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Traditional Approach of Nadi Vigyan to Diagnosis of Disease and Assess a Patient's Health in Ayurveda

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Abstract

Traditional approach of Nadi Pariksha mentioned on Ancient Ayurvedic texts. The Origin of Nadi Vigyana was concluded by the Maharishi Kanda which written the book Nadi Vigyanam. The Maharishi Kanda claims to the Lord Shiva to firstly preach the Four Vedas and Ayurveda for the benefits of the humanity. The Lord Shiva to Lord Brahma and then Daksha Prajapati to Devraj Indra to delivered the knowledge of Ayurveda. Then different Maharishi to receive the knowledge of Ayurveda and its principles. The Maharishi Kanda to get the knowledge of Nadi Vigyana. Nadi Pariksha expert was Ravan. Ravan written Nadi Vigyan and mentioned on Ravan Samhita. In Ramyana kala Vadiya diagnosis the diseases and treatment by the Nadi Parikshana. An Ancient Ayurvedic Texts i.e. Yogaratnakara, Bhavprakash Samhita, Sharangdhar Samhita, Nadi Vigyan by Kandmistra all these Ayurvedic texts mentioned the Nadi Parikshan. In 13th Century written Ayurvedic text Sharangdhar Samhita Mentioned firstly the association between the Nadi and Tridosha i.e. Vata, Pitta and Kapha. Later Nadi Pariksha mentioned by the Bhav Mishra wrote Bhavaprakasha in 16th Century. In the 17th Century, Yogaratnakara mentioned on Yogaratnakara Samhita on 48 Shlokas which describe the Nadi Pariksha as the science of pulse and Nadi Pariksha reveals numerous ailments. Nadi Parikshan provides the expertise with extensive experience to be able to reading the pulse. Nadi Parikshan depends upon the movement of pulses or gati of Nadi to reads the clinical features of the Tridosha. In the Gati of Nadi moves like a cobra indicates the Vataj Nadi, the gati of Nadi moves like a frog indicates the Pittaj Nadi, the Gati of Nadi move like a swimming swan indicates the Kaphaj Nadi. Nadi Parikshana provide the Tridosha increase or decrease provide a condition of dosha parkopa condition which is the indication of disease and help to diagnosis of the disease.

Keywords: Nadi, Tridosha, Gati, Principles, Extensive, Indication.

Introduction

The Indian Science of Pulse is a very important and vital branch of the Indian system of Medicine or Ayurveda. An accurate knowledge of the science of pulse will certainly have much of the unnecessary waste of time and money. He who has knowledge of this sublime science of pulse will be able to foretell the appearance of a disease with its progress long before it has taken a strong hold in the constitution of the patient. The ancient Ayurvedic Physicians of India had attained great mastery and excellence in the science of feeling the pulse. They depended on the pulse for diagnosing a disease. They had no apparatuses and appliances for the examination of blood, urine, stool and sputum. They had no microscope or sphygmomanometer and yet they were highly successful without the aid of appliances in finding out the exact nature of the diseases. What a great marvel! What a great wonder! How intelligent they were!

What is Pulse?

Pulse is defined as the heart-muscle contractions. A wave of increased pressure is transmitted by Vayu along the arteries. This wave is called Pulse. The pulse indicates the normal and

abnormal conditions of the body.

Where to Feel Pulse

- Generally, the pulse is felt in the radial artery, because it rests on the bone radius and it is easily accessible too.
- The pulse is felt in the tibial and temporal arteries also. It can be felt in the arteries in the neck, nose, eye, ear, tongue and penis as the Prana Vayu is predominant in them.
- The radial pulse is felt at the wrist on the radial artery by three fingers along two inches. The three digits commence from the root of the thumb. The first, second and third digits represent Vatha, Pitta and Kapha respectively. They are examined by the index, middle and ring fingers respectively.
- The pulse is prominent on the left side in women and on the right side in men on account of the alternate disposition of the transverse Kurma Nadi at the navel.

Science of Pulse

- There are 72, 000 arteries in the body. They all form their

centres in the navel or umbilicus.

