

ANCIENT DIAGNOSTIC TOOL (NIDAN PANCHAK) IN CURRENT SCENARIO

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ABSTRACT

Nidan Panchak is a traditional *Ayurvedic* concept that refers to the five-fold diagnosis of a disease. It is a comprehensive method of diagnosis that considers not only the physical symptoms but also includes the psychological, social, and environmental factors that contribute to the disease. *Nidan Panchak* is a crucial diagnostic tool in the field of medicine. It comprises five components *Nidan*, *Purvarupa*, *Rupa*, *Upashaya*, and *Samprapti*. Each of them plays an important role as a diagnostic tool for the assessment of Aetiology (*Nidan*), Prodromal Symptoms (*Purvarupa*), Signs (*Rupa*), Therapeutic methods (*Upashaya*), and Pathogenesis (*Samprapti*) of disease. Each

aspect of *Nidan Panchak* plays a crucial role in enhancing a physician's knowledge of the disease process and improving the determination of appropriate treatment methods. In the modern era, the concept of *Nidan Panchak* has gained renewed importance in contemporary times, as an increasing number of individuals are turning towards holistic approaches. This approach allows for the identification and treatment of diseases by considering various factors that contribute to an individual's overall well-being.

KEYWORDS: *Nidan Panchak*, *Nidan*, *Purvarupa*, *Rupa*, *Upashaya*, *Samprapti*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda - "the science of life" has its roots pursuit of understanding and curing diseases and promoting overall health and well-being. In the current era, the *Nidan Panchak* is considered one of the most valuable diagnostic tools in the practice of *Ayurveda*. In this modern era, *Nidan Panchak* is a highly efficient tool for the diagnosis and prognosis of the disease.

In *Ayurveda*, there are five means of diagnosis (*Nidan Panchaka*) known as *Nidan* (cause or etiology), *Purvarupa* (prodromal symptoms or premonitory symptoms), *Rupa* (specific sign and symptoms or clinical features), *Upasaya* (relieving and aggravating factors), *Samprapti* (pathogenesis). For the treatment of any disease, it is necessary to make a proper diagnosis of the disease. The *Ayurvedic* diagnostic basis is of two types comprising *Roga Pareeksha* and *Rogi Preeksha* separately. Analysis of disease is *Roga pareeksha*. It involves the investigation of the features and etiology of the disease. *Nidan Panchak* is considered a crucial aspect of *Roga Pareeksha* in determining the existence of illness. After having complete knowledge of *Roga*, the physician should carry on *Rogi Pareeksha*. By this concept of *Nidan Panchaka*, one can diagnose the disease at an earlier stage and henceforth can plan for the treatment and avoid additional complications.

Importance of *nidan panchak*

- The concept of *Nidan Panchak* indicates about manifestation and progression of the disease.
- Knowledge of *Nidan* helps in disease identification.
- *Nidan* provides an understanding of the disease and recommendations for avoiding contributing factors.
- *Nidan*, *Purvarupa*, *Rupa*, and *Samprati* aid in the effective planning of treatments.
- Knowledge of underlying causes, or *Nidan*, of a disease, is essential for a physician in determining the potential outcome or prognosis.
- The concept of *Nidan Panchak* can help determine the chronicity of the disease.
- Early diagnosis is crucial in preventing the development of further complications associated with a disease.
- The progressive stage of the disease is known as *Samprati*, and it is crucial to intervene promptly to prevent its further advancement.

1. *Nidan* (Etiological factors)

Nidan is the causative factor of the disease.

In the traditional *Ayurvedic* system, *Nidan* plays a crucial role in determining the root cause of disease and guiding the treatment process. *Nidan* means one which aggravates *Vatadi Doshas*.

It may be due to the consumption of incompatible dietetics and improper activities. *Nidan* offers comprehensive details about the disease i.e., etiology, symptomatology, and pathogenesis.

