


## Original Review Article

# A review on the guidelines in Ayurveda as Swasthavritta on prevention and promotion of health along with longevity of life with its applied aspect

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## Abstract

Prevention is a wise step to avoid incidence of diseases. Promotion is a positive effort to achieve excellence of health status. Ayurveda, an ancient medical science deals with the study of preservation of health and life along with treatment if disease occurs. Guidelines of prevention and promotion of health are described in details at every stage of life from fetal life up to old age i.e. *garbhavastha* to *jarawastha*. All such guidelines described in Ayurveda are collectively called as *Swasthavritta*. Moreover, the life style supportive to cure diseased condition is also mentioned as *aaturvritta*. Swastha is a well-being of all components of an individual as body, mind, sense organs etc. Excellent capacities of those factors can be achieved by specific life style and rasyana dravyas by which longevity of life can be achieved. Methods to achieve it are described in details in Ayurveda Daily regimen, seasonal regimen, *sadvritta* dietary guidelines, *rasayana*, rules for sleep and *Brahmacharya*. *Triskandha* Ayurveda *Hetu* (aetiological or causative factors of diseases or health), *Linga* i.e. sign and symptoms of health and diseases or *dravyas* for prevention and promotion of health and for treatment of diseases. These are fundamental concepts of Ayurveda. Another important concept is a *Pradnyapardha* is a route cause at all dosha vitiation and it is advised to avoid it. Sushrut and Vagbhat have descendent preventive measures in details by following wholesome life style.

## Key words

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Prevention, Promotion, Swasthavritta, Ayurveda guidelines, Life style, Daily regimen.

## Introduction

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Ayurveda is a study of life and its preservation. Two important objectives of Ayurveda are prevention and protection of health of healthy being and treatment of diseased persons [1-3].

So guidelines of prevention and promotion are described in Ayurveda in details. Life style has an important role for its. For study purpose all preventive and promotive literature is collectively called as “*Swasthavritta*”, and is similar to preventive and social medicine [4, 5].

Promotion of health is a positive effort for the excellence of health status. It can be achieved by *rasayana*, immunomodulent life style and *aachar rasayanas*. Ideal life style is mentioned in Ayurveda in detail. One needs to follow it. For it one has to look for own instinct of life called as *Praneshana* [6].

Then only one will be aware of preservation of it. One has to gain capacity to follow wholesome life style and to avoid causative factors, known as *Pradnyaparadha* and *Astmyendriyarth* in Ayurveda.

Equilibrium of dosha-dhutu, mala, agni, mind, indriyas with atman is known as health status *Prakriti*, predominance of doshas at the time of conception is one of the main factor for healthy status of an individual. As ek-doshaj *Prakriti* as vataj, pittaj and kaphaj lead to frequent disease due to predominance of single dosha.

*Agni* or digestive power, metabolic power is also called as life and strength as maintenance and nourishment of body and mind is fulfilled only by proper working of *Agni*. Individuals’ health is related to environment. Seasonal changes can lead to diseases so *Rutucharya* is mentioned to follow to prevent diseases [7]. All such aspects are described in details in Ayurveda, One can achieve hundred years of life through following

guidelines of *Swasthavritta* and *sadvrittha* mentioned in Ayurveda. One needs to understand about self, constituents of health, life, causes of health & causes of disease respectively.

Longevity of life depends upon following healthy life style including moral conducts; calm and balanced mind and applying preventive and promotive procedures, as massage (*Abhyanga*), poring of oil (*Seka*), exercise (*Vyayam*), (*Nasya*) nasal drops, rasayanas or rejuvenating diets and medicines are effective for promotive health and preserving long life. All such guidelines should be followed and are effective & Ayurveda contains scientific and effective guidelines.

## Aim

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- To study the guidelines in Ayurveda as Swasthavrittha on Prevention and promotion of health along with longevity of life with its applied aspect.

## Objectives

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- To study guidelines of Ayurveda on Prevention.
- To study guidelines of Ayurveda on Promotion of health.
- To study ‘*Swasthavritta*’ with its preventive and promotive role for health.
- To study guidelines of *Swasthavritta* for longevity of life.
- To study applied aspect or methods to use preventive and promotive guidelines of Ayurveda.

## Materials and methods

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Collection and review of ancient Ayurvedic texts with commentaries and modern literature.

