

6.4. Hṛdroga, Hṛdshoola

Unit 6.4 — Hṛdroga & Hṛcchūla (Hṛdśūla)

1) Nirukti (Etymology)

Hṛd (हृद) = heart / the central vital organ; also a *marma* (vital spot).

Roga (रोग) = disease / disorder.

Hṛdroga (हृद्रोग) = disorder afflicting the heart region and its functions.

Śūla (शूल) = colicky/pricking pain.

Hṛcchūla / Hṛdśūla (हृच्छूल / हृदशूल) = pain perceived in the cardiac region (may be *hṛdroga-janya* or may arise from nearby systems like *āmāśaya/uras*, as described in classics).

2) Paribhāṣā (Classical definition idea)

Hṛdroga is understood as a condition where *doṣa* (Vāta/Pitta/Kapha or their combination), sometimes with *krimi*, afflict the *hṛdaya* leading to characteristic systemic and local features—pain, distress, breath-related complaints, nausea, faintness, etc.

Caraka: Etiology + General Symptom Cluster (core “definition by *lakṣaṇa*”)

Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 26 (Trimarmiya Cikitsā), śloka 77

व्यायामतीक्ष्णातिविरेकबस्तिविन्ताभयत्रासगदातिचाराः ।
छर्द्यामसन्धारणकर्णनिहृद्रोगकर्तुणितथाऽभिघातः ॥७७ ॥

English meaning: Excess exertion; overly strong/excessive purgation and basti; anxiety, fear, stress; improper handling of diseases; suppression/withholding of vomiting and *āma*; emaciation; and trauma—these act as causes of heart disease.

Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 26, śloka 78

वैवर्ण्यमूच्छ्राज्वरकाशहिक्काशवासास्यवैरस्यतृष्णाप्रमोहाः ।
छ्रदिःकफोत्क्लेशरुजोऽरुचिश्चहृद्रोगजाःस्युर्विवधास्तथाऽन्ये ॥७८ ॥

English meaning: Discoloration, fainting, fever, cough, hiccup, dyspnea, unpleasant taste, thirst, confusion, vomiting, nausea/kapha-upsurge, pain/distress, anorexia and many other features can occur in *hṛdroga*.

Suśruta: Nidāna emphasis (diet-behavior, *rasa duṣṭi*)

Suśruta Saṃhitā, Uttaratantra 43 (Hṛdroga-pratiṣedha), śloka 3

वेगाधातोष्णस्क्षान्नैरतिमात्रोपसेवितैः ।
विरुद्धाध्यशनाजीर्णसात्मैश्चापिति भोजनैः ॥३ ॥

English meaning: Due to suppression of natural urges and excessive intake of very hot/dry foods, incompatible eating, overeating, indigestion, and unwholesome foods—bodily *rasa* becomes vitiated, and *hṛdroga* develops.

3) Paryāya (Synonyms / clinically used near-equivalents)

In practical Ayurvedic clinical writing, **Hṛdroga** is commonly discussed along with:

- **Hṛcchūla / Hṛdśūla** (pain in cardiac region)
- **Hṛd-rujā / hṛd-ārti** (cardiac-region pain/distress)
- **Hṛd-graha** (gripping/tightness, functional restriction—often Vāta/Kapha association)

(These are used as symptom-terms and sometimes as condition labels, depending on context.)

4) Bheda (Classification)

A) Caraka: Doṣa-based + Krimija

Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 26, śloka 79-80 (doṣa-specific features and krimija clue)

Śloka 79

हृच्छून्यभावद्रवशोषभेदस्तस्मा:समोहाःपवनादविशेषः।
पित्तात्मोदूद्यनदाहमोहाःसन्त्रासतापञ्चरपीतभावाः॥७९॥

English meaning: Vāta-predominant hṛdroga shows emptiness in cardiac region, dryness/wasting tendency, pricking pain, stiffness/obstruction, and confusion. Pitta-predominant shows darkness/blackout, burning, distress, confusion, heat/fever and yellowishness.

Śloka 80

स्तव्यंगुरुस्यात्स्तमितंचमर्मकफात्प्रसेकज्वरकासतन्द्राः।
विद्यात्निदोषत्वपिर्सर्वलिङ्गंतीत्रातिर्तोदंकुमिजंसकण्डम्॥८०॥

English meaning: Kapha-predominant has heaviness, stiffness/dullness of the marma region, salivation, fever, cough, drowsiness. Tridoṣaja shows mixed features. Krimija shows severe pain/pricking with itching.

