Hasti-Chikitsa vigyan in the Garuḍa Purāṇa

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According to Maharshi Yajnavalkya among the fourteen branches of knowledge the Purāṇa is the best.

“पुराण- न्याय-मीमांसा-धर्मशास्त्राङ्गममश्रितााः
वेदा: स्थानाति विद्यानां धर्मस्य च चतुर्दश: ||” ¹

The Purāṇa describes itself as ancient. From the Vedic period the scholars have mentioned the Purāṇa in their treatises. Even Veda, itself has indicated the description of Purāṇa. Vedas, Purāṇas, Brahmanas, epic etc. are flooded with information on animal care, health management and disease cure. Atharva Veda is a repository of traditional medicine including prescriptions for treatment of animal diseases.

Just like people, animals get sick sometimes. As a result, there is a field of animal science devoted to caring for all species called veterinary science. According to the Garuḍa Purāṇa animals received good medical care in ancient India. Physicians treating human beings were also trained in the care of animals. Indian medical treatises like Charaka samhita, Susruta samhita and Harita Samhita contain chapters or references about care of diseased as well as health of animals. There were, however physicians who specialized only in the care of animals or in one class of animals only; the greatest of them was shalihotra, first known veterinarian of the world and the father of Indian veterinary sciences. In Garuḍa purāṇa the art of taking care of horses is known as ‘Ashva-āyurvedā’ and the art of taking care of elephants is known as ‘Gaja-āyurvedā’. Similarly the art of taking care of cows is known as ‘Gou Ayurveda.’

Next in importance to cows was the horse. There is one mammal that transformed the world once its speed and power were harnessed. It is the first thing that allowed man to travel faster than his two legs could carry him on land. It is the creature that a few of us, as equestrians, know and appreciate in our current day lives. The unsung hero is the Horse Rakta-shrāva’ is a very common disease of horses. It can be cured through drinking the mix extract of ‘Nimba-patra’, ‘Patol’, ‘Tripholā’, ‘Khadir-kastha’ etc. If this mixture of juice we will give horses back to back three days it can also remove ‘kustho-roga’ of the horses. ‘Sarshapa-tela’ is an important ingredient of the horses’ pimples remedies. Garlic is also very needy things for horses.

“निम्बपत्रं पटोलञ्च त्रत्रफला खदिरं ववचक्षणः
काथनित्वा ततो वाहं तैतृव्िं प्रिातव्िं
सत्रशेषु च कुष्ठेषु तैतं सषषपजं
लशुिादिकशष पािभुक्त्िौपशान्तिे ||” ²

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For Ārtharitis (Battik-roga) use the mixture of Sugar, Ghee and Milky oil. For snivel, related diseases we can use ‘katu-tailo’ and for diarrhea (poittik-roga) use Trofala water.

“तैलेिवानतके रोगे शकषराज्ञापिोऽन्न्वतैः। कटुतैलैः कफे व्िोधैः पित्ते त्रिफलावारिभः।” ⁴

For better nutrition of horses, always add milk with their food even if those foods are nutritious of fruitul of medicines. Milk makes that food more effective. Increasing of immunity power for diseases we should give them guduchi (flame lily or Guduchi plants), Shatavari (as piraguas recemousbot winter cherry), and Ashvagandhā’s tenacious. These medicines protect them from many diseases. It is informed that four times daily are the best measure for this medicines, three times daily are medium and once in a day are worst measure.

“रोगिंपुन्ष्टिञ्चावपतेजोवववर्द्षि। तिेवाश्माितिातव्िंक्षीरितुक्तमवावपवा।” ⁵

Of the four-winged army, stated before, one was the elephant. This mighty and majestic animal, besides adding to the royal dignity and taking a prominent part in royal processions, served as a beast of burden, as mounts of kings in hunting excursions and as carriers of soldiers in battles. The importance of this animal led to the formulation of a systematic elephant-lore which deals with the maintenance and treatment of elephants.

“गजायुव्वेिुव्वेिुव्वेिुुपाः। नातलोसात्तूमाः। चातुगुषणा मात्रा।” ⁶

Whatever medicines are used for horses can also be used for elephants. But the dosage for elephants must be four times the dosage used for horses. If an elephant is all, feeding brahmanas and donating jewels and cows ensure quick recovery. It also helps to tie a garland around the elephants tusk and throw at it mustard seeds over which incantations have been chanted.

“गजोपसगषव्िाधीिामंशमिंशान्तकम्मष।” ⁷

Humans share special bonds of loyalty and love with their animals and pets. Animals show humans affection as they receive it. This is my proposed paper on Hasti-chikitsa vigyan in the Garuḍa purāṇa.

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