

**KASHYAP SAMHITA – A COMPREHENSIVE CLASSICAL TEXT OF  
AYURVEDA****<sup>1</sup>\*Dr. Vishal Kumar Sharma and <sup>2</sup>Dr. Mahendra kumar Sharma**

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**ABSTRACT**

Vridhdha Jivaka has one of the kaumarbhritya book named as Kashyap Samhita, the only available source book on book written for paediatrics in Ayurveda, it is written in the form of compilations of teachings of Acharya Kashyap by his disciple. With the interval of time, the book was mislaid in oblivion and then resuscitated by Vatsya, who obtained it from Anayasa. This article reviews the history of this ancient text and various aspects connected to its stages of expansion. The article also précises the input of Kashyap Samhita in field of kaumarbhritya, one of the eight branches of ayurveda, which pacts with care and illnesses of children.

**KEYWORDS:** Kashyap, Vridhdha Jivaka, Kashyap Samhita in Kaumarbhritya.

**INTRODUCTION**

Kashyap Samhita is written by Vridhdha Jivaka which is important book of kaumarbhritya, it is one of the eight branches of ayurveda. It is a compilation based on the wisdoms of classical book named as Acharya Kashyap, which was accrued by Vridhdha Jivaka and edited by Vatsya. Kaumarbhritya is the branch of ayurveda commerce with care of infants and children, diseases, and conduct of Dhatri (wet nurse or care taker of child), milk, its makings and treatment of milk related illnesses and sicknesses due to bal grahas. It must have been a fully advanced, well flourished, and practiced art of medicine in the ancient era of ayurvedic history. There were establishments of the field as specified in Kalidasa`s

Kumarbhrityakusala and Kautilya's Arthashastra. Dalhana in his clarification on first chapter of Uttar Tantra of Sushruta Samhita mentions the discourse of Parvatika, Jivaka and Bandhaka. Much of the ayurvedic classics connected to the subject have been lost with the way of time and most of them are not available today. However, we have been lucky sufficient that Kashyap Samhita which was also mislaid in oblivion was found by Nepal's Rajguru. In year 1938 Pt. Hemraj Sharma took the pious task of hitting the tadapatra manuscript composed and got it published for the first time in Varanasi by Chaukhambha. Present available book is may be one fourth or even less than the present book which we got today. Still many of the chapters of various sthana (sections) could not be collected as the pandulipi or manuscript was incomplete and broken in many portions. He has also composed the highly educative 'Upodghat' on Kashyap Samhita. It is in Newari script and deposited in Durbar library in Kathmandu. Hence an attempt has been made to recollect the speciality and contribution of Acharya Kashyap in writing this book.

## HISTORY

Rajguru Hemraj Sharma has mentioned in 'upodghat' that "source material of this samhita is a book written on tadapatra (palm leaves). These leaves having six lines in each. The book begins with page 29 and ends with 264, in-between also pages, lines or words are missing. In spite of the script of the book being very old, the difference in writings indicates that it has been probably completed by two writers. The shape of script, indications of page numbers by letters at certain places, number of chapters and verses, length and width of leaves of tada indicate that probably this available book was written about 700-800 years back".<sup>[2]</sup> Presently, a hindi translation of Kashyap Samhita by Sri Satyapal Bhishagacharya and English translation by Prof. (Km) P.V. Tewari, published by Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi and Chaukhambha Visvabharati, Varanasi respectively are available. The following is a deeper view of history of Kashyap samhita: Kashyap: He was the preacher of Kashyap samhita.<sup>[1]</sup> His full name is believed to be Marichi Kashyap. Several other scholars have been in history with the same name as Kashyap. One of them was the expert of toxicology, who is mentioned in Mahabharat (ancient epic of India). Another scholar with this name was Vriddha Kashyap, who has been mentioned in third chapter of sidhhi sthana of Kashyap samhita and cited by acharya Dalhan.<sup>[3]</sup> b) Vriddha Jivaka: He was the one who compiled the teachings of acharya Kashyap in form of Vriddha Jivaka tantra or Kashyap samhita. It is said that the prefix 'Vriddha' which means 'old' or 'elder' was attached to name of 'Jivaka' as he attained a vast knowledge in a small age i.e. though he was young in age, yet was old in

