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Method of *Ayurvedic Nidan*; A Critical Review

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Abstract:

Ayurveda is a holistic life science. It has studied and laid the basic principles of healthy life. From precautionary measures to the treatment protocol for a certain disease, it had detailed each aspect with through explanation. Nidan – Diagnosis is one such area which is elaborated and explained nicely in Ayurveda classics. Here an attempt is made to discover the principles of Ayurvedic Nidan and to brief the various types of Nidan along with their contemporary relevance.

Keywords: Nidan, Diagnosis, Ayurvedic Nidan, Ayurveda

Introduction:

Specialty of Ayurveda is the holistic approach towards each aspect of life. The diagnostic techniques are also one of it. Ayurveda looks human body in totality, thus the principles led are also based on it. The causative factors for a certain disorder vitiates the *Dosha*, it further hampers the working of *Strotas* i.e. *Dushya* and in turn develops various signs and symptoms accordingly. Here there are many factors which influence this process and are termed as *Nidan – Hetu*. By knowledge of it one can plan the treatment protocol and gain ease from the disease. The vitiation of *Tridosha – Vata, Pitta and Kapha* results in physical imbalances, while vitiation of *Manas Dosha, Raja and Tama* results in psychosomatic disorders. Thus in Ayurveda the *Nidan – Hetu* and its Diagnosis is made at many critical levels right from factors causing vitiation of *Dosha – Sharir – Manas, Dushya, Roopa and Samprapti*. This unique explanation of etiopathogenesis of each disease can be studied by the proper understanding of *Nidan*. Also this will complement the treatment to be done and yield satisfactory results.

Nidan -

Acharya Charaka states the definition of *Nidan* as follows,

तत्रनिदानंकारणमित्युक्तमग्रे।

- *Ch.jwar nidan 1/7*

It means *Nidan* is the causative factors of a disease. While Acharya *Vijayrakshit* defines that which gives complete knowledge about a disease is termed as *Nidan*. *Madav nidan 1/4*

The synonyms of *Nidan* are been mentioned by *Acharya Charaka* as follows, (*Cha. Jwar. 1/3*)

<i>Hetu</i>	Means the cause
<i>Nimitta</i>	Associate causes
<i>Ayatana</i>	Refers to the site of causative factor
<i>Karta</i>	Means the doer
<i>Karana</i>	The primary cause
<i>Pratyaya</i>	Refers to faith/knowledge which is complimentary to main cause
<i>Samuthan</i>	Development or progress of certain factors

Acharya Chakrapani in his commentary, tells us about *Nidan* and its meaning in two context,

- Vyadhi janak* – factors which causes *Vaydhi* – disease
- Vaydhi Bodhaka* – diagnostic *Nidan* of respective disease

These all factors ultimately causes vitiation of *Tridosha* – physical humors and also *Manas Dosha* – mental humors. Accordingly resulting in formation of diseases respectively.

Classification of *Nidan* according *Madhav Nidan* is as follows;

These classification is basically of *Hetu*, i.e. causative factors responsible for formation of a respective disease.

***Nidan* classification**

<i>Sannikrishta hetu</i>	Factors causing vitiation of <i>Tridosha</i> without <i>Sanchaya</i> of it
<i>Viprakrishta hetu</i>	Distant cause of disease
<i>Vyabichari hetu</i>	Weak factor which is unable to form the disease, but starts manifesting it as favorable conditions arises
<i>Pradhanik hetu</i>	Potent factor which causes disorder instantly
<i>Dosha hetu</i>	Factors responsible for direct vitiation of <i>Dosha</i>
<i>Vyadhi hetu</i>	Factors responsible for manifestation of specific disease
<i>Ubhaya hetu</i>	Factor which simultaneously vitiate <i>Dosha</i> and also manifest a specific disease

<i>Utpadaka hetu</i>	Factors which favor vitiation of <i>Dosha</i>
<i>Vyanjaka hetu</i>	Factors which directly favor formation of disease
<i>Bahya hetu</i>	External factors
<i>Abhyantar hetu</i>	Internal bodily factors
<i>Prakrit hetu</i>	Cause vitiation of <i>Dosha</i> in respective <i>Prakop kala</i>
<i>Vaikrita hetu</i>	Causes vitiation of <i>Dosha</i> apart from <i>Prakop kala</i>
<i>Anybandhya hetu</i>	Prime causative factor
<i>Anubandha hetu</i>	Secondary causative factor

