

IMPORTANCE AND UTILITY OF *SAMHITA* IN PRESENT ERA

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ABSTRACT

Samhitas possess the oldest keen knowledge of healthcare, cure and life science. Its antiquity is going back to Vedas. Now a day, several diseases have stood up and are increasing due to the basic factor of stress and aggressiveness and are now frequently at an early age. In this rut of life each one is left to cater to one's own need causing a vicious cycle of stress & distress, threatening one's very existence. This is the need of hour to prove & present uses and application of *Samhita* to the world & scientific nation via using its principles in curing national health problems. *Ayurveda samhitas* are based on principles which remain same and valid in all phases of life. Irrespective of country and time, *Samhitas* always illuminates our path like sun. May be there was a *lopa* of *samhitas* at previous time but there was a *lopa* not *nasha* of *ayurveda* "*lopa*" means "*adarshna*" i.e. its validity never ends. *Samhita* is based on an unique pronature holistic approach to life, health and cure for which it evolved its own philosophy, higher physics, biology and biomedicine in tune with the vedic unified field theories of *atman- brahman* continuum and *loka –purusha saamy*a conserved through the doctrine of *samanya* and *vishesha* law of nature. This unique and ever advance knowledge has been passed on to present generation through authentic texts via *Brahattrayi* and *laghutrayi*.

Keywords: *Samhita*, *Ayurveda*, Present era, Public welfare.

INTRODUCTION

Now-a-days the obvious question that arises is that how relevant or effective is ancient system of health care to people of today, when technological progression have drastically altered our lifestyles ,our environment as well as our medicine. Modern age proudly displays a lifestyle where work communication, business & travel

has been made extremely easy for humans, with various gadgets & machines equipped with previously unheard of electronic technology still in spite of these comfort life has become more complex & competitive. Man finds himself more under stress as ever before. *Ayurveda* is a science of life which is flowing continuously for

the public welfare. *Ayurveda Samhita* is a nectar of health flowing in every yuga (era), although its ancient but very useful for each and every era, either it is *satyuga* or *kalayuga*. For this reason *ayurveda* is known as *shaswata* (immortal)^[1] There was no time when either the stream of life or the stream of intelligence did not flow. *Ayurveda* is immortal because of following reasons:

- It has no beginning
- It deals with such things as are inherent in nature
- Such natural manifestation are eternal

Importance of the *Samhitas* can be Categorize in following categories:

- In maintaining personal & spiritual health
- In improving our social life & our societies
- In preventing & curing diseases in present era

A. In maintaining personal & spiritual health :

- ***Vaigyanika siddhanta* (Scientific principles)**

By long time experimentation and observance, *Ayurveda*'s principles were established on strong scientific basis.

Pramanuvaad- atomic theory

Svabhavoparamvaad – wear & tear phenomenon

Panchmahabhut theory, *tridosha*, *sapta dhatu*, principles of *Ayurveda* is helpful in understanding physiological process & pathophysiology of human body. These principles help in solving mysteries of human body which are still unknown to mankind

These principles are mainly available only in the basic text of *samhitas*. Thus, there is utmost need of studying *samhitas* at present time.

- ***Ahmisa* / Nonviolence:**

(i) Today when world is in the sea of violence, Non-violence is the ultimate dharma. According to *manusmriti*, *ahmisa* is the foremost among the dharma. *Ahmisa* means much more than non-injury, it implies not doing harm to others even by thought or words. “*vasudhaiva kutumbakam*” a Sanskrit phrase found in *mahaupnishada*, the whole world is our family. This phrase is engraved in the entrance hall of Parliament of India. By adopting this one would not attack other country, so there is no world war. *Samhitas* by its moral values not only beneficial at individual level but also for maintaining peace and harmony in the world, for attaining highest level of spiritual progress and making one capable of performing his worldly duties without attachment to material possession.

According to scholars of *Ayurveda*, one of the factors among those which promote longevity, strength, nourishment, delightfulness & happiness & lead to salvation is non-violence. Nonviolence stands the first & foremost among the promoters of longevity of living beings.^[1] Cakrapani commented food is one of the factors to promote longevity but nonviolence leads to attainment of virtues.