wisdom. Also, it is said that young Jivaka, son of Richika took bath in the holy river Ganga near Haridwar, and emerged as an old man. The prefix also serves to differentiate him from another scholar of ayurveda with the name 'Jivaka', who was a specialist in shalya or surgery. Vatsya who was a devotee of Lord Shiva, Kashyap as well as Yaksha redacted this book after procuring it from a yaksha named Anayasa. Vatsya was a descendant of Bhrigu and Vriddha Jivaka, thus also called 'bhargava' i.e., belonging to family of Bhrigu. It is also possible that Vatsya derived this name kaushambi.

**Khila Sthana of Kashyap Samhita:** Kashyap samhita is divided into eight sthanas (sections) excluding Khila sthana. Khila sthana in the book was added later on, because in initial enumeration of eight sections of the book (sutra, nidana, vimana, shareer, indriya, chikitsa, siddhi and kalpa) it is not included, but is added in subsequent description.<sup>[4]</sup> It is believed that the Khila sthana was added by Vatsya, while some authors believe it to be added by an anonymous author after Vatsya. When this Khil sthana was being written, probably major part of the original book was available, as it mentions that "twenty-four types of measurements of diet are described in Rasa Vimana chapter".<sup>[2]</sup> However, this chapter is not found in presently available Kashyap samhita. Other books with the title 'Kashyap samhita': 1. A work called Kashyap samhita is noted in Burnell's catalogue of Tanjore library (mss no. XLT p-70). In Aufrecht's catalogue also this manuscript is included (p-88). This book is in the form of discussions between Uma and Maheshwara (Deities in Hindu mythology) and deals with the etiology and treatment of diseases including prayers to Rudra, Shiva and Vishnu. This book has very scarce matter pertaining to kaumarbhritya.<sup>[3]</sup> 2. A manuscript entitled 'Kashyap rog nidanam' is enlisted in GOML Vol. XXIII no. 13112. This book is incomplete and gives types and distinguishing characteristics of different diseases and their treatment. However, this book is nowhere near to presently accepted Kashyap samhita.<sup>[4]</sup> 3. Dalhana in the commentary on twenty seventh chapter of Uttar tantra of Sushruta samhita has cited a book named 'Kashyapadi tantra'. 4. A book on toxicology, named 'Kashyap samhita' is published from Madras. It deals with snakes, insects, poisonous drugs etc. and is not related to kaumarbhritya. 5. In the library of Sampurnanand Sanskrit Vishwavidyalaya, there is a manuscript entitled 'Kashyap samhita' in which good number of drug preparations containing metallic contents are included. Hence it cannot be earlier than 12th or 13th century. 6. Another manuscript with the name 'Kashyap samhita' has been found in Newari language kept at Saraswati Bhawan, Varanasi. But it deals mainly with etiology and treatment of diseases and does not propound kaumarbhritya as its main subject. It also includes

