

HRIDAY SHARIR IN AYURVEDA: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

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Abstract:

Hriday Sharir, or the study of the heart in Ayurvedic medicine, is a critical aspect of understanding human anatomy and physiology from the perspective of traditional Indian medicine. This review aims to synthesize classical Ayurvedic texts and contemporary research to provide a holistic view of Hriday Sharir. It discusses the anatomical and physiological conceptualization of the heart, its significance in health and disease, and the integration of Ayurvedic principles with modern medical insights.

Keywords: *Hriday, Heart, Trimarma, Rakta, dasa Dhamanis etc*

Introduction:

Ayurveda, the ancient science of life, offers a unique perspective on human anatomy and physiology, with a strong emphasis on the heart (Hridaya) as a vital organ. The term "Hridaya" is derived from the root words "Hri" (to receive), "Da" (to give), and "Ya" (to circulate), reflecting its pivotal role in sustaining life. This review explores the classical descriptions of Hriday Sharir, its physiological functions, and its relevance in contemporary medicine.

• Anatomical and Physiological Perspectives in Ayurveda:

Classical Ayurvedic Texts:

Classical Ayurvedic texts, including the Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Ashtanga Hridaya, provide detailed descriptions of Hriday Sharir:

Charaka Samhita: Describes the heart as the seat of Chetana (consciousness) and the reservoir of Ojas (vital energy). It is considered one of the Trimarma (three vital points), crucial for life.

Sushruta Samhita: Elaborates on the heart's anatomical location in the thoracic cavity and its connection to the Dasha Dhamanis (ten major vessels) that distribute Rasa (nutrient fluid) throughout the body.

Ashtanga Hridaya: Integrates the knowledge from earlier texts, emphasizing the heart's role in circulating Rasa and Rakta (blood) and maintaining homeostasis.

• Ayurvedic Physiology:

In Ayurveda, the heart is not merely a pump but a dynamic center of various physiological and emotional functions:

Prana Vayu: Governs the respiratory and circulatory functions.

Sadhaka Pitta: Manages emotional well-being and intellect.

Avalambaka Kapha: Provides structural support and lubrication to the heart.

• Hridaya and Health in Ayurveda

Cardiovascular Health

Ayurveda outlines various factors that maintain cardiovascular health, including diet, lifestyle, and mental well-being. Key concepts include:

Dinacharya (Daily Regimen): Regular routines promoting balance and heart health.

Rasayana Therapy: Rejuvenative treatments enhancing Ojas and cardiac function.

Pathya-Apathya (Dietary Regulations): Specific dietary guidelines to prevent heart diseases.

• Disease Management

Ayurvedic texts categorize heart diseases under "Hridroga" and provide detailed etiologies, symptomatology, and treatment protocols:

Samprapti (Pathogenesis): Imbalance in Doshas leading to Hridroga.

Chikitsa (Treatment): Tailored approaches using herbs, Panchakarma, and lifestyle modifications.

• Integration with Modern Medicine

Recent studies have explored the convergence of Ayurvedic principles with modern cardiology. Examples include:

Phytotherapy: Use of Ayurvedic herbs like Arjuna (*Terminalia arjuna*) in managing heart diseases.

Mind-Body Techniques: Practices like Yoga and meditation in reducing stress and improving cardiac health.

Conclusion:

Hriday Sharir in Ayurveda offers a rich, holistic understanding of the heart's role in human health. Integrating Ayurvedic wisdom with contemporary medical practices can enhance cardiovascular care and promote overall well-being. Further research and clinical trials are needed to validate and expand the application of Ayurvedic principles in modern healthcare settings.

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