



## Concept of Gandha in Charaka Samhita

Patil A<sup>1\*</sup>, Shreevathsa<sup>2</sup>

DOI:10.21760/jaims.10.4.20

<sup>1\*</sup> Ashwini Patil, PhD Scholar, Dept of Samhita Siddhanta, Government Ayurveda Medical College, Mysuru, Karnataka, India.

<sup>2</sup> Shreevathsa, Professor and HOD, Dept of Samhita Siddhanta, Government Ayurveda Medical College, Mysuru, Karnataka, India.

Ayurveda which is unique in its origin, observations and documentation of diseases and its treatment has added beauty in understanding the prognosis too. Acharya's have not left any area untouched related with preventive and curative aspect of diseases. The Sharira Sthana ends with Jatisutriya Adhyaya wherein the measurement of child is told indicating the life span. Seeing the bad signs, one can predict the Ayu, which are elaborated in Indriyasthana. This helps in understanding Chikitsa Sthana wherein treatment related to only Sadhya Rogas are said. Ayurveda classifies disease as mainly two i.e., Sadhya and Asadhya. This classification is very important to know the prognosis of disease rather than diagnosis otherwise it can lead to loss of social respect, money and knowledge of physician. For the proper knowledge of Asadhya Laxanas there is description of Arishtas in Samhita Granthas. The whole Indriyasthana of Charaka Samhita (12 chapters), 5 chapters (28 - 33) of Sushruta Samhita Sutrasthana and in 2 chapters (5-6) of Ashtanga Hrudaya Sharira sthana different types of arishtas are clearly mentioned which are helpful to explain the prognosis of a patient. Along with Charaka Samhita, Bhela Samhita, Kashyapa Samhita and Harita Samhita also included Indriya Sthana. A total of 47 factors are mentioned to look into for the prognosis. These are again basically grouped under 2 factors i.e., those signs and symptoms which are lodged in subject and those which are understood by inauspicious signs. Thus, it covers all the Laxanas starting from Pratyaksha Bhavas to Anumanagamya Bhavas. In this article, Gandha which is one among the 47 factors is been explained from Indriya Sthana as well as from other Sthana's.

**Keywords:** Indriyasthana, Gandha, Sthana

Corresponding Author	How to Cite this Article	To Browse
Ashwini Patil, PhD Scholar, Dept of Samhita Siddhanta, Government Ayurveda Medical College, Mysuru, Karnataka, India. Email: <a href="mailto:drashurkundgol@gmail.com">drashurkundgol@gmail.com</a>	Patil A, Shreevathsa, <a href="#">Concept of Gandha in Charaka Samhita</a> . J Ayu Int Med Sci. 2025;10(4):142-147. Available From <a href="https://jaims.in/jaims/article/view/4205/">https://jaims.in/jaims/article/view/4205/</a>	

**Manuscript Received**  
2025-03-13

**Review Round 1**  
2025-03-28

**Review Round 2**  
2025-04-08

**Review Round 3**  
2025-04-18

**Accepted**  
2025-04-28

**Conflict of Interest**  
None

**Funding**  
Nil

**Ethical Approval**  
Not required

**Plagiarism X-checker**  
11.65

**Note**



© 2025 by Patil A, Shreevathsa and Published by Maharshi Charaka Ayurveda Organization. This is an Open Access article licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/> unported [CC BY 4.0].



## Introduction

*Gandha* is considered as one of the *Vishesha Guna* of *Pruthvi Mahabhoota*.<sup>[1]</sup> These *Vishesha Guna*'s perform specific functions in our body both physiologically and pathologically. *Gandha Pareeksha* is considered as one of the assessment tool in identifying the *Arishta Lakshana* by *Acharya Charaka* in *Indriyasthanas*.<sup>[2]</sup> *Gandha* is perceived by *Vata Dosha* and *Pitta, Kapha Dosha* have their unique *Gandha* in *Prakruta* and *Vaikruta Avastha*.<sup>[3]</sup> An attempt is made to understand the concept of *Gandha* in *Charaka Samhita* for better understanding and applying it clinically.

## Materials and Methods

Literary part is documented and interpreted with the help of *Shabda Kosha*, *Charaka Samhita* with available *Chakrapani* and *Gangadhara* commentaries.

