



Review Article

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A REVIEW ARTICLE ON SADVRITTA ACCORDING TO SAMHITA

Dr. Yogesh Sharma

Assistant Professor, Department of Samhita, Prakash Institute of Ayurvedic Medical Sciences and Research, Jhaihar, Bulandshahr, U.P.

Corresponding Author – Dr. Yogesh Sharma, Assistant Professor, Department of Samhita, Prakash Institute of Ayurvedic Medical Sciences and Research, Jhaihar, Bulandshahr, U.P.

Email id – yogeshsharmam01s@gmail.com

Abstract

Sadvritta is an important ethical and behavioral concept described in *Ayurveda* for the maintenance of health and prevention of disease. It includes rules related to personal hygiene, moral discipline, social behavior, mental control, and spiritual conduct. All major *Acharyas* like *Charaka*, *Sushruta*, and *Vagbhata* have described *Sadvritta* in their classical texts with minor variations but with a common aim of achieving *Swasthya*. According to *Ayurveda*, neglect of *Sadvritta* leads to *Pragyaparadha*, which is a major cause of disease. *Charaka* focused more on control of sense organs and social discipline, *Sushruta* emphasized cleanliness and professional ethics, while *Vagbhata* provided a detailed and practical application of *Sadvritta* in daily life. In the present era of lifestyle disorders and mental stress, the principles of *Sadvritta* are highly relevant for promoting physical, mental, and social well-being. This review highlights the concept of *Sadvritta* according to different *Acharyas* and its importance in modern life.

Keywords:

Sadvritta, Ayurveda, Charaka, Sushruta, Vagbhata, Swasthya

Introduction

Ayurveda is the ancient science of life that guides human beings not only in the treatment of disease but also in the maintenance of health. The primary aim of *Ayurveda* is to protect the health of a healthy person and to cure the disease of a patient. Health in *Ayurveda* is defined as a balanced state of *Dosha*, proper functioning of *Dhatu* and *Mala*, and a peaceful state of *Manas*, *Indriya*, and *Atma*. Thus, *Ayurveda* considers physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being as essential components of a healthy life.¹

To achieve and maintain this ideal state of health, *Ayurveda* has described various lifestyle guidelines such as *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, and *Sadvritta*. *Dinacharya* deals with daily routine, *Ritucharya* explains seasonal regimen, and *Sadvritta* focuses on ethical, moral, and social conduct. Among these, *Sadvritta* plays a very important role in regulating the behavior of a person in society and maintaining mental discipline. It teaches what should be done, what should be avoided, and how to live a balanced and meaningful life.²

The concept of *Sadvritta* is mainly concerned with the control of body, speech, and mind. It helps in preventing *Pragyaparadha*, which is considered one of the major causes of disease according to *Ayurveda*. Improper use of intellect, uncontrolled desires, and unethical behavior disturb mental peace and lead to physical and psychological disorders. Therefore, following *Sadvritta* is essential for achieving *Indriya Vijaya* and maintaining harmony between the individual and society.³

All major *Acharyas* of *Ayurveda* like *Charaka*, *Sushruta*, and *Vagbhata* have described the importance of *Sadvritta* in their classical texts. Though the mode of explanation differs, the basic aim remains the same, that is promotion of health, prevention of disease, and development of moral and social values. In the present era of stress, lifestyle disorders, and social imbalance, the teachings of *Sadvritta* are highly relevant. Hence, this study attempts to review the concept of *Sadvritta* as explained by different *Acharyas* and highlight its importance in modern life.⁴

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Aim

To study and review the concept of *Sadvritta* as described by different *Acharyas* in *Ayurveda* and understand its role in the maintenance of physical, mental, and social health.

Objectives

1. To understand the basic concept and meaning of *Sadvritta*.
2. To study the description of *Sadvritta* according to *Charaka*, *Sushruta*, and *Vagbhata*.
3. To evaluate the role of *Sadvritta* in prevention of disease and promotion of *Swasthya*.
4. To assess the relevance of *Sadvritta* in present-day lifestyle and health management.