Thus, clinically used bheda:

1. **Vātaja hṛdroga**
2. **Pittaja hṛdroga**
3. **Kaphaja hṛdroga**
4. **Sannipātaja (Tridoṣaja) hṛdroga**
5. **Krimija hṛdroga**

B) Hṛcchūla / Hṛdśūla bheda (practical approach)

Hṛcchūla can be:

- **Hṛdroga-janya śūla** (pain due to doṣa/krimi afflicting hṛdaya), or
- **Āmāśaya/ūrasa-sambandhī śūla** (non-cardiac pain presenting in the heart region), which Caraka discusses as “non-cardiac chest pain” in the same chapter (see below).

5) Etiopathogenesis (Samprāpti) — concise but conceptually complete

Samprāpti (stepwise)

1. **Nidāna sevana**: exertion, stress, doṣa-provoking diet, urge suppression, indigestion, trauma etc. (Caraka 26/77; Suśruta 43/3)
2. **Doṣa prakopa** in *rasa-rakta* pathways + *prāṇavaha/rasavaha srotas* involvement (functional strain of circulation/respiration)
3. **Sthāna-saṃśraya in hṛdaya (marma)** due to vulnerability and continuous functional load
4. **Vyakti**: pain/distress + systemic symptoms (Caraka 26/78)
5. **Bheda**: doṣa-specific patterns (Caraka 26/79–80), chronicity, complications

Samprāpti Vighaṭana (breaking the pathogenesis)

- **Nidāna parivarjana** (remove causatives: stress, exertion extremes, incompatible foods, indigestion pattern, etc.)
- **Agni/Āma management** if present (especially when nausea, heaviness, kapha-otkleśa dominate)
- **Doṣa-pratyānika cikitsā** (Vāta/Pitta/Kapha-specific)
- **Srotoshodhana** in suitable patients (vāman/virecan etc. as per doṣa)
- **Balya-hṛdaya-rasāyana** in convalescence/stability

6) Diagnosis (Roga nīrṇaya) — Ayurveda + contemporary correlation

A) Lakṣaṇa clusters to identify doṣa dominance

Vātaja pattern

- emptiness in chest, dryness, pricking pain, variable intensity, anxiety/restlessness, obstruction-like feeling

Pittaja pattern

- burning, heat, feverishness, yellowish hue, blackout/dizziness tendency, intense distress

Kaphaja pattern

- heaviness, dull ache, stiffness, salivation, drowsiness, cough, sluggish pulse-feel (clinically)

Sannipātaja

- mixed features, variable, more severe

Krimija

- severe pricking + itching component (classical clue)

B) Hṛcchūla (Hṛdśūla): “cardiac vs non-cardiac” classical anchor

Caraka explicitly notes that **pain can be perceived in the heart region even when the heart is not the primary seat**, due to pathology in āmāśaya.

Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 26, śloka 101-102

हृच्छूलमामाशयमेवचार्तमन्येतहृत्संनिकृष्ट्यमाणम् ।
तस्मिंश्चलिङ्गहृदिरोगरूपसर्वभवेत्सवृद्धामयेत् ॥१०१ ॥

English meaning: In some patients, the *āmāśaya* (stomach/upper GI) itself is afflicted, and the pain is felt as if it is pulled toward the heart. In such cases, symptoms resembling *hṛdroga* may appear.

तवामयोऽसौहृपचार्यमाणःशनैःशनैःसंप्रति यातिशान्तिम् ।
हृद्रोगिणांत्वैषधशान्तियोगात्क्षिप्रंप्रणश्यत्युपचार्यमाणः ॥१०२ ॥

English meaning: That disorder (originating in *āmāśaya*) subsides gradually when treated appropriately; whereas true *hṛdroga* responds more promptly to specific heart-disease treatment measures.

Clinical application:

- If pain strongly relates to meals, indigestion, belching, nausea, heaviness, and improves gradually with *āmāśaya* measures → consider **āmāśaya-pradhāna hṛcchūla**.
- If pain relates to exertion, breathlessness, faintness, and responds to *hṛdroga*-specific measures → consider **hṛdroga-pradhāna**.

7) Chikitsā Sūtra (Principles of management)

Core principle

Doṣa-pradhāna cikitsā with marma-sensitivity:

- *Vāta*: **snehana + vātaśamana + anulomana**, supportive *hṛdyā*
- *Pitta*: **śitala upakrama + virecana + pittahara**, cooling diet/drugs
- *Kapha*: **langhana/āmāpācana as needed + vāman + kaphahara**, lightening measures
- *Sannipāta*: **balanced approach**, avoid extremes, treat dominant *doṣa* first
- *Krimija*: **krimighna + doṣaśamana**, address *nidāna* and tissue milieu

8) Chikitsā (Classical treatment measures & formulations)

A) Vātaja Hṛdroga (Caraka-based)

Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 26, śloka 81

तैलससौवीरकमस्तुतक्रवातेप्रपेयलवणसुखोष्णम् ।
मूत्राम्बुसिद्धंलवणैश्चतैलमानाहगुल्मार्तिहृदामयच्छम् ॥८१ ॥

English meaning: In *Vāta*-*hṛdroga*, warm unctuous preparations—oil with *sauvīraka/mastu/takra* and salt; and oil processed with urine/water and salts—help relieve flatulence, gulma-like distress, pain, and heart disease.

Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 26, śloka 82

पुनर्नवांदारुसपञ्चमूलंरास्नांयवान्विल्वकुलत्थकोलम् ।

पक्त्वाजलेतेनविपाच्यतैलमध्येङ्गपानेऽनिलहृदगदध्नम् ॥८२ ॥

English meaning: Prepare decoction of punarnavā, devadāru, pañcamūla, rāsnā, yava, bilva, kulattha, kola; cook oil with it—use for internal intake and abhyanga; alleviates Vāta-type heart disease.

Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 26, Śloka 84 (includes vikartikā/angina-like pain)

सपुष्कराहृःफलपुरमूलंमहौषधंशाटथभयाचकल्काः ।
क्षारान्वुर्सपिर्लवणीर्विमश्राःस्युर्वातहृद्रोगविर्किंकाच्चाः ॥८४ ॥

English meaning: Paste of puṣkaramūla, phalapūramūla, mahauṣadha (śunṭhī), śatī, abhaya; mixed with alkali-water, ghee and salts—relieves Vātaja hṛdroga and vikartikā (cutting chest pain).

Clinical synthesis (Vātaja):

Snehana (internal/external) + warm, unctuous, vāta-anulomana; avoid fasting extremes if *bala* is low.

B) Pittaja Hṛdroga

Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 26, Śloka 90

शीताःप्रदेहाःपरिचनानितथाविकेकोहृदिपित्तदुष्टे ।
द्राक्षासिताक्षौद्रपरूषकैःस्याच्छुद्धेतुपित्तापहमन्नपानम् ॥९० ॥

English meaning: In pittaja heart disease—cooling applications and sprinkling; and virecana. After purification, diet and drinks that alleviate pitta (with drākṣā, sugar, honey, parūṣaka etc.) are used appropriately.

Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 26, Śloka 92

दद्यादभिषग्धन्वरसांश्चगव्यक्षीराशिनांपित्तहदामयेषु ।
तैवसर्वेप्रशमंप्रयान्तिपित्तामयाःशोणितसंश्रयाये ॥९२ ॥

English meaning: Physician may administer *dhanva-rasa* (meat soups of animals of arid land) to those taking cow's milk in pittaja hṛdroga; pitta disorders seated in blood get pacified by these measures.

Clinical synthesis (Pittaja):

Śītala upakrama + virecana when indicated + pittaśamana diet; avoid ushṇa/tīkṣṇa overstimulation.

C) Kaphaja Hṛdroga

Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 26, Śloka 96

हृदस्थितंश्लेष्महैःकषायैःपिवेत्सुसिद्धैःकटुकैश्चयुक्तैः ।
वाम्योनरःश्लेष्महैर्यवागूभर्तौश्चलिङ्गांचशमनंप्रजेच्च ॥९६ ॥

English meaning: Kapha situated in the heart should be alleviated by well-prepared astringent decoctions combined with pungent drugs; the patient should undergo emesis; take kapha-reducing gruels/foods; and symptoms subside.

Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 26, Śloka 98

वाम्योऽथ शुद्धः कफजं हृदामयं लङ्घनैरन्नपानैः प्रशाम्येत् ।
श्लीपादशोथाशः प्तीहगुल्मे श्वासे च कासे च कफे च सर्वे ॥१८ ॥

English meaning: After emesis and purification, kaphaja hṛdroga is pacified by lightening measures and appropriate diet-drinks (langhana-type), similarly useful in various kapha disorders.

Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 26, śloka 99

शरीरचिन्तां कठिनां विहाय हृदि स्थितं यच्च कफं हरेत ।
हितं हि शुद्धस्य हृदामयस्य बलं च मेध्यं च सुखं च दत्ते ॥१९ ॥

English meaning: Avoiding heavy exertion, remove kapha lodged in the heart; after purification, it supports heart-disease management and promotes strength, intellect, and wellbeing.

Clinical synthesis (Kaphaja):

Langhana/āmāpācana where needed → Vamana (if appropriate) → kaphaśamana diet + medicines.

D) Sannipātaja Hṛdroga

Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 26, śloka 100

हृदामये सान्निपाते यथास्वं यत् प्रतिदोषं परिकीर्तिं तत् ।
वर्जयं त्रिदोषे तु समासतोऽल्पं भवेन सात्यं बलिनां च तिक्तम् ॥१०० ॥

English meaning: In sannipātaja hṛdroga, apply doṣa-specific measures as described; avoid extremes; in tridoṣa conditions, strong/unsuitable measures may not suit all—therapy should be balanced and individualized.

