

COMPILATION OF NYAAYA W.S.R. ASHTANGA HRIDAYA

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18797525>**How to cite this Article:** Dr. Indu Bala^{*1}, Dr. Shanti Bodh², Dr. Sneha Ghosh³, Dr. Diksha Sharma⁴. (2026). Compilation of Nyaaya W.S.R. Ashtanga hridaya. World Journal of Pharmaceutical and Medical Research, 12(3), 71–76. This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license.

Article Received on 15/01/2026

Article Revised on 04/02/2026

Article Published on 01/03/2026

ABSTRACT

Background: Classical Ayurvedic texts employ a highly compact style of exposition, often leaving scope for multiple interpretations. In *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Acharya Vagbhata* resolves this challenge through the implicit and explicit use of *Nyaayas* (Maxims), which serve as cognitive tools for understanding, interpretation, and application of medical principles. These *Nyaayas* bridge theoretical knowledge with practical clinical reasoning. **Objective:** To critically explore the role of *Nyaayas* used in *Ashtanga Hridaya* and to evaluate their significance in clarifying textual meaning, guiding clinical judgment, and enhancing pedagogical understanding. **Materials and Methods:** The study is based on an analytical review of *Ashtanga Hridaya* supported by classical commentaries—*Sarvangasundari* of *Arunadatta* and *Ayurveda Rasayana* of *Hemadri*. Here a total of eighteen *Nyaayas* will be mentioned. Each *Nyaaya* conveys a broader principle that aids in avoiding mechanical application of therapies and promotes individualized clinical thinking. **Conclusion:** The systematic understanding of *Nyaayas* in *Ashtanga Hridaya* enriches both theoretical comprehension and clinical competence.

KEYWORDS: *Nyaaya*, *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Vagbhata*, *Arundatta*, *Hemadri*.**INTRODUCTION**

Explanation of *Nyaaya* (Maxims) is primarily found in vedic period, continued in *Purana*, *Upanishad*, *Kavya*, *Darshana*, etc. While explaining the *Arthapatti Pramana Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* explains “*Dandapoopa Nyaaya*”. In *Ramayana*, we find *Ashoka Vanika Nyaaya*. In *Mahabharata*, we find *Sinhavalokana Nyaaya*. In *Meemansa Darshana*, we find *Dehalideepa Nyaaya*. Ayurveda, being the *upaveda* of *Atharvaveda*, also explains various maxims to enlighten their treatise and for easy understanding of topics. As these maxims are commonly used by the people, Ayurveda *Acharyas* found it an easy tool for classification of the views that they want to put forth in their *sutras* (quotations).

Acharya Vagbhata (6th–7th century AD) the author of *Ashtanga Hridaya*, employed a concise and poetic style to convey complex Ayurvedic principles. Commentator of *Ashtanga Hridaya* *Arundatta* and *Hemadri* had used many Maxims to explain the main context in many *sthanas* such as ‘*Abhinava Mrit Kumbha Jala Lava Syandana Nyaaya*’ in *Nidana Sthana* etc. Here *Nyaaya* or Maxim means- a method or general rule or logical explanation or a principle that clarify subtle concepts through familiar reasoning patterns.

This article systematically converts the cited references from *Ashtanga Hridaya* (along with *Arunadatta*’s *Sarvangasundari* commentary and *Hemadri*’s *Ayurveda Rasayana* commentary) into a structured discussion of the concerned *Nyaayas*, explaining their meaning, contextual interpretation, and clinical relevance.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Primary source includes *Ashtanga Hridaya* with *Sarvangasundari* commentary of *Arundatta* and *Ayurveda Rasayana* a commentary of *Hemadri*. *Nyaayas* were identified, classified, and analysed for textual context, interpretative meaning, and clinical relevance.

