

## A CONCEPTUAL REVIEW OF AUSHADHA SEVANA KAAL SIDDHANTA IN AYURVEDA

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### ABSTRACT

Kaal (Time) is regarded in Ayurveda as a unique and inevitable factor influencing all kinds of effects in the body and environment. It is broadly classified into Nityaga (constant or regular time) and Awasthika Kaal (situational or conditional time). The timing of medicine administration, or *Aushadha Sevana Kaal*, is specifically categorized under Awasthika Kaal. Acharya Vagbhata has stated that medicine administered at the right time (Yukta Kaal) proves significantly more effective than the same medicine given at an improper time. This highlights the importance of synchronizing *Aushadha* with *Kaal* to enhance therapeutic outcomes.

**KEYWORD:** Aushadha Sevan Kaal, Bhesajya, Kaal, Siddhanta.

### INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a unique and holistic system of medicine that originated in India, focusing on balance and harmony in the body, mind, and spirit. It considers the individual's unique constitution, or *dosha*, and aims to address the root cause of health issues through natural remedies, lifestyle changes, and personalized treatments. Ayurveda believes that rhythmic changes in the predominance of *Doshas* occurs with *Kaal* (Time). *Kaal* is one of the "*Kaaran Dravya*".<sup>[1]</sup> mentioned in ayurveda that is unique and specific causative factor of all type of effects, at the same time; it is unavoidable. That is why, Ayurveda being science of life, gives emphasis on the concept of *Kaal*. *Kaal* is categorized as "*Niyat*" or "*Nityag*" (continuous) and "*Aniyat*" or "*Aavasthik Kaal*".<sup>[2]</sup>

*Aushadha* is so called as it possesses "*Osa*" means *Virya* (potency) and who hold this potency known as *Aushadha*. *Sevana* means to consume, *Kaal* means time. *Aushadha sevana kaal* is taken into consideration under *Aavasthik*. *Aushada sevana kaal* means time at which of drug can be administered.

**Synonyms** - *Bhaishajya Kaal*, *Aushadha Kaal*, *Aushadhavekshan Kaal*, *Aushadha Avcharan Kaal*, *Agad Kaal*, *Bhaishajya Kaal*, *Bhaishajya Graham Kaal* are synonyms of *Aushada sevana Kaal*.

Charaka says "While treating a disease success can be achieved only when there is proper combination of *Desha* (region), *Kaal* (time), *Pramana* (dosage), *Satmya* (wholesomeness), *Asatmya* (unwholesomeness), *Pathya* (useful), and *Apathya* (harmful)".<sup>[3]</sup> Among these seven most important factors, *Kaal* acquires second position, which reflects the importance of *Kaal* in *Chikitsa*. *Charak* further describes "*Vaidhya* should understand '*Kala*' (time) by observing the following six *avekshana* (observatory factors) - *Dina* (Day Time), *Atur* (Patient Strenght), *Aushadh* (*Medicine Administration Time*), *Vyadhi* (Disease Condition), *Jirnalagam* (*Aaharjirna Lakshana*), *Ritu* (*Chaya-prakopadi* of *dosha*).<sup>[4]</sup> *Acharya Sushrut* also give importance of *Kaal* as *Shad-kriya Kaal* for practical application.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present conceptual review focuses on the traditional Ayurvedic concept of *Aushadha Sevana Kaal* (the appropriate time for drug administration), as elaborated in the classical texts of Ayurveda. A systematic textual review was conducted using primary sources including the *Acharya Charaka*.<sup>[5]</sup>, *Sushruta*.<sup>[6]</sup>, *Vagbhata*.<sup>[7]</sup>, *Kashyapa*.<sup>[8]</sup>, *Ashtanga sangrah*.<sup>[9]</sup> & *Acharya Sharangadhara*.<sup>[10]</sup> The sections specifically dealing with *Aushadha Sevana Kaal* were identified and extracted for detailed study.

Inclusion criteria were based on direct references to drug administration timing and its relation to doshas, disease condition, digestion. Excluded were indirect or metaphorical references lacking clinical relevance.

This review aims to highlight the theoretical framework and practical implications of *Aushadha Sevana Kaal Siddhanta* in clinical Ayurvedic practice.

## RESULT

The review of above mentioned classical Ayurvedic literature, commentaries, and modern scientific insights revealed the following key findings regarding *Aushadha Sevana Kaal*.

