



ARCHITECTURAL DESIGNS MENTIONED IN CHARAKA SAMHITA FOR DIFFERENT TREATMENT PROTOCOL -A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Charak Samhita mentions various architectural designs or structures in various chapters for treatment purposes or for *Vihar* (accommodation) in different types of diseases or conditions. This article compiles and reviews all such structures mentioned in different places throughout the *Charak Samhita*. like *Sutikagara*, *Kumaragara* mentioned in *Sharirsthana*, *Aturalaya*, *Kutisweda* mentioned in *Sutrasthana*, *Dhara graha*, *Kutipraveshika* mentioned in *Chikitsa sthan*, etc. Each structure will be described in the format purpose, its designs and structure, its importance in the present era, and Vastu Shastra's view. We have taken some of Vastu Shastra's references wherever needed to explain structure or architectural design.

Keywords: *Aturalaya*, *Dhara graha*, *Kumaragara*, *Kutipraveshika*, *Sutikagara*, *Vastu Shastra*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is an ancient science of medicine, and *Charak Samhita* is one of the leading books of medicine in Ayurveda, including the *Brihatrayi*, the three core books in Ayurveda. *Charak Samhita* mentions the cause, symptoms and treatments of many diseases. Along with this, it also mentions diet (*Pathya*) and don't's (*Apathya*), *Ahar* (food according to disease) and *Vihar* (accommodation) in various conditions and diseases. This article mainly focuses on *Vihar*, i.e., the accommodation part; here, we are compiling and studying different types of architectural buildings or designs mentioned in various parts of *samhita*. We also explained its structure, purpose, and advantages in the present era. The reference from *Vastu Shastra* has been taken wherever needed; *Vastu Shastra* is the Art of Balancing 5 Elements in a Building. It comprises five elements (*Panchamahabhuta*): earth, water, fire, air, and space². Harmony with natural surroundings³. Positive energy flow (*Prana*) in the constructed structure.¹

Charak Samhita Sutrasthana: *Charak Sutra Sthan* contains 30 *Adhyayas* or chapters; this chapter explains different basic principles, therapeutic procedures, and medicines useful in *Ayurvedic* treatment. Chapters like *Sweda Adhyaya* and *Upakalpaniya Adhyaya* explain the construction of structures like *Kutisweda* and the construction of *Aturalaya*.

1) *Kutisweda*²

Purpose: For *Swedan* (Sudation) therapy.

Construction/design :

If one desires to administer the (hot-house) Sudatorium-sudation, The place should be well selected, either on the eastern or northern sides. A pleasant, fertile land with black, sweet earth or golden-coloured soil should be selected. It must be on the bank of the reservoir of water, having near to it a flight of steps on the southern or western side. A round chamber should be built on an even and well-laid-out plot with the frontage on its eastern or northern side facing the water and about seven or eight cubits distant.²

Dimensions: Its height should be sixteen cubits at most, and its diameter should be the same. It should be circular.

The walls and roofs should be of earth and well plastered, leaving several air- holes. Within this chamber, a platform must be built all around except the entrance, one cubit in height and breadth. This chamber must be constructed as an oven of four spans' breadth and a man's height with earth with multiple small holes and a lid on its top. It should then be ignited with the sticks of catechu, *Asvakarna Saal* and other similar kinds of wood.²

Procedure :

When it is known that the wood is wholly burnt away and the smoke is gone, the hot house has been heated to the degree of right temperature required for the sudation. The person anointed with *Vata*-curative substances and covered with a cloth should be made to enter it. While he enters, he should be told to enter to gain well-being and health. Having entered and getting on to the platform, lie down on your right or the left side as is comfortable. However, it is overcome by sweating and fainting. You must not leave the platform. You must cling to it as long as life's breath is in you. If once you let go of your hold of the platform, being overpowered by perspiration and faintness, you will be unable to find the doorway and immediately lose your life. So, you should, on no account, leave the platform. When you feel yourself cleansed of inspissated impurities, well and copiously sweated. Your body channels are well dilated, and you have been rendered light. You have known that all obstruction, stiffness, numbness, pain and heaviness have left you, then following the platform, reach the entrance. Having emerged, do not rush to touch cold water, as it will harm your eyes. When you have got over the heat and fatigue, after the lapse of a *muhurta* (3/4 hour), you must have suitable affusion in genially warm water, and then you may take your meal". This is the procedure to be followed in the sudatorium-sudation.²

View of *Vastu shastra* ¹: *Vastushastra* suggest the north or east side facing construction as it is the di-

rection of *Kuber* (the god of wealth) and also for good light and airflow in the home. The same direction has been mentioned for *Kuti* in *Charak Samhita* while selecting a land. Both *Ayurveda* and *Vastu shastra* have similarities in their views. It should be plain, not uneven; large buildings should not surround it, and a water reservoir should be nearby. The Direction of the Water reservoir should face the northern or eastern side because it is the direction of *Jala Mahabhuta* or water element.¹

All other construction of *Kutisweda* is being customised for *Swedan* or sudation therapy purposes, such as round walls and a sitting platform.

