

ĀYURVEDAŚĀSTRA AND IT'S MODERN PERSPECTIVES - A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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Abstract:

Āyurveda-śāstra is a very old specimen of ancient Indian physiology. It is not only an encyclopedia of ancient medical works, but a treatise on biology. The root of modern medical science is placed in the Āyurveda-śāstra. Caraka-saṃhitā, Śusruta-saṃhitā has acted as an indicator of various natural constituents which were used to solve many physical problems in ancient India. Modern medical science says that the physical part and the psychological part of a human being are complementary to each other. Often similar view was revealed by Āyurvedācārya Caraka –

“Śarirendriya sattvatma-saṃjogo dhārījībitam¹”

In this paper we shall make an attempt to highlight the relevance of the Āyurveda-śāstra in modern age and try to figure out some problems and their remedies associate in the society.

Keywords: Āyurveda- śāstra , Ācārya , Disease , Remedy , Ancient , Herbs , physical etc.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Āyurveda is the Upaveda of Atharva-veda. It is also known as the Pañcam-Veda. According to Purāṇa, Dhanvantarī was a doctor of the god- goddess. So he was called the father of Āyurveda-Śāstra. Ācārya Caraka (600 - 400 B.C) and Ācārya Śusruta (2 - 4 century A.D) are the greatest Āyurvedācāryas in ancient medical science. According to Āyurveda-śāstra describes that Āyuh has four types. They are Hitāyuh, Ahitāyuh, Sukhāyuh, and Duḥkhāyuh. The quantity of entire Āyuh, it's nature and it's beneficent harmful matters where determined that type of śāstra is called 'Āyurveda-śāstra' –

*“hitāhitam sukham duḥkhamāyus tasya hitāhitam|
manañca tacca yatroktaṃ āyur vedaḥ sa ucyate²||”*

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The primary motive of this paper is to establish the view that, the sequence of ancient Indian āyurveda-śāstra is equally relevant in modern time.

III. AYURVEDIC CULTURE IN ANCIENT INDIA

Śada-rasa is the essential element of human body. According to Caraka-saṃhitā, the proper growth of human body depends on the accurate application or distribution of 'Sada-rasa'. If they are not applied properly then diseases like Vātadi-doṣa will come around. Ācārya Caraka has mentioned about three doṣas. They are –

“doṣāḥ punas trayo vata-pitta-sleṣmāḥ”

Now a chart presents in below which shows that how Śaḍa-rasa produce three above mentioned doṣas and how to relieve them –

Doṣa	Produced by	Alleviated by
Vāyu	katu, tikta, kaṣāya.	madhura, amla, labaṇa.
Pitta	katu, amla, labaṇa.	madhura, tikta, kaṣāya.
Sleṣmā	madhura, amla, labaṇa.	katu, tikta, kaṣāya.

Ācārya Caraka has discussed about many diseases and their remedies. Few of them are referred here:

IV. ŚIROROGA

Śira (head) is a very important part of the physic. It is the shelter of the breath and sense organs of a living being. In Sanskrit it is popularly known as 'Uttamāṅga'. Śiroroga is medically known as headache. It can affect the quality of life and it is a source of all unhappiness.

Medical science says that headaches are two types- Primary and Secondary. Primary headache include migraine, tension (it is the most common type of primary headache) and Cluster headaches (rear type). Secondary headaches are those that are due to an underlying structural problem in the head or neck. In this world every person has a different health, so check the individual history is very important in case of headache. Generally the causes of headache are due to trauma, irritation, sinuses, infection, structural disorder in bones, teeth, eyes or nose etc. However in 'Āyurveda-śāstra' there we found two types of Śiroroga. Such are – (i) Vātaja śiroroga (ii) Tridoṣaja śiroroga.

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Useful herbs in Vātaja śīroroga are rāsnā, śālapāṇi, vṛkṣhaṭī, kantakārī, dugdha etc. There are so many other herbs which are often useful for the recovery of Tridoṣaja śīroroga. As for example, dārucini, vyāghranakha, vidaṅga, navamālikā, karañjavīja, śirīṣavīja, bela-chāla, haridrā, hiṅga, tulsī etc. Again meditation is a very useful remedy to overcome from headaches. Scientists are recently realizing its health benefits.

V. VRAṆA

Vraṇa is commonly known as pimples or pustule. It is a normal skin condition that affects many people and they feel miserable due to their appearance. Doctor says that it is an inflammation of skin in which the oil glands become infected with bacteria. Excess sebum secretion by the oil glands is the root cause behind this problem. Pimples generally occur on face, neck, back and shoulders.

There are lot of lotions and medicines on the market to treat pimples but they take time. Beside many natural methods are effective in treating pimples in a short time. Use of Ice is a very common therapy that applying today. It can be used to quickly reduce the redness, inflammation and swelling of pimples and also improving blood circulation to the affected area. Again use of lemon juice which is rich in vitamin C, helps pimples to dry up faster. Moreover Garlic, tea tree oil, steaming are the another way that helps for fast treatment of pimples.