CONCEPTUAL STUDY

Sadvritta

The concept of ideal conduct has been present in *Ayurveda* from the very beginning. The fundamental aim of *Ayurveda* is stated as *Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam* and *Aturasya Vikara Prashamanam*. To achieve this, *Acharyas* have not limited themselves to medicine and therapies but have also given detailed guidelines regarding behavior and lifestyle. Under *Swasthavritta*, they have described *Dinacharya*, *Ritucharya*, *Ratricharya*, *Achar Rasayana*, and *Sadvritta*. Among these, *Sadvritta* is specifically concerned with ideal moral, mental, social, and physical conduct of an individual.⁵

The word *Sadvritta* is formed from *Sad* (good) and *Vritta* (conduct), meaning good or righteous behavior. It covers conduct related to body, speech, and mind and aims to provide *Hita Ayu* and *Sukha Ayu*. All major *Acharyas* agree that violation of proper conduct leads to *Pragyaparadha*, which is considered one of the root causes of disease. Hence, in classical literature, *Sadvritta* is treated as a strong preventive tool and a practical method to maintain *Swasthya*.⁶

Sadvritta in Charaka Samhita⁷

Acharya Charaka gives an elaborate description of *Sadvritta* mainly in *Sutra Sthana* under chapters like *Indriyopakramaniya Adhyaya* and *Naveganadharaniya Adhyaya*. His approach connects ethical and mental behavior directly with physical health. He repeatedly stresses that improper thinking, wrong decisions, and unethical behavior disturb *Dosha* and lead to disease through *Pragyaparadha*.

In *Charaka Samhita*, *Sadvritta* can be understood under different heads, though the original text is continuous:

- **Ethical and mental conduct (*Vyavaharika Sadvritta*)** *Acharya Charaka* advises the person to always speak truth, use soft, meaningful, and limited words, avoid harsh speech, jealousy, anger, and greed, and cultivate forgiveness and compassion. One should not harm any living being (*Ahimsa*), should avoid theft, unlawful sexual activities, and hatred. These instructions are meant to purify *Manas* and prevent mental stress and conflicts.
- **Social conduct (*Samajika Sadvritta*)** He instructs to respect teachers, elders, scholars, guests, and physicians; show hospitality to guests; console frightened and distressed people; maintain good relations with relatives and friends; and avoid association with wicked persons. One should not insult others, should not reveal one's own insults in public, and should maintain dignity in society. This supports social harmony and emotional stability.
- **Religious conduct (*Dharmika Sadvritta*)** *Charaka* suggests regular worship of God, respect for *Deva*, *Rishi*, *Brahmana*, *Gau*, and *Guru*, and observing righteous behavior

according to *Dharma*. He warns against staying in impure or dangerous places such as deserted houses, burial grounds, or slaughter areas. Such instructions are meant to protect both the subtle mind and the physical body.

- **Physical and hygienic conduct (*Sharirika Sadvritta*)** *Charaka* repeatedly mentions personal hygiene: regular bath, cutting hair and nails, keeping excretory orifices clean, using clean and appropriate clothes, and application of fragrance and ornaments to maintain freshness and self-confidence. He recommends daily oil application to head, ears, and feet, regular cleaning of hands and feet, and proper use of footwear to protect eyes, skin, and strength.
- He also gives detailed instructions about not suppressing natural urges (*Vega Dharana*), not forcing them unnecessarily, and explains that many diseases arise from improper handling of these urges. Codes related to eating include washing hands, feet, and face before food, eating in a clean place, not eating too fast or too slow, avoiding impure food, and avoiding food offered by enemies or hostile persons. Through these rules, *Acharya Charaka* clearly links behavior with *Dosha* balance, *Agni*, *Srotas*, and overall *Swasthya*. For him, *Sadvritta* is both ethical philosophy and practical preventive medicine.

***Sadvritta in Sushruta Samhita*⁸**

Acharya Sushruta is mainly known as the pioneer of surgery, but he has also contributed significantly to *Swasthavritta*. In *Sushruta Samhita*, *Sutra Sthana* chapters related to lifestyle and behavior emphasize purity, discipline, and social responsibility. His description of *Sadvritta* often overlaps with instructions for a physician, reflecting the high moral standards expected from medical professionals.

