

Critical Study of *Swastha Chatushka* and its Applicability in Present Era: A Short Review

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ABSTRACT

The exponential boom in industrialization and human civilization has led to progress but also has been enduring enormous life style disorders such as cardiovascular diseases, stroke, metabolic disorders, pulmonary disorders, musculoskeletal disorders ,cancer etc. due to their unhealthy lifestyle and if this unhealthy lifestyle and food habits are not intervened on time can lead to these life threatening diseases or even death .In *Ayurveda* treatise moreover in *Charak Samhita Acharya Charak* has mentioned *Swastha Chatushka* that comprises the ideal way of healthy living ,and that is the need of today's era to follow various measures cited in *Charak Samhita* so as to attain health and longevity.

Key Words *Swasth Chatuska, Matravat Ahar, Din Charya, Ritucharya, Sadvrita, Vegdharan, Vyayma, Pathya, Apathy*

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INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the ancient system of human life that is a complete package of scientific and traditional system of medicine that explains the holistic approach of living and primarily focuses on the preventive aspects rather than curative aspects. A tremendous and revolutionary change in lifestyle due to continuous advancement in the field of science and technology has led to increase in incidence of various lifestyle disorders such as hypertension, Diabetes mellitus, obesity, hypothyroidism, cardiovascular diseases etc. causing a drastic decrease in life expectancy and elevations in occurrence of sudden deaths

.The changed living habits due to Increasing sedentary lifestyle, job requirements, competitive Living has led to a stressful life ,and in maintaining an equilibrium with work pressure humans overlook their health which is becoming a significant public health issue and making them prone to severe life threatening diseases.

Being the most ancient system of medicine *Ayurveda*, the science of human life, aims at physical, psychological as well as spiritual wellbeing of individual. As per *Ayurveda* the basic goal of human life are *dharma, artha, kam ,moksha*¹ ,and to achieve all these one need good health and for achieving these goals *Acharya*

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Charak has mentioned whole *swastha chatushka* that comprises of healthy dietetics, healthy lifestyle and code of conduct to be followed for achieving a healthy state of mind and body. *Charak samhita* being one of the most authentic *samhita* of *bruhattrayee*, illustrated the ideal healthy living in a unique way by describing methodology of *chatushka*. *Ayurveda* elaborated the way of healthy living in the form of ideal *ahaar* and *vihar*. To depict all these dietary habits, routine habits, seasonal routine, concept of *sadvrita* *acharya charak* expounded *swastha chatushka*.

Swastha chatushka is a tetrad of chapters namely *matrashitiya adhyay*, *tasyashitiya adhyay*, *navegandharneeya adhyay*, and *indrioprkamaniya adhyay*². In these chapters *Acharya* quoted about basic and preventive aspects of healthy living so that we can follow these measures and can make an equilibrium between the present scenario and a healthy life.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature of *Ayurveda* starts from the *Vedic* era comprising various valuable *samhita*'s like *Charak samhita*, *Sushruta samhita*, *Ashtanghrudya* and *astang sangrah* and many more valuable Classics of *Ayurveda*.

Acharya charak divided whole *sutrasthan* in 7 *chatushka* starting from *bhesaj*, *swastha*, *nirdesh*, *kalpana*, *rog*, *yojna*, *annapana*, and remaining two chapters are covered in *sangrah* *dhway*.

Acharya charak expounded *swastha chatushka* by describing 4 chapters namely *matrashitiya adhyay*, *tasyashitiya adhyay*, *navegandharneeya adhyay*, *indrioprkamaniya adhyay*. *Matrashitiya adhyay*-Amid all the responsible factors for the prevention of diseases, food comes first. The same was best elucidated by *Acharya Sushruta* in *vedotpattiya adhyay*,

तत्रापिस्वास्थ्यपरिपालनहेतुषुमात्रावदन्नप्रधानं; यदाह

"प्राणिनांपुनर्मूलमाहारोबलवणजसांच"³.

Here *acharya Sushruta* explained for better strength, complexion and immune system intake of proper healthy food is mandatory.

The term *matrashitiya* comprises of words *matra* that means quantity and *Ashi* refers to *Khadya*, *bhakshya*, *Lehya* and *Peya*, so the literary meaning of *matrashi* denotes quantity of food. Here *acharya chakrapani* elucidates the word *matra* represents *anpayiparinam* i.e. the quantity of food which will not cause any hindrance in equilibrium of body components.

