



Review Article

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## PREVENTIVE AND CURATIVE ASPECTS OF KAYACHIKITSA: A CLASSICAL REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

*Kayachikitsa*, the principal branch of internal medicine in *Ayurveda*, plays a vital role in both prevention and management of diseases by maintaining the equilibrium of *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Mala*, and *Agni*. Classical Ayurvedic texts emphasize that preservation of health is as important as treatment of disease, and *Kayachikitsa* addresses both these objectives through a comprehensive and individualized approach. Preventive aspects of *Kayachikitsa* include regulation of *Ahara* and *Vihara*, strengthening of *Agni*, observance of *Dinacharya* and *Ritucharya*, and use of *Rasayana* therapy to enhance immunity and vitality. On the curative side, *Kayachikitsa* focuses on understanding disease through *Hetu*, *Purvarupa*, *Rupa*, and *Samprapti*, followed by appropriate application of *Shodhana* and *Shamana* therapies for correction of underlying pathology. This classical review highlights how preventive measures reduce disease susceptibility, while curative principles aim at root-cause correction rather than symptomatic relief. The integrated preventive and curative framework of *Kayachikitsa* thus offers a safe, holistic, and sustainable approach to health care, with relevance in the management of lifestyle and chronic disorders prevalent in the modern era.

**Keywords:-** *Kayachikitsa*, Prevention, Cure, *Agni*, *Rasayana*, Holistic Health

### INTRODUCTION

*Ayurveda* is a science of life that gives equal importance to preservation of health and treatment of disease. The classical definition of *Ayurveda* clearly emphasizes protection of the health of a healthy individual and alleviation of disorders in the diseased. In this context, *Kayachikitsa*, the branch of internal medicine, holds a central position as it primarily deals with maintenance of systemic balance and management of a wide range of diseases through internal therapeutic principles.<sup>1</sup>

The preventive dimension of *Kayachikitsa* is deeply rooted in the concepts of *Ahara*, *Vihara*, and maintenance of *Agni*. Proper digestion is considered the foundation of health, as derangement of *Agni* leads to formation of *Ama*, which acts as the primary cause of many diseases. Classical texts advocate daily and seasonal regimens such as *Dinacharya* and *Ritucharya* to preserve digestive strength, enhance immunity, and prevent the onset of disease.<sup>2</sup>

On the curative side, *Kayachikitsa* adopts a systematic approach to disease management based on assessment of *Dosha* involvement, *Samprapti*, chronicity, and strength of the patient. Therapeutic interventions such as *Shodhana* and *Shamana* are applied judiciously to eliminate vitiated *Dosha*, correct metabolic imbalance, and restore normal physiological function. This approach ensures that treatment is not merely symptomatic but addresses the root cause of disease.<sup>3</sup>

In the present era, increasing prevalence of lifestyle-related and chronic disorders highlights the need for a holistic health-care system that integrates prevention with effective treatment. The classical principles of *Kayachikitsa* provide a balanced framework that promotes health, prevents disease, and offers sustainable curative solutions. Therefore, understanding the preventive and curative aspects of *Kayachikitsa* is essential for effective application of *Ayurvedic* principles in contemporary clinical practice.<sup>4</sup>

## **AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

### **AIM**

To review the preventive and curative aspects of *Kayachikitsa* as described in classical *Ayurvedic* texts.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To understand the preventive principles of *Kayachikitsa* in maintenance of health.
2. To study the curative approach of *Kayachikitsa* in disease management.
3. To highlight the role of *Agni*, *Ahara*, and *Vihara* in prevention and cure.
4. To emphasize the relevance of classical *Kayachikitsa* principles in present-day health care.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Preventive Aspects of *Kayachikitsa***

Classical *Ayurvedic* literature places strong emphasis on disease prevention, considering it the foremost duty of a physician. The preventive approach of *Kayachikitsa* is rooted in the maintenance of equilibrium among *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Mala*, and *Agni*. Acharya *Charaka* states that preservation of health is achieved by following proper diet, lifestyle, and ethical conduct, thereby preventing the manifestation of disease. This highlights that prevention is not an isolated concept but an integral part of internal medicine in *Ayurveda*.<sup>5</sup>

Regulation of *Ahara* forms the cornerstone of preventive *Kayachikitsa*. Classical texts describe that wholesome, timely, and compatible food maintains strength of *Agni* and prevents formation of *Ama*. Acharya *Charaka* has detailed guidelines regarding quantity, quality, and combinations of food to ensure proper digestion and assimilation. Improper dietary habits are considered the primary causative factors for most systemic disorders, emphasizing the preventive value of dietary discipline.<sup>6</sup>

Lifestyle regulation or *Vihara* is another key preventive measure described under *Kayachikitsa*. Daily regimens (*Dinacharya*) and seasonal regimens (*Ritucharya*) are prescribed to maintain physiological harmony with environmental changes. Proper sleep, exercise, cleanliness, and regulation of natural urges are advocated to support digestive strength, metabolic balance, and immunity, thereby reducing susceptibility to disease.<sup>7</sup>

The use of *Rasayana* therapy is considered a unique preventive tool of *Kayachikitsa*. Classical literature describes *Rasayana* as a means to enhance longevity, improve tissue nourishment, strengthen immunity, and delay aging. By maintaining strong *Agni* and healthy *Dhatu*, *Rasayana* therapy plays a crucial role in preventing both acute and chronic disorders, reinforcing the holistic preventive framework of *Kayachikitsa*.<sup>8</sup>