## Definition of Ayurveda and aim of Ayurveda

Ayurveda means a science deals with a study of a life [8]. The word ‘Ayurveda’ itself indicates knowledge about a life. According to Ayurvedic

texts, its' origin is from divine sources and it has been constructed for achieving health and longevity of a life of an individual. It indicates Ayurveda is a source of guidelines about prevention and promotion of health with longevity of life [9].

Aim of Ayurveda is mentioned as 'Swasthasya Swasthya rakshana' and cure of disease. Health preservation is one part of the aim of Ayurveda. Various references from the text at various chapters are mentioned about the same aim.

Charak has mentioned as preventive measures should be followed by which one can avoid occurrence of disease which may occur in future [10].

#### **Swastavrittha as preventive Measures**

Term 'Swasthavritta' is mentioned by Charak while describing its importance for prevention of diseases [11]. According to description, Following are rules of Swasthavrittha for one who wants to prevent diseases. By following rules of daily regimen as preventive measures and following panchankarmas and rasayan dravyas, one can attain strength and can achieve anti-ageing effect [12].

Term Swasthavritta is mentioned in commentary of Ashtang Hriday named as 'Ayurvedic rasayan' by Hemadri. 'He has described maintenance of life is made by two ways. One is Swasthavrittha, life style and other efforts as seasonal purification to achieve long healthy life. Another way of maintenance of life is practiced by following appropriate lifestyle modification according to disease to get cure [13]. Applied aspect includes all the instructions of daily regimen with rasayana.

#### **Rasayana as a promotive measure**

For achieving more strength and rejuvenating effect, rasayana should be administered. While introducing treatment of various chapter prior to that [14]. The concepts about Rasayana dravyas are specifically described with its use for promotion of health. Charaka has classified

Bheshaj in two types, one which enhances the excellent qualities of healthy components of an individual described as Swasthya Oojaskar [15] is a state of Dhatu-sarata or excellency.

Thus Swasthavritta also deals with the use of rasayan dravyas for promotion of health along with its use for longevity of life [16]. It is also mentioned as the promotive dravyas can be used for therapy and medicated dravyas can be used for promotion of health many times [17].

Thus rasayan is useful for longevity of life with excellent strength described as 'Maha Phalam' by 'Chakrapanidatta', commentator of Charak-Sanhita [18]. 'Gangadhar' another commentator is mentioned as Rasayan dravyas are more effective for therapy as compared with bajikaran dravya (Table – 1).

#### **Rasayanas use as immunomodulant in various diseases**

Susrut, Charak and Vagbhat have mentioned Rasayan in detail. Susrut has described it in three chapters of Chikitsa Sthana. Rasayana is that by which one attains rasa etc. duatus with affluence as longevity, strength, energy, firmness and sustaining youthfulness as effects of rasa, virya, vipak located in drugs is rasayana [19].

Rasayan dravyas are also described for specific disorders to gain immunity strength for particular dhatus. In this category 'Glycyrrhiza garbar' yashtimadhu and honey with Vidang and another four combinations of dravyas are mentioned to take for piles (Arsh), krimi (worms) etc. and the same combination is used for a long increase one hundred years of life span. Use of kashamarya is indicated for disease occurs due to vitiated Rakta-pitta for sharp intellect and longevity of life 'Bakuchi' is indicated.

Vagbhat, the author of ancient text book on Ayurveda has described rasayana for various diseases. Chitrak Choorna with oil has to be taken for eliminating Vatrogas [20]. Bhallataka rasayan is used for Prameha, worms, Piles, skin disorders and obesity [21]. Pippli or Piper

Rasayan is used for Cough, Asthma, Kshayrog, Grahani, Arsha, Pandurog, Vish mawra, Chardi, etc. [22].

Those are some examples of rasayanas according to diseases. Ideal behaviour results as rasayan

known as *Aachar rasayana* [23, 24]. Thus ‘these are the specific guidelines for promotion of health and comes under lifestyle with specific intention to promote the health of specific system or organ comes under Swasthavritta.

