



## Conceptual review of *Adhyatma* in *Ayurveda*

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### Abstract

This *adhyatma gyana* is also a part of *Ayurveda* because it is related to human health especially with mental health; A group of diseases is described independently in Sushruta as *adhyatmika dukha*. Contemporary books also mention *adhyatmika dukha* and *adhyatma* has been described in details. The subject matter of *adhyatma* has been mentioned from different point of view, but in fact the *adhyatma* is related to *atman*, as it is knowledge of *atman* and its related subjects are the knowledgeable materials of *adhyatma*. Here in this paper is a brief review of *adhyatma*, terminology and its different prospects in *ayurveda*.

Key words: *Adhyatmika dukha*, *atman*, *adhyatma dravya*, *adhyatmaguna*

### Introduction:

**Etymology** : The term “ **Adhyatma** ” has been derived from *\*vf?k ^\$ vkReu \$ ?kk¥~* in sense of means based on *Atman* or surrounding the *Atman* or chapter about *Atman*.

#### Adhyatma terminology in different dictionaries:

**Amarkosha** *Adhyatma* term is applied for covered by *Atman* (*ksetrajña*), *Brahma* along with body and *indriya*, means the *Adhyatma* term contains the subject matter covered by *atman* or surrounding *Atman*.

**Amar Singh** has quoted the verse of Sridhar to explain *adhyatma*. According to him a unit of *Brahma* takes the form of *jiva* which is considered as *Atman*, his site is the *sarira* (body) and existence of phenomenon of *atman* in the body is the *adhyatma*. *sukshma* or subtleness has been called as *Adhyatma* in *Amarkosha*, *Nanartha varga*.

In a reference he has quoted the view of different *Darsanas* like *Nyaya*, *Vaishesika*, *Sankhya* etc. *Nyaya*, *Vasesika* considers *Atman* different from *deha*, *Sankhya* considers different from *prakriti*. After keeping the philosophical views *adhyatma* is a process in which as it is knowledge about *Atma tattva* can be achieved. Observing the views of all Indian philosophies *Amar Singh* has explained *Adhyatma* as knowledge about *Atman / Brahma* along with site. In this reference he has quoted different verses. *Adhyatmika* term has been used in reference of *dukha (daihk /manasik)*.

In **sabda Kalpa Druma** ; *dukha* has been classified in 3 groups, *Adhyatmika* is one of them.

**Monier Williams** has quoted *Adhyatma* as relating to self or soul, proceeding from bodily and mental causes with one's self, relating to supreme spirit, spiritual or holy, and class of disease. *Adhyatma* stands for different meaning as the supreme spirit, own, belonging to self, concerning self or individual personality.

*Adhyatma cetas* - One who meditates on supreme spirit

*Adhyatma gyana* - Knowledge of supreme spirit or of *Atman*

*Adhyatma dris* - knowing the supreme spirit

*Adhyatma rati* - Delighting in contemplation of supreme spirit

**Apte** *Adhyatma* is applied in sense of related to *Atman* and to gain the knowledge about *Atman*, *Paramatma*, *Brahma* is *Adhyatma vidya* and the person who seeks this knowledge of *Atman* is called *Adhyatmika*.

- Belonging to self or a person
- Concerning an individual, concerning self,
- the supreme spirit(manifested as individual self) or relation between supreme and individual soul.

- Brahma is the supreme, the indestructible, its manifestation as an individual self adhyatma.
- Knowledge of supreme spirit.
- Theosophical or metaphysical knowledge.
- There is nothing so fruitful than this *adhyatma vidya*.
- Concentration of *manas* on Atman drawing it off from all subjects of sense.

