Diagnosis of Disease through Ayurveda w.s.r. to Panchnidaan

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Abstract

Ayurveda the Indian system of medicine owns a special ideology to understand the disease process and proper diagnosis of disease. Almost all Acharyas indicated that diagnosis is very important and necessary before proceeding treatment. There are various factors that can affect your health, such as: Diet, lifestyle and some external factors. Since ayurveda treats according to individual Prakriti, correct diagnosis is required to accurately suggest medication. Basically, ayurveda believes that diseases result from an imbalance of three components known as "Tridosha", namely vata, pitta and kapha. Tridosha imbalance can occur due to improper diet and lifestyle and needs to be properly diagnosed for the specific treatment of a particular disease. The article discusses some ayurvedic diagnostic approaches such as panchnidaan tools.

Protecting health and curing disease is the main goal of ayurveda.[1] The three sutras[2] are listed as hetu gyan, linga gyan, and aushadha gyan. Knowledge of linga gyan is the most important of the three sutras above, for only after knowledge of disease, hetu (cause) and aushadha can be examined and administered, and then medicine also takes effect. Nidan Panchaka plays an important role in identifying the type of disease. Each ingredient of nidaan panchak helps the doctor to better understand the disease process and cure the disease as early as possible.[3]

Keywords: Panchnidaan, tridosha, nidaan, poorvaroop, roop, upshaya, samprapti.

Introduction

Ayurveda is a traditional medicine and natural healing system in India. Ayurvedic diagnosis is based on etiological factors. The diagnostic approach involves studying the causes and their correlation with sign and symptoms. Madhav Nidan evaluates Ayurveda is a classic diagnostic approach using over 5,000 signs and symptoms to identify diseases.

In Ayurveda, Nidan Panchak is explained in many Samhitas but it is explained detail in Madav Nidan.[4]

The Ayurvedic diagnostic approach consists of two types that cover Roga Pariksha and Rogi Pariksha separately. Roga pareeksha[5] is the analysis of diseases. It is the study of Vyadhi and its forms. What is the cause of the disease, how does the pathogen enter the body, what are its effects and what are its properties, all of which come under Roga pareeksha ? This can be achieved through Panchanidaan and Shata Kriyakala.

Rogi pareeksha is the study of a patient suffering from illness or Vyadhi. Observation of clinical features, examination of the body, body parts, fluids or body elements comes under rogi pareeksha. Trividha, Chaturvidha, Astavidha, Dashavidha pareeksha[6] and Shadvidha pareeksha are used for rogi pareeksha.

The diagnosis in Ayurveda mainly depends on the prakriti of an individual and the progression of the disease. Another important aspect of diagnosis (vikriti pariksha) of disease by the pareeksha of prakupita dosha & pathology of dhatu & mala (dosh-dushya sammurchhna). There are many abnormal conditions associated with dhatu & Dosha imbalance. Considering the importance of dosha imbalances, Ayurveda suggests that some points should be considered as diagnostic tools; known as Pancha Nidana; they are: cause (nidana), prodromal features (purva rupa), symptoms (rupa), methods of investigation (upashaya) and prognosis (samprapti).

Aims and objectives

1. To Understand the concept of Nidan Panchak based on available ancient Ayurvedic texts.

2. To Understand the Clinical Significance of Nidan Panchak.

TYPES OF NIDAN PANCHAK

1. Nidan (Etiological factors) :

Nidana considers pathogenic factors such as; Diet, lifestyle, environmental factors and injuries are the source of all diseases that together lead to an imbalance of doshas. The ancient text of Ayurveda relates causative factors to the dosha type associated with disease.

