

#### WHERE CLASSICAL WISDOM MEETS INTELLIGENT LEARNING

### Topic 2 Clinical ethics in the practice of Kayachikitsa

### Clinical Ethics in the Practice of Kayachikitsa

Integrating classical Ayurvedic wisdom with modern principles

# 1. Ethical Principles

#### 1. Satya (Truth-telling) & Ahimsa (Non-maleficence)

- ॰ "सत्यवाकदनं अक्रोधं च निर्वृत्तं मद्यमैथुनात् ..." (Āchāra-Rasāyana 1/4/30-35) Speak honestly, avoid anger, intoxication and harm .
- In practice: never withhold diagnosis; choose therapies that minimize harm.

#### 2. Beneficence (Hitam) & Non-maleficence (Ahitam)

- ः "अतुरेणैव विनारभेत् □" Treat the ailing with utmost care, avoiding aggravation.
- o Uphold śodhana-śamana sequence (e.g. snehana before virechana) to prevent iatrogenesis.

#### 3. Autonomy & Informed Consent

- o Explain diagnosis (rogi-roga parīkṣā), prognosis and all major interventions.
- Respect patient's right to accept or refuse sodhana, pāṇāyadāna, etc.

#### 4. Justice & Equity

- o Provide care equitably, regardless of caste, creed or socio-economic status.
- Ensure access to essential formulations and pañçakarma facilities.

#### 5. Confidentiality

- o Maintain discretion over patient's personal, medical and lifestyle information.
- Share information only with explicit patient permission or urgent public-health need.

# 2. Qualities of a Vaidya (Professionalism)

"चिकित्स्य पुरुषे चतुर्षदु गुणाः सम्पद्यन्ते" - The four limbs of successful therapy are the physician, medicine, attendant and patient .

गुण (Qualities)	श्लोक (Shloka) & Source	Explanation
दक्षता (Skill)	"दक्ष्तीथाधिश्चाधिरथो"(Cha.Su.9/6)	Mastery of theory & hands-on techniques.
शौच (Purity)	"शौचभमतत"(Cha.Su.9/6)	Cleanliness of body, mind & instruments.
श्रद्धा (Integrity)	"ज्ञानं चि विदुषां पुष्टिभिः"*	Uphold sacred texts; honest practice.
सामर्थ्य (Compassion)	Implied across Āchāra-Rasāyana	Empathetic care, patient-centred approach.

<sup>\*</sup>traditional madhukara-kavya reference

### 3. Effective Communication Skills

- Active Listening
  - Give full attention; reflect back ("So you're experiencing śītasnata...").
- Empathetic Language
  - o Use warm words: "You are not alone in this journey." (प्रियावचनम्)
- Clear Explanations
  - o Translate Sanskrit terms: e.g. *virechana* → mild purgation.
- Non-verbal Cues
  - o Open posture, eye contact, nodding to encourage dialogue.

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- Cultural Sensitivity
  - o Respect dietary taboos, family-centred decision-making.

## 4. Ethical Decision-Making Framework

- 1. Identify the Ethical Dilemma
  - o E.g., patient refuses virechana despite clinical indication.
- 2. Gather Clinical & Contextual Data
  - o Review dosha-dhātu status, rogi's mental strength (sattva), socio-economic factors.
- 3. Refer to Ethical & Ayurvedic Principles
  - $\circ$  Satya, Ahimsa, autonomy, śodhana  $\rightarrow$  śamana sequence.
- 4. Explore Alternatives
  - o Offer mild anuvāsana basti instead of virechana; adjourn procedure after counselling.
- 5. Make & Document Decision
  - Obtain informed consent; record rationale in case-sheet.
- 6. Implement & Reflect
  - o Monitor outcomes; debrief with team; integrate learnings into future practice.

# 5. Practicing Professionalism & Ethics

- Punctuality & Reliability: Respect patient's time; follow through on referrals.
- Continuous Learning: Regularly update knowledge of classical texts (Caraka, Sushruta) and modern guidelines.
- Teamwork & Accountability: Collaborate with nadi-pariksa, lab-analysis colleagues; admit errors promptly.
- Self-care & Boundaries: Maintain svasthavritta; avoid burnout to ensure sustained compassionate care.

This module equips the Kayachikitsa practitioner with a robust ethical compass—grounded in Āyurvedic śāstra and enriched by contemporary bioethical standards—to deliver safe, compassionate and equitable care.

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