### Definition of Gandha:

As per Monier Williams 1872 dictionary the word *Gandha* is been defined as: *Gandha as*, m. (said to be fr. rt. *gandh*), smell, odour, (sometimes nine or ten kinds are enumerated, viz. *Ishta*, *Anishta*, *Madhura*, *Katu*, *Nirhari*, *Samhata*, *Snigdha*, *Ruksha*, *Visada*, *Amla*); a fragrant substance, fragrance, scent, (in comp. = fragrant, see *gandhambu* &c.), a perfume.

As per *Shabdakalpdruma*,

गन्धः, पुं, (गन्ध + पचाद्यच् ।) आमोदः । इति विश्वः । स तु घ्राणग्राह्यपृथिवीगुणः । यथा, --"घ्राणग्राह्यो भवेद्गन्धो घ्राणस्यैवोपकारकः । सौरभश्चासौरभश्च स द्वेधा परिकीर्तितः ॥" इति भाषापरिच्छेदे । १०३ ॥ (अस्य लक्षणान्तरं यथा, घ्राणमात्रग्राह्यगुणत्व-व्याप्यजातिमत्त्वं गन्धत्वं यद्वा पृथिवीवृत्तिमात्र वृत्तिगुणत्वसाक्षाद्व्याप्यजातिमत्त्वमिति ॥) स तु दशविधः । (यथा, महाभारते । १४ । ५० । ४०-४२ ।) "शब्दः स्पर्शस्तथारूपं रसो गन्धश्च पञ्चमः । एते पञ्च गुणा भूमेर्विशेषा द्विजसत्तमाः ॥ पार्थिवश्च सदागन्धो गन्धश्च बहुधा स्मृतः । तस्य गन्धस्य वक्ष्यामि विस्तरेण बहून् गुणान् ॥ इष्टश्चाणिष्टगन्धश्च मधुरोऽम्लः कटुस्तथा । निर्हारी संहतः स्निग्धो रूक्षो विशद एव च । एवं दशविधो ज्ञेयः पार्थिवो गन्ध इत्युत ॥" एतेषामपि केषु को गन्ध इत्येतद्विवृतिमाह । १) इष्टः १ कस्तूरिकादौ । अनिष्टः २ शवादौ । मधुरः ३ मधुपुष्पादौ । अम्लः ४ आम्रा-तकादौ । कटुः ५ मरिचादौ । निर्हारी दहिङ्गवादौ । संहतः ७ चित्रगन्धः अनेककल्कगतः । स्निग्धः ८ सद्यस्तप्तघृतादौ । रूक्षः ९ सार्षपतैलादौ । विशदः १० शाल्यनादौ ॥

*Gandha* is said to be *Pruthvi* predominant and perceived through *Ghrana*. Through *Ghrana* two types of *Gandha* are perceived and they are:

*Sourabha* and *Asourabha*. It is been again classified into ten types:

1. *Ishta* - Ex: Smell of *Kasturi*.
2. *Anishta* - Ex : Smell of dead body
3. *Madhura* - Ex: Smell of *Madhu*, *Pushpa*.
4. *Amla* - Ex: Smell of *Amra*
5. *Katu* - Ex: Smell of *Maricha*
6. *Nirhari* - Ex: Smell of *Hingu*
7. *Samhata* - Ex: Smell of different mixtures
8. *Snigdha* - Ex: Smell of immediate formed *Ghrta*
9. *Ruksha* - Ex: Smell of *Sarshapa Taila*
10. *Vishada* - Ex: Smell of *Anna*.

