Nidana: A special way of clinical diagnosis through Ayurvedic methodology

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ABSTRACT:

Diagnosis is a very important aspect of Ayurveda. As per Ayurveda, diagnosis involves identification of root cause of disease. The method of diagnosis by Ayurveda mainly depends on the in-depth- understanding of Dosha and Dushya. Proper diagnosis is the most essential feature of treatment of diseases. There are various factors which affect health such as diet, environment, life-style etc. Since Ayurveda treats according to the constitution of an individual, it is known as highly accurate and personalised method for analysing disease. .According to Ayurveda, all the diseases are caused by aggravation of three doshas – Vata, Pitta and Kapha. The Nidana or the solution of the disease is done in accordance with the Doshas. This article discusses some diagnostic approaches of Ayurveda as a tool for Nidana.

KEYWORD: Nidana, Ayurveda, Nadi pariksha, Dosha, roga, rogi

INTRODUTION:

Ayurveda – the Indian system of Medicine, has its own speciality for diagnosis of diseases. In modern medical sciences, a healthcare provider diagnoses the disease and determines which pathogens, such as bacteria or virus, caused it. The treatment is then geared toward selecting a technique to battle those pathogens. The same medicines, procedures and doses are often used for multiple people battling the same disease.

An Ayuredic diagnosis and subsequent treatments, differ from the modern process in that the diagnosis is made not only on the disease level (Roga), but also on the patient level (Rogi). The exhaustive examination helps the Ayurvedic practitioner not only diagnose the disorder but individualize or tailor treatments for each patient. Thus Ayurveda has its own speciality for clinical diagnosis of the diseases. This methodology is called Rogi –Roga Pariksha, which combines disease analysis with deep examination of each individual patient.

Ayurveda is a very logical medical science. It dose not depend upon the symptoms as told by the patient, rather it believes in a thorough examination to find out the root cause of the disease in the patient's body. According to Ayurveda, human energy is divided into three Doshas-Vata,Pitta and Kapha. Each and every dosha have both positive as well as negative qualities and is affected by whether internal or external factors such as food, environment and lifestyle. Balanced state of Doshas keeps the body and mind healthy ,whereas imbalanced Dosha foster discomfort or illness. According to Ayurveda, all the diseases are caused due to the imbalance (increase or decrease) of Doshas. The causative factors of the disease, whether internal or external, directly or indirectly creates an imbalance in Doshas first, and only then do the symptoms of the disease manifest. The Ayurvedic practitioner's first role is to discover the underlying cause of the symptoms. Two people can exhibit the same symptoms, yet the etiological factors behind the symptoms in each case may be entirely different. The Ayurvedic practitioner goes beyond symptoms to discover the under-lying cause of the imbalance, so that there can be ultimate resolution of the imbalance, not just as appeasement of symptoms. Modern medical practices often pacify the symptoms without treating the root cause. When we treat only the symptoms, we destroy Nature's signaling system in the process. Ayurveda is a whole person healing process, treating body, mind, emotions and spirit.

PRINCIPALS OF CLINICAL DIAGNOSIS:

Following are the methods used to find out the clinical diagnosis through Ayurvedic methodology.

Two main methods for diagnosis of diseases are –

1) Roga Pariksha - It means diagnosis of disease(Rog)
2) Rogi Pariksha – It means examination of patient(Patient) according to Ayurvedic methodology

ROGA PARIKSHA: (Diagnosis of the disease)

This consists of 5 directives. Nidana, Poorvarupa, Rupa, Upashaya and Samprapti.

1. Nidana: That means etiology of a disease, which provides complete picture in relation to causative factors of a disease. Nidana considers the disease causing factors like diet, lifestyle, environmental factors and injuries as a sources of any disease which overall leads the imbalance of Doshas in the human body.

2. Poorvarupa: That means early signs and symptoms of a disease before the begining of the complete disease condition. These symptoms may termed as warning symptoms for any particular disease and appear before the aggravated symptoms appear.

3. Rupa : That means main signs and symptoms which indicates a disease condition. This is the prompt and well defined stage of the disease with clear-cut specified symptoms.

4. Upashaya : When disease condition mixes with some signs and symptoms creating doubts and confusion for correct diagnosis. In this stage, dietetic and therapeutic steps are taken to remove the obstacles. This process is known as Upashaya.

5. Samprapti: This is called "Pathogenesis of diseases."This provides complete knowledge of the disease development stages, starting from the cause to the final stage of investigation. This approach considers role of Doshas as well as location where the imbalance prompt (Dushyas). Samprapti is divided and subdivided into few points for better understanding.

