

**ROLE OF AYURVEDIC DIAGNOSTIC PARAMETERS FOR
AUTOIMMUNE DISEASES**

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ABSTRACT

Autoimmune diseases are chronic conditions in which the immune system targets the body's own cells and tissues, resulting in persistent inflammation and tissue degradation. The modern biomedical community explains these as immune dysregulation, whereas Ayurveda interprets them through the concepts of Dosha, Agni, Ama, and Ojas. The Ayurvedic diagnostic parameters—Trividha, Ashtavidha, Dashavidha, and Rogi–Roga Pariksha—enable a comprehensive assessment of both the patient and the disease, providing a deeper understanding of the constitutional imbalance and fundamental cause. This paper investigates the ways in which Ayurvedic diagnostic tools assist in the identification of predisposing factors and the development of personalized management strategies for autoimmune diseases.

KEYWORDS: Autoimmune disease, Agni, Ama, Ojas, Trividha Pariksha, Ashtavidha Pariksha, Dashavidha Pariksha, and Vyadhikshamatva.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, the prevalence of autoimmune disorders, including rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus erythematosus, psoriasis, Hashimoto's thyroiditis, and ulcerative colitis, has been increasing. Modern pathology attributes them to aberrant immune responses, whereas Ayurveda perceives them as the result of Agni mandya (digestive fire impairment), Ama sanchaya (toxic accumulation), Tridosha dushti, and Ojas kshaya. The Ayurvedic diagnostic system emphasizes understanding the patient's constitution (Prakriti), vitality, mental state, and etiological background, offering a holistic view of disease that transcends mere symptomatic diagnosis.

Ayurvedic Diagnostic Framework

1. Trividha Pariksha (Three-fold Examination)

I. Darśhana Parīkṣā (Inspection / Visual Examination)

Observational Parameters in Autoimmune Disorders

1. **Skin:** Eruptions, discoloration, depigmentation (Vitiligo, Psoriasis) → *Pitta-Rakta Dushti*
2. **Joints:** Swelling, deformity, restricted movement → *Vata-Aama association*
3. **Eyes:** Pallor, icterus, dryness, photophobia → *Raktavaha Srotodushti*
4. **Tongue:** Thick coating, cracks, discoloration → *Aama and Agnimandya*
5. **Posture and gait:** Stiffness or deformity → *Vata Prakopa*
6. **General appearance:** Weakness, dryness, emaciation → *Ojākṣaya lakṣaṇa*

II. Sparśana Parīkṣā (Palpation / Touch Examination)

This examination gives direct tactile knowledge of temperature, tenderness, texture, and pulse. It includes both **physical examination** and **Nādi Parīkṣā (pulse reading)**.

Key Diagnostic Insights

- **Warm and red swelling:** Indicates *Pitta Prakopa* and inflammation (e.g., SLE, Psoriasis).
- **Cold, firm, and pale swelling:** Suggests *Kapha dominance* (e.g., Scleroderma).
- **Dry, painful, stiff joints:** Reflect *Vata–Aama* pathology (e.g., Rheumatoid arthritis).
- **Irregular or weak pulse:** Suggests *Tridoshaja Vyadhi* or *Ojākṣaya*.
- **Tender lymph nodes or organs:** Shows *Rakta–Mamsa Dushti* involvement.

Through *Sparśana*, the physician understands the **nature, depth, and systemic spread** of the autoimmune disturbance.

III. Praśna Parīkṣā (Interrogation / Case Inquiry)

This component emphasizes the patient's subjective experiences, lifestyle, diet, and emotional state.

It is crucial for understanding the etiopathogenesis (*Samprāpti*) in autoimmune disorders.

