

ASTHAVIDHA PARIKSHA: A DIAGNOSTIC METHODPranjalee Sharma¹, Akshay Kumar², Akhilesh Srivastava³, Swapnil Saini⁴

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**ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda is a natural health system based on the belief that health and wellness depend on a delicate balance between the mind, body and spirit. An imbalance in *Dosha*, *Agni*, *Dhatu*, *Mala* can cause disease. It is necessary to diagnose the disease for proper management. Diagnosis as per Ayurveda is not merely naming the disease but identifying the imbalance state of *Doshas*. Ayurveda has described various *Parikshas* to diagnose a disease. *Rogi pariksha* that is examination of diseased can be done by *Dwividha Pariksha*, *Trividha Pariksha*, *Chaturvidha Pariksha*, *Panchvidha Pariksha*, *Astavidha Pariksha* and *Dasvidh Pariksha*. Among all the *Rogi Parikshas*, *Astavidha Pariksha* is most significant as it provides diagnosis as well as helps in establishing the prognosis of the disease. An attempt is made in this paper to establish the clinical utility of *Astavidha Pariksha* and its implementation in medical practices.

Keywords: *Pariksha*, *Dosha*, *Diagnosis*, *Examination*, *Ayurveda*, *Astavidha Pariksha*.

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, the word *Pariksha* stands for examination. The examination is done to arrive at a proper diagnosis (vyadhi Nirnaya) by knowing the imbalance state of *dosha*, *dhatu*, *agni* and *mala*. It helps to check whether the person is healthy or diseased. In the state of diseased, it is very useful to identify the disease to implicate proper treatment by administering suitable *Aushadi*. Various methods of examination have been explained by ayurvedic texts which helps us to attain information about *rogi bala* and *roga bala*. One among them is the *Ashtavidha pariksha* given by Yogratnakar which is very significant in diagnosing *Rogi bala*

MATERIAL AND METHODS: Various Ayurvedic texts were referred to fulfil this part. The conclusion is drawn based on acquired knowledge.

ASTAVIDHA PARIKSHA: The emphasis while diagnosis is laid mainly on the non-invasive technique. It is a complete examination of the patient having a close resemblance with a general physical examination done by modern medicine. *Astavidha Rogi Pariksha* (Eightfold examination of patient) includes-

- *Nadi Pariksha* (Pulse Study)
- *Mutra Pariksha* (Examination of Urine)
- *Mala Pariksha* (Stool Examination)
- *Jihwa Pariksha* (Tongue Examination)
- *Shabda Pariksha* (Voice Examination)
- *Sparsha Pariksha* (Skin Examination)
- *Drik Pariksha* (Eye Examination)
- *Akriti Pariksha* (General appearance Examination)

NADI PARIKSHA-

Nadi Pariksha refers to the examination of pulse. It is the first and most important *Pariksha* mentioned by *Yogaratanakar*. It helps the physician to check the status of doshas in a healthy and diseased person. It is one of the most significant methods of diagnosing a disease in Ayurveda. It is also known as *Jaranashana* i.e., it signifies the presence of life.

Synonym of Nadi: *Snayu, Nadi, Hansi, Dhamani, Dharani, Dhara, Tantuki, Jeevangyana*, [1].

Nadi location: *Vata, Pitta* and *Kapha Nadi* lie respectively under *Tarjini* (index finger), *Madhyama* (middle finger) and *Anamika* (ring finger) of examining *Vaidya* (physician) [2].

Examination of Tridosha: Three fingers placed in position over *Nadi* indicate the condition of the *tridosha* and their movement like *Manda, Madhyama* and *Tikshana* [3].

Procedure for examining Nadi: *Vaidya* must hold the *Rogi* elbow gently with their left hand and feel the pulse with his right index, middle and ring finger. *Nadi* should be examined repeatedly three times by applying and releasing pressure alternately over *Nadi* to assess the condition of *Doshas* rightly [4].

Contraindications for Nadi Pariksha: *Nadi Pariksha* (pulse examination) should not be examined in the following conditions- Just after taking bath, just after taking food, after internal and external anointing therapy, during hunger, during thirst, during sleep or just after awakening [5].

