

“Nidana” traditional diagnostic approaches as per Ayurveda

Sanjeev M Khuje^{*1}, S. K. Khodre¹, B. K. Sarkar²

¹Govt. Ayurveda College, Rewa, (MP), India.

²National Institute of Ayurvedic Pharmaceutical Research, Moti Bagh Road, Patiala, Punjab, India.

***Correspondence Info:**

Sanjeev M Khuje

Govt. Ayurveda College, Rewa, (MP), India.

E-mail: drsanjeevkhuje@gmail.com

Abstract

Diagnosis is a very important aspect of Ayurveda. As per ayurveda diagnosis involves the identification of causes of diseases. Proper diagnosis is essential feature of disease treatment. There are various factors can affect health such as; diet, life style and some external factors. Since ayurveda treats according to the *prakriti* of an individual thus proper diagnosis required for the accurate suggestion of medicine intake. Basically ayurveda believes that diseases are occurs due to the imbalance of three vital component known “*tridosha*” i.e. *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*. The *tridosha* imbalance may occur due to the improper diet & lifestyle and need to be diagnosed properly for specific treatment of a particular disease. This article discusses some diagnostic approaches of ayurveda as tool for *nidaan*.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Nidaan, Pancha Nidana, Nadi Pariksha

1. Introduction

Ayurveda is a traditional medicine and natural healing system in India. Ayurvedic diagnosis is based on etiological factors. The approach of diagnosis involves investigation of causes and their correlation with sign & symptoms. Ayurveda classified *Madhav Nidan* is a classical approach of diagnosis having more than 5,000 signs and symptoms for the identification of diseases. Diagnosis in ayurveda mainly depends on the *prakriti* of an individual and progression of the diseases. Another important aspect of diagnosis (*vikriti pariksha*) is considération of *dosha* movement and pathology of *dhatu* & *mala*. There are many abnormal conditions can be corelated with ‘*dhatu & dosha imbalance*’ i.e ; hormone imbalances can be corelates with problem of *Dhatu*. Similarly *Kapha* and *Vata problems* indiqâtes higher and lower level of hormones respectively. Stress can be correlated with *Vata* disturbance. Disturbances of *Pitta* indicates problem like; acidity, blood pressure and burning eye. Likewise *Kapha* imbalance can be correlates with condition of fatigue, restlessness, etc. Looking importance’s of *dosha imbalance* ayurveda suggests some points need to be consider as diagnostic tools; known as *Pancha Nidana*; these are the cause (*nidana*), signs (*purva rupa*), symptoms (*rupa*), investigative methods (*upashaya*) and disease prognosis (*samprapti*). The *pancha nidana* utilizes causative factor (*nidana*) as a part of *dosha* imbalance. It is also important to identify type of *dosha*.

2. Pancha Nidana

2.1 Nidana:

Nidana considers the disease causing factors like; diet, life style, environmental factors and injuries as sources of any diseases which overall leads the imbalance of *doshas*. The ancient text of ayurveda correlates

causative factors with the type of *dosha* associated with disease. In ayurveda, *nidana parivarjana* or “avoiding the cause” is considered as the first line of treatment in most of the diseases.

2.2 *Purvarupa*:

Purva rupa considers initial sign and symptoms of disease. These symptoms may term as warning symptoms for any particular disease and appear before the other aggravated symptoms appeared. Each disease has specific preliminary signs and *purva rupas* approach believes that many diseases may have similar sign and symptoms but their initial features may vary thus disease can be diagnosed accurately initially and treat accordingly.

2.3 *Rupa*

Rupa considers main sign and symptoms of a disease as actual manifestation process. This is a prompt and well defined stage of disease with clear-cut specified symptoms. The *rupa* can be considered as advanced form of the warning signs (*purva rupa*).

2.4 *Upashaya*

Many diseases having special preliminary signs and symptoms these are the basic consideration of *upashaya* applied for the some special type of diseases. The investigational and treatment options involve utilization of proper diet, herbal remedies or physical therapies. Dietary changes may be recommended to confirm suspected diagnosis.

2.5 *Samprapti*

Samprapti is to get the proper knowledge about the pathway of disease manifestation. This provides complete knowledge of the disease development stages, starting from the causes to the final stage of investigation; this approach considers role of *doshas* as well as location where the imbalance prompt (*dooshya*). This approach takes each and every stage of disease developments as tool of diagnosis and treatment [1,2].

