

TRIVIDHA PARIKSHA -THE TRIAD OF AYURVEDIC DIAGNOSTIC TECHNIQUES

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ABSTRACT

Trividha Pariksha, the classical threefold diagnostic methodology described in Ayurveda, forms the Basic framework for clinical evaluation and Assessment of disease. It consist of **Darshana (inspection)**, **Sparshana (palpation)** and **Prashna (questioning)**, this system offers a Integrative approach to understanding the patient's physical, mental, and social health. Through direct observation, tactile evaluation, and systematic questioning, it enables to assess *dosh- dushya* imbalance, pathological changes, clinical interpretation and the stage and severity of disease. In spite of availability of advanced diagnostic technologies in modern medicine, *Trividha Pariksha* continues to hold importance due to its non-invasive nature, patient-focused approach, and focus on individualized examination. This abstract highlights the significance, methodology, and clinical utility of *Trividha Pariksha* as an essential diagnostic tool in *Ayurvedic* practice, highlighting its role in guiding proper diagnosis, therapeutic planning, and preventive healthcare.

KEYWORDS: *Rogi pariksha, nidaan panchak, darshan, prashna, palpation, diagnosis.***INTRODUCTION**

The process of examination by which the exact nature of patient determined is known as *pariksha*. *Pariksha* are of two types.

1. **Roga Pariksha**^[1] – it consist of Examination of the diseases. It is done by analyzing *Nidanpanchak* i.e five components of disease diagnosis such as

- Nidan* – Aetiology
- Purvarupa* - Prodromal features
- Rupa* – Clinical features
- Samprapti* – Pathogenesis
- Upashaya/ unupshaya*

2. **Rogi Pariksha** – it includes Examination of the patient. *Rogi pariksha* for the diagnosis of the disease are described such as *trivividh, shadvidh, ashtavidh, dashvidh pariksha*.

Trividh Pariksha is a fundamental diagnostic method in Ayurveda used to assess the health status of an individual. The term *Trividh* means “threefold,” and *Pariksha* means “examination.” Thus, *Trividh Pariksha*

refers to the three essential tools of examination that helps in understanding a patient's condition before planning treatment.^[2]

These three examinations are

1. **Darshana (Inspection)** – it includes observing physical signs, appearance, gestures, skin, eyes, posture, etc.
2. **Sparshana (Palpation)** – it includes examining through touch, temperature, pulse, tenderness, swelling, and tactile qualities.
3. **Prashna (Interrogation)** –it consist of asking questions related to signs and symptoms, lifestyle, diet, mental state, medical history, and disease progression.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

To study *trividh pariksha-darshan, sparshana, prashana pariksha* from *ayurvedic* texts and its application in clinical practice.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Trividha pariksha comprises *rogi pariksha* by

1. *Darshana pariksha* (Inspection)
2. *Sparshan pariksha* (Palpation, Percussion)
3. *Prashna pariksha* (Questionnaire /interrogation)

I. DARSHANA PARIKSHA

In Ayurveda, it is the first step of *Trividha Pariksha*—the three-fold diagnostic method described by *Acharya Charaka* and *Sushruta*.

It refers to examination by inspection, meaning diagnosing a patient simply by observing with the eyes.

It includes variety of observational examination such as color, shape, size, luster, normal and pathological states of the body, as well as other unmentioned aspects should all be examined with the eyes.

a. Color examination (*Varna*) is crucial and can serve as a diagnostic marker. The color of the skin, sclera, nails, and other body parts changes abnormally in several disorders. Color change is a defining characteristic of various disorders.^[3]

In *kamala vyadhi*- the colour of skin, sclera, nails becomes yellow. Also colour of urine and stool also changes.

In *Pandu vyadhi*, there is pallor over the skin.

b. Gait and Movement- It includes observation of gait of patient. It Helps to assess dominant *Vata/Pitta/Kapha* influence. Various gaits according to diseases are

1. Limbing gait -*Grudhrasi* (sciatica)
 2. Forward bending while walking- *Katigraha* (low back pain)
 3. Walking with hands placed on both knee- *Sandhivaat* (joint pain)
 4. Holding abdomen while walking -*Udarshool* (pain in abdomen)
 5. Walking with tremors in whole body -*Kampavaat* (parkinsonism), *madatyay* (alcoholic liver disease), *khanja*.
 6. Hands placed over chest while walking -*Shwas* (respiratory disease), *Hridrog* (Cardiac disease)
- Any abnormal movements such as tremors, tics, chorea, myoclonus are also examined by *darshan pariksha*.

c. Shape and size of the body

The term "*samsthana*" refers to the structural shape of the body or its organs. Some disorders cause abnormal changes in the shape of body organs or body parts, such as

- *Shotha* and *sandhivakrata* - *sandhigata vata* or *amavata*,
- *Mukhavakrata* - *ardita*,
- Abdominal distension – *Udara*

According to size, *krusha sharir* in *vata prakriti*, *madhyam* in *pitta prakriti*, *sthulta* in *kapha prakriti*. Deviations in any body parts or organs may indicate specific imbalances.

