

## CONTRIBUTIONS OF ATREYA, JIVAKA AND VAGBHATA IN MEDICAL SCIENCE

Prof. (Dr.) Ram Krishna Mandal\*<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Anusree Krishna Mandal<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University, Cooch Behar, West Bengal, India.<sup>2</sup>MD, Department of Paediatric Medicine, Bankura Sammilani Medical College and Hospital, Bankura, West Bengal, India.

\*Corresponding Author: Prof. (Dr.) Ram Krishna Mandal

Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University, Cooch Behar, West Bengal, India.

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## ABSTRACT

The ancient sages made intricate contributions to our understanding of disease causes and even provided information on the likelihood of genetic transmission and treatment methods. The 'natural medical system' known as Ayurveda, which promotes health via the use of herbs and other materials, has its roots in India and dates back more than 5,000 years. Examining the contributions of ancient Indian physicians Atreya, Jivaka, and Vagbhata to medical science must be the study's main goal. Method: The study is descriptive in nature and is primarily based on secondary source data that has been gathered from various sources. Findings: Indian medical knowledge diffused around the world and has been used in some regions of the world either exactly as it was in the past or in a modified manner. **Conclusion:** In ancient India, Atreya, Jivaka, and Vagbhata all made substantial contributions to the country's healthcare systems. Their important findings and revolutionary theories still have an impact on how we design medical procedures.

**KEYWORDS:** Ayurveda, natural medicine, herbs, scriptures, Greek travelers, Buddhist writings.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The traditional medical practice known as Ayurveda was created in ancient India. The literal meaning of the word "Ayurveda" is "the science of longevity and good health." This traditional Indian medical approach teaches not only how to treat illnesses but also how to identify their causes and symptoms. It serves as a manual for both healthy and ill people. It characterizes both health and sickness as equilibrium between the three doshas. When using herbal remedies to cure a condition, the goal is to attack the ailment's fundamental causes in order to eradicate them. Health and longevity have been the primary goals of Ayurveda. It is the world's most ancient system of medicine. The Atreya Samhita, a book on Ayurveda, is the world's oldest medical text. Sushruta is known as a father of surgery, whereas Charak is credited as the creator of Ayurvedic medicine. The well-known Ayurvedic physicians like Sushruta, Charak, Madhava, Vagbhata, Jeevak and many others were the most contributors of medicinal knowledge in ancient India. Do we realize how popular Ayurveda has recently become in the west? This is due to its advantages over the contemporary western-based Allopathic method of medicine.

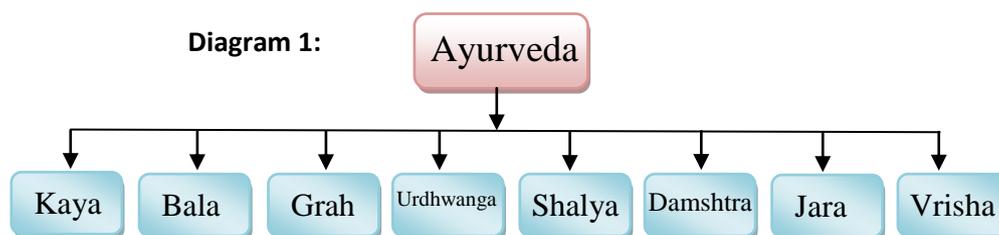
The Atharvaveda, previously an oral tradition of medical knowledge passed down from generation to generation from antiquity, contains a large number of earliest medical writings. The Atharvaveda has sections on

topics including longevity, sickness treatment, germs' eradication, poison removal methods, wise eating practices, and good living. The hidden lesson in this narrative is the value of proper hygiene, a sensible diet, physical and mental health, etc. It is amazing that the ancient sages discussed intricate knowledge for the causes of diseases and even described the possibility of hereditary transmission pathways. The Vedas, the oldest collection of classic literatures are remained in existence, are the ancient source of Indian medicinal science known as Ayurveda. The four Vedas, holy texts of knowledge written most probably between 1500 and 800 B.C. are the earliest sources from which we are getting the idea of Indian philosophy and medicine. The Atharva Veda's Upa-veda is concerned to Ayurveda. All four of the Vedas contain numerous references to various elements of medicine, according to an examination of the Vedic text. Gods regarded as celestial healers at that period included Rudra, Agni, Varuna, Indra, and Maruthi (Raikwar, 2023).