In Ayurveda it can be understood in two ways as a causal and diagnostic factor. Karana (root cause), Karta (factor), Hetu (cause), Sammuthan (place of origin), Pratyaya (sense of faith), Nidan (root cause) are synonyms of Nidan. The three nidanas can be explained in three stages as samvayikarana (dosha deterioration), asamvayikarana (doshadushaya sammurchhna) and nimitkarana (cause such as diet, lifestyle and bacteria).[7]

Again, as in Madhukosh :

1. **Anubandhya hetu -** These are the predominant causes.
2. **Anubandha hetu -** These are recessive causes.[8]

According to the Charaka Samhita, there are three main types of Nidana namely :

1. **Asatmyindriyartha -** Meaning decrease, increase or improper use of the senses.
2. **Praghyapradh -** Means lack of coordination between mind, body and speech.
3. **Kala -** Kala is also known as Parinama, i.e. disturbances in time or Ritu (season).[9]

Again in Madhukosh Tika the nidanas can be divided into two groups :

1. **Bahya Hetu (external causes) -** External factors that aggravate the doshas, such as insect bites, wounds, poisons, etc.
2. **Abhyantara Hetu (internal causes) -** Elements of internal causes such as dosha and dushya exist in the body.[10]

Clinical significance of nidana

(A) Knowledge of Nidan helps in identifying causes of disease :

If nidan is not identified we cannot isolate disease. If the pathogens stay in contact with the body for a long time, the disease they cause worsens over time and becomes incurable. Nidana gives an indication of the chronicity of the disorder: for example, if a patient with cirrhosis of the liver has abused alcohol for a long time, it can be assumed that the disease is chronic and persistent (corresponding to the frequency of alcohol consumption).

(B) Knowledge of Nidan helps to make the correct diagnosis :

When there is uncertainty about the diagnosis of a disorder, analysis of Nidan or causal factors helps clarify the condition. For example, in the case of Vata, it can be vitiated by one or more factors, such as Sheet Guna (cold quality), Ruksha Guna (dry quality), Kashaya Rasa (sour taste), Katu Rasa (spicy taste), Ativiyayama (excessive exercise), Avarana (blocking of Vata by other parts of the body), etc. Knowing each of these etiological factors that aggrevate Vata helps the doctor to have a good prognosis, to make an accurate diagnosis of the disease, the cause with (disease and its symptoms) to correlate, help the patient identify the causative factors and plan the disease appropriate treatment.

(C) Knowledge of Nidan helps correct the causative remedies of the disease:

'Sankshepataha Kriya Yogo Nidana Parivarjanam'[11] The best and simplest form of treatment is to avoid the causative factors of the disease, and this is the basic step in preventing further pathogenesis. Understanding Nidan helps the doctor advise the patient to avoid conflicting factors, foods and activities. It will not help you to develop a proper treatment protocol, but also design a good diet and lifestyle protocol where many ailments can be avoided by following the healthy and good parts of life.

2. Purvarupa (Prodromal symptoms):

The symptoms arising from defective doshas during the sthana samshrya process are called purvarupa.[12] Purvarupa considers the early signs and symptoms of the disease. These symptoms can be described as warning signs of a specific disease and appear before other more serious symptoms appear. Each disease has specific initial signs, and the Purva-Rupas approach recognizes that many diseases may have similar signs and symptoms, but their initial characteristics may be different. Purva rupa does not help to know that a actual disease has become purvarupa, it existed before it appeared.

Classification of purvarupa :–
1. Samanaya Purvarupa
2. Vishishta Purvarupa

1. **Samanaya Purvarupa :**
   The general symptoms of the disease precede the manifestation of the disease but do not specify Dosha involvement. Excessive sweating, body odor, sweet taste in mouth, watery discharge, fatigue, etc.General prognostic symptoms of Prameha.[13]
2. **Vishishta Purvarupa :**
   Vishishta Purvarupa deals with identifying the cause of disease (related to specific Doshas) and

the reason behind it. Example - Yawning, burning eyes and loss of appetite are Vishishta Purvarupa of Vata, Pitta and Kapha respectively.[14]

Clinical significance of purvarupa :

