

A REVIEW ON THE CONCEPT OF HEALTH MENTIONED IN AYURVEDA  
COMPENDIADr. Deshpande Vaishali Shailesh\*<sup>1</sup> and Joshi Abhijit H.<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>Ph. D. (Scholar), Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune and Prof. in Kayachikitsa, Parul Institute of Ayurved and Research, Parul University, Vadodara, Gujrat.<sup>2</sup>Ph.D. Guide, Dean Faculty of Ayurveda and Registrar, Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune.**\*Corresponding Author: Dr. Deshpande Vaishali Shailesh**

Ph. D. (Scholar), Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune and Prof. in Kayachikitsa, Parul Institute of Ayurved and Research, Parul University, Vadodara, Gujrat.

Article Received on 21/10/2020

Article Revised on 11/11/2020

Article Accepted on 01/12/2020

**ABSTRACT**

Different health sciences developed in different ages in different parts of the world have one common goal which is to keep human race healthy and free from diseases. However, health which is the primary goal has been defined in variety of ways in different health sciences. Among these, Ayurveda which is known as the oldest health science defines health in the most elaborate way. Ayurveda not only considers sound state of body as health, but it also gives emphasis on optimum function of special senses and other psychological factors while defining healthy individual. Different scholars in Ayurveda have added different points while describing 'Health' over the period of time. A systematic compilation of all such definitions and their review brings forward the vision of ancient Acharyas in describing Swasthya (health). This review attempts to elaborate definitions of health according to Ayurveda in an elaborate manner.

**KEYWORDS:** Ayurveda, Swasthya, Swastha, Health.**INTRODUCTION**

Health is one of those terms which most people find it difficult to define although they are confident of its meaning. Among definitions still used probably the oldest is that "Health is the Absence of Disease". If one was free from disease then the person was considered healthy. This biomedical concept was found inadequate to solve some of the major health problems of mankind (e.g.:- malnutrition, chronic diseases, accidents, mental illness etc). As against this the ancient view of ayurvedic scholars about health is the total health definition of mankind.

**Charaksamhita**

According to Charakachrya, Person possessing balanced proportion of musculature, compactness, firmness of sensory & motor organs and who is not falling prey easily to prowess of a disorder, is termed as a healthy person. He can easily withstand hunger, thirst, heat, cold & exercise and also possess balanced agni & normal metabolism.<sup>[1]</sup> Various commentaries are available on this verse. Chakrapani comments that "mansa" in general means development.<sup>[2]</sup> Gangadhar explains that "mansa" means musculature and "praman" means anthropometric measurement. The normal healthy person should have balanced musculature & average measurement.<sup>[3]</sup> Yogindranath also takes "mansa" as musculature. Vidyodinitika on this verse is very well explained.

According to it, A swastha person must be of sam mamsa & should neither be too corpulent nor to emaciated. Healthy person must be of "Sampraman" i.e. neither too tall nor to short. Also sampramana denies the possibility of healthy person being too hairy, hairless, too black or too fair. Besides sam sanhanan clarifies that those who have any deformity can't be labeled as Swastha. Thus a person possessing qualities like sam mansa, sampraman & sam samhana have very strong sensory & motor organs. Such a person spends healthy life & if by any reason he falls prey to disease, the malady is not of much strength and can be taken care of very soon.

In another place Charakacharya quotes that any disturbance in the equilibrium of Dhatus is known as 'Vikar' (- disease), while their equilibrium is Prakruti (- health). Health & disease are also defined as pleasure (Sukh) & pain (Dukkha) respectively.<sup>[4]</sup> Chakrapani comments that in the above verse- the term Dhatu includes the Doshas(viz Vata, Pitta, Kapha)& the Updhatus (viz Raja, Stanya, etc)along with Sapta Dhatus (viz- Ras, Rakta, Mans, Meda, Asthi, Majja, Shukra).For all practical purposes disequilibrium (Vaishamyam) means deficiency or excess of either of the above factors from their normal range.<sup>[5]</sup> Yogindranath is of the view that the term Dhatu literally means -the factor which supports the body (Dharan).Therefore in this context the word Dhatu includes 'Malas' along with Doshas & Sapta Dhatus. He

says that just like the Dosha & Dhatus, Malas also in their normal state play role in supporting the body. It will not be unfair to represent here the similar opinion of Acharya Sushruta and Vagbhata at this gesture. Both the Scholars have efficiently depicted the importance normal Dosha, Dhatu Mala in maintaining health.