(ii) *Ayurveda* never supported violence even in the *vimanasthana* line of treatment of parasites mentioned is-“ all parasites should first of all be extracted; thereafter, factors responsible for the production of these parasites Viz. phlegm etc should be counteracted and as the third principle of their treatment factors which causes such parasites should be avoided.”^[2] For counteracting the factors responsible for the production of parasites, drugs & diet which are pungent, bitter & astringent in taste & hot in nature are to be used along with other drugs having properties contrary to phlegm and feces. Therefore,

factors which produce these parasites and similar other substances are to be avoided and not adopted violence practice via killing parasites. But in modern era treatment has become violent & harmful. By giving treatment of one disease other complication produced. As by killing worms & not its spores will lead to reinfection, violence never give any benefit to society. In present era Samhita is the only source which by its non- violence properties provides solution to the society.

(iii) “*Ahimsa pratisthayam tatsannidhav vairatyagah*” The minds of even cruel people will be transformed in the presence of men practicing utter *ahimsa*. In other words when a man is full of love he can make other people also loving & this is an *Avantara prayojana* Even Buddhism and Jainism impose total non-violence on their followers.

• **Jeevana shastra (science of life) :**

Ayurveda is not a *pathy* describing treatment only but also teaches us how to live. Acharyas in *samhitas* taught us about art of living in a society. For instances, *samhitas* mentioned *sambhasha* which gave the knowledge of asking questions in front of different intellectual peoples and how to give answer regarding the matter.

To attain perfection and to establish knowledge in the society via *vada* (debate) with other person Main aim of *vada* is to acquire knowledge for exploring own personality.

Samhitas also taught us about practice regarding code of general ethics one should not tell a lie, should not indulge in hatred or sinful activities. One should not go out without touching feet of respectable persons.^[3] This teaching tells us about respecting our parents. Deprivation of this lead to increase in number to old age homes in society today.

Samhitas enriched with moral values as well as good conduct in society like be friendly to all creatures, reconcile the angry, console the frightened, be merciful to the poor, be truthful and be predominantly of comprising natures and tolerant toward unpalatable words uttered by others, be controller of intolerance, be peaceful deposition and conquer the very roots of attachments & hatred^[4]

Respect all religions *samhitas* never considered Hindu Muslims, Sikh differently like today, *samhitas* considered *purusha* as a whole.

This science of treatment is taught for the benefit of life. It is called the science of life because it explains the conditions of life.

If a person’s life is not beneficial to the society then it is of no use, that’s why Acharya Caraka divided the *ayu* in 2 groups: *sukha- dukkha aayu* (for individual) & *hita-ahita ayu* (for society)

Life is said to be beneficial to society when one seeks the good of all creatures, who abstains from appropriating what belong to others, who is truthful to speech, who is devoted to tranquilly, who acts only after reflection & examination, who pursues the aggregate of three i.e. religion, wealth & pleasure, who has properly controlled the impulses of affection or attachments, of jealousy, of arrogance, of pride, who always makes diverse kinds of gifts. This type of characters only maintains harmony in society.

B. In improving our social life & our societies :

• **Lokahita/Public welfare/ common good:**

Ayurveda evolvment is mainly for *Lokahita* as mentioned in *Deergajivintiya adhyaya*.^[5]

It is said that when diseases first seriously assailed the lives of righteous people, the merciful sages taking pity on them met together on the auspicious slopes of the Himalayas to find out a

way to overcome these impediments in their pursuit of the good life.

Main Goals of *Ayurveda* is – Public welfare. Now a day, clinical practice become business but it is said in *caraka Samhita* “A physician who practices his profession just out of compassion for living beings and not for *artha* (wealth) or *karma* (satisfaction of the worldly desires) excels all others. A physician, who practices his profession as a saleable commodity for earning wealth, is running after a heap of ash instead of gold.”^[6] *Cakrapani* also commented that one who adopts the profession for *dharma* (righteousness) is endowed with all spiritual and material earnings. To endowed practice only for public welfare one has to read the *Samhita* and apply its basic principles and moral values in field. Not only for public welfare, *vriksha Ayurveda* & *pashu chikitsa* also mentioned in *samhitas*.

