

## REVIEW STUDY OF ANAHATA CHAKRA W.S.R. TO CARDIAC PLEXUS

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## ABSTRACT

The *Chakra* has its own importance in *Ayurveda*. Traditional writings mention 88,000 *Chakras*. Most of these *Chakras* are extremely small and only have minor role to play in the energy system. Only approximately 40 secondary *Chakras* can be considered significant. The six primary *Chakras*, which are located along a central, vertical axis at the front of the body, are of relevance for the functioning of the most important and fundamental aspects of the human body, mind and soul. The *Chakras* are thought to vitalize the physical body and to be associated with interactions of a physical, emotional and mental nature. They are considered loci of life energy or *Prana*, which is thought to flow among them along pathways called *Nadis*. The function of the *Chakras* is to spin and draw in this universal life force energy to keep the spiritual, mental, emotional and physical health of the body in balance. *Chakras* have the potential to generate two qualities of energy, ordinary subtle energy and heightened subtle energy. There are six primary *Chakras*. From lowest to highest they are *Muladhara Chakra* (root *Chakra*), *Svadhishthana Chakra* (sacral *Chakra*), *Manipura Chakra* (solar or navel *Chakra*), *Anahata Chakra* (heart *Chakra*), *Vishuddha Chakra* (throat *Chakra*) and *Ajna Chakra* (third eye *Chakra*). This article is about *Anahata* or heart *Chakra*.

**Keywords :** *Ayurveda, Anahata Chakra, Nadi, Prana.*

## INTRODUCTION

Traditional writings mention 88,000 *Chakras*. This means that there is scarcely a minute area of the human body which is not a sensitive organ for the reception, transformation and transferral of energies. Most of these *Chakras* are extremely small and only have minor role to play in the energy system. Only approximately 40 secondary *Chakras* can be considered significant. The most important of these are located in the area of the spleen, the back of the neck, the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet. The six primary *Chakras*, which are located along a central, vertical axis at the front of the body, are of relevance for the functioning of the most important and fundamental

aspects of the human body, mind and soul. The true seat of the six *Chakras* is in the etheral body. They resemble funnel shaped blossoms, each possessing a different number of petals. The petals of the blossoms represent *Nadis* or energy channels, through which energy is able to flow into the *Chakras*, where it is then conveyed to the subtle bodies. The number of petals or *Nadis* ranges from four at the root *Chakra* to nearly a thousand at the crown *Chakra*.

The word *Chakra* is derived from “*Kriyategatirenena*”. One which has the action of movement is called *Chakra*. *Chakra* denotes a centre of power or energy. They are considered as receptors and transmit-

ters of *Kundalini* or *Pranic* energy. The *Shatchakra* are represented as energy centres aligned along the spinal cord, which form an integrating channel. The *Chakras* are constantly in a state of rotation. This is why they are called "*Chakra*", which in Sanskrit means "wheel". It is their rotation which attracts energy and draws it in or gives it off, depending on the direction of rotation. The *Chakras* rotate either to the right or to the left, depending on sex. There are six primary *Chakras*. From lowest to highest they are *Muladhara chakra* (root *Chakra*), *Svadhishthana Chakra* (sacral *Chakra*), *Manipura chakra* (solar or navel *Chakra*), *Anahata Chakra* (heart *Chakra*), *Vishuddha Chakra* (throat *Chakra*) and *Ajna Chakra* (third eye *Chakra*). Each level in the *Chakra* system is the sum total of various physical, emotional, mental and spiritual elements. That is why each *Chakra* is connected to a neurological plexus.

**Anahata Chakra** Fig. 1 Location of Anahata Chakra

Literary meaning- Sound without any break.

- ✚ Location: *Hridaya*
- ✚ Colour: Green, but also pink and gold.
- ✚ Associated element: Air
- ✚ Sense: Touch



- ✚ *Gyanendriya* or sense organ: *Twak*
- ✚ *Karmendriya* or motor organ: *Hasta*
- ✚ *Bijavahak* or bearer: Antelope (deer)
- ✚ *Granthisthana*: *Vishnu*
- ✚ Symbol: 12 Petalled lotus (*Kam, kham, gam, gham, ngam, cham, chham, jam, jham, nyam, tam* and *tham* in Sanskrit).

Fig.2 Petals of Anahata Chakra

- ✚ Appearance: *Anahata* is represented by a lotus flower with twelve petals. Inside there is a smoky region at the in-



tersection of two triangles, creating a *Shatkona*. The *Shatkona* is a symbol used in Hindu *Yantra*, representing the union of male and female.