### Utpatti of Gandha

According to *Ayurveda*, *Indriyas* (sense organs) are the apparatus to attain knowledge for *Atma* (soul).<sup>[4]</sup> These are eleven in number which includes 5 *Gyanendriya* (sense faculties) *Chakshu* (visual apparatus), *Srotra* (auditory apparatus), *Rasana* (gustatory apparatus), *Sparshana* (tactile apparatus), *Ghrana* (olfactory apparatus); 5 *Karmendriya* (motor organs) *Vaak* (organ for speech), *Upastha* (reproductive part), *Pani* (hands), *Pada* (legs), *Payu* (excretory organs); and 1 *Ubhayendriya*- *Mana* (mind). These *Indriyas* are also made of the five elements. Each sense faculty has the dominance of one element and a particular sense organ receives only *guna* (specific attribute) of that element in the form of stimulus. For e.g. *Ghranendriya* (olfactory apparatus) is dominated by *Prithvi Mahabhuta* (earth element) and receives knowledge of *Gandha* (smell). *Acharya Charaka* has further mentioned the intellectual aspect of the five *Gyanendriya*. This is termed *Indriya Panchapanchaka*.<sup>[5]</sup> It includes *Indriya* (sense faculties), *Indriya Dravya* (material constituents corresponding to the sense faculties), *Indriya Adhithana* (sense organ), *Indriya Artha* (objects) and *Indriya Buddhi* (perception). For *Ghranendriya*, *Bhu* (earth) is *Dravya*, *Nasika* (nose) is *Adhithana*, *Gandha* (smell) is *Artha* and *Gandha Buddhi* (olfactory center in the brain) is *Indriya Budhi*. The *Ghranendriya* is responsible to complete its respective work viz. transmission and interpretation of sense of smell. Further, the learning process carries on where the *Ghranendriya* connects *Mana* (mind) which is synchronous with *Atma* (soul) and thereafter knowledge is perceived.<sup>[6]</sup> This is necessary for a normal sense of smell. *Acharya Charaka*, in *Indriyanikam indriya* opines that if a person fails to recognize smell of different objects,

Whether good or bad or not responsive to any smell at all, it is suggestive that the person is having fatal signs related to olfactory sensation. This shows the importance of smell as a sense in *Ayurveda* science.

#### Bheda of Gandha:

Acharya Charaka in *Pushpitaka Adhyaya* of *Indriya Sthana* explains about *Gandha* and *Rasa Arishta*. While explaining *Gandha*, he explains about both *Prakruta* and *Vaikruta Gandha*.

नानापुष्पोपमो गन्धो यस्य भाति दिवानिशम्।

पुष्पितस्य वनस्येव नानाद्रुमलतावतः॥८॥

तमाहुः पुष्पितं धीरा नरं मरणलक्षणैः।

स ना संवत्सराद्देहं जहातीति विनिश्चयः॥९॥

एवमेकैकशः पुष्पैर्यस्य गन्धः समो भवेत्।

इष्टैर्वा यदि वाऽनिष्टैः स च पुष्पित उच्यते॥१०॥

समासेनाशुभान् गन्धानेकत्वेनाथवा पुनः।

आजिघ्रेद्यस्य गात्रेषु तं विद्यात् पुष्पितं भिषक्॥११॥

आप्सुतानाप्सुते काये यस्य गन्धाः शुभाशुभाः।

व्यत्यासेनानिमित्ताः स्युः स च पुष्पित उच्यते॥१२॥

तद्यथा- चन्दनं कुष्ठं तगरागुरुणी मधु।

माल्यं मूत्रपुरीषे च मृतानि कुणपानि च॥१३॥

ये चान्ये विविधात्मानो गन्धा विविधयोनयः।

तेऽप्यनेनानुमानेन विज्ञेया विकृतिं गताः॥१४॥

इदं चाप्यतिदेशार्थं लक्षणं गन्धसंश्रयम्।

वक्ष्यामो यदभिज्ञाय भिषङ्गणमादिशेत्॥१५॥

वियोनिर्विदुरो गन्धो यस्य गात्रेषु जायते।

इष्टो वा यदि वाऽनिष्टो न स जीवति तां समाम्॥१६॥

एतावद्गन्धविज्ञानं...॥१७॥

#### Meaning:

As how forest will be filled with smell of different पुष्प & लता's, similarly person who emits different types of smell/odor similar to flowers day & night is said to die certainly & such persons are called as पुष्पित. It is sure too that पुष्पित person will die within 1year. Person who emits odor/smell of all flowers individually is said to be पुष्पित. Person who emits diff. smell/odor separately or all toge. is also called as पुष्पित. Person who emits smell/odor even after he has done लेपन with गन्ध द्रव्य's is said to be पुष्पित.