**Table no. 1: Number of *Aushadha Sevana Kaal* according to different Acharyas.**

S.no.	Name of Author	Enumeration
1.	<i>Charaka, Sushruta, Vagbhata (A.H.), Kashyapa</i>	10
2.	<i>Vridhavagbhata (A.S.)</i>	11
3.	<i>Sharangadhara</i>	5

**Table No. 2: Name of *Aushadha Sevana Kaal* according to different Acharyas.**

<i>Charak</i> <sup>[5]</sup>	<i>Sushruta</i> <sup>[6]</sup>	<i>Asthanga Hridayam</i> <sup>[7]</sup>	<i>Kashyap</i> <sup>[8]</sup>	<i>Asthang Sangraha</i> <sup>[9]</sup>	<i>Sharangdhara</i> <sup>[10]</sup>
1.Niranna	1.Abhakat	1.Ananna	1.Abhakat	1.Abhakat	1. Suryodye
2.Pragbhakat	2.Pragbhakat	2.Annaaduo	2.Purvabhakta	2.Pragbhakata	2. Divas Bhojane
3.Madhyabhakata	3.Madhyabhakata	3.Madhye	3.Madhyebhakat	3.Madhyabhakata	
4.Pratha Paschat Bhakta	4.Adhobhakata	4. Ante	4.Adhabhakat	4.Adhobhakata	

5.Sanya Paschat Bhakta	5.Antarabakata	-	5.Bhakatyormadhya	5.Antarabakata	3. Sanyante Bhojane
6.Bhakatsanyukta	6.Sabhakta	5.Saanna	6.Sabhakta	6.Samabhakata	
7.Samudgam	7.Samudgam	6.Samudgam	7. Samudgam	7. Samudgam	
8.Muhurmuha	8.Muhurmuha	7.Muhuh	8.Muhurmuha	8.Muhurmuha	4. Muhurmuha
9.Grasa	9.Sagrahsam	8.Grased-Grased	9.Grasa	9.Sagrahsam	
10.Grasantra	10.Grasantra	9.Kavalantre	10.Grasantare	10.Grasantra	
		10.Nishi		11. Nishi	5. Nishi

Table No. 3: Comparison of Aushadha Sevana Kala as described in Sharngadhara Samhita and Brihatrayi.

S. No.	Sharangdhar	Bhrihatrayi
1.	Suryodye	Abhakat
2.	Divas Bhojane	Pragbhakat, Madhyabhakata, Adhobhakata, Sabhakta, Samudgam
3.	Sanyante Bhojane	Sagrahsam, Grasantra
4.	Muhurmuha	Muhurmuha
5.	Nishi	Nishi

Table No. 4: Indications of different Aushadha Kaal.

S. no.	Aushadh Kaal	Indications
1.	Niranna (Abhakta)	1.Diseased and disease with good strength <sup>[5][6][7][8][9]</sup> 2.Pancha-vidh Kashaya-kalpna (five basic formulations) they are heavy to digest and need strong Agni to digest them <sup>[10]</sup> 3.Lekhanartha (scrapping) and Utklishta Kapha (Vaman) Pitta (Virechan) <sup>[10]</sup>
2.	Pragbhakta	1.Vitiated Apaana Vayu <sup>[5][7][8][9][10]</sup> 2.Gudagata Vayu (Situating in anus) <sup>[10]</sup> 3.Aged person <sup>[6]</sup> 4.Children <sup>[6]</sup> 5.Bhiru (panic) <sup>[6]</sup> 6.Krishanga (emaciated) or weak <sup>[6]</sup> 7.For strengthening lower parts of body <sup>[9]</sup> 8.Diseases of lower body <sup>[9]</sup> 9.Krishikaranarth (In Obesity) <sup>[9]</sup>
3.	Madhyabhakta	1.Samana Vaya Vikruti <sup>[5][7][10]</sup> 2.Koshtagat Vyadhi <sup>[9]</sup> or Madhya Deha <sup>[6]</sup> or Antrashyaa <sup>[8]</sup> 3.Pittaja diseases <sup>[9]</sup> 4.Mandagni <sup>[10]</sup>
4.	Adhobhakata (Pratahbhojana Pashchat)	1.Vitiated Vyana Vayu <sup>[5][7][9][10]</sup> 2.Diseases of Ura, Kantha and Shir <sup>[8]</sup> 3.Strengthening upper body parts (Sthulikaran) in emaciation person <sup>[9]</sup> 4.Diseases of upper half of body <sup>[6]</sup>
	(Sanyabhajana Pashchat)	1. Vitiated Udana Vayu <sup>[5][7][9][10]</sup>
5.	Antrabhakta (Bhakatyomadhya)	1.Hridya (Beneficial for heart) <sup>[6]</sup> 2.Manobalakara (Promotes mental power) <sup>[6]</sup> 3.Always wholesome for stimulating digestive fire <sup>[6]</sup> 4. Mild diseased and good digestive capacity <sup>[8]</sup> 5.Deepagni Purush suffering from vitiated Vyana Vayu <sup>[9]</sup>
6.	Sabhakta (Bhaktasamyuktam)	1.Aushadh Dveshi (Patient who dislike medicine) <sup>[6][8][9]</sup> 2.Aruchi (Anorexia) <sup>[5][7][9]</sup> 3.Shishu <sup>[6]</sup> / Bala (Children) <sup>[9]</sup> 4.Durbala (Weak) <sup>[6][8]</sup> 5.Stree (ladies) <sup>[6]</sup> 6.Vridha (elderly) <sup>[6]</sup> 7.Sukumar (Easy lifestyle) <sup>[9]</sup> 8.Kshat-Ksheena <sup>[8]</sup> 9.One suffering with Sarvangagata Vikar 10.To protect Bala <sup>[8]</sup>

