

CONCEPT OF NIDAN: AN AYURVEDIC REVIEW**Dr. Archis Ravindra Patil***

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Maharashtra.**ABSTRACT**

Ayurvedic texts indeed place great emphasis on understanding the Nidan or causative factors of diseases. These factors are classified into two main types: Vyadhijanaka and Vyadhibodhak. Vyadhijanaka Nidan: These are the etiological factors of diseases. They delve into the root causes or triggers that lead to the onset of a particular illness. Factors such as faulty diet, lifestyle choices, environmental influences and even accidental causes fall under this category. Understanding these factors helps in identifying the underlying reasons behind the disease manifestation. Vyadhibodhak Nidan: These are the means of diagnosis. They aid in recognizing and understanding the nature of the disease. This includes factors like symptoms, signs and diagnostic criteria that help physicians pinpoint the specific ailment afflicting the patient. The interplay between Nidan, Dosha and Dushya is crucial in Ayurveda. Doshas (Vata, Pitta, Kapha) represent physiological principles, while Dushyas (tissues such as Rasa, etc.), Dhatus (body tissues) and Malas

(waste products) constitute the bodily components that can be affected by Dosha imbalance. The imbalance or vitiation of Doshas affects these elements, leading to various diseases. In diagnosis, it's essential to consider all these factors comprehensively. A holistic understanding of the disease involves elucidating the interplay between Doshas, Dushyas, and Nidan. This knowledge aids in accurate diagnosis, prognosis, and effective treatment planning. Initiating treatment without proper diagnosis is akin to shooting in the dark. Even if a physician possesses profound knowledge of medicinal applications, success isn't guaranteed without understanding the root cause of the disease. Therefore, a thorough grasp of Nidan is indispensable for achieving successful outcomes in Ayurvedic treatment.

KEYWORDS: Nidan, vyadhijanakahetu, vyadhibodhakhetu, samavayikaran.

INTRODUCTION

The term "Nidan" encompasses both Vyadhijanaka and Vyadhibodhaka aspects [1]. The concept of Nidan-Dosha-Dushya underscores the importance of understanding the interplay between causative factors (Nidan), physiological principles (Dosha) and bodily components (Dushya) in disease manifestation. Doshas influence the Dushyas, leading to imbalance and subsequent disease manifestation. This comprehensive understanding of Nidan is instrumental in various aspects of disease management.

- 1. Diagnosis:** Identifying the causative factors (Vyadhijanaka Nidan) and recognizing the diagnostic indicators (Vyadhibodhaka Nidan) are crucial steps in disease diagnosis.
- 2. Prognosis:** Knowledge of Nidan aids in predicting the course and outcome of a disease, helping healthcare providers formulate appropriate prognostic assessments.
- 3. Manifestation:** Understanding the relationship between Nidan, Dosha and Dushya provides insights into how diseases manifest in the body and the factors influencing their progression.
- 4. Management:** Utilizing the knowledge of Nidan, healthcare practitioners can develop comprehensive treatment strategies aimed at addressing the root causes of diseases and restoring balance to the body.

Definition of nidan

Nidan, in Ayurveda, the causative factor responsible for the origin or manifestation of a disease.

- 1. Origin of Disease:** Nidan serves as the underlying cause (Vyadhiutpatti Hetu) that leads to the onset of a disease. These causes can be diverse, including substances (dravya), qualities (guna) or actions (karma) that disrupt the balance of doshas, ultimately resulting in the manifestation of diseases.^[1]
- 2. Vitiating of Doshas:** Nidan causes an imbalance in the doshas, which are the fundamental physiological principles in Ayurveda. Any factor—be it related to diet, lifestyle, environmental influences or other external or internal factors—that disrupts the equilibrium of doshas can be considered a Nidan.^[2]
- 3. Types of Nidan:** Nidan encompasses various factors, including dietary habits (Ahar), lifestyle choices (Vihar) and conditions that lead to either depletion (Kshaya) or excess (Vridhi) of doshas. Anything that causes an imbalance in the bodily tissues (Dhatu Vaisamya) is also considered a Nidan.^[3]

4. Identification and Diagnosis: Nidan is identified through its characteristic features (Hetu and Lakshan) and aids in the diagnosis of diseases. Recognizing the specific Nidan associated with a particular ailment helps confirm the diagnosis and guides healthcare practitioners in formulating appropriate treatment strategies.^[4]

Nidan encompasses a broad spectrum of factors that contribute to the development of diseases by disrupting the balance of doshas. Understanding and identifying these causative factors are essential for accurate diagnosis and effective management of diseases in Ayurveda.

