

CONTRIBUTION OF CHARAK SAMHITA IN KAUMARBHRITYA

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ABSTRACT

charak samhita is a part of “*brihat trayi*” the three main compositions of ancient Indian medicine i.e, *Ayurveda*. It is a well known composition among *ayurvedic* practitioners for its excellence in “*chikitsa*” i.e, treatment. *Charak acharya* is also known as “father of medicine”. But contribution of *charak* towards other branch of *ayurveda* is not known to many. *Kaumarbhritya* is one of the branches in *ashtang ayurveda* which deals with care of infant, children; their disease and management. Though *kashyap samhita* is considered main text of *kaumarbhritya* but it is not available completely. So, the students and physicians have to go to through other texts to gain the knowledge and get rid of their queries. The list of contribution of *acharya charak* is never ending and in this review, an attempt has been made to highlight the contributions and knowledge of *kaumarbhritya* available in *charak samhita*.

KEYWORDS: *kaumarbhritya, acharya charak, kaumarbhritya in charak samhita.***INTRODUCTION**

lord *brahma* propounded *ayurveda* a branch of *atharvaveda*, even before the creation of living beings. He composed it in one thousand chapters having one lakh *shloka*(verses) and divided it into eight branches. *Acharya charak* placed *kaumarbhritya* at 6th position in *ashtang ayurveda* [*kayachikitsa* (medicine), *shalakya* (eye and ENT), *shalyauphrutakam*(surgery), *vishagaravairodhikprashamanam*(toxicology), *bhootvidya* (demonology), *kaumarbhritya* (paediatrics), *rasayanam*(rejuvenation), *vajikaranam*(virilification).^[1] Direct definition of *kaumarbhritya* is not found in *charak samhita*, but *chakrapani* one of the commentator of *charak samhita* states that the branch which deals with the child nurturing is called as *kaumarbhritya*.

Acharya charak has given description of *kaumarbhritya* in *sharirsthan* chapter 4th and 8th, *chikitsasthan* chapter 30th and *viman sthan* chapter 8th. Some related topics are also found scattered in other *sthans* of the *samhita*. Here is a short review of *kaumarbhritya* in *charak samhita*.

Embryology

The combination of *shukra*(sperm), *shonita*(ovum) and the life principle implanted in the *kukshi*(womb) is known as *garbha*(embryo).^[2]

Garbha(embryo) which is formed with the help of six *garbha sambhav bhava* – *matrutaha*(mother), *pitrutaha*(father), *aatmataha*(self), *satmyataha* (suitability), *rasataha*(nutrition) and *satvataha* (psyche).^[3]

Acharya charak has explained *masanumasik vrudhi* of *garbha*.

Embryo during the 1st month is completely mixed up and made *kalushikruta*(turbid) with all the constituents and like *khetbhuto*(phlegm). during 2nd month it is solidified as *pinda*(small bolus), *peshi*(elongated mass) and *arbuda*(tumor). During 3rd month all the body parts are formed simultaneously. During 4th month fetus attain *sthiratva*(stability). During 5th month in fetus flesh and blood are more developed as compared to other months. During 6th month *bala-varna*(complexion and strength) develops more. During 7th month, the fetus is developed in respect to all entities. During 8th month the fetus and mother exchanges *Ojas* mutually. On expiry of even one day (after the 8th month), the 9th month till the 10th month is said as the period of parturition.^[4]

The fetus develops in the womb due to excellence of the procreative factors mother etc., excellence of mother's conduct, proper mechanism of ‘*upsnehan*(nourishment) and *upswedan*(heating)’ from the mother, passage of time and natural phenomena.^[5]

Care of newborn at birth

Acharya Charak explains *sadyojat paricharya* in a very fine manner.

Rubbing of stone pieces at the root of ear and sprinkling of cold or hot water over the face helps the newborn to recover the vital breadth stopped due to distress so far.