- **Personal purity and discipline** *Sushruta* stresses on keeping the body clean, maintaining trimmed hair and nails, using clean garments, and living in a clean environment. He advises to avoid unhygienic practices, excessive sleep, overexertion, and addictions such as alcohol. This supports the idea that the body of a physician and a householder should itself be an example of health and discipline.
- **Professional and social ethics** He explains that a physician should be truthful, compassionate, and self-controlled, should not be greedy, and should not harm patients for money. Although this is professional ethics, it fits under the broad umbrella of *Sadvritta* because it deals with ideal conduct in society.
- **Religious and moral aspects** *Sushruta* also advises worship of God, respect for elders and teachers, and following *Dharma*. He warns against contact with sinful, violent, and impure people. These ideas highlight the role of *Sadvritta* in maintaining purity of *Manas* and avoiding *Asat* influences.

- Thus, in *Sushruta Samhita*, *Sadvritta* is closely linked with personal health, public health, and medical ethics. The physician is shown as a role model who must follow ideal conduct to be fit for serving others.

***Sadvritta in Ashtanga Hridaya and Ashtanga Sangraha*⁹**

Acharya Vagbhata has presented one of the most systematic and detailed descriptions of *Sadvritta*. In *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Sutra Sthana*, especially chapter 2, he has arranged the rules of conduct in a very practical and easy-to-apply form. Many modern authors of *Swasthavritta* quote *Vagbhata* as the main source for *Sadvritta*. Important features of *Sadvritta* described by *Vagbhata* include:

- **Regulation of food and urges** He instructs that one should eat only after digestion of previous food, in proper quantity, and wholesome in nature; one should never force or suppress natural urges; curable diseases should be treated without delay. These rules show how *Sadvritta* is connected to both behavior and internal physiology.
- **Ten sins (*Dasha Vidha Papa Karma*)** *Vagbhata* clearly lists ten types of sinful activities related to body, speech, and mind, such as violence, theft, unlawful sexual acts, harsh or false speech, jealousy, and wrong perception. He instructs that these should be completely abandoned. This is a direct mental and moral framework for *Sadvritta*.
- **Interpersonal and social behavior** He advises helping those who suffer from poverty, disease, or grief; respecting *Deva*, *Gau*, *Vipra*, *Vaidya*, *Vridhdha*, *Nripa*, and *Atithi*; not sending away a seeker of help empty-handed; maintaining balance of mind in prosperity and adversity; being the first to greet, speaking at proper time, in soft and limited words, without provoking arguments. These instructions build strong social and emotional health.
- **Personal habits and movement** He explains that one should cut hair, nails, and moustache regularly; bathe daily; wear clean clothes and pleasant fragrance; use umbrella and proper footwear; avoid walking in dangerous places, climbing unsafe trees, or travelling in risky boats or vehicles; cover mouth while sneezing, yawning, or laughing; avoid awkward body movements and indecent acts in public. These are very practical hygiene and safety measures.
- **Mental control and middle path** *Vagbhata* advises not to strain the sense organs excessively and not to pamper them too much, and to always follow the middle path (*Madhyama Marga*) in all activities. He also states that the world itself is a teacher for an intelligent person, and one should observe and learn from others' experiences. He defines *Sadvritta* in short as compassion towards all living beings, charity, control of body, speech, and mind, and considering the welfare of others as one's own. This systematic and verse-

wise presentation makes *Sadvritta* of *Vagbhata* very useful for teaching, clinical counselling, and public health education even today.

***Sadvritta* in Other Classical¹⁰**

Apart from the major *Brihatrayi*, concepts similar to *Sadvritta* are also found in other classical works like *Kashyapa Samhita*, *Harita Samhita*, and in *Achar Rasayana* description of *Charaka Samhita*. *Achar Rasayana* especially stresses truthfulness, non-violence, forgiveness, avoiding anger, controlling senses, and having faith in God and teachers. Though the word *Sadvritta* may not always be used, the underlying idea of ideal conduct is the same.