- Fourteen arteries are important. They are Ida, Pingala, Sushumna, Saraswati, Varuni, Pusa, Hastijihva, Yasasvini, Visvodari, Kuhu, Sankhini, Payaswini, Alambusa and Gandhari. Of these fourteen the first three are most important.
- Pulse reveals the Doshas arising from the combination of the two Doshas or three Doshas.
- Himstra, Snayu, Vasa Nadi, Dhamani, Dhara, Tantuki, Jivitgna and Sira are the designations of the pulse.
- By feeling the pulse the three kinds of Doshas are ascertained by the three kinds of movement of the pulse, viz., slow, middle and swift.
- The pulse indicates whether the disease is due to Vatha or Pitta or Kapha or due to the influence of two Doshas combined or three Doshas combined or whether the disease is curable or incurable.

Nature of Pulse

- Pulse in a healthy person is slow and strong. The movement of the pulse is like that of an earthworm.
- The pulse beats mildly in the morning, quickly at noon and moderately at night.

Benefits of Feeling Pulse

- The examination of the pulse will reveal the knowledge of the impending disease, the three Doshas individually and in combination and the curability and the incurability of diseases.
- Just as face is index of the mind, just as eye is the index of the state of heart, so also pulse is an index of condition of the heart, blood-circulation and the entire system of a man. The examination of the pulse gives convincing facts.
- Just as the strings of violin or Veena or Sitar express the musical notes, the pulse expresses the symptoms of the diseases".
- It is very difficult to attain the knowledge of the pulse. Much experience, much clinical observation and study are necessary. A keen intelligence is also necessary.

How to Examine the Pulse

- Firstly, to learn the pulse under the guidance of an experienced and able Ayurvedic physician. The grace of God and one's own virtue are also necessary. Knowledge of the pulse is attained through long practice.
- The student should at first feel the pulse of healthy persons.
- The pulse of a sick person takes different attitudes in connection with the patient's age, time and the peculiar character of the disease.
- Examine the pulse in the morning after sunrise in the radial artery above the thumb ^on an empty stomach. The patient should sit comfortably. Feel the pulse with your three fingers —index, middle and ring fingers.
- The examiner of the pulse also should sit comfortably. He should have a calm mind. He should have perfect concentration. He should be free from anger and lust.
- You cannot feel the pulse clearly and distinctly after sexual intercourse, when one has just taken his meal or bath, when he is hungry, thirsty or heated owing to exposure to sun, when he is fatigued due to exercise, when he has checked his calls of nature, when the mind is disturbed by emotion. The pulse is not normal and hence unfit for examination in such cases.

- Place the hand to be examined in a curved state. Examine the pulse with your left hand. Feel the pulse three times by holding and letting loose the hand.

Indication of Pulse

- The pulse at the wrist indicates digestion, onset of fever and derangement of the Vatha, Pitta and Kapha.
- The pulse in the neck indicates fear, anger, sexual union, thirst, fatigue, bereavement, the nature of accidental fear.
- The pulse in the nose indicates sexual desire, the life and death of the patient, diseases of the throat, head, ear, face and mouth, passion, headache.



Fig 1: Diagnosis of Nadi

Pulse Rate

- The pulse-rate of a new born infant is 130 per minute. In an adult it is 72 per minute; in an old man of 80 it is 60. In young women the pulse-rate is faster than in men by 5 beats per minute.
- The pulse-rate is increased in emotional excitement, long walk, during menstruation, and absence of menstruation.
- The pulse is slow in convalescents, depressed conditions, grief, fear, starvation, excessive copulation, dyspepsia, emaciation, wasting diseases like consumption, diarrhoea, diabetes, anaemia, general debility.
- Exercise, emotion etc., modify the pulse-rate temporarily. If rest is given, normal condition will manifest again. This is not pathological.
- The pulse which is too rapid, too slow, too crooked, too feeble is of pathological importance.

Table 1: The characteristic of pulses in all three doshas.

Dosha	Vata	Pitta	Kapha
Pulse in finger	1 st pulse	2 nd pulse	3 rd pulse
Location	Index finger	Middle finger	Ring finger
Frequency	80-95	70-80	50-60
Amplitude	Low	High	Moderate
Regularity	Irregular	Regular	Regular
Temperature	Cold	Hot	Warm to cold
Tension & volume	Low	High	Moderate
Vessel wall	Rough hard	Elastic flexible	Soft thickening

Pulse in Disease

The science of pulse is inseparably associated with the Tridosha theory of Ayurveda. A perfect knowledge of the Tridosha theory, the knowledge of Vatha (air), Pitta (heat)

and Kapha (phlegm), the three vital principles in the composition of the human body is, therefore, absolutely essential for a proper understanding of sphygmology or the nature of the pulse in Ayurveda.

