

**CLINICAL IMPORTANCE OF NADI PARIKSHA (PULSE EXAMINATION): AN
AYURVEDIC DIAGNOSTIC METHOD**

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ABSTRACT

Ashtavidha rogi pariksha is one of the main diagnostic tool prescribed in *Ayurveda*. *Acharya* Yogaratnakara described eight varieties of *rogi pariksha*, namely *nadi*, *mutra*, *mala*, *jivha*, *shabda*, *sparsha* and *drik* for the diagnosis of diseases. Among them, *nadi pariksha* is necessary to diagnose altered condition of *doshas* like diminished functions or hyper functions or mixed or normal function of *doshas*. *Nadi pariksha* throw light to entire condition of diseases. In current paper attempts are made to study the relation of *nadi pariksha* (pulse examination) among *ashtasthana pariksha* in therapeutics with special emphasis and its applicability in medical practice.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda*, *Ashtasthana pariksha*, *Nadi pariksha*, Pulse examination, Diagnose.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda gives emphasis on diagnosis of disease before starting treatment.^[1]

‘*Rogamadau pariksheta tatoanantaramaushadham.*’
Charaka Sutra Sthana 20/20

Examination plays a significant role in diagnosis of the diseases. There are different types of examination in ayurvedic texts like *trividha pariksha*, *sadvidha pariksha*, *ashtavidha pariksha*, *dashavidha pariksha* etc. Among them *ashtavidha rogi pariksha* was described by *Acharya* yogaratnakara. These are given as under.

Rogakrant sharirasya sthananyashtau nirikshayet.
Nadi mutram malam jivha shabda sparsham drigakruti.
(YR)

1. *Nadi*-examination of pulse
2. *Mutra*- examination of urine
3. *Mala*- examination of stool
4. *Jivha*- examination of tongue
5. *Shabda*- examination by organ of hearing
6. *Sparsha*- palpation
7. *Drik*- direct observation or inspection
8. *Akriti*- examination of whole body.^[2]

The examination of all these are related to *pratyaksha pramana* and all are objective in nature. *Nadi pariksha* is one among them and it comes under *sparshendriya pariksha*. The diagnosis of diseases by *nadi pariksha* is

possible only by persistent practice. *Nadi pariksha* is simple, cost effective and valuable technique. This tool is very useful to assess curable as well as incurable diseases.^[3]

Aims and Objective

1. The conceptual study of *nadi pariksha*.
2. To review its clinical significance.
3. To study *nadi pariksha* in context of diagnosis

This conceptual study will be helpful in understanding of pathogenesis of *various diseases* through *nadi pariksha* in their early stages.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Different *Ayurveda* texts, journals, research papers, articles are referred to study the conceptual understanding of *nadi*, its clinical significance and its usefulness in manifestation and sequelae of the diseases.

Synonym of nadi

Nadi, *dhamani*, *dharani*, *dhara*, *tantuki*, *snayu*, *jeevanyana*, *hansi*.^[4]

Nadi location

Vata, *pitta* and *kapha nadi* lies respectively under *tarjini* (index finger), *madhyama* (middle finger) and *anamika* (ring finger) of examining *vaidya* (physician).^[5] (Fig No.1).



Fig. 1: Location of Vata, Pitta and Kapha.

Tridoshas and nadi

Three fingers placed in position over *nadi* indicate the condition of the *tridosha*^[6] and their movement like *manda*, *madhyama* and *tikshana*. The index finger denotes *vata*, the middle finger denotes *pitta* and the ring finger denotes *kapha*. *Nadi pariksha* deals knowledge about involvement of *doshas* and prognosis of disease.

Site of nadi pariksha^[7]

- Physician should be performed pulse examination of patient in right hand by using his right hand.
- Pulse felt at the wrist region signifies the life of the patient and physician should be able to diagnose the diseases and healthy condition by observing the nature of the pulse.
- Use right hand for male patients and left hand for female patients because it is best felt in respective hands.

Procedure of nadi pariksha (pulse examination)

1. The best time for *nadi pariksha* is in the morning hour for one *prahara*.
2. Physician should be seated in comfortable position and in a healthy composed mood and *rogi* (patient) should have calm and cool mind also.^[8]
3. They must sit in comfortable place facing each other.
4. *Vaidya* must hold the *rogi* elbow gently with left hand and feel the pulse with his right index, middle and ring finger kept in close opposition near wrist region.

