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# Critical Review and Analysis of *Nadi Vigyan*: A Boon to Ayurvedic Methodology

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## ABSTRACT

Ayurvedic medicine has been using *Nadi Pareeksha* as a tool of diagnosis for *Roga Rogi Pareeksha*, since 2500 years ago. *Charaka Acharya* has mentioned "*Rogamaadou Pareekshayet Tato Anantaram Aushadham*" as an approach for accurate diagnosis and treatment. *Acharya Sharangadhara* was the first to describe about *Nadi Pareeksha*. The traditional text *Sharangdhara Samhita*, *Yogaratanakara*, *Basavarajeeyam*, *Bhavaprakash Samhita*, *Kanada Samhita* and *Ravana Samhita* have discussed the details of *Nadi Pareeksha*. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, *Yogaratanakara* takes a special place in *Nadi Vigyana* as he explains about *Vega* (rate), *Gati* (movement), *Sthiratva* (stability), *Tala* (rhythm), *Akruti* (volume and tension) and *Kathinyatva* (consistency) of *Nadi* useful for *Nadi Pareeksha*. Also, he explains *Nadi Pareeksha* under *Ashtavidha Pareeksha*. The root cause for all diseases is imbalance of *Tridoshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*). A *Vaidya* should examine the *Nadi* in the initial consultation to know about the extent of *Doshas* imbalance. According to *Yogaratanakara*, all the diseases can be diagnosed from *Nadi* and it was compared with strings of *Veena* playing all the *Ragas*, similarly, the *Nadi* of hand highlights *Prakruti* of *Dosha* vitiation. The speed, stability and *Gati* of *Nadi* varies with *Dosha* vitiation and assessing is an Art and Science of its own. Although, *Nadi Pareeksha* is an important part of investigation, still, it is not practiced by many *Vaidyas* due to insufficient knowledge. In relation to modern science, *Nadi Pareeksha* needs more growth and development. Hence, it is the need of the hour for *Vaidyas* to develop *Nadi Pareeksha* for globalization of *Ayurveda*.

**Key words:** *Tridosha*, *Ayurveda*, *Ashtavidha Pareeksha*, *Nadi Gati*, *Vyadhi Vinishchaya*, *Pulse Diagnosis*

## INTRODUCTION

*Nadi Vigyan* is an ancient science described in *Hatha Yogic Pradeepika* as well as in *Ayurvedic Samhita*. *Nadi Vigyana* is a science through which the physician can get accurate information about the physiological and pathological state of the patient's body. It is very difficult to get definite information about where *Nadi Vigyana* has started. If we look at the history of *Nadi Pariksha* in *Ayurveda*, there is no mention of *Nadi*

*Pariksha* in the basic text *Brihatrayi* in the early days of *Ayurveda*. *Yogaratanakar* was the first to explain *Nadi Pareeksha* under *Ashtavidha Pareeksha*.<sup>[1]</sup> Also the first description of the *Nadi Pariksha* is seen in *Sharangdhara Samhita*.<sup>[2]</sup> In *Nadi Pariksha*, mainly *Nadi* of the thumb root of the patient is seen, which *Acharya Sharangdhara* has called *Jeevasakshini Nadi*.<sup>[3]</sup> The *Vyadhi Vinishchay* (accurate diagnosis of the disease) is done by knowing the position of *Doshas* through *Nadi Gati* and the description of *Nadi Pariksha* also comes in the later literature of *Sharangdhara*.

According to *Yogaratanakara*, all the diseases can be diagnosed from *Nadi* and it was compared with strings of *Veena* playing all the *Ragas*, similarly, the *Nadi* of hand highlights *Prakruti* of *Dosha* vitiation.<sup>[4]</sup> The speed, stability and *Gati* of *Nadi* varies with *Dosha* vitiation and assessing is an Art and Science of its own.

## Utpatti of *Nadi Vigyana*

*Maharshi Kanada*, author of *Nadi Vigyanam*, wrote in his literature, "*Nadi Vigyanam*" that Lord *Shiva* was the

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first to preach the four Vedas along with *Ayurveda* for human welfare. Lord *Shiva* was the first to preach *Ayurveda* to Lord *Brahma*, then Lord *Brahma* preached *Ayurveda* to *Devraj Indra* and *Devraj Indra* gave the teaching of *Ayurveda*. This statement of *Maharshi Kanada* concludes the origin of *Nadi Vigyana* along with *Ayurveda*. The word “*Nadi*” does not mean nerve. *Nadis* are pathways or channels of *Prana*.