Examples

- Bulging abdomen → *Kapha* accumulation or weak *agni*
- Sunken eyes → *Vata* aggravation or dehydration
- Enlarged joints → *Vata-Kapha* disorders
- Swollen limbs → *Kapha* or obstructed *Vata*

d. Proportion (*Sama-Asama Pramāṇa*)

Ayurveda emphasizes proportion more than absolute size.

A body where each part is properly proportioned indicates long life, strength, and good health. Disproportionate parts indicate *doṣa* imbalance, *dhātu* depletion, or congenital issues.

Examples

- Long arms/legs relative to torso → *vata*
- Broad torso with shorter limbs → *kapha*
- Balanced proportions → *pitta/tri-doṣa*

e. Shadow and normal glow of the body (*Chhaya and Prabha*)

The shadow and normal glow of the body based on the individual's complexion and luster.

Chhaya darkens the skin, while *prabha* brightens it.

Darshan pariksha can also constitute some recently developed imaging procedures such as X-rays, CT scans, MRIs, and endoscopies that have been produced by modern science.

II. SPARSHAN PARIKSHA

It is a technique of examination that uses touch to examine the patient. It includes all palpation and percussion techniques. It helps to

- To detect *doṣa* vitiation (*Vata, Pitta, Kapha*)
- To identify *dhātu* (tissue) involvement
- To support disease diagnosis (*roga*) and strength assessment (*bala*)

Through *sparshan pariksha*, the Ayurvedic physician can assesses

1. Temperature (*Ushanata/shitata*): Fever, coldness, heat in specific areas. Many diseases manifest anomalous changes in local temperature of bodily parts, such as the temperature of the belly, joint, abscess, or forehead, which can be measured with *sparshan* and used to assist, diagnose the ailment. In *Vata vyadhi* by palpation of joint we can differentiate *sandhigat*, *amavata*, *vatarakta* as in *amavata* there is a *ushna sparsha* of joint.

2. Tenderness / Pain on touch: It Helps to identify areas of inflammation or imbalance.

3. Texture of skin (*Tvak Guna*): Rough, smooth, oily, dry conditions of skin can be examined by *sparshan*. It indicates *doṣa* dominance e.g., rough = *Vata*, oily = *Kapha*

4. Pulse Examination (*Nadi pariksha*): Often included under *Sparśana*.

5. Edema (*Śotha*)-Pitting or non-pitting swelling.

6. Stiffness or relaxation (Kampa, Stambha): Tremors, rigidity, muscle tone. Only *sparshan* can sometimes feel *sandhikujan* or joint crepitations. *Sparshan* can be used to assess hyperesthesia and tenderness

7. Palpation of organs and masses- For size, hardness, mobility.

Acharya sushruta also mentioned that cold, hot, smooth, rough, soft, hard, etc., tactile perception in fever, *edema*, etc. should be assessed with *palpation*.^[4]

III. PRASHNA PARIKSHA

The most significant test done by verbal interaction with the patient or his relative is *prashna pariksha*. History taking is a form of art and interrogation is an important aspect of it. The doctor-patient relationship is aided by vocal contact, which makes it easier to gather a complete medical history from the patient. Interrogation should be used to inquire about bowel motions, dream types, likes and dislikes, pain and pleasure, according to *Charakacharya*.^[5]

It refers to diagnostic interrogation — understanding the patient's illness through structured questions. It helps the physician to know:

- Onset of disease
- Course and duration
- Aggravating & relieving factors
- Mental and lifestyle factors
- Overall constitution (*Prakṛuti & Vikṛuti*)

It is considered essential because many aspects of disease cannot be understood through physical examination alone. It Helps in accurate diagnosis, provides understanding of root cause (*Hetu*), helps identify *Dosha imbalance*, guides appropriate line of treatment, useful when physical examination is limited (elderly, children, special conditions).

Through questioning, *Acharya Sushruta*, included *prashana pariksha* in *shadvidh pariksha* and asked for the following things to be noted - *Desham, Kalam, Jatim, Satmyam, Atanksamutpattim, Vedana samucchayam, Balam, Antaragnim, Vatapravritti or apravritti, Mutrapravritti or apravritti, Purisha pravritti or apravritti, Kala Prakarsha, Kala Prakarsha*, etc.^[6] Examiners should ask about problems such as discomfort, anorexia, vomiting, and angina as well as good and bad habits, gentle, or hard bowel movements, through *prashna pariksha*.