7.	Muhurmuha	1.Shwasa (Dyspnoea) <sup>[5][6][7][8][9][10]</sup> 2.Kasa (Cough) <sup>[5][7][8][9]</sup> 3.Trishna (Thirst) <sup>[5][7][8][9][10]</sup> 4.Hikka (hiccups) <sup>[6][7][8][9][10]</sup> 5.Chardi (Emesis) <sup>[6][7][8][9][10]</sup> 6. Visha (Poison) <sup>[6][7][9][10]</sup> 7.Swarabhanga (Hoarseness of voice).
8.	Samudga	1.Hikka Roga (Hiccupps) <sup>[5][7][9][10]</sup> 2.Kampa (Tremors) <sup>[7][9][10]</sup> 3.Akshepa (Convulsion) <sup>[7][9][10]</sup> 4.Urdhva Kayagata Vikar <sup>[9]</sup> 5.Pravivruta (Spreaded) Urdhwa and Adha Visruta Dosh <sup>[6][8]</sup>
9.	Sagrasa / Grase	1.Vitaited Pranavayu <sup>[5][7][9]</sup> 2.Vajikaran medicine <sup>[6][8][9]</sup> 3.Stimulate Agni <sup>[6][8][9]</sup> 4.Durbala <sup>[8]</sup>
10.	Grassantare/ Kavalantare	1.Vamaniya dhooma <sup>[8]</sup> 2.Swasroga <sup>[6]</sup> 3.Hridroga <sup>[9]</sup> 4.Vitiation Pranvayu <sup>[5][7][9]</sup>
11.	Nishi	1.Urdhvajatru vikar (Disease above the neck region) <sup>[7][9][10]</sup> 2.Lekhana <sup>[10]</sup> 3.Pachana <sup>[10]</sup> 4. Brinhan <sup>[10]</sup> 5. Shaman <sup>[10]</sup>

## DISCUSSION

1. **Abhakta (Niranna kaal / Empty stomach)** - *Niranna* refers to administering medicine on an empty stomach, ensuring that it is not mixed with or affected by food before it is fully digested. *Hemadri* states that medicine should be administered only after the previously consumed food has been fully digested, and once the medicine itself is digested, food can be taken again.<sup>[11]</sup> *Indu* adds that *Aushadha* given 1 *Yaama* (3 hours) after sunrise in the morning is *Niranna kala*.<sup>[12]</sup> In *Abhakta Kaal*, medicine is given on an empty stomach to ensure direct contact with the digestive fire (*Agni*). *Acharya Sushruta* states that medicine becomes highly potent when taken on an empty stomach, ensuring effective and doubt-free disease relief and supports proper nourishment of the seven body tissues (*sapta dhatus*), making it especially beneficial for *Rasayana* (rejuvenation) therapy.

## Precautions

To avoid *glani* and *bala-kshaya* it is contraindicated in children, aged, women, who cannot withstand the potency of medicine. In these people medicine is advised to take along with food.<sup>[6]</sup>

2. **Pragbhakta (Before Meal)** – According to commentator *Indu*, *Bheshaja* should be administered just before food intake [*tatkalameva*]<sup>[12]</sup>. *Aushadha* is digested without affecting *bala* of the person. Since food follows the medicine. The medicine becomes the first target of *Agni* rather than the food. This timing also prevents regurgitation, as the medicine is covered by the meal.<sup>[6]</sup> It will help to cure the diseases of *Apana vata vikruthi*.

