

iv. Definitions of Ayurveda

iv. Definitions of Ayurveda - Hitāyu & Ahitāyu, Sukhāyu & Dukhāyu, Trisūtra of Āyurveda (Hetu, Liṅga, Auṣadha), and the Focus on Svastha & Ātura

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Definitions of Ayurveda

Core Meaning

- Āyurveda = "āyuḥ" (life) + "vedaḥ" (knowledge/science). Thus, it is the science of life.
- In classical texts, **Caraka Saṃhitā** (Sūtra Sthāna 1/41-42) notes that Ayurveda **analyzes** what is **beneficial** (hita) or **harmful** (ahita) for life, along with factors that foster **happiness** (sukha) or **sorrow** (duḥkha).

Purpose

Caraka Saṃhitā (Sūtra Sthāna 30/26) proclaims Ayurveda's goal is twofold:

- 1. Protect the health of the healthy (svasthasya svāsthyarakṣaṇam).
- 2. Alleviate disorders of the diseased (āturasya vikārapraśamanam).

Hitāyu & Ahitāyu, Sukhāyu & Dukhāyu

Ayurveda classifies life (āyuḥ) in terms of quality, alignment, and overall well-being.

Hitāyu (Beneficial Life) & Ahitāyu (Harmful Life)

Hitāyu (Beneficial Life)

- Defined as life spent in harmony with dharma, correct diet, virtuous conduct, and balanced dosas.
- Caraka Samhitā describes Hitāyu as life that promotes physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.
- Embodies **ethical** living, self-awareness, compassion, and moderation.

Salient Features:

- 1. Balanced Doṣas: Avoiding extremes in Vāta, Pitta, Kapha.
- 2. Ethical Conduct: Truthfulness, non-violence, philanthropy, moral lifestyle.
- 3. **Regulated Diet & Lifestyle**: Practicing daily routines (dinacaryā), seasonal regimens (ṛtucaryā), and mindful eating.

Ahitāyu (Harmful Life)

- Contrasts with Hitāyu, reflecting a disconnected life—unethical, self-indulgent, ignoring natural or moral laws.
- Imbalance in doşas or ignoring health guidelines leads to greater disease susceptibility.
- Emphasizes how chronic neglect or harmful behavior fosters ill health and mental unrest.

Key Examples:

- Overeating, misuse of substances, lack of proper sleep or exercise.
- Ethical lapses (dishonesty, arrogance, aggression) exacerbating dosic imbalances.

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Sukhāyu (Happy Life) & Dukhāyu (Unhappy Life)

Sukhāyu (Happy Life)

- Sukha means "happiness," thus Sukhāyu is life endowed with joy, contentment, stable health, and mental peace.
- Physical well-being (proper digestion, balanced energy), emotional balance, and fulfilling social interactions define Sukhāyu.

Characteristics:

- Disease-free state with harmonious doşas and healthy dhātus.
- 2. **Positive mental disposition**—calm mind, reduced stress, good sleep.
- 3. Constructive relationships and purposeful engagement in life.

Dukhāyu (Unhappy Life)

- A life marred by diseases, mental turmoil, sorrow, and obstacles to genuine well-being.
- Involves uncontrolled doşas, frequent illness, emotional unrest, and possibly negative social circumstances.

Key Indicators:

Chronic illness, recurrent stress, dissatisfaction, lack of direction or support.

Trisūtra of Āyurveda: Hetu, Linga, Auşadha

Trisūtra refers to three fundamental threads or pillars that structure Ayurvedic thinking around disease and health.

Hetu (Cause)

- Hetu means "causative factor." Ayurveda systematically identifies triggers for diseases—dietary indiscretions, lifestyle errors, emotional imbalances, or environmental factors.
- Classified as:
 - 1. Samavāyi Hetu: Inherent causes (e.g., the doșic constitution).
 - 2. **Asamavāyi Hetu**: Indirect influences (e.g., intangible triggers like emotional stress).
 - 3. Nimitta Hetu: External causes (climate, pathogens).