- ✚ Basic principle: Devotion, self abandon.
- ✚ *Devshakti* or Goddess: *Kakini*
- ✚ Presiding God: *Isana/Rudra*
- ✚ *Bijaakshara* or seed: *YAM*
- ✚ Associated parts of the body: Heart, upper back, including the thorax and thoracic cavity, the lower area of lungs, the blood and the blood circulation system and the skin.
- ✚ Associated gland: Thymus. It regulates growth and controls the lymphatic system. It also has the function of stimulating and strengthening the immune system.
- ✚ Associated astrological planets and signs:
  - Leo/Sun-Emotional warmth, sincerity, generosity.
  - Libra/Venus-Contact, love, striving for harmony, augmentation of self.
  - Saturn-Overcoming the individual ego thus making selfless love possible.
- ✚ Corresponding nerve plexus in the physical body: Cardiac plexus

In Sanskrit, *Anahata* means "unhurt, unstruck, and unbeaten". *Anahata* is associated with balance, calmness, and serenity. In *Anahata Chakra* there are two triangles,

inverted triangle is *Shakti* and upright triangle is *Shiva*.

### **Purpose and function of Anahata Chakra**

The *Anahata Chakra* is the centre of the entire *Chakra* system. It connects the three lower physical and emotional centres to the three higher mental and spiritual centres. The hexagon as its symbol clearly illustrates how the energies of the three lower and the three higher *Chakras* mutually permeate each other. It is assigned to the element air and to the sense of touch. This indicates the flexibility of the heart, the ability to establish contact and the willingness to be touched and at the same time be in touch with all things. Here we find the capability to empathize with others and sympathize with them and to attune ourselves and join in with the cosmic vibrations. Through the same energy centre we perceive beauty in nature as well as the harmony to be found in music, the visual arts and poetry. In the fourth *Chakra* images, words and sounds are transformed into feelings.

The purpose of the *Anahata Chakra* is to achieve perfect union through love. All yearning for deep, intimate contact, for oneness, harmony and love, even when these feelings come to us in the guise of sorrow, pain, fear of separation or loss of love etc. is expressed via the heart *Chakra* or *Anahata Chakra*. In its pure and completely opened state, the fourth *Chakra* forms the centre of true, unconditional love which exists only for its sake and which therefore can neither be possessed nor lost. When connected with higher *Chakras*, this love transforms itself into *Bhakti*, the divine love which makes us aware of the divine presence in all creation and guides us to unity with this heart of all things in the universe. On its way toward achieving this goal, our heart must learn to

love, understand and accept our own personality, the prerequisites to saying yes to others and life in general.

Once we have accepted that all our experiences, wishes and emotions have a deeper sense, and that their purpose is to lead us back through different steps of learning to an all embracing order, we find in the fourth *Chakra* a loving acceptance that all feelings and expressions of life come from the longings for love and union with life and that in the final analysis, they too are expression of love.

With every negation and rejection we regenerate separation and negativity, whereas positive and loving acceptance, a conscious "yes", produce vibration in which negative forms of expression or feelings cannot survive. The energy of the *Anahata Chakra* streams out extremely strongly and an open heart *Chakra* can have a spontaneous healing or transforming influence on others. However, in case of conscious, deliberate healing, the inner eye chakra has to be part of the process.

The twelve red petals are inscribed with the syllables *Kam, kham, gam, gham, ngam, cham, chham, jam, jham, nyam, tam* and *tham* in Sanskrit. They match the *vrittis* of lust, fraud, indecision, repentance, hope, anxiety, longing, impartiality, arrogance, competence, discrimination and defiance. The heart *Chakra* radiates in the colours green, pink and sometimes gold. Green is the colour of healing, sympathy and harmony. If an enlightened person perceives a clear light green in a person's heart *Chakra*, this indicates a well developed capability to heal, while a golden aura, interwoven with pink, shows a person who lives in pure and selfless love of the divine.

The heart *Chakra* is often referred to as the seat of our deepest and most vivid feelings of love. Through this energy centre we can

also establish contact with the universal part of our soul, that spark of the divine within us. The heart *Chakra* also plays a decisive role in refining the perception that accompanies the opening of the third eye or brow chakra, for it is the devotion of the heart that makes us receptive to the subtler aspects of creation. Thus the higher capabilities of the brow chakra develop concurrently with the unfolding of the heart *Chakra*.

