

## REVIEW ON CONCEPT OF SMRITHI (MEMORY) IN AYURVEDA

Kuber Sankh<sup>1\*</sup>, Ashalatha M<sup>2</sup>

1. Ph.D Scholar, Dept. of Dravyaguna, Government Ayurveda Medical College, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India.
2. Professor and Head. Dept. of Dravyaguna, Government Ayurveda Medical College, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India.

Received: 02-12-2014; Revised: 17-01-2015; Accepted: 22-01-2015

### Abstract

Smrithi (Memory) is one of the important faculty of the mind and has prominent role in the perception of knowledge. There are so many diseases where this faculty of brain gets affected viz., Alzheimer's, Parkinsonism, etc. This article explains the concept of Smrithi and its role in attaining knowledge and conditions where smrithi is affected.

**Keywords:** Alzheimer's; Memory; Parkinsonism; Smrithi.

### \*Address for correspondence:

Dr. Kuber Sankh,  
Ph.D. Scholar,  
Dept. of Dravyaguna,  
Government Ayurveda Medical College,  
Bengaluru, Karnataka, India – 560 009  
E-mail: [kuberss@live.com](mailto:kuberss@live.com)

### Cite This Article

Kuber Sankh, Ashalatha M. Review on concept of Smrithi (Memory) in Ayurveda. Ayurpharm Int J Ayur Alli Sci. 2015;4(1):10-14.

## INTRODUCTION

Dhee (Perception), Dhriti (Retention) and smriti (Memory) are recognized as intrinsic dimension of manas (Mind), when used in general sense, refers to the totality of knowing and indicate Dhee, Dhriti and smriti as well. Manas as specific term refers only to its initial contact with the Vishaya (object), in other words perception is the process of doing or knowing. In a given kriya (act/process), manas is called smriti at the level of recall, Dhee at the level of control and dhriti in the moderation of the act throughout. In this competitive era, every human being wants to achieve highest goal. It is being increasing necessity at the student level in schools and colleges, as the exam pattern of present system is fully depended on memorizing the subject only. Furthermore, in routine life and social interaction to good memory is always appreciated.

### Prajna

The word meaning of Prajna is to know, understand, especially a mode of action, discern, distinguish, know about, be acquainted with, to find out, discover, perceive, learn, wisdom, intelligence, knowledge, discrimination and judgment. That which generates to knowledge in advance and is equated to buddhi and Dalhan defines Prajna as Knowledge about the present, past and future is called Prajna.<sup>[1]</sup>

### Faculties of prajna (wisdom)

Prajna is of threefold i.e. Dhee, Dhriti, and Smriti are the faculties of Prajna.

### Dhee

The word meanings of Dhee are intelligence, intellect, ability to correct judgment and discrimination power. Amarakosha defines 'Dhee' as to perceive and to reflect i.e. the faculty of Buddhi, which performs the duty of

perceiving the things. Arunadatta and Chakrapani opine 'Dhee' as bheda (Type) of Prajna and which discriminates the good and bad things.

### Swarupa of Dhee

Acharya Charaka has tried to identify Dhee through its functions.<sup>[2]</sup> Regarding this Chakrapani comments that the knowledge of an object in the sense of "as it is" (Yatharthanubhava) or perception of true knowledge (Uchita buddhi).

### Dhriti

Meaning of Dhriti is capacity of with holding, seizing, supporting, firmness, well, resolution, command and satisfaction. According to Sushruta the ability to be within in the norms or rightness which is caused by satwa guna of manas. Where as Dalhan says that Dhriti is the mental happiness. According to Charaka Dhriti is a controlling factor, which prevents the mind from indulging in harmful and non-beneficial objects. The Svasyanigraha (self control) function of manas are carried out by the factor Dhriti only.<sup>[3]</sup>

### Dhriti vibhramsha

In abnormal conditions of Manas, Dhriti vibhramsha occurs and conscious mind indulges in performing harmful things knowingly. By all this one can say that, Dhriti is a will power and power to hold as well as ability, to be within norms of rightness.