**Adhyatma in different context of Ayurveda:** The term adhyatma is repeatedly applied in Àyurvedic classics but original author of text have not defined or explained in Àyurvedic texts but commentator Acarya Cakrapani has clarified the adhyatma term “*atmanam adhikritya adhyatman*” i.e. attributes related to Atman is Adhyatma. Acarya Caraka has mentioned some dravyas as *adhyÁtmika dravyas* separately. *Manas, buddhi, Átman*, and the *visaya of manas* are considered as *adhyatma dravyaguna sangraha*. Explaining the *adhyatma dravya* Acharya Cakrapani has stated that the dravyas which are influenced by *Atman* are *Adhyatma dravya*. These dravyas have own *guna* and *karma*. It is notable that Caraka has clearly convinced the good and bad result of performance *pravritti* and *nivritti* are based on Adhyatma dravya. In other words it may be said that biological functions and performance of different action are based on *adhyatma dravya*. As *Adhyatma* is considered in Vedic literature Caraka has followed the similar ground.

The term *Adhyatma* or *Atma gyana* has been applied in different places of *Caraka samhita* and have different meaning, but all meanings are polarized on *Atman*. The *manas* (psyche), *mano artha* (the objects of mind), *buddhi* (intellect) and *Atman* (soul) constitute the *Adhyatmika dravya* and its *gunas* are regarded as *adhyatmika gunas*, they serve as factors for prompting an individual to indulge in and or refrain from virtuous and sinful acts. Commonly performance of an action depends upon the materialistic objects. *AdhyÁtmika dravyas* are *Atman* and *Manas*, the rest are *adhyatmika guna* which includes *buddhi* and *manoartha*. The non utilization or excessive or miss utilization of *adhyatmika dravyas* may result in prompting an individual to perform sinful acts and refrain from virtuous acts. Metaphysically speaking a good knowledge of these *adhyatmika dravya* and *gunas* helps in eliminating the bondage letting to the secular birth and death and so causes salvation otherwise, it may also strengthen the bondage and as such cause miseries.

In a reference by *caraka* it has been quoted that as the *loka* (macrocosm) is afflicted or maintained respective by the morbidity and normal state of the wind, sun and moon so also the *adhyatma loka* is either afflicted or maintained respectively by the morbidity and normal state of *vayu, pitta and kapha*. This verse signifies the *samanya vada* (principle of similarity) between *loka* and self where the factors governing *loka* i.e. *vayu*(air), *surya*(sun) and *Chandra*(moon) is present in our body as *vata, pitta and kapha* and this *adhyatma loka* i.e. residual place of self is effected by normalcy and abnormality of outer environment.

According to Sushruta the subject matter or subject related to self is *adhyatma* or *atmagyana*. Acarya Dalhana has commented this verse in detail according to him thirteen factors have been included in *adhyatma*. In this reference Dalhana has considered *Atman* word as *sharira* (body). The factors related to *sharira, buddhi* etc. in meaning of self is *adhyatma*. Again he has considered *Atman* word for *Paramatma*.

Àcarya Dalhana has enumerated 13 factors in form of *Adhyatma i.e. buddhi adhyatma, mano adhyatma, shrotram adhyatma, twak adhyatam, chakshur*

*adhyatma, rasanaadhyatma, ghranaadhyatma, vakaadhyatma, hastaavadhyatma, padavadhyatma, payur adhyatma, upastho adhyatma*

Acharya Sushruta have classified the diseases in three groups, *adhyatmika* group is first among them. Dalhana has explained the *Adhyatmika rogas* as physical and mental diseases involved by *Vata, pitta, kapha* (somatic dosas) and *raja, tama* as (manasika dosas). The other commentator Gayadasa commented the *adhyatmika* on basis of manas. According to Gayadasa manas is cause of attraction with objects and its result is characterized through sukha and dukha, This type of pravritti experience is adhyatmika.<sup>1</sup>

In a reference in *yajjah purushiya adhyaya*, Punarvasu Atreya has concluded that one should get rid of the argument and try to pursue the real truth. One cannot attain real knowledge without avoiding one's bias for the partial aspects of the truth. Adhyatma according to chakrapani dutt has been mentioned as knowledge of *tattva*. Here in this context it has been mentioned that one should have debate about a subject matter with full knowledge (as it is knowledge) of the *tattva*. During a debate a real knowledge cannot come until the group is biased with a *paksha* (the subject matter or any group). The contact of *Purusa* with *rajas* and *tamas* makes an individual born again and again because this conjugation is endless but when an individual starts getting rid of *rajas* and *tamas*, one gets free from contacts by virtue of dominance of *sattva*. As soon as *sattva* increases, it gives rise to pure knowledge and so it overcomes *rajas* and *tamas* which are responsible for creating resulting in realization of *purusa* as something distinct from *prakriti*. This realization leads to salvation. This ultimate knowledge with purity of sense faculties is *Atman gyana or Adhyatma gyana*.

