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# Sadvritta (Conduct, Behaviour and Moral Values): Key to positive health

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## ABSTRACT

Health is defined as balance of Physical, Mental, Social and Spiritual wellbeing. Every person can lead a healthy life by following the certain rules and regulations mentioned by the *Ayurveda*. *Dincharya* (a daily regimen), *Ritucharya* (seasonal routine) and *Sadvritta* (code of Good Conduct for Mental Health and Social Behaviour) are important rules and regulations for prevention of diseases and leading an ideal positive health. These rules are highly effective in reducing the life style disorders. *Ayurveda* stalwarts like *Acharya Charaka* prescribed the list of good conduct and behaviour under heading of *Sadvritta*. *Sadvritta* gives us detail knowledge about how to live, dos and don'ts for the person. One who follows the code of good conduct for the maintenance of positive health lives for a hundred years without any abnormality. In this article an effort is made to explore the *Sadvritta* as positive approach towards healthy life in present scenario.

**Key words:** *Ayurveda, Sadvritta, code of conduct, behaviour*

## INTRODUCTION

Prevention of diseases and promotion of health is the unique aspect of *Ayurveda*. *Ayurveda* system of medicine there is an abundance of concepts that are passionately embraced in every sphere of life. *Ayurveda* given importance for balancing the body constitution with nature. There must be a balance between nature/universe and the self for both to work adequately. *Sadvritta* if we practice definitely, it will be helpful to restore the positive health and control over

the mind. Better understanding purposes the *Sadvritta* can classified in to four categories as-

1. *Sharirika Sadvritta* (Physical codes of conduct).
2. *Manasika Sadvritta* (Mental codes of conduct).
3. *Dharmika Sadvritta* (Moral codes of conduct).
4. *Samajika Sadvritta* (Social codes of conduct)
5. *Vyavaharika Sadvritta* (Ethical codes of conduct).

### 1. *Sharirika Sadvritta* (Physical codes of conduct)

- One should bath twice a day, and one should clean his excretory passages and feet frequently.
- Cutting of hair, shaving & nail cutting should be done thrice a fortnight.
- One should always wear untorn clothes, should be cheerful, and use flowers and fragrance. The attire should be gentle and style of hair should be as commonly in practice.
- One should apply oil to head, ear, nose, and feet daily and should resort to (healthy) smoking.

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- One should not eat without wearing precious stones in the hand or without taking bath or while wearing torn clothes, without reciting mantras, without offering oblations to God, without offerings to the departed forefathers, teachers, guests and dependents.
  - One should not eat without applying purifying fragrance and garland, without washing hands, feet and face, without cleaning the mouth, facing towards the north, with depressed /stressed mind, surrounded by the disloyal, undisciplined, unclean and hungry attendants, in unclean utensils or at improper place and time, in crowded surroundings, without first offering to the fire, without sprinkling with sacred water, without sanctifying it with mantras, with contemptuous disposition towards the food.
  - One should not take contaminated meal or food which has been served by enemies or opponents.
  - One should not take stale food (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.
  - One should not be engaged in other works while urge for the natural urges. (One should pass natural urge first and then do other works).
  - One should not spit out sputum, pass faeces and urine in front of the winds, fire, water, the moon, the sun, Brahmins and the preceptors.
  - One should not urinate on the road, in crowded (public) places and while taking food.
  - One should not let out oral or nasal excreta at the time of recitation of mantras, oblation, studies, and sacrifice, religious and auspicious acts.
  - Foot wear should be wearied as per physical structure, season and type of job.
  - Should discontinue exercise before feeling of fatigue.
  - The footwear should be selected as per our physical structure, geographic condition.
- 2. *Manasika Sadvritta (Mental codes of conduct)***
- One should not speak ill of noble persons and preceptors.
  - One should not study when there is unseasonal lightning, houses appear as if they are burnt, during outbreak of fire, earthquake, grand festivals, fall of meteors, eclipses (solar or lunar). One should not study on a new moon day, during dawn or dusk.
  - One should not study without being instructed by preceptor. One should not pronounce words in low, high, weak or deranged voice, without proper accents and morphological symmetry, neither too fast nor too slow, nor with excessive delay and nor with too high or too low pitch of sound.
  - One should timely speak useful, measured, sweet & meaningful words.
  - Should be self-controlled & virtuous
  - One should be zealous to the cause but not be anxious about the result/outcome.
  - One should be free from anxiety, fearless, shy (from committing bad deeds), wise, highly enthusiastic, skillful, fore bearing, religious, with positive attitude.
  - Should be tolerant of harsh words, and should curb the practice of intolerance.
  - Should always concentrate on the qualities of peaceful life and should be the remover of the causes of attachment and aversion.
- 3. *Dharmika Sadvritta (Moral codes of conduct)***
- One should not perform spells, worship of sacred trees and superiors, and studies while remaining impure.
  - Should offer oblation, perform religious sacrifices, donations, pay respect to road crossings, offer *Bali* (religious offerings or ritualistic sacrifices).