Dosha, Dhatu & Malas are the base of the body. They are the root cause of Deha.<sup>[6]</sup> In all the circumstances /positions Dosha, Dhatu & Malas are the foundations of the body.<sup>[7]</sup> A similar opinion is found in Ashtanga Samgraha. Dalhana commentary on Sushruta Su.15/3, Arundatta commentary on A. Hr. Su. 11/1 and Indu commentary on A.Sa Su. 19/3 all reveal that as the roots are the main supporting base of the plant likewise Dosha, Dhatu & Mala are the foundations of the body. Just as the growth & health of a plant depends on the normalcy of the root similarly the health of a person is dependable on the equilibrium of the above basics .i.e. Dosha, Dhatu, Mala. Not only in the Sutrasthana but also further in Uttarsthan, Sushruta explains the prime role of these fundamentals in attaining health. He says that – All the three Doshas, Sapta Dhatus, & the Malas (fecus, urine, etc) support the body with the help of Aahar & Pathya.<sup>[8]</sup> Chakrapani further adds that in the above Charaka's verse, that the equilibrium of Dhatus termed as Prakruti should be taken as health.<sup>[9]</sup>

Health is known as Sukha - happiness while Dukha - unhappiness is Vikara. Chakrapani commentary at this position raises a question that whether Dhatuvaisamaya itself is Vikara or the latter is caused by the former. Some take Dhatuvaisamaya not as Vikara but as the cause of Vikara. If it is taken so then a problem arises, that if the Vikar results from the disequilibrium of Dhatus what happens to the former after it has brought about the latter. This can't be taken as health because health is Dhatuvasamya. Also it can't be regarded as disorder as it is taken as the causative factor of disease. The fact is that there is no such condition when Dhatuvaishamya is not disorder because in states of diminution as well as aggravation there is always corresponding change in the characters of Dhatus. Hence Dhatuvaishamya itself may be taken as Vikar. This Vaishamya may manifest in the form of maladies [fever, etc.] when aggravated or may not as when diminished, but both these condition are states of Dhatuvaishamya. Thus Chakrapani insists that by the term Vikar both Dhatuvaishamya and disorders must be taken.<sup>[10]</sup> On this Gangadhar comments that, in view of the variations under normal range & also combining the purports of both the halves of the verse, he defines Prakruti as 'Dhatuvasamya' which causes happiness & Vikara as 'Dhatuvaishamya' which causes unhappiness. Further he says that, by secondary application of effect to cause, disorders such as fever, etc. are also taken by Dhatuvaishamya.<sup>[11]</sup> At this reference Yogindranath says that in exogenous diseases too, there is disequilibrium of Doshas though lately and hence Dhatuvaishamya is the integral part of all disorders. Or he says the present

context may be taken as that of the innate disorders. Thus this health definition quoted by Charakacharya incorporates total positive health. Charaka has emphasized this theory by repeating the fact in Sharirsthana.<sup>[12]</sup> He emphasis pleasure and pain for health and disease respectively again by stating that as long as the Vaishamya does not produce Klesha [trouble], disease or death, it is not considered pathological.<sup>[13]</sup> On this Chakrapani holds a view that imbalance means increase or decrease from the normal range. It is the principle that the normal Dhatus can never lead to maladies.

### Sushrutsamhita

Acharaya Shusruta has very scientifically defined health as "The state of equilibrium of all the Doshas, Agni, Dhatus and Malas accompanied by normal functions of Dhatu and Malas as well as tranquility of Atma, Indriya & Mana is said to be health".

**Samadosha – Commentry** - Samdosha indicates the normalcy of Vata, Pitta & Kapha Doshas. They must neither be aggravated nor diminished. Dalhan commentary describes the queries and answers at this quotation. It is said that the Vata, Pitta, Kapha Doshas attain to an aggravated state as per diurnal, seasonal and age wise variations. Old age, middle age & childhood respectively have excess of Vata, Pitta & Kapha. While the diurnal & seasonal physiological aggravation of the Doshas respectively incorporate increase of Vata in evening, late night and rainy season, boost of Pitta during afternoon, midnight and summer while excess of Kapha in morning, early night and winter season. Thus if such natural variations of Doshas are indicated in the texts, then how can the Samdosha state can be attained? On this Dalhan clarifies in his commentary that these variations are in a very milder form, which retain the normal state in short time span. Just like in a fast if single rice grain is consumed, it makes no difference in the Anshan Avastha similarly the very short periodic Doshavaishamya (agggaravation) make no difference. Also the Dincharya and Rutucharya mentioned in the ayurvedic texts are the tools to pacify the above stated mildest periodic imbalance of Doshas.