For many of us understand that Ayurveda is limited to herbal remedies and warm oil massages, but it is not true. The Ayurveda's application is everywhere. Many times where modern medicine fails to cure a complicated disease, the Ayurveda starts action and cure fully from the root. The Ayurveda has an astoundingly detailed scope of treatment for total health including from paediatrics to geriatrics for rejuvenation, surgery, and

even sexual health. Ayurveda is Ashtanga science. Ashta means 8, anga means branches. Thus, Ashtanga Science means compilation of 8 branches of Ayurveda. Therefore, Ayurveda has 8 branches, which compile in

the following Diagram 1 (<https://artoflivingretreatcenter.org/blog/the-eight-branches-of-ayurveda/>).



Kaya Chikitsa - treatment through general medicine, (ii) Bala Chikitsa - treatment of child and woman care (paediatrics), (iii) Graha Chikitsa - treatment of Demonology/Psychology/idiopathic diseases (diseases whose causes cannot be precisely tracked, infectious diseases are considered under this branch, bacteria, virus etc. can be clubbed under the term graham), (iv) Urdhwanga Chikitsa - treatment of ear, nose, throat, head related diseases, (v) Shalya Chikitsa – treatment through surgery, (vi) Damshttra Chikitsa - treatment of toxicology and forensic medicine, (vii) Jara Chikitsa – treatment of Geriatrics/Rejuvenation/immunology and (viii) Vrisha Chikitsa– treatment of aphrodisiacs. Ayurveda, a health care system of India, has been developed step by step by many ayurvedic vaidyas (physicians). Atreya, Jivaka and Vagbhata are three famous ayurvedic physicians among them. We discuss here in brief about them.

### OBJECTIVES

The study seeks to explore the contributions of Atreya, Jivaka and Vagbhata of Ancient India in Medical Science.

### II. METHOD AND MATERIALS

The study is descriptive type by nature based basically on data of secondary sources. The data of secondary sources are collected from books, journals, Hindu scriptures, etc. and e-libraries, e-books, e-articles, and different website based information, reference materials, wikipedia, etc. A few recurring motifs from these readings have been revealed, and they are discussed in the following sections.

**Analysis:** The different reading materials are collected from the different sources and it has been scrutinized, verified and arranged systematically under appropriate heading to hold requisite presentation and thereby conclusion.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Medical Treatment in Vedic Age (5000–600 BCE):** The traditional Indian medicine and healthcare system is said over 5000 years old, that makes it the oldest medicine' system known to mankind. It is deeply rooted in Hindu mythology. Beginning about 1500 BCE, there is concrete evidence regarding India's medical

procedures, medications, and practitioners. The four Vedas, along with their Brahmanas, Aranyakas, and Upanishads, provide us with insights into the medical practices of the Vedic era (1500–600 BCE). All items' spirits were regarded by the Vedic people as deities. Religious activities were used to treat illnesses because they were thought to be caused by divine forces. The priests' job was to please the Gods by performing rituals and other religious exercises. Through the use of hymns (mantras) and worship for therapeutic purposes, the Priests possessed magical control over the Gods. The primary component of the medical supplies used by the Vedic healers was made of plants and their products. In the modern era, these customs are still prevalent in our tribal society. The four Vedas—Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda, and Atharvaveda—described various maladies, their causes, cures, and methods for making medicine from various materials, herbs, plants and its different parts, etc.

**Emergence of Ayurveda (600–200 BCE):** The Atharva Veda, which relied on the medicinal properties of plants and other substances, is where Ayurveda got its start. In the Vedic era, medical observation and theorizing served as the basis for the more methodical and logical medical system in Indian medicine known as Ayurveda (the Science of Life), which emerged around 600 BCE. The Ayurvedic doctor was known as a vaidya, who was deep knowledgeable. Buddhist writings, Chanakya's Arthashastra, and stories of Greek travelers to India during the time (600–200 BCE), all provide evidence for the medicinal concepts and practices that prevailed in India during that time. Most historians cite the Charaka Samhita by Acharya Charaka and Sushruta Samhita by Acharya Sushruta, two early Christian-era Sanskrit medical works, when discussing Ayurvedic thought. In addition to Acharya Charaka and Acharya Sushruta, other significant Ayurvedic literatures are dated back to the sixth century BCE by the Ayurvedic scholar, Acharya Atreya, to the fifth century by Acharya **Jivaka and** to the seventh century CE by Acharya Vagbhata. Both were well-known for the development of Ayurvedic Science.