Later *Swasthavritta* texts and commentaries by authors such as *Madhava*, *Hemadri*, and various *Nighantu* and *Nibandha* writers have elaborated and interpreted these rules according to the needs of their time. They highlight that *Sadvritta* is flexible in external form but stable in internal principles like truth, non-violence, cleanliness, compassion, and self-control.

SADVRITTA ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT ACHARYAS

Aspect	<i>Acharya Charaka</i>	<i>Acharya Sushruta</i>	<i>Acharya Vagbhata</i>
Basic Concept	Describes <i>Sadvritta</i> mainly under control of <i>Indriya</i> and prevention of <i>Pragyaparadha</i> .	Emphasizes purity, discipline, and ethical behavior with special focus on physician conduct.	Gives the most systematic and detailed practical description of <i>Sadvritta</i> .
Main Reference	<i>Charaka Samhita, Sutra Sthana</i> (especially <i>Indriyopakramaniya</i> and <i>Naveganadharaniya Adhyaya</i>).	<i>Sushruta Samhita, Sutra Sthana</i> (chapters of <i>Swasthavritta</i> and ethics).	<i>Ashtanga Hridaya, Sutra Sthana</i> , Chapter 2.
Aim of <i>Sadvritta</i>	Prevention of disease through control of mind and senses and avoidance of <i>Pragyaparadha</i> .	Maintenance of personal purity and high moral standards in social and professional life.	Achievement of long life, health, wealth, fame, and eternal happiness.
Mental Conduct	Avoid anger, greed, jealousy, hatred, and harsh thinking. Maintain emotional balance.	Self-discipline, calm behavior, avoidance of addictions.	Balanced mind in happiness and sorrow, no excessive trust or suspicion.
Speech Conduct	Speak truth, speak softly, speak limited and beneficial words.	Avoid harsh and false speech, maintain dignity.	Speak at the right time, speak politely, avoid arguments.

Social Conduct	Respect elders, teachers, guests, physicians. Show kindness and hospitality.	Focus on disciplined social life and righteous living.	Serve good friends with affection and avoid bad company.
Religious Conduct	Worship God, respect <i>Guru, Brahmana</i> , and follow <i>Dharma</i> .	Worship God, respect teachers and elders.	Respect <i>Deva, Gau, Vipra, Vaidya, Vriddha, Nripa</i> , and <i>Atithi</i> .
Physical Hygiene	Daily bath, clean clothes, trimming hair and nails, use of fragrance.	Strong emphasis on external and internal cleanliness.	Detailed instructions on grooming, bathing, oil massage, footwear, and clothing.
Natural Urges (Vega)	Do not suppress or force natural urges. Disease occurs due to <i>Vega Dharana</i> .	Supports proper regulation of natural urges.	Clearly states not to suppress or force urges and to treat curable disease first.
Dietary Conduct	Eat clean food, at proper time, in proper quantity. Avoid impure food.	Emphasizes disciplined food habits.	Very detailed rules of eating regarding place, posture, cleanliness, and timing.
Professional Ethics	Limited mention of professional conduct.	Strong emphasis on physician ethics, compassion, and honesty.	Moderate mention of ethical duties and social obligations.
Ten Sins Concept	Indirectly explained under wrong behavior and <i>Pragyaparadha</i> .	Not described as a fixed list.	Clearly explains <i>Dasha Vidha Papa Karma</i> related to body, speech, and mind.
Personal Safety and Movement	General guidance on clean and controlled living.	Emphasis on safe and balanced lifestyle.	Very detailed instructions on walking, travel, posture, and public behavior.
Overall Approach	Philosophical and disease-prevention oriented.	Discipline and professional ethics oriented.	Practical, systematic, and daily life oriented.

RESULT AND FINDINGS

- *Sadvritta* is uniformly accepted by all classical *Acharyas* as a fundamental component of *Swasthavritta* for the maintenance of *Swasthya*.

