



NAADI PARIKSHA (PULSE DIAGNOSIS) - THE ANCIENT WISDOM TO EARLY DIAGNOSIS

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ABSTRACT Naadi pariksha or radial pulse examination is the foremost among the eightfold examination described in Ayurvedic text for the general examination of a patient and is the most revealing one. As we know that any disease starts much before it is detected through any diagnostic tests or instruments; naadi lays a specific key to early diagnosis. Ayurveda gave special importance to it due to the fact that whole Ayurvedic Science is dependent on the concept of Tridosha i.e., basic vital life supporting energies which are best assessed by naadi pariksha. Character of Naadi not only reveals the quantum or state of dosha, but it is also helpful in knowing certain diseases directly. If we talk about the wisdom of ayurveda, Naadi pariksha stands on first hand as a non invasive technique for early diagnosis of a disease without any physical tools in today's world of science and technology.

KEYWORDS : Naadi Pariksha, Diagnosis, Pulse

Introduction:

Since ancient times, Naadi Pariksha has been incorporated almost in every system of medicine and is considered to be the most fundamental sign of life. Even today in emergency conditions the doctors examine the pulse as a vital sign of life irrespective of their system of medicine. Naadi pariksha is considered to be of utmost importance in Ayurveda due to the fact that the Ayurvedic Science describes the human physiology in terms of Tridosha i.e., Vata, Pitta and Kapha which are best assessed by naadi pariksha. No machine can be helpful to assess the quantum of Doshas in the body till now. We can understand them as three kinds of energies which actually runs the human machinery or system. A detailed description of these energies is given in the ayurvedic text in terms of health & disease. Though, specific signs and symptoms of doshas in equilibrium and vitiated state have been mentioned which helps the physician to detect any imbalance if happens in the body but naadi pariksha has an important role to confirm it. In other words, if there are no specific sign of any disease or imbalance, even then the status of doshas can be assessed by naadi pariksha as they are well manifested through the naadi. Specific character of naadi is helpful in knowing both the balanced and vitiated state of doshas. So there lies the importance of Naadi Pariksha as a specific key to diagnosis.

Self Diagnosis through Naadi Pariksha: Naadi Pariksha or knowing the character of pulse by a person can help him to know about his physical well being and its alteration as well. Like we see our face in the morning in front of a mirror and can feel we are fresh or vibrant or not, in the same way by learning and assessing the character of the pulse one can know about internal harmony or disharmony of the system. In the beginning help can be taken from some Ayurvedic physician to learn it. Later on by continuous practicing it everyday and correlating it with other symptoms in the body, one can be aware of his health. There are some simple remedies also that can be used in the vitiation of a particular dosha at an early state and the issue can be resolved. But if after that also the symptoms do not disappear, the help from some physician should be taken. In this way the skill and efficiency developed by training of one's own finger and mind can certainly be over kept on any kind of finding by any machine.

Technique/Method: Though there are various sites in the body where the Naadi can be examined, the first and the major artery approached for pulse examination clinically is Radial Artery. It is also known as jeevasaakshini naadi 1 in ayurveda being most easily assessable without causing any discomfort to the patient.

Time for Naadi Pariksha : Generally in the morning after attending to the natural call and other daily regimes² on empty stomach or 3hours after intake of food. The patient is made to sit comfortably and then his pulse is examined. Because after a nights rest, naadi is in its natural state. In any diseased condition or emergency, naadi pariksha can be done at any time according to need.

Procedure of Examination of Pulse : The physician should gently hold the patient's elbow with the left hand and feel the pulse with his right index, middle and ring fingers, kept in close apposition on the root of thumb on the radial artery. The pulse is examined by gently palpating, pressing, tapping and rolling the artery under the fingers. The radial pulse is felt in right hand in males and left hand in females³. One should count atleast 30 impulses. One should reassure the patient and examine the pulse for three times before diagnosing the disease.

Nature of Naadi : The pattern of pulse depends on the dominance of doshas. Characteristic nature of the pulse has been stated according to the dominance of dosha, such as a leech or snake like curved scrawling under the index finger for vata dosha, a sensation like a frog jumping under the middle finger for pitta dosha, and a pigeon or swan's smooth, slow movement felt under the ring finger for kapha dosha. In vata dominance the movement of naadi is irregular, in pitta it is fast and forceful and in kapha it is slow and stable⁴. In case of a healthy person the pulse is felt like the movement of earthworm and snake with a stable pace⁵. It is regular, steady, neither fast nor slow, well felt at the normal expected site.