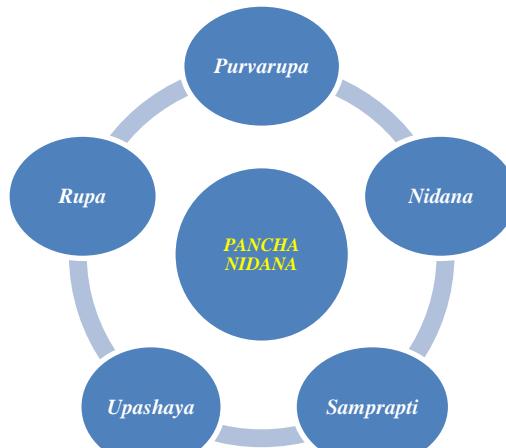


Figure 1: Compositions of *Pancha Nidana*

3. Principles of Ayurveda *Nidana*

It has been said that the origin of ayurveda involve scientific reasoning which works around its principles. Diagnostic methods of ayurveda based on the principle concept of *dosha* imbalances. On the basis of *dosha* imbalances ayurveda suggests some methodologies for diagnosis of diseases such as; *Trividh*, *Astavidh*, *Dashvidh*, *Nadi Pariksha*.

1. *Trividh*: The decision regarding disease must be established only after complete examinations for this purpose ayurveda describes some *triads* under the category of *Trividh Pariksha* as follows;

- *Darshana*
- *Sparshana*
- *Prashna*

Darsana Pareeksha

Darsana Pareeksha means diagnosis of disease through patient observation including physical manifestations of symptoms like; skin colour, eyes appearance and behaviors etc.

Prasna Pareeksha

Principle of this approach based on the detailed discussion as questions and answers between physician and patients which helps to correlates with the instances of *dosha* imbalance.

Sparshana Pareeksha

This *nidana* approach principally involves diagnosis by using touching sensation, palpitation and percussion.

2. Ashtavidh: Ashtavidh Pariksha considers eight various aspects for diagnosis purpose:

- *Nadi Pariksha* (Pulse examination)
- *Jivha Pariksha* (Tongue examination)
- *Shabda Pariksha* (Voice examination)
- *Sparsha Pariksha* (Skin examination)
- *Drka Pariksha* (Eyes examination)
- *Akruti Pariksha* (General appearance examination)
- *Mutra Pariksha* (Urine examination)
- *Mala Pariksha* (Stool examination)

3. Dashvidh: This approach utilizes following ten factors for making decision regarding disease:

- *Prakriti* (Physical constitution)
- *Vikruti* (Pathological condition)
- *Sara* (Conditions of tissue)
- *Samhanana* (Body frame work)
- *Pramana* (Limbs and elements)
- *Satmya* (Homologation)
- *Sattva* (Mental constitution)
- *Ahara shakti (Agni)*
- *Vyayama shakti* (Capacity of exercise)
- *Vaya* (Age)

4. Nadi Pariksha (Pulse Diagnosis)

In ayurveda the pulse examination is very vital component of traditional diagnostic methodology which involves observation of circulatory movement of vessels of wrist (Pulse examination). Diagnosis through pulse requires highly expert technical hands to establish accurate correlation between pulsation and disease type. This approaches based on the fact that the pulsations dictate the physiological status of the entire human body. It involves examination of pulse by applying pressure until to get maximal pulsation and then observation of various pulse phases with varying pressure. Pulses need to be observed deeply, to predict physiological changes. Generally examination of radial pulse performed to diagnose disease [3,4].

Shatkriyakaal

Shatkriyakaal is an ayurvedic concept describes stages of disease prognosis means physiological transitions from normal to abnormal conditions. These stages may help in early diagnosis of diseases [5].

4. Conclusion

This review describes some disease diagnosis approaches as basic tool of *Rog-Nidana* as per ayurveda; articles also suggest that utilization of proper diagnostic techniques helps to determine the accurate treatment option to cure disease permanently. Ayurveda suggests various techniques for *Rog-Nidana* (disease diagnosis) including *pancha nidana* which helps to identify causes and type of disease. Preliminary consideration of signs and symptoms of a particular disease can helps to eliminate disease initially even before the disease has actually established. The knowledge of disease pathway helps to select treatment regimes in order to ensure the permanent cure. The ultimate aims of all *Rog-Nidana* approaches are to determine improper physiology of internal tissues, excretory system, *agni* (digestive system) and immune system, etc. Proper *Rog-Nidana* approach is very essential to prevent disease or disease prognosis.

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