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Uttamang Sharir - A Research Article

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Abstract: ***The human body is like a complex machine, consisting of various organs working nonstop all the time. Some parts take rest while sleeping at night. But some are still working all day, all night and whole life till death. They are the vital parts of the body for example heart and brain. Their taking rest even for single second can lead us to death.***
The organ lodging in the uppermost region is Uttamang. But in my opinion the word "Uttamang" has one more meaning that is "Uttam + Anga" That means the best part of the body is Uttamang. Hence the Shir or head is the best and foremost organ of the body. According to acharya Vagbhatta, the Purusha sharir (human being) is like a tree whose roots are above and the branches are lying below in downwards direction. So, by protecting the roots; the whole tree can be safeguarded. In the same way the Uttamang, where the vitality resides. The head is the unrivalled region of the body. It is the governing body. Every organ of our body is perfect and unique to target its objective but without brain its nothing. As a brain-dead person is alive, every organ is doing its job but the body is not more than a cadaver. That is the importance of brain and head. That's why it should be protected.
Keywords: Uttamang, Vitality, Purusha, Sharir, Brain

I. INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the most ancient, eternal and living medical science. From the Vedic era till today Ayurveda is healing the ailments. It is the archaic science of life. It exhibits the quintessence of life experiences, the pinnacle of education and epitome of compassion. It is further a mission to dignify, comfort and heal the fellow human beings. The objective of Ayurveda is-
"Prayojanam cha asya swasthasya swasthya rakshanam aturasya vikar prashmanam cha."
The two main principals of Ayurveda are
1) To fortify the health of healthy ones
2) To cure the malady of diseased ones.
But to fulfil the above written aims of Ayurveda, it is essential to ponder and have consummate knowledge of anatomy of the whole body.

II. SHARIR

The human body is termed as "Sharir" in Ayurveda. The Sharir is interpreted as
"*Shiryate tat shariram"* That means which is continuously catabolised with time is the Sharir.

A. Definition of Sharir

The Sharir can be defined as the dwelling place of the vitality (soul) and formed from the conjunction of Panchmahabhut namely Prthvi, Ap, Teja, Vayu and Akash.
It is Samyogvahi i.e. budges when the three Dosha, seven Dhatu and three Mala are in uniform state.
A very perspicuous and exquisite delineation of Sharir has been given by acharya Sushrut. The Shukra (Sperm) and Shonit (the Ovum), residing in Uterus when amalgamate with Atma (Soul), the eight Prakriti (Satva, Raja, Tama and five Tanmatra namely Shabda, Sparsh, Roop, Rasa, Gandha) and sixteen Vikar (Five sense organ i.e. Nose, eye, ear, Tongue and Skin and five motor i.e. Hasta, Pada, Payu, Upastha and Vak and Mana in addition with five Mahabhut that is Prthvi, Ap, Teja, Vayu, Akash) then the Garbha (the Embryo) is formed. This living Embryo is cleaved by Vayu, acted upon by Teja, given moisture by Jala, solidified by Prithivi and expanded or developed by Akash Mahabhoot. In this way the developed foetus comprising the hands, legs, tongue, nose, ears, hips etc. is christened as Sharir[1].

III. SHADANGAM SHARIR

This Sharir is mentioned as "Shadang" by ancient erudite of Ayurveda. That means, the human body consists of six regions[2].
Dissevering the body, acharya Charak says that two hands, two legs, head and trunk are six regions[1].
The human body is cleaved in six parts, by acharya Shushrut and Vagbhatt; namely the four extremities, one trunk and head is the sixth part[1,3].

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IV. UTTAMANG SHARIR

A. Formation of Shir IN Embryo (Ayurveda View)

Acharya Shushrut said that the buds of five regions of the body i.e. the two upper extremities, two lower extremities and one head are seen in foetus in the third month of intrauterine life[1].

Acharya Vagbhatt accord with Shushrut in the view, that the head originates in third month of intrauterine life along with the sprouts of other extremities and with the development of head, the foetus can experience the joy and grief[3].

Acharya Vrddhavagbhatt abet with acharya Shushrut that all the five twigs of extremities arise in the third month of intrauterine life.

While discussing the embryological development, in the opinion of Shaunak muni, the Shir is the first part to develop because it is the lodging place of all the chief indriyas[1]. Supporting acharya Shaunak, sage Kumarshira Bharadwaj uttered that the Shir is the foremost developing organ of the body, as all the sense organs are located in it[2].