- Should offer hospitality to guests, offer *Pinda* (rice balls) to forefathers.
- One should adopt auspicious conduct, should avoid places with dirty clothes, bones, thorns, impure articles, hairs, chaff, garbage, ash, and skull and one should bathe & sacrifice.
- One should not leave without touching the gems, ghee, the respectable, the auspicious and flowers.
- One should not pass the respectable and the auspicious on left and others on right side.
- One should not tell lies and should not take other's possessions.
- Should not covet other's women or property.
- Should not indulge in enmity, sinful acts, or be vicious (even to a sinner).
- Should not point out defects of others and should not try to know other's secrets.
- One should not keep company of the unvirtuous, those hated by the king, insane persons, those not following social ethics, foetus killers, wretched and wicked.

#### 4. *Samajika Sadvritta (Social codes of conduct)*

- One should not be impatient, or overexcited / over exhilarated.
- One should not be the person who does not support his attendants, confide in his kins, be happy alone and has unpleasant conduct, behaviour and attendance.
- One should not rely on everybody nor suspect all and should not be critical (too meticulous) at all times.
- One should not deviate from generally approved social practices and should not break any code of conduct.
- One should not move in the night or in an inappropriate place. One should not indulge in taking food, studies, sexual relations or sleep during the dawn or dusk.

- One should not make friendship with children, the old, the greedy, the fools, the persons under affliction and the eunuchs.
- One should not have interest in taking wine, gambling and making physical relationship with prostitutes.
- One should not disclose secrets and should not insult anybody. One should not be self-conceited, unskilled, inexperienced and envious.
- One should not insult the *Brahmins* nor should beat the cow with sticks. One should not abuse the old, the preceptors, the administrative class and the king.
- One should not speak too much nor treat kins, persons attached, that stood along in difficult times and the persons who know the secrets disparagingly.
- One should walk with an umbrella, stick, turban & foot wear, and look six feet ahead.
- Should help the poor, be truthful & peaceful.

#### 5. *Vyavaharika Sadvritta (Ethical codes of conduct)*

- One should not be in a habit of postponing things at the time of action.
- One should not indulge in any activity without properly examining it.
- One should not be submissive to his senses nor should let his fickle mind move around.
- One should not overburden his/her intellect or senses.
- One should avoid procrastinating.
- One should not do things in a fit of anger or rejoicing.
- One should not be under continuous grief.
- One should not be conceited over achievements or desperate in loss.
- One should always remember his own constitution of mind (nature).

- One should not stay for long in the temples, sacred places, raised platforms, crossroads, gardens, cremation grounds & places of execution during nights, and should not enter a deserted house or forests alone.
- One should not be attached to women, friends and servants with sinful conduct, should not oppose or antagonize superior persons and be attached to inferior persons.
- One should not take interest in crooked things, take refuge of wicked persons and indulge in frightening/ terrorizing acts.
- One should have faith in the correlation of the cause and effect that is good and bad deeds and their corresponding results and should always act on it.
- One should not be despondent and assume that now nothing can be done.
- One should not lose spirit (give up courage) nor should remember his insults.

## DISCUSSION

*Acharya Charaka* mentioned the benefits of following *Sadvritta* by the person as -

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

नृलोकमापूरयते यशसा साधुसम्मत्तः। धर्मार्थावेति भूतानां  
बन्धुतामुपगच्छति।।३२।।

परान् सुकृतिनो लोकान् पुण्यकर्मा प्रपद्यते। तस्माद्दृत्तमनुष्ठेयमिदं  
सर्वेण सर्वदा।।३३।।

One who follows the code of good conduct for the maintenance of positive health lives for a hundred years without any abnormality. Such persons, praised by the noble ones, earn fame all over the world, attain virtue and wealth, friendship of all living beings and at the end, with holy acts, attain the excellent abode (virtuous world) of good souls after the death. Hence this code of conduct should be followed by everybody.

## Impact of *Sadvritta* on Immunity and Health

The behavioral and ethical components of life will have direct impact on the health of an individual. It is now known that our thoughts cannot only create or change our mood, but they can actually change our bio-chemistry. We also know that they affect how we see ourselves and the world around us. *Ayurveda* emphasized this as the concept of the balance between the *Sharirika Doshas* and *Manasika Doshas* as they are interrelated with each other to maintain health and immunity of person. Hence the code of conduct and behavior has a direct effect on our mind and it can affect the mental health. There are evidences available on Mind-Body- Immune System interaction which states that the person will have good immunity with positive attitude attained by proper conduct and behavior. Many researchers are looking forward to know its effects in classics learning and conditioning the development of the immune system and immune modulating effect of personality and life style. In the future, research will likely be extended into many new areas including psychotherapy, illness prevention and healing etc.

## CONCLUSION

Observance of these basic rules in the form of *Sadvritta* has an advantage to achieve good health and prevention of disease. Although these are the rules which are not related to particular disease; still, it is useful and applicable to Physical and psychological variety of diseases. Principles of *Sadvritta* laid down in *Ayurveda* highlights the importance of Sociocultural factors in the maintenance of Mental & Social health. A stable & harmonious equilibrium between *Mana* [Mind] & his environment is needed to reduce man's vulnerability to mental diseases & to lead a more productive & satisfying life. Hence it is very clear that persistent follow-up of *Sadvritta* prescriptions leads to the maintenance of positive health, devoid of all diseases and healthy long life.

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