



Review Article

A CRITICAL REVIEW ON RITUCHARYAM ADHYAYAM MENTIONED IN SUSHRUTA SAMHITA

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ABSTRACT

The sixth chapter of the *Sushruta Samhita Sutra Sthana* is the *Ritucharya Adhyaya*. Acharya Sushruta clarified that *Roga* can be avoided before it manifests if one abides by *Ritucharya*'s precepts. Thus, *Ritucharya* is an Ayurvedic preventive and health-promoting practice that helps people live in harmony with nature and stay healthy throughout time. *Sushruta Samhita Sutra Sthana* is the source of literature about *Ritucharya*. In *Ritucharya*, Acharya Sushruta explains what should be done in each season (*Samshodhana kala*) to stop illnesses before they start. According to him, for *Swasthya Rakshana*, *Snehapana* and *Basti* should be conducted in *Varsha Ritu* to calm *Vata dosha*, *Virechana* should be performed in *Sharad Ritu* to balance *Pitta dosha*, and *Vamana* should be performed in *Vasanta Ritu* to balance *Kapha dosha*.

INTRODUCTION

Acharya Sushruta, known as the Father of Surgery, wrote the *Sushruta Samhita*, one of the most renowned and important books in Ayurveda. In addition to being a surgical manual, it is a thorough medical reference that covers anatomy, therapeutics, disease, health, and preventative care. Structurally, the *Samhita* is divided into six *Sthana*:

In *Sutra Sthana* Acharya described about Fundamental principles, seasonal regimens, and general guidelines.

The *Ritucharya Adhyaya* is the 6th chapter of the *Sutra Sthana* in the *Sushruta Samhita*, in which Acharya Sushruta has described the following points. *Kaala*, *Shadritus*, *Anaya Dvaya*, *Ritu dosha Prabhava*, *Ritu Dosha Chikitsa*, *Dinanusara Ritu Bhava*, *Ritu Vyapada*, *Ritu Charya*, *Avyapanna Ritu Lakshan*, and the fundamental treatment plan for *Dosha* eradication.

Ritu and *Charya* are the two words that make up *Ritucharya*. *Charya* means Regimen, while *Ritu* means season. *Ritucharya* encompasses all of the activities that are intended to be performed during different seasons.

Lifestyle diseases are the result of people's improper interactions with their surroundings. These lifestyle diseases are hard to treat, have delicate symptoms, and progress slowly.

Acharya Sushruta explained that if a person follows the rules of *Ritucharya*, *Roga* can be prevented before they arise. Thus, *Ritucharya* is a preventive and health-promoting practice of Ayurveda, which helps an individual stay healthy throughout all over time by living in harmony with nature. Ayurveda has always placed more emphasis on maintaining good health and preventing illness via adherence to a healthy diet and lifestyle than it has on curing and treating illnesses.

The main objective of this chapter is to teach people how to live harmoniously with the environment.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1. Detailed study of *Ritucharyam Adhyayam* mentioned in *Sushruta Samhita*.
2. To know the importance of *Ritucharya*.
3. To prevent illness and preserve health by following seasonal dietary and lifestyle guidelines.
4. To prevent seasonal ailments and condition the body for seasonal changes.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Literature review- Literature regarding *Ritucharya* is taken from *Sushruta Samhita Sutra Sthana*.

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OBSERVATIONS AND RESULT**The Explanation of Kaala is as follows^[1]**

It is glorious and self-existent, not born from anything else, and it is without beginning, middle, or end- meaning its origin, middle, and termination are not known. The disturbances and prosperity of the *Shad Rasa* (*Madhura* etc.), as well as the life and death

of living beings, are all under the control of *Kaala*. Time does not remain still even for its most subtle moment, and therefore it is called *Kaala*.

Divisions of Kaala^[2] the divisions of *Kaala* are *Nimesha*, *Kashtha*, *Kaala*, *Muhurta*, *Ahoratra*, *Paksha*, *Masa*, *Ritu Ayan* and *Yuga*.