**Acharya Atreya (6<sup>th</sup> Century BCE)**

In the sixth century BCE, the Ayurvedic scholar, Acharya Atreya was well-known. Based on his teachings, six early Ayurvedic schools were established. He served as King Nagnajita of the Gandhara Kingdom's personal physician according to some Ayurvedic historians. The Puranas describe the feats of Maharishi Atri, one of the great Hindu sages (Rishis), whose successor is Atreya. Atreya's teachings are condensed in the earliest sections of the Charaka Samhita and the Bhela Samhita. The Bhela Samhita is a conversation between Atreya and Bhela, one of his students. Atreya is credited with writing the Charaka Samhita's initial text, which Agnivesha and Charaka afterwards codified and modified. He is mentioned in the Buddhist work *Mulasarvastivada-Vinayavastu* as a student of Jivaka, the Lord Buddha's personal physician, and is linked to Takshashila in Gandhara. Another follower, Harita, wrote down the sage Atreya's teachings in the *Atreya Samhita*, which is currently accessible in part under the name of *Harita Samhita*. We also refer to him by another Ayurvedic moniker, *Bhikshu Atreya*. He was a medical professor at the esteemed University of Takshashila, where he taught both medicine and philosophy. He was a Buddhist. He rose to fame for employing cutting-edge instructional strategies that involved his students in a question-and-answer format and encouraged a deeper comprehension of the material. Atreya was also a great master in the herbal department of the ancient Taxila academy.

**Other names of Acharya Atreya:** Atreya was also addressed by other names like Bhagawan Athreya, Punarvasu Athreya, Krishna Atreya and Chandrabhaga. Why he was called other names as because:

**Bhagawan Atreya:** Atreya was called Bhagawan because he possessed knowledge of birth, death, material science, spiritual science, and knowledge of creation.

**Punarvasu Atreya:** He was born in Punarvasu nakshatra, hence he called as Punarvasu Atreya.

**Krishna Atreya:** He belonged to the Krishnayajurveda Shakha or was possibly referred to as Krishnaatreya due to his black complexion.

**Chandrabhaga:** He was called as Chandrabhaga as he lived on the banks of river Chandrabhagi.

**His Six Students:** His six students included Agnivesha, Bhela, Harita, Parashara, Jathukarna, and Ksharapani. He had mastered the art of Ayurveda from Bharadwaja. We have learned from numerous documents that Jivaka was one among the best students of the wise Atreya. He was regarded by scholars as one of the founders of Ayurveda, alongside Charaka and Sushruta. All of the pupils went to publish significant Ayurvedic treatises continuing the chain of transmission of this whole medicine system and philosophy. Sadly, the original version of Agnivesha's work is no longer accessible. It was then edited by Charaka and Dridhabala, and as a result, it is today referred to as the *Charaka Samhita*.

**Atreya Sampradaya (Atreya's Teaching Method):**

*Atreya Sampradaya* or '*Kaya Chikitsa Sampradaya*' was the names of Atreya's school of medical instruction. Atreya was a well-known Ayurvedic teacher who had a strong background in the field of *Kaya Chikitsa*, or general Ayurvedic medicine. Among the *Ashtanga Ayurveda* (8 branches of Ayurveda), it was one of the most well-known and frequently practiced. It concentrated on the identification and management of illnesses affecting the body, mind, and soul of people. His lectures focused more on medicine than on the ramifications of surgery. The foundation of the treatment was a systematic comprehension of the illness and its progression, which was based on a solid foundation of theoretical and practical knowledge of the fundamentals of Ayurveda. He was also renowned for his unmatched approach to organizing and classifying the subjects. Ayurveda practice had been significantly impacted by the *Atreya Sampradaya* tradition. It had inspired the growth of other Ayurvedic sub-specialties, such as *Panchakarma*, *Rasayana*, and *Vajikarana*. Additionally, it has helped advance ayurvedic study and research. He also emphasized the need of a healthy food, way of life, and use of herbal treatments. Teachings of Atreya emphasized the value of identifying the underlying causes of illnesses rather than only treating their symptoms. Atreya's teaching strategies were a reflection of his in-depth medical expertise and dedication to making knowledge accessible to everyone. His method of instruction included a clear declaration of the topic matter he wanted to cover.

