



Dear Dhamma Friends:

As a minimum all Buddhists must observe, as daily routine, the five precepts. How can a physician be in compliance with the five precepts in the discharge of his(her) profession duty, daily?

Buddhist Five Precepts:

1. I pledge to observe the precept of abstaining from killing any living beings.
2. I pledge to observe the precept of abstaining from taking what is not given to me by the owner.
3. I pledge to observe the precept of abstaining from committing sexual misconduct
4. I pledge to observe the precept of abstaining from telling lies
5. I pledge to observe the precept of abstaining from taking any intoxicant (liquor) or drug that causes forgetfulness.

Thou shall not kill is one of the five precepts that we Buddhist have to observe on a daily routine. The question then is if you are a physician, are you in compliance with this precept if you are using anti-biotic drugs to eliminate microbial elements in a sick patient?

Drug can easily eliminate millions of microbial bacterial inside a sick person's body; however, if you are being instructed, mandated rather, by the physician code of ethics to save the life of a patient, you might still be considered as in compliance with your five precepts. So you can still be a good Buddhist by this Dhammapada verse No. 124 [The Story of Kukkutamitta](#). See also the [medical code of ethics](#).



World Medical Association International Code of Medical Ethics
DUTIES OF PHYSICIANS TO THE SICK

- 1. A PHYSICIAN SHALL always bear in mind the obligation of preserving human life.**
- 2. A PHYSICIAN SHALL owe his patients complete loyalty and all the resources of his science. Whenever an examination or treatment is beyond the physician's capacity he should summon another physician who has the necessary ability**
- 3. A PHYSICIAN SHALL preserve absolute confidentiality on all he knows about his patient even after the patient has died.**
- 4. A PHYSICIAN SHALL give emergency care as a humanitarian duty unless he is assured that others are willing and able to give such care.**



“If there is no wound on the hand, one may handle poison; poison does not affect one who has no wound; there can be no evil for one who has no evil intention.”

Dhammapada verse 124 said, yes you are in full compliance with the five precepts and you are still a good Buddhist. Read on Verse 124.

While residing at the Veluvana monastery, the Buddha uttered Verse (124) of this book, with reference to the hunter Kukkutamitta and his family.

At Rajagaha there was once a rich man's daughter who had attained Sotapatti Fruition as a young girl. One day, Kukkutamitta, a hunter, came into town in a cart to sell venison. Seeing Kukkutamitta the hunter, the rich young lady fell in love with him immediately; she followed him, married him and lived with him in a small village. As a result of that marriage, seven sons were born to them and in course of time, all the sons got married. One day, the Buddha surveyed the world early in the morning with his supernormal power and found that the hunter, his seven son and their wives were due for attainment of Sotapatti Fruition. So, the Buddha went to the place where the hunter had set his trap in the forest. He put his footprint close to the trap and seated himself under the shade of a bush, not far from the trap.

When the hunter came, he saw no animal in the trap; he saw the footprint and surmised that someone must have come before him and let cut the animal. So, when he saw the Buddha under the shade of the bush, he took him for the man who had freed the animal from his trap and flew into a rage. He took out his bow and arrow to shoot at the Buddha, but as he drew his bow, he became immobilized and remained fixed in that position like a statue. His sons followed and found their father; they also saw the Buddha at some distance and thought he must be the enemy of their father. All of them took out their bows and arrows to shoot at the Buddha, but they also became immobilized and remained fixed in their respective postures. When the hunter and his sons failed to return, the hunter's wife followed them into the forest, with her seven daughters-in-law. Seeing her husband and all her sons with their arrows aimed at the Buddha, she raised both her hands and shout: "Do not kill my father."

When her husband heard her words, he thought, "This must be my father-in-law", and her sons thought, "This must be our grandfather; and thoughts of loving-kindness came into them. Then the lady said to them, "Put away your bows and arrows and pay obeisance to my father". The Buddha realized that, by this time, the minds of the hunter and his son; had softened and so he willed that they should be able to move and to put away their bows and arrows. After putting away their

bows and arrows, they pad obeisance to the Buddha and the Buddha expounded the Dhamma to them. In the end, the hunter, his seven sons and seven daughters-in-law, all fifteen of them, attained Sotapatti Fruition.

Then the Buddha returned to the monastery and told Thera Ananda and other bhikkhus about the hunter Kukkutamitta and his family attaining Sotapatti Fruition in the early part of the morning. The bhikkhus then asked the Buddha, 'Venerable Sir, is the wife of the hunter who is a sotapanna, also not guilty of taking life, if she has been getting things like nets, bows and arrows for her husband when he goes out hunting?' To this question her Buddha answered, "**Bhikkhus, the sotapannas do not kill, they do not wish others to get killed. The wife of the hunter was only obeying her husband in getting things for him. Just as the hand that has no wound is not affected by poison, so also, because she has no intention to do evil she is not doing any evil.**"

Then the Buddha spoke in verse as follows:

Verse 124. If there is no wound on the hand, one may handle poison; poison does not affect one who has no wound; there can be no evil for one who has no evil intention.