Derivation of the word- Nidan^[5]

Nidan is indeed regarded as the fundamental cause or "aadikarana" in Ayurveda, marking the starting point of any disease.

1. Fundamental cause: Nidan is considered the primary or root cause of a disease, analogous to the seed (Beej) being the cause for the sprout (Ankura). Just as a sprout cannot emerge without a seed, diseases do not occur without a Nidan

2. Description of Causative factors: Nidan is used to describe the various causative factors that contribute to the onset of a disease. These factors can range from dietary and lifestyle choices to environmental influences and genetic predispositions.

3. Beginning Point: Nidan marks the beginning or origin point of diseases. Understanding and identifying the Nidan associated with a particular ailment are crucial for effective diagnosis and treatment.

Synonyms of Nidan^[6]

1. Hetu- cause
2. Nimitta- sakuna
3. Ayatana-karana
4. Karta- doer
5. Karana- primary cause
6. Pathyaya- sense of faith (cause of disease)
7. Samutthana- origin
8. Nidan- initial cause of diseases
9. Karak- intention to cause
10. Moola- origin/ base/ basic source
11. Yoni- origin or source

12. Nibandhana- origin/ foundation cause.^[6]

Classification of nidan

According to Charaka

Asatmyaindriyaartha samyoga- Pragyaparadh-Parinam

- Asatmyaindriyaartha samyoga refers to the unwholesome contact of sensory organs with their objects, leading to conditions like disuse atrophy.
- Pragyaparadh involves the wrong utilization of speech, body, and mind, such as drug abuse.
- Parinam signifies the transformation or consequences due to seasonal variations, which can be the cause of diseases like malaria and dengue.

According to Chakrapani Dutta

Sadharan- Asadharankaran

- Sadharankaran encompasses causes shared commonly by all, like lifestyle diseases such as obesity and diabetes mellitus.
- Asadharankaran includes causes of unexplained origin, such as filariasis in specific regions.

According to Madhukoshtika of Madhav Nidan

Sannikrista- Viprakrista- Vyabhichari- Pradhanik

- Sannikristahetu causes rapid aggravation of doshas, as seen in conditions like anaphylaxis.
- Viprakristahetu are distant causes contributing to disease production, such as the combination of a high-calorie diet and lack of exercise in diabetes mellitus.
- Vyabhichari acts as a weak cause that carries but doesn't directly produce diseases, like certain immunizations.
- Pradhanik is a potent cause that instantly produces diseases, such as the toxic action of poisons.

Bahya- Abhyantarhetu

- Bahyahetu are external factors contributing to diseases, such as microorganisms.
- Abhyantarhetu are internal factors like immune mechanisms.

Prakrt- Vikrithetu

- Prakrthetu causes dosha aggravation naturally, such as heatstroke in summers.
- Vaikrthetu leads to dosha aggravation or diseases regardless of seasonal effects, like viral fevers.

Anubandhya- Anubandha

- Anubandhya represents the primary cause, such as the presence of Mycobacterium in tuberculosis.
- Anubandha is the secondary cause, like humid climate or unhygienic conditions in tuberculosis.

Utpadak- Vyahjakhetu

- Utpadakhetu favors dosha accumulation due to time factors, such as hypertension leading to renal failure.
- Vyanjakhetu stimulates disease development, such as diet, stress, and lifestyle factors in diabetes mellitus.

Dosha- Vyadhi- Ubhayhetu

- Doshahetu are factors responsible for dosha aggravation, like autoimmune causes.
- Vyadhihetu are factors leading to specific diseases by specific etiologies, such as autoimmune diseases.
- Ubhayhetu aggravate doshas and simultaneously manifest diseases, like alcohol abuse leading to neuropathy or liver cirrhosis.