During his lectures, Atreya led lively discussions in which his students contributed insightful comments. He used a question-and-answer method of instruction, encouraging participation from his students to improve their understanding of the material. It was an original and inclusive method of teaching. At the start of each class, each topic was discussed in a way that resembled a conversation between a teacher and students. After recommending the topic, the students were called to discuss, and other modern scholars were invited to offer their own perspectives. Atreya utilized to make a concluding statement about the subject under debate. Atreya's teaching methodology was somewhat different from teacher-disciple dialogues. It was closer to the Brahmanical technique of discussion and older in its original form.

**Contributions**

Atreya's extensive and important contributions to Ayurveda were numerous. He was the first to popularize the idea of rational medicine, which placed a focus on the use of scientific deductive thinking and observation in the identification and treatment of illnesses.

1. The ideas of *Tridosha* (Three circumstances: Vata, Pitta, and Kapha) and *Pancha Mahabhutas* [Five Fundamental Elements of Nature: earth (Prithvi), water (Jala), heat (Agni or Tej), air (Vayu) and space (Aakash)] were thoroughly described by Atreya. A therapeutic

approach was suggested using the Rasa hypothesis and its effects on metabolic and physiological processes. In-depth scientific explanations were given for the concepts of Rasa (taste of medicine), Guna (quality of medication), Veerya (potency of medicine), Vipaka (post-digestive effect of the medicine), and Prabhava (gross effect of the medicine). The "science of medicine" was evolved from the empirical stage to the scientific stage with the notions.

2. He made important advances in the identification and management of mental disease. Previously, it was thought that supernatural or heavenly forces were to blame for this ailment.

3. He was the first to link an erratic diet and routine to mental illness. It was a medical discovery that changed the course of history.

4. Atreya was credited with developing the widely used Pushyanuga Churna, which was/is used to cure a variety of illnesses. This robust mixture of herbs has been known for its remarkable therapeutic qualities.

### **Jivaka (5<sup>th</sup> Century BCE)**

Jivaka was a renowned physician (healer) who treated Lord Gautam Buddha, numerous kings, including the king of Magadha, all the monks, and members of every social class. He practiced Buddhism. He became a figure of admiration and respect because of his close relationship with the founder of Buddhism and his early support of the religion. According to a legend, Lord Buddha did not convert him to monasticism but rather welcomed him as a lay pupil so that he might continue to care for the sick. In addition to subsequent Buddhist revelations and numerous other texts, early Buddhist texts also contain information about him. At the fifth century BCE, he resided at Rajagihā, the modern-day Rajgir. He also requested Buddha to advise the monks to engage in physical activity in order to prevent illnesses and lead healthy lives. In addition to his remarkable contributions to surgery, he also practiced medicine. Many literatures have been written about Jivaka's life, his works, and contributions in Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan, Pali, and other languages.

**The early life of Jivaka:** When Jivaka was in his teen years, he discovered that he was not the son of Prince Abhaya, who had brought up him. Jivaka immediately felt humiliated and owed the prince a debt of gratitude. According to legend, Prince Abhaya found a living newborn baby in garbage in a harsh, cold and nasty environment. As the child was still alive in this unpleasant circumstance, the king gave him the name Jivaka. Jivaka received quite a bit of compensation for his services from the wealthy clients. He attempted to offer the Prince Abhaya, his foster father, some of the money he had made, but the prince neither accepted it nor asked for it back. Instead, the Prince Abhaya used the money to build an infirmary, where the patients would receive better care and treatment from Jivaka. Jivaka was raised by Prince Abhaya as his son and had a royal education among the other princes. It was later

discovered that Jivaka was an exceptionally sensitive, bright, and perceptive youngster. The top university in Taxila (Takshashila) accepted him after he passed a deductive reasoning test and another evaluation of his brilliance under the great Guru (Teacher) of India, Atreya. For seven years, Jivaka studied and underwent training to demonstrate that he was a deserving pupil of his Guru, Atreya. Jivaka was once given a test by his teacher to identify an herb or plant that had no therapeutic value in order to gauge his abilities. Jivaka examined every plant and herb in the area with all of his potency before telling his master that there was not a single one with no therapeutic worth. "Everything on this planet is medicine and nothing else," declared Jivaka. His teacher expressed happiness and noted that Jivaka had finished his education. After that, regardless of their level of socioeconomic class or allegiance with a particular religion, Jivaka continued to heal numerous sick and dying people. He established himself as a famous doctor after carrying out numerous surgical and therapeutic procedures, and he went back to Magadha. His life is covered in depth in the eighth chapter of the Mahavagga of the Vinaya Pitaka. He was the most accomplished pupil of the physician Atreya, who had a rare capacity for detecting the pulse of a patient.