• ***Samta Santulan* (balance/symmetry):**

In present era when disequilibrium is at peak, *Samhita* continuously proving itself to be a boon to the society because *Samhita* text taught us about basic principles of maintaining balance in life e.g. Marriage age, age of conception, date of conception, hygiene, sleeping time, daily regimen, seasonal regimen, meditation etc. person maintains healthy status in life if his or her mind is in perfect synchronization otherwise not. Treatment given in *Samhita* lead to healthy life by restoring balance that why it is known as *Prakritisthapana*^[7] *Gangadharsen* commented that the term *Prakritisthapana* is composed of two words viz *prakriti* (natural state) and *Stahapana* (to place or to maintain). Thus, the whole term “*Prakritisthapana*” means agents which are responsible for the maintenance of equilibrium of *Dosha* & *Dhatu* in the body. Balance is important in life just like a *Nata* (a danc-

er) walks on a rope by balancing his mind & body. By maintaining balance a person will succeed & proceed in life otherwise a fall in health is definite.

C. In preventing & curing diseases in present era:

• ***Shudha Prayoga* (Pure Treatment):**

“*shudh*” means “*nirdosha*”

Any treatment is said to be pure only if it treats one ailment & does not give rise to any other ailment or any side-effects. This type of treatment is mentioned in *caraka Samhita*- “the therapy which while curing one disease provokes another is not the correct one; the correct therapy is the one which while curing a disease does not provoke the manifestation of another disease.”^[8] In present era, when society tolerance power is decreasing day by day and treatment applied to every individual is same irrespective of their *bala*. *Ayurveda samhitas* are the only one which mentioned separate treatment for both weak and strong patient. A patient should be examined so as to obtain knowledge regarding the span of life, strength and the intensity of morbidity. Hence the purpose of examination is to obtain the knowledge relating to strength of the individual and the intensity of morbidity, because it is on the basis of morbidity that the dosage of therapy is determined and latter is depended upon the strength or the power of resistance of individual. If strong things are immediately administered without proper examination, to a weak patient, this might result in his death. Weak patients are incapable of resisting strong therapies like medicines domination in *agni* and *vayu mahabhutas*, application of alkalis, heat and surgeries. These therapies cause immediate death of the patient because of very

sharp action which is too strong for the individuals.

Thus a weak patient should be given such mild & tender therapies as are not injurious to the body & mind. Stronger therapies which are neither distressing during their digestion nor associated with serious complications may be administered slowly & gradually.

Such therapies are specifically needed for ladies because they are by nature unsteady, light and often sensitive or weak temperament and also because they are mostly tender and subordinate to others. Even for pregnant women it is to be mentioned that a pregnant women is to be treated very cautiously as if one is walking with a pot full of oil, in hand without letting a drop to fall^[9]. Similarly, if weak therapies are administered to the strong individual having a serious disease without proper examination, the disease does not get cured. Therefore the patient should be examined with reference to his *prakriti* (physical constitution), *vikriti* (morbidly), *sara* (excellence of dhatus) *samhana* (compactness of organs), *praman* (measurement of organs of the body), *satmaya* (homologation), *satva* (psychic condition), *ahara shakti* (power of intake and digestion of food), *vyayama shakti* (power of performing exercise) and *vaya* (age) in order to ascertain his strength and intensity of malady.

This needs logical thinking and skillful attitude which is attained only by studying *samhitas* and practicing its principles.

• ***Arvacheen roga/modern disease/ recent disease:***

This has been enumerated in the context of *nanatmaja vikara* where each *atma rupa* of *dosha* is attributed with specific actions. The *lakshana* like *sramsas*, *vyasa* etc exhibited by the specific action in either whole/part of the body without any doubt indicates the disease to be

vata origin. This principle can be extended to understand any number of unknown diseases of present day. For instance in innumerable heart disease classified by contemporary medicine although the *samhitas* classified *hridaya roga* to be of 5 types, but by the above basic principle innumerable disease of heart can be understood.