According to Gananath Sen

Samanya- Vishishta

- Samanyahetu are general etiological factors, such as feco-oral transmission in hepatitis.
- Vishisthahetu are specific etiological factors, like Salmonella typhi in enteric fever.

Associated mechanism related to nidan

Kshaya- sthana- vridhhi

- Kshaya- diminishes vitiation of doshas due to causative factors.
- Sthana- Accumulation of doshas at its specific place due to its causes.
- Vridhhi- Increase in vitiation of doshas due to causative factors

Urdhwaga- Adhoga- Tiryak

- Urdhwaga- Vitiating of doshas in upward direction.
- Adhoga- Vitiating of doshas in downward direction.
- Tiryak- Vitiating of doshas in any direction.

Ashayupakarshahetu

- Prakrt or samadosha moves from its own place by influence of vata and produces diseases. Prakrt dosha when moves to another place than normal, it becomes a prakrt as the place is not conducive to the particular dosha.

Hetusankar

- One hetu manifest many diseases. E.g. humid unhygienic environment may cause tuberculosis, hepatitis, rheumatic fever depending on exposure and immunity of patient.

Importance of Knowledge of Nidan

1. Knowledge of nidan helps in identifying the cause of disease. If causative factors are in contact with the body for a longer time, the disease caused by them keeps worsening with time
2. Knowledge of nidan helps in planning dosha pratyanikchikitsa as particular nidan may vitiate particular disease. Thus, providing treatment and medicines which are antagonistic for particular vitiated dosha thus mitigates the disease.
3. Knowledge of nidan helps in speculation of outcomes about the vitiated dosha, nature of disease, upadrava, chronicity of diseases etc.
4. Knowledge of nidan helps in making diagnosis. Analyzing the causative factors help to arrive on the prognosis of disease and a more accurate diagnosis in case of doubt.
5. Knowledge of nidan helps in planning the treatment regimen in accordance to causative factors. It helps the patient to keep away from aggravating factors and plan an effective treatment protocol.
6. Knowledge of nidan helps in preventing further diseases and complications. Lifestyle modifications can be adopted as required to prevent impending doshic disturbances, thus aborting diseases before they are manifested or to avoid further complications.
7. Knowledge of nidan helps in differential diagnosis of the disease.^[7]

CONCLUSION

Understanding the exact cause of a disease, known as Hetu or Nidan in Ayurveda, is indeed crucial for several reasons. Pathogenesis understanding-Knowing the root cause helps in understanding how the disease develops and progresses within the body, providing insights into its pathogenesis. Early Diagnosis-Identifying the causative factors early enables early diagnosis of the disease, facilitating timely intervention and management. Proper Diagnosis and prognosis-Knowledge of the causative factors aids in proper diagnosis and prognosis, allowing healthcare providers to predict the course of the disease and its likely outcomes. Basis of Treatment plan-The exact cause forms the basis of an effective treatment plan. By addressing the root cause, healthcare practitioners can develop targeted treatment strategies aimed at restoring balance and promoting healing. Morbidity assessment-Understanding the extent of dosha imbalance (morbidity), the nature of insult to the body, and the disease status is essential for accurate assessment and monitoring of the condition. Isolating causative Factors-Identifying the Nidan helps isolate the causative factors, which is a significant aspect of treatment. Addressing these factors constitutes a significant portion of the therapeutic approach. Treatment protocol design-Knowledge of Nidan enables the formulation of tailored treatment protocols targeting the specific dosha imbalance and disease manifestation. Selection of medicines and Diet-Understanding the causative factors guides the selection of appropriate disease-modifying medicines and dietary interventions. Nidan Parimarjana, or the process of identifying and eliminating causative factors, is indeed crucial for effective disease management and recovery. It not only aids in diagnosis and prognosis but also forms the foundation for designing personalized treatment plans aimed at restoring health and well-being. Therefore, a thorough understanding of the concept of Nidan is indispensable in Ayurveda practice.

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