**Table – 1:** Benefits of rasayan dravyas with respect to promotion of health and longevity of life.

Sanskrit Term	Meaning With (Specific Description 100 years of life)
<i>Deergh – aayu</i>	Longevity of life
<i>Smriti</i>	Excellent memory function
<i>Medha</i>	Excellent grasping capacity
<i>Aarogya</i>	Positive health with all dimensions
<i>Tarun vaya</i>	Youth phase
<i>Prabha</i>	Glory of Skin
<i>Varna</i>	Fairness of skin
<i>Swara</i>	Cultured voice
<i>Audarya</i>	Excellence of Prabha, Varna, balan
<i>Dehabala param</i>	Excellent health
<i>Endriya bala paran</i>	Excellent working capacity of senses
<i>Vacha Siddhi</i>	Purity and capacity of intellect and mind to superior development
<i>Kanti</i>	Complexion
<i>Arogo</i>	Prevention of disease
<i>Agni Vriddhi</i>	Enhanced digestive capacity
<i>Medhya</i>	Enhancing intellect
<i>Param Ojaskar</i>	Excellent enhancer of Ojas
<i>Vish prasaman</i>	Detoxifying capacity
<i>Sarva vyadhitiar</i>	Subsiding all diseases

### Health promotion by using procedures indicated in daily regimen- Dinacharya

Life style is described in *Dinacharya* for prevention and promotion of health. Every act of a routine is supposed to be protective for health and should not be a cause of a disease. Wholesome daily regimen is one of the most important preventive measures in Ayurveda.

### Indication For Urdwajatrugat of Head and neck region

Care of eyes, ears, nerves, head, hairs should be taken daily. Ayurveda’s guidelines for it are mentioned in *Charaka Sutrasthana* [25].

**Anjana** – Procedure as Anjana is useful for prevention of khaphaj roga. It enhances the capacity of eyes, improves vision Aschyotan procedures are said to be performed daily.

All details about dose, procedure, indications, and contraindications are described in text [26].

### Benefits of Nasya

*Pratimarsha nasya* is procedure in which oil drops are administered in each nostril. It should be performed daily twice a day [27, 28].

Preventive role of nasya is mentioned as prevention of *Pinas, Ardhavbhedak*, etc. diseases related to nose, head, ears throat, spasm in the neck muscles, headache, facial palsy, Rhinitis’ migraine can be prevented [29].

### Promotive role of Nasya

Ability of indriyas to perceive the knowledge increases facial complexion improves, strength of vessels, ligaments, muscles, tendons of head

and neck region enhance. Voice strengthens and quality improves.

Importance of Nasya is describes as Basti that is useful for all age group from child up to old age [30].

### Preventive role of Dhoompana

Heaviness of head, headache, Rhinitis, migraines, earache, pain in eyes, cough, Hiccup, dyspnea, congestion in throat weakened teeth excessive saliva, discharge in ears, rhinorrhea, excessive lacrimation by vitiated tridoshas, suppurative Rhinitis, otitis media, pain in teeth, anorexia, stiffness in neck, jaws, hair fall, greying of hairs can be prevented by performing dhoomapana as per rules described in Ayurveda in details [31].

Vagbhat has mentioned to practice daily *dhoomapana*, *Gandoosh*, *Tambul*, *Anajana*, *Dantadhavna* for prevention and promotion of health [32].

### Use of Dhoompana as promotion of health

Regular practice of *Dhoompana* according to guidelines leads to enhanced strength in head region, sensory as well as motor functions and strengthens function of voice [33].

### Benefits of daily regimes – Massage

*Abhyang* is one of the most important daily procedures indicated in Ayurveda for prevention and promotion of health. Specifically massage to be given to had, ears and feet (**Table – 2**).

These guidelines are clearly mentioned for preventive and promotive measures [34].

