

**ISSN**INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

ISSN No. : 2584-2757

Volume : 03

Issue : 02

DOI : 10.5281/zenodo.18259349



Publisher

**ROGANIDAN VIKRUTIVIGYAN PG ASSOCIATION
FOR PATHOLOGY AND RADIOLOGICAL DIAGNOSIS**

Reg. No. : MAHA-703/16(NAG)

Year of Establishment – 2016

Impact Factor : 1.013

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF DIAGNOSTICS AND RESEARCH

An Introduction To Charak Samhitokta Rishi Gautama and Evaluation of His Contribution To Ayurveda

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Article Info: Published on : 15/01/2026

Cite this article as: - Dr. Subhash Waghe (2026) ; An Introduction To Charak Samhitokta Rishi Gautama and Evaluation of His Contribution To Ayurveda; Inter .J. Dignostics and Research 3 (2) 65-72 , DOI : [10.5281/zenodo.18259349](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18259349)

Abstract

Gautam rishi's earlier name was *Deerghatama*. This name he got because he remained blind for long time (*Deergha*) blind (*Tama*) due to the curse given to him by his uncle and teacher of God Brihaspati. Later by observing the fine '*Govrata*' (serving the cows), he got the name '*Gautama*'. He donated the sperm to the wife of famous demon king Bali due to infertility on the part of king Bali. That time it was a common method adopted to treat male infertility. Bali's wife Sudeshna had five sons from the sperm donation by *Deerghatama* rishi. These five sons, created five states in ancient India and it were named after their names viz. 1] Anga (modern day Bhagalpur Area in Bihar), 2] Vanga (Modern Day Bengal), 3] Kalinga (Modern day Odisha), 4] Undra (Area in Modern Day Bengal) 5] Pundra (Area in Modern Day Bengal & Odisha). Sage Gautama was instrumental in bringing the river Godavari on the earth to get rid of the draught in the region. His famous cursed wife '*Ahilya*' was extricated by lord Rama. Gautama's grandson *Krupacharya* trained Kauravas and Pandavas in archery whereas his granddaughter *Krupi* was married to famous teacher *Dronacharya*. Sage Gautama was present in the ancient conclave of rishis held below mountain Himalaya to discuss the management of diseases occurred on account of consuming domestic food as mentioned in Charaka Samhita. All the *rishis* present there learnt Ayurveda from sage Bhardwaja. Hence, it can be concluded that sage Gautama may also have contributed in further development of Ayurveda.

Keywords – Godavari, Ahilya, Deerghatama

Introduction :

Sage Gautama was present in the ancient conclave of rishis held below mountain Himalaya to discuss the management of diseases occurred on account of consuming domestic food as mentioned in Charaka Samhita. [1] Sage Gautama's earlier name was 'Deerghatama'. He was the son of Aushij who was the brother *Devaguru* Brihaspati. He was born blind and remained in that state for long time. His eyes were revived by Nandi. He was married to 'Ahilya' the daughter of Kanva rishi. His wife Ahilya was deceptively raped by God King Indra. Sage Deerghatama donated the sperm to the wife called 'Sudeshna' of famous demon king Bali. Out of this donation, Sudeshna gave birth to five famous sons who created famous five states of ancient India; viz. 1] Anga (modern day Bhagalpur Area in Bihar), 2] Vanga (Modern Day Bengal), 3] Kalinga (Modern day Odisha), 4] Undra (Area in Modern Day Bengal) 5] Pundra (Area in Modern Day Bengal & Odisha). Sage Gautama was instrumental in bringing the river Godavari on the earth to get rid of the draught in the region. His famous cursed wife 'Ahilya' was extricated by lord Rama. Gautama's grandson Krupacharya trained Kauravas and Pandavas in archery whereas his granddaughter Krupi was married to famous teacher of Kauravas and Pandavas called 'Dronacharya'.

Material & Method :

Literary method of research is followed in this article. All the available Ayurvedic and Indological literature is explored to find the maximum information about the sage Gautama.

