

THE PATH TO LONGEVITY: EMBRACING SADVRITTA

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ABSTRACT

Health is a multifaceted concept that encompasses the physical, mental, social, and spiritual dimensions of well-being. These elements are deeply intertwined, each reflecting and influencing the others. A disturbance in one aspect can disrupt the harmony of all four, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a balanced life. In āyurvēda, the principle of Sadvritta plays a crucial role in preserving this balance. It is a comprehensive approach detailed across āyurvēdic texts, aiming to enhance the overall quality of life by nurturing each dimension of health. This article delves into the principles of sadvritta and exploring its application in nurturing the physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being of an individual. **Materials & Methods:** This article reviews the ancient āyurvēdic scriptures that include caraka saṁhitā, suśruta saṁhitā, aṣṭāṅga Hridaya, along with other classical texts including āyurvēda magazines, journals and newsletters.

Discussion: Sadvritta provides a holistic framework for leading a

balanced life—one that nurtures both individual happiness and societal well-being. Sadvritta, a concept from āyurvēda, plays a significant role in today's era, especially in the context of health and well-being. It refers to good conduct or virtuous habits that align with the natural rhythms and ethical principles of life. In the modern world, where lifestyle disorders are prevalent, Sadvritta's emphasis on a holistic approach to health is more relevant than ever. It

encourages individuals to live in harmony with nature and to make conscious choices that contribute to overall health and longevity. By incorporating Sadvritta into daily life, one can improve immunity, reduce stress, and prevent diseases, thereby enhancing the quality of life.

Conclusion: āyurvēda recognizes that health extends beyond physical well-being. It encompasses mental, social, and spiritual aspects. Sadvritta aims to promote a long, happy, peaceful, and healthy life by harmonizing these dimensions. Overall, Sadvritta is about making small, sustainable changes that have a profound impact on one's health and well-being.^[2] It's a timeless wisdom that should be adapted and preached by each and everyone, offering a path to balance and vitality. Embracing the path of Sadvritta leads to a life of well-being, virtue, and global renown, by integrating mind control, balanced lifestyle, and virtuous conduct, it harmonizes health dimensions for a better quality of life.

KEYWORDS: Sadvritta, longevity, health, conduct.

INTRODUCTION

The term 'sadvritta' combines 'sad,' signifying proper or virtuous, with 'vritta,' denoting conduct or practice. **Sadvritta**, a fundamental concept in āyurvēda, encompasses the principles of **good conduct** and **virtuous habits**. It guides individuals toward physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. āyurvēda describes health as a harmonious balance of the body's systems, including doshas (bodily humors), agni (digestive fire), dhatus (tissues), and mala (waste elimination), along with the contentment of the soul, senses, and mind. Those seeking personal health should follow beneficial routines diligently. Sadvritta in āyurvēda pertains to various dimensions of well-being, encompassing physical behavior (sharirika sadvritta), mental behavior (manasika sadvritta), societal behavior (samajika sadvritta), moral behavior (dharmika sadvritta), and ethical behavior (vyavaharika sadvritta). According to Acharya Chakrapani, sadvritta involves associating with virtuous individuals. Acharya Vagbhata interprets sadvritta as embodying empathy for all creatures, generosity, and the disciplined management of one's physical actions, thoughts, and speech, along with a selfless concern for the welfare of others. Incorporating Sadvritta into our daily life involves adopting a holistic approach to well-being that aligns with Ayurvedic principles.

Śārīrika Sadvritta (Physical codes of conduct)

śārīrika Sadvritta encapsulates Ayurvedic guidelines for maintaining physical health. These include Daily Routines as in Rising during the 'brahma muhurta' (pre-dawn period), maintaining cleanliness, and daily bathing, Personal Hygiene, Regular cleaning of feet and

bodily openings, with baths recommended twice daily, grooming well with Haircuts, shaving, and nail trimming should occur every five days or at least once every fortnight.

