Nadi Pareeksha (Pulse examination) is one of the diagnostic tools in Ayurveda mentioned under Asthathana Rogi Pareeksha (eightfold examination). Although the term Nadi has been frequently used in Breehattrayeeya, its use as a diagnostic tool has been mentioned first by Sharangadhara. There are evidence of the practice of Nadi Pareeksha by folk-practioners, hakims and vaidyas. The knowledge of this practice has been passed from generation to generation from father to son or through guru shisya parampara, limiting the wisdom to certain population. The treatise in Ayurveda lacks systematic and elaborative description of methods on Nadi Pareeksha. A collective approach of methods mentioned in classics helps to draw an insight into systemic understanding of the procedure of carrying out Nadi Pareeksha.

**Keywords:** Nadi Pareeksha, Asthathana Pareeksha, Pulse examination

**INTRODUCTION**

The term Nadi is defined as “Sirayam kayasthsiraswarupa bhedadikam”, which means Nadi is a type of blood vessels. Snayu, Nadi, Hamsi, Dhamani, Dharani, Dharaa, Tantuki, Jeevanjnana are some of the synonyms of Nadi. Nadi Pareeksha is one among the Asthathana Rogi Pareeksha. There are no references of Nadi Pareeksha as a diagnostic tool mentioned in Breehattrayeeya. However, the descriptions regarding the characteristics of Nadi as Arista Lakshanam is found in Indriyasthana in Breehattrayeeya. Apart from this, the use of term Nadi has been abundantly described in classics, but with the meaning apart from Nadi Pareeksha. Sharangadhara Samhita (13th century) was first to mention Nadi Pareeksha as a diagnostic tool. It has been described in 3rd chapter of first part of Samhita in 8 verses. Bhavaprakasha (16th century) has mentioned Nadi Pareeksha in 6th specified subdivision of the first part under the heading “Rogi Pareeksha”, in 12 verse. Yogaratnakara (18th century) has mentioned Nadi Pareeksha in 48 verse, in the first chapter under the heading Rogi Pareeksha. Basavarajeeyam (16-17th century) has mentioned Nadi Pareeksha in 42 verse, in the first chapter while describing Jwara. Apart from these literatures in Ayurveda, more detailed explanation on Nadi Pareeksha is found in ‘Nadi Vijnana’ by Kannada and ‘Nadi Pareeksha’ by Ravan are also important treatise on Nadi Pareeksha. Kanaada appears to be a tantric explains Nadi Pareeksha in 116 verses. No data is available as to decide when Kanaada came into existence. Like Kanaada, period of Ravan also remains unknown. He describes Nadi Pareeksha in detail in 96 verses. Like any other diagnostic procedures, Nadi Pareeksha also has its own methods to be followed. These treatises lacks the systemic description of methodology on Nadi Pareeksha. A collective approach from these treatises help to create an overview on methodology.

**METHODS**

This article is based on collective review on methodology of Nadi Pareeksha described by Sharangadhara, Yogaratnakara, Basavarajeeyam, Kanaada and Ravan.

**DISCUSSION**

Purva Karma: Both the patient and examiner need to be prepared for Nadi Pareeksha. The physician should be Sthirachitta (stable in mind) and Prasannatma (free from emotional disturbances).
disturbances). The patient needs to be calm and relaxed too. **Nadi pareeksha** is to be avoided immediately after bath, food, Sneha (oleation), Sveda (sudation), Vyayama (exercise), Shrama (physical activity), Aatapa sevana (exposure to temperature), Pavanabhaya (exposure to wind), at the time of hunger, fasting, thirst, crying, at state of sleep, intake of alcohol, Matibhramsa (unsatable mind), Apasmara.9, 10