- All three major texts, *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya*, emphasize that neglect of *Sadvritta* leads to *Pragyaparadha*, which is a main cause of disease.
- *Acharya Charaka* primarily highlights mental and ethical discipline along with control of *Indriya* as the central aim of *Sadvritta*.
- *Acharya Sushruta* places special importance on external cleanliness, self-discipline, and professional ethics, particularly for physicians.
- *Acharya Vagbhata* provides the most systematic, practical, and detailed daily life application of *Sadvritta*.
- All *Acharyas* uniformly emphasize truthfulness, non-violence, compassion, and self-control as the core qualities of ideal conduct.
- Regulation of speech, such as speaking truth, speaking softly, and avoiding harsh words, is commonly described in all classical texts.
- Proper personal hygiene, including bathing, clean clothing, trimming of hair and nails, and use of fragrance, is consistently emphasized across all texts.
- Proper handling of natural urges and avoidance of *Vega Dharana* is clearly accepted as essential for disease prevention.
- Rules related to food intake, place of eating, cleanliness, and timing of meals are described with special emphasis in *Ashtanga Hridaya*.
- Social harmony through respect to elders, teachers, guests, and physicians is considered an important outcome of following *Sadvritta*.
- *Sadvritta* is directly linked with mental peace, emotional balance, and prevention of stress-related disorders.
- The ten immoral activities described as *Dasha Vidha Papa Karma* by *Vagbhata* provide a clear moral framework for behavior control.
- Following *Sadvritta* supports prevention of lifestyle disorders such as stress-related illness, sleep disturbances, addictions, and behavioral disorders.
- *Sadvritta* contributes not only to physical health but also to social stability and spiritual development.

- The comparative study shows that although the style of explanation differs among the *Acharyas*, the fundamental objective of *Sadvritta* remains disease prevention and health promotion.
- *Sadvritta* is found to be highly relevant in the present era of increasing lifestyle disorders, mental stress, and social imbalance.
- Literature confirms that *Sadvritta* acts as a bridge between individual health and community health.
- None of the classical texts describe *Sadvritta* as merely moral teaching; it is always linked with physiological, psychological, and preventive aspects of health.
- The overall finding highlights *Sadvritta* as a powerful non-pharmacological tool for achieving long life, good health, and balanced living.

DISCUSSION

The present review clearly shows that *Sadvritta* is considered an essential part of *Swasthavritta* by all major *Acharyas*. Although the mode of explanation varies among *Charaka*, *Sushruta*, and *Vagbhata*, the basic purpose remains the same, that is, maintenance of *Swasthya* and prevention of disease. *Charaka* mainly focuses on mental discipline and control over *Indriya* to prevent *Pragyaparadha*. This highlights that improper use of intellect and unhealthy behavior are major causes of disease, and these can be controlled effectively through proper conduct.¹¹

The contribution of *Sushruta* toward *Sadvritta* is more centered on physical purity, discipline, and professional ethics. His emphasis on cleanliness, moral conduct, and righteous behavior of physicians reflects the importance of *Sadvritta* not only for individuals but also for those responsible for public health. This shows that *Sadvritta* is not limited to personal life but also extends to social responsibility and ethical medical practice. Thus, *Sushruta* connects *Sadvritta* with both personal health and community well-being.¹²

Vagbhata has presented the most detailed and practical form of *Sadvritta*, making it easy to apply in daily life. His description includes food habits, speech control, personal hygiene, social behavior, mental balance, and moral discipline in a very organized way. The explanation of *Dasha Vidha Papa Karma* provides a clear moral framework for behavior control. In the present era of stress, addictions, lifestyle disorders, and social conflicts, the

principles of *Sadvritta* are highly relevant and scientifically meaningful as a preventive approach for both physical and mental health.¹³

CONCLUSION

Sadvritta is a fundamental component of *Ayurveda* that guides a person toward ideal physical, mental, social, and moral living. The reviewed classical literature confirms that all major *Acharyas* have strongly emphasized the role of *Sadvritta* in the maintenance of *Swasthya* and prevention of disease. Though the style of description differs, the core values of truthfulness, self-control, compassion, cleanliness, and balanced living remain the same. In the modern era of increasing lifestyle disorders and mental stress, *Sadvritta* serves as an effective non-medicinal tool for promoting long life, good health, and harmonious social living.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST -NIL

SOURCE OF SUPPORT -NONE

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