2. Ashtavidha Pariksha (Eight-fold Examination)

Source: *Yogaratanakara, Rogi Pariksha Adhyaya*

1. **Nadi:** Indicates the predominance of the doshas; an irregular pulse frequently indicates Vata-Pitta involvement.
2. **Mutra:** Dark, frothy, or scarce urine may suggest Pitta aggravation or dehydration.
3. **Mala:** Sticky or mucous-laden defecation is indicative of Ama.
4. **Jihva:** Coated tongue signifies metabolic toxin accumulation.
5. **Shabda:** Weak voice or low tone denotes *Ojas* depletion.
6. **Sparsa:** Altered temperature shows inflammatory status.
7. **Drik:** Redness or dullness indicates systemic imbalance.
8. **Akruti:** Overall build and vitality reflect *Bala* and *Ojas*.

3. Dashavidha Pariksha (Ten-fold Examination)

This examination assesses the *Rogi Bala* (patient strength) and *Roga Bala* (disease strength).

1. Prakriti (Constitution)

Determines the individual's inherent body type and susceptibility to autoimmune reactions.

- Vata Prakriti: more susceptible to degenerative autoimmune diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis.
- Pitta Prakriti: febrile and inflammatory forms (e.g., psoriasis, SLE).
- Kapha Prakriti: chronicity, lethargic immune response (e.g., Hashimoto's thyroiditis).

2. Vikriti (Current Dosha Imbalance)

- Autoimmune conditions typically are characterized by Tridoshic vitiation, which is characterized by the accumulation of Ama (toxins).
- Vata-Pitta predominance → pain, inflammation, fatigue.
- Pitta-Kapha → redness, swelling, sluggish metabolism.

3. Sara (Dhatu Excellence)

- Evaluates tissue quality (Rasa to Shukra).
- Low-quality Rakta or Mamsa Sara suggests a predisposition to autoimmunity.
- Ojas Sara that is inadequate indicates a lack of immunity (Vyadhikshamatva).

4. Samhanana (Body Compactness)

- Individuals who are well-built (good Samhanana) are more resistant to chronic maladies.
- Autoimmune pathology produces faster tissue degradation as a result of inadequate Samhanana.

5. Pramana (Body Measurement)

- Evaluates height, weight, BMI-like ratios.
- Emaciation (Karshya) is a symptom of severe autoimmune disorders.
- Helps track disease progression (e.g., loss of muscle mass in myositis).

6. Satmya (Adaptability)

- Evaluates the person's adaptability to food and environment.
- Poor Satmya (unaccustomed diet/lifestyle) → disturbed Agni → *Ama* formation → autoimmune trigger.

7. Satva (Mind Strength)

- Psychological state influences immunity.
- Low Satva (stress, anxiety, depression) → *Oja-Kshaya* → immune dysregulation.
- Essential for autoimmune management and prognosis.

8. Ahara Shakti (Digestive Power)

- Indicates the strength of *Agni*.
- *Mandagni* (low digestion) → *Ama* formation → autoimmunity.
- Assessment via appetite, digestion, and bowel regularity.

9. Vyayama Shakti (Exercise/Activity Capacity)

- Low Vyayama Shakti = poor metabolism and weak resistance.
- Common in chronic autoimmune disorders due to fatigue and inflammation.

10. Vaya (Age)

- Age influences immunity:

- *Bala avastha* (childhood): immune immaturity → susceptibility.
- *Yuva avastha*: better resistance.
- *Vridhdha avastha*: declining Ojas → frequent autoimmune relapse.

Parameter	Diagnostic Relevance in Autoimmune Disease
Prakriti	Determines disease susceptibility; <i>Vata-Pitta</i> individuals often prone to inflammatory types.
Vikriti	Identifies current <i>Dosha</i> vitiation pattern.
Sara	Tissue excellence evaluation; reduced <i>Dhatu Sara</i> indicates chronicity.
Samhanana	Structural integrity of joints and muscles.
Pramana	Body measurements to assess <i>Bala</i> .
Satmya	Dietary adaptability; intolerance may worsen <i>Ama</i> .
Ahara Shakti	Digestive power, essential to correct <i>Agni</i> .
Vyayama Shakti	Physical stamina, related to <i>Ojas</i> level.
Satva	Mental strength — autoimmune disorders often associated with stress.
Vaya	Prognosis and treatment planning differ with age.

