

SEEVANA KARMA: AN AYURVEDIC REVIEW ON SUTURING AND ITS PRACTICAL APPLICABILITY***¹Dr. Arpitha Kulkarni, ²Dr. Sheshashaye B., ³Dr. Shailaja S. V.**

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Article Received on 15 Dec. 2025,
Article Revised on 05 January 2026,
Article Published on 16 January 2026,

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18264636>

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How to cite this Article: ¹Dr. Arpitha Kulkarni,
²Dr. Sheshashaye B., ³Dr. Shailaja S. V. (2026)
Seevana Karma: An Ayurvedic Review on
Suturing and Its Practical Applicability. "World
Journal of Pharmaceutical Research, 15(2), 491–
497.

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ABSTRACT

Seevana Karma (suturing) is one of the Ashtavidha Shastra Karma described by Acharya Sushruta and remains a cornerstone of both ancient and modern surgical practice.^[1] The principles of wound approximation, choice of suture material, needle design, indications, contraindications, and post-suturing care outlined in Ayurvedic classics closely parallel contemporary surgical science. This review aims to compile, analyze, and correlate classical descriptions of Seevana Karma with modern suturing techniques, highlighting its relevance and applicability in present-day surgical practice.

KEYWORDS: Seevana Karma; Suturing; Surgical needles; Suture materials; Sadyovrana; Wound closure.

INTRODUCTION

Seevana is described as one of the Ashtavidha Shastra Karma by Acharya Sushruta, representing a unique and advanced surgical concept in Ayurveda. Suturing is primarily indicated in wounds involving separation of tissues, fresh wounds (Sadyovrana), wounds over movable joints, and conditions arising from Meda dhatu diseases (wounds) such as tumours etc.^[2]

CLASSICAL REFERENCE

“सीव्या मेदः समुत्थाश्च भिन्नाः सुलिखिता गदाः।

सद्योव्रणाश्च ये चैव चलसन्धिव्यपाश्रिताः॥”

(Su. Su. 25/16–17)

This establishes Seevana as an essential surgical intervention aimed at early wound healing, prevention of complications, and restoration of tissue continuity.

Seevana Dravya (Suturing Materials in Ayurveda)

Acharya Sushruta has described several natural materials suitable for suturing

“शणजक्षौमसूत्राभ्यां स्राय्वा बालेन वा पुनः।मूर्वागुडूचीतानैर्वा॥”

(Su. Su. 25/21)

Classically Mentioned Materials.^[3]

- Ashmantaka Valkala (Bark of Bauhinia racemosa)
- Kshouma (Linen / Flax – Atasi)
- Shanaja Sutra (Jute fibers)
- Snayu (Tendinous fibers)
- Bala
- Murva (Marsdenia tenacissima)
- Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia)

These materials were selected not only for mechanical strength but also for their medicinal properties such as vrana shodhana and vrana ropana.

Suchi (Surgical Needle).^[4]

Acharya Sushruta gives precise guidelines regarding the construction of surgical needles:

“सूचीस्तीक्ष्णायाः सुसमाहिताः।”

(Su. Su. 25/23–24).

Characteristics of an Ideal Suchi.^[4]

Tikshnagra	Sharp pointed
Susamahita	Uniform body
Parimandala	Rounded at the end resembling Malati pushpa vrinta

Types of Suchi

Based on anatomical location and tissue thickness, needles are classified as:

Vritta Suchi	For areas with less muscle and joints
Triangular Suchi	For muscular areas
Dhanurvakra Suchi	For vital organs and cavities

देशेऽल्पमांसे सन्धौ च सूची वृत्ताऽङ्गुलद्वयम् ।

आयता त्र्यङ्गुला त्र्यस्रा मांसले चाऽपि पूजिता ॥२३॥

धनुर्वक्रा हिता मर्मफलकोशोदरोपरि । (Su. Su. 25/23–24)

Types of Seevana (Suturing Techniques)⁵

“वेल्लितकं शनैः। सीव्येद्रोफणिकां वाऽपि

सीव्येद्वा तुन्नसेवनीम्। ऋजुग्रन्थिमथो वाऽपि॥”

(Su. Su. 25/22).

Classical Types

Vellitaka	Continuous suturing along wound edges
Gophanika	For wide wounds
Tunnasevani	Similar to stitching torn garments
Rujugranthi	Interrupted sutures placed perpendicular to skin

These techniques correspond closely to modern continuous, mattress, and interrupted sutures.

Procedural Steps of Seevana Karma

Purva Karma (Pre-operative Care)

Foreign bodies such as dust (Pamshu), hair (Roma), and nails (Nakha) must be removed to prevent suppuration.