A. For the diagnosis of disease -

If two diseases have identical Nidana, then Purvarupa helps establish the correct diagnosis. For example. Acharya Charak said in chapter 17 of chikitsa sthana, the Nidana of Hikka (Hikka) and Swasa (Difficulty breathing) are the same. Here the disease will be diagnosed in Purvarupa avastha stage (stage) with the help of specific prodromal symptoms such as heaviness in the throat and chest, astringent taste in the mouth and gurgling sound in the abdomen are the prodromal symptoms of Hikka while hardness in bowels and painful on both sides,compression in the cardiac region, miss passage of vital breath are prodromal symptoms of Swasa.[15]

B. For differential diagnosis -

E.g. If the urine is yellow or mixed with blood excreted in the urine without the warning symptoms and signs of Prameha (diabetes), this patient should not be diagnosed as Prameha rogi (diabetes), otherwise the diagnosis should be Raktapitta (bleeding disorder).

C. For the treatment of disease -

With the help of puravrupa's disease knowledge we can detect the disease earlier (eg:before the actual manifestation of the disease) and a treatment plan can be initiated to prevent a new manifestation of the disease. For example. In Jwara, Langhana chikitsa is indicated in Purvarupa and in Ashmari, Snehadi karma is indicated in puravrupa avastha to cure the disease from root.

D. For the prognosis of the disease -

If the number of prodromal symptoms is less, the disease is easy to cure.If Purvarupa manifests with moderate intensity then it is krichhasadhya (difficult to cure) disease. If all the prognostic features are present in a patient, the disease will be asadhya (incurable).

3. Rupa (Symptoms) :

When the purvarupa is fully developed it is called rupa. Rupa of a diseases indicate the actual beginning of the process of manifestation. When rupa occurs, the disease becomes more pronounced, noticeable and clearly defined symptoms. The pathogenesis leads to various manifestations of the disease. These symptoms and doshas are linked throughout the disease. The pathogenesis taking place in the body (Dosha dushya sammurcchhana) is therefore expressed externally in the symptoms of this disease[16] that is, it indicates a specific disease showing symptoms specific to that disease. E.g. Burning sensation in shoulder, sides of chest, hands, feet and fever are main symptoms of Rajyakshma (tuberculosis), excessive urination of unclean urine in Prameha (diabetes).

Clinical Importance of Rupa :

A. For diagnosis of disease -

Few diseases have no prodromal symptoms like Vata vyadhi, Ksataksheena, and their diagnosis is made only by observing their clinical features (e.g. in Rupa-avastha). Based on the main signs and symptoms of the disease, we can diagnose the disease. E.g. Distended abdomen, gurgling sound in abdomen,

swelling of legs and hands, weakening of Agni potency, smoothness of chin, emaciation are the main signs and symptoms of udara roga (ascites).

B. For Differential Diagnosis of Disease -

Based on the signs - symptoms and a detailed medical history, we can diagnose a disease with similar symptoms. For example, cough and tuberculosis, Annadravasoola (pain worse after eating) and Parinamadravasoola (pain is relief after eating) few symptoms are common.

C. For prognosis of disease -

When all the symptoms of the disease are present, than it is difficult to cure the disease.

D. For detection of cause -

Symptoms helps to find the cause. For example, in leprosy (Kushtha), symptoms such as pain, dryness, black discoloration etc This indicates that the patient must have been on a Vata-inducing diet.

4. Upshaya (Relieving and Aggravating Factors) :

Disease whose manifestation, symptoms, signs do not clear the production of disease and from which the doshas and dushyas arise, Upshaya (examination methods) are used in this disease to exclude disease . The treatment used, medicines, lifestyle and diet are also considered in Upashaya.[17]

The physician has to administer the patient Aushadha, Ahara, Vihara and observe its effects. If the patient feels comfortable or reduces the intensity of the disease by such methods and the doctor finds that the condition is improving, then it is called Upashaya (Roga Saatmya favorable disease is the term coined by Madhav Nidan). It is also called Satmya.