- The single Nadi is divided into three parts and possesses the characteristics of Vatha, Pitta and Kapha.
- The Vayu Nadi lies beneath the first finger, the Pitta Nadi beneath the second and the Kapha Nadi beneath the third.
- Brahma, Siva and Vishnu —these are the respective presiding deities of Vayu Nadi, Pitta Nadi and Kapha Nadi.
- The predominance of Vatha is felt in the rainy season and winter; the predominance of Pitta is felt in the autumn and summer; the predominance of Kapha is felt in the spring.
- The predominance of Kapha is felt after taking food, that of Pitta during digestion and that of Vatha after the food is digested.
- The predominance of Kapha is felt in the first part of the day and the night, that of Pitta in the second part and that of the Vatha in the third part.
- Colours of Vatha Nadi, Pitta Nadi and Kapha Nadi are respectively blue, pale and white.
- The touch of Pitta Nadi is warm, that of Kapha Nadi is cold, and that of Vatha Nadi is neither warm nor cold.
- The movement of the pulse under the fore-finger is that of Vatha, under the middle-finger is that of Pitta and under the ring-finger is that of Kapha.
- Vatha Nadi is crooked, Pitta Nadi is flickering and Kapha Nadi is steady.
- In fever the pulse is quick and flickering. It is called Chanchala pulse. The pulse in chronic fever and diarrhoea is called Durbala (weak). The pulse in a more deteriorated state of body is called Ksheera. The pulse in very long-standing diseases is called Deerghagaamini. The state in an oncoming fever and Vatha pulse is called Tejapunja.

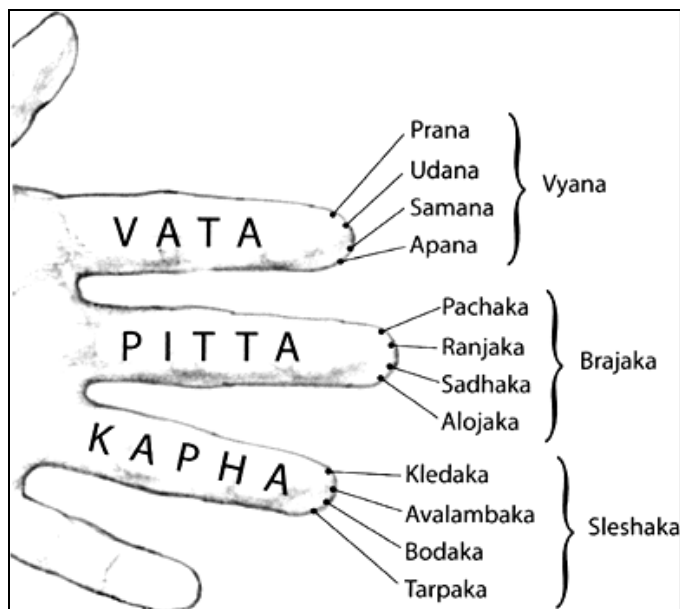


Fig 2: Quality of Vata-Pitta-Kapha Nadi

Movement of the Nadi

- The movement of Vatha Nadi is like that of serpents and leeches.
- The movement of Pitta Nadi is like that of Kulinga, crows and frogs.
- The movement of Kapha Nadi is like that of pigeons,

peacocks, swans and cocks.

- The movement of the pulse becomes crooked in the case of excess of Vatha; rapid in the case of excess of Pitta; heavy in the case of excess of Kapha; and mixed in the case of mixed Doshas.
- The movement of the pulse becomes crooked like that of snake, leech and scorpion in the case of excess of Vatha. The movement is like that of the crow, the Lava and the frog in the case of excess of Pitta. The movement of the pulse is like that of gander, the peacock, the pigeon, the dove and the cock in the case of excess of Kapha.
- In the case of excess of both Vatha and Pitta the movement of the pulse is like that of the snake and that of the frog at frequent intervals.
- The movement of the pulse is like that of the movement of the snake and the gander in the case of excess of Vatha and Kapha.
- The movement of the pulse is like that of the movement of the frog and the peacock in the case of excess of Pitta and Kapha.
- The pulse due to the excess of the three Doshas moves just like the snake, the Lava and the gander.