Nirukti of Nyaaya

- 1) न्यायःनयः,नीतौ,नितिसाधन,उपाय यथार्थज्ञान, निर्णय, जयोपाय, युक्तिः^[1]
- 2) प्रमाणानुग्राहस्तर्को न्यायः|- निश्चितमीयते निर्णयतेअनेन इति न्याय^[2]
- 3) यथा: नियमेन ईयते इति न्यायः,युक्तम्,औपियकम्,लभ्यम्,भजमानम्,अभिनीतम्,कल्प नम्,विधौ,ताच्छीलये,आमर्षने च^[3]

From all the above words the meaning of *Nyaya* can be denoted as per Sir Monier Williams

Method – पद्धति;उपयाशच; Rule (a general or universal rule) – नियम; System- क्रम;व्यवस्था; Plan-योजना; judgement - निर्णय; standard – मापदंड; Principles – सिद्धान्त; way - मार्ग; Logical proof- युक्तयुदाहरणम्; conclusion - निर्णय; Manner- नियमशच^[4]

REVIEW

Nyaaya mentioned in *Ashtanga Hridaya*

NYAAYA & LITERAL MEANING	CONTEXTUAL MEANING
<p>1. Abhinava Mrit Kumbha Jala Lava Syandana Nyaaya <i>Abhinava</i>- very new, <i>mrit kumbha</i> – pitcher of mud, jala-water, <i>lava</i>-little amount, <i>syandana</i>-leak. When water is kept in a new pitcher of mud, the pot is intact and healthy, yet very fine drops of water slowly ooze out through its tiny pores, no matter how tightly you pack the mud.</p>	<p><i>Arundatta</i> has incorporated this <i>Nyaaya</i> while describing the <i>dhaatu parinama</i> in context of <i>sthaulya</i> (obesity). In obese individual <i>meda dhaatu</i> accumulates in excess and other <i>dhaatus</i> are in reduced quantity. From <i>meda dhaatu</i>, little amount of <i>aahara rasa</i> reached to <i>uttrotara dhaatus</i> (<i>asthi,majja,shukra</i>) only for <i>apyaayana</i> not for <i>poshana</i> and major amount of <i>aahara rasa</i> is returned back to <i>purva dhaatus</i> (<i>mansa,rakta,rasa</i>) due to <i>meda avarana</i>.^[5]</p>
<p>2.Ashma Shastra Nyaaya <i>Ashma</i> – stone, <i>Shastra</i> – weapon <i>Shastra</i> is made of <i>ashma</i> and it is even sharpened by <i>ashma</i> but if dashed against <i>ashma</i> inappropriately, it gets blunted that means those factors which are responsible for origin and existence of anything, those are the cause of destruction when they are in abnormal state.</p>	<p><i>Arundatta</i> has commented on this that <i>chakshuindriya</i> is derived from <i>tejasa mahabhuta</i> and doing its work also because of <i>tejasa mahabhuta</i> and <i>atiyoga</i> of <i>tejasa mahabhuta</i> is also responsible for destruction of <i>chakshuindriya</i>. So, according <i>Ashma Shastra Nyaaya</i>, which factors are responsible for <i>utpatti</i> (origin)and <i>sthiti</i> (existence)of things when they are in abnormal state also cause for <i>vinaasha</i> (destruction).^[6]</p>
<p>3.Ayurghritam Nyaaya <i>Ayu</i> – life, <i>Ghrita</i> – ghee. The maxim of long life and ghee. Ghee is the cause of long life. If pure ghee is taken regularly everyday with meal, one becomes healthier and lives disease free in old age.</p>	<p><i>Hemadri</i> has quoted this <i>Nyaaya</i> while explaining <i>Oja</i> and said that <i>shleshma</i> in its natural state promotes <i>bala</i> in the form of <i>oja</i>, when in morbid condition, it takes the form of <i>mala</i> (excreta) and cause <i>papma</i> (misery). Thus <i>shleshma</i> is the cause of <i>apara oja</i>. This maxim is used to denote the relation of cause and effect.^[7]</p>
<p>4. Dhaatu Poshana Nyaaya <i>Dhaatu</i>-fundamental body tissues, <i>Poshana</i>-nourishment. This <i>nyaaya</i> explains that body tissues are nourished in a fixed, sequential order, not all at once. Each <i>dhaatu</i> receives nutrition from the previous one. Nourishment occurs in the following order: <i>Rasa</i> → <i>Rakta</i> → <i>Mansa</i> → <i>Meda</i> → <i>Asthi</i> → <i>Majja</i> → <i>Sukra</i></p>	<p><i>Arundatta</i> proposed the theory '<i>Ek kala Dhaatu Poshana Nyaaya</i>'. According to this, by circulation of <i>rasa</i> and all <i>dhaatu</i> simultaneously they are nourished by <i>rasa</i> itself. Here, any liquid element in the body which moves or flows can be treated as <i>rasa</i>. The site of <i>rasa dhaatu</i> is <i>Hridaya</i> but it circulates throughout the body by <i>vyaanvayu</i>. <i>Vyaanvayu</i> stimulates the process of circulation of <i>rasa dhaatu</i> all over the body simultaneously and constantly. The '<i>Ek kala Dhaatu Poshana Nyaaya</i>' says that all seven <i>dhaatus</i> are formed simultaneously from <i>aahara rasa</i>.^[8]</p>