Table 1: features of *Nadi Gati* in various dosha predominance [6,7]

S.No.	Dosha	Features
1.	<i>Vata</i>	<i>Jalauka</i> (Leech), <i>Sarpa</i> (Snake)
2.	<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Kulinga</i> (Sparrow), <i>Kaka</i> (Crow), <i>Manduka</i> (Frog)
3.	<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Hamsa</i> (Swan), <i>Paravat</i> (Pigeon)
4.	<i>Vata Pittaja</i>	<i>Sarpa</i> (Snake), <i>Bheka</i> (Frog), <i>kadachit mand kadachit vegvaan</i> (Sometimes sluggish and sometimes fast)
5.	<i>Pitta Kaphaj</i>	<i>Hari</i> (Monkey), <i>Hansa</i> (Swan), <i>kadachit mand kadachit vegvaan</i> (Sometimes sluggish and sometimes fast)
6.	<i>Vata Kaphaj</i>	<i>Sarpa</i> (Snake), <i>Hansa</i> (Swan), <i>kadachit mand kadachit vegvaan</i> (Sometimes sluggish and sometimes fast)
7.	<i>Sannipataja</i>	<i>Lava</i> (Bastard Quail), <i>Tittira</i> (Grey), <i>Vartaka</i> (Button Quail)
8.	<i>Asadhya Nadi</i>	<i>Sthitava chaliti</i> (intermittently)

Table 2: - Nadi Gati According to Various Pathological Conditions ^[8]

S.No.	Pathological Conditions	Nadi Gati
1.	Jwara	Gambheera, Ushna and Vegavati (rapid)
2.	Kama Krodha	Vegavati (rapid)
3.	Chinta and Bhaya	Bhaya Kshina (weak)
4.	Mandagni	Manda (slow)
5.	Rakta Dosha	Ushna (warm), Gurvi (heavy)
6.	Aama	Gambheera
7.	Deeptagni	Laghu (Light), Vegavati (quick)
8.	Kshudhita	Chanchala (unstable)
9.	Tripta	Sthira (stable)

MUTRA PARIKSHA –

Mutra Pariksha refers to the examination of urine. It is the waste material produced by our body and its examination is very useful in determining the health and presence of disease. By observing different color changes in urine, the physician can make a diagnosis. In *vata* aggravation, urine is rough and dries easily. In *pitta* aggravation urine is oily and in *kapha* aggravation, urine is watery and unctuous ^[9]. (See table no. 3)

Tail Bindu Pariksha: *Taila Bindu Pariksha* is an important method for examining urine. Freshly voided midstream urine should be collected in glass jar. A drop of *Tila taila* is put in the collected urine. The shape and the direction in which the *taila* spread indicates a lot of information for the physician to make a prognosis.

Tail Bindu appearance in different *doshas* ^[10]:

- *Vata*- Sarpakara (Snake)
- *Pitta*- Kshatrankara (Umbrella)
- *Kapha*- Muktakara (Pearl)

Sadhyata Asadhyata on the basis of oil position ^[11]:

- Oil spreads quickly over the surface of urine- *Saadhya* (Curable)
- Oil does not spread- *Kashta-saadhya* (difficult to treat)
- Oil sinks and touches the bottom of vessel- *Asaadhya* (incurable)

Prognosis According to *Taila Bindu Pariksha* ^[12]:

- *Purvadisha* (East)- good prognosis and person become healthy quickly.
- *Dakshina* (South)- the patient is suffering from fever and become alright gradually.
- *Uttara* (North)- the patient is going to be free from disease.
- *Paschima* (West) – the person becomes healthy.
- *Ishana Kona* (Northeast)- the patient is going to die within a month.
- *Agneya Kona* (South-east)- Death of patient.
- *Nairitya Kona* (South-West) - Death of patient
- *Vayavya Kona* (North-West)- Going to die anyway

Table 3: features of *Mala* in various *dosha* predominance

S.No.	Dosha	Features
1.	<i>Vata</i>	<i>Pandu</i> (pale)
2.	<i>Pitta</i>	<i>Raktavarna</i> (reddish)
3.	<i>Kapha</i>	<i>Fenayukta</i> (frothy)
4.	<i>Dwandaja</i>	Mixed feature of any two doshas
5.	<i>Sannipataja</i>	<i>Krishna Varna</i> (black)