### Curative Aspects of *Kayachikitsa*

The curative approach of *Kayachikitsa* is based on a systematic understanding of disease through detailed assessment of *Hetu*, *Purvarupa*, *Rupa*, and *Samprapti*. Classical *Ayurvedic* texts emphasize that proper identification of the underlying cause and pathogenesis is essential for successful treatment. Unlike symptom-oriented management, *Kayachikitsa* focuses on correcting the fundamental imbalance of *Dosha*, *Agni*, and *Srotas* to achieve lasting cure.<sup>9</sup>

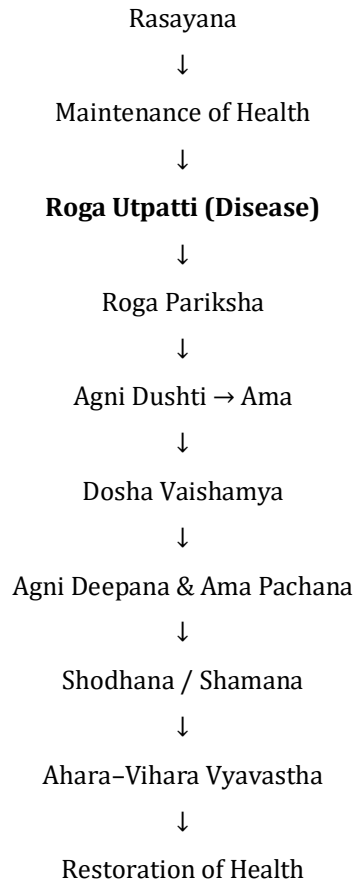
*Agni* holds a central position in the curative principles of *Kayachikitsa*. Impairment of *Agni* leads to formation of *Ama*, which is considered the root cause of many diseases. Therapeutic measures such as *Deepana* and *Pachana* are employed to restore digestive and metabolic strength, thereby facilitating proper digestion, absorption, and elimination. Correction of *Agni* ensures that subsequent treatment becomes effective and sustainable.<sup>10</sup>

*Shodhana Chikitsa* is a major curative modality in *Kayachikitsa*, aimed at eliminating vitiated *Dosha* from the body. Procedures such as *Vamana*, *Virechana*, and *Basti* are selected based on *Dosha* predominance, disease stage, and strength of the patient. These therapies not only remove accumulated toxins but also cleanse the *Srotas*, preventing recurrence of disease and improving overall physiological function.<sup>11</sup>

Following *Shodhana*, *Shamana Chikitsa* plays a vital role in stabilizing the body and maintaining therapeutic benefits. Use of herbal formulations, dietary regulation, and lifestyle modification helps in pacifying residual *Dosha* and restoring normal tissue function. Thus, the curative aspects of *Kayachikitsa* offer a holistic and rational framework for disease management by addressing the root cause, promoting healing, and supporting long-term health.<sup>12</sup>

### Flow Chart -Swastha Rakshana (Prevention)





## RESULT AND FINDINGS

- *Kayachikitsa* was found to emphasize prevention and cure equally, giving importance to *Swastha Rakshana* as well as *Roga Prashamana*.
- Maintenance of *Agni* was identified as the central factor in both preventive and curative approaches, as deranged *Agni* leads to *Ama* and disease manifestation.
- Preventive measures like *Ahara*, *Vihara*, *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, and *Rasayana* were observed to play a significant role in reducing disease susceptibility.
- Curative management through *Agni Deepana*, *Ama Pachana*, *Shodhana*, and *Shamana* therapies was found effective in correcting *Dosha Vaishamya* and *Srotodushti*.
- Regulation of diet and lifestyle (*Pathya-Apathya*) was noted to be essential in both prevention of disease and prevention of recurrence after treatment.
- The integrated application of preventive and curative principles of *Kayachikitsa* was found to provide a holistic, sustainable, and root-oriented approach to health maintenance and disease management.

## DISCUSSION

The present review brings out the importance of the preventive approach of *Kayachikitsa*, which gives primary emphasis to maintenance of *Agni* and balance of *Dosha*. Classical principles such as regulation of *Ahara* and

*Vihara*, observance of *Dinacharya* and *Ritucharya*, and use of *Rasayana* therapy help in preserving physiological harmony and enhancing disease resistance. By preventing formation of *Ama*, these measures reduce the likelihood of disease manifestation and promote long-term health.<sup>13</sup>

The curative aspect of *Kayachikitsa* is centered on understanding the root cause of disease through assessment of *Hetu* and *Samprapti*. Correction of *Agni* through *Deepana* and *Pachana* is considered the initial and most crucial step in treatment, as it enables effective action of further therapies. Procedures such as *Shodhana* and *Shamana* are applied according to *Dosha* involvement and disease stage, ensuring individualized and rational management rather than symptomatic relief alone.<sup>14</sup>

An important observation is that prevention and cure in *Kayachikitsa* are not separate entities but are closely interlinked. Preventive principles support the success of curative treatment, while curative measures reinforce preventive outcomes by restoring physiological balance and strengthening the body. This integrated approach makes *Kayachikitsa* highly relevant in the management of lifestyle-related and chronic disorders prevalent in the modern era, offering sustainable and holistic health care solutions.<sup>15</sup>

## CONCLUSION

From the present review, it can be concluded that *Kayachikitsa* provides a comprehensive framework that effectively integrates both preventive and curative aspects of health care. By emphasizing preservation of *Agni*, balance of *Dosha*, proper regulation of *Ahara* and *Vihara*, and judicious use of *Shodhana*, *Shamana*, and *Rasayana* therapies, *Kayachikitsa* addresses disease at its root while also preventing its occurrence and recurrence. This balanced, holistic approach makes *Kayachikitsa* highly relevant for promoting long-term health and managing both acute and chronic disorders in a safe and sustainable manner.

## CONFLCIT OF INTEREST -NIL

## SOURCE OF SUPPORT -NONE

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