**Treatment:** Jivaka used to make Ashtavarga, an ayurvedic mixture of eight particular herbs, which helped to hydrate body tissues and improve overall toughness and stamina. Jivaka was a well known to identify herb for treating illnesses such as gastrointestinal problems and raising immunity in humans. Jivaka taught people how to prevent damaging oxidative skin damage as well as how to manage diarrhoea. Jivaka also prevented early indications of skin aging and reduced joint discomfort in addition to possessing antioxidant and anti-aging qualities. Jivaka's efficacy against bronchitis was similarly encouraging. Jivaka demonstrated how to fortify the body's total immune system in order to protect it against microbial illnesses. He taught how to eliminate germs frequently from the intestines that cause diarrhea and other intestinal infections. He was blessed with powerful anti-bacterial and anti-diarrheal capabilities. His formulations substantially reduced the frequency of stools in addition to removing pollutants from the body. Many patients traveled great distances to see Jivaka since he was the most well-known and reputable gynecologist and surgeon of that time.

Additionally, it was stated that Jivaka had the ability to view within the body using a magic tree stick, much like an X-ray or ultrasound. Jivaka achieved great success and popularity by treating a wide range of medical conditions, including infectious diseases, bodily maladies, pediatrics, etc. He became well-known throughout the world for his activities as the greatest surgeon and doctor.

**Male Sexual Disorders:** Jivaka recommended for enhancing male health. It was extremely helpful in treating erectile dysfunction, early ejaculation, asthenozoospermia (abnormal sperm motility), teratospermia (abnormal sperm shape), oligospermia (low sperm count), hypospermia (low volume of semen), and enhanced spermatogenesis (i.e., sperm production). The herb's natural antioxidant content boosts the production of testosterone and luteinizing hormone, two male hormones. During sexual action, it successfully induces an erection and increases blood flow to the penile tissue. Since Jivaka was innately adaptable, it also assisted in reducing mental tension and anxiety and in releasing chemicals that raised libido. Men's virility and stamina are also increased by it.

**Relieve of Pain and Inflammation:** To alleviate the pain and inflammation associated with arthritis, Jivaka created medicines of anti-inflammatory and anti-arthritic characteristics. It was also used to treat arthritic disorders, other inflammatory conditions, painful muscle spasms, sore muscles, and other conditions because it is a natural vasodilator. It was quite effective to apply a powdered paste of bulb to treat rheumatoid arthritis, also known as amavata in Ayurveda.

**Thwart's Respiratory Issues:** With its predominantly anti-inflammatory, anti-biotic, and anti-asthmatic qualities, jivaka plays a significant role in treating a variety of respiratory problems. The herb he recommended was frequently used to treat the flu, sore throat, cough, and symptoms of the common cold. Additionally, it actively decreased and slackened the catarrhal components in the chest and nasal pockets, improving breathing and assisting the body in eliminating mucus. It was also extremely effective in treating bronchitis and asthmatic conditions.

**Augments of Skin Health:** Eczema, psoriasis, acne, and pimples are just a few examples of myriad skin illnesses, which can develop when the Pitta doshas are disturbed in the body. Jivaka identified herbs which possesses the antibacterial, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory properties, and recognized it as a treatment for a variety of skin problems. Additionally, the herb's blood-purifying properties were used in eliminating toxins from the blood, which in turn aided in curing a variety of skin ailments. It prevented numerous aging symptoms like blemishes, spots, wrinkles, fine lines, and dark circles in addition to protecting the skin from oxidative radical damage. It was helpful for treating a variety of allergic disorders, including psoriasis, scabies, eczema, acne, and pimples.

**Staves off Infections:** Jivaka's suggestion was effective at preventing various infectious diseases and maintaining the body's natural anti-fungal, antibacterial, and anti-parasitic defenses. This helped to prevent the cause of fungal infections in the body and intestinal worm infestation in the stomach, intestines, and other organs.