Table 1: *Nadi gati of doshas*.

Vataja nadi	Pittaja nadi	Kaphaja nadi	Dvandvaja nadi	Sannipataja nadi
<i>Jalauka sarpayogati</i> (leech and snake like movement)	<i>Kulinga-kaka-mandukagati</i> (sparrow, crow and frog like movement)	<i>Hansa-paravatagati</i> (swan, pigeon like movement)	Sometimes slow and sometimes fast <i>nadigati</i>	<i>Lava tittira varti gamanam</i> (bustard quail, grey partridge and button quail like movement)

5. The *nadi* of the right hand will be clear in males while in female that of left hand.
6. Examine the pulse thrice by pressing and releasing technique and diagnose the diseases by using his intelligent power.
7. Identify the *vata*, *pitta* and *kapha* pulsation at the index, middle and ring finger respectively and elicit its characters like feeble, moderate and fast along with identify the character of various *doshik* pulse.
8. Examination of pulse shed light on the involvement of *vata*, *pitta*, *kapha*, mixing of two *doshas* or mixing of three *doshas* or curable or incurable diseases.

Contraindications for nadi pariksha

Nadi pariksha (pulse examination) should not be examined in following conditions-

- Just after taking bath
- Just after taking food
- After internal and external anointing therapy (*snehavagahana*)
- During hunger
- During thirst
- During sleep or just after awakening

Nadi gati of doshas^[9]-The three main division made for the movement of the pulse, which resembles with the movements of various animals or birds, make the study easier and understandable. *Nadi gati* according to *doshas* are shown in Table No.1 and Fig No.2.



Fig. 2: *Nadi gati* according to doshas.

Nadi gati in different pathological conditions^[10]-

This is a very special type of noninvasive diagnostic technique where by the use of three fingertips only and pulse of the patient a diagnosis can be achieved within

no time. This can provide the information about the exact location and nature of the disease. The pathological conditions and accordingly its *nadi gati* are shown in Table No.2&3.

Table 2: Pathological conditions and accordingly its *nadi gati*.

Sr. No.	Pathological conditions	<i>Nadi gati</i> (Pulse movement)
1.	<i>Jwara</i> (fever)	<i>Gambhira, ushna, vagavati</i> (rapid and hot)
2.	<i>Kama</i> (lust), <i>krodha</i> (anger)	<i>Vegavaha</i> (rapid)
3.	<i>Chinta</i> (worry) & <i>bhaya</i> (fear)	<i>Kshina</i> (weak)
4.	<i>Mandagni</i> (decreased digestion and metabolism) and <i>kshina dhatu</i> (decreased <i>dhatu</i>)	<i>Mand</i> (slow and feeble)
5.	<i>Asrikpurna</i> (full of blood in excess in vessels)	<i>Ushna</i> (warm)
6.	<i>Ama</i>	<i>Gurvi</i> and <i>gariyasi</i> (heavy and tense)
7.	<i>Diptagni</i> (powerful digestive capacity)	<i>Laghu</i> and <i>vegavati</i> (light and fast)
8.	<i>Kshudhita</i> (hunger)	<i>Chapala</i> (unsteady)
9.	<i>Tripta</i> (thirst)	<i>Sthira</i> (stable)
10.	<i>Asadhya vyadhi</i>	<i>Kampate</i> (vibration) and <i>spandate</i> (pulsation)

Nadi gati in different *jwaravastha*^[11]

Nadi Pariksha is an ayurvedic tool of diagnosis practiced from long back. The method of *Nadi Pariksha* being a very potent diagnostic tool needs to be used very

precisely to achieve the correct diagnosis. Identification of different *jwaravastha* is also distinguished through *nadigati*. (Table No.3).

Table 3: *Doshik jwaravastha* and *nadigati*.