In describing *adhyatmika vyadhis*, sushruta has quoted three group of diseases comes under *adhyatmika vyadhi* which are *adi bala pravritta, janma bala pravritta* and *dosa bala pravritta*.

**1. *Adi bala pravritta***- Adibala pravritta are those produced by the abnormalities of sukra (semen vis-a-vis sperm) and sonita (menstrual blood a vis-a-vis ovum) such as leprosy, piles etc. These are again of two kinds

- a. *matrija* - derived from the mother and
- b. *pitrija* - derived from the father.

**2. *Janmabala pravritta*** – Diseases are those produced by improper conduct of the mother, diseases such as lameness, blindness, deafness, muteness, nasal speech, dwarfness etc. all by birth. Even these are of two kinds, viz.

- a. *Rasakrita* produced by rasa (essence of food)
- b. *Dauhridapachara krita* produced by non fulfilling of longings of the mother during pregnancy.

**3. *Doshabala pravritta vyadhi***- Those diseases arising from improper food and activities; these are also of two kinds-

- a) *amasaya samuttha* and
- b) *pakvasaya samuttha*

Again these are of two kinds, viz.

- a) *Sarira* - of the body (somatic) and
- b) *Manasa* - of the mind (psychic).

All the above are *adhyatmika* diseases concerning (produced by) one's own self (individual).

**Process to achieve *adhyatma or atma gyana*** :This Ayurveda is based on science of *Atman gyana* or *Adhyatma*. one should control his sense organs as well as mobile (fickle) *manas* and keep himself stabilized

in his own self after knowing the real nature of the *Atman* and attaining the height of spiritual wisdom. Thus with his knowledge undisturbed in all situations one will be able to examine all aspects. Here the process of such type of *gyana* is mentioned based on *yoga* and it has been clearly indicated that one should draw the *indriyas* from external objects, means the contact with the objects should be attraction less and *manas* should be sheltered in *atman*, This process is identified by *adhyatma gyana*. In other place propagating the importance and significance of *Adhyatma gyana* it has been stated that one should listen to spiritual wisdom which is of immense help for the attainment of the knowledge of *adhyatma*.

**Adhyatma and physician:** An *Ayurvedist* should attain the *Adhyatma gyana* essentially. In *Caraka samita* *adhyatma gyana* has been indicated mandatory for physician as stated in the text, the *Ayurveda* can be studied by all for the attainment of virtues, wealth and pleasure. Virtues are attained by treating individuals who have *atma gyana*, who practice and propagate righteousness and treat others like mother; father, brother, friend and superiors. These are also achieved by meditation, propagation and practice of the *atma gyana* contained in the science of life. This has been called as *para dharma* i.e. best among all codes of right path. All these constitute the higher virtue of his life.

**Discussion:** As per various dictionary it can be said that *adhyatama* deals something concerned to self or *atma*. It has been clearly used by *caraka* conjointly with *dravya* and *guna* collectively called *adhyatmadravyaguna sangraha* ; proper use of which in form of good or sinful activities leads to achievement of *moksha* or *punarjanma* as clearly said to be cause of *pravritti* that is rebirth and *nivritti* that is salvation. Further *sushruta* using *adhyatmika vyadhis* can be thought as diseases resulting in self as result of *bija* disorders, *dosha* either physiological or psychological. *Ayurveda* is based on *adhyatama* having effected by various *astika darshana*. *Atma gyana* is supreme among all. *Adhyatma gyana* is mandatory for physician and common public to improve the moral values, and to maintain the health, promote the values based morality and to attain the salvation. *adhyatma gyana* has a great role in prevention of physical and mental diseases.

**Conclusion:** *Adhyatma* is knowledge of self or *Atman* and *Ayurveda* is based on *Adhyatma gyana* .

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