Role in Prevention

• By knowing **causative factors**, one can **prevent** the disease through lifestyle corrections, reversing wrong habits, and implementing prophylactic measures.

Linga (Symptom/Sign)

- Linga denotes clinical features or expressions of a disease.
- Ayurveda relies on thorough clinical examination (darśana, sparśana, praśna) and signals from pratyātmalinga (subjective experiences) to identify illness progression.

Importance of Symptom Recognition

- Early detection: Recognizing subtle lingas helps in timely intervention before disease fully manifests.
- Differential Diagnosis: Observing unique symptoms guides correct doşa identification and appropriate therapy.

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Aușadha (Treatment)

Auşadha generally means "medicine," but in a broad Ayurvedic sense, it encompasses therapeutic approaches
addressing doşic imbalance and tissue malfunction.

Three Pillars of Treatment

- 1. Antidotal or Pacifying measures (e.g., doṣa-praśamana)
- 2. Nourishing or Tissue-replenishing measures (dhātu-upacaya)
- 3. Eliminative or Detox measures (śodhana, panchakarma)
- Lifestyle modifications, herbal drugs, panchakarma therapies, and **pathya-apathya** (dietary do's and don'ts) collectively form Ayurvedic auṣadha strategies.

Focus on Svastha & Ātura

Svastha (The Healthy Individual)

Definition

Caraka Saṃhitā (Sūtrasthāna 9/4) defines svastha as one whose doṣas, agni (digestive fire), dhātus (tissues), and malas (wastes) are in equilibrium, and whose ātmā (soul), indriyas (senses) and mana (mind) are pleasant and content.

Characteristics

- 1. Sama Doșas: Balanced Vāta, Pitta, Kapha.
- 2. Samāgni: Optimal digestive and metabolic fire.
- 3. Samadhātu & Samamala: Properly formed tissues and regular excretion.
- 4. Prasanna Ātmendriya Mana: Cheerful, stable mind, clarity of senses, spiritual harmony.

Relevance

• Emphasizes **preventive healthcare**: daily routine (dinacaryā), seasonal regimen (ṛtucaryā), balanced nutrition, ethical living, stress management to maintain "svastha" status.

Atura (The Diseased Individual)

- Atura means "one who is suffering or afflicted."
- The **opposite** of svastha, reflecting **imbalance** in doṣas, deranged agni, or mental agony leading to physiological or psychological **pain**.

Pathogenesis

- Mistakes in diet (viruddhāhāra), environment, stress, or ignoring prakṛti lead to doṣic vitiation.
- The culminating stage is vikāra, manifested as recognizable liṅgas (symptoms) and clinical disorders.

Treatment

Ayurveda's approach to restoring the ātura to a svastha state involves reversing the underlying hetu, addressing linga, and providing auşadha (appropriate therapy).

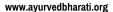
Conclusion

Ayurveda frames life and disease in dynamic ways:

1. Definitions of Ayurveda highlight it as the science guiding beneficial vs. harmful living, laying out the

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- fundamentals for **health** (svastha) and disease (ātura).
- 2. Hitāyu-Ahitāyu & Sukhāyu-Dukhāyu clarify the qualitative dimensions of life—ethical alignment, physical well-being, and mental contentment or, conversely, harmful lifestyles and unhappiness.
- 3. The **Trisūtra**—Hetu (cause), Liṅga (signs/symptoms), and Auṣadha (treatment)—structures how Ayurveda **diagnoses and intervenes** in illness.
- 4. The explicit focus on svastha (healthy) and ātura (diseased) individuals underscores Ayurveda's dual mission: preventive care to maintain health, and therapeutic protocols to cure existing diseases.

By comprehending these categories, practitioners and patients grasp **why** certain lifestyles yield **hitāyu** or **sukhāyu** and how **Ayurvedic** therapies rectify pathologies—always aiming to restore the integrative **harmony** between body, mind, behavior, and environment.

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