Advantages: If the morbid *Vata* in a man is corrected by a sudation procedure preceded by oleation, his urine, semen, and faeces do not get inspissated (Thicken). That sudation is considered productive, well-contrived, well-medicated, and neither too hot nor too mild. It is applied with due consideration of the patient's disease, season, and vitality.

Its relevance in the present era: In the present era, most Ayurvedic hospitals, spa centres, etc., are using steam boxes for whole body steam; Kutisweda can be correlated with sauna baths or steam rooms of today's era; Soana baths have many types according to the type of heating technique used in it. e.g. infrared saunas (infrared heat waves are used), dry soanas (heated rock is used), traditional soanas (air is heated in the room)³; steam rooms are unlike the soanas the steam rooms employ wet heat; boiling water is used for the steam which is somewhat similar to traditional *Ayurvedic* steaming procedure.⁴In today's era we can use traditional *Ayurvedic Kutisweda* with some modern changes like temperature monitoring system, modern building materials and Luke warm showers in a bathroom after patients coming out from sudation hut.

2) *Aturalaya*:⁵

Purpose: For treatment procedures, equipment storage, and emergency treatments, an *Aturalaya* is built.

Construction/design: The expert architect should first design a good house that is strong and wards off the wind except on one side, affords comfortable moving space, is not surrounded by high places, is

not penetrable to smoke, heat, moisture, dust and undesirable noise, contact, taste, sights and odour, and is furnished with a water storage room, pharmacy room, latrine, bathroom, and kitchen.

Accessories: The attendants who have character, cleanliness, good conduct, affection, and sympathy and are not disinclined to any work.

Those who are well-versed in singing, playing musical instruments, verses of approved character, versed in the knowledge of climate and season and are good members of society.

Kitchen instruments: A beaker, sipping spoon, water tub, pot, cooking pot, pan, etc.

Accessories related to patients: beds and seats with kettle and spittoon, bed sheets, coverlets and cushions with pillows, beds convenience for inclining, reclining, for oleation, sudation etc.⁶

Medicinal accessories: ghee, oil, animal fat, marrow, honey, treacle, salt, water, etc. All the above accessories and others that may be considered helpful in effecting remedies in emergency treatment should be kept ready and also valuable for after-treatment.⁶

Advantages :

It keeps the physician ready for an emergency, keeps all the instruments safe and free from contamination in a hygienic place, and ensures the safe use of instruments. *Aturalaya* provides a proper place where a physician, along with his team and all the proper therapeutic instruments, can treat from pre-procedure to post-procedure, which is convenient for both the patient and the physician.

Relevance of *Aturalaya* in the present era :

In the present era for building an *Ayurvedic* hospital, a standard protocol is followed as per government rules,^{seven} while the basic things remain the same, i.e. many of these rules are similar to the rules stated in *Charak samhita* for *Aturalaya*. Like selection of place, selection of staff, light and ventilation, equipment for procedures, and emergency medicines; while building a modern-day *Ayurvedic* hospital, we can use modern building materials, techniques, and modern equipment like ECG monitor, x-ray photography etc. while following basic *Vastu* rules.

Role of Vastu Shastra: *Vastu Shastra* decides on architectural perfection based on light, ventilation, and peace. It also states rules for placing different rooms according to *Panchabhautic* components. The water component resides in the north-east direction, so open spaces, gardens, water bodies, halls, etc., should be located in the north-east direction to get proper sunlight; the *Agni* component resides in the East-south direction, so the use of fire, i.e. Kitchen for *Ayurvedic* medicine preparation, and storeroom should be placed in this section. The earth component resides in a south-west direction, so the patient's restroom should be there after the procedure. The Air component resides in a west-north direction, so the sanitarium, cattle's shed, etc., should be kept on this side so the wind can take the smell from these places.⁸

Sharir sthan: *Charak Shashir Sthan* contains 8 chapters, which mention different aspects of the human body, *Garbha Utpatti*, *Garbhaphoshana* etc. It also mentions structures like *Sutikagara* and *Kumaragara*.