### Smriti

The word meaning of Smriti is remembrance, memory or calling of mind.

### Definitions

Smriti means subject ability to recall things. i.e. recalling past experiences.

- Regaining of past knowledge
- Memory power
- Recalling of past experiences
- Memory is generated from past experiences
- Preservation of acquired faculty of cognition is smruthi
- According to Vacaspatyam, Smruthi is the capacity to recollect the experience of knowledge acquired before.
- According to Kanada, Smruthi is the product of the trades on internal impression produced by the union of experience of soul and mind (vaisesika sutra 1/26).
- Smruthi is defined as the cognition of past experience.
- Cakrapani opines that the ability to recognize the basic nature of all matters is Smruthi.

### Examination of Smruti

It is examined by Anumana pramana (Speculation) i.e. asking the person to recollect the past experiences.<sup>[4]</sup>

By all the above said references one can conclude that smruti is the phenomenon which is the experience gained by the pancha jnanendriyas (sense organ) like Darshana (sight), Sparshana (Palpation), Shravana (Hearing), Grahana (Smell perception) and Rasana (Taste perception) will be stored and collected in a seat of Buddhi (Mastiska).

### Factors responsible for smruthi (physiology of smruti)

According to Acharya Charaka, for the functions of smruti two factors are mainly responsible, they are

- a) Abhyantara karana (Intrinsic factors)
- b) Bahya karana (Extrinsic factors)

### Abhyantara karana

The Sannikarsha of Atma, Indriya, Manas and Indriyarthas are responsible for Smruti.<sup>[5]</sup>

### Bahya karana

Acharya Charaka, has described 8 factors responsible for the recollection of experiential knowledge, they are as follows

- Nimitta grahana (Reaction to caused effects)
- Rupa grahana (perception similar shape objects)
- Sadrushya (Similarity)
- Saviparyaya (Contrast)
- Satvanubandha (Attention)
- Abhyasa (Repetition)
- Jnanayoga (Divine knowledge)
- Punaha Shruta (Repeated hearing)<sup>[6]</sup>

### Smruti vibramsha (memory disturbance)

Smruti vibramsha refers to a state characterized by deviation from normalcy; this means either reduced memory or selective memory or total loss of memory.<sup>[7]</sup>

### Causative factors (Nidana) responsible for loss of memory

#### Divaswapna (Day sleep)

Divaswapna is considered as one of the etiological factor for smruti vibramsha. It is said that, Divaswapna aggravates kapha and Pitta. Continuous indulgence can result in alteration in the processes of digestion and metabolism and resulting in alteration / reduction of growth, cheshta and Smruti hrasa.<sup>[8]</sup>

## Gramyahara sevana

### List of Gramyahara

- Amla, katu, Lavana rasatmaka ahara sevana
- Shushka shaka and mamsa sevana
- Viruddha dhanya sevana – usage of sprouted grain
- Nava shuka shamee dhanya sevana
- Paryushita bhojana
- Stree nithya – Daily indulgence of sex
- Madya nitya – Daily intake of alcohol
- Vishama and atimatra vyayama
- Bhaya, Krodha, Shoka, lobha, Moha bahulanam - excessive fear, anger, grief etc.

Because of above-mentioned factors person becomes unable to perform physical & mental work. He also loses his Memory, intellect & complexion & becomes abode of diseases.<sup>[9]</sup>

### Rajo and Mohavrita mana

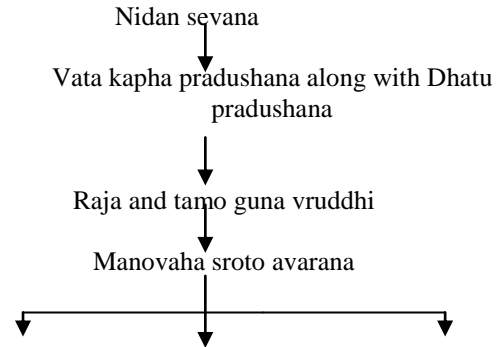
Rajo and Tamo gunas are considered as doshas of Manas. These affect the Manas and can cause disturbed manasika chesta, which can also include smruti vibhramsha.<sup>[10]</sup>