On the other hand, if the patient complains of discomfort and the doctor notices that the condition is getting worse and worse, then it is called Anupashaya (Roga Asaatmya - not beneficial to illness) Also known as Asatmya, these two factors will help accurately diagnose the disease.

It is of two varieties :-

1. **Viprita -** That is the opposite of Hetu (cause) and Vyadhi (disease) or both of them.
2. **Vipritarthkari -** That is producing the opposite effect through not opposite to either the Hetu, Vyadhi or both of them. This is known as Satmya (compatibility).

Clinical Importance of Upasaya :

A. For Diagnosis of Disease -

The relieving factors helps to correct diagnosis, when it is difficult to diagnose the disease because of its confusing or mysterious manifestation. Then, using aggravating or relieving factors, we can diagnose disease. For example. In case of obstructive jaundice, the drug "Trikatu powder" will help relieve pain But if it is not obstructive jaundice, the symptoms are more severe because the drug is ushna and tikshna.

5. Samprapti (Pathogenesis) :

As long as the three Doshas (functional entities), seven Dhatus (structural entities) and three Mala (excretory products) are in a normal state (equilibrium), there is no disease. When etiological factors disturb this equilibrium, the disease manifests itself. The changes that take place in the body from the onset of etiological factors until the onset of symptoms are collectively referred to by as Samprapti (Pathogenesis). Dosha vitiated by various causes moves in different directions in the body. Depending on the cause or the types of defects and the direction or path of the vitiateddoshas, there is settlement (Dosha-dushya sammurchchhana) at the defect site (kha-vaigunya) or organs and produces many type of illness.for example when provoked doshas settle in Abdomen, they cause diarrhea, flatulence, ascites, abscesses, tumors, etc.[18] Basically, there are two types of samprapti, i.e.

1. **Samanya samprapti** - It includes 6 stages of Shatkriyakala so that better understand the pathogenesis and appropriate timing of treatment, and it is common to all diseases.
2. **Vishista samprapti** - (It includes Samkhya, Pradhanya, Vidhi, Vikalpa, Bala, Kala). Vishistasamprapti i.e. Samkhya, Pradhanya, Vidhi, Vikalpa, Bala, Kala samprapti.[19,20,21]

CLINICAL IMPORTANCE OF NIDAN PANCHAK :-

➢ Identification of Nidan Panchak helps to plan appropriate treatment.
➢ Knowledge of Nidan Panchak suggests chronic illness 0f disease.
➢ Nidan Panchak concept refers to manifestations and progression of ongoing disease.
➢ Early diagnosis prevents further complications of the disease.
➢ Nidan not only gives an idea of disease but also suggests factors to avoid.

Conclusion

Ayurveda says that before planning a treatment, a proper diagnosis is essential, meaning that a doctor should examine the condition thoroughly before prescribing any medication. Nidana panchaka is a diagnostic tool for disease at different stages . The naming of the disease is not very important, but knowing the exact etiological factors, dosha vitiation, pathogenesis or progression of the disease. In short, avoiding the causative factor is an important part of the treatment of any disease. According to modern medical concepts, the treatment of disease begins after the disease actually occurs.But in Ayurveda, good knowledge of purvarupa can help the doctor to prevent the disease from developing in early stage as treatment at this stage would require minimal or simpler modalities. The Rupa phase is useful for specific treatment planning. Upashaya plays an important role in the diagnosis as well as the treatment of diseases. Samprapti provides knowledge of the induced doshas, disease pathways, associated dhatus and affected strotas (systems or organs). This is helpful in deciding on a specific treatment. Each component of Nidana Panchaka individually as well as collectively helps in diagnosis of disease. If one component indicates towards a disease then other aspects of Nidana Panchaka confirm the diagnosis.

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