considerable usage of rasa preparations in treatment, which renders its time to be after 11th A.D. Kashyap Samhita is considered main text of Kaumarbhritya and for this speciality it is the only source book even today. It is also known as Vridha Jeevaka Tantra, a treatise on Ayurveda attributed to the sage Kashyap. The text is often named as one of the earliest treatises on Indian medicine, alongside works like the Sushruta Samhita, Charak Samhita, Bhela Samhita, and Harit Samhita. With the lapse of time, the important texts were either missing or incompletely available which was then resurrected by Vatsya, who procured it from a Yaksha named Anayasa. This article reviews various aspects related to Kaumarbhritya like Garbh Vigyan (Embryology), Navjata Shishu Paricharya (care of new born), Vaya Vibhajan (Age Classification), Shishu Aahar (Nutrition), Samskara (Childhood sacraments), Samanya Chikitsa Siddhant (General Principles of Management), Samanya Aushadha Matra (Drug doses), Shishu Roga Vinishchaya (Childhood Diagnosis). Ayurveda is mentioned as upanga of Atharvaveda by Sushruta and Vagbhata; Charak says that Ayurveda, being Veda is knowledge of Ayu, is worshiped by erudites of Vedas and the physician should express his devotion in Atharvaveda. In Kashyap Samhita identical descriptions is seen and Ayurveda is considered as fifth Veda. Ayurveda is equated with thumb of palm while other four Vedas with four fingers. Vatsya is said to have redacted Kashyap Samhita after learning Rigaveda, Yajurveda and Samveda properly, this shows that Atharvaveda and Ayurveda are considered as one.<sup>[1]</sup> Kashyap Samhita deals with child health care in detail including breastfeeding, alternate feeding, nutritional foods, concept of supplementary foods, certain drugs / recipes, specially gold or medicated ghrita, elaborate description of sudation, emesis and enema for children, dentition, wet nurse, pediatric disease like phakka, visarpa, charmadala etc and management of common diseases like jwara, atisara etc taking into consideration the factors like age and strength. Kaumarbhritya is described as an independent branch in Ashtanga Ayurveda. Acharya Charak placed Kaumarbhritya at 6 th position, Acharya Sushruta at 5 th position and Acharya Vagbhata at 2 nd position. The practice of Kaumarbhritya starts right from birth of the baby upto he become capable of independent existence. This is the time of maximum development of child. During this time both his physical and mental development is promoted. Thus, Kaumarbhritya is considered as the first hand support offered by science of Ayurveda to a new born on his arrival to this new world, to guide him towards a healthy living throughout the future and bring out the best possible individual out of him. Kashyap Samhita is the only available treatise on Kaumarbhritya today. Following are its contribution in this field.

Garbh Vigyaan (Embryology) is main content found in the book. According to Kashyap Samhita the intrauterine development in first and second month is explained as prana(jiva) certainly divides the bijadhatu(zygote) according to number or systems of asthi(bones). The bija immediately after its entry into the body is enveloped by rakta. From shukra, asthi (bones) are derived, from asthi (bones) the mamsa and from these two i.e. asthi and mamsa develops snayu (tendons) and all other major and minor body parts alongwith indriyas of foetus. From rakta heart is formed, from heart the liver, from liver the spleen and from spleen the lungs.

### **RAKSHAKARAMA**

The aims of rakshoghanakarmas are to protect children from grahabaadha, prevention of mental disorders, prevention of infections in post-natal period, curative function and reduction in intensity of manifested disease. In Kashyap Samhita there is a detail chapter on fumigation called Dhupakalpadhyaya, which is original contribution of Kashyap Samhita and various dhupana yoga are mentioned with their utmost importance.

### **VAYA VIBHAJAN (AGE CLASSIFICATION)**

In Ayurveda, Acharyas have divided life span under three categories i.e. childhood, adulthood and oldage. For expressing a particular matter, the most accepted scientific approach is the simple process of classification. Classification can be in different view. In Ayurvedic classics, total age of a human being is classified according to its physical dynamics. i.e. (dhatu pushti, sthiti, naasham).<sup>[5-6]</sup>

### **SHISHU AAHAR (NUTRITION)**

Acharya Kashyapa in Kashyap Samhita Sutra Sthana Ksheerutpatyadhyaya without mentioning any physical characters says that the pure milk is that which provides unobstructed, easy and good growth of different body parts. It provides longevity as well as good health to the child and does not cause any pain or trouble to the child and wet nurse. In Khila Sthana of Kashyap Samhita Acharya Kashyap described Aahar as “Mahabhaishajyam”. As per his verses no medicine will act as good as food for sustaining the life of living beings. Though one may be taking medicine, one can't exist without food. So food is otherwise called as mahabhaishajyam.

### **CHUDAKARAM SANSKARA**

Acharya Kashyap has devoted a separate chapter of Sutra sthana on the topic Karanvedhana in Chudakarniyeadhyaya that contained detailed information regarding when, how, where to

pierce and complication of ear lobe piercing. He mentioned that the experienced and expert physician should pierce the ear of over joyous child, for achievement of Trivarga Sidhi i.e. Dharam (religion), Kaam (Desires) and Arth (Wealth). This Sanskara may stimulate the strengthening of immune system in response to injury to the earlobes which initiates the antigen antibody reaction in early period of child.