ROGI PARIKSHA : (Examination of a patient)

This is classified into 2 main divisions –

1) Prashna – That means interrogations to patient.
2) Parikshan – That means examination of a patient.

There are many types of parikshana (Examinations) occurring in Ayurvedic methadology for the clinical diagnosis.

- Chakshu Pariksha – (Inspection) That means examination of a patient by the observation by eyes.
- Examination of a patient by Sparshendriya – (Palpation) That means examination by hands.
- Shravanendriya Pariksha – (Auscultation or Percussion) That means hearing through ears.
- Ghran Pariksha – That means examination through nose, smell, odour of excretions etc.
- Rasanendriya Pariksha – That means examination by taste.

All these examinations are classically elaborated in the books of Ayurveda. Apart from these methods, some more methods for examinations are also described in details in the Classical books of Ayurveda.

- Prakruti Pariksha – Examination of a patient through the study of Temperaments.
- Vikruti Pariksha – Examination of a patient by the study of the morbid condition.
- Awastha Pariksha – Examination of a patient by the age factors.
- Aahar shakti Pariksha – Examination of a patient by evaluating the capacity of digestion and ingestion.
- Vyayam shakti Pariksha - Examination of a patient by evaluating the physical power, capacity of work or capacity of exercise.
- Saratah Pariksha – Examination by study of 'Sara' of patient. The excellence of dhatus as "sara" represents the state of each dhatu.
- Samhananatah Pariksha – Examination by the study of the constitution of the patient.
- Satvatah Pariksha – Examination of a patient by observing and studying mental condition or quality of mind and behavioural pattern.
- Satmyatah Pariksha – Examination by the study of capacity of diet intake.
- Pramaantah Pariksha - Examination of a patient by the study of the measurements of body and body parts like length, weight, breadth of the different organs and parts.

On the basis of imbalance of Doshas, Ayurveda suggests some methodologies for diagnosis of disease, such as ; Trividh, Ashtavidh,Dashavidh Pariksha as well as Nadi pariksha.

- Trividh Pariksha – The dicision regarding disease must be established only after complete examination. For this, Ayurveda discribes some triads under the category of Trividh Pariksha as follows –
  1 Darshana – This means diagnosis of disease through observation of patient including physical manifestations of symptoms; like skin colour, appearance of eyes and behaviour etc.
  2 Sparshana- - Diagnosis by using touch sensation, palpation and percussion.
  3 Prashna – Detail discussion as questions and answers between physician and patient which helps to corelate with the instances of dosha imbalance.

- Dashavidha Pariksha (Tenfold Examination) : The check up of the patient is done by considering following ten points.
  1 Dushyam – Regarding the structural and functional abnormality of the body.
  2 Desham – Geographical situation of the place where patient lives.
  3 Balam – Physical strength.
  4 Kalam – The season and climate conditions.
  5 Analam – The diagestive power of the patient.
  6 Prakriti – The natural tridosha constitution of the body.

7 Vayah – Age of the patient.

8 Satvam – Psychological strength of the patient.

9 Satmyam – General and personal habits of the patient.

10 Aaharam – Nature of the diet.

- Ashtavidha Parikshan :
  1 Nadi - pulse
  2 Mutram – Urine
  3 Malam – Stool (faecal matter).
  4 Jivha – Tongue – taste.
  5 Shabda – Voice or speech of the patient
  6 Sparsha – Touch, skin and tactile sense.
  7 Druk – Eye and vision.
  8 Aakruti – General body build

- Nadi Pariksha (Pulse diagnosis) :
  In Ayurveda, the pulse examination is very vital component of traditional diagnostic methodology which involves observation of circulatory movements of vessels of wrist (Pulse Examination). Diagnosis through pulse requires highly expert technical hands to establish accurate co-relation between pulsation and disease type. This approach is based on the fact that the pulsations ditect the physiological status of the entire human body. It involves examination of pulse by applying pressure until to get maximal pulsation and then observation of various pulse phases with varying pressure. Pulses need to be observed deeply, to predict physiological changes. Generally examination of radial pulse is performed to diagnose the disease.

Personal history and family history are also taken for consideration.

CONCLUSION :

Ayurveda is a very logical medical science based on the basic principles of body mechanism and organ functioning. It suggests various techniques for clinical diagnosis of the disease. This review describes that the diagnosis and the treatment of the disease is always individual to each patient. As Ayurveda treats according to the constitution of an individual, it is a highly accurate and personalized method of analysing disease. Preliminary consideration of signs and symptoms of a particular disease can helps to eliminate disease initially even before the disease has actually established..More than healing a particular disease through external means, it focuses more on eliminating the root cause of the disturbances of doshas, so that body can regain it's normal strength and endurance to function properly.

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