MALA PARIKSHA –

Mala Pariksha refers to the examination of stool. a. In Ayurvedic texts, examination of stool is limited

mainly up to the examination of physical characteristics such as color, quantity, odor, froth, and consistency. As per the *Rudratanttra* the stool vitiated

by *vata* is dry, non-consistent and smoky color. The stool vitiated by *pitta* is yellow whereas that vitiated by *kapha* is whitish^[13]. (See table no.- 4)

Clinical significance of Mala Pariksha: Stool examination is very useful in examining volume, color,

odor, consistency, blood/ mucous and parasite. In the modern era, microscopic examination of the stool is important to diagnose Amoebic dysentery etc. Blood in stool indicates gastrointestinal lesion and fat determination is done for seborrhea.

Table 4: features of *Mala* in various *dosha* predominance

S.No.	Dosha	Features
1.	<i>Vata vikara</i>	<i>Dridha</i> (hard) and <i>Shushka</i> (dry)
2.	<i>Pitta vikara</i>	<i>Peeta</i> (yellowish)
3.	<i>Kapha vikara</i>	<i>Shuklata</i> (white)
4.	<i>Vata Pittaja</i>	<i>Baddha</i> (binding), <i>Tritita</i> (broken), <i>Peeta</i> , <i>Shyam</i>
5.	<i>Pitta Kaphaj</i>	<i>Peeta</i> , <i>Sweta</i> , <i>Ishat Sandra</i> , <i>Pichchhila</i>
6.	<i>Vata Kaphaj</i>	<i>Kapisha</i>
7.	<i>Sannipataja</i>	Mixed features of all doshas

Table 5: *Mala Swaroopa* in Various Diseases^[14]

S. No.	Mala Swaroopa	Diseases
1.	<i>Shweta</i> (Whitish), <i>Durgandhayukta</i> (foul smell)	<i>Jalodara</i>
2.	<i>Shyama</i>	<i>Kshaya</i>
3.	<i>Peeta Varna</i> (Yellowish) & <i>Kati Vedana</i> (pain)	<i>Aam Dosha</i>
4.	<i>Atikrishna</i> , <i>Atishubra</i> , <i>Atipeeta</i> & <i>Aruna mala</i>	<i>Asadhya Vyadhi</i>

JIHVA PARIKSHA

Jihva Pariksha refers to the examination of the tongue and observing it. Imbalance in *doshas* may cause changes in the general appearance of the tongue. In *vata* vitiation, the tongue is dry, rough and cracked. In *pitta* vitiation, the tongue is reddish blakish. In *kapha* vitiation, the tongue is whitish and coated^[15]. (See table no.- 6)

Clinical significance of Jihva Pariksha: The above-mentioned limited approach of *Yogaratanakar* to

tongue examination is not sufficient as *Acharya Sushruta* has described an entire chapter on *mukhgata roga*. The examination of the tongue is divided into two parts: an examination of the tongue body; and examination of the tongue coat. Tongue body texture, its shape, size, colour, moisture, coating, nature of papillae and the movements are the important components of the tongue examination. (See table no. 7)

Table 6: features of *Jihva* in various *dosha* predominance

S.No.	Dosha	Features of tongue
1	<i>Vataj</i>	<i>Sheeta</i> , <i>khara sparsha</i> , <i>Sphutita</i>
2	<i>Pittaj</i>	<i>Rakta – Shyama</i> (reddish – black)
3	<i>Kaphaj</i>	<i>Shubhra</i> (White), <i>Picchhila</i> (Excessively Greasy)
4	<i>Dwandaja</i>	Mixed features of any two <i>doshas</i>
5	<i>Sannipataj</i>	<i>Krishna</i> (blackish), <i>Kantaka</i> (Thorny), <i>Shushka</i> (Dry)

Table 7: features of tongue in various diseased conditions^[16]

S.No.	General examination	Diseases
1.	Color	

	Pale/white (Shukla)	Anaemia, Pneumonia, leukoplakia
	Bright red (Arakta)	Acute glossitis, scarlet fever, typhoid
	Bluish (Neelabh)	Alcohol intoxication, peripheral circulatory failure
	Yellowish (Peetabh)	Jaundice, acute hepatic necrosis.
	Blackish (krishnabh)	Iron, actinomycosis, tobacco chewing
2.	Texture	
	Dry	Severe thirst
	cracked tongue	chronic nervous stress and tension
3.	Coated	
	Posterior part of the tongue	Toxins in the large intestine
	The middle part of the tongue	Toxins in the stomach and small intestine.