<p>5.Duta Sandesha Vachana Nyaaya <i>Duta</i>- messenger,<i>Sandesha</i> – message, <i>Vachana</i> – word This <i>Nyaaya</i> refers to the faithful delivery of a message by a messenger, exactly as intended by the sender—without addition, omission, or distortion.</p>	<p>The original teachings were given by <i>Atreya</i> and other sages. <i>Acharya Vagbhata</i> compiled and presented them in <i>Ashtanga Hridaya</i>. Here, <i>Vagbhata</i> is <i>duta</i>. He conveys the same teachings, sometimes in different words, but without altering the meaning.^[9]</p>
<p>6.Gangayam Ghosha Nyaaya <i>Gangayam</i> – in/on the river Ganga, <i>Ghosha</i> – a village Literally, it means “the village is in the Ganga”. In reality, a village cannot exist inside a river; it is actually situated on the bank of the Ganga. So this <i>Nyaaya</i> is used in the condition where <i>gauna artha</i> (secondary meaning) is considered instead of <i>mukhya artha</i> (main meaning).</p>	<p><i>Hemadri</i> has quoted this <i>Nyaaya</i> while describing <i>shaaka varga</i> in the context of <i>pindalu</i>. Here, the meaning of <i>pindalu</i> (<i>katu, ushna vatakaphahara</i>) is taken <i>varahikanda</i> i.e. secondary meaning instead of main meaning of <i>pindalu</i> i.e. <i>pindaluka</i> (<i>kaphavardhaka, guru, vishtambhi</i> according to <i>Sushruta Samhita</i>).^[10]</p>
<p>7.Gauna Mukhyayor-Mukhye Karya Sampratyaya Nyaaya <i>Gauna Mukhyayo</i>- both secondary and primary meaning are available, <i>Mukhye</i>-for primary meaning, <i>karya sampratyayah</i>-work assets. It states that when a word or statement has both a direct (primary) and an indirect (secondary) meaning, the primary meaning should be accepted first, unless it is impossible or illogical in that context.</p>	<p><i>Acharya Vagbhata</i> has explained the properties of vegetable oils depend upon the source of corresponding seeds from which they are extracted. The chief oil among them is <i>tikshna, vyavayi, tvak dosha krit, sukshma, ushna</i> etc. <i>Hemadri</i> has commented on this verse that <i>Acharya Vagbhata</i> has not clearly mentioned in this context that properties of which <i>taila</i> has been described here. But the word <i>mukhya</i> indicates to til <i>taila</i>. Because til <i>taila</i> is the most efficacious in <i>taila varga</i> for the purpose of <i>bala</i> and <i>snehana</i>.^[11]</p>
<p>8.Ghritadi Dagdha Nyaaya <i>Ghritadi</i> – ghee, oil etc., <i>Dagdha</i>-burnt It is the maxim of burnt with ghee means some body burnt by heated ghee where although it is the <i>agni</i> that actually burns. <i>Ghrita</i> is not the cause of burning actually <i>ushnata</i> of <i>ghrita</i> is the main cause. It can be understood by <i>adhara-adheya-sambandha</i>. A red hot iron ball (<i>adheya</i>) placed in the pot (<i>adhara</i>) also heats the pot. Likewise the <i>ushnata</i> in the <i>ghrita</i> is the main cause for burn. Here <i>ghrita</i> is <i>adhara</i> and <i>ushnata</i> is <i>adheya</i>.