

## AYURVEDA CONCEPT OF PRAMANA AND ITS UTILITY IN ANCIENT PRACTICES

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## ABSTRACT

The history of Indian civilization witnessed remarkable contribution of intellectuals and profound thinkers in various fields, including Ayurveda. The ancient physicians relied on their keen observations, intellect and analytical skills to understand the subtle aspects of the human body and related natural phenomena. Ayurveda offers insights into health, disease and prevention and treatment of disease along with their diagnosis. In this regard Ayurveda suggested various concepts and *Pramana* is one such concept of Ayurveda. *Pramana* served as a guiding framework helps to acquire knowledge and formulate coherent concepts. With *Pramana* as tool physicians navigated Ayurvedic knowledge employing modes such as *Aptopadesha*, *Pratyaksha*, *Anumana* and *Yukti*. These *Pramanas* empowered Ayurveda physician to validate their observations and helps to derive meaningful outcome. This article discussed about the Ayurveda concept of *Pramana* and its utility in ancient practices.

**KEYWORDS:** *Ayurveda*, *Pramana*, *Aptopadesha*, *Pratyaksha*, *Anumana*, *Yukti*.

## INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda *Pramana* is stand out as a fundamental concept which related with the essential knowledge, valid proof of the acquired knowledge and means of knowledge, etc. This concept serves as a tool for acquiring comprehensive understanding. Ayurveda adapts various forms of *Pramana* such as depicted in Figure 1.



Figure 1: Various forms of *Pramanas* and their modern reasoning.

The *Pramanas* facilitates thorough knowledge acquisition, precise understanding and analysis, etc. This concept support process of data analysis and interpretation, therefore used as tool for knowledge acquisition.<sup>[1-4]</sup> In Ayurveda *Pramana* used to navigate the complexities of health and disease, also support

process of diagnosis. In Ayurveda research *Pramanas* serve as scientific approach, for conducting research within the specific discipline. Concept of *Pramanas* holds significant importance in Ayurvedic research methodology.

Synonyms of *Pramana*

- Palabdhi* (perception)
- Sadhana* (tool)
- Jnana* (knowledge)
- Pariksha* (evaluation).

As mentioned in Figure 1, the concept of *Aptopadesha* used as scriptural testimony for knowledge acquisition. *Aptopadesha Pramana*, derived from the learned, devoid of *Rajas* and *Tamas*, representing authentic knowledge. *Acharya Charaka* defines *Aptas* as individuals possessing pure, unobstructed and unquestionable knowledge, devoid of aversion. Their words and actions constitute *Aptopadesha Pramana*.

*Pratyaksha* means direct perception for acquiring knowledge. *Pratyaksha Pramana* pertains to knowledge perceived directly with the help of senses and mind. It encompasses contact between sense organs and objects, facilitating the acquisition of knowledge. *Acharya Sushruta* advocates coupling *Aptopadesha* with

*Pratyaksha Pramana* for knowledge enhancement. *Pratyaksha Pramana* distinguishes between *Laukika Pratyaksha* (ordinary perception) and *Alaukika Pratyaksha* (extraordinary perception).

*Anumana* means inference based on previous knowledge or observation. *Anumana Pramana* involves inferring unknown knowledge from known facts, constituting indirect knowledge based on reasoning. It follows the perception of *Pratyaksha* and *Aptopdesha*. *Anumana* is categorized into *Swarthanumana*, individual logical inference driven by curiosity, and *Pararthanumana*, providing knowledge to others through demonstrative inference. *Pararthanumana* employs *Panchavayavi Vakya*, comprising reason or cause, etc.

Concept of *Yukti* involves utilization of logical reasoning for gaining some information. *Yukti Pramana* entails understanding phenomena resulting from the interaction of multiple causative factors, employing rationale and logical reasoning. This form of knowledge transcends time and aids in achieving the objectives, emphasizes the rational and effective combination of various elements.<sup>[4-7]</sup>

Additional factors such as *Arthapatti*, *Abhava*, *Aitihya*, *Sambhava*, *Cheshta* and *Parishesha* also utilize for gathering some information or knowledge related to research and clinical practices in Ayurveda science. *Upamana* is knowledge gained by comparing an unknown object with a known one. *Arthapatti* means understanding implied meaning through relevant references. *Sambhava* is inference of related references. *Abhava* is knowledge of absence while *Cheshta* is observation of expressions or expectation.<sup>[6-8]</sup>

#### Utility of Concept of Pramana

- ✚ *Pramana* aids in elucidating foundational concepts of Ayurveda, such as *Doshas*, *Dhatu*s, *Malas* and their role in body as well as in disease conditions.
- ✚ Research relies on *Pramana* to validate methodologies, theories and outcomes. The concept of *Aptopadesha Pramana* gives insights from ancient texts to contemporary research. *Pratyaksha* and *Anumana Pramanas* play roles in experimental observation and inference-based analysis. *Yukti* ensures logical coherence in research design and interpretation.
- ✚ *Pramana* support process of diagnosis in Ayurveda. *Pratyaksha* involving direct symptomatic observation to forms the basis of final clinical assessment. *Anumana* assists disease by deducing underlying causes and patterns from data. *Yukti* guides in formulating reasoned hypotheses and treatment plans accordingly based on the logical consideration.
- ✚ The Ayurveda concept of *Pramana* also helps to support therapeutic intervention utilizes for disease management. *Pramana* by integrating empirical evidence, traditional wisdom and logical inference

provides way of planning therapeutic interventions. *Aptopadesha* provides guidance from classical texts on dietary recommendations, lifestyle practices and herbal formulations about the specific diseases. Similarly *Pratyaksha* helps to monitor treatment outcomes and suggest therapeutic strategies based on the direct observations. *Anumana* anticipate effects of interventions based on observed patterns and theories. *Yukti* ensures rationality of treatment protocols and advises particular treatment based on the specific needs.

- ✚ *Pramana* Facilitates understanding of *Triskandha* of Ayurveda; *Hetu*, *Linga* and *Aushadha*. Through systematic analysis, practitioners can comprehend the underlying factors contributing to health and disease.
- ✚ *Pramana* enables comprehension of the *Tantra*, providing insights into the intricate mechanisms and principles governing Ayurvedic therapies and interventions.
- ✚ *Pramana* establishes factual knowledge, the concepts like *Punarbhava*, contributing to a deeper understanding of life's fundamental truths.
- ✚ *Pramanas* guide the planning and execution of research endeavors, ensuring that investigations adhere to rigorous methodologies and draw upon traditional wisdom and empirical evidence.<sup>[7-11]</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

*Pramana* signifies the means through which knowledge is perceived. *Pramana* aids in examining entities to attain genuine knowledge. Synonymously, *Uplabdhi*, *Sadhana*, *Gyana* and *Pariksha*, *Pramana* encapsulate similar concepts. The ancient concept of evidence, embodied in the fourfold testing of *Pramana*, remains foundational to Ayurveda. *Pramana* serves as a multifaceted tool in Ayurveda, facilitating a systematic approach to understanding, researching, diagnosing and treating diseases. The various *Pramanas* in Ayurveda play pivotal roles in maintaining health, diagnosis and treating disease using conceptual approaches of Ayurveda.

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