### **SHISHU ROGA VINISHCHAYA (CHILDHOOD DIAGNOSIS)**

In Vedanadhyaya of Kashyap Samhita all the clinical features mentioned under the heading are short cases with spot diagnostic value requires minimum clinical examination and interaction with the informer. Majority of the symptoms pertain to newborn rather than a child with sufficient language development. In Kashyap Samhita, a total of 34 clinical conditions have been enlisted in Vedanadhyaya of Sutrasthana. Vedanadhyaya concerns the symptomatology of various diseases in children and serves as a great guidance for pediatric examination and diagnosis as children themselves are unable to narrate their symptoms. Examination of diseased child is essential primarily for diagnosis of the disease and secondarily for determining the prognosis and planning the treatment protocol. This chiefly comprises of two domains namely general physical examination and the detailed systemic examination. Therefore, it is important to understand that precise and timely diagnosis is the key to prevent significant morbidity and mortality in children.<sup>[7-8]</sup>

### **DISCUSSION**

Acharya Kashyap states that the omnipresent jiva empowered with the qualities of God, abdicate from the former body and enters into next one. Thus, it is never dissociated from bija shonita, vayu, akasha etc.(Mahabhuta), mana (mind) and buddhi(intellect). The jiva due to its omnipresence does not enter randomly in either of the species, but the entry in specific species is guided by the fruits of own deeds of previous life. In third month, Kashyap elaborated that embryo starts quivering, achieves consciousness and can feel the pain that means indriyas have subtle revelation and the mana (mind) has more revelation. In fourth month, the foetus stabilizes becomes conspicuous without complications and there is heaviness in the body of pregnant women. In fifth month, there is more accumulation of flesh and blood of the foetus therefore the pregnant women become emaciated. In sixth month, there is increase in bala (strength), varna (complexion) and ojas (vital power) and the pregnant women has more exhaustion. In seventh month, the foetus becomes complete in respects of all dhatu (muscle, blood, bone etc) gets proper nourishment. All the major body



parts are more conspicuous and whole body gets completely associated with Vata, Pitta and Kapha; thus, the pregnant women feel extreme tiredness. In eighth month due to maturity of the foetus the Ojas become agile and remains unstable, it moves from mother to foetus and from foetus to the mother through rasa carrying channels. Due to this transfer of Ojas mother and foetus become happy or dull alternately (happiness when Ojas is present and dull when Ojas has gone to the other side). If delivery takes place at this period life becomes doubtful (at the time of delivery if Ojas is in the mother, the fetus will die, if it is in the foetus, the life of mother may be in danger). Wise physicians do not consider this month appropriate for labour. From ninth month onwards delivery occurs in due course and foetus remembers all the deeds of previous life as well as sorrow and happiness of intra-uterine life only till it does not get new sustenance. Navjata Shishu Paricharya (Care of New Born) Navjata Shishu may be defined as a baby upto 28 days of age therefore Navjata Shishu Paricharya includes the care of new born baby till 28 days of age. Acharya Kashyap explains very clearly that every delivery is an emergency and during delivery one leg of lady will be on earth and the other on the Yamalok(Death). In Ayurveda, Acharyas gave prime importance to Navjata Shishu Paricharya (care of new born) which starts from birth to full stability of new born. According to Acharya Kashyap Navjata Shishu Paricharya can be considered to include Prashan after first day, Rakshakarma, Suryodarshan and Chandrodarshan. Though Acharya Charak and Acharya Vagbhat has mentioned Pranpratyagamanam, Ulbaparimarjanam, mukhavishodhnam, Garbodhakvamanam, Nabhinaalchednam etc, there is no mention of these in Kashyap Samhita due to missing texts from initial chapters. As we can see the contribution of all these by kashap acharya than we can conclude the article below.<sup>[9]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Kashyap Samhita is the select and revered classical textbook on Kaumarbhritya with the care of newborn, their diseases and running. The unique role of Kashyap Samhita is exemplified as Lehan, Samanya Aushadh matra, Dhupan, Child's Nutrition, growth and development, various childhood Sanskara, Vedanaadhyaya. Kashyap Samhita is careful exactly the book of Kaumarbhritya since subject matter. It is thus unquestionably the most commanding text of Kaumarbhritya. Although Kashyap Samhita is partial but the knowledge of Kaumarbhritya hold its provenience to this Classic.

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