While diagnosing a disease, a physician evaluates the underlying causes or etiology to determine the root cause of symptoms and make an accurate and informed diagnosis. E.g., excessive sleeping, excessive use of curd, meat soup of the domestic, aquatic, and marshy animals, and excessive use of milk are the *Nidan* of *Prameha*. The knowledge of each of these etiological factors helps the physician to make a good prognosis and make the exact diagnosis of the disease. When the symptoms of multiple diseases overlap, arriving at an accurate diagnosis can be difficult. However, identifying the underlying cause can aid in making a more definitive diagnosis. In the case of, *Vatarakta* and *Kustha* have a few similarities in *Purvarupa*, a precise diagnosis made by utilizing *Nidan* for further assessment. *Nidan* is very important in the prevention as well as the cure of diseases. As *Acharya Sushruta* has explained, avoiding *Nidan* i.e., *Nidanaparivarjana* is the simple form of *Chikitsa*. The process of *Nidan* in *Ayurveda* involves a comprehensive evaluation of the patient's physical and mental symptoms, medical history, and current state of health. It also takes into account the patient's lifestyle, environmental influences, and any underlying genetic predispositions in relation to the disease. A sedentary lifestyle can have detrimental effects on an individual's health, which can increase the possibility of several medical conditions like obesity, cardiovascular disease, anxiety, high blood pressure, etc. Following an improper diet, such as (*Adhayshan*, *Vishamshan*, *Shamashan*, too much fast food, fatty food) leads to digestive disorders, heart disease, etc. The purpose of *Nidan* is to determine the root cause of the disease and understand the pathogenesis by assessing the involvement of *Doshas*. One of the benefits of *Nidan* in the modern era is that it provides a more personalized approach to healthcare. By considering a wide range of factors. This results in more effective treatments and a better overall outcome.

2. *Purvarupa* (Prodromal features)

The symptoms produced before the actual manifestation of the disease are called *Purvarupa*. These prodromal features help to know the *Dosha* responsible for that particular disease but not the nature of the forthcoming disease. When *Purvarupa* gets manifested, the disease is still in developing form. It helps in the diagnosis of disease, identifying the disease, and also to prevent the disease process. In *Ayurveda*, the early

recognition of *Purvvrupa* symptoms is considered a crucial factor in preventing the progression of a disease. By identifying premonitory symptoms, practitioners can take proactive measures to prevent the onset of the disease or reduce its severity. It may involve making lifestyle adjustments, dietary modifications, or utilizing herbal remedies to address the underlying imbalances in the body.

Every disease exhibits unique preliminary signs, and *Purvarupas*, an approach also acknowledges that some diseases may share similar signs and symptoms with variations in their initial features, enabling accurate diagnosis and tailored treatment. Knowledge of *Puravarupa* helps in the early diagnosis of the disease and treatment accordingly.

Types of *purvarupa*

1. *Samanya puravrupa* (General symptoms)

General features present in that particular disease. For example, such as fatigue and weakness in case of fever.

1. *Vishisth purarupa* (Specific Manifestation)

The appearance of premonitory symptoms is observed specifically by specific *Doshas*.

Examples – *Jrimba* (yawning) in *Vatika* fever, *Nayandaha* (burning sensation in eyes) in *Pitika* fever, and *Aannabhilasa* (anorexia) in *Kaphaja* fever.

In the present era, *Purvarupa* plays a vital role in clinical practice, as they provide essential clues regarding the development of pathology. So *Purvarupa* aid in diagnosing the disease at an early stage before the actual onset of the disease. It is also important as it indicates the curability or incurability of the disease. When the symptoms of any disease are ambiguous, the history of a specific *Purvarupa* is helpful in the differential diagnosis.

3. *Rupa* (Signs and Symptoms)

These are prominent diagnostic tools for disease. It indicates the specific disease, by manifesting specific symptoms of that disease.

Synonyms – *lingam*, *Aakriti*, *Lakshana*, *Chinha*, *Sansthana*, *Vyanjana*.

As per *Madhav Nidan*, the ideal definition of *Rupa* is 'disease produced on the completion of *Doshas-Dushya-Samurchhana*, and the symptoms of manifestation of such diseases are known as *Rupa*'. Hence the pathogenesis (*Dosha Dushya Samurchhana*) occurring inside the body is expressed externally as the symptoms of that disease. i.e., it indicates the specific

disease by manifesting specific symptoms of that disease. E.g., Burning sensation in the shoulder, sides of the chest, hands, and feet and fever is the cardinal symptom of *Rajyakshma* (Tuberculosis), excessive unclean urination in *Prameha* (Diabetes).

Classification of *rupa*

- *Lakshana* (symptoms) – symptom is a manifestation of disease experienced and perceived by the patient, acting as subjective evidence of the disease. For example, thirst, hunger, sleep, etc.
- *Chinha* (signs) – sign is a manifestation of the disease observed by a physician, serving as objective evidence of the disease. For example, the color of the eyes, skin, skin rash, edema, etc.