Time Division (<i>Kaala Vibhaga</i>) ^[3]	Definition / Count
<i>Akshinimesha</i>	<i>Laghu Akshar Uchharan</i>
1 <i>Kaashtha</i>	15 <i>Akshinimesha</i>
1 <i>Kala</i>	30 <i>Kaashtha</i>
1 <i>Muhurta</i>	20 <i>Kalas</i> + 1/10 th <i>Kala</i> (≈ 20 <i>Kalas</i> + 3 <i>Kaashtha</i>)
1 <i>Ahoratra</i> (Day-Night)	30 <i>Muhurta</i>
1 <i>Paksha</i> (Fortnight)	15 <i>Ahoratra</i>
1 <i>Masa</i> (Month)	2 <i>Pakshas</i>

Relation of Masa with the Ritu^[4]

S.No.	Ritu	Masa
1.	<i>Hemanta Ritu</i>	<i>Saha-Shahsya</i>
2.	<i>Shishira Ritu</i>	<i>Tapa-Tapsya</i>
3.	<i>Vasanta Ritu</i>	<i>Madhu-Madahav</i>
4.	<i>Greeshma Ritu</i>	<i>Suchi-Shukra</i>
5.	<i>Varsha Ritu</i>	<i>Nabha-Nabhsya</i>
6.	<i>Sharada Ritu</i>	<i>Isha-Urja</i>

Ritu Ayan Vibhaga^[5]

S.No.	Ritu	Ayan	Rasa Bala	Sharira Bala
1.	<i>Shishira Ritu</i>	<i>Uttarayan</i> (<i>Arka</i> dominant)	<i>Katu Tikta</i> <i>Kashaya Rasa</i>	<i>Uttarotara Bala</i> <i>Haani</i>
2.	<i>Vasanta Ritu</i>			
3.	<i>Greeshma Ritu</i>			
4.	<i>Varsha Ritu</i>	<i>Dakshinayan</i> (<i>Soma</i> dominant)	<i>Madhura, Amla,</i> <i>Lavana rasa</i>	<i>Uttarotara Bala</i> <i>Vridhhi</i>
5.	<i>Sharada Ritu</i>			
6.	<i>Hemanta Ritu</i>			

“The Moon keeps the Earth moist with its cool rays, while the Sun dries it. Taking support from both the Moon and the Sun, the *Vayu* sustains all living beings.^[6]

A year is formed by the combination of the two *Ayana* - *Dakshinayana* and *Uttarayan*. Five such years together are called a ‘*Yuga*.’ From *Nimesha* up to a *Yuga*, time undergoes cyclical change like a wheel, and according to some, this is called the ‘*Kalachakra*’.^[7]

Ritu and Dosha Avastha^[8]

S.No.	Dosha	Sanchaya	Prakopa	Shamana
1.	<i>Vata</i>	<i>Greeshma Ritu</i>	<i>Varsha Ritu</i>	<i>Sharada Ritu</i>
2.	<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Varsha Ritu</i>	<i>Sharada Ritu</i>	<i>Hemanta Ritu</i>
3.	<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Hemanta Ritu</i>	<i>Vasanta Ritu</i>	<i>Greeshma Ritu</i>

Months (Sanskrit)	Ritu
<i>Bhadrapada, Ashwin</i>	<i>Varsha</i>
<i>Vaishakha, Jyeshtha</i>	<i>Grishma</i>
<i>Kartika, Margashirsha</i>	<i>Sharad</i>
<i>Pausha, Magha</i>	<i>Hemanta</i>
<i>Phalgun, Chaitra</i>	<i>Vasanta</i>
<i>Ashadha, Shravana</i>	<i>Pravrit</i>

Pathogenesis of Paittika Disorders^[9]

In the *Varsha Ritu*, medicinal herbs are newly sprouted (fresh) and thus possess only mild potency. The water becomes impure because it is mixed with the impurities of the earth (decayed matter). When the sky is covered with clouds and the earth is dampened by rainwater, beings with moist bodies and digestive fire weakened by aggravated cold (*Vata*) suffer from impaired digestion. Due to the intake of such impure water and medicines, burning sensations (*Vidaha*) occur in the body. This burning leads to the accumulation of *Pitta*. When the clouds disperse and the mud on the earth dries up, this accumulated *Pitta*, being provoked by the rays of the sun, gives rise to diseases caused by *Pitta*.

Pathogenesis of Kaphaja Disorders^[10]

In the *Hemanta Ritu*, the same medicines, by the effect of time, become matured in potency (*Parinataveerya*) and strong, while water becomes pure, unctuous, and very heavy. At this time, because of the weakened rays of the sun and the contact of *Vata* mixed with *Hima*, the bodies of beings become

stiffened. When such medicines and water are consumed, they produce *Madhura Paka* and, due to their qualities of unctuousness, coldness, heaviness, and slipperiness, lead to the accumulation of *Kapha*. This accumulated *Kapha*, in the *Vasanta* season, melts under the influence of the sun's rays and, in beings whose bodies are somewhat stagnant, gives rise to diseases caused by *Kapha* or *Shlaishmika* disorders.