### Rachana Sharira of Nadi

If seen from the point of view of *Nadi Vigyana*, in the centre of the *Nabhi Chakra* is the *Sushumna Nadi* and in the *Nabhi Chakra*, all *Nadi*'s are situated. The body has three and half million *Sthula* and *Sukshma Nadi* channels and all the *Nadi*'s are tied at the base of *Nabhi Chakra* and situated at curve, up and down position. There are three and half million hair follicles in the human body; they are all the faces of *Nadi*'s through which *Sweda* comes out.

The *Utpatti Sthana* of *Nadi* is called as *Kanda Sthana* which is the *Nabhi* (navel area) of the human body as navel is the central power of the body. 72000 *Nadi*'s are *Sthula Nadi*'s and they are *Vayu-Gochara*, which spring from three basic *Nadis* - the left, the right and the central - *Ida*, *Pingala*, and *Sushumna*.

### Paryaya

*Spura* (Nerves), *Dhamani* (Artery, Sira, Veins), *Rasayani* (Lymphatic vessels), *Snayu* (Ligament), *Jivitadnya* (knowledge of life), *Jivakshi* [Akshi (eye/indicator) of life], *Hansi* (continuous movement).<sup>[5]</sup>

Table 1: Showing *Nadi Prakara*

Nadi	Number	Location
<i>Hastadwayagata</i>	2	At the end of <i>Prakoshtasthi</i> , 3 inches below the <i>Manibandha Sandhi</i>
<i>Padadwayagata</i>	2	Below the <i>Gulfa Sandhi</i>
<i>Kanthaparshwa</i>	2	At the root of the neck in both sides around one inch level
<i>Nasamoolagata</i>	2	Around one inch at <i>Nasa Mula</i>

Table 2: Showing *Nadi Gati*<sup>[6]</sup>

Nadi	Gati
<i>Vataja</i>	<i>Sarpa, Jalauka</i>
<i>Pittaja</i>	<i>Kaka, Manduka</i>
<i>Kaphaja</i>	<i>Hansa, Mayura, Kapota</i>
<i>Vata-Pittaja</i>	<i>Sarpa, Manduka</i>
<i>Vata-Kaphaj</i>	<i>Sarpa, Hansa</i>
<i>Pitta-Kaphaj</i>	<i>Vanara, Hansa</i>
<i>Sannipataj</i>	<i>Tivra</i>

### Nadi Pariksha Vidhi

“*Kara Angustha Moole*” which means *Nadi Pareeksha* is done at the root of the thumb.<sup>[7]</sup> A *Vaidya* after attaining the state of mental stability and peace of soul and mind should examine the *Nadi* of *Rogi* in the first three hours (*Eka Prahara*) of the morning. In case of females, the *Vaidya* is advised to examine the *Nadi* below the *Vaama Hasta* and for males, it is *Dakshina Hasta*.<sup>[8]</sup> The qualities of *Vata Dosha* can be best appreciated under index finger, *Pitta* under middle and *Kapha* under ring finger.<sup>[9]</sup>

Figure 1: Showing *Nadi Pareeksha*



While, examining the *Nadi* following points are taken under consideration: *Vega* (rate), *Gati* (movement), *Sthiratva* (stability), *Tala* (rhythm), *Akruti* (volume and tension) and *Kathhinyatva* (consistency).

Table 3: Showing *Yogya-Ayogya Kala*<sup>[10]</sup>

Yogya Kala	Ayogya Kala
<i>Pratah Kala</i>	Just after the bath

<i>Bhojan Purva</i>	In hungry or thirsty state
<i>Samayaka Nidra Pashchata</i>	During sleep, just after awaking

### Applicability of biological clock for physiological evaluation of *Nadi Pareeksha*

As *Acharya Vagbhata* says that in day time, during *Pratah Kala Kapha* elevates, in *Madhayana Kala Pitta* elevates and in *Sayan Kala, Vata* elevates and this phenomenon repeats in similar fashion in night time.<sup>[11]</sup> So, on the basis of this phenomenon we can say that at these times if *Nadi Pariksha* is done, there will be an increase in *Nadi Vega* in *Adhishtana* of *Kapha, Pitta* and *Vata* because energy flow increases in these organs as these timings are for *Prakruta Prakopa* of *Doshas*.

The biological clock is a visual representation of how the energy pathways called channels relate to each and how energy flows from one organ system to the next and how various organ systems inter relate to one another. The body clock outlines which organ systems are most active during throughout the day.