1) *Sutikagara* :

Purpose: To provide a suitable place for proper postpartum care for the mother and child.

Site of construction: Before the commencement of the ninth month, the physician should erect a lying room on a site free from bones, sands and broken bits of earthen vessels in soil, which is excellent in colour, taste and savour, facing east or north.⁹

Construction material and design: wood of bael, false mangosteen, putramjiva, marking nut, three-leaved capers and catechu or any other wood which the Brahmanas who are knowers of the *Atharvaveda* recommend. This should be well-built, well-plastered, and well-furnished with doors and windows and according to the principles of architecture, there should be arrangements for a fireplace, water storage, pounding, lavatory, bathroom and kitchen, and it should be comfortable in that particular season.¹⁰

Advantages: Postpartum recovery and care of the mother become easier; newborn care and monitoring can be done easily; Lactation support increases breast-feeding success; due to proper hygiene, women and children remain healthy and fit; Nutritional

counselling and meal planning promote proper recovery of the mother; and Emotional support and counselling are provided, which is essential during this period.

Relevance of in the present era :

Currently, there are many maternity homes for caring for a pregnant lady during her delivery and post-natal care. They provide facilities like Obstetric and gynaecological care, Labor and delivery services, Postpartum care, Neonatal care, Prenatal education and counselling, containing labour room, rest room, separate sanitary rooms and other modern equipment and infrastructure; Although the equipment and infrastructure have been changed drastically the basic principle and purpose remains the same. It provides proper care for women, their foetus, and also post-natal care.

View of Vastu shastra: Its orientation should be Southeast or southwest, while the Entrance must be East- or north-facing; bed placement should Avoid placing beds under beams or near corners. Windows: East- or north-facing for natural light, and colours should be Calm, like white, light blue, or pale green.⁸

2) *Kumaragara* :

Purpose: To provide a nurturing environment for children's physical, emotional, and mental well-being.

Design and Construction: It should be excellent, beautiful, well-lighted, sheltered from draught, admitting from only one direction, strong, free from pests as marauding beasts, animals, fanged creatures, mice and moths, well planned as regards the places of water storage, grinding, lavatory, bath and cooling, comfortable during all seasons, and provided with beds, seats and spreads suited to each season. Experienced physicians and those attached to the family Should be available. The bed, seats, spreads and covers meant for the child should be soft, light, clean and fragrant, fumigated well and rendered perfectly clean and dry.¹²

Advantages: It provides a safe and comfortable place for children to grow, improves child health and well-being, provides a Supportive environment for children, is well protected due to fumiga-

tion, and reduces health complications. It also contains different playing toys for the all-around growth of the child and enhanced cognitive development.

Its relevance in today's era: *Kumaragar's* emphasis on natural light, ventilation, and colour schemes creates a nurturing atmosphere for children and families; today we can have a separate room for children in our home Which is disinfected with various disinfecting agents, and floor cleaners, everyday proper hygiene should be maintained of children's room, We can provide different modern day toys, puzzle games, musical instruments etc., Children's rooms can be equipped with smart temperature controllers, CCTV monitoring etc., In today's conditions usually, separate rooms for children are built during the construction of houses, so we can follow the minute instructions mentioned in *Kumaragara*, like Orientation, layout, colour scheme, light and ventilation, etc. and apply it in today's architecture.

View of Vastu Shastra: The orientation of the *kumaragara* should be Northeast or northwest (considered auspicious for child); the entrance should be present East- or north-facing (Direction of *Kuber*, the god of wealth). Its layout should be Spacious, well-ventilated, and naturally lit. Place the colour scheme used in bright, cheerful colours (e.g., yellow, orange, green), and furniture and other structures should be without sharp corners, rounded or curved, Child-friendly, comfortable, and safe.⁸

Charak Samhita Chikitsa Sthan: The *Chikitsa Sthan* contains 30 *Adhyayas*, each of which explains various causes, symptoms and treatments for different types of diseases. In *Chikitsa Sthan* 1st *Adhyay*, while explaining the *Rasayan Kutipravesika Rasayan*, is mentioned later in *Charak Chikitsa Sthan* 4th while explaining the *Chikitsa of Raktapitta Dharagriha* has been mentioned.

1)Kutipraveshika rasayana :

Purpose: For taking *Kuti Rasayana* for longevity and healthy life.

Construction: Physicians, the twice-born (*Dwija*) communities, saintly men and men of virtuous deeds, free from *Alam*, should select a land close to a city,

where the necessary appurtenances (apparatus/ instruments) may be had, it is facing towards either the east or the north.