If the fetus is devoid of movement he should be fanned with the winnowing basket having black flaps till he recovers. After recovery he should be bathed and cleaned well with water. Thereafter his palate, lips, throat and tongue should be cleaned with the help of finger having nails well cut and putting a well washed, cushioned cotton swab. After washing his mouth his anterior fontanel should be covered with a cotton swab soaked in some fatty substance. Then vomiting should be induced by administering ghee added with rock salt.^[6]

Umbilical cord clamping and cutting

After fixing the point at 8 fingers from the umbilical attachment the cutting point should be held tightly on both the sides and cut with a sharp, half edge instrument made of gold, silver or steel. The end of the attached portion should be tied with a thread and attached loosely to the neck of the fetus.^[7]

Cord care

If the cut portion of the cord suppurates, it should be massaged with the oil prepared with the paste of *lodhra*, *madhuka*, *priyangu*, *devadaru* and *haridra*. The powder of the above drugs may also be applied over the part.^[8]

Complication caused due to improper processing of the cord

Ayamotundita (vertical swelling)

Vyayamotundita (horizontal swelling)

Pindalika (circular hardness)

Vinamika (marginal swelling)

Vijrumbhika (umbilical hernia)

These complications should be treated according to the severity, with massage anointing and bathing with *ghees* which are free from burning effects and are able to alleviate *vata* and *pitta doshas*.^[9]

Jatakarma vidhi

First child should be given to ingest the combination of honey and *ghee* processed with *mantras* as prescribed in scriptures. And then breastfeeding should be started.^[10]

Raksha karma

The maternity home should be surrounded by the branches of the *adani*, *khadira*, *karkandhu*, *pilu* and *parushak*. The seeds of mustard, linseed, rice and *kankanika* should be scattered all over the maternity home. The oblation of the offering of rice to the fire should be performed continuously twice a day till the naming rite soliminised. At the door after the threshold a wooden pestle should be kept obliquely. A cloth packet containing *kushtha*, *choraka*, *hingu*, mustard, linseed, garlic, *kanakanika* and other drugs repelling evil spirits should be kept at the front door. The same should be worn by the mother as well as the child in the neck and also put in the cooking vessels, water jars, cot and both the panels of the door. There should be fire burning constantly with the fuel of *kanakanika* and *tinduka* wood within the maternity home. The said attending women and the favourite friends should keep up the whole night

near the mother for 10-12 days. Moreover gifts, auspicious rites, blessing, praises, songs, playing musical instruments should be performed continuously in home which should be amply provided with food and drinks and be full of affectionate and happy person. The *brahmanas* proficient in *atharvaveda* too should continuously offer propitiatory oblation to the fire both the times for the well being of the child as well as the mother.^[11]

Naming ceremony

On the 10th day the mother along with the baby having taken bath with the water containing all aromatic drugs, white mustard and *lodhra*, having put on light, undamaged and clean cloths, wearing auspicious, desirable, light and splendid ornaments, having touched auspicious objects, having worshipped the appropriate deity should receive blessing invocations from *brahmanas* possessing hair lack on the crown of the head, white dress and no deformity. Then the baby having placed on the pack of undamaged cloth should be admitted with head towards the east or the north. Thereafter father of the baby say that the child is offering salutation to the deity and *brhamanas* and having said so, the child should be given two names- one based on the constellation at the time of his birth and other popular name for the day to day use. Of them, the popular name should begin with *ghosa*(sonant) alphabets and the end with *anasth* (semivowel) or *usma* ones. Besides, there should not be a letter with *vridhi*(diphthong), it should be similar to that in preceding generations and should not be newly established. The constellatory name is similar to the deity of the constellation consisting of two or more letters.^[12]

Examination of the baby

After the naming ceremony the child should be examined for the knowledge of the span of his life. Following are the features said by *acharya charak* of the child blessed with long life.

Discrete, soft, sparse, oily, deep rooted and black hair. Firm and thick skin. Naturally well endowed, slightly bigger in size, proportionate and umbrella like head. Broad, firm, even, united well with temporal. Endowed with upper signs(three tranverse lines), corpulent, wrinkled and half moon shaped forehead. Ears thick, having large and even flaps, equal elongated downwards depressed at the back, having compact tragus and big meatus. Eyebrows slightly hanging downwards, disjoined, even, compact and large. Eyes equal, having concentrated vision, with clear division and subdivisions, strong lusturous and having beautiful front and corners. Nose straight with large nostrils, well ridged and slightly depressed at the tip. Mouth big, straight and having well set teeth. Tongue having sufficient length and breath, smooth, thin and with normal color. Palate smooth, well developed, hot and red. Voice propound, not poor, sweet, echoing and deeply risen. Lips neither too thick nor too thin, having proper breadth, covering the mouth and red

