

# Charak Shapath

February 14, 2022

**In news—** Recently, the National Medical Commission (NMC), has suggested that the Hippocratic oath taken by doctors during their graduation ceremony should be replaced by a Charak Shapath.

## About Charak Shapath-

- Maharishi Charak Shapath **is mentioned in Charaka Samhita.**
- Charaka Samihata is **a Sanskrit text by Charaka on Indian traditional medicine Ayurveda.**
- Born in 300 BC Acharya Charak was one of the principal contributors to the ancient art and science of Ayurveda, a system of medicine and lifestyle developed in Ancient India and has been **crowned as the Father of Medicine.**
- Charaka Samihata is a medical pharmacopeia and collection of commentaries and discussions on medical practices that is dated to the 1st-2nd centuries AD.
- Along with the compendium of Susruta (c. 4th century AD), which is about surgery, the Charak Samhita is considered the foundational text of ancient Indian medicine, which was an evolved system of understanding and treating disease that resembled that of Hippocrates and Galen (2nd century AD), and was in some ways ahead of the Greeks.
- **In his the Shapath, the Charak instructs a physician to preach to his pupils at a ceremony at the end of their apprenticeship. His Shapath says:**
  - You must strive with all your soul for the health of the sick.
  - You must not betray your patients, even at the cost of your own life.
  - You must not get drunk, or commit evil, or

have evil companions.

- You must be pleasant of speech and thoughtful, always striving to improve your knowledge.
  - When you go to the home of a patient you should direct your words, mind, intellect, and senses nowhere but to your patient and his treatment.
  - Nothing that happens in the house of the sick man must be told outside, nor must the patient's condition be told to anyone who might do harm by that knowledge to the patient or to another.
- **This ethical code is universal, and remains just as relevant and applicable today.**
  - Presently, **AIIMS have been taking the Charak Oath** during their annual convocation for several years now.
  - **The AIIMS Charak Shapath is:** "Not for the self; Not for the fulfillment of any worldly material desire or gain, but solely for the good of suffering humanity, I will treat my patient and excel well."

### **What is Hippocratic Oath ?**

- It is an **oath of ethics traditionally taken by doctors and is derived from the Greek medical texts.**
- Basically, the Hippocratic Oath is a charter of **ethical principles that physicians over the ages have sworn to uphold in the practice of their profession.**
- The earliest available fragments of what is understood to be the original oath date back to the late 3rd century AD, and a millennium-old version is now in the library of the Holy See.
- It is **attributed to Hippocrates of the island of Kos, a Greek physician** of the classical period (4th-5th centuries BC, until the death of Alexander the Great in

323 BC), broadly corresponding to the period from the death of the Buddha (486 BC) to the rise of the Mauryas (321 BC) in India.

- **Among the great contemporaries of Hippocrates were the Athenian philosopher Plato and his teacher Socrates,** and Plato's student and Alexander's tutor, the polymath Aristotle.
- The Corpus Hippocraticum is a collection of 70 books on medicine; however, most scholars agree that the Hippocratic Oath was probably not the work of the individual identified as the historical **Hippocrates, the "father of modern medicine"**.
- **There is no universally accepted version of the physician's oath.**
- **The World Medical Association (WMA) adopted an international code of medical ethics in 1949, which was amended in 1968, 1983, and 2006.**

**Further**

**reading:**

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