Pathogenesis of Vataja Disorders^[11]

In the *Grishma Ritu*, the same medicines and water lose their essence, becoming dry and extremely light. When such medicines and water, possessing these qualities, are used, they cause in the heat of the sun, in persons with dry bodies, an increase of roughness, lightness, and non-unctuousness, leading to the accumulation of *Vata*. This accumulated *Vata*, during the *Pravrit* when the earth becomes overly moist due to water, manifests as *Vata* disorders in beings whose bodies are dampened by cold, wind, and rain. In this way, the causes of the accumulation and aggravation of the *Doshas* have been described.

Diurnal Variation of Dosha Vastha in Relation to Time and Ritu^[12]

Time	Equal Season	Doshavastha
<i>Purvahna</i>	<i>Vasanta</i>	<i>Kapha prakopa</i>
<i>Madhyahna</i>	<i>Grishma</i>	<i>Vata sanchaya</i>
<i>Aparnaha</i>	<i>Pravrit</i>	<i>Vata prakopa</i>
<i>Pradosa</i>	<i>Varsha</i>	<i>Pitta sanchaya</i>
<i>Ardha ratri</i>	<i>Sharad</i>	<i>Pitta prakopa</i>
<i>Pratyusha</i>	<i>Hemanta</i>	<i>Kapha sanchaya</i>

In unvitiated seasons, the medicines and water also remain unvitiated, i.e., pure and untainted. Their use promotes *Pranashakti*, *Ayu*, *Bala*, *Veerya*. The vitiation of those seasons occurs due to *Adrishta*, and *Adharma*). The abnormal variations of cold, heat, wind, and rain spoil the medicines and water." The consumption of those vitiated medicines and water gives rise to various kinds of diseases, or even epidemics called *Marak*.^[13]

Sometimes, even when the *Ritus* remain normal, entire regions are destroyed due to *Kritya*, *Abhishapa*, the wrath of *Rakshasa*, *Pishacha* and

Adharma. At times, because of air polluted with the fragrance of poisonous or toxic flowers, without any specific predominance of *Doshas* like *Vata* and without the particularity of *Prakriti* such as *Sattvika*, the people of the country suffer from *Kasa*, *Shvasa*, *Vamana*, *Pratishyaya*, *Shirovedana* and *Jvara*. Diseases may also arise from the inauspicious influence of *Grahas* such as *Surya* and constellations such as *Ashvini*. Likewise, they are seen to occur from the vitiation of *Griha*, *Stri*, *Shayana* (bed), *Asana* (seat), *Yana*, *Vahana*, *Mani*, *Ratna* and other instruments, as well as from other inauspicious omens.^[14]

Hemanta and Shishira Ritu^[15]

In *Hemanta Ritu*, cold winds blow from the northern direction. All four directions remain covered with dust and smoke. The Sun appears veiled by frost (snow), and lakes and ponds become covered with ice. Animals such as the crow, rhinoceros, buffalo, ram, and elephant remain proud and intoxicated with their own *Mada*. Trees like *Lodhra*, *Priyangu*, and *Punnaga* (*Nagakeshara*) come into bloom.

In *Shishira Ritu*, cold becomes more intense, the directions are disturbed by wind and rain, and the remaining characteristics are similar to those of *Hemanta Ritu*.

Vasanta Ritu^[16]

In *Vasanta Ritu*, the southern breeze of *Malaya Parvata*, scented by the embrace of creepers like Jasmine and *Malati* that have climbed over Sandalwood trees, and marked by the *Alaktaka* adorning the feet of *Siddhas* and the wives of *Vidyadharas*, blows to delight lovers, enflame *Ananga* (*Kama Deva*), and break the pride between women and men. Moreover, in *Vasanta Ritu*, all directions appear clear and bright, adorned with forests and groves, beautified with the blossoms of *Palasha*, lotus, *Bakula* (*Maulashri*), mango, and *Ashoka* trees. Everywhere resounds the sweet humming and songs of groups of cuckoos and bees. The southern breeze pervades the atmosphere, and the earth is decorated with many fresh reddish-brown tender leaves.

Greeshma Ritu^[17]

In *Grishma Ritu*, the Sun becomes intense in its rays, and a distressing wind blows from the *Nairitya* direction. The Earth remains heated, and due to low water flow, rivers become shallow. All four directions appear fiery. Pairs of *Chakva* and *Chakvi* searching for water, and deer remain restless in search of water. Small trees, grasses, and creepers perish, and the leaves of large trees fall.