Apparel or Dressing should be intact, clean, adopting a cheerful demeanour, and using flowers and scents. Daily application of oils to the head, ears, nose, and feet. Natural urges like urination, defecation should be prioritised before engaging in any other activities. Respect the elements and the esteemed around Avoid expelling bodily waste in the presence of natural elements like wind, fire, water, as well as in view of the moon, the sun, and revered individuals such as Brahmins and teachers, Maintain public decorum Refrain from urinating in public thoroughfares, crowded areas, or while eating, Observe cleanliness during sacred acts, do not release saliva or mucus during the recitation of mantras, offerings, study sessions, and during religious or auspicious ceremonies ,Consider physical and environmental factors for footwear, Select one that suit your body type, the current season, and the nature of your occupation, Exercise in moderation Stop exercising before reaching the point of exhaustion śārīrika Sadvritta aims to provide clarity and emphasize the importance of personal hygiene, respect for one's surroundings, and the selection of appropriate attire based on individual and environmental factors. These practices aim to promote a disciplined and holistic approach to physical well-being.

Sadvritta related to āhāra

consuming food only after the digestion of previously taken food and when there is proper hunger, consuming food by considering the aṣṭauāhāra vidhiviśeṣāyatana and āhāra vidhividhāna . Freshly prepared food should be consumed in a clean and calm place and water should be consumed in between the meals. Eating Etiquette like Meals should be approached with cleanliness, wearing jewellery, after bathing, and in proper attire. Reciting maṁtra, making offerings to deities, ancestors, teachers, guests, and dependents are essential pre-meal rituals. One should Avoid eating with unclean hands, face, or mouth, in the presence of disloyal or unclean company, in dirty surroundings, or without proper ritualistic preparations like offerings to fire, sprinkling of sacred water, and maṁtra recitations. A minimum of hundred steps should be walked after consuming food, avoiding day sleep, physical exertion after food. One should not take contaminated meal or food which has been served by enemies or opponents. One should not take stale food (excluding meat, salad, dry vegetables, fruit and hard eatables). One should not take curd at night. One should not consume roasted grain flour without mixing it with ghee and sugar, in the night, after meals,

in large quantity, twice daily or interrupted with water intake or tearing with teeth. one should not sneeze, eat and sleep in curved position.

Mānasika Sadvritta

It refers to conduct which helps in fostering good mental health. Cultivating a virtuous character, Strive to be kind, gentle, and maintain a cheerful disposition, Let go off negativity, Release any feelings of anger or resentment and avoid excessive pride, Use senses wisely, Engage your senses in a balanced and appropriate manner (avoiding hina, mithyā, and ati yōga), steering clear of harmful thoughts towards others, Honor the wise and the learned, Speak respectfully of those who are noble and your mentors, Choose the right environment for learning, Refrain from studying during tumultuous natural events, significant celebrations, or at times when focus is compromised, such as at dawn or dusk, Learn from a guide, Seek instruction from a knowledgeable teacher before delving into studies, Communicate effectively, Speak clearly, at a moderate pace, and with proper intonation, ensuring your words are thoughtful, kind, and significant, Embrace self-discipline, Exercise self-control and uphold moral excellence, Focus on effort, not just outcomes, Be dedicated to your endeavours without becoming overly concerned about the results, Maintain a positive outlook, Live without worry, embrace courage, modesty, wisdom, enthusiasm, and skilfulness, and always approach life with a constructive attitude, be resilient, Accept criticism gracefully and resist the urge to react negatively, Seek tranquillity, Aim for a serene life, free from excessive attachment or aversion, Choose your company wisely, Avoid associating with individuals who engage in unethical behaviour or are shunned by society. ācārya Vagbhata says to avoid daśavidha pāpakarma pertaining to body, mind and manas which helps in achieving good mental health. These guidelines promote a healthy state of mind, respectful communication, and a balanced lifestyle.