पांशुरोमनखादीनि चलमस्थि भवेच्च यत् ॥

अहतानि यतोऽमूनि पाचयेयुर्भृशं व्रणम् ।

रुजश्च विविधाः कुर्युस्तस्मादेतान् विशोधयेत् ।

(Su. Su. 25/18–19)

Pradhana Karma (Operative Procedure)

Proper elevation and approximation of wound edges are essential, avoiding excessively close or distant needle placement to prevent pain or tissue tearing.

“नातिदूरे निकृष्टे वा सूचीं कर्मणि पातयेत्।”

(Su. Su. 25/25–26)

Paschat Karma (Post-operative Care)

After suturing, Avachurnana is done using:

- Priyangu
- Anjana
- Yashtimadhu
- Lodhra
- Shallaki Phala

Followed by dressing with Kshouma Pichu and bandaging.

अथ क्षौमपिचुच्छन्नं सुस्यूतं प्रतिसारयेत् ।

प्रियङ्गवञ्जनयष्ट्याहवरोधचूर्णेः समन्ततः ॥

शल्लकीफलचूर्णैर्वा क्षौमध्यामेन वा पुनः ।

ततो व्रणं यथायोगं बद्ध्वाऽऽचारिकमादिशेत् ॥

(Su. Su. 25/27–28)

Indications of Seevana.^[2]

- Medaja disorders
- Bhinna and Sulikhita vrana
- Sadyovrana
- Wounds over movable joints

Contraindications.^[6]

Seevana should not be performed in:

- Wounds caused by Kshara, Agni, or Visha
- Wounds with internal foreign bodies
- Highly mobile or minimally muscular areas
- Infected and contaminated wounds

Modern Correlation : Sutures.^[7]

Types

- Absorbable: Catgut, Polyglactin 910
- Non-absorbable: Silk, Prolene, Stainless steel wire

Ideal Suture Characteristics

- Uniform diameter
- Adequate tensile strength
- Minimal tissue reaction
- Good knot security
- Easy sterilization and handling

Surgical Needles

Modern needles are atraumatic and classified based on shape and use

- Round-bodied needles: Intestinal, vascular surgery
- Cutting needles: Skin and fascia
- Blunt needles: Abdominal wall closure

Suturing Techniques

- Interrupted sutures
- Continuous sutures
- Mattress sutures (vertical/horizontal)
- Subcuticular sutures (cosmetic closure)

DISCUSSION

- Wound healing has great importance in Surgery.
- Wound healing is of three types, primary intention, secondary intention and tertiary wound healing. Suturing comes under primary intention of wound healing.
- Wound caused by Kshara (alkali), Agni (fire), Visha (poison), antar lohita shalya, in these above conditions there will be extensive trauma to skin and if suturing done in these condition leads to formation of pus and secondary infection can occur. Due to loss of skin by trauma approximation of skin for suturing is difficult to achieve. In present day surgical practice also suturing is contraindicated in above conditions.
- Seevana sutra mentioned in our classics can be divided into animal and plant origin. Plant origin are Sukshma sutra of Ashmantakavalkala (bark of Bauhinia racemosa) Shanaja

sutra(Jute fibres), Murva (Marsdenia Tenacissima), Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia). In present day the classically mentioned fibres are extracted from plant by retting method or by machine. These obtained monofilament fibres are made into multifilament by different process for suturing purpose.

- Animal origin Snayu (Tendons), bala (horse hair), head of ants is used.
- अभिन्नमन्त्रं निष्क्रान्तं प्रवेश्य नान्यथा भवेत् । पिपीलिकाशिरोग्रस्तं तदप्येके वदन्ति तु ॥ सु. ५६॥
- The edges of the perforation in the intestine are brought together and are made to be bitten by the Krishna Pippilika. Once bitten, the trunk of the ants are cut off, leaving the heads in place and the both edges are approximated.
- Another classification of suture materials can be made based on its degradation i.e. Absorbable suture and non-absorbable suture. Plant origin is non absorbable suture material while snayu and ant head comes under absorbable suture.

Types of seevana karma

- 1) Vellitaka: It is a continuous type. This is achieved by suturing continuously along the length of wound wrapping the wound edges inside it.
- 2) Gophanika: It is an interlocking or blanket type suturing. The wounds which are shaped as footprints of crow, they are sutured with this type of suturing.
- 3) Tunnasevni: Zigzag type or subcuticular. It is done just like how the torn garments are stitched.
- 4) Riju Granthi: Straight and interrupted type. This type of section thread is inserted from two edges of wound and knot is tied. This is interrupted type of suturing.

CONCLUSION

- Seevana karma is the suturing technique which is one of the most important step in every surgery.
- The procedure, indication, contraindication for suturing mentioned in our classics holds good at present day also. Classically mentioned seevana dravya not only act as a mechanical support, but also have some medicinal value in it.
- Every surgeon should be well acquainted with shastra karma in order to avoid operative and post operative complications of surgery.

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