Rupa indicates the nature of *Dosha Dushya Samurchana*. It helps to provide information about vitiated *Dosha* and the qualities of its vitiation. It specifies the site of actual pathology in the body. It helps in the confirmation of disease, differential diagnosis as well as prognosis of the disease. *Rupas* produced at various stages of the disease allow timely intervention and help in avoiding the future course of the disease. Ex- Specific treatment given in *Jwara* according to its location in various *Dhatu* and it can be decided by looking at the specific *Lakshana*.

4. Upashaya (Therapeutical method)

The trial with medicines, diet, and daily regimen producing specific beneficial effects by acting directly or indirectly against etiological factors, the process of a disease, or the disease itself, is known as *Upshaya*. The practices of using medicine, diet, and regimens that result in an improvement in one's mood and sense of well-being are referred to as *Upasaya*. It offers comfort to individuals by utilizing various forms of treatment, nutrition, and routine. Their action may be directly against the cause, or to the disease itself, or both (i.e., the cause and disease). According to *Charak*, *Upshaya* is *Sukhanubandh Upyog* (suitable use) of *Ausadha*, *Aahar* (diet), and *Vihar* (lifestyle) which are contrary to the causing factors of the disease. When the medicines, despite being opposed to the disease qualities, do not pacify the disease, or if they aggravate the symptoms they are considered *Anupashaya*. E.g. in *Nava Jwara*, a condition characterized by thirst and burning sensation is temporarily relieved by cold water but ultimately worsened. This is considered as *Anupasaya*, then the opposite of *Upasaya*, which involves aggravating factors. These factors help in making a correct diagnosis. Like

in *Sheet Jwara's* use of *Ushna* and *Jwaraghna Yavagu*. In *Vatakaphaja Grahani Takra* (buttermilk) is given. *Divasavapan* (daytime sleeping) causes the accumulation of *Kapha* so *Ratrijagrana* (night awakening) is needed to pacify the *Kapha*.

To arrive at a precise diagnosis of any disease a specific group of symptoms is essential. In cases where symptoms are not prominent or appear weakly, the method of trial-and-error treatment can be useful in arriving at an accurate diagnosis.

5. Samprapti (Pathogenesis)

The process of appearance of disease by the provoked *Doshas* which are circulating all over the body is *Samprapti*. It 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 an investigation, this approach considers the role of *Doshas* as well as the location where the imbalance prompt (*Dushya*). *Samprapti* is a successive exploration of vitiation *Doshas* and the manifestation of disease. ex.- when provoked *Doshas* to get settled in the abdomen they give rise to diarrhea, flatulence, ascites, abscesses, etc. As per *Acharya Sushruta*, *Samprapti* has the following successive stages – *Dosha Sanchaya*, *Prakopa*, *Prasara*, *Sthana Samshreya*, *Vyakti*, and *Bhedavastha*.

The knowledge of *Samprapti* is essential because it gives a precise and comprehensive picture of the nature of the disease. *Samprapti* is a process of understanding the progression of the disease by vitiated *Doshas* which are constantly circulating inside the body. It is also known as *jati*, *Agati*. *Samprapti* means knowing the factors which are liable for the genesis of a disease and not only knowing the disease.

CONCLUSION

The concept of *Nidan Panchak*, which originated in *Ayurvedic* medicine, holds significant importance in the modern era. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the root cause of a disease, rather than simply treating its symptoms. *Nidan Panchak* is an important diagnostic tool in *Ayurveda*. Each component of *Nidan Panchak* is a tool for diagnosing the disease at various stages. *Nidan Panchak* comprises definite causative factors, *Dosha* vitiation, prodromal features, signs and symptoms, differential diagnosis, and pathogenesis of the disease, elusion of such factors can help to prevent disease progression. Preliminary consideration of signs and symptoms of a particular disease can help to exclude the disease initially even before the disease has been established. The knowledge of disease pathways

helps to select treatment regimes to ensure early therapeutic interventions. Each component of *Nidan Panchak* individually as well as collectively helps in the diagnosis of disease. If one component specifies a disease then other aspects of *Nidan Panchak* confirm the diagnosis. The concept of *Pancha Nidan* offers a valuable approach to healthcare that is relevant in the modern era. By considering the causes of disease and taking a holistic approach to healthcare, practitioners can develop a more effective and personalized treatment plan that improves overall health and well-being.

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