### Importance of *Nadi Pareeksha*

The *Nadi* of a person suffering from the disease should be tested. In the *Alpa Dosh*, by first examining the *Nadi* at beginning of the disease and examining the *Nadi* at the end of the disease in the *Doshadhikya*, the full state of the *Nadi* should be double checked. Even if the *Rogi* is *Sangya Vihina, Muka* and *Manda Buddhi, Unmata* or *Shishu*, where history is not available, *Nadi Pariksha* should be done which clues for the *Roga Vinishchaya* of various diseases. A well-known *Nadi Vaidya* by examination of *Nadi* can give a fairly accurate diagnosis of disease.

These may be present in any combination and should be understood accordingly. *Acharya Sharangdhar* describes the *Gati* of *Sannipataja Nadi* as similar to the gait of *Laavaka* and *Titthiri* birds because these birds flutter rapidly for some time and on a sudden, they stop their *Gati* together, to repeat their quick *Gati* once again.

Table 4: Showing *Nadi Vikriti* according to Diseases<sup>[12]</sup>

<i>Roga</i>	<i>Vikriti</i>
<i>Madatyaya</i>	<i>Purna Nadi</i>
<i>Arsha</i>	<i>Sthira, Mridugati Nadi</i>
<i>Chinta</i>	<i>Kshina</i>
<i>Atisara</i>	<i>Tivra, Tanu</i>
<i>Yakruta Vikara</i>	<i>Tivra</i>
<i>Uccha Raktachapa</i>	<i>Tivra</i>
<i>Gulma</i>	<i>Kampita, Kapota Gati</i>
<i>Aantarika Avarodh</i>	<i>Tivra Gati</i>
<i>Avatugranthi Vikara</i>	<i>Manda Gati</i>
<i>Utaphullika</i>	<i>Tivra Gati</i>
<i>Vrukka Vicar</i>	<i>Kathora Purna Nadi</i>
<i>Aamavataj Jwara</i>	<i>Mrudu, Tivra</i>
<i>Vidradhi</i>	<i>Tivra Nadi</i>
<i>Jwara</i>	<i>Kshina, Mridu</i>
<i>Mandagni</i>	<i>Manda Nadi</i>
<i>Visuchika</i>	<i>Chanchal Nadi</i>
<i>Grahani</i>	<i>Manduk Gati</i>
<i>Pandu</i>	<i>Durbala, Sthira Gati</i>
<i>Chhardi</i>	<i>Kathora, Ushna Nadi Gati</i>
<i>Krimi Roga</i>	Some times <i>Sthira</i> sometimes <i>Vegavat</i> , sometimes <i>Spandita</i> , sometimes not experienced
<i>Unmada</i>	<i>Ushna, Gambhira, Druta-Gamini</i>
<i>Raktapitta</i>	<i>Kathina, Mrudu</i>
<i>Yakshma</i>	<i>Nadi Gati</i> does not remain <i>Sthira</i>

<i>Kasa</i>	<i>Sukshma Sthira Mrudu Gati</i>
<i>Swasha</i>	<i>Tivra Nadi Gati</i>
<i>Pakshaghata</i>	<i>Vishuddha, Vatadhikyta Nadi Gati</i>
<i>Gridhrasi</i>	<i>Sthula, Vakra, Mandagamini Nadi Gati</i>
<i>Amavata</i>	<i>Kampanshila, Sphutita, Gambhira, Pichchila</i>
<i>Hridaya Roga</i>	<i>Madhya Nadi Gati</i>
<i>Jalodara</i>	<i>Sthula Sheetala Nadi Gati</i>
<i>Prameha</i>	<i>Gatheeli Nadi Gati</i>

### **Arishta Lakshanas<sup>[13]</sup>**

- Death occurs within 3 hours when *Nadi Gati* is like finger of *Shati*, coinciding with perspiration and cold.
- *Nadi* appears & disappears alternatively and moves like a drum which is shaped like an hour glass when there is a death within a day.
- Death occurs within 2 days, when *Nadi* carrying excessive amount of metabolites and *Sheeta* to touch.
- When *Nadi* is not felt at the proximal end, *Sheeta* in the middle and appears tired at the terminal part, Death occurs within 3 days.
- When *Nadi* becomes *Teevra* at the proximal end, sometimes *Sheeta* and *Swedita* and *Pischila* skin days indicates death within 7 days.
- Death occurs within 15 days, when *Nadi* is *Ushna*, *Teevra* and body is *Sheeta* and patient breathes by mouth.
- When *Nadi* adopts curvilinear motion like that of lighting and alternatively appears and disappears Sudden death occurs.
- Death occurs within one *Yaama Kala*, when *Nadi* become *Chanchalita*, *Ativega* and *Nashik Adharsamyuta*.