Review Of Literature :

Birth of Gautama And Name as Deerghatama :

It is already stated that Brihaspati's brother was sage Ashija. When Ashija's wife Mamta became pregnant, sage Ashija went to observe austerity. Taking benefit of this opportunity, *Devaguru* Brihaspati (God's preacher) approached already pregnant Mamata for sexual gratification. Mamata tried to dissuade him from this Adharma by saying that it will be sinful to perform sex in such condition when he foetus inside had completed the maturity. And your semen will also bear fruit instantly. But derived by the strong urge of sex, Brihaspati ignored her advice saying that he knows everything and forcibly raped his brother's wife Mamta. The foetus inside the uterus became uncomfortable with this forced sex and tried to narrow the vaginal tract. Brihaspati got angry with this and cursed the foetus inside to suffer with longtime blindness for interrupting him during sexual pleasure. Hence, the foetus was born blind and to be remained blind for long time due to curse. Hence, he got the name 'Deerghatama'. [2] [3] [4]

Punishment To Deerghatama & Rescue by King Bali :

Once upon a time Deerghatama forcibly raped the wife of his younger brother Autithya under the influence of lust. His son rishi Shardwan got very angry to see this sinful act of Deerghatama. He not only abused Deerghatama but also caught hold of him and put him in the wooden box and then glided it into river Ganga to be flown away into the ocean. After a week's time when the box was sinking near ocean, the King Bali who was roaming alongside, saw it and rescued Deerghatama and brought him to his home. [5] [6]

Boon to Bali in the form of Progeny :

After reaching home king Bali offered Deerghtama food, fruit and several other things. Rishi Deerghtama became very pleased due to the service and hospitality given by king Bali and told him to ask for the boon. Virochan's son King Bali requested rishi Deerghtama to donate his sperm to his wife as he was childless due to infertility. Accordingly, rishi Deerghtama donated the sperm through the intercourse to the wife called Sudeshna of king Bali. Later, Sudeshna gave birth to the five sons namely 1] Anga, 2] Vanga, 3] Kainga, 4] Undra and 5] Pundra. These all five sons established their princely states later. ^{[7] [8]}

Getting the name as Gautama :

Lord Rudra's carrier the **Nandi** became very impressed with the '*Go-Vrata*' observed by the *rishi* Deerghtama and blessed him with eyesight and removed his long-standing blindness. He also made him young and free from the curse of death. Since the *rishi* Deerghtama, became young and eyesight full with the blessing of '*Gau*' (cow), he came to know as '**Gautama**'. ^{[9] [10]}

Marriage of Gautama :

Kanva muni's beautiful and multitalented daughter was 'Ahilya'. Kanva gave this Ahilya to sage Gautama for up bringing and told that when she will get adulthood, he should return the girl back to him. Kanva was worried for her safety as all Gods, rishis, Gandharvas had approached sage Kanva for her marriage with them. Later Kanva tested everyone and found Gautam as the only suitable man for marrying with Ahilya and accordingly, he gave his daughter to Gautama. Sage Kanva gave the hermitage built over mountain Bramhagiri to reside to the sage Gautama. (near present day

Nashik city, state of Maharashtra, India) ^[11]

Progeny of Gautama :

Gautama (Shardwat) had son called Shardwan from the wife Ahilya. This Ahilya was the sister of Rajarshi Divodasa in the lineage of Mudgala. Shardwan's son was 'Satyadhriti'. Satyadhriti's had heterozygous twins from celestial nymph Janpadi. The twins were left by the mother on the dried grass. King Shantanu of Hastinapur mercifully (*Krupapurvak*) brought these twins in the palace. Hence, they got the names 'Krupa' and 'Krupi' respectively. 'Kripacharya' taught archery to Kauravas and Pandavas. Shardwan's daughter 'Krupi' was married to Dronacharya. She had son called 'Ashwathama' from Dronacharya. ^{[12] [13]}

From the wife named Sudeshna of Bali, sage Gautama had five sons namely 1] Anga, 2] Vanga, 3] Kainga, 4] Undra and 5] Pundra. From the maid of Sudeshna, he had son called Kukshiwan. This Kukshiwan fathered 1000 black-coloured children who were called as Krishna Gautamas.