E) Krimija Hṛdroga (brief classical anchor)

Caraka Saṃhitā, Cikitsāsthāna 26, śloka 103

हृद्रोगमुक्तस्य च यस्तु दोषः कृमिरूपमापद्यत तं निहन्यात् ।
तिक्तैः कण्ठैः कट्टैः प्रलैपैः शुद्धैः क्रिमिघ्नैश्च सुदीर्घकालम् ॥१०३ ॥

English meaning: If, after relief from hṛdroga, a doṣa transforms into a krimi-like manifestation, it should be eliminated with bitter, astringent, pungent measures, external applications, purification and krimighna measures over a sustained period.

9) Role of Antaḥparimarjana & Bāhirparimarjana in Hṛdroga / Hṛcchūla

Antaḥparimarjana (internal)

- Doṣa-specific śamana formulations (as above)
- Doṣa-specific śodhana (vāmana in kaphaja; virecana in pittaja; vāta in selected cases with careful sequencing and bala-assessment)

Bāhirparimarjana (external/supportive)

- In Vāta-predominant pain: **abhyanga with vāta-hara taila**, gentle warmth (classical logic aligns with Caraka oil preparations in Vātaja)
- In Pittaja distress: **śitala pariṣeka/pradeha** (explicit in Caraka 26/90)
- In Kaphaja heaviness: external measures adjunct to internal langhana/vāmana plan

10) Pathyāpathyā (Diet & lifestyle) — Ayurveda-consistent

Pathya (generally supportive)

- Regular, timely meals; easily digestible food
- Avoid *adhyāśana* (overeating), *viruddha āhāra*, indigestion-provoking combinations (Suśruta 43/3)
- Stress regulation, adequate sleep; avoid excessive exertion (Caraka 26/77)
- Warm water sips in Vāta/Kapha patterns; cooling liquids in Pittaja pattern as appropriate

Apathya (to avoid)

- Excess exertion, strong purgation/enema misuse (Caraka 26/77)
- Persistent anxiety/fear/stress (Caraka 26/77)
- Very hot/dry foods, incompatible foods, overeating, eating on indigestion (Suśruta 43/3)
- Suppression of natural urges (Suśruta 43/3)

11) Representative Simulated Clinical Case (de-identified) + Chikitsā decision

Case vignette

A 54-year-old male presents with:

- Episodic chest heaviness/tightness on climbing stairs, relieved by rest
- Mild breathlessness on exertion, occasional nausea
- Tongue mildly coated; appetite variable; heaviness after heavy meals
- Sleep disturbed with worry; sedentary work
- Pulse feels somewhat slow/heavy; mild cough at times

Ayurvedic interpretation

- **Pradhāna doṣa:** Kapha with Vāta-anubandha (heaviness + exertional tightness + mild breathlessness; worry adds Vāta)
- **Srotas focus:** Rasavaha + Prāṇavaha involvement; hṛdaya as sthāna-saṃśraya
- **Āma status:** mild (coated tongue, heaviness after meals)

Appropriate type of Chikitsā (for the simulated case)

Step 1 — Samprāpti vighaṭana first

- **Nidāna parivarjana:** exertion extremes, heavy meals, stress triggers (Caraka 26/77; Suśruta 43/3)

Step 2 — If Kapha/Āma prominent

- Begin with **langhana + āmāpācana** (dietary lightening; doṣa-aligned gruels)
- Then **Kaphaja hrdroga line: Vāmana** as classical principal therapy when patient's *bala* and suitability permit (Caraka 26/96)

Step 3 — Śamana (classical) after appropriate purification / or when śodhana is not chosen

- Kapha-hara **kaṣāya** with **kaṭu-yukta** support (Caraka 26/96)
- Continue **langhana-type anna-pāna** (Caraka 26/98-99)

Step 4 — Address Vāta-anubandha and chest pain component

- If pricking/variable pain predominates, add **Vātaja hrdroga measures** (oil/ghee-based vātaśamana as per Caraka 26/81-84), selected to the digestive tolerance and doṣa balance.

If pain appears meal-linked and GI-dominant

Use the **āmāśaya-pradhāna hrcchūla** lens (Caraka 26/101-102): treat **āmāśaya** disorder first; improvement is gradual, and hrdroga-like features resolve correspondingly.

12) Quick self-check

1. From Caraka (26/77), list **any four nidāna** of hrdroga.
2. From Caraka (26/78), list **any five general lakṣaṇa** of hrdroga.
3. Differentiate **Vātaja vs Kaphaja** hrdroga using Caraka (26/79-80).
4. Explain the clinical significance of **Caraka 26/101-102** in evaluating hrcchūla.
5. Write a doṣa-wise chikitsā outline for a case of **Pittaja hrdroga** citing Caraka (26/90, 92).