Sāmājika Sadvritta

Embrace social well-being, uphold conducts that enhance societal health and avoid actions that are detrimental to it, Show reverence to educators, seniors, and family. Extend a helping hand to those in need and refrain from improper behaviour in public, maintain composure, Avoid impatience and excessive excitement. Support those who serve you, trust your relatives, find joy in the company of others, and exhibit pleasant behaviour, Exercise discernment in trust, do not place your trust indiscriminately, nor be overly suspicious or critical, Adhere to societal norms, Follow accepted social customs and do not violate

established codes of conduct, Be mindful of time and place, Refrain from nocturnal wanderings or being in unsuitable locations, Avoid eating, studying, engaging in intimate relations, or sleeping during twilight hours, Be selective in associations, Steer clear of forming bonds with the immature, the elderly who are not family, the avaricious, the foolish, the afflicted, Lead a virtuous life, Eschew alcohol, gambling, and liaisons with sex workers, Guard confidences and show respect, Keep secrets entrusted to you and do not belittle anyone, Avoid arrogance, incompetence, inexperience, and jealousy, Respect the sacred and the societal pillars, Do not speak ill of the learned and the holy, nor harm animals revered in society, Treat the elderly, mentors, leaders, and rulers with dignity, Communicate with consideration, Speak in moderation and honour with those close to you, especially those who have supported you in challenging times, Navigate with awareness, Carry an umbrella, a walking stick, a head covering, and suitable footwear, and be observant of your surroundings, Cultivate benevolence and integrity, offer assistance to the impoverished, be honest, and foster harmony, It is the essence of social etiquette and responsibility, emphasizing the importance of respect, support, and proper behaviour within the community.

Dhārmika Sadvritta It embodies the virtuous behaviour that nurtures spiritual health. It emphasizes the importance of purity in one's actions, particularly in rituals such as fire worship, which should be done by offering cow ghee (ghrita), akshatha (rice grains), tila (sesame seeds), kuśā grass, and sarṣapa (mustard) only after ensuring personal cleanliness. Such practices are designed to discipline the indriya (sense organs), aiding in the discernment between truth and illusion. By understanding and following these spiritual fundamentals, an individual can seek life's ultimate goals, thereby attaining spiritual fulfilment.

Vyavaharika Sadvritta these are the principles of ethical behaviour. It advocates for truthfulness, respect for others' relationships and possessions, and discretion in revealing personal flaws or secrets. It encourages shunning the company of deceitful individuals and fostering amity with the virtuous. Ethical conduct also includes respecting the autonomy of others in intimate matters, observing appropriate times for certain activities, and caring for those who depend on us.

Adherence to these ethical codes involves proactive engagement in tasks, thorough evaluation before action, and mastery over one's senses and thoughts to avoid impulsiveness. It calls for emotional balance, neither being overwhelmed by success nor disheartened by loss, and maintaining self-awareness. Ethical living means avoiding prolonged stays in potentially

unsafe or solitary places at night, steering clear of negative associations, and not engaging in harmful behaviors. It emphasizes the importance of believing in the just nature of cause and effect, recognizing that our actions have consequences. It encourages resilience and the belief that it is never too late to make a positive change. One should maintain hope and not succumb to the belief that all is lost. It's important to keep one's morale high and not dwell on past grievances. By fostering a resilient mindset, one can continue to strive for progress and improvement, regardless of previous setbacks. By living according to these ethical standards, one can lead a life of integrity and purpose.

Estol of Sadvritta

ācārya caraka mentioned the benefits of *Sadvritta*

स्वस्थवृत्तं यथोद्दिष्टं यः सम्यगनुतिष्ठति। स समाः शतमव्याधिरायुषा न वियुज्यते॥३१॥

नृलोकमापूर्यते यशसा साधुसम्मतः। धर्मार्थावेति भूतानां बन्धुतामुपगच्छति॥३२॥

परां सुकृतिनो लोकान् पुण्यकर्मा प्रपद्यते। तस्माद्धृतमनुष्ठेयमिदं सर्वेण सर्वदा॥३३॥

He who properly follows the healthy regimen as prescribed, remains free from diseases and does not get detached from life for a hundred years, Such a person fills the world with his fame and is respected by the good; he attains kinship with all beings by following the path of righteousness and wealth, he reaches the worlds of the doers of good deeds, the virtuous, therefore, this conduct should always be followed by everyone.