in colour. Large jaws. Round and not very large neck. Broad and well developed chest. Hidden xiphisternum and vertebral column. Distant breast nodule. Unbending and stable sides. Arms, legs and fingers round, developed and long. Hands and feet big and developed. Nails stable round, unctuous, coppery, high and tortoise shaped. Navel whirled clockwise and deep. Waist 1/3rd less than chest in breadth, even having well developed muscles. buttocks round with firm and developed muscles, not too elevated. Thighs tapering downward, round and well developed. Shanks neither too corpulent nor too thin, resembling that of deer's foot, with hidden blood vessels, bones and joints. ankles neither too corpulent nor too thin. Apart from these anatomical features, the functional relating to flatus, urine, stool and sexual organs and also sleep, excretion, smiling, weeping and sucking as normal indicate the long life span.^[13]

Nursery

It should be well planned by the architect. It should be spacious, beautiful, free from darkness and access to wind, well ventilated and strong. Inaccessible for various animals, rats and insects. Distinct paces of the water, pounding, urinals, lavatory, bathroom and kitchen, comfortable in particular season. Equipped by cot, chairs and bedding according to the season. Moreover, protective measures, offerings auspicious rites, ablation and expiatory rights should be performed well there and it should be full of clean and elderly persons, physicians and affectionate people.^[14]

Bedding of child

The cot, chair, beddings and coverings for the child should be soft, light, clean and perfumed. Those having contacts with sweat, excrements and insects or soiled with urine and faeces should be discarded or used only after cleaning, drying well fumigating.^[15]

Fumigation

Materials- barley, mustard, linseed, asafoetida, *guggulu*, *vacha*, *vayastha*, *golomi*, *jatila*, *palankasha*, *ashokrohini*, slough of serpent mixed with should be used for clothing, cot, bedding and covering.^[16]

Ornaments

Amulets to be worn by the child could be made of the tip of the right horns of the alive rhinoceros, deer, *gayal* or bull. Herbs like *jeevaka*, *aindri*, *rushabhaka* or whatever the *brahmana* conversant in the *atharvaveda* prescribes.^[17]

Toys(*kridanaka*)

variegated
sound producing
beautiful
light weight
without sharp ends
those which cannot enter the mouth
not fetal
not terrifying^[18]

dhatri(wet nurse) pariksha

samanvarna(wet nurse belonging to same caste)
youvanawastha(youthful)
nibhrutam(submissive)
anaturam(free from impatience)
avyangam(free from deformity)
avyasanam(non-addictive)
avirupam(ugliness)
ajuguptisam(non-loathsomeness)
deshjatiyam(born in same place)
akshudra-akshudrakarmini(not mean minded or indulged in mean acts)
kulejata(born in good family)
vatsalam(having affectionate disposition)
aroga(disease free)
jivadvatsa puvatsa(having living male child)
dogdhri(having profuse lactation)

Along with above qualities the wet nurse should be skilled in management, not sleeping on excrements, clean, endowed with excellence of breast and breastmilk.^[19]

Properties of *uttam stanya*

Prakrutivarnagandharasasparsham (normal color, smell, touch and taste) *Udakapatre cha duhyamanamudakam vyeti prakrutibhutatvat* (dissolves completely in water if milked in water pot because of its watery nature). *Pushtikaramarogyakaram*(milk is nourishing and healthy).^[20]

CONCLUSION

Charak samhita, a part of three great treaties of *ayurveda* "*bruhat trayi*", is a beautiful creation of *acharya charak* with the sequential arrangement and detailed description of the topics in the form of verses .because of his deep routed knowledge and wonderful contribution towards the field of medicinal treatment, he is respectfully known as "father of Indian medicine". Though he has given more emphasis on adult medicine he has simultaneously mentioned that the same medicine can be used in paediatric group only in smaller quantity. He has given a brief knowledge of neonatology. After thorough review of *samhita*, it was found that the considered text has mentioned all the important concept/aspects of *kaumarbhritya* like care of new born, breastfeeding, protection of child, neonatal nursery, toys etc. which are enough for the basic knowledge of the subject and to satisfy the students, scholars and physicians. Instead of research work done till date, there are many hidden facts in the text which can be explored further.

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