V. DEFINITION OF SHIR

In Charak Sutrasthana 17/12, the definition of Shir where the Prana (the vital binding force of the body) resides, is given.

The constituent of body, where vitality and all the sense facilities reside and which is elite among all the organs of the body, is called the Uttamang i.e. the Shir or head.

Interpreting the above written verse Acharya Chakrapani alleged that the organ lodging in the uppermost region is Uttamang.

But in my opinion the word “Uttamang” has one more meaning that is

“Uttam + Anga” That means the best part of the body is Uttamang. Hence the Shir or head is the best and foremost organ of the body.

According to acharya Vagbhatt in Ashtanga Hradaya Uttartantra chapter 24 verse 58-59 the Purusha sharir (human being) is like a tree whose roots are above and the branches are lying below in downwards direction. So, by protecting the roots; the whole tree can be safeguarded. In the same way the Uttamang where the vitality resides along with all the sense organs namely the five sensory i.e. Eye, Ear, Nose, Tongue, Skin and five motor i.e. Vak, Pani, Pad, Payu, Upastha and one Ubhayendriya Mana; should be shielded with great effort, in order to fortify the whole body.

The head is the unrivalled region of the body. It is the governing body. Every organ of our body is perfect and unique to target its objective but without brain its nothing. As a brain-dead person is alive, every organ is doing its job but the body is not more than a cadaver. That is the importance of brain and head. That’s why it should be protected.

VI. SIGNIFICANCE OF SHIR

Acharya Chakrapani Datt commented on verse of Charak sutra stana 2/6 that as a tree having lusty roots, grows completely in all directions similarly an individual possessing healthy shir have proper and complete development.

In Charak Siddhisthana 9/4 it is illustrated that all the sense organs and pranavahasrotas are fastened with the Shir as the rays are bonded with the Sun.

Exemplifying further in Charak Siddhisthana 9/9 the Shir is included in the Trimarma, together with the heart and urinary bladder; where the Prana are established and they should be protected with great effort.

Acharya Bhela had alleged that between Talu (Palate) and Shir (head) that is in the Brain there lives the Mana which is supreme among all the indriyas.

VII. SHIR AS THE SITE OF PRANA VAYU

The Ashtang Hrdayakar acharya Vagbhatt said that Pran Vayu propels in the head region[3].

While acharya Charak in chikitsa stana 28/06 asserted that the Prana Vayu is situated in head, thorax, neck, tongue, mouth and nose.

VIII. SHIR AMONG THE PRANA

Ashtang Hrdayakar acharya Vagbhatt has enumerated Shir together with tongue suture, neck, heart, umbilicus, urinary bladder, anus, sperm, oja and blood among the ten Pranas.

But acharya Shushrut in sharir sthan 4/3 has not included it in Pranas

He asserted that, the sages of Ayurveda have counted twelve Pranas that is the Agni, Soma, Vayu, Satva, Raja, Tama, five sense organs namely Eyes, Ear, Nose, Tongue and skin and the Bhutatma.

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IX. SHIR AMONG PRANAYATAN

Talking about Pranayatan in Sutrasthana, Acharya Charak alleged that two Shankha (Temporal region), three Marma, neck, blood, Shukra, Oja, anus are ten Pranayatan where the vitality specially resides. Simultaneously in Sharir Sthana 7/9 the acharya Charak enumerated head, neck, heart, umbilicus, urinary bladder, Oja, Shukra (sperm), Shodit (Ovum) and muscles among the ten Pranayatan. Out of these first six are the Marmas.

Portraying Pranayatan in sharir 5/32 acharya Vagbhatt asserted head, tongue suture, neck, heart, umbilicus, urinary bladder, anus, Shukra, Oja and blood, as the site of vitality (Prana).

X. MARMAS LOCATED IN SHIR

The subject will remain incomplete, if the marmas of head region are not discussed. Shir is the vital organ and so the maximum numbers of marmas are located in this region. Out of one hundred and seven marmas, thirty-seven are situated in this region.