</p>	<p><i>Acharya Vagbhata</i> has explained that <i>manglacharana</i> in the context of how these <i>ragaadi</i> mentalities which is related to <i>mana</i> affected <i>sharira</i>. <i>Arundatta</i> has commented that the <i>ragaadi</i> includes diseases such as <i>raga, dvesha, lobha, moha</i> etc. These <i>ragaadi</i> mentalities induce <i>autsukya, moha, arati</i>. Here question arises that these <i>ragaadi</i> disorders related to <i>mana</i> then why is <i>sharira</i> affected. The body and mind are extremely interrelated. Here body is <i>adhara</i> and mind is <i>adheya</i>.^[12]</p>
<p>9.Kaka Danta Pariksha Nyaaya <i>Kaka</i> – crow, <i>Danta</i> – teeth, <i>Pariksha</i> – examination Literally, it means examining the teeth of a crow. Since a crow does not have teeth, examining them is meaningless and futile. One should not engage in such projects and works that waste time, energy and gain nothing.</p>	<p><i>Arundatta</i> has commented that even when good medicines, proper nursing, and experienced physician are available, some patients do not get cured, whereas others recover even without these. Then what is the purpose of Ayurveda? <i>Acharya Atreya</i> clarifies that Ayurveda is not purposeless. Medicine supports life, just as a support helps a person sinking in slush. Not all diseases are curable, and all lives can be restored. The absence of absolute result does not nullify the value of science. <i>Kakadanta Pariksha Nyaaya</i> teaches that rejecting Ayurveda due to non-uniform outcomes is a meaningless exercise-just like examining the teeth of crow.^[13]</p>
<p>10.Kaakaakshi Golaka Nyaaya <i>Kaka</i>-crow, <i>Akshi</i>-eye, <i>Golaka</i>-eyeball. This <i>Nyaaya</i> is based on the popular observation that a crow appears to see with only one eye, yet it is able to look in different directions by quickly shifting that single eyeball from one socket to the other. Although a crow has two eyes, it seems to use one eye at a time, giving the impression that one eye performs the function of two.</p>	<p><i>Arundatta</i> has quoted this <i>Nyaaya</i> in context of definition of <i>maatraakaala</i>. <i>Gandushaadi-vidhi-adhyaaya</i> deals with <i>gandusha, kavala, mukhalepa</i> etc. the time taken by these therapies has been given in <i>matrakala</i> i.e. time taken for the finger of <i>dakshina</i> (right hand) to move once around the right knee or the time taken for one opening and closing of eyelids. Here, by <i>kaakaakshi golaka Nyaaya</i>, term <i>dakshina</i> also includes <i>vama</i> (left), since same thing can be used for multiple purpose.^[14]</p>
<p>11.Munjaadishikodddharana Nyaaya <i>Munja</i> – a type of grass, <i>Shikha</i> – interior spike, <i>Uddharana</i> – extraction or separation This <i>Nyaaya</i> refers to the process of separating the useful, subtle essence from the coarse, unnecessary outer</p>	<p>While explaining the mode of action of <i>nasya karma</i>, <i>Acharya Vagbhata</i> states that <i>nasya</i> is the treatment of choice for <i>urdhava-jatrugata-vikara</i>. <i>Hemadri</i> has commented on this verse that <i>nasya karma</i> gives through nasal passage spreads into different parts of <i>murdha</i> (head),</p>