Sr. No.	<i>Jwaravastha</i>	<i>Nadi gati</i>
1	<i>Vataja jwara</i>	<i>Vakra</i> (curvilinear), <i>chapala</i> (unstable), cold on touch
2	<i>Pittaja jwara</i>	Rapid, straight and of long duration
3	<i>Kaphaja jwara</i>	Slow, stable, cold and sticky
4	<i>Vatapittaja jwara</i>	Some what <i>vakra</i> , <i>chapala</i> and <i>kathina</i>
5	<i>Vatakaphaja jwara</i>	<i>Manda</i> (slow)
6	<i>Pittakaphaja jwara</i>	<i>Sukshma</i> , <i>shitata</i> and <i>sthira</i>

Arishta Lakshana of *nadi* for prognosis of disease^[12]

The term *nadi pariksha* denotes examination of pulse (*nadi*). According to ayurveda, *nadi pariksha* is base of

tridoshvijyana. *Nadi pariksha* also helps to find out vitiated *doshas* in patients. Similarly, prognosis of the health status is also judged by *nadigati*. (Table No.4).

Table 4: Arishta lakshana of nadi for prognosis of diseases.

Sr. No.	Pulse movement with physical condition	Prognosis
1	<i>Sthira</i> (stable) and rapid like <i>vidyuta</i> (electrical force)	May die 2 nd day
2	<i>Shighra</i> (very fast), <i>shita</i> (cold) and passing <i>mala</i> (stool) repeatedly	Will die within 2 days
3	Sometimes <i>tivra</i> (rapid) and sometimes <i>manda</i> (slow with body sweating)	May die within 7 days
4	No facial pulsation, coldness in body with <i>klama</i> (tiredness)	May die within 3 days
5	<i>Tivra</i> (rapid) <i>nadi</i> with <i>daha</i> (burning) and <i>shita</i> (coldness in the body) with <i>swashakasha</i> (dyspnea)	Will die within 15 days
6	Very rapid and sometimes slow, sometimes forceful (<i>vegavati</i>)	About to die
7	<i>Vakragati</i> (curvilinear motion)	Imminent death
8	<i>Tiryak</i> , <i>ushna</i> , <i>vegavati</i> (moves like snake along with <i>kapha</i> filled throat)	May die
9	<i>Chanchala</i> (unstable), <i>ativega</i> (rapid) <i>nasikadharsamyuta</i> (felt like cloth wave on the strength of respiration)	May die in one <i>yama kala</i>
10	<i>Tridoshas</i> influence the <i>nadi</i> simultaneously	<i>Asadhya</i> / <i>krichhasadhya</i>

Swastha nadi (healthy pulse)^[13]

- Pulse of healthy individual is steady and forceful (with normal rate and rhythm character and symmetry).
- *Hansagamana* (swan like walk) and *gajagamini* (elephant like walk) and who is having happiness and freshness in face is considered to be a healthy pulse.

Asadhya nadi^[14]

- Displacement of *nadi* from its own place and moves slowly and slowly, this indicates, patient's poor prognosis and patient will die.
- Feeble and cold pulsation definitely kills the patient.
- When *nadi* firstly pulsates like *pittaja gati*, afterwards it becomes like *vata gati* then converting to *kapha gati* and moves like *chakra* (wheel), sometimes it is rapid and sometimes *mand* (slow), such *nadi* should be considered as *asadhya nadi*. The *nadi* which resembles *damaru* (a musical instrument), which is strong at opening and ending but in between which is very slow, is a *mrityu suchaka nadi* and it indicates death in a day.

DISCUSSION

Nadi gati in nadi pariksha is appropriate pressure at various levels of touch to three fingers, i.e. each finger felt different pressure due to *doshaprabalyata*, as *acharya* explains it in various *upamas* for identifying *gati* of *doshas* or *prabalya* of *doshas*

Ashtavidha pariksha including Nadi pariksha has not been mentioned in *brihatrayi* i.e. Charaka, Sushuta and Ashtanga Samgraha, Earliest, *nadi pariksha* is described by *Acharya Sharangdhara* but did not mention *ashtavidha pariksha*. *Acharya Yogaratnakara* gave a detailed description about *ashtavidha pariksha*. Among them *nadi pariksha* is one of the most important method for diagnosis as well as prognosis of diseases in *ayurveda*.

CONCLUSION

Diagnosis is the primary step before starting treatment of any disease. In our ancient *Ayurveda*, there are various types of diagnostic methods. *Ashtasthana pariksha* is an important tool to assess the *roga* and *rogi bala*. *Nadi pariksha* is one of the most significant methods of diagnosis in *Ayurveda*. On the basis of *nadi pariksha* one can draw a conclusion on diagnosis of particular disease and can start management consequently. In present age also, there are many successful physicians which diagnose the diseases only on *nadi* basis.

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