By अनुमान the गन्ध is ascertained. आचार्य चरक says about शुभ and अशुभ गन्ध. The शुभ गन्ध are of:

**Table 1: Showing शुभ AND अशुभ गन्धः**

शुभ गन्ध	अशुभ गन्ध
■ चन्दन	■ मूत्र
■ कुष्ठ	■ पुरीष
■ तगर	■ मृत पशु
■ अदूरू	■ कुणप
■ मधु	
■ माला	

There are other different गन्धा's also which are शुभ and अशुभ, examination of this is to be done on the basis of अनुमान प्रमाण.

#### Chakrapani Commentary:

Chakrapani says here, that the word “नानाद्रुमलतावत” is used specifically to denote the variety i.e., in a forest similar variety as well as other variety of fruits, flowers, creepers, climbers exist. चम्पकवनमशोकवनमित्यादि” It also indicates the budding stage of different flowers.

“नानात्वं च पुष्पाणामेकजातीयानामपिकलिकादवस्था भेदादपि स्यात्।”

And all these गन्ध are present always i.e.दिवानिशि (day & night). Similarly in a person who emits गन्ध day & night is said to be पुष्पित. All above lakshanas may be seen individually or altogether. By अनुमान the शुभ & अशुभ गन्ध should be ascertained. Chakrapani clearly states मृत to dead animals & कुणप to dead human body. Even he considers गन्ध which is present in धूप & नानाप्रकार गन्ध which are अकृत्रिम i.e., natural to be taken or considered or ascertain as शुभ/अशुभ गन्ध.

#### Gangadhara Commentary:

Gangadhara opines that how a flower always emits smell day and night similarly मरणासत्र पुरुष too emits smell day and night. If गन्ध is lost then the पुष्प dies, similarly a person too i.e.,

“एतावता तद्वनस्य नाशवत् नाश इति न ख्यापितं, किन्तु नाशे पुष्पवद्गन्धांशे इय उप्मा।”

He says that even though शुभ & अशुभ गन्ध are told but still they also act as अरिष्ट. Person emits शुभ गन्ध without appl. गन्ध द्रव्य (day&night) is अरिष्ट. And on appl. गन्ध द्रव्य emits अशुभ गन्ध then it's also अरिष्ट. Such varieties of गन्ध may be emit. from person's body & he will be called as पुष्पित who will die within 1 year.

## Discussion

After understanding the basic of *Gandha* in form of its definition, *Utpatti* and *Bheda*, it is important to know about *Gandha* utility in different context in different *Sthana's* of Charaka Samhita. The table 1.2 provides with the information of the same.

