Charak Samhita*, *Susruta Samhita* and *Astanga Hridaya*. *Charaka Samhita* in important Ayurveda texts encompasses several theories and principles related to the overall well being of mankind.^[1-4]

Charaka Samhita

The *Charaka Samhita* an ancient and pivotal authoritative text in Ayurveda stands as one of the earliest and most significant contributions to the field. It is believed to have originated from the scholarly collaboration of several revered *Acharyas*. *Acharya Punarvasu Atreya* served as the advisor, while *Acharya Agnivesha*, the main author, meticulously compiled the extensive knowledge, initially known as the *Agnivesha*

tantra, which later evolved into the renowned *Charaka Samhita*. *Acharya Charaka* acted as the *Pratisanskarta*, the actual redactor, and the final touches were contributed by *Acharya Dridabala*, the completer of the *Charaka Samhita*.

The *Charaka Samhita* delves into various aspects of the human body, the pharmacological actions of numerous medicinal substances, detailed descriptions of preventive and therapeutic measures for diverse ailments, including *Shamana* and *Sodhana chikitsa*, as well as guidance for the promotion of overall well-being. Furthermore, it provides valuable insights into healthy practices, directions for teaching and research, and an array of methodologies.^[4-6]

The "*Charaka Samhita*" comprises eight distinct sections (*Sthanas*), consisting of a total of 1204 chapters, 9035 *Sutras*, and 12,000 *Slokas*. *Acharya Dridabala* contributed the final 17 chapters of the *Chikitsasthana*, as well as the complete *Kalpasthana* and *Siddhithana*. Each section is dedicated to specific aspects of Ayurvedic knowledge including; *Sutrasthana*, *Nidanasthana*, *Vimanasthana*, *Sharirasthana*, *Indriyasthana*, *Chikitsasthana*, *Kalpasthana* and *Siddhithana*. *Sutrasthana* of *Charaka Samhita* encompasses concept of *Chatuska* which includes

various types of methodologies related to the health and teaching of concept of Ayurveda philosophy.

Chatuska

The term *Chatuska* denotes a collection of four parts or subjects, forming a cohesive group. This method of organizing knowledge can be traced back to *Vedic* literature. The *Chatuska* methodology serves as a unique writing approach, offering tangible evidence of the practical approach adopted in the *Charaka Samhita*. Serving as the fundamental building blocks of the *Sutrasthana*, these *Chatuskas* collectively present four chapters, each addressing diverse aspects while remaining interconnected through a common theme.^[5-7] *Sutrasthana*, considered the heart of the *Charaka Samhita*, structured into seven *Chatushkas* as depicted in **Figure 1**.

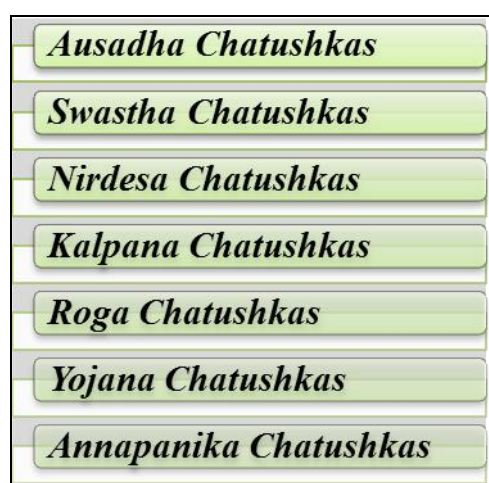


Figure 1: Various Chatushkas mentioned in Charaka Samhita.

These *Chatushkas* can be categorized into three subgroups, each aligning with the primary objectives of Ayurveda, this categorization is as follows.

1. *Chatushka* for maintenance of health.
 - A. *Swastha Chatushka*
 - B. *Annapana Chatushka*
2. *Chatushka* for management of disorders.
 - A. *Bhesaja Chatushka*
 - B. *Roga Chatushka*
3. *Chatushka* for fulfilling both objectives.
 - A. *Nirdeśa Chatushka*
 - B. *Kalpana Chatushka*
 - C. *Yojana Chatushka*

Swastha Chatuska

Ranked as the second in the sequence of the Seven *Chatuskas*, the *Swastha Chatuska* epitomizes the key objectives of Ayurveda, emphasizing the preservation of health as well as the alleviation of ailments. In Ayurveda, the purpose of treatment is to restore the balance of *Dhatusamyā*, which is synonymous with the state of *Swasthya*. This *Chatuska* primarily delves into

significant guidelines aimed at maintaining the well-being of individuals in robust health. It extensively expounds upon the principles of *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya* and the essential tenets of *Aahara*.^[7-9]

The *Swastha Chatuska* encompasses the following aspects.