In modern era, many new diseases arises like chikungunya, swine flu, dengue etc. by considering it under *anukta vyadhis*, it can be treated. So for a correct approach to the diagnosis, treatment of disease which are not directly mentioned a principle that can be applied is “if a physician is not able to name a particular disease, he should not feel ashamed on that account because it is not always possible to name all type of diseases in definite terms when aggravated one and the same *dosha* may cause manifold diseases depending upon the various etiological factors and the sites of manifestation.

So a physician should try to comprehend the nature of the disease (*dosha*), the site of its manifestation and etiological factors and should then initiate the treatment a physician who so initiates the treatment after having full knowledge of the therapeutic properties of these three aspects and paying due respect to scriptural instructions would never fail in his attempts to cure the disease^[10]

In present era, *samhitas* are the only one which will give us the thorough knowledge of etiological factors rather than name of disease which count for the purpose of their treatments. The acquaintance with the name of disease is important for the purpose of description only. So a physician is required inter alia with the sites of manifestation.

- **Antar drishti (Internal factors):**

Ayurveda text mainly focuses on internal factors to keep an individual healthy and also incurring disease because internal factors are intimate cause and external factors are instrumental cause. *Aagantuka hetu* (external factors) vitiates *tridosha* (internal factors) and then only produce *nija vyadhi*^[11] i.e. external factors are able to cause disease by vitiating internal factors only. So an individual is himself responsible for the disease.

The wise man should not blame the god, ancestor or *rakshasas* for disease caused by his own misdeeds due to intellectual blasphemy. One should hold himself responsible for his happiness and miseries. Therefore without apprehension one should follow the path of propitiousness. To remain disease free & healthy, one should follow the *dincharya, ritucharya, sadvritta* as given in *samhita* to keep internal factors intact.

- **Svabhavik Prakriya (Natural process):**

Ayurveda Samhitas always put forth the *prakriti* first. Ayurveda Samhita is based on nature. Above all; we all are parts of nature. We are created by nature, nurtured by nature and we are going back to nature. Every vital breath, consciousness, and an individual soul are given by nature.

Each individual carries a healer within that healer is the immune system of the individual. If we cut a finger, even without any medication it will be naturally healed. Who heals it? It is the healer within, the immune system within. By giving right direction to it and creating a proper situation of healing, we can help the body to be healed on its own.

In Ayurveda Samhitas, to maintain immunity is the main purpose and also strengthen the same to prevent & cure various diseases. Ayurveda

always prefer natural process of healing not by forcefully eradicate the disease like pain killers in modern practice because its results will not by favoring in the long run.

In *samhitas*, therapy is like manual support. Prompted by will to live the body by nature itself comes forward for alleviation of disorder and restoring equilibrium. In diarrhea the excretion of liquid stool, in *raktapitta* discharge of blood vitiating by pitta and in vomiting elimination of the harmful material are some of the instances for this.

With the same view, checking these in the beginning is forbidden as obstructed dosha might create many complications as Charaka says in the context of diarrhea hence one should ignore the excited and self-impressed motions or if there be any difficult he should administer *haritaki* to induce it further. By this when impurities is eliminated the abdominal disorder is relieved, body regains lightness & digestion improves.^[12]

Physicians by dint of his expertise, extends assistance to nature itself. For instance, a person slips or falls down on the way may get up himself but, if somebody lends support the task becomes easier^[13]. Thus therapy is like manual support in *samhitas*.

Vagabhatta also says- ‘for those dipped in mud of disease, therapy is like manual support.

- **Prakriti (Bodily constitution):**

Antibiotics resistance increasing day by day because they not considered that each person is different & their treatment is also different and is made of different constitution even *the twins are different from each other*. In *samhitas* foremost importance was given to *prakriti*. *Ahara viahara* is given according to *prakriti*, treatment given according to *prakriti* One who knows the

principles governing their correct application in consonance with the place, time & individual variation, should be regarded as the best physician^[14]

- **Rasayan & Vajikarna (Rejuvenation therapy & Aphrodisiac therapy):**

Ayurveda covers all the three aspects of treatment i.e. preventive, curative, & promotive.