Life At Bramhagiri And Plot by Bramhins :

Gautama was living very happily with his wife Ahilya. They were progressing with the cows and agriculture. Gautama was gaining high status with his penance. Looking at the social status of Ahilya, the wives of other rishis use to envy her. To show her down they requested their respective husbands to make plot against sage Gautama. The rishis tried to dissuade their wives from this evil deed but later became helpless before their stubborn attitude. Accordingly, they put the ill and old cow in front of the house of sage Gautama so that when Gautama touched her, she died immediately. Other rishis they put the blame of killing the cow on Gautama and ensured his ouster from the community. ^[14]

Bringing the Ganga as river Godavari :

Because of false blame on the innocent Gautama rishi, severe draught prevailed in the area. Looking at the draught in the region and sufferings of the common people, sage Gautama decided to bring river Ganga to that region. Sage Gautama went to Kailasha the abode of lord Shiva and praised him lot. Pleased with the praising rhymes of sage Gautama granted boon to the Gautama. Sage Gautam asked lord Shiva to send the branch of river Ganga to the mountain peak of Bramhagiri (present day Tryambakeshwara , Nashik, state of Maharashtra, India). Lord Shiva agreed and sent one branch of river Ganga on Brmhagiri mountain. This river later came to know as Gautami Godavari. It is very sacred. ^[15]

Yogasadhana with son Kukshiwana and End of sage Gautama :

Rishi Deerghatama also had the son called 'Kukshiwan' from the maid of Sudeshna. *Rishi* Deerghatama asked Kushiwan to observe the great austerity. Kukshiwan followed the father's order and attained *Bramhanatva*. He produced thousands of black sons which are referred as ' *Gautama Gotreeya*'. Rishi Gautama (Deerghatama) also done the *Yoga Sadhana* and attained the *Bramha Pada* (Bramharishi). After this, both father and son left this material world. ^{[16] [176]}

Advise to Shukracharya to make Shiva as Teacher :

On knowing that, Bramharishi Angira is doing partiality with Kavi (Shukracharya, the son of illustrated Bramharishi 'Bhrigu') in delivering the knowledge, Gautama advised Shukra the son of Bhrigu rishi to approach the lord Shankara for making him the teacher. He suggested him to take a

holy bath in river Godavari and please lord Shankara with pleasing rhymes. Accordingly, he pleased lord Shiva and received rare '*Mrit Sanjivani Vidya*' from lord Shankara. ^[18]

Gautama Chief Priest of King Bharata :

King Bharata organized the Ashwamedh Yagya and appointed rishi Deerghatama as chief priest for accomplishing it. From insertion of river Ganges /Gangasagar (present day Kolkatta - Bengal) to origin of Ganga at Gangotri (present day Uttarkhand) king Bharata conducted 55 Yagyas. Similarly, he also conducted 78 Yagyas from insertion of Yamuna at Prayag (present day Uttar Pradesh) to origin of Yamuna at Yamunotri (present day Uttarkhand). In these Yagyas, King Bharata the son of Dushyanta expended heavily. He gave huge donations of 13084 cows to each participating Bramhin. He also donated gold decorated 14 lacs elephants. King Bharata ruled for years and defeated Bramhin haters like Kirats Huns, Yavanas, Andhras, Kankas, Khashas, Shakas, Mlenchhas. He also rescued *Devanganas* (God girls) from the captivity of demons in the *Rasatala* (Patala). ^[19]

Curse to Wife Ahilya & Extrication :

God king Indra, lured the wife of Gautam in his absence and cohabited with her. By that time sage Gautama came home back and caught them red handed. Furious to see wife Ahilya committing adultery in his absence he cursed Ahilya to become motionless like stone till the lord Shri Rama arrives the hermitage. Only after that she will be extricated from her sin and come back to him. He also cursed Indra to become devoid of scrotum with thousand vagina like scar on this body. However, Indra begged pardon and became free of curse by taking

holy bath in river Godavari. Ahilya also got free of curse when lord Shri Rama visited her hermitage while on the way to Mithila along with sage Vishwamitra. ^[20]

Order to Kill Wife Ahilya & Repentance :