Pravrit Ritu^[18]

In *Pravrit Ritu*, the sky is filled with clouds brought by the western wind, which produce lightning, occasional rainfall, and terrifying thunder. The earth is covered with tender, dark-green grass, shines brightly

due to *Shakragopas* (*Indrabdhu-Virbahuti*), and is adorned with the blossoms of *Kadamba*, *Neepa*, *Kutaja*, *Sarja*, and *Ketaki* trees.

Varsha Ritu^[19]

In *Varsha Ritu*, rivers are full of water and, due to their strong flow, uproot trees located on the banks. Wells are adorned with fully bloomed white lotuses and blue lotuses. The earth, covered with grass, and is beautifully decorated with various types of grains. Likewise, the sun, Nakshatras, and sky remain hidden by clouds that slowly rain with gentle sounds.

Sharada Ritu^[20]

In *Sharad Ritu*, the Sun is *Pingala-varna* (reddish) and hot. The sky appears clear, adorned with white clouds. Lakes are beautified by *Kumuda* (lotus) and sound generated by the movement of migrating *Hamsa* (swans). The earth, at low and high places alike, becomes muddy, dry, and inhabited by *Dhurma*. It is also decorated with *Jhinti*, *Satouna*, *Gulduphariya*, *Kasha*, and *Vijaysar* plants.

DISCUSSION

This part of Article entails the statement of results, before concluding this research work, it was necessary to discuss about the findings of all the sections in detailed, which have been mentioned in this study. In the beginning of this chapter, *Acharya Sushruta* has described about *Kaala* (time), which is as follows *Kaala- Swayambhu*, *Anadi*, *Madhya Nidhano*. After this, *Acharya Sushruta* explained the divisions of *Kaala*, the divisions of *Kaala* is *Nimesha*, *Kashtha*, *Kaala*, *Muhurta*, *Ahoratra*, *Paksha*, *Masa*, *Ritu Ayan* and *Yuga*. After the division of *Kaala*, *Acharya Sushruta* explained the relation of *Masa* with the *Ritu*. *Ayan* means dividing the year into two parts *Dakshinayan* and *Utarayan*. After this, the description of the seasons (*Ritu*) and the state of the *Doshas* is given. *Acharya Sushruta* is the first among the *Acharyas* who divided a day into six seasons (*Ritus*) and described the state of the *Doshas* in each season in a day.

In the *Ritucharya Adhyaya*, a beautiful description of the seasons (*Ritus*) and flowering is found, which is as follows.

Ritu	Flowering
<i>Hemanta Ritu</i>	<i>Rodhra</i> , <i>Priyangu</i> , <i>Punnaga</i>
<i>Shishira Ritu</i>	<i>Rodhra</i> , <i>Priyangu</i> , <i>Punnaga</i>
<i>Vasanta Ritu</i>	<i>Kimsuka</i> , <i>Ambhojas</i> <i>Bakula</i> , <i>Aamra</i> , <i>Ashoka</i>
<i>Greeshma Ritu</i>	Not mentioned
<i>Pravrita Ritu</i>	<i>Kadambha</i> , <i>Nipa</i> , <i>Kutaja</i> , <i>Sarja</i> , <i>Ketaki</i>
<i>Sharada Ritu</i>	<i>Baṇa</i> , <i>Saptahva</i> , <i>Bandhooka</i> , <i>Kasa</i> and <i>Asana</i>

At the end of this chapter, *Acharya* has described the elimination of aggravated (*Prakupita*) *Doshas*.

Ritu	Elimination of Aggravated <i>Doshas</i>
<i>Vasanta Ritu</i>	<i>Kapha</i>
<i>Sharada Ritu</i>	<i>Pitta</i>
<i>Varsha Ritu</i>	<i>Vata</i>

CONCLUSION

Based on the explanation and discussion above, we have concluded that everyone should follow the rules and regulations of *Ritucharya* to fulfil the principle of Ayurveda is to cure the disease of the sick person and to maintain the health of the healthy person in a proper manner.

Acharya Sushruta has explained in *Ritu Charya* what should be done in each season to prevent diseases before they occur. He mentioned that in *Vasanta Ritu*, *Vamana* should be done for balancing *Kapha dosha*; in *Sharad Ritu*, *Virechana* should be performed for *Pitta dosha*; and in *Varsha Ritu*, *Snehapana* and *Basti* should be done to pacify *Vata dosha*.

Thus ends the sixth chapter of the *Sutra Sthana* in the *Sushruta Samhita* which treats of the characteristic features of the seasons and their influence on health and drugs.

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