



i. Introduction to śarīra racanā kriyā

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Etymology and Scope

- **Śarīra**: The Sanskrit root “√śrī” or “√śr” connotes “to decay, to break down,” implying that the **body** is perpetually subject to **change, growth, and decay**.
- **Racanā**: Means “**anatomical structure**” or “**arrangement**.” It deals with how the body’s **organs, tissues, and systems** are arranged and constituted.
- **Kriyā**: Implies “**physiology**” or the study of **functions and processes** that sustain life.

Thus, **Śarīra Racanā Kriyā** corresponds to **Ayurvedic Anatomy and Physiology**—encompassing a holistic view of the **human body’s structure** and **its functional mechanisms** in both health and disease.

The Significance of Studying Śarīra Racanā Kriyā in Ayurveda

1. **Holistic Approach**: Ayurveda views the body as **interconnected** (physical, mental, and spiritual levels). A thorough understanding of the **anatomy** and **physiology** lays the foundation for the **principles of diagnosis** and **treatment**.
2. **Alignment with Doṣas**: Body structure and functions are governed by **Vāta, Pitta, and Kapha**, the three doṣas. Śarīra Racanā Kriyā explains how each doṣa interacts with **various tissues (dhātu)** and **organs**.
3. **Individualization**: Knowledge of **body structure** (e.g., srotas, marma points, etc.) and **function** (e.g., agni, metabolism) is critical for **personalized treatments** and preventive care (svasthavṛtta).

Interplay of Mind and Body: Ayurveda emphasizes that **manas (mind)** and **ātman (soul)** also reside in the body. Studying **śarīra racanā kriyā** helps practitioners appreciate the **psychosomatic** dimensions.