According to Arundatta, an Ashtanghriday commentator. Learn about patients dreams, feelings, and whether or not they have suffered from some kind of diseases since birth as well as the duration of health complaints.^[7,6] The following points are used to explain *Prashna pariksha vidhi*: *Pradhanvedana, Roga purvavritta, Rogi*

purvavritta, Parivarika charitra, and Vyaktigata charitra.^[8,7]

TRIVIDHA PARIKASHA RELATING TO SYSTEMIC EXAMINATION

Respiratory system

In a respiratory system *Darshan pariksha* can be done in the following ways

A. Shape of chest – Normally the chest is bilaterally symmetrical with smooth contour and slight recession below the clavicles. The abnormal chest shapes are disease condition such as

1. Pigeon chest- Rickets
2. Funnel chest - Heart disorders
3. Barrel shape chest -Emphyema
4. Flat chest- Adenoid lymphoid bilateral tuberculosis

B. Movement of chest

A. unilateral diminished movements -Obstruction to the main bronchus, Consolidation, Fibrosis of lungs, Massive Collapse, Hydropneumothorax.

B. Bilateral diminished movements- Emphysema, Bilateral fibrosis, bronchial asthma.

***Sparashan pariksha*:** Tactile vocal fremitus –TVF is the tactile perception of vibration communicated to the chest wall from the larynx.

Percussion: when lungs are impaired there is possibility of impaired note, dull note, stony dull note and tympany in case of pneumothorax, superficial and emphysema.

***Prashna*:** Questionaries can be asked about respiratory disease.

Abdominal examination

Inspection (*Darshan*): the abdomen can be divided into 9 quadrants.

The shape of abdomen- generally enlarges due to 9 F are fat, flatus, fetus, feces, fetus, full bladder and fatal new growth.^[10]

Umbilicus –

- The everted umbilicus may occur with herniation of bowel or fat into the widened umbilical ring.
- A faint blue discoloration around the umbilicus that is cullens sign or in one or both flank
- Grey turners sign may occur in acute pancreatitis or ectopic pregnancy
- Cherry red swelling suggest meckels diverticulum.

Palpitation (*sparshan*)

Tenderness: it is the pain on pressure. It is commonly found in inflammatory lesions of viscera.

Percussion (*Sparshan*) – Test like shifting dullness, horse shoe shaped dullness, fluid thrill, and puddle sign can be done to diagnose the disease.

Prashna (questionaries) -Questionaries like onset of pain, location of pain and duration of pain must be asked. Likewise other systems disorder can be diagnosed by *trividha pariksha*.

DISCUSSION

Trividh Pariksha— These three approaches allow a physician to understand the patient holistically, combining observational skills, tactile examination, and detailed case history. In *charak Samhita vimana stahana*, it has been well said that the physician who are unable to enter the soulful mind of the patient with the help of enlighten knowledge and fails to acquire the trust of the patient are always unsuccessful in their treatment.^[9]

Through Darshana, the physician observes the patient's general appearance, physical characteristics, gait, complexion, and any visible signs of disease. This initial visual assessment often provides vital clues about the *doshic* imbalance, chronicity, and severity of the condition.

Sparshana adds a tactile aspect, enabling the physician to assess temperature, tenderness, swelling, pulse, texture of the skin, and other physical characteristics not apparent through observation alone. It helps in understanding the involvement of tissues (*dhatu*s), localization of pathological processes, and nature of pain or discomfort.

Prashna gives insight into the patient's subjective experiences—such as diet, lifestyle, habits, symptoms, onset, progression, and associated factors. It not only helps in identifying causative factors (*Nidana*) but also reveals psychological and emotional aspects, offering a personalized context for diagnosis and treatment.

Together, these three methods create a comprehensive diagnostic framework. They emphasize the preventive, holistic, and individualized approach that is central to *Ayurveda*. In modern clinical practice, *Trividh Pariksha* remains relevant as it encourages thorough patient interaction, careful examination, and detailed history taking—principles aligned with modern medical diagnostics.

CONCLUSION

Trividh Pariksha serves as the basic pillar of *Ayurvedic* diagnosis, observation, physical examination, and patient inquiry into a unified clinical approach. It enables the physician to identify *doshic* imbalances, understand disease progression, and assess both physical and mental health. Despite advancements in diagnostic technology, It retains huge value due to its emphasis on holistic assessment and personalized care. Its principles align with contemporary clinical methods, demonstrating its timeless relevance in ensuring accurate diagnosis and effective treatment planning in *Ayurveda*.

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