

CONCEPTUAL APPROACH TOWARDS RACHANA SHARIR W.S.R. TO SHADANGA SHARIR

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ABSTRACT

The Sharir Rachana (Human Anatomy) is an important subject for allied health sciences. It is one of the fundamental subject to the health science. Ayurveda deals with scientific study of the subject Sharir Rachana (Human anatomy) in Bruhatrayees. Sharir Sthana is illustrated in various parts starting from Garbha nirman & Garbha vikas (Embryo development) for human anatomy. Knowledge of human body is the very foremost step in the world of medical science. Sharir means human body and Rachana means structure. This Human Sharir is mainly made up of six main parts or segments. These six parts are called as Angas. Thus the Sharir or human body is made up of Shadanga or six segments.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Rachana Sharir, Human Anatomy, Angas, Shadanga Sharir.

INTRODUCTION

The concepts of Rachana Sharir or Anatomy in Ayurveda are exemplary. All tissues, components, organs and organ systems of the body fall within this broad group of Shadangas. Rachana Sharir is the branch of Ayurveda which states a detailed description of the structures in human body. This branch consist knowledge about bones, muscles, blood vessels, strotas, joints, vital organs etc. It also gives knowledge of Garbha sharir, Kala and Marma sharir. Acharyas like Sushruta, Charaka and Vagbhata have given importance to the knowledge of Rachana Sharir. This Human body is mainly made up of six main parts or segments. These six parts are called as Angas. Thus the Sharir or human body is made up of Shadanga or six segments.

Shadanga forms the foremost classification of body parts, in fact a gross demarcation or surface marking of the body into six large units. Shadang = Shad (6) + Anga (parts, segments).

The Shad Angas are

2 upper limbs,

2 lower limbs,

1 head and 1 trunk (central portion of the body).

Shadangatva of Sharir

The human body is called by the name Sharir in Ayurveda. This Sharir is chiefly made up of 6 main organs or parts or segments. These 6 parts are called as Angas.

According to Ayurveda Shadang Sharir are as follows

- Shakha or Bahu -Two Upper limbs
- Shakha or Sakthi -Two lower limbs
- Madhya Sharir or Antradhi-Trunk
- Shir or Shirogriva-Head and Neck.

According to Modern medical Science six parts of the body are

- Upeer limb (Urdhva Shakha)
- Lower limb (Adho Shakha)
- Thorax (Vaksha)
- Abdomen (Udar)
- Head and Neck (Shir Evam Griva)
- Brain and Spinal cord (Mastishka / Sushumna).

Shadang Sharir Described by the Ayurvedic Acharyas Shadangam as Per Charaka

Charak says that the body is divided into 6 major parts (Shadanga) namely-

Bahu – Upper limbs, 2 in number

Sakthi – Lower limbs, 2 in number

Shirogreeva – Head and neck, 1 in number

Antaradhi – Middle part of the body or trunk (comprising of thorax and abdomen), 1 in number.

Shadangam as Per Sushruta

Sushruta has given the same classification with change of names. According to him, the body is divided broadly into 6 parts (Shadanga), namely –

Shakas – 4 in number (2 Urdhwa Shakha or upper limbs + 2 Adho Shakha or lower limbs)

Madhyama Sharir – Middle portion of the body, 1 in number (trunk comprising of thorax and abdomen)

Shira – Head, 1 in number.

Shadangam as Per Bhavamishra

Bhava Mishra further in his treatise Bhavaprakasha, has further explained these 6 parts of the body (Shadanga) on the basis of their importance and the structures which they are made up of. They are as follows –

Shira (head) – Seat of Gnanendriyas (Sense organs)

Urdhwa Shaka (upper limbs) – Seats of Anguli (fingers)

Adha Shaka (lower limbs) – Seats of Anguli (toes)

Vaksha (chest) – Seat of important organs like Hridaya (heart), Phuphusa (lungs), Stana (breasts) etc.

Udara (abdomen) – Seat of vital visceral organs like Yakrut (liver), Pleeha (spleen), Kloma (pancreas), Antra (intestines), Vasti (urinary bladder), Vrukka (kidneys), Guda (anus, rectum) etc.

Prushta (back) – Seat of Prushta Vamsha (spine), vertebral column Kati (pelvis), Nitamba (hips) etc.

Importance of Shadanga Structures

The concepts of Rachana Sharira or Anatomy in Ayurveda are exemplary. Ayurvedic seers have made anatomy easy by firstly classifying the human body into 6 broad landmark parts as seen from outside. They named them Shad Angas. Later the smaller landmarks or associated Angas were described and were called Pratyangas. Then the core interior of the body was described and each and every anatomical aspects were explained in depth namely Ashayas (visceras), Koshta (large spaces), Koshtangas (visceral organs), Shrotas (channels of circulation), Siras and Dhamanis (blood vessels and nerves, lymphatics) etc were dealt with precision.

Shad Angas Including all Structures of the Body

All components, tissues, organs and organ systems of the body fall within this broad group of Shadangas. Muscles, bones and other soft tissues helping in locomotion are included in the Shakas (limbs) and Prishtha (back). Brain and sense organs, important nerves are located in the head (Shiras). Vital organs like heart and lungs are seen to be placed in chest (Uras) and important organs like liver, spleen, intestines, pancreas, kidneys, urinary bladder, uterus etc are found in abdomen and pelvic cavities (Udara – Kati Guha).

Important Activities of Shadanga Sharir

Organs and structures controlling main life activities are located in the Shad – Angas

Shakas – Limbs help in all the activities of daily living and also in locomotion.

Shiras – The control centre of all the activities of the body (brain) including control stations for thoughts, memory, emotions, judgment, etc, is located in the Shiras (head). Shiras is also a place where all our sensory and motor activities are blended into synchronized life activities, is also a site of Manas (mind) and Indriyas (sense organs).

Antaradhi – The Antaradhi or Madhya Shareer (middle portion of the body, trunk) comprises of many organs related to important life – processes and are found located in Uras / Vaksha (chest cavity) and Udara (abdominal and pelvic cavity).

Vaksha is comprised of vital organs of circulation and ventilation, namely heart and lungs and other organs like trachea, oesophagus, pharynx, etc, gives origin to aorta (greatest artery) and receives deoxygenated blood from all parts of the body through great veins i.e. superior and inferior vena cava.

UDARA and KATI (abdomen and pelvic cavity) has important organs of digestion, urinary and genital apparatus (reproduction), immunity etc.

Aspects of Shadanga

- The Doshas, Dhatus and Malas belong to the Shadangas.
- Hridaya (heart, brain) being a site of Manas (mind) is located in the Uras / Shiras which is part of Shadanga Sharir.
- 107 Marmas or vital areas of the body which on getting injured or damaged either take away the life or cause temporary or permanent damage of the organs and tissues are scattered all through the Shadangas.
- The endocrine system, the circulatory system, lymphatic systems are found scattered in all the Shadangas.

CONCLUSION

Acharyas like Sushruta, Charaka and Vagbhata have given importance to the knowledge of Rachana Sharir.

Shadangas and Pratyangas are the first ever anatomical landmarks explained in medical science. The knowledge of these aspects has made Understanding Anatomy an easy process.

For the purpose of easy understanding and for convenience of studying, the human body is divided broadly into six different regions. Therefore the human body is also often addressed as Shadanga Sharir or Human body made up of six fragments or regions.

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