4. Rogi–Roga Pariksha (Examination of Patient and Disease)

Roga Pariksha includes identifying *Dosha-Dushya Sammurchana*, *Srotodushti*, and *Ama* stages.

Dosha Pariksha (Examination of Doshas)

Dosha	Manifestations
Vata	Pain, stiffness, dryness, deformity
Pitta	Burning, inflammation, fever, redness
Kapha	Heaviness, swelling, sluggishness

Most autoimmune diseases exhibit **Aam-Vata** or **Vata-Pitta** predominance.

5. Dushya Pariksha (Examination of Body Tissues)

Dushya (Dhatu)	Involvement / Symptoms
Rasa	Fatigue, general weakness
Rakta	Inflammation, rashes
Mamsa	Muscular weakness
Asthi	Joint deformity, bone pain
Majja	Nervous disorders
Ojas	Loss of vitality, reduced immunity

Srotas Pariksha (Examination of Channels)

Srotas	Involvement	Manifestation
Rasavaha	Fatigue, debility	Nutritional deficiency
Raktavaha	Inflammation, rash	SLE, vasculitis
Mamsavaha	Weakness, pain	Myositis
Asthivaha	Joint stiffness	Rheumatoid arthritis

Majjavaha	Nerve damage	Multiple sclerosis
Ojasvaha	Immunity loss	Generalized weakness

Sthana Pariksha (Site of Manifestation)

The disease mainly affects **Madhyama Rogamarga** (bones, joints, muscles, nerves).

Examples

- Sandhigata (rheumatoid arthritis)
- Tvakgata (Psoriasis, SLE)
- Majjagata (Multiple sclerosis)
- Rogi Pariksha assesses Agni, Ojas, Satva, and Vyadhikshamatva.

This dual assessment is essential for chronic autoimmune conditions, as it guarantees an individualized diagnosis and prognosis.

6. Role of Agni, Ama, and Ojas in Autoimmunity

- **Agni:** The fundamental component of immunity and metabolism. Agnimandya, its derangement, triggers the formation of Ama, which is the result of improper digestion.
- **Ama:** A semi-digested noxious substance that functions as an antigenic material and induces self-reactivity (Ama Dosha = Autoantibody concept).
- **Ojas:** Represents immune vitality; its depletion (Ojas Kshaya) results in inadequate tissue defense and disease progression.

Ayurvedic Interpretation of Autoimmune Pathogenesis

Aamaj Vyadhi or Sama Dosha conditions are common terms in Ayurveda that refer to autoimmune diseases. Ama localizes in susceptible tissues (Khavaigunya) when it combines with Vata, Pitta, or Kapha, resulting in Srotorodha (blockage) and inflammation. Ojas Kshaya is a reflection of immune dysfunction and chronicity.

Clinical Correlation

Ayurvedic Concept	Modern Immunology Equivalent	Diagnostic Use
<i>Agni Mandya</i>	Impaired metabolism	Early stage indicator
<i>Ama Utpatti</i>	Autoantigen / Cytokine excess	Active inflammation
<i>Srotorodha</i>	Blocked microcirculation	Chronic tissue damage
<i>Ojas Kshaya</i>	Immunodeficiency	End-stage weakness
<i>Tridosha Dushti</i>	Systemic inflammation	Individualized treatment basis

CONCLUSION

Ayurvedic diagnostic parameters offer a comprehensive and personalized comprehension of autoimmune diseases. Modern diagnostics may overlook preclinical imbalances that

Ayurveda identifies by evaluating Dosha, Agni, Ama, and Ojas. The integration of Ayurvedic examination with contemporary immunological tests has the potential to enhance the development of personalized and preventive healthcare strategies for autoimmune disorders.

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