### Jara (Senile)

In Jara avastha there is a gradually depleting nature of the Dhatu, Indriya (sense organs) and Bala (strength), and predominated by Vata dosha. It results in diminished Grahana (Grasping), Dharana (Retention) and Smarana (Recollection).<sup>[11]</sup>

### Pathogenesis of Smruti Vibhramsha (Memory disturbance)

In our classics, specific patho- physiology of Smruti hrasa is not explained but information obtained from various textual collections shows the pathogenesis as, when mana is shielded with excessive raja and tamo gunas then the smruti nasha will manifest.



Dhee Vibhramsa Smruti Vibhramsa Dhruti Vibhramsa

Smruti nasha is one of the symptoms of the diseases like Apasmara (epilepsy),<sup>[12]</sup> Unmada (insanity),<sup>[13]</sup> Jarajanya Smrutinasha.<sup>[14]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Memory is the basic requisite to attain the knowledge. Ayurvedic literature has given the utmost importance to Smrithi in the perception of Jnana (knowledge). In many of the diseases of brain memory of the person gets affected and loss or diminished Memory will be the major clinical symptom in such diseases. Hence understanding this concept will help us in proper application in clinical practice.

## REFERENCES

1. Susruta. Sushruta samhitha. Kaviraj Ambika datta shastri, editor. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Samskrit Samsthana; 2005. shareera sthana, 1/18.p.4-5.
2. Caraka. Caraka Samhita. Kashinatha shastri, editor. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Samskrit Samsthana; 2005. Shareera sthana, 1/99.p.924, 710-711.
3. Caraka. Caraka Samhita. Kashinatha shastri, editor. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Samskrit Samsthana; 2005. Shareera sthana, 1/100.p.924, 710-711.
4. Caraka. Caraka Samhita. Kashinatha shastri, editor. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Samskrit Samsthana; 2005. Vimana sthana, 4/6-7. p. 588-589.
5. Caraka. Caraka Samhita. Kashinatha shastri, editor. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Samskrit Samsthana; 2005. Sutra sthana, 11/ 20. p.152-153.
6. Caraka. Caraka Samhita. Kashinatha shastri, editor. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Samskrit Samsthana; 2005. Shareera sthana, 1/148-149. p.720-721.
7. Caraka. Caraka Samhita. Kashinatha shastri, editor. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Samskrit Samsthana; 2005. Shareera sthana, 1/101. p.710-711.

8. Caraka. Caraka Samhita. Kashinatha shastri, editor. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Samskrit Samsthana; 2005. Sutra sthana, 21/49. p. 284-285.
9. Caraka. Caraka Samhita. Kashinatha shastri, editor. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Samskrit Samsthana; 2005. Chikitsa sthana, 1/3. p.15-16.
10. Caraka. Caraka Samhita. Kashinatha shastri, editor. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Samskrit Samsthana; 2005. Shareera sthana, 1/101. p.710-711.
11. Caraka. Caraka Samhita. Kashinatha shastri, editor. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Samskrit Samsthana; 2005. Vimana sthana, 8/122. p.67-672.
12. Caraka. Caraka Samhita. Kashinatha shastri, editor. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Samskrit Samsthana; 2005. Chikitsa sthana, 10/ 3. p.270-271.
13. Caraka. Caraka Samhita. Kashinatha shastri, editor. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Samskrit Samsthana; 2005. Chikitsa sthana, 9/7. p. 252-253.
14. Caraka. Caraka Samhita. Kashinatha shastri, editor. 8<sup>th</sup> ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Samskrit Samsthana; 2005. Vimana sthana, 8/122. p.670-672.

Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None Declared