Table 1: Nature of Naadi

S. no	Description	Vata Predominance	Pitta Predominance	Kapha Predominance
1	Feel of the artery	Neither hot nor cold, light, empty, thin	Hot, forceful, medium	Cold, stable
2	Best felt under	Index finger	Middle finger	Ring Finger
3	Rate	Fluctuating	Fast	Slow
4	Movement resembles to that of	Leech, Serpent	Crow, frog	Swan, Pigeon

Table 2: Pulse rate based on Age⁶

S.No	Age in years	Pulse rate/Min
1.	Birth -11 months	80-160
2.	1-2 year	80-130
3.	3-4 years	80-120
4.	5-10 years	75-110
5.	10-30 years	60-100
6.	30-50 years	60-90
7.	50-80 years	60-80

Factors that affect the Pulse rate :

Body Temperature: The pulse rate rises and falls with the rise and fall of body temperatures respectively.

Sex: The pulse rate is practically the same in males and females. However, in elderly females, the pulse is faster by about five beats per minute.

Diet: When fasting, the pulse is rapid and uniform. But after the meals the change of pulse movement take place according to the quality of food consumed.

Table 3: The change in the movement of pulse according to the food consumed⁷

Sl No	Food item	Pulse
1.	Milk	Slow, Soft, cold, steady and strong
2.	Ghee or oil	Flat, Steady and strong
3.	Jaggery and starchy food	Steady, slow and strong
4.	Udad Dal	Straight, Steady and Strong
5.	Sweets or Sugar	Movement of swan and peacock
6.	Vegetables and banana	Full, heavy and unctuous
7.	Carrots and kushmanda	Slow
8.	Meat	Full and steady
9.	Excessive liquids	Hard
10.	Dry and rough food	Thin
11.	Roasted food items	Steady and slow

Psychological state: At the time of anger the pulse is fast and due to worry, fear or sorrow the pulse becomes slower⁸.

Naadi in Disease: Importance of Nadi Pariksha as a diagnostic measure in systemic diseases including cardio-vascular system, G.I.T. diseases (Udar Roga) and others is described in Ayurvedic literature. Naadi pariksha is of much significance in knowing the status of agni. Amasaya and Grahani are the seat of Agni which play the key-role in Dhatu Posana and ultimately regulate the physiological homeostasis⁹. Agni definitely has its impact on the Nadi movement and thus has its relevance in the G.I.T. disease. Nature of pulse in common abdominal ailments as reviewed is helpful in diagnosis. When the agni is sama, the pulse is light and strong or forceful. In agnimandya and Dhatushaya the pulse becomes very slow and moves like a goose¹⁰. In ajeerna (indigestion) pulse is hard and cold, in Anaha (Constipation) and samgrahni, due to accumulated mala, it is forceful and easily palpable. In udawarta, pulse becomes almost extinct and trembles. In atisara (Diarrhoea), the pulse is slow and vattik in character¹¹

Table 4: Attributes of naadi commonly seen indicative of certain conditions

S. no	Nature of Pulse	Condition
1.	Cold	Low metabolism, Indigestion, Diarrhoea
2.	Hot	Fever, Blood Disorders
3.	Thick (full)	Obesity, Indigestion, Diabetes
4.	Thin (Thready)	Degenerative disorders, TB, Hypotension
5.	Heavy Pulse (forceful but slow)	slow metabolism, indigestion, immediately after meals, in pregnancy
6.	Light (low fast and volume but fast and good)	Time of hunger, good metabolism, good appetite
7.	Soft	Hemorrhage, Anaemia, Inflammatory Fevers
8.	Hard	Atherosclerosis, Constipation, Indigestion, Hypertension

So, like the strings of veena generates all ragas, the naadi reveals all the information about health and disease¹². Thus an experienced doctor is able to predict physiological condition, mental state, and general pathological state by pulse reading¹³.

CONCLUSION The early physicians paid great attention to the characters of the pulse in healthy and diseased. In Ayurveda, *vata*, *pitta*, and *kapha* are the main diagnostic variables. Change in the proportion of these three is used as sign of change within the patient which is evident mainly through naadi pariksha. According to Ayurveda, health is defined as the state of equilibrium of bio-energies (*dosha*), digestive juices, enzymes and hormones (*agni*), body tissues (*dhatu*), and the normal excretion of waste materials (*mala*), along with a happy state of soul (*atma*), sensory and motor organs (*indriya*), and mind (*manas*). This equilibrium tends to be influenced by some unhealthy habits such as irregular diet, stress, and weather change. Thus, the doctor is able to diagnose subtle subclinical change in the

dosha through pulse in a relatively healthy subject. This early diagnosis can prevent further progression of disease by taking appropriate action at time. Thus Naadi should be examined like Ratna (Precious Stone) according to Ayurveda.

On the other hand, by continuous practice of palpating one's own pulse daily can help in self diagnosis and can certainly reveal a lot of valuable information about the state of doshas the equilibrium of which can be maintained with simple home remedies initially.

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