**Samagni – commentary** - When the Jathragni, Panchbhuta-agni and the Dhatwagni all of them are in equilibrium state, the condition is termed as Samagni Avastha. Here the Dalhan commentary imposes a question that when Doshasamya leads to Agnisamya, there was no reason to insist on Samagni Avastha in the definition of health. On this Dalhan, himself clarifies that Dosha and Agni are two different identities and it is not necessary that if the Doshas are Sama, the Agni will also be Sama. They both have different treatment for their vitiation, for eg: - Ghee and goats milk are Pitta pacifying but they do increase Agni. Thus Agni and Doshas are two different substances. Even it is mentioned that Doshas have their separate Agnis. Thus the Samaagni state- that is absence of Mandaagni,

Vishamagni and Tikshanagni is one of the factors of total health.

**Sama Dhatu Mala Kriya** - According to the Dalhan and Chakrapani commentary on the above verse Sama Dhatu Mala Kriya can be splitted as the normal functions of Dhatu, Updhatu and Malas. They also comment that Kriya means sleeping, awakening, walking, etc Chakrapani says that Updhatus can be taken by the term Dhatu as they perform similar Dharana function.

**Prasanna Atma Indriya Mana** - This term indicates mental health. As long as the Atma, Indriya and Mana are sound a person is happy. But any imbalance in their equilibrium leads to sorrow. The normalcy of Dosha, Dhatu, Mala, Agni & their normal functions are the only parameters of health stated in Ayurveda.<sup>[14]</sup> But as they are invisible /concealed, their direct examination is not possible.<sup>[15]</sup> Prasanna Atma Indriya Mana is the parameter to examine the normalcy of these elements. Their aprasannatwa denotes the disequilibrium of Doshas, Dhatus and Malas. As long as the daily, seasonal or the periodic Vaishmya does not create Aprasannatwa in Mind, Soul and sense organs, it is not Aswasthaya/un-health. Thus the tranquility of soul, sense organs & mind is the visible & adequate parameter of health.<sup>[16]</sup> Dalhan comments here that Atma can be called as Deha.

This definition of health comprises all the sections of total health. Not only the later authors like Madhavanidan, Bhavprakash, Sharangdhar, Yogratnakar but also the latest WHO definition of health keeps pace with the ancient Sushruta's definition of health.

Sushrutacharya has also elaborated the features of healthy person. He states that a person consuming a balanced, adequate diet has a proper and proportionate development. Such a person possessing a "Madhayam Sharir" is capable of all kinds of work & movements. He can fairly stand the in clemencies of weather, the keenness of hunger & thirst and will gain strength & energy. Care should be taken to have and maintain such a well equipped body of moderate size.<sup>[17]</sup>

#### **Asthanga Sangraha and Ashtanga Hridaya**

In Asthanga Sangraha and Ashtanga Hridaya the definition is given. The state of equilibrium of Doshas (Samyata) is termed as health (Arogata) whereas the imbalance of their equilibrium is disease (Roga).<sup>[18]</sup>

#### **Commentry – Dosha – Sharira and Manasa**

Charaka explains that body & mind are the two substrata of diseases & happiness.<sup>[19]</sup> Chakrapani intrepitition on this verse explains that the Sharir Doshas (Vata, Pitta & Kapha) lead to somatic ailments like Kushtha (leprosy), the Manas Doshas (Raja and Tama) results into psychic disorders such as passion while both types of Doshas may sequel into psychosomatic diseases like insanity.<sup>[20]</sup> In this reference Ganghadhar holds the view that Vata, Pitta, etc. are called Doshas when they are in the state of

disequilibrium, otherwise they are termed as Dhatus as they support the body in normalcy.<sup>[21]</sup>

#### **Importance of Doshas in maintaining health**

Shrusrut describes that Dosha, Dhatu and Malas are the foundations of the body.<sup>[22]</sup> Similar importance is given to Doshas in A.Hr. Su.11/1 and A.Sa.Su.19/3. According to Sushruta Vata, Pitta and Kapha are the primary and essential constitutional factors of human organism. Just as a dwelling house is supported by three pillars in the same way these three basic elements when in normalcy support the body. Thus the body is spoken as Tristhunam. The disequilibrium of these Doshas may bring about dissolution, diseases or death.<sup>[23]</sup> He further notes that the Kapha, Pitta and Vata maintain the integrity of the organism by performing functions like Visarga (releasing strength), Adana (withdrawing strength) and Viksepha (initiating all actions) respectively just as the Soma, Surya and Anil maintain the integrity of the terrestrial world. Similar reference is mentioned in Sh.Su.6/8.