According to Carakācāryya, vraṇa should be recovered by the Oppress therapy in Sanskrit which was formally known as pīḍana therapy. The herbs which are useful in this process are teoḍa, masura, godhūma and matara. Thereafter vraṇa should be washed properly by using triphalā, khadira, dāruharidrā, veḍelā, kuśa, nīma and patolpatra. Another remedy has been given by Ācāryya Caraka for vraṇa śodhana –

“Tilakalkaḥ salabaṇo dve haridre trivṛkṣd ghṛtam |
madhukam nimbapatrāṇi lepaḥ syād vraṇaśodhanah³||”

VI. KEŚAVARDHAKA AND KAŚHA- RAÑJAKA

Hair-fall or hair loss is a great problem in ancient India as well as today. It has become a quite common disease that spreads to new generations. Regarding many researches it is proved that several causes are responsible for hair loss, like oily scalp, dandruff, imbalance of hormones, irregularity in diet, heredity, change of water and too much stress. ‘Why this hair-fall is happening’-it is the prime question before starting efforts to treat hair loss and once the reason has been found then there are so many natural treatments available in our glorious ‘Āyurveda-śāstra’.

It is very interesting to say that people were usually used Āyurvedic treatment to prevent hair fall from the past in India. According to Ācāryya Caraka following herbs are generally useful for hair-fall treatment prescribed in ‘Āyurveda-śāstra’. They are yaśtimadhu, padmakeśara, madhu, Āmlakī etc. Again Triphala is a very useful product for hair-fall problem. Moreover fascinate people were used this product for colouring their hair which is formally known in Sanskrit kaśha-rañjanāya. But sorry to say that now a day we forget this enormous history of Āyurveda-śāstra and we are going to

hair-parlor or salon for striating, steaming and also colouring our hair by different chemical product and finally result comes to hair loss.

VII. AROCAKA

Arocaka is a Āyurvedic term which is formally known as ‘Aruchi’ in Bengali and in English it is commonly known as tastelessness or a feeling of intense dislike. ‘A’ refers to absence and ‘ruchi’-means taste in food. When we take food we should perceive its taste, smell, color and density and then only it gives us pleasure.

Anorexia is the medical term for the condition where the individual suffers loss of taste in food and loss of appetite. Modern science does not recognize this condition as an individual disease; it is commonly felt in many diseased conditions as a symptom. According to Indian system of medicine, anorexia is a condition manifested due to the affliction of the gastro intestinal tract. Whereas Āyurveda possesses detailed description regarding this particular illness. According to Āyurveda Vata or air (Prāṇa- Udāna and Samāna), Pitta (the form of digestive fire) are required for the process of burning or digestion. If they should co-ordinate well then body maintains good digestion strength. Whenever the relation is dropped or hampered, anorexia is caused. Here Pitta plays a vital role in increasing hunger. Hunger stimulates proper perception of taste. Prāṇa Vāta (existing in head and neck), Samāna Vāta (persisting in stomach) and Udāna also make a material role in digestion.

Excess intake of heavy oily food, intake of polluted food, indigestion, loss of digestive fire, food poisoning, incompatible food are the reasons for loss of taste.

There are four types of arocaka-nidana described in Caraka-saṃhitā. They are vātaja arocaka, pittaja arocaka and kaphaja arocaka. Vātaja arocaka is one of the causes of hypersensitivity of teeth and in this situation the mouth is full by the secretion of Kaṣāya rasa. Distress, pain in various body parts, cardiac pain and astringent taste in the mouth are also found in this condition. Those plants which are mentioned by Ācāryya Caraka for preventing vātaja arocaka are kuḍa, sacala labāṇa, kṛṣṇajīra, cini, marica etc. Thirst, burning sensation, cutting pain, bitter sour mixed pungent taste in the mouth and bad smell of the mouth are the symptoms of Paṭtik or Pittaja arocaka condition. It is prevented by the following herbal plants and their fruits, flower like āmlakī, elaca, padma kāṣṭha, venāmula, pipula, nilotpala and candana. Sweet mixed salty taste in the mouth, sliminess, heaviness, coldness and nausea are the features of kaphaja arocaka. It is prevented by lodh, haritakī, yavakṣāra etc. Mixed features of all doṣas are found in ‘tridoṣaja arocaka’ or Tridoshic Aruchi.

VIII. KAṆṬHAROGA

Are you suffering from a sore throat? Is your throat painful, especially while swallowing? If your answer is yes, you could be suffering from tonsillitis. Kaṇṭharoga or Tonsillitis is also called tonsil inflammation. The human body is the perfect machinery. It has its own defense system that helps it fight pathogens (any disease-producing agent) and infections. Tonsils are the body's defense mechanism. They are composed of tissues similar to the lymph nodes or glands found in the

neck or other parts of the body. The tonsils are thought to assist the body in its defense against incoming bacteria and viruses by helping the body from antibodies.

Causes: Tonsillitis is inflammation of the tonsils. It is usually caused by a viral infection or less commonly a bacterial infection. Normal tonsils are usually about the same size and have the same pink color as the surrounding area. It is a common childhood illness but teenagers and adults can get it too.