<p>part, just as the inner fine spike extracted from <i>Munja</i> grass after removing the rough outer layers. <i>Shatpatha Braahmana</i> mentioned this <i>Nyaaya</i> while explaining the moksha. Just like layers of <i>munja</i> grass get detached, <i>atma</i> too get detached from external objects to attain <i>moksha</i>.</p>	<p>like <i>netra</i> (eyes), <i>shrotra</i> (ears), <i>kantha</i> (throat) etc. via its blood vessels through <i>shringataka marma</i> and cures diseases located there through vitiated <i>doshas</i> are dragged out from <i>murdha</i> just like layers of stick of <i>munja</i> grass get detached.^[15]</p>
<p>12.Nira Kshira Viveka Nyaaya <i>Nira</i> – water, <i>Kshira</i> – milk, <i>Viveka</i> – judge. This <i>Nyaaya</i> refers to the classical example of the hansa (swan), which is believed to possess the ability to separate milk from water when they are mixed together. This illustrates perfect judgement and discrimination-accepting what is good and rejecting what is not.</p>	<p><i>Acharya Vagbhata</i> uses this <i>Nyaaya</i> while explaining <i>jalaauka-avacharana</i> (leech therapy) in <i>raktamokshana</i>. <i>Jalauka</i> sucks only impure or vitiated blood and does not harm pure blood just like swan takes only milk from a milk-water mixture.^[16]</p>
<p>13.Pishta Peshana Nyaaya <i>Pishta</i> – ground flour, <i>Peshana</i> – grinding. Literally, grinding something that is already ground. When grains are ground, they become flour. Once flour is prepared, there is no need to grind it again. Do not repeat an action that has already achieved its purpose.</p>	<p><i>Acharya Vagbhata</i> uses this <i>Nyaaya</i> while explaining the treatment of <i>Jvara</i>. When <i>doshas</i> are in <i>pakva</i> condition then <i>langhana</i>(lightening therapy/fasting) and <i>kashaya</i> (decoction) is necessary which is either <i>paachana</i> or <i>shamana</i> in nature. <i>Arundatta</i> has commented on this, if the patient is having <i>Ama dosha</i>, then <i>langhana</i> and <i>paachana kashaaya</i> should be administered for <i>paaka</i> of <i>dosha</i>. If <i>doshas</i> are already in <i>pakva</i> state then <i>langhana</i> and <i>paachana</i> is not necessary. It is just like <i>Pishtapeshana Nyaaya</i> (the work is already done, no need to do something).^[17]</p>
<p>14.Sinha Avalokana Nyaaya <i>Sinha</i> – lion, <i>Avalokana</i> – looking back. A lion, after catching its prey, looks in all directions –front, back and sides to ensure there is no danger or rival. This is used to explain something briefly not going to its depth.</p>	<p><i>Arundatta</i> has quoted this <i>Nyaaya</i> while explaining <i>atisaara</i> treatment. Warm water is used for <i>Ama pachana</i> in the treatment of <i>shleshma-atisaara</i>. <i>Vagbhata</i> has already said that <i>shleshma-atisaara</i> treatment should be done according to <i>vaataja atisaara</i> and specially <i>Ama paachana</i> and <i>Agni deepana chikitsa</i>. So according <i>Sinha-Avalokana Nyaaya</i> we should go to previous <i>shlokas</i> of <i>Amatisara chikitsa</i>.(a retrospective study which means looking back).^[18]</p>
<p>15.Swami Bhriya Nyaaya <i>Swami</i> – master, <i>Bhriya</i> – servant This <i>Nyaaya</i> means a servant is dedicated to his master, do the work of master and will not do his own work which is unfavorable to his master.</p>	<p><i>Arundatta</i> has quoted this <i>Nyaaya</i> while explaining <i>yogavahi</i> nature of <i>madhu</i>. <i>Yogavahi</i> nature of <i>madhu</i> is just like <i>bhriya</i>, when it is added to <i>madanphala</i>, it accentuate the action of <i>madanphala</i> i.e. <i>vamana</i>. Similarly, with <i>haritaki, madhu</i> accentuate the purgative action of <i>haritaki</i>, leaving its own property <i>stambhana</i>..^[19]</p>
<p>16.Takra Kaundinya Nyaaya <i>Takra</i> –Buttermilk, <i>Kaundinya</i> – name of a brahman Once, at a feast where curd was served to all Brahmins, only <i>kaundinya</i> was given <i>takra</i>. So, although he belonged to the same group,a special exception was made only for him.</p>	<p><i>Hemadri</i> has incorporated this <i>Nyaaya</i> while describing the common treatment principles of <i>adhovata</i>, <i>shakrita</i> & <i>mutra vega-avarodha</i> and in the context of special treatment of <i>shakrita vega avarodha</i>. Common management of disease affected by suppression of urges of <i>adhovata</i>, <i>shakrita</i> & <i>mutra</i> mentioned initially. Further specific management of <i>shakrita</i> i.e. <i>vidbhedi annapana</i> is mentioned.^[20]</p>
<p>17.Utsarga Apavada Nyaaya <i>Utsarga</i> – general rule, <i>Apavada</i> – exception to the rule.When a general rule is broken due to some special reason,this <i>Nyaaya</i> is utilized</p>	<p><i>Arundatta</i> has quoted this <i>Nyaaya</i> in the context of <i>avika mansa</i> i.e. <i>ushna</i>, <i>snigdha</i>, <i>guru</i>, <i>brimhana</i> which has opposite properties to <i>aja mansa</i>. Here <i>brimhana guna</i> of <i>avika</i> is same as <i>aja mansa</i> i.e. an exception.^[21]</p>
<p>18.Yugapat Utpala Sata Patra Vyatibheda Nyaaya <i>Yugapat</i> – simultaneously, <i>Utpala</i> – lotus,Sata-hundred, <i>Patra</i> – leaf, <i>Vyatibheda</i> – piercing The maxim of piercing of one hundred lotus leaves simultaneously.</p>	<p><i>Arundatta</i> has quoted this <i>Nyaaya</i> while explaining the <i>dhaatu parinama</i>. The process of <i>dhaatu parinama</i> (<i>rasa</i> to <i>rakta,rakta</i> to <i>mansa</i> and so on.)occur sequentially but its quickness is the reason that we think all processes occur simultaneously.^[22]</p>