3. **Madhyabhakta (In between meals)** - *Chakrapani* and *Indu* specify that in *Madhya Bhakta kaal*, medicine is taken during the meal - specifically after eating half of the food, followed by the remaining portion of the meal.<sup>[12][13]</sup> When the medicine is enveloped by food, it gains *Avisari bhava*<sup>[6]</sup> (restrict), allowing it to act effectively on *Samana Vata*, *Pitta*, and disorders located in the digestive tract (*Kostha*), while also enhancing the digestive fire (*Agni*).<sup>[9]</sup>

4. **Adhobhakta:** According to commentator *Indu* in *Adhobhakta*, *Bheshaja* is to be administered immediately after meal.<sup>[12]</sup> This *kaal* is primarily recommended for treating disorders of *Vyana Vata*. Since the heart (*Hridaya*), the seat of *Vyana Vayu*, is believed to become active in the morning-much like flowers that bloom with the morning sun, medicine is best given at that time. Administering the medicine after a meal ensures that it travels with the *Ahara Rasa* (nutrient essence), as *Vyana Vata* becomes active post-digestion. This helps the medicine effectively reach the heart and address *Vyana Vata*-related conditions. Following dinner, *Udana vayu* becomes active and promotes the upward movement (*Urdhvagati*) of the medicine. This action helps strengthen the upper regions of the body, particularly enhancing the function of the sense organs.<sup>[9]</sup>
5. **Sabhakata:** *Sabhakta* refers to the intake of medicine together with food.<sup>[6]</sup> There are two ways to administer it in this *kaal*: either by incorporating the medicine during the preparation of the food or by mixing it with the food after it has been prepared.<sup>[13]</sup> As the food is digested and transformed into *Ahara Rasa*, the medicine also undergoes digestion and its active components blend with the *Ahara Rasa*. This allows the medicine to circulate throughout the body, curing *Sarvangagata vikar* while also diminished sharpness, strong smell, and unpleasant taste of *Aushadha*. This method is especially suitable for women, children, elderly individuals, those with weak constitution (*Sukumara*), and people who dislike taking medicine. In weak or debilitated persons (*Ksheena Purusha*), the timing of medicine intake in this way helps to preserve their strength (*Bala*).<sup>[9]</sup>
6. **Antrabhakat:** The intake of food between two main meals is known as *antarbhakta*.<sup>[6]</sup> The first *antarbhakta* occurs during the daytime, while the second takes place one *yama* (approximately three hours) after the digestion of the evening meal, as noted by the commentator *Indu* as time corresponds to *nishi*, or night.<sup>[12]</sup> Before administering medicine, one should assess the sign of complete digestion (*Jeerna lakshanas*) of the previous meal. Once the medicine has been metabolized and its effects observed, the evening meal can be consumed. During this period, the indicators of both food digestion (*ahara jeerna lakshanas*) and medicine digestion (*aushadha jeerna lakshanas*) are considered crucial. Due to *madhyahna* i.e., *Pittakaal*, *agni* is in a stimulated condition, so *bheshaja* is properly metabolised in this *kaal*. So, it demonstrates the *Hridya*, *Pathya*, *Deepana*, and *Manobalakara* effects.<sup>[6]</sup>
7. **Samudga:** The administration of *bheshaja* should be done either just before or immediately after food intake.<sup>[12]</sup> In this context, *bheshaja* functions like a container (*samudga* or box) for the food. The food consumed along with it should be light and easy to digest. *Acharya Dalhana* uses the term *Piyate* in relation to *samudga kaal*, indicating that the medicine should be in liquid form.<sup>[14]</sup> No particular *Dosha dushti* (vitiation of doshas) is specified for this *kaal* (time). However, certain conditions-such as *Pravrisruta*, upward and downward movement of vitiated *doshas*, *hikka roga* (hiccups), *kampa* (tremors), *akshepa* (convulsions), and disorders affecting the upper part of the body (*urdhva* and *adha kayagata vikar*) in which *dosha* imbalance is observed in both the upper and lower parts of the body.<sup>[9]</sup>
8. **Muhurmuhur:** *Muhurmuhur* refers to the repeated or frequent administration of *Bheshaja* <sup>[9]</sup>. In this method, the medicine is given multiple times, either with food or without it, to sustain its therapeutic effect over time <sup>[6][9]</sup>. Therefore, this *kaal* can be broadly categorized into two types:
  1. *Sabhakta muhurmuhur* – medicine given repeatedly along with food.
  2. *Abhakta muhurmuhur* – medicine given repeatedly without food.