**Table 2: Reference's of *Gandha* in Charaka Samhita**

SN	Reference's	Remarks
1.	Ch.Su.1/29	Indication of Dhumapana in Pooti Gandha from Ghrana
2.	Ch.Su.5/72	Dantadhavana benefit - removes Durgandha.
3.	Ch.Su.20/14	Among the 40 pitta Nanatmaja Vikaras, Angagandha is been mentioned and also Gandha is been mentioned as one of the Aatma Roopa of Pitta Dosha.
4.	Ch.Su.25/40	Chandana is said to be best Durgandha Hara.
5.	Ch.Su.26/11	The Parthiva Dravya's are predominant of Gandha Guna
6.	Ch.Su.27/9	Intake of Annapana which are Ishta Varna, Gandha is said to be beneficial.
7.	Ch.Su.27/169	Jambeera removes Pooti Gandha
8.	Ch.Su.27/215	Quality of Jala has been mentioned. In that Jala with Durgandha is said not to be used.
9.	Ch.Ni.2/5	While defining Raktapitta, it is been mentioned as Pitta acquiring the Lohita Varna as well as Gandha
10.	Ch.Ni.2/6	In Purvaroop of Raktapitta Shukla, Amla Gandha, Rasa and Udgara are been mentioned
11.	Ch.Ni.4/13	Udakameha Pramehi passes Nirgandha Mutra
12.	Ch.Ni.4/29	Ksharameha Pramehi passes mutra with Gandha similar to that of Kshara
13.	Ch.Ni.4/47	In Purvaroop of Prameha there will be presence of excess Shareera Gandha.
14.	Ch.Vi.3/7	Dushita Vayu, Udaka and Desha Lakshana's are been told. Dushita Vayu - will be with Asaatmya Gandha Dushita Udaka and Desha - will be with Vikruta Gandha
15.	Ch.Vi.4/6	The naming of Roga is also sometimes done based on Gandha
16.	Ch.Vi.7/26	In the preparation of Tilvakoddalakadi Taila, the features of well-prepared Taila is been mentioned which says that the Taila should have the Varna, Gandha and Rasa of the drugs used.
17.	Ch.Sh.1/27	Gandha Guna is said to be the Vishesh Guna of Prithvi Mahabhoota
18.	Ch.Sh.1/126	Here Gandha perception in Heena, Ati and Mithya Yoga is been mentioned.
19.	Ch.Sh.8/8	During Garbhadana, Maithuna should be performed with all liking things around. One among them is presence of Ishta Gandha
20.	Ch.Sh.8/54	In Stanya Sampat, Prakruta Gandha has been told as one of the quality. It indicates pleasant smell with no bad odor.
21.	Ch.Sh.8/55	The Stanya which is infected by Vikruta Vata Dosha will be with bad odor i.e., Alakshya Gandha
22.	Ch.Chi.1/2/4	In collection of Amalaki, it is been said to collect Amalaki's which is with Anupahata Gandha.
23.	Ch.Chi.1/3/60	In Shilajatu Rasayana, the Shilajatu possessing Gomutra Gandha is said to be best among all the varieties.
24.	Ch.Chi.2/1/18	While explaining the benefits of Vaajikarana, it is been said as Dhatu (Shukra) is of Anishta Gandha then it is of no use.
25.	Ch.Chi.3/79	In Medogata Jvara Lakshana, Svagandha Asahatva is mentioned as one of the Lakshana. Patient is intolerable to his own body smell.
26.	Ch.Chi.4/9	In definition of Raktapitta, it is been said that Pitta acquires the qualities of Rakta i.e., Gandha, Varna.
27.	Ch.Chi.4/98	In case of Nasagata Raktapitta, if patient is suffering from Ghrananasha and Krimi then there will be Kunapa Gandha.
28.	Ch.Chi.6/12	In Kaphaja Prameha, Svadosha Gandha is said to be one of the Lakshana i.e., Aama Gandha
29.	Ch.Chi.6/13	Anga Gandha is been mentioned as one of the Prameha Purvaroop Lakshana.
30.	Ch.Chi.7/35	Visra Gandha is one among the Lakshana in Pittaja Kushta
31.	Ch.Chi.8/179,180,182	Under Mano Anukula Chikitsa of Rajayakshma, Ishta Gandha treatment is given of prime importance
32.	Ch.Chi.9/22	In Asadhya Unmada Lakshana, if patient is associated with Pooti Gandha then it should not be treated.
33.	Ch.Chi.11/11	Durgandha is one of the Lakshana mentioned of Kshataksheena.
34.	Ch.Chi.17/49	In Urdhva Shvasa Lakshana, the word Kruddha Gandhavaha is been referred as Dushta Vayu
35.	Ch.Chi.18/25	Durgandha is one of the Lakshana in Kshyaja Kasa
36.	Ch.Chi.19/5	Aama Gandha is one of the Lakshana in Aamaja Atisaara
37.	Ch.Chi.19/6	Ati Durgandhayukta Pureesha Sarana is the Lakshana in Pitta Atisaara
38.	Ch.Chi.19/7	Durgandha is one of the Lakshana in Shleshma Atisaara