Deliberating about the marmas in head, acharya Shushrut and Vagbhatt called them, the ***Urdhwa Jatrugata Marma***. They had computed thirty-seven marmas in head region. They are explained as follows:

1) *Vidhur Marma:* Vidhur is a Snayu marma of Vaikalyakar type. They are two in number and located behind and below the ear. Trauma in this region causes deafness. They are called as Dhamani marma by the sage Vagbhatt. It is located as post-auricular vessels.
2) *Phana Marma:* They are two in enumeration. Phana marma are Vaikalyakar marma and are computed as Shira marma. They are established inside the nose. Any injury leads to loss of smell sensation. It is Olfactory region of nose.
3) *Apanga Marma:* Two Apanga are situated at the outer canthus, below the end of eyebrows. They are enumerated as Shira Marma and of Vaikalyakar kind. Any injury conduces to deficit vision or complete blindness. They are Zygomatico -temporal Vessels
4) *Avarta Marma:* Avarta are also Vaikalyakar marma. They are two in number and of Sandhi marma class. They are spotted at the junction of Frontal, Molar and Sphenoid bone, above the eyebrows. The injury to this region tends to deficiency or loss of vision. It is the junction of frontal, maxilla and sphenoid bone.
5) *Shankha Marma:* The two Shankha marma are Asthi marma. They are Sadhyah pranhar Marma. They are sited in temporal region, between ear and forehead. Trauma here causes immediate death. Temples are considerd as Sankha marma.
6) *Utkshepa Marma:* These are located above Shankha marma, near hair line. They are two in number and designated as Snayu marma of Vishalyaghna marma variety. The patient survives, if the Shalya is left infiltrated in this region. But immediate death occurs, if the Shalya is removed. They are Temporal vessels and fascia.
7) *Sthapni Marma:* It is the Shira marma and resides between the two eyebrows. It is also a Vishalyaghna marma. The symptoms of injury are same as Utkshepa marma. Frontal Vein is located here in Nasal arch.
8) *Simanta Marma:* The cranium embodies five joints, which are entitled as Simanta. As the name indicates Simanta is a Sandhi marma of Kalanter pranhar marma kind. Trauma to them leads to confusion, Schizophrenia and ultimately to death. Cranial sutures are asserted as Simanta marma
9) *Shrangatak Marma:* They are counted as Shira marma and are christened as Sadhyah pranhar marma. They are four in computation and are coupling of nasal, vocal, labyrinthine, glossal and optic arterial conjunctures. Any injury to this part causes death. They are asserted as Dhamani marma by Vagbhattacharya. Cavernous sinus can be called as Shrangatak marma.
10) *Adhipati Marma:* Adhipati marma is seated in the brain and recognized as confluence of Sinuses. It is a Sadhyah pranhar marma and enumerated in Sandhi marma. Injury here leads to death. It is confluence of sinuses. It lies at the topmost part of head and alleged as “Brahmarandhra” by erudite of Ayurveda. It resides at the location of Anterior Fontanelle. It is delineated as Urdhwamoola in Geeta the holy book. The following are the marmas of neck region. But they are described in this section, since they are enumerated as Jatrudhwa marma by our sages.
11) *Krakatika Marma:* Krakatika is a Sandhi marma, established at the joint of head and neck. It is counted in Vaikalyakar marma and injury to it causes shaking of head. It can be considered as Atlanto-occipital joint
12) *Nila and Manya:* There are two Nila and two Manya Marma. They are asserted as Sira marma. These are the four arteries located on the both sides of Kantha nadi. They are enumerated in Vaikalyakar marma. Any injury to them causes deformity in voice, loss of taste and even the loss of voice. In modern anatomy it can be correlated to Jugular veins and carotid arterie
13) *Matrika Marma:* Matrika marma are four Sira lying in both flanks of neck. They are related with tongue and nose, in the vision of acharya Vagbhatta. They are enumerated in Sadhyahpranhar marma. Any trauma to them leads to death. They can be called as blood vessels of neck.