This *kaal* is used to treat *dosha* that are vitiated during their *sanchaya* (accumulation) and *vega* (aggravated) stages. It is especially indicated in conditions where symptoms occur repeatedly or in continuous episodes. In such cases, *Aushadha* (medicine) is administered multiple times to ensure a sustained therapeutic effect. Faster relief is achieved when the medicine is absorbed sublingually (under the tongue).

**9. Sagrasa:** *Sagrasa* refers to the method where *bheshaja* (medicine) is mixed with every bite or morsel of food during consumption.<sup>[6]</sup>

- *Sagrasa bheshaja* enables the medicine to be absorbed directly through the buccal mucosa. This leads to a high concentration of the drug in the bloodstream, resulting in a faster onset of action.
- Since swallowing (deglutition) is governed by *pranavata*, administering the medicine in *grasa* (chewed or masticated) form allows it to interact with *pranavata*, making it particularly effective in treating disorders related to this *dosha*.<sup>[9]</sup>
- The *ruksha guna* (dry quality) of *churna* helps stimulate the digestive fire (*agni*), thereby enhancing digestion.<sup>[9]</sup>

**10. Grasanthara:** The medicine is administered in between each morsel or bolus of food <sup>[9]</sup>. It helps regulate *Vikrut vata* by encouraging its natural directional flow.

**11. Nishi:** *Hemadari* states that *Nishi-kaal* refers to the time that follows three hours after the evening meal has been digested. This period is also referred to as *Swapna-kaal* or *Ratri kaal*.<sup>[11]</sup>

At this *Kaal*, *Bhaishajya* employs a targeted approach to the *Urdhvajatrugata* section. The *Shamana Aushadha* attains long-lasting results (*Chira-parinamana*) because no food is taken until morning.<sup>[10]</sup>

#### Factors influencing the determination of *Aushadha Sevana Kaal* include

1. The natural biological cycles of the *Dosha*
2. Interactions between food and medicines
3. The specific subtype of *Dosha* involved, such as *Prana Vata*, etc.
4. The age of the individual (*Vaya*)
5. The person's physical strength or vitality (*Bala*)

#### Modern Perspective

A comparable approach to drug administration is also found in modern medicine, where timing is influenced by:

##### A. Food-Drug Interactions, including

1. Potential effects arising from the interaction between food and medication
2. The pH level within the intestinal lumen
3. The rate of gastric emptying and the duration of intestinal transit

##### B. CONCEPT OF CHRONOBIOLOGY (Chronos - time, bios -life, logos -study)

Definition: The branch of science focusing on biological rhythms and their mechanisms.

Biological rhythms

- **Circadian:** Rhythms that follow a roughly 24-hour cycle, such as the sleep-wake cycle.
- **Infradian:** Rhythms that last longer than 24 hours but less than six days.



- **Ultradian:** Rhythms that occur more frequently than once a day.
- **Seasonal:** Rhythms influenced by seasonal changes, often linked to seasonal affective disorders.

### Chronopharmacokinetics

The analysis of drug absorption, distribution, metabolism, and elimination in relation to the specific time of day or time of year.

### CONCLUSION

The concept of Aushadha Sevana Kala is Vital because without proper timing, both medicines and food may fail to produce the desired effect. Medicines must be taken in alignment with the body's natural biological clock and its variations. Aushadha Sevana Kala corresponds closely with the pharmacodynamics of drugs and modern chronotherapy concepts. The interaction of medicine should activate Agni at all levels: Jatharagni, Bhutagni, and Dhatvagni. Both Kaal (time) and Agni are recognized by the Acharyas as essential factors in transformation (*Parinamakara bhava*). Integrating this knowledge allows practitioners to optimize treatment, reduce drug doses, and improve patient outcomes. Thus, understanding and applying the principles of Aushadha Sevana Kala is essential for effective and rationale Ayurvedic therapy. A Vaidya with a deep understanding of Bhaishajya Sevana Kaal can provide better patient care and achieve improved treatment outcomes.

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