SHABDA PARIKSHA

Shabda Pariksha refers to the examination of voice/sound produced by different organs of the body. The voice will be healthy and natural when *doshas* are in a balanced state. Different types of *dosha prakop* will generate different types of *shabda* like in *Vataja dosha* hoarse or rough *shabda*. In *pittaja dosha Sphuta vaktra* (cracked) *sahbda*. And in *kaphaja dosha Guru* (heavy) *shabda* ^[17]. (See table no. 8)

Clinical significance of Shabda Pariksha: Auscultation can be compared with the *Shabda Pariksha* i.e., listening to the internal sounds of the body. Auscultation is performed for the purposes of examining the circulatory system and respiratory system (heart sounds and breath sounds), as well as the gastrointestinal system (bowel sounds). (See table no. 9)

Table 8: Influence of *dosha* in *shabda pariksha*

S.No.	Dosha	Features
1	<i>Vataj</i>	<i>Guru</i> and <i>Sphutita</i> (Devoid of these two qualities)
2	<i>Pittaj</i>	<i>Sphuta vaktra</i> (cracked)
3	<i>Kaphaj</i>	<i>Guru</i> (heavy)

Table 9: systemic examination through *Shabda Pariksha* ^[18]

S.No.	System	Examination
1.	Circulatory system	Heart sounds, murmurs.
2.	Respiratory system	Breath sounds, foreign sounds, vocal resonance.
3.	Gastrointestinal	Peristalsis, arterial bruit, venous hum.

SPARSHA PARIKSHA

Touch in the healthy and diseased state should be examined through hands. Cold, hot, smooth, soft, hard etc. tactile perception in fever, oedema etc. should be examined through *Sparsha Pariksha*. It is one of the most important to access the state of the skin, organs and tissue. *Doshika* influence in *Sparsha Pariksha* ^[19]. (See table no.-10)

Clinical significance of Sparsha Pariksha: Palpation can be compared to *Sparsha Pariksha* i.e., the method of feeling with the fingers or hands during a physical

examination. Palpation is commonly used for abdominal or thoracic (chest) examination. It is used to determine the size, shape, firmness, or location of an abnormality suggestive of disease. This may include:

- Feeling the texture of the skin for evidence of swelling or inflammation
- Assessing the location and severity of pain
- Examining for lumps or irregularities suggestive of a tumour, hernia, or fracture

- Locating anatomical landmarks to identify structural irregularities, such as a joint dislocation or slipped disk
- Determining the position of the fetus during pregnancy

Table 10: Influence of dosha in *Sparsha Pariksha*

S.No.	Dosha	Features
1	Vataj	Sheeta Sparsha (cold)
2	Pittaj	Ushna Sparsha (hot)
3	Kaphaj	Aadra (moist)

Table 11: systemic examination through *Sparsha Pariksha* ^[20]

S.No.	System	Examination
1.	Respiratory system	Measurement of chest expansion, assessment of chest, swelling, tenderness, tactile vocal fremitus.
2.	Gastrointestinal system	Tenderness, guarding, rigidity, lumps, fluid thrill.

DRIK PARIKSHA

Drik Pariksha refers to the examination of the eye. In *vata* predominance eyes are dry, smoky and shrunken. In *pitta* predominance eyes are yellowish and the patient suffers from photophobia. In *kaphaj* predominance, eyes are watery and lusterless ^[21]. (See table no.-12)

Bad prognostic indicators: ^[22]

- If one eye is big and the other is closed- the patient dies in 3 days.

- If the patient can't see anything and eyes are cyanosed- the patient dies definitely.
- If eyes are bloody or cyanosed and appear terrible- the patient dies definitely.