**Legacy of Jivaka:** Over the years, Jivaka had developed a reputation as a "miracle man". The majority of his remedies were largely forgotten in India, but the Chinese and Thai people continue to use insertion to treat illnesses and soothe pain. Jivaka was revered as the finest physician of the ancient world by the Chinese, and he was hailed as the father of "Thai Massage" by all massage therapists in Thailand. Numerous tourists from around the world still visit his birthplace in the city of Rajgir. According to some academics, Jivaka had become the "Arahant" which means one who has gained nirvana being alive. He is also regarded as one of the sixteen Arahants, who are currently guarding all of the Buddha's teachings until the arrival of the next Buddha. Jivaka also invented Thai massage therapy, which is still used today. His entire medical knowledge was preserved in the form of Jivaka sutras. His writings are still kept in the old Chinese Buddhist libraries. He is referred to be the "father of doctors" in Thailand. In Thailand, he is also referred to as Shivago Kompara.

#### Remarks

Jivaka has been recognized as the best physician for treatment for many health abnormalities and is listed in several Ayurvedic literatures. As a potent aphrodisiac, his identified extraordinary medical herbs helped many men to become more fertile, to treat numerous infertility problems, and to improve their reproductive health. Additionally, it promoted overall stamina and body immunity by ensuring appropriate digestion, treating diarrhoea, reducing inflammation, delaying the onset of age-related changes, and relieving respiratory problems. Jivaka was a fantastic surgeon and doctor to the Thai and Chinese populations. The Indians did not know as much about him. The people of Thailand built a huge statue of Jivaka in honour of his traditional medical practices, but Indians have forgotten about their great historical figures in medical science. Finally, Jivaka had always thought that prevention is more vital than seeking therapy in right away.

#### Acharya Vagbhata (4<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century CE)

We know of Charaka and Sushruta largely because of their seminal contributions towards general medicine (Kaya Chikitsa) as well as surgical medicine (Shalya Tantra). But, there is a third scholar who perhaps holds even greater significance as he performed the enviable task of synthesizing different Ayurvedic theories and explaining them with remarkable poetic proficiency. He was Acharya Vagbhata. He was one of the greatest medical scientists and one of the most influential writers of Ayurveda in ancient India. It is known from the different literatures, he lived somewhere around the 6<sup>th</sup> century CE. In his Ashtanga Sangraha, he mentioned his birth place somewhere in Sind, nearby today's Karachi of Pakistan. Vagbhata was the son of Simhagupta. His grandfather too was known by the same name i.e., Vagbhata. His father and grandfather, both were great Ayurvedic scholars. He derived most of his Ayurvedic knowledge from his father and his grandfather. He is said

to be the disciple of Avalokita - the chief monk of Mahayana Buddhism. He was famous for having presented Ayurveda and its essence in an easy simple, comprehensive and understandable way.

Though it is known not much about him, he was most likely to have been a vedic, as he made a reference to Lord Shiva in his writings, and his sons, grandsons, and disciples were all vedic. It is also believed that he was taught Ayurvedic medicine by his father and a veda monk, named Avalokita. Again, in Ashtanga Sangraha we see a lot of references relating to Hinduism and Buddhism. This suggests that Vagbhata was born in a Hindu Brahmin family and in the later part of his life he adopted Buddhism. Based on various evidences, Vagbhata's date can be estimated to have been between 4th and 5th century CE. But his work was based on and is influenced by Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita etc. This gives a clear idea that Vagbhata lived much later to Charaka and Sushruta. Charaka was a medical genius while Vagbhata was considered to be "The Trinity" of Ayurvedic knowledge.

**Contributions:** He was the author of two great treatises of Ayurveda namely 'Ashtanga Sangraha' and 'Ashtanga Hridaya'. It is mentioned that Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and Ashtanga Sangraha are known as 'Brihat Trayees', meaning three great treatises or 'greatest trio' of Ayurveda. Maharishi Vagbhata being the greatest physician in India as in his time he tried to advance India in the medical field through his book. His both books were originally written in Sanskrit with 7000 sutra. According to Vagbhata, 85% of diseases could be cured without a physician; only 15% of diseases required a physician. Ashtanga Sangraha and Ashtanga Hridaya have glimpses of influence of Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita. Vagbhata was famous for having presented Ayurveda in an easy, simple, comprehensive and understandable way. The language used by Vagbhata was worth appreciating. It is reachable to almost everyone who reads it of course with a good knowledge of Sanskrit. The translated versions can be understood by common people also. He mentioned frequent references to the earlier classical works of the Charaka Samhita and the Sushruta Samhita in both of his books. He placed his two books chronologically after the publication of the Charaka Samhita and the Sushruta Samhita. He was praised equally for the refined style in which he presented his works.