1. *Matrasitiyaadhyaya*: Involves a comprehensive portrayal of dietary recommendations, personal hygiene practices, such as *Anjan*, *Nasya* and the nuances of *Dhumpāna*, essentially outlining the daily regimen for individuals seeking to maintain good health.
2. *Tashyasitiya Adhyaya*: Explores the correlation between the human body and the natural environment across the six seasons, elucidating the concepts of *Adankal* and *Visargakal*, and delving into the regimen necessary for adapting to the changes in the six seasons.
3. *Navegandharaniya adhyaya*: Focuses on an in-depth understanding of both suppressible and non-suppressible urges, delineating the significance of exercise, as well as the etiology, preventive measures and treatment methodologies for endogenous and mental ailments.
4. *Indryopakramaniya adhyaya*: Offers insights into the *Panchapanchak* and emphasizes the adherence to *Sadvritta*.

Matrashiteeya Adhyaya is the foremost chapter of the *Swastha Chatushka* focuses on the critical aspect of proper dietary intake, where "*Matra*" signifies the appropriate quantity and "*Ashi*" denotes various forms of food and beverages, including solid and liquid sustenance. *Swastavritta*, elucidated in the same chapter, look into the intricate relationship between lifestyle and well-being. Acknowledging the profound impact of lifestyle on overall health, this section emphasizes the importance of cultivating positive habits and embracing a healthy routine.

Asyashiteeya Adhyaya delves into the influence of seasonal changes on the body, stressing the importance of adjusting dietary and behavioral practices in accordance with these variations. Understanding the connection between diet, regimen and seasonal variations is deemed crucial in maintaining equilibrium and preventing potential health complications.

Navegandharaneeya Adhyaya sheds light on the non-suppressible urges and their implications on maintaining positive health. It explains the significance of allowing the natural expulsion of metabolic waste products without inhibition, ensuring the proper functioning of the body. This section also discusses the adverse effects of suppressing these natural urges over prolonged periods.

The chapter further elucidates *Adharaneeya Vega* and *Dharaneeya Vegas*, emphasizing the importance of balancing these urges for maintaining physiological and

psychological well-being. These urges, if not properly managed, can lead to disturbances in the body's equilibrium and trigger various psychosomatic manifestations.

Indriyopakramaneeya Adhyaya, the final section of the *Swastha Chatushka*, focuses on the interplay between the mind, senses and ethical conduct. It looks into sensory perception and the means through which the mind and soul acquire knowledge, emphasizing the role of harmony between these components in promoting overall health.^[8-10]

DISCUSSION

The *Chatushkas* can be classified into three distinct subgroups, each of which corresponds to the primary goals of Ayurveda. *Chatushka* for maintaining health include; *Swastha Chatushka* and *Annapana Chatushka*. *Chatushka* for managing disorders include; *Bhesaja Chatushka* and *Roga Chatushka*. *Chatushka* for addressing both objectives include; *Nirdesa Chatushka*, *Kalpna Chatushka* and *Yojana Chatushka*.^[4-6]

Swastha Chatuska ranked second in the sequence of the seven *Chatuskas*, the *Swastha Chatuska* represents the core principles of Ayurveda, emphasizing the maintenance of good health and the alleviation of ailments. In the realm of Ayurveda, the objective of treatment is to restore the balance of *Dhatusamyā*, which is synonymous with the state of *Swasthya*. This *Chatuska* primarily delves into significant guidelines aimed at promoting the well-being of individuals in robust health. The *Swastha Chatuska* encompasses the various aspects *Matrasitiyaadhyā*, *Tashyasitiya Adhyā*, *Navegandharaniya adhyā* and *Indriyopakramaniya adhyā*. *Matrasitiyaadhyā* involves comprehensive guidance on dietary recommendations and personal hygiene, etc. *Tashyasitiya Adhyā* explores the relationship between the human body and the natural environment throughout the six seasons. *Navegandharaniya adhyā* focuses on a comprehensive understanding of both suppressible and non-suppressible urges, delineating the significance of exercise, as well as the etiology, preventive measures, and treatment methodologies for endogenous ailments. *Indriyopakramaniya adhyā* provides insights into the *Panchapanchak* and emphasizes the adherence to *Sadvritta*.^[5-8]

CONCLUSION

In the *Charak Samhita*, the *Sutrasthana*, serving as the foundation for the entire *Samhita*, is systematically divided into seven *Chatuskas*, a unique methodological approach exclusive to this text. Notably, this *Chatuska* methodology is distinct to the *Charak Samhita* and is absent in both the *Sushruta Samhita* and the works of *Vagbhata*, such as the *Astanga Sangraha* and *Astanga Hridaya*. Understanding the clinical application of the *Chatuska* framework is crucial for effectively navigating the wealth of knowledge within the *Samhita*, as it

facilitates a comprehensive study and comprehension of the text. Among these *Chatuskas*, the *Swastha Chatuska*, occupying the second position in the sequence, delves into the timeless theory of maintaining optimal health, known as *Swasthavritta*. This holistic understanding of equilibrium and contentment encapsulates the essence of the *Swastha Chatuska* within the *Sutrasthana*.

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