It should be of the following description: high roofed and commodious; built in three concentric courts; furnished with narrow ventilators; thick-walled; congenial in all weathers; well lighted; pleasing to the mind; proof against noises and other disturbing agents; untenanted by women equipped with all the requisite appurtenances, it should be *tri-garbha*, *Trilochana* and *Sukshma Lochana* that is there should three consecutive *Kutis* built one inside the other, three windows which are placed alternatively to the windows of each hut to avoid entry of direct sunlight, many small holes on the walls of hut for ventilation. At the construction site, the land should be of black or yellow soil. Physicians, medicines, and Brahmanas should be present and ready on the call. After that, during the sun's northern course, in the bright half of the month, when the day (*tithi*) and the constellation (*Nakshatra*) are propitious and the *Muhurta* (determined time). A man full of faith and single-mindedness should enter the hut.¹³

Advantages of Kutipraveshika Rasayan: For a healthy and long life free of diseases, the *Kutipraveshika Rasayana* is suggested in *Charaka samhita*; it is said to slow down the ageing process, makes nails shiny and makes hair black again; it rejuvenates the body and provides it with immense immunity, it also increases the Aphrodite property of the body and provides strength to the body.

Its relevance in the present era :

1) at present, where avg. Human health quality is drastically reduced, and different types of lifestyle disorders like diabetes mellitus, hypertension, thyroid dysfunction, etc., have become more common, so the concept of *Kutipraveshika* seems to be of great importance if implicated in a practical way. But in today's lifestyle or routine, it will be hard for people to stay in *Kuti* for such a long time until someone proves the more fruitful benefits of *Kutipraveshika*.

View of Vastu shastra: *Selection of place Both Ayurveda and Vastu shastra suggest a place of construction that is even without any slope*

and has fertile black or yellow soil. Large Buildings should not surround it. Its Orientation should be facing north-east or north-west direction. The entrance is suggested in a north direction, which is the perfect entrance according to *Vastu Shastra*, as *Kuber* (the god of wealth) resides there; the water reservoir should be present on the west side as it is a direction of the water component.¹⁶

3)Dharagriha :

Purpose: For accommodation of patients suffering from *Raktapitta* diseases

Structure: A normal *Kuti* or hut with a flow of water or showers from above the roof should be constructed, water should fall from four sides, and the *Rogi* or patient should reside inside the hut.¹⁴

Advantages: It calms down the aggravated *pitta Dosh*a in the body; it provides supportive treatment for reducing *Raktapitta*; in *Dharagraha*, due to the constant flow of water from above, the inner temperature of the hut remains cool and provides a cooling effect on the body. Gives the effect of treatment in less time.

Relevance in the present era: In today's world, people's food and habitat have become more prone to Pittaj diseases due to spicy, oily food and uneven timing. Bleeding disorders like epistaxis, *Raktapradara*, haematuria, and bleeding piles have become more common. So, a construction like *Dharagraha* can be of great significance if used along with *Pittashamaka*, i.e., *Pitta Dosh*a-calming *Ayurveda* medicines.

DISCUSSION

Charak Sutra Sthan mentions the construction of structures like *Kutisweda*, which are mentioned for therapeutic purposes, and are even relevant today as spas and steam rooms are even preferred today by the people. The *Aturalaya*, which is constructed for the proper treatment of a patient, storage of instruments and drugs etc., resembles modern-day hospitals system; the *Sharir Sthan* mention *Sutikagara* and *Kumaragara*, which are now replaced by maternity homes, and *kumaragara* gives us an overview of how a children's idol room should be further in *Chikitsa sthan* explains *Kutipraveshika Rasayana* and *Dhara-*

graha, *Kutipraveshika Rasayana* in today's era it will be a challenging task for someone to live in such structure for such a long time while *Dharagraha* for bleeding disorders seems to be a good option for accommodation of a patient with pitta bleeding disorder. From all this structure, we can also conclude that *Ayurveda* gives considerable importance to Vihar or place of patient's accommodation during different diseases or conditions.

CONCLUSION

Although the *Charak Samhita* is a book of medicine, it mentions many different forms of treatment, from *Tadana kriya* to *Mani-Adi Dharan*, from *Aushadh Sev*an to *Ahar-Vihar Palan*; while studying *Vihar palana*, we got different architectural constructions to mention in *samhita* we can conclude that *Vihar* or accommodation of patient has an importance role while treating the diseases as mentioned in *Charaka Samhita*. This also gives us an insight into the architectural views of that time's writers (*Ayurveda Acharyas*).

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