Ashtanga Hridaya is a land mark in the history of Ayurvedic Medicine. When there was a real need to record the previous work of Ayurveda in a comprehensive manner, Acharya Vagbhata compiled this great treatise, which occupied a place in the greater triad along with the sages Charaka and Sushruta. His work was a bridge between the traditions of the ancient seers and mere Ayurvedic physicians of the middle ages. He was the cream of the vast ocean like literature of Ayurveda. It contains

the gist of the teachings of ancient sages belonging to all schools of Ayurveda in minimum words comprehensively. Just by studying Ashtanga Hridaya alone, one may be acquainted with the concepts and practices of all the schools without hunting through the dense growth of literature. This is an informative and fundamental work useful for teachers, students and researchers. He was also famous for his contribution in field of Physiology which forms base of Ayurvedic Diagnostics. He other than compiling the earlier ancient material added also his practical research and shared his thoughts. He was first to mention the names of all the five types of Vata, Pitta and Kapha.

**Ashtanga Sangraha:** The author of Ashtanga Sangraha was Acharya Vagbhata. Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita are self-authentic works which were independently created. They are called Akara Grantha. Ashtanga Sangraha on the other hand was not self-authentic, it was written by quoting the references from the other texts, and moreover it has references from Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita. Therefore, it is called Prakarana Grantha. Ashtanga Sangraha means compilation of 8 branches of Ayurveda. But Acharya Vagbhata gave importance to all the 8 branches of Ayurveda and composed Ashtanga Sangraha. In this treatise we can know about all the 8 branches. He has covered everything in brief and in a sweet and understandable manner, thus making Ayurveda learning an easy process. Vagbhata will always be praised in the world of medicine (Ayurveda) for having presented Ayurveda in a simple, yet precise way.

**Ashtanga Hridaya:** Ashtanga Hridaya was also written by Acharya Vagbhata.

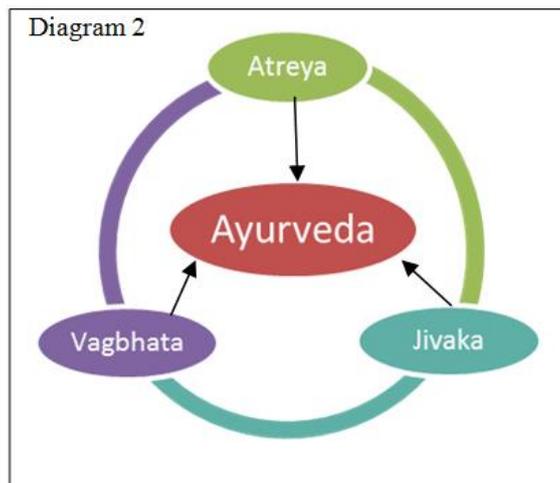
**Sections and specialties of Ashtanga Hridaya:** Ashtanga Hridaya is a more simplified version of Ashtanga Sangraha. It comprises of 6 sections and 120 chapters. Ashtanga Hridaya was translated into almost all Indian languages. It was also translated into Arabic during the reign of Harun-al-Rashid (773-808 AD), into Tibetan language during the reign of king Khrison-dehu (755-797 AD) and into German by Luise Hilgenberg and Willibald Kirfel in 1941 (<https://www.easyayurveda.com/2016/08/21/acharya-vagbhata/>).

#### IV. DEVELOPMENT OF AYURVEDA

The Ayurvedic Science as it exists today is the result of the efforts of numerous great ancient Vaidyas (physicians), Rishis, Sages (Saints), and Acharyas (Professors) dating back to the Vedic period. Diagram 2 shows the evolution of Ayurveda, showing how Atreya, Jivaka, and Vagbhata created the Ayurvedic system of medical treatments. India began treating this ailment even before others around the world were aware of its term. Again, even now, we learn of several undiagnosed health conditions that were mentioned in Hindu scriptures but are still unknown to modern medicine.

There are still numerous priceless books that were authored by the Rishis, Acharyas, and Sages in India. The medicinal expertise that was developed in ancient

India requires immediate attention. Ayurvedic medicine, which originated in India, is being used today all over the world to promote longevity and promote good health.