DISCUSSION

As we see that *Nyaaya* in *Ashtang Hridaya* and commentary are explained according to contexts in different *sthana* and chapter. Here efforts has been made to compile all the *nyaayas* of *Ashtang Hridaya* at one place. So that it become easy for reader to study only *Nyaaya*.

The *Nyaayas* explained in *Ashtanga Hridaya* makes difficult Ayurvedic concepts easy to understand by connecting them with common, everyday experiences. Instead of long explanations, each *Nyaaya* presents a simple example that helps the student quickly grasp the main idea. Their real value lies not in the example itself, but in the principle hidden behind it, which can be applied in many clinical situations using *yukti*.

Some *Nyaayas* such as *Dhaatu Poshana Nyaaya* help us to understand how the body **works**, such as nourishment of *dhaatus*, flow through *srotas*, and coordination of multiple functions. They clarify that although many processes seem to happen together, each has its own role and sequence. This supports early diagnosis and explains why diseases become complicated when neglected.

Other *Nyaayas* such as *Pishta Peshana Nyaaya* guide clinical thinking and treatment, reminding the physician to choose therapies wisely, avoid unnecessary repetition, and modify treatment according to the patient's condition. They also warn that excess or improper treatment can cause harm, highlighting the importance of balance.

Certain *Nyaayas* such as *Kaka Danta Pariksha Nyaaya* focus on correct interpretation of texts and observations, teaching students to look for the main meaning, avoid confusion, and not search for qualities that do not exist. This ensures logical diagnosis and faithful understanding of classical teachings.

Overall, these *Nyaayas* train the physician to think clearly, observe carefully, and apply knowledge practically. They show that Ayurveda is not only based on tradition, but also on sound reasoning and common sense, making the science relevant in both ancient and modern clinical practice.

CONCLUSION

Nyaayas serve as interpretative keys, preventing misapplication of general rules, resolving apparent contradictions, and guiding clinical decision-making. *Nyaayas* described in *Ashtanga Hridaya* are not merely illustrative maxims but powerful pedagogical tools that translate complex and abstract medical concepts into familiar, day-to-day experiences. Their true significance lies beyond the literal meaning; it rests in the underlying principle that the physician or student must grasp and apply through *yukti*. By compressing vast subject matter into concise and intelligible statements, these *Nyaayas* facilitate deeper understanding, better retention, and

rational clinical application. Thus, the judicious use of *Nyaaya* in *Ashtanga Hridaya* reflects the classical Ayurvedic emphasis on logical reasoning and practical wisdom, enabling learners to extend the same principles across diverse clinical and theoretical contexts. This article systematically converts the cited references from *Ashtanga Hridaya* into a structured discussion of the concerned *Nyaayas*, explaining their meaning and contextual interpretation.

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