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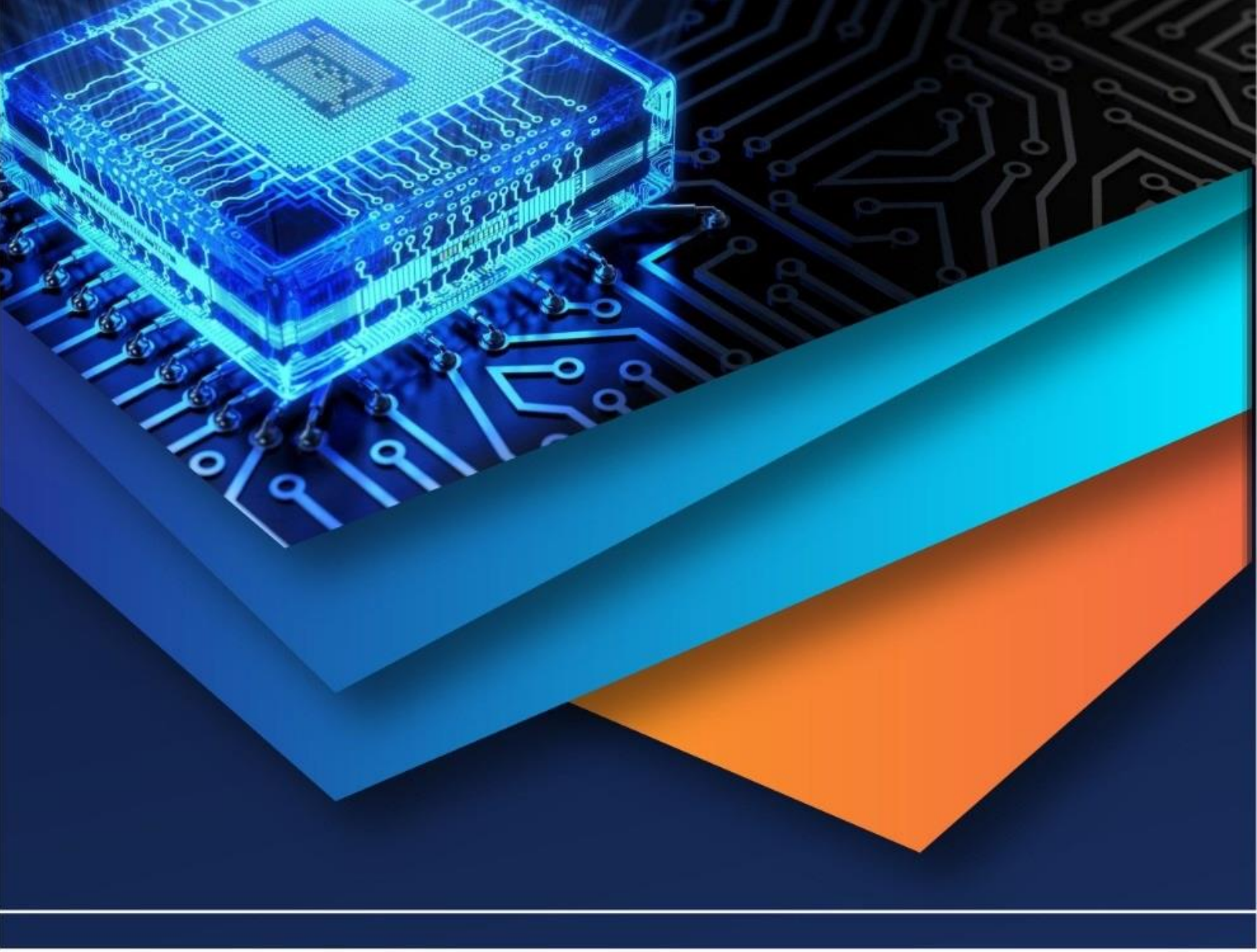
XI. CONCLUSION

Sharir Rachana is the branch of Ayurveda deals with the detailed knowledge of structures of the human body. This branch not only consist of knowledge about bones, muscles, organs and organ systems but also talks about Garbha sharir, Kala sharir, Srotas Sharir, Marma Sharir, Uttamang Sharir etc. They are basic components of Ayurveda. The components described in Ayurveda are exemplary. All the components, tissue, organ, organ system converge in one group i.e. Shadanga. In Shadang there is shir the Uttamang which is governing body of our sharir. It is place of Vitality where Prana resides. It is moola of Pranavaha Srotas according to Charak. It is among Prana, among Pranayatan, Adhisthan of Indriya (Sense organ). Out of 107 Marmas 37 are located in Sirah Pradesh. Above verses validate the importance of Shir as Uttamang. That's why this is Uttamanga and need to be protected. Uttamang is brain and governs the whole body as roots nourish whole tree.

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