### **Harmonious functioning of the Anahata Chakra**

A completely open *Anahata Chakra* that works together with all the other *Chakras* in harmony will transform us into a channel for divine love. The energies of our heart can change the world about us and unite, reconcile or even heal the people in our surroundings. We radiate natural warmth, sincerity and happiness. This opens the hearts of the people around us, inspires confidence and creates joy. Compassion and the willingness to help, come perfectly naturally to us. Our feelings are free of inner disturbances, conflicts, doubts or uncertainty. We feel safe and comfortable with all creation. We put our heart in everything we do.

The love in our heart also makes us aware of the cosmic game of separation and renewed union taking place in all manifest life, maintained in this and permeated by divine love and harmony. Our own experience has taught us that longing for reunification with the divine is rooted in separation from the divine aspect of the life and the sorrow resulting from this separation. To experience the infinite joy which grows out of true love of God, separation must take place first. Through this “wisdom of the heart” we view worldly and personal happenings in a new light. The love in our heart spontaneously supports all efforts that help love for god and his creation

grow and prosper. We recognize that all beings, both sentient and non-sentient, live in our heart

The feeling of being alive grows so strongly within us that we begin to understand what life in its purest and most original form really signifies an everlasting expression of divine love and bliss.

### **Disharmonious functioning of Anahata Chakra**

A malfunctioning *Anahata Chakra* may express itself in various ways. It can manifest itself as upper back and shoulder problems, asthma, heart conditions, shallow or rapid breathing and lung diseases. Emotionally imbalance in the chakra is indicated by difficulty with love, lack of hope, despair, moodiness, fear, jealousy, anger and anxiety. We might, for example, always want to be there for others and give freely, but without really being connected with the source of love. In secret perhaps without being conscious of it or admitting to it-we always expect recognition and reassurance in return for all the “love” we give and feel deeply disappointed when our efforts are not sufficiently appreciated.

### **Insufficient functioning of Anahata Chakra**

Inadequate functioning of the heart *Chakra* makes us very vulnerable to injury and dependent on the love and affection of others. If your *Anahata Chakra* is completely shut, this will express itself in coldness, indifference or even heartlessness; in order to feel anything at all we require strong external stimulation. We are out of balance and suffer from depression.

### **Possibilities for cleansing and activating the fourth Chakra**

1. Experiencing nature: Every quiet walk through the unspoiled green countryside harmonizes entire being through the heart or *Anahata Chakra*. Every single blossom conveys a message of

love and innocent joy and lets the same qualities bloom in heart. Pink colour flowers are especially suitable for the gentle revitalization and healing of this *Chakra's* energies. A pink colour sky with gossamer clouds brightens up and expands hearts. Let the beauty and softness of the colours of this painting in the sky envelop you and carry you away.

2. Sound therapy : Music: Any type of classical, new age or sacral music of the Eastern or Western tradition which has an identifying effect and makes the heart join in the dance of life is suitable for the *Anahata Chakra*. It will awaken the power of love and influence it in a revitalizing and harmonizing way. Sacral or meditative dances which express the harmony and joy of creation in their movements are also highly suitable. Vowel: The vowel sound "ah" is assigned to this *Chakra*. The "ah" sound symbolizes direct awareness of heart, as expressed in the exclamation "Ah!". It is the most open of all sounds and represents the greatest possible richness of expression available to the human voice. The "ah" sound expresses unbiased acceptance of all manifestation, the acceptance which brings forth love. It is the sound that babies, whose intellect is as yet unable to distinguish between good and bad, use most frequently to comment on their experience. Mantra: YAM.
3. Colour therapy Green: The colour of the meadows and forests or our planets provides us with harmony and compassion and makes us receptive to reconciliation. We feel empathy and experience inner peace and serenity. Additionally, green has a regenerating effect on the body, mind and soul and provides us with new energy.

Pink: The gentle, tender vibrations of the colour pink can loosen tension in heart, awaken feelings of love and tenderness and bring back a childlike feeling of happiness. These vibrations also stimulate creative activity.

4. Aroma therapy  
Attar of roses: No other fragrance has such a harmonizing effect on our well being as the precious attar of roses. Its gentle, loving vibrations soothe and heal the wounds of our heart. They awaken our perception of love, beauty and harmony everywhere in creation. A deep joy and readiness for dedication enter our heart. Attar or oil of roses also induces stimulation and refinement of sensual pleasure, and at the same time helps transform them into transcendental love.
5. Gemstone therapy  
Rose quartz: The soft, pink colour light of the rose quartz encourages gentleness, tenderness and love. It envelops the soul in loving vibrations that heal the wounds of y heart caused by hardness, lack of consideration or carelessness and opens your soul so that it is able to give and receive love more freely. The rose quartz teaches to accept and love yourself, and opens your heart for all expressions of love and tenderness within yourself, in others and in all creation. It makes us receptive for the beauty of music, poetry, painting and other art forms and enlivens our imagination and creative power of expression.  
Tourmaline: The pinkish-red tourmaline leads out of narrow emotional structures and opens and expands heart. It makes you conscious of the joy-bringing aspect of love and connects you with the female manifestation of divine love as expressed in the

beauty of creation, in innocent joy, spiritual dance or play. Thus it integrates the various expressions of divine and worldly love. Pink tourmaline edged in green, which are often available as cut slices, are of particular value, since they unite the expansive qualities of the pinkish-red tourmaline with the healing, harmonizing vibration of the green colour.