Rasayan therapy is a major & foremost important contribution of *ayurveda* which tends to increase the age and *vyadikshamtava* capacity that has significantly reduced in this era.

A person undergoing rejuvenation therapy attains longevity, memory, intellect, freedom from diseases, youth excellence of luster etc^[15]

In today's era millions of men & women facing infertility, there need of an hour to serve such people with best *path* available in *samhitas* to build a family. *Samhitas* enriched with aphrodisiac *yogas*. Aphrodisiac therapy aerates potentiality for getting off springs for the maintenance of continuity of lineage, which causes instantaneous sexual excitation

Aphrodisiac therapy mentioned in *Samhita* enables him to procreate children

- **Samanvaya (Coordination):**

Atreya mentioned many *sambhasha* and atlast provide a conclusion based on all observations. *Samhitas* also include *dharmashastra*, *vyotishshastra*, *vriksha ayurveda*, and *pashu chikitsa* i.e. a collaboration of work of different fields is seen in *samhitas*. This is the right time when all pathies collaborate and work as a team and serve nation with its precious knowledge & reduce the human suffering and make society healthy both physically and mentally also. Moreover one pathy or one view can be biased and never reach to perfect conclusion.^[16]

- **Janapadaudhvansha (epidemic/pollution)**

Agnivesha queried *atreya* how people having dissimilar nature, diet, physical strength, homologation, age, simultaneous get affected by the same epidemic disease

Lord *atreya* replied even though there is dissimilarities in the physical constitution of human beings still there are such factors as are common to all individuals and vitiation of these factors leads to the simultaneous manifestation of disease having the same set of symptoms leading to destruction of countries. Factors which are common for all the inhabitants of a country are air, water, location & season.

The main cause of epidemic leading to destruction of a country is sinful act (*adharm*)^[17]

In the present time this sinful acts include cutting of tress, as a result pollution increases, season getting impaired consequently there is no rainfall in time or there is no rainfall at all or there is abnormality in rainfall, air does not blow properly there is abnormality in the earth, water get dried up, drugs lose their attributes & get impaired.

The cause of sinful act is misery (*pragyaapradha*) can be corrected by following *dincharya*, *ritucharya*, *sattvaavjaya chikitsa* to improve intellect (*dhee*), patience (*dhriti*), memory (*smriti*), as mentioned in *Samhita*. Now a days breathing in Indian capital like smoking 50 cigarettes a day. On Nov 8, pollution surged so high that some monitoring stations reported an Air Quality Index of 999, way above the upper limit of the worst category, hazardous. But a ray of light already mentioned in *samhitas* in this regard & proved to be a blessing to society those who are not destined to die during the epidemics, for their cure, five elimination therapies are the best. They should be properly administered rejuvenation therapy and physical health

should be maintained with such drugs as are collected before the onset of epidemics. Truthfulness compassion for living being, charity, adoption of preventive measures, tranquility protection of the self by mantras etc, residence in auspicious localities, constant association with religious, *satvika* and learned persons- these are the therapies which if adopted during epidemics can easily save the lives of individuals provided the death of a particular individual during the period is not predestined^[19]

CONCLUSION

The conviction or faith in the science is acquired only after reading of *Samhita (patha)*, comprehending (*avabodha*) and implementing the science (*anushthana*). In *samhitas* every word has been explored (*prikshit*) after rigorous observations and thereafter fundamental principles (*siddhanta*) are compared which are the universal facts of science. Thus conviction is to be built through observation (*pratayksha*), inference (*anumana*) and also by realizing the wisdom of authoritative personalities (*apta*). An *apta* who is beyond the influence of *manasika dosha* is never self-centered. Knowledge thus delivered by them is devoid of any errors & is valid in all phases of time as their vision is always directed towards compassion over creatures (*bhutadayam prati*). Thus *Samhita* is extraordinary (*asamanya*) considering their depth of wisdom. Principles of *Samhita* originated & practiced in India for more than 5000 years. It is as useful and fresh to human today as it was in ancient times yet more relevant and applicable in these modern times. Its use provides a holistic approach to one's life.

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