Clinical significance of Drik Pariksha: *Drik pariksha* is the examination of an eye both anatomically and functionally, which include shape and structure of lid, lacrimal glands, conjunctiva, cornea etc. and functioning of eyes like visual acuity. (See table no.-13)

Table 12: features of eyes in various dosha predominance

S.No.	Dosha	Features of eyes
1	Vataj	<i>Ruksha</i> (dry), <i>Dhumra</i> (smoky), <i>Roudra</i> (terrifying), <i>Chala</i> (moving), <i>Antarjwala</i> (internally hot)
2	Pittaj	<i>Dipa dwesha</i> (photophobia), <i>Santapta</i> (burning sensation), <i>Pita Varna</i> (yellowish colouration)
3	Kaphaj	<i>Jalardra</i> (watery), <i>Jyotihina</i> (lustreless), <i>Snigdha</i> (greasy), <i>Shweta</i> (whitish)
4	Dwandwaj	Mixed feature of any two doshas
5	Sannipataj	<i>Shyam-varna</i> , <i>Tandra</i> , <i>Moha – yukta</i> , <i>Roudra</i> and <i>Rakta Varna</i>

Table 13:

S.No.	Parts of eye	Deformity	Diseases
1.	lids	Drooping of eyelid Swelling	Myasthenia gravis Orbital cellulitis
2.	Conjunctiva	Pallor yellowish	Anemia Weak liver
3.	Cornea	Redness and swelling	Keratitis
4.	Lens	Cloudy appearance	Cataract

AKRITI PARIKSHA

Akriti Pariksha refers to the examination of external features of the body. By examining the personalities of

the patient, the condition of *dosha* can be examined. *Vataja* personality peoples are more prone to have dry skin, split hairs, dhusara varna & they don't like cold

atmosphere. *Pittaja* peoples have a fair complexion, fewer hairs, are brave, egoistic and they have a strong appetite and thirst. *Kaphaja* personality is well built, able to tolerate thirst and hunger [23]. (Table no.-14)

Clinical significance of Akriti Pariksha: General state of health is determined by akriti pariksha which

includes body build and nutritional status for eg. Height, weight, BMI, obese/lean, tall/short. State of awareness or level of consciousness, facial features, speech, position/posture and gait etc.

Table 14: influence of dosha in *Akriti Pariksha*

S.No.	Dosha	Features
1	<i>Vataj</i>	<i>Dhusar Varna</i> , split hair, prone to diseases, dislikes cold, dry skin, <i>Smriti</i> , <i>Buddhi</i> , <i>Cheshta</i> , <i>Mitrata</i> , <i>Drishti</i> and <i>Gati</i> are <i>chanchal</i> (unstable).
2	<i>Pittaj</i>	Hungry and thirsty, fair in colour, hot, <i>Tamra Varna</i> , <i>Shoor & Maani</i> (<i>Swabhimaani</i>) and <i>Alpa Kेशha</i> (less hair).
3	<i>Kaphaj</i>	<i>Saumya</i> , well-built body and joints, <i>Sthula</i> , <i>Balvana</i> , <i>Gambhira</i> and tolerates thirst and hunger

DISCUSSION

Among all the *Samhitas* mentioned in *Brihatrayi* and *laghutrayi* only acharya Sharangdhar was the first to mention *Nadi prakisha*. He laid a great emphasis on evaluating *nadi* for diagnosis. *Shabda prakisha* is mentioned by all the *Acharayas*. The two pariksha are mentioned in *Astavidha pariksha* which is given by *Yogratnakar*. He has described in detail the *Astavidha pariksha* for the purpose of diagnosing a disease similar to the modern general physical examination. *Nadi pariksha* indicates dosha predominance along with *Nadi gati* for the prognosis of the disease. Similarly, *mala* and *mutra pariksha* help in examining the character, quantity and consistency of the stool and urine for proper diagnosis. The rest of *pariksha* have similar clinical utility.

CONCLUSION

Astavidha Pariksha is a very useful diagnostic tool for the examination of *Rogi bala*. As treatment should always be implicated after knowing the strength of the patient. *Astavidha Pariksha* given by *Acharaya Yogratnakar* holds a great significance even in the modern era as it is similar to that of general physical examination given by modern medicine to draw a conclusion on the diagnosis of a particular disease and start the treatment based on various diagnostic observations attained by *Astavidha Pariksha*.

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