Various methods of *Ayurvedic Nidan* mentioned in various classics can be brief as follows;

- a) *Roga Pariksha*
- b) *Rogi Pariksha*

In first type i.e. *Roga Pariksha* the *Pancha Nidana* is used;

Pancha Nidan

<i>Nidan</i>	<i>Hetu</i> – causative factor
<i>Purvarupa</i>	Preliminary signs and symptoms
<i>Rupa (Lakshana, Linga)</i>	Main signs and symptoms
<i>Upashaya</i>	Investigational and treatment regime depending on use of <i>hetu</i> and <i>vyadhi viparit/vipariathakari</i> methods
<i>Samprapti</i>	Complete etiopathogenesis of the disease

But for the *Rogi Paiksha* various methods are been described in *Ayurveda* classics.

1. *Trividh nidan* – Applying *Pancha Nidana* principles by the experimental ways which are
Darshan – inspection

In this we can inspect the following factors such as,

Gati, Assana (Siting position), *Shayana, Varna* (colour changes)

Sparshan – diagnosis based on touch sensation, palpation/ percussion

These can give the knowledge about, *Ushana/ Sheet Sparsha, Pronmati- Unmati Shotha, Drava Sanchiti, Sparshasahatva* etc.

Prashna – questioning/ interrogation

This gives insight about chief complaints, previous disorders history, family history and many other factors.

2. *Ashtavish nidan* – eight aspects for diagnosis

Nadi pariksha – Pulse diagnosis. It is the examination of pulse in terms of rate, volume, tension and type of pulsation.

Mala parikshan – stool examination. Here we can know about the condition of digestive system by mere examination the stool.

Mutra parikshan – urine examination. The appearance, volume and frequency of urine is indicative of various disorders in the body.

Jivha parikshan – tongue examination. The *Samta* and *Niramta* can be determined by this examination. The colour and coating of tongue also reflects the *Dosha* vitiation.

Shabda parikshan – voice examination. Voice of the patient and also various rhythmic sounds of the body such as, heartbeat, breathing sound, bowel movements etc. can be examined.

Saprscha parikshan – skin or touch examination. *Sheet*, *Ushna*, *Snigdha*, *Ruksha*, *Kathin* etc factors can be examined by the touch examination.

Druk parikshan – eye examination. The colour deviation of eyes from the normal healthy eyes are examined in this. It gives the insight about the vitiation of *Dosha* and also about the prognosis of a disease.

Akruti parikshan – general appearance examination. One gets the gross idea about the *Doshaj Prakruti* by observing the physic of the patient. Any deviation from the normal appearance can be examined for the respective vitiation of *Dosha* and affected *Dushya* part.

3. *Dashvidh nidan* – ten aspects for diagnosis

Prakruti – *Dosha* constitution. It helps to know the *Dosha* buildup of ones body. Accordingly the drugs are chosen and also the prognosis can be made.

Vikruti – vitiated *Dosha* state. The vitiation of *Dosha* and the *Dushya* affected by it is been studied.

Sara – optimum health of organs. It indicates the *Dhatu* health which is *Dushya* in any given disorder. It also denotes the metabolism function of the body.

Samhanan – body stature. The buildup of bones and joints are considered and examined. It gives idea about the health and prognosis.

Pramana – optimum measures of body constituents. Any deviation in natural measures of bodily organs denote the imbalance.

Satmya – homogeneity or habitualness. It is the tendency or nature of one's body and mind which can acclimatize to the given diet, medication or *Vihara*.

Satva – mental constitution. The tolerance power is indicated in it. It is to be examined as the severity of the disorder can be understood and treatment can be planed accordingly.

Aahar Shakti – digestive power. The quantity of food one can ingest and time required for the digestion of the same. It denotes the metabolic natural or disturbed metabolism.

Vyayam Shakti – physical endurance. Ability to perform the physical activity and hindrance in performing it denotes the progression of the respective disease.

Vaya – Age. It gives the idea about the strength and vigor of *Dhatu*. It also reflects the *Dosha* predominance in given age.

Inference:

Every individual has different health makeover. Also the causative factors for a certain disease are same by are reflected differently in different individuals owing to their *Prakruti*. Thus the treatment part is art along with basic science. Here the diagnostic tool proves to be important in management of disorders.

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