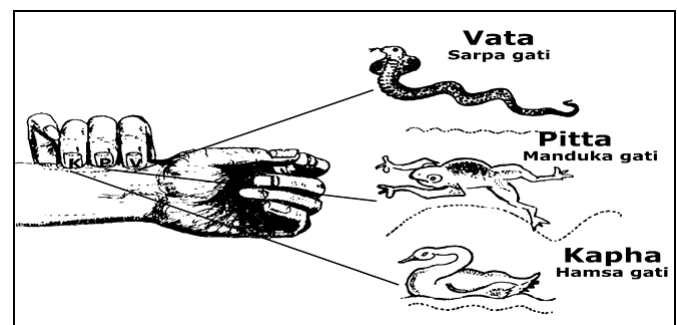


Fig 3: Nadi Gati/Pulse Movement Indications

Low Pulse

- In serious Sannipata the pulse sometimes beats slowly, sometimes loosely, sometimes beats and sometimes does not, sometimes becomes throaty. A pulse of this type cannot be restored to its normal condition.
- When the pulse is cold but the body is warm, again when the pulse is warm but the body cold, and when the pulse has various movements, the patient must die.
- Sometimes the pulse stops on account of swoon, fear, sorrow, the carrying of heavy loads, a fall from a high place, purgation, and loss of semen due to excessive copulation. This does not indicate death, because the pulse beats again after some time.
- If anyone fasts, if a healthy man has sexual intercourse, his pulse becomes weak and rapid.
- In pregnancy the pulse becomes weak and moves slowly.

Pulse and Diet

- The pulse of a man who has taken sweet things moves like a peacock or frog, that of the man who has taken bitter things moves like an earth-worm, that of the man who has taken sour things becomes hot and jumps like a frog, that of the man who has taken pungent things moves like a Vringa bird, that of the man who has taken astringent things becomes hard and dejected, that of the man who has taken saline things becomes straight and rapid.
- The taking of white pumpkin (Kushmanda or Petha) and Munakka makes the pulse heavy; milk makes it cool and steady; meat makes it slow and rigid; greens and plantains

make it full; jaggery and oils make it slow and strong; roots make it slow; dried things make it slow and heavy; bitter things make it dull; saline things make it straight and light; hot things make it hard and dry; sour things make it cool; solid things make it tender; liquid things make it hard.

Pulse in Allopathy

Allopathy also recognises the theory of pulse and its efficacy in determining the nature of the disease and its cure. Allopathy, too, has realized its usefulness and nowadays examination of the pulse is given the proper place in the treatment of diseases. At each heart-beat four to six ounces of blood are sent into the aorta. A fluid wave distends the arteries as it passes and is transmitted along the arteries all over the body. This fluid wave is called pulse. The physician has in the wave a valuable means of studying both the state of the artery as regards elasticity and the heart action. Pulse is the expansion and contraction of the artery caused by the blood which is being pumped into it by the heart.

Pulse-Rate

- The pulse-rate is usually about 72 per minute but it may vary in health from 50 to 100. It is quicker in children and slower in old age than in middle life.
- In a newborn infant the pulse-rate is 140 per minute, and, twelve months old 120, and in a child about 100. In old age, the pulse becomes slower than 60.
- In childhood and youth, the wall of the artery is very thin. In old age and in some degenerative process, the vessel wall becomes so thick that it may be felt like a piece of whip cord rolling beneath the finger. This gives the valuable information to the physician as to the existence of Bright's diseases, the liability to apoplexy, etc.
- The size of the column felt also gives information. After great muscular exertion or when the heart is beating strongly, the vessels of the limbs are full and the pulse is large. In the case of internal inflammation, the vessels of the limbs are empty. The pulse is thin and wiry.