After explaining *matravatahar* and its benefits such as attaining strength, longevity⁴, *Acharyacharak* briefly explained commonly used *laghu* and *guru dravya*⁵, food items that need to be ruled out from diet and food substances that should be taken.

Other *acharya* expounded daily routine activities using the term *dincharya* but *acharya charak* beautifully described the routinely activities under the term *swasthavritta* in the chapter *matrashitiya adhyay* where he quoted everything about *anjan*, *dhoompan*, *nasya*

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,*dantadhavan,jivhanirlekhan,tambulsevan,gandusha,abhyang,sharirparimarjan,snan,vastradharam,gandhamaladharan,kshorkarm,padatradharan,chatradharan and dandadharan*, there benefits,way to use them , there types ,the complications caused if not performed in a correct way and what can be done to subside the complications.

Tasyashitiya adhyay-

Following *matrashitiya adhyay*,here in *tasyashitiya adhyay acharya charak* initially

discussed about *Ritu* and there classification followed by the regimen according to the seasons.

Literary the term *tasya* means ‘his’ and *ashita* means food that means *tasyashitiya* refers to one’s food or correctly we can say the food that is apt according to various seasons.

Here in this chapter *acharya charak* classified year into *aadankal* and *visargkal*, then further divided into 6 *Ritu*’s and then mentioned the regimen to be followed in that particular season⁶.

Table 1 Ritucharya

Ritu	Diet	Routine to be followed	Do’s And don’ts
Hemant ritu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intake of <i>snigdha, amla, lavan ras.</i> • Intake of meat of animals living in aquatic regions and marshy land. • Intake of <i>bileshya maans</i> and <i>prashah maans</i> • Intake of <i>Madira, Sidhu, madhu.</i> • Regular intake of <i>gorasvikruti, ikshu vikruti, vasa, taila, navodana, toyam ushnam.</i> 	Recommend measures to be followed such as <i>Abhyang, Utsadan, Murdhini tail, Jentaka sveda, Atapasevan.</i> Individual should live in warm environment, should protect himself from cold by wearing warm clothes and use of thick furry blankets Application of thick paste of <i>agru</i> all over the body.	Avoid the diet that elevates <i>vaatdosh</i> Avoidance of <i>pravata, pramitahara, Udmantha.</i>
Shishir ritu	All the diet prescribed in <i>Hemantritu</i> can be taken in <i>shishira ritu</i>	One should reside in wind free and warm environment All the routine explained in <i>Hemant ritucharya</i> can be followed in <i>shishira ritu.</i>	Avoidance of <i>katu, tikta</i> and <i>kashaya ras</i> Avoid <i>laghu</i> and <i>sheetal</i> substances
Vasant ritu	In <i>Vasant ritu vaman</i> should be performed to waive off the elevated <i>kapha dosha</i> Intake of <i>yava, godhuma, meat of sarabha, sasha, ena, lava, kapinjala.</i> Intake of beverages such as <i>Sidhu, madhvika</i> etc.	It is advised to do <i>vyayama, udvartana, dhumpna, Anjan.</i> Application of paste of <i>chandan, agru.</i>	One should avoid <i>guru, amla, snigdha, Madhura dravya</i> and <i>divaswapna.</i>
Greeshm ritu	Food items that are <i>Madhura, sheeta, drava,snigdha</i> are beneficial. Intake of <i>ghee,milk, shali chawal, sheeta mantha</i> mixed with sugar. <i>Jangal mrigapakshi maans</i> should be eaten .	One should sleep in cool environment or under the cool ness of moonlight. Use of garlands, such as pearls etc.	One should Avoid of <i>lavana, amla, katu, ushna, vyayama</i> so as to survive the Ill Effects. Avoid sexual intercourse.