Vagbhata also describes that vatta, pitta and kapha in their equilibrium state supports and maintains the body while their imbalance may consequence into destruction of health.<sup>[24]</sup>

Charak has also cited many references describing the prominent role of doshas in maintaining health. He describes in Ch.Su.12/13 that all the three Doshas when in normal state endow the person- possessing unaffected indriyas- with strength complexion, happiness and longevity. Like virtue (Dharma), wealth (Artha) and desire (Kama) when pursued properly, these Doshas also if well directed bring about immense happiness to living beings in this world and the world beyond. These three factors when disturbed cause great tribulation to man just as the three seasons when vitiated inflict evil on the world, as that at the time of its dissolution.

Charka further in Ch.Su.20/9 observes that Vata, Pitta and Kapha pervade the entire body producing good and ill effects respectively depending upon their equilibrium or disparity. When in normal state they bring about good consequences like growth, strength, complexion, cheerfulness etc., while their disequilibrium leads to various shoddier consequences known as Vikara.

A similar concept appears in Ch.Sha.6/18 where it is clearly mentioned that the Prakrutibhuta (normal) Doshas result in Arogya while their derangement leads to various mobility and mortalities.

Further Charka proceeds to describe the importance of Doshas also in Ch.Vi.1/5 as the three Doshas in their normal state are beneficial for the body while in their abnormalcy they afflict the body with various ailments. Similar to Sh.su.21/8 reference charka has also quoted the same idea in Ch.Chi.26/286 in different words.

Vagbhata in Asthanga-sanghara (A.Sa.Su.20/3) while explaining the significance of doshas similar to Sh.su.21/23 states that in the normal condition Doshas support the body like Tristhuna; hence they can be termed as Dhatus. When they contaminate the body and are increased by the waste products of Aahar they can also be termed as Malas. As the Doshas have Dushan Swavabhav i.e. nature of being polluted, they are termed as Doshas.

### Importance of Health as per Ayurveda

Arogya is used as a synonym of health (Chakrapani on Ch. Su. 1/15.). This Arogya- total health- stands at the very root of attaining the four objects of life i.e Dharma [virtue], Artha [wealth], Kama [desire] & Moksha [emancipation/ salvation], while Roga-disease, destroys Shreyas & Life. [Ch.Su.1/15-18] Chakrapani commentary on this verse helps in understanding this theme. He holds the view that Arogya means equilibrium of Dhatus in the absence of disease. An unhealthy person is absolutely unable of performing any act conducive to the attainment of any of these four objects. He adds that 'Shreyas' is to be taken as 'Wellbeing' in general inclusive of virtuous acts, etc.

Similarly in A. Hr. Su.1/2 & A.Sa.Su. 1/5, Arogya is claimed to be the very source of attaining Dharma, Artha and Sukh. In both these texts Kama and Moksha described by Charak are replaced by 'Sukha.' 'Sukha' (Happiness) is of two types, temporary and everlasting (Ad.on A.Hr. Su.1/2). The everlasting sukha is considered as 'Moksha' (salvation) by Arundatta.

### CONCLUSION

Against biomedical concept of 'health is absence of disease' the ancient view of ayurvedic scholars about health is the total health definition of mankind. The gist of the above versions is the very fact that health is the only implement to go ahead with a calm, cheerful, disease free, lengthy and meaningful life.