## V. REASONS FOR DOWNFALL OF MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE

In all ways, India was undoubtedly the epicenter of knowledge in antiquity. India was capable of reaching the highest level of development, but she was unable to do so for the reasons listed below:

- (1) From 712 CE until 1757 CE, a large number of Muslim invaders occupied our land, stole it, burned universities with fire, and governed it without regard to the advancement of knowledge.
- (2) The British then looted, captured, and dominated what little of India was left for 190 years, from 1757 CE to 1947 CE. Wealth and wisdom from India were conveyed by both the Muslims and the British. They attempted to annihilate our culture. The British attempted to convert us so that our minds would be British but our bodies would stay Indian. They demolished our Gurukul educational system.
- (3) All Indian governments after independence, with the exception of the NDA government, made little effort to reclaim the country's traditional wisdom.
- (4) During the Muslim reign, many Muslim rulers either destroyed the Hindu temples or converted the temples into mosques. Thus they continued to suppress Hinduism. The educational institutions were suffered as most of them were connected to the temples. In 1669, Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb destroyed the Kashi temple and built the Gyanvapi Mosque in its place.

## VI. TRANSMISSION OF MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE FROM INDIA

There may be traces of Greek explorers such as Pythagoras and Democritus who visited India in quest of knowledge, traveled across the country till their knowledge grew, and then returned to Europe well-versed in Indian culture. Indian medical expertise later had an effect on their cultures. There are other places where the Indian Ayurvedic dosha model is analogous. Given the extensive Selucid Kingdom that spanned from

India to Turkey and the active presence of Buddhist missionaries in the region, it is not surprising that knowledge from India diffused to these locations. Indian spices, herbs, and medicines were also a part of the Roman trade network, as William H. Schoff's *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* illustrates. The Greek physician, pharmacologist, botanist, and author of *De Materia Medica*, a five-volume encyclopedia of herbal medicine and related medicinal substances, Pedanius Dioscorides, is actually known as "the father of pharmacognosy" and has a large section on Indian herbs (Raikwar, 2023). Many Indian medical texts have been translated into Persian and Arabic from the start of the Islamic era in India in 712 CE, and they have been presented in a number of locations, from Sindh to Southern Spain. Through Arabic books translated into Latin between the tenth and thirteenth centuries in translation schools in Sicily, Italy, and Toledo, Spain, this medical knowledge eventually found its way to Western Europe via Arabian nations with whom India had strong trading relations from the start. Following that period, Indian medical knowledge was directly transmitted to European colonialists, allowing medieval Europe to become increasingly dependent on Indian medical knowledge [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8514395/>]. Greek and other explorers, Buddhist missionaries, traders, and European colonialists were among those who brought Indian medical knowledge to Europe. It was also translated, either directly or indirectly, into several languages. Consequently, Indian medical knowledge expanded over the globe, and in certain regions of the world, Indian medical concepts are being applied today either exactly as they were in the past or in modified ways while maintaining their uniqueness.

## VII. CONCLUSION

For vaidyas, illness treatment was just as vital as disease prevention and health promotion. They advised a daily meal and a seasonal, nutrient-dense diet to maintain a

balanced state of health. Similarly, psychic therapy was used to treat mental disorders. The vaidya suggested many methods, at his discretion, to prevent the mind from dwelling on unfavorable thoughts. Numerous doctors and surgeons (Vaidyas) have made significant contributions throughout the ages, as evidenced by the history of the health care systems in ancient India. Numerous scientific disciplines have been impacted significantly by these exceptional ancient Indian medical professionals. Their original research, novel hypotheses, and deep understandings continue to influence how we currently understand medicine.

We owe these visionaries a debt of appreciation for pushing the envelope of knowledge and laying the groundwork for future scientific discoveries pertaining to medical procedures. Their intellectual strength must serve as an inspiration to us as we work to build on their outstanding accomplishments. Therefore, from the history of Indian health care systems, we have to know that how much richness of medical knowledge the ancient India had and the contributions of several physicians and surgeons were followed throughout the world till today. They have contributed a lot in the area of fundamental doctrines, description of medicines, surgical practices and description of systematic required knowledge. Thus, they were really a great legendary and visionary of Ayurveda. We should admit their contributions and respect them heart and soul.

N.B.: Time period of the above vaidyas are not known exactly, mentioned on the basis of different literatures, which are controversial.

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