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	Intake of alcohol should be prohibited, and if taken should be mixed with water.		
Varsha ritu	Use of honey in food, drinks etc. Food possessing <i>amla</i> , <i>lavana</i> rasa and that are <i>snigdha</i> should be taken Cereals such as <i>yava</i> , <i>godhuma</i> , <i>shali chawal</i> should be taken with <i>jangal mansaras</i> and <i>yusha</i> Beverages such as <i>madhvika</i> , <i>arishta</i> , <i>Mahendrajala</i> , boiled then cooled water should be taken	Wear garlands, light and clean clothes <i>Pragharshan</i> , <i>udvartanasnan</i> also recommend in rainy season.	Sleeping in daytime Intake of <i>udmantha</i> , <i>nadi ka jal</i> should be also avoided in rainy season <i>Vyayam</i> and <i>atapsevan</i> .
Sharad ritu	Intake of food items having <i>Madhura</i> , <i>tikt rasa</i> along with <i>laghu</i> and <i>sheeta gun</i> <i>Shali dhanya</i> , <i>yava</i> , <i>godhuma</i> are suggested by <i>acharya charak</i> Meat of <i>lava</i> , <i>kapinjala</i> , <i>ena</i> , <i>aurabhra</i> , <i>sarabh</i> , <i>sasha</i>	<i>Virechan</i> and <i>raktmokshan</i> is recommended to pacify elevated <i>pitta</i> . Use of <i>hansodaka</i> in bathing, drinking is advised	Avoidance of <i>anupa</i> and <i>audaka mans</i> Sleep during daytime, <i>Kshara</i> , <i>dahi</i> should be avoided along with <i>Pragvat</i> and <i>atapsevan</i> .

Na vegan dharneeya adhyay-

Acharya charak illustrated the importance of wholesome and unwholesome food and their impact on individual and here in this chapter *acharya charak* elucidated that one should not suppress urges such as *mutra*, *purisha* etc. at the appropriate time, as neglecting them may cause severe ill effects on body.

Here *acharya charak* described 13 types of *Vega* that should not be suppressed that are respectively *mutra*, *purish*, *retas*, *vata*, *chardi*, *ksavathu*, *udgara*, *jrumbha*, *kshut*, *pipasa*, *baspa*, *nidra*, *shramswash*⁷ and he also explained the complications that will arise if these urges will be suppressed and the measures to be done to deal with the complications.

In this chapter he also illustrated about *vyayam*, its importance, its ill effects if done in excess and also mentioned the specific order to discard

unwholesome food (*apathya*) and adopt wholesome food *pathya*⁸.

Indriopakramaniya adhyay-

As the *matrashitiya*, *tasyashitiya* and *na vegan dharneeya adhyay* of the *swastha chatushka* deal with diet and regimen for a good health, *acharya charak* also explained the code of conduct that need to be followed for a better health.

Here in this chapter *acharya charak* mentioned *panchpanchak*, *man* and *hetuchatushtya*, description of good conducts as restoration of health and Victory over the senses can be achieved through following good code of conduct⁹. In this chapter *acharya* expounded that whomsoever follows measures given in *swastha chatushka* attains longevity, eminence and fame¹⁰.

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DISCUSSION

Due to advancement in technology and living standards humans are blindly competing with each other leading to an imbalance in equilibrium between the health and professional life causing various health issues due to deterioration in their health. Today's so called economically and educationally rich generation trying to be social through social media and technology is failing to remember their root and holistic approach of living and consequently facing issues like metabolic disorders such as diabetes mellitus, hypothyroidism, cardiac disease, neurological diseases, kidney issues and many more life threatening diseases. Individuals living isolated from their family due to their jobs far away from family are facing issues such as depression and anxiety; the sedentary lifestyle along with immense work pressure being the main reason.

As per *ayurveda* being healthy means health in all dimensions physical, mental, social and spiritual and for remaining healthy one should follow all the measures illustrated by *Acharya* in *swastha chatushka* in *charak samhita*.

By mentioning the ideal way of healthy living in day to day life as well as in different seasons *acharya* denoted the path to follow by mankind in order to stay healthy and fit. A healthy mind is as essential as a healthy body and for that *Acharya charak* mentioned code of conduct to be followed.

CONCLUSION

As there is a need to generate awareness among the mass about the potentials of *Ayurveda*, the only and the basic way for that is people and general society should be made clear and familiar about the ancient and authentic ways of living as mentioned above. The sedentary and messy lifestyle of today's generation has led to occurrence of several lifestyle disorders which are truly fatal. Hence the applicability of our ancient ways of living should be brought back. This research paper will definitely bring back the lost holistic approach of living.

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