### **Role of Nadi Pariksha in Prognosis**

*Nadi Pareeksha* represents the condition of the heart. So, *Nadi Pareeksha* plays an important role in the prognosis of disease. *Nadi* represents the severity of the disease, *Arishta Lakshana* and even death. *Acharya Charaka* in the *Indriya Sthana* mentions that “Absence of pulsation is fatal in the organs of the body which pulsate constantly”.

### **Role of Asanas in Nadi Vikruti**

The practice of *Yoga* allows free flow of energy inside the *Nadi* and helps in detoxifying them. According to *Hatha Yoga*, we can maintain the blood flow through specific *Nadis* by performing few *Asanas*. Performing various *Asanas* like *Makarasana*, *Bhujangasana*, *Shavasana* help in curing the various spinal disorders. Performing *Gomukhasana*, *Ardhamatasyendra Aasan*, help in curing *Madumeha*. Performing *Ardhakati Chakrasana*, *Ardha Chakrasana*, *Paada Hastasana* helps in curing *Gridhrasi*, *Prishtashoola* and also helps in increased flexibility of back.

### **DISCUSSION**

*Roga Vinishchaya* is one of the important parts of *Nadi Pariksha*. It has been mentioned under *Ashtavidha Pariksha*. *Nadis* are innumerate in our body. But specific *Nadi's* have to be selected for *Roga Vinishchaya*. Like pulse of radial region, axillary region, cubital region, carotid region femoral region, popliteal region etc. among all these, mainly, the pulse of radial or femoral region are mainly used for *Nadi Pariksha*. The pulse of brachial artery in cubital fossa is mainly used for checking the blood pressure. *Nadi Pariksha* for females should be always done in the *Vaama Hasta* because in *Vedas* it is considered that there is *Kurma* (tortoise) in our body (hypothetical concept). In males, the *Kurma Mukha* is upwards and, in the females, the *Kurma Mukha* is downwards. As *Mukha* is downwards, the *Kurma* left leg can be correlated with left hand of female, so it is necessary to check the *Vama Hasta Nadi* in females. During *Nadi Pareeksha*, the *Vaidya* has to examine the *Gati* (movement) of the *Nadi* very keenly. Based on this *Gati* (movement) only *Vaidya* can conclude accurate

diagnosis. As explained above the conditions like Pulsus Deficit in which the *Nadi Gati* is just like *Jalouka*, so we can consider it as a *Vata* predominant *Nadi*. The condition, Pulsus Alternans, is characterized by less amplitude of second wave of pulse; it means *Nadi Gati* is just like *Sarpa* and *Hansa*, so we can consider it as *Vata-Kapha* predominant *Nadi*. In condition, Pulsus Paradoxus, it is observed that pulse becomes very strong and as well as very weak alternatively in relation to respiratory cycle this is mainly seen due to *Vata Kshaya Lakshanas*. So, it can be correlated to *Vata* predominant *Nadi Lakshanas*.

In the condition, Thready Pulse/Pulses Parvus, the pulse is very feeble and hardly felt. It is condition in which the *Vata Kshaya Lakshanas* are observed. So, *Nadi Gati* will be like *Kaphaja Nadi*. In Water Hammer Pulse, the rapid upstrokes and down strokes are observed due to *Pravruudha Vata Avastha*.

The condition where 2 beats per cardiac cycle is seen is called as Pulsus Bisferiens. It is nothing but *Pitta* predominant *Nadi*. Because its *Gati* is nothing but like *manduka* (frog). Anacrotic Pulse (slow upstrokes) can be correlated to *Vata Kshaya Lakshanas*. The *Nadi Pariksha* is contraindicated in conditions like -just after bath, in thirsty state, in hungry state because in all these situations *Vata* is in *Prakupita Avastha* due to which the *Vaidya* can't get proper *Dosha Avastha* for accurate diagnosis and treatment.

## CONCLUSION

Diagnosis of any diseases is the primary step before starting treatment. In *Ayurveda*, there are various types of diagnostic techniques. *Ashta Sthana Pariksha* is an important tool to assess the *Roga* and *Rogi Pareeksha*. *Sharangdhara* was the first to explain *Nadi Pariksha* and it is one of the most significant methods of diagnosis in *Ayurveda*. On the basis of *Nadi Pariksha*, one can draw a conclusion on diagnosis of particular disease and can start management consequently. Although, *Nadi Pareeksha* is an important part of *Roga Vinischaya*, still, it is not practiced by many *Vaidyas* due to insufficient knowledge. In relation to modern science, *Nadi Pareeksha* needs more growth and development. Hence, it is the need of the hour for

*Vaidyas* to develop *Nadi Pareeksha* for globalization of *Ayurveda*.

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