Symptoms: The main symptoms of tonsillitis are inflammation and swelling of the tonsils. Again other symptoms are throat pain, redness of the tonsils, white or yellow coating on the tonsils, painful blisters, loss of appetite, difficulty swallowing or breathing through the mouth.

Remedy: According to Caraka pañcakola, talīspatra, elaca, marica, dārucini, palaskṣāra, yavakṣāra etc are the remedy for kañtharoga (Tonsillitis). Moreover the dusts of lodh, triphala, yavakṣāra are very useful to prevent dental disease, infection of mouth and also kañtharoga. Again patient have to drink warm or very cold fluids to ease throat pain, eat smooth foods, gargle with warm salt water. During the recovery period it's important for the patient to get enough rest.

So we can see that Caraka-saṃhitā is a store-house of information in today's medical science. Again it is full of indication of various diseases and their remedies. It discussed several kinds of treatment process some of which are incidentally useful in modern medical system in different figure. For example, surgery is a very well-known term in modern medical science which was known as śāstra-karma in ancient āyurveda-śāstra. There are six types of śāstra-karma in ancient medical science. Such as-

“pāṭanaṃ vyadhanañcaiva chedanaṃ lekhaṇaṃ tathā |
pracchanaṃ sīvanañcaiva śaḍhavidhaṃ śāstra-karma tat ||”

Here we listed some common used herbs in various diseases and their substitute allopathic composition:-

Disease	Useful herbs	Allopathic composition
Insomnia	Methi, Brahmi,	Alzolam,
Acne	Haridra, Aswagandha, Jaba,	Azeliac acid, Benzoyl peroxide
Hypertension	Brahmi, Neem, Sarpa gandha,	Clonidine HCL, etizolam
Burn	Sandal wood, Chirata, Ghrta kumari	Antihistamines
Bronchitis	Tulsi, Pippali,	Amoxicillin, Clarithromycin
Anemia	Bhumi amla,	Cyanocobalamin, Carbonyl iron.
Nervous disorder	Aswagandha, Brahmi	
Dandruff	Methi, Brahmi, Vrngaraja,	Selenium sullied Ciraita topical suspencion
Sunburn	Kimsuka,	Glucocide,
Heart problem	Arjun	Aspirin
Blood pressure	Darucini, Yastimadhu,	Amlodipine,
Arthritise	Kadamba,	Hydroxychloroquine,
Fever	Ciraita, Kalamegha,	Acetaminophen,
Skin infection	Manjistha, Haridra, Neem,	Etraconazole,
Hair-fall	Amlaki, Nili, Durva,	Minoxidil,

IX. BOTANICAL NAME OF SOME AYURVEDIC HERBS

Haridra: - Terminalia chebula.	Pippali: - Peeper longum.
Amla: - Emblica officinalis.	Sandal wood: - Santalum album.
Brahmi: - Bacopa monnieri.	Sarpa gandha :- Ranwolfia serpentine.
Aswagandha: - Withania somnifera.	Tulasi:- Ocimum sanctum.
Ghrta kumari: - Aloe verar.	Vrngaraja:- Eclipta alba.
Ashoka:- Saraca asoca.	Neem:- Azadirachta indica.
Bhumi amla:- Phyllanthous amarus.	Manjistha:- Rubia cordifolia.
Ciraita: - Swertia chira.	Yasthi:- Glycyrrhiza glabra.
Kalamegha: - Andro graphis paniculata.	Durva:- Cynodon dactylon.

X. CONCLUSION

After the above discussion based on available references and resources, conclusion can be drawn that there are lot to learn from ancient tradition. Āyurveda-śāstra has been blessing upon human life through thousand years. Though medical science has flourished much, but we are not capable to refuse the great contribution of ancient Āyurveda-śāstra. Many unsolved questions still remain as to how much knowledge we will be able to draw from this past wisdom. Āyurveda definitely contains the solution of every problem faced by mankind but we still need to convert the fundamental principles into practical application which links from Vedas and then formulate the treatment protocol including advanced integrated medicinal management. Many new diseases are everyday being identified, explored, explained, and introduced in modern science. But as we are in a hurry-scurry, we forget the natural essence rather accept some chemical remedy. As a result, gradually we are going to a short-lived life. Many concepts in Āyurveda are untouched or unexplored till date. It is imperative that unless we link our basic sciences to modern advances our objective of establishing Āyurveda as a global tradition will remain unfulfilled. So it is the time when we research our old manuscripts, go through a thorough study and start applying those concepts and basics in our daily life style.

XI. END NOTES

1. Caraka-Saṃhitā Ed. Satish Chandra Sharma. 1st Adhyaya. Sūtra-sthānam. P- 4.
2. Caraka-Saṃhitā Ed. Satish Chandra Sharma. 1st Adhyaya. Sūtra-sthānam. P- 5.
3. Caraka-Saṃhitā Ed. Satish Chandra Sharma. 25th Adhyaya. Cikitsā-sthānam. P- 569.
4. Caraka-Saṃhitā Ed. Satish Chandra Sharma. 25th Adhyaya. Cikitsā-sthānam. P- 565.

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