Pulse and Diseases

- Different types of heart diseases have special features of the pulse. In auricular fibrillation the general character is irregularity.
- In cases where the aortic valve is incompetent, the pulse has the peculiarity of rising very quickly and collapsing suddenly (water-hammer pulse).
- In fevers a dicrotic pulse indicates considerable nervous prostration in which the heart continues to beat violently, while the small blood vessels have lost their tone. Dicrotic pulse is one in which two impulses are felt by the finger at each heart-beat.

Examination of Pulse

- i). The examination of the pulse gives you direct information regarding the condition of the walls of the arteries and the amount and variation of pressure of the contained blood. By careful and intelligent observation, you can obtain very valuable information regarding the state of the heart and circulation, as well as the general state of the patient.
- ii). The patient should not make any effort or strain before the examination of the pulse.
- iii). Feel the rate of the pulse, its rhythm of pulse (irregularity, inequality), size of the artery (calibre), condition of the

vessel wall, volume, amount of movement during a pulse-wave, the blood pressure in the artery during the systolic beat, the blood-pressure between the beats (tension), the form of the individual pulse wave (rise, maintenance and fall of pressure).

- iv). The successive beats of the pulse may recur at equal or unequal intervals giving a regular or irregular rhythm. There may be an occasional intermission in the pulse. The intermission may recur, as in pulses bigeminus after two beats. The individual beats may be irregular in their time-relation to each other. They may be unequal in volume too.
- v). A small instrument known as "sphygmograph" has been devised to register the waves.

Abnormal Pulses

- i). A rapid pulse is one over 100. A running pulse is very quick. The beats are difficult to distinguish. They appear to run into each other. The pulse cannot be counted (as in Tachycardia).
- ii). A Slow pulse is one below 60 (as in Bradycardia).
- iii). Napoleon had Bradycardia.
- iv). A low volume, low tension, thready pulse-denotes a low blood-pressure. It may be due to loss of blood as in bleeding.
- v). In failure of heart the pulse is small and easily compressible.
- vi). Abounding pulse is of full volume; difficult to compress.
- vii). It is seen in cases of high blood-pressure and apoplexy.
- viii). A high tensions pulse occurs in some cases of high blood-pressure, when the arteries have undergone calcareous degeneration, as in arterio-sclerosis.
- ix). An irregular pulse is one in which the intervals between the pulse beats vary in length. Sometimes the beats seem to run together quickly; at other times the intervals are long and the pulse appears slow.
- x). An intermittent pulse is one in which some of the beats are missed.
- xi). A dicrotic pulse is one in which two expansions of the artery can be felt instead of one. The second is like an echo of the first true wave of expansion. Every heart beat is counted twice. The true pulse wave is easily recognizable. The second wave is of smaller volume than the first.
- xii). Corrigan's pulse is one which characterizes incompetence of the aortic valve. The pulse is felt but it immediately recedes as the blood regurgitates into the left ventricle. It is also described as a collapsing pulse and a water-hammer pulse.

Discussion

Nadi Parikshan is a Technique which is mentioned an ancient Ayurvedic text of diagnosis the disease and imbalances of the doshas and to assess the health of a person. Nadi parikshan involves the examination of pulse at the various points on the wrist of radial artery by the trained practitioner with vast knowledge of Nadi Vigyan to diagnosis of disease with the imbalance of dosha i.e. vata, pitta, kapha and to analysis the potential health issues of patients. A trained practitioner feels the pulse and to analyzing the rhythms, speed, strength and quality of the pulse and interpreted in the relation of the dosha i.e. Vata, pitta, kapha or mixed dosha of any two dosha or tridoshas to analysis the prakriti of the person and dosha accumulated in the body to diagnosis of disease and the

treatment according to unbalanced doshas by the help of Nadi pariksha.

Conclusion

Nadi Parikshan provides a deep insight into the parkarit of a person and vikruti dosha that is the imbalances of the dosha in the body. The Nadi parikshan provides the diagnostic tools to identification of the parkupit or vikrit doshas in the body and mind. The information of Nadi parkishan is used to the treatment of the disease which includes the Ayurvedic medicine, changing of life style, dietary management i.e. pathya-Apathya in which do and don't eat food habits, Herbal remedies, yoga, exercise etc. to be planning by the Nadi pariksha. In Nadi Parisha findings which is Body Constitution, Dosha Imbalances, Root cause of disease identifies, progress of treatment by monitoring by assessing a patient progress towards the balance of the tridoshas.

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