**Kunzite:** The kunzite combines the tender pink of higher love with the violet of the crown chakra which supports union with the divine. Kunzite opens heart chakra to divine love and helps to develop your heart to the point of selflessness and perfection. It will make us straight forward and will always lead us back onto this path if ever we leave it.

**Emerald:** The emerald is the gemstone of all embracing love, for it strengthens and deepens love on all levels. While providing with peace and inner harmony, it will also tune you into the energies of nature. The emerald draws healing energies from the cosmos to the earth. It regenerates, rejuvenates, refreshes and relaxes.

**Jade:** The soft, green light of jade brings peace, harmony, wisdom of the heart, fairness and modesty. Jade relaxes our heart and makes us calm, lets us discover and experience the beauty of all nature and thus enhances our appreciation of and love for all creation. Jade will bring relief if we are fidgety and restless and help us sleep peacefully and have pleasant dreams.

6. Asana for *Anahata Chakra*-There are three *Asana* and one *Pranayama* that are helpful to open and balance the heart *Chakra*. These are *Bhujangasana*, *Ushtrasana* and *Hastapadasana*.

The *Kapalbhati* is mentioned for this *Chakra*.

### **The form of yoga that works primarily through the fourth *Chakra***

***Bhakti yoga:*** *Bhakti yoga* is the way which leads to the realization of the divine through devotion and love of God. Devotes deepen and intensify their feelings and direct them towards God. They relate everything to him, perceive him in all things and are transfigured in their love for him.

In our body cardiac plexus corresponds to *Anahata Chakra*.

### **Cardiac plexus**

The cardiac plexus is divided into a superficial part and a deep part. The two parts are closely connected.

**Superficial part:** the superficial part of the cardiac plexus lies beneath the arch of aorta, in front of the right pulmonary artery. It is formed by the superior cardiac branch of the left sympathetic trunk and the lower superior cervical cardiac branch of the left vagus nerve. A small ganglion, the cardiac ganglion of Weisberg, is occasionally found connected with these nerves at their point of junction. This ganglion, when present, is situated immediately beneath the arch of aorta, on the right side of the ligamentum arteriosum. The superficial part of the cardiac plexus gives branches (a) to the deep part of the plexus, (b) to the anterior coronary plexus and (c) to the left anterior pulmonary plexus.

**Deep part:** the deep part of the cardiac plexus is situated in front of bifurcation of the trachea, above the point of division of the pulmonary artery and behind the aortic arch. It is formed by the cardiac nerves derived from the cervical ganglia of the sympathetic trunk and the cardiac branches of the vagus and recurrent laryngeal nerve. The only cardiac nerves which do not enter into the formation of the deep part of the

cardiac plexus are the superior cardiac nerve of the left sympathetic trunk and the lower of the two superior cervical cardiac branches from the left vagus nerve, which pass to the superficial part of the plexus. Right half: the branches from the right half of the deep part of the deep cardiac plexus pass, some in front of and others behind the right pulmonary artery; the former, the more numerous, transmit a few filaments to the anterior pulmonary plexus and are then continued onward to form part of the anterior coronary plexus; those behind the pulmonary artery distribute a few filaments to the right atrium and are then continued onward to form part of the posterior coronary plexus. Left half: the left half of the deep part of the plexus is connected with the superficial part of the cardiac plexus and gives filaments to the left atrium and to the anterior pulmonary plexus and is then continued to form the greater part of the posterior coronary plexus.

Fig. 3 Superficial and deep cardiac plexus



## CONCLUSION

A *Chakra* is a centre of activity that assimilates and expresses life force energy. These chakras serve as an energetic template of the nerve plexuses that function in the physical body. The fourth *Chakra*, the *Chakra* of the heart, is the place where resides our spirit, our true self, which is eternally pure and unaffected by anything, like a shining diamond hidden within us which witnesses all our actions. It is related to love, equilibrium and well being. It is symbolized by a lotus with twelve petals.

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