SN	Reference's	Remarks
39.	Ch.Chi.20/17	In Asadhya Chardi Lakshana, person vomiting with smell as that of Vinmutra is said as Asadhya
40.	Ch.Chi.20/43,44	In Chardi Chikitsa, person should be treated with Gandha of Phala, Mula or any material which is liked by the patient as it differs in different individuals.
41.	Ch.Chi.23/120,121	In Visha Chikitsa, different sources incorporated with Visha are mentioned which a Vaidya should carefully examine. Ex: Garland having no Gandha brings about Shiroruja, Loma Harsha The water in Koopa, Tadaga etc. if is of Durgandha then it produces Shvayathu, Kotha, Pidaka and even Marana also
42.	Ch.Chi.25/13	Pittaja Vrana will be with Gandha i.e., Pooti Gandha
43.	Ch.Chi.25/27	8 types of Gandha are been mentioned in Vrana: Sarpi, Taila, Vasa, Pooya, Rakta, Shyava, Amla, Pooti Shyava is been mentioned as Shavasya Gandha.
44.	Ch.Chi.25/108	Through Dhupana Chikitsa, Vikruta Gandha in Vrana is subsided
45.	Ch.Chi.26/110,114	Loss of Gandha perception is one of the Saamanya Lakshana in Dushta Pratishyaya and Peenasa
46.	Ch.Chi.26/124,126	In Vataja and Tridoshaja Aruchi, Manoghna Gandha is one of the causative factors for Aruchi
47.	Ch.Chi.26/225	Mention of Gandha Taila is seen which is nothing but Taila prepared out of Sugandha Dravya's
48.	Ch.Chi.30/222	In Pradara, Durgandha is one of the Upadrava Lakshana
49.	Ch.K.1/6	The drugs mentioned in Shadvirechanashatashritiya Adhyaya are explained based on Gandha, Varna Rasa etc. and they should be used accordingly.
50.	Ch.K.1/10	Collection of drugs is based on Kala, Aatapa, Pavana and Anupahata Gandha, Varna etc. factors
51.	Ch.K.3/12	Ikshvaku should possess Ishta Gandha
52.	Ch.Si.3/11	In selection of Basti material, Vigandha is one of the feature. It refers to the Basti which is devoid of Pootigandha. It is said as Vigandha
53.	Ch.Si.6/16	An ideal drug is one which has a Ishta Gandha (pleasant)
54.	Ch.Si.6/32	When a person in whom Kapha is Utklesha Avastha and at that time consumes Durgandhayukta Virechana Oushadha then it causes Vamana.
55.	Ch.Si.9/43	Vitgandha Mootra Pravrutti is one of the Lakshana in Bastikundala.

In many areas *Gandha* word is been utilized to denote garland with pleasant smell. This is seen in almost all *Pittaja Vikara Chikitsa*, as external soothing agent and in *Dinacharya* too. Many of the *Dravya's* are named based on *Gandha* as *Uragandha*, *Teekshna Gandha* etc. Here the word *Gandha* which relates with physiological and pathological perception is been selected from all the *Sthana's* and incorporated in the above table.

## Conclusion

*Gandha* plays an important role in identifying the normalcy and abnormal *Avastha* of the *dosha's*. Body emits different odors which co-relates with many pathological conditions. In order to understand, interpret, diagnose and also for prognosis knowledge of *Gandha* is essential.

## References

1. Trikamji AY. Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha with Ayurveda Dipika Commentary of Chakrapanidutta. Reprint. Varanasi: Choukhamabha Surbharati Prakashan; 2020. p. 289 [Crossref][PubMed] [Google Scholar]

2. Trikamji AY. Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha with Ayurveda Dipika Commentary of Chakrapanidutta. Reprint. Varanasi: Choukhamabha Surbharati Prakashan; 2020. p. 353 [Crossref][PubMed] [Google Scholar]

3. Acharya VJ, Narayanaramacharya. Sushruta Samhita with Nibandha Sangraha Commentary of Shri Dalhanacharya and Nyayachandrika Panjika of Shri Gayadasa Acharya on Nidana Sthana. 8th ed. Varanasi: Choukambha Orientalia; 2005. p. 101-2 [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]

4. Trikamji AY. Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha with Ayurveda Dipika Commentary of Chakrapanidutta. Reprint. Varanasi: Choukhamabha Surbharati Prakashan; 2020. p. 289 [Crossref][PubMed] [Google Scholar]

5. Trikamji AY. Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha with Ayurveda Dipika Commentary of Chakrapanidutta. Reprint. Varanasi: Choukhamabha Surbharati Prakashan; 2020. p. 55 [Crossref][PubMed][Google Scholar]

6. Trikamji AY. Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha with Ayurveda Dipika Commentary of Chakrapanidutta. Reprint. Varanasi: Choukhamabha Surbharati Prakashan; 2020. p. 56 [*Crossref*][*PubMed*][*Google Scholar*]

Disclaimer / Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of Journals and/or the editor(s). Journals and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.