### REFERENCES

1. Acharya Y.T. (Eds). Ashtaninditiya Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya (Eds), Charaksamhita. Bombay: Nirnay Sagar Press Publications, 3rd edition (PDF Copy), 1941; 117: 18 & 19.
2. Acharya Y.T. (Eds). Ashtaninditiya Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya (Eds), Charaksamhita. Bombay: Nirnay Sagar Press Publications, 3rd edition (PDF Copy), Chakrapani commentary, 1941; 117: 18.
3. Narendra Sengupta & Vallabha Sengupta (Eds) Ashtaninditiya Adhyaya.in Charaksamhita Aadya Khanda Kalkatta, 1st edition, (PDF Copy), Gangadhar commentary verse, 1849; 790: 15 & 16.
4. Acharya Y.T. (Eds). Khuddak Chatushpada Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya (Eds), Charaksamhita. Bombay: Nirnay Sagar Press Publications, 3rd edition (PDF Copy), 1941; 62: 4.
5. Acharya Y.T. (Eds). Khuddak Chatushpada Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya (Eds), Charaksamhita. Bombay: Nirnay Sagar Press Publications, 3rd edition (PDF Copy) Chakrapani commentary, 1941; 62: 4.
6. Acharya Y.T. Acharya N.R. Doshadhatumala Kshayavridhhi Vidnyaniya Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya, N.R. Acharya (Eds), Sushruta Samhita. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Publications, 6th edition, 1997; 67: 3.
7. Paradkar H.S. Doshadividnyaniya Adhyaya. In A.M.Kunte & K.R. Navare (Eds), Ashtanga Hridaya. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Publications, 1939; 182: 1.
8. Acharya Y.T. Acharya N.R. Doshabheda Vikalpa Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya, N.R. Acharya (Eds), Sushruta Samhita. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Publications, 6th edition, 819-820; verse, 1997; 6-7.
9. Acharya Y.T. (Eds). Khuddak Chatushpada Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya (Eds), Charaksamhita. Bombay: Nirnay Sagar Press Publications, 3rd edition (PDF Copy) Chakrapani commentary, 1941; 62: 4.
10. Acharya Y.T. (Eds). Khuddak Chatushpada Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya (Eds), Charaksamhita. Bombay: Nirnay Sagar Press Publications, 3rd edition (PDF Copy) Chakrapani commentary, 1941; 62: 4.
11. Narendra Sengupta & Vallabha Sengupta (Eds) Ashtaninditiya Adhyaya.in Charaksamhita Aadya Khanda Kalkatta, 1st edition, (PDF Copy), Gangadhar commentary verse, 1849; 438-439: 4.
12. Acharya Y.T. (Eds). Sharir Vichay Sharir Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya (Eds), Charaksamhita. Bombay: Nirnay Sagar Press Publications, 3rd edition (PDF Copy), 1941; 329: 4.
13. Acharya Y.T. (Eds). Sharir Vichay Sharir Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya (Eds), Charaksamhita. Bombay: Nirnay Sagar Press Publications, 3rd edition (PDF Copy), 1941; 329: 4.
14. Acharya Y.T. Acharya N.R. Doshadhatumala Kshayavridhhi Vidnyaniya Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya, N.R. Acharya (Eds), Sushruta Samhita. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Publications, 6th edition, 1997; 75: 41.
15. Acharya Y.T. Acharya N.R. Doshadhatumala Kshayavridhhi Vidnyaniya Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya, N.R. Acharya (Eds), Sushruta Samhita. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Publications, 6th edition, 75 verse 41 Chakrapani commentary, 1997.
16. Acharya Y.T. Acharya N.R. Doshadhatumala Kshayavridhhi Vidnyaniya Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya, N.R. Acharya (Eds), Sushruta Samhita. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Publications, 6th edition, 75 verse 41 Chakrapani commentary, 1997.
17. Acharya Y.T. Acharya N.R. Doshadhatumala Kshayavridhhi Vidnyaniya Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya, N.R. Acharya (Eds), Sushruta Samhita. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Publications, 6th edition, 1997; 75: 41.

18. Paradkar H.S. Aayushkamiya Adhyaya. In A.M. unte & K.R. Navare (Eds), Ashtanga Hridaya. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Publications, 1939; 13: 19.
19. Acharya Y.T. (Eds). Deerghaneevitiya Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya (Eds), Charaksamhita. Bombay: Nirnay Sagar Press Publications, 3rd edition (PDF Copy), 1941; 15: 55.
20. Acharya Y.T. (Eds). Deerghaneevitiya Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya (Eds), Charaksamhita. Bombay: Nirnay Sagar Press Publications, 3rd edition (PDF Copy) Chakrapani commentary, 1941; 16: 57.
21. Narendra Sengupta & Vallabha Sengupta (Eds) Ashtauninditiya Adhyaya.in Charaksamhita Aadya Khanda Kalkatta, 1st edition, (PDF Copy), Gangadhar commentary verse, 1849; 164: 28.
22. Acharya Y.T. Acharya N.R. Doshadhatumala Kshayavridhhi Vidnyaniya Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya, N.R. Acharya (Eds), Sushruta Samhita. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Publications, 6th edition, 1997; 67: 3.
23. Acharya Y.T. Acharya N.R. Vrana Prashna Adhyaya. In Y.T. Acharya, N.R. Acharya (Eds), Sushruta Samhita. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Publications, 6th edition, 1997; 99: 3.
24. Paradkar H.S. Aayushkamiya Adhyaya. In A.M. Kunte & K.R. Navare (Eds), Ashtanga Hridaya. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Publications, 1939; 7: 7.