These verses from ācārya Charaka highlight the significance of adhering to Sadvritta, or good conduct, for achieving longevity, fame, respect, and spiritual advancement. By living a life of virtue, one not only benefits oneself but also contributes positively to the world and attains a harmonious relationship with all beings.

गुणैरितैः समुदितैः प्रयुङ्क्ते यो रसायनम्।

रसायनगुणान् सर्वान् यथोक्तान् स समश्नुते॥३५॥

(इत्याचाररसायनम्)। Ch. Chi १/४. (आयुर्वेदसमुत्थानीयो रसायनपादः)

"He who employs sadācaraṇa or sadvritta endowed with these qualities, fully attains all the benefits of Rasayana as described. one who follows the regimes as mentioned in sadvritta, which are characterized by specific qualities, will reap all the described benefits of Rasayana, a concept in Ayurveda that aims to delay aging and maintain youthfulness and promotes longevity and vitality.

Role of Sadvritta in today's era

In today's world, where crime, depression, unbridled desires, dissatisfaction, and a materialistic approach often overshadow moral values, the role of Sadvritta, or righteous conduct, becomes increasingly significant. Sadvritta serves as a beacon of ethical living, guiding individuals to maintain integrity, self-discipline, and moral responsibility. It encourages Compassion and Non-violence, Promoting peaceful coexistence and understanding, Sadvritta dissuades individuals from committing acts of crime or harm, Mental Well-being, By advocating for moderation and contentment, it helps combat depression and dissatisfaction, fostering a sense of inner peace, Control over Desires, Sadvritta teaches restraint over excessive lust and desires, encouraging individuals to seek fulfillment in more meaningful pursuits, Satisfaction and Gratitude, It emphasizes being grateful for what one has, reducing the constant chase for material gains., In an era where ethical lines are often blurred, Sadvritta reinforces the importance of honesty, respect, and Moral Uprightness.

By adhering to the principles of Sadvritta, individuals can cultivate a life that not only respects their own well-being but also contributes positively to society, creating an environment where ethical and moral values are cherished and upheld. It's a timeless framework that, if embraced, can counterbalance the challenges of modernity with wisdom and virtue. Adhering to sadvritta not only fosters robust health, allowing one to live a century free from ailments but also garners the admiration of the virtuous. It bestows global renown, cultivates virtue and prosperity, and forges bonds with all creatures. Therefore, it is imperative for all to embrace this path of righteousness.

CONCLUSION

Sadvritta, which means “good conduct” or “virtuous habits,” is a foundational concept in Ayurveda that underscores the importance of a comprehensive approach to health. It's not just about physical well-being; it also includes mental, social, and spiritual health, all of which are interconnected. The practice of Sadvritta is designed to foster a life that is not only long and healthy but also happy and peaceful. This involves mind control to maintain mental calmness, managing emotions to avoid disturbances, and adhering to a balanced lifestyle that aligns with the natural equilibrium of the body's doshas. Socially, it encourages serving friends with affection, speaking kindly, and showing respect to others, regardless of their background. Physically, it emphasizes personal hygiene and following daily and seasonal

routines. Spiritually, it advocates for compassion, sacrifice, and empathy, while occupational conduct calls for enthusiasm, modesty, intelligence, and trust. By integrating these components into one's life, Sadvritta aims to harmonize the various dimensions of health, leading to an improved quality of life. It is about adopting a holistic lifestyle that nurtures the mind, body, and spirit, leading to a balanced and healthy life.

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