One of the sons of sage Gautam was 'Chirkari'. He got this name because he uses to delay every work. Once, on knowing the adultery committed by his wife Ahilya with God king Indra, sage Gautama ordered her killing to his son Chirkari and went away in forest to observe the penance. In the forest, sage Gautama realized about the innocence of his wife and was worried about the wellbeing of his wife and hurriedly came to home to see whether Chirkari had killed her on his order. On the other side Chirakri as per his name, took long to take decision. He was confused whether to follow the order of the father or prohibit killing of mother. Hence, he did not kill her. By that time sage Gautama arrived at home and took deep sigh of relief to see his wife alive. ^[21]

Hermitage of Gautama :

Sage Gautama's Ashrama (Hermitage) was on Pariyatra mountain. For many years sage Gautama observed penance there. Once, lokapal Yama appeared there and discussed about the duties of the king with sage Gautama. ^[22]

Contribution To Ayurveda:

Rishi Gautama was present in the ancient conclave of *rishis* held below mountain Himalaya to discuss the management of diseases occurred on account of consuming domestic food as mentioned in Charaka Samhita. All the *rishis* present there learnt Ayurveda from sage Bhardwaja. Hence, it can be concluded that sage Gautama may also

have contributed in further development of Ayurveda. In the Madhukosh commentary on 'Madhav Nidana', we find the reference of Gautama wherein acharya Gautama stated the five types of Kaphas and their functions. As per acharya Gautama, Kapha is of five types. The Kapha situated in chest is called as the 'Avalambak Kapha'. It provides nutrition to all rest of the Kaphas. The Kapha present in stomach is called as 'Kledak Kapha'. It liquifies the diet. The 'Bodhak Kapha' is situated in mouth. It senses the taste of the food. The Kapha present in head, is called as 'Tarpak Kapha'. It provides nutrition to the brain. The Kapha present in joints is called as 'Shleshak Kapha'. It provides lubrication to the joints and also act as cementing material for the joints. ^[23]

Observations :

Gautama In Nutshell :

1	Father	Aushinaj
2	Mother	Mamta
3	Earlier Name	Deerghatama
4	Transformed Name	Gautama
5	Spouse	Ahilya
6	Children	Shatanik
7	Grandchildren	Krupacharya and Krupi
8	Donated children	Anga, Vanga, Kaling, Pundra, Undra
9	Lineage	Angira Gotri
10	Important work	Brought river Godavari on earth

Discussion :

Though sage Gautama was born blind but with his penance and cow service, he overcame the physical handicap and gave meaning to his life. Gautama had to face lot of hardship in life on account of jealous feeling by other Bramhins. Even though he faced hardship, he brought river Godavari on earth to overcome the prevailing draught in the region. This shows his kind heartedness. Even though God king Indra raped his wife by deception, he forgave Indra. This shows his forgiveness. He properly guided Shukracharya to take education from lord Shiva. This shows his true path guiding nature. He returned the girl Ahilya to her father Kanva muni on attaining the younghood. This shows his word keeping and honest nature. He donated the sperms to king Bali's wife. He fathered brilliant sons. With his enduring penance, he achieved the rare feat of 'Bramaharshi' post. Ultimately, he concentrated his mind in Yoga. His presence in the conclave of rishis to discuss management of diseases, shows his interest in medical science and caring approach towards mankind. Although no concrete evidence of any medical literature attributed to Gautam is found presently, but as he was present in the assembly of rishis and learnt Ayurveda from Bhardwaj rishi, he may have contributed in the development of Ayurveda.

Conclusion :

Rishi Gautama was present in the ancient conclave of rishis held below mountain Himalaya to discuss the management of diseases occurred on account of consuming domestic food as mentioned in Charaka Samhita. All the *rishis* present there

learnt Ayurveda from sage Bhardwaja. Hence, it can be concluded that sage Gautama may also have contributed in further development of Ayurveda. Secondly acharya Gautama had mentioned five types of Kaphas and their functions. Hence, it can be concluded that acharya Gautama may have contributed in the development of Ayurveda as a medical science although we do not get the full version of his treatise today.

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Declaration :

Conflict of Interest : None

ISSN: 2584-2757

DOI : 10.5281/zenodo.18259349

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