**Table – 2:** Daily Regimen and its benefits: according to Suhsrut.

Dinacharya in Sanskrit	Term in English	Preventive and Promotive Role
<i>Dantadhavan</i>	Teeth washing	Removes foul smell, kapha
<i>Jihwa Lekhana</i>	Tongue Scraping	Remove dirt, cleans tongue
<i>Gandoosh</i>	Gargles	Provides, cheerfulness, firmness to teeth.
<i>Mukh Prakshalan</i>	Facial wash	Alleviates blue spots, dryness of face, boils and other diseases, makes vision strong.
<i>Anjan</i>	Galena	Removes burning, itching, dirt of eyes, provides brilliance and vision
<i>Tambula</i>	Chewing betel leaf	Provides clarity and fragrance in mouth, lustre and charm on face, alleviates diseases of the throat.
<i>Abhyang (shirobhyanga)</i>	Massage with oil on head	Eliminates diseases of head, provides softness and gloss in hairs charm on face, saturation in sense organs
<i>Karnapooran</i>	Filling of ear with oils	Removes pain in the jaw, carotid region, head and ear
<i>Vyayam</i>	Exercise	Physical development, lustre, compactness of body part, stimulation of digestive power and provides optimum immunity
<i>Udwartan</i>	Dry massage	Pacifies vata, dissolves kapha
<i>Snan</i>	Bath	Removes sleep, burning and fatigue, eliminates sweat, itching and stimulates digestive powder
<i>Mukhalepam</i>	Application of cosmetics on face	Makes eyes firm, cheek & face corpulent and beautiful like lotus
<i>Aahar</i>	Food	Nourishes, gives strength promotes, life span, memory Ojus and digestive power
<i>Nidra-kale</i>	Sleeping in time	Promote development, strength, non-drowsiness and equilibrium of dhatus

**Table – 3:** Seasonal guidelines.

Season	Using diet	Lifestyle/ Vihar	Shodhan/ Purification
<i>Varsha</i>	Madhur-amla-lavan, laghu, snigdha, honey, boiled water pippali	Protection from rain, mild, exercise, Drying clothes properly, avoid extreme walking	Basti, Vaman, Virechana, Nasya
<i>Sharad</i>	Madhur, Tikta, kashay, laghu, rice, green gram, aamalaki, cold water	Chandanadi lepan, avoiding, heat, day sleeping, curd, oil over eating	Raktamokshan, virechana
<i>Hement</i>	Oil & ghee, Brimhana, Madhur, Sneegdhar, diet, jaggery, milk products	Worm gooms, heavy exercise, massage	-
<i>Shishir</i>	Nultritional diet	Worm gooms, heavy exercise	-
<i>Vasant</i>	Warm Water, water prepared by musta, sunth katu, tikta, kashay diet	Vyayam, udwatan, kapoor, chandan, avoiding direct sun rays at afternoon	Vaman, Nasya, Dhoomapana
<i>Greesham</i>	Water kept in mud vessel – cold water, madhur and diet without salt, plenty of liquid diet	Cool lepa of chanda etc.	-

### Preventive role of seasonal purification and seasonal guidelines

It is one of the important measures to prevent future diseases that may occur due to aggravated doshas by environmental effects [35] (Table – 3).

### Importance of sadvritta for health and longevity

The moral conducts for safety, prevention of imbalance and for maintaining personal and social health are described in sadvritta.

### Discussion

Ayurveda is the ancient medical science deals with the study of life, its preservation, ideal and wholesome life style, promotion of health and causes of diseases with treatment. Fundamental of life have described in detail in which concept of health, maintenance of health through ideal Aahar-Vihar according to age, prakriti, season, desh, agni, etc. on the basis of Samanya- vishesh Siddhant are included. Methods to protect the health and promote it are wholesome daily regimes as ideal timings of sleep, wholesome

diet with proper time and ahara vidhi, balanced and positive mental and intellectual activities, seasonal guidelines for aahar-vihar and purification methods. Daily procedures such as *nasya, anjan; abhyang, vyayam* have great importance in preventive and promotion of health.

Rasayan is one of the important measures to prevent disease and promote health in a general and specific according to used dravyas. Rasayana is a specialty of Ayurveda which deals with promotion of health through various dravyas and conducts.

By reviewing texts in aspect of applied aspect for longevity of life, it is found that the guidelines about life style which mainly described as what to do and what should avoid *dincharya, Rutucharya* at physical, mental, social, spiritual level have great importance, A step to avoid unwholesome aahar-vihar and to follow wholesome is most important for prevention and promotion of health.

## Conclusion

Considering all Guidelines collected for prevention and promotion of health from Ayurveda texts, it is concluded that Ayurveda deals with study of health and its prevention and promotion. Details of health dimensions are the parameters of positive health with characteristics described in Rasayan adhyay as excellent capacities at physical-mental and intellectual levels. Longevity of life is also depends upon ideal life style with proper *aahar-vihar-rasayana* and avoidance of causes of diseases as *pradnaparadha*, *kal* and *astamyendriyarth sanyog*. It is concluded that guidelines about longevity of life in Ayurveda are mentioned with details.

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