**Pradhana Karma (Site of examination):** The Dhamani at root of the thumb also known as Jeevasakshini, is the site of examination. In females the Nadi are upwards and in males Nadi are downwards.11 Thus, in case of male; right hand is to be taken for examination and left hand in case of females. Other than root of the thumb, other parts of body such as right leg in case of male and left leg in case of females are also mentioned as site of examination. Apart from hands and legs, Ravana has mentioned: Kantha (Throat) Nadi, Nasa (Nasal) Nadi, Akshi (Eyes) Nadi, Karna (Ears) Nadi, Jihwa (Tongue) Nadi and Medra (Penile) Nadi. Basavarajeyeyam describes Hasta (Hand) Nadi, Pada (Legs) Nadi, Kantha Nadi and Nasagata (Nasal) Nadi as centers of Prana Vayu. Among these Nadi he has given specification for each of the Nadi. Pada Nadi reveals Ayu (Life), Sarira Laghava (Lightness of body), Swasthata (Health), Jwara Vimochana (Elimination of fever). Hasta Nadi reveals about status of Vata-Pitta-Kapha Dosha, appetite, fever. Kantha Nadi reveals Agantuja jwara (Exogenous fever), Trishna (Thirst), Bhaya (Fear), Krodha (Anger), Shoka (Sorrow). Nasa Nadi reveals about Maranam (Death), Jeevitan (Life), Kama (Lust), Netra roga (Eye disease), Sira roga (Disease of head), Mukha roga (Disease of mouth).

**Position of Nadi at root of thumb:** the pulsation at one finger distance from root of the thumb should be examined carefully. In the leg, pulsation at one finger below the great toe and also below the malleoli towards the side of the great toe, should be examined. Position of hands for examination: hand of patients should be bent slightly downward; elbow should be extended slightly towards left, fingers should be dispersed.12 Patient’s hand should be supported by left hand. During examination, the physician should rub slowly with his left hand on the portion of the elbow of the patient, where the Nadi becomes prominent.13 Again, putting the three fingers of his right hand at the root of the thumb of the patient, examine the pulse of Vata and the other Doshas. Examination should be done by three fingers by applying his knowledge gained from the classical literature of the subject, tradition and his self-experience.14 Among the three fingers, the index finger is to be kept at root of thumb, followed by middle finger and ring finger. The Nadi has to be pressed and released three times.15 To know the Dosha predominance/Vaishamya, each dosha has been assigned with one finger. Vata Dosha is felt under index finger, Pitta Dosha under middle finger and Kapha Dosha under ring finger. Dwandwaja Dosha predominance of Vata and Pitta is felt under index and middle finger, Vata and Kapha is felt under index and ring finger and Pitta and Kapha is felt under middle and ring finger. Sannipataja Dosha is felt under all three fingers. Time of examination: In the morning Prahara (early morning three hours) after being free from his daily routine, the physician should examine the Nadi;16, 17 Procedure after Nadi Pareeksha: After examination of Nadi Pareeksha, the physician should wash his hand.18 Nadi has been described as channels through which prana, dosha, dhatu circulate. Nadi is influenced by gross and subtle changes occurring at physical and mental level. Thus, both physician and patient need to be calm at the time of examination. A physician requires to be mentally and emotionally stable, have a good concentration and memory which would enable him to discriminate and feel the subtle changes generated in the pulsation. A regular practice of yoga, pranayama and meditation needs to be adopted for this. The physiological adaptation of cardiovascular system and change in heart rate in response to ingestions of food, dehydration, exposure to temperature, exercise explains the probable reasons why Nadi Pareeksha is to be avoided immediately after food, bath, exercise, on exposure to hot climate, at time of hunger, thirst and sleep. There are different sites described for Nadi Pareeksha and pulse examination but due to convenience; superficially located, easily accessible root of the thumb (radial artery) is chosen as the appropriate site for examination. According to yogic philosophy, male energy is dominant on the right side of the body and female energy is dominant on the left side of the body, this could be the probable reason for difference in site of examination for male and female patients. In pulse examination the finger should be closest to the heart is used to occlude the pulse pressure; the middle finger is used to get a crude estimate of blood pressure and the finger most distal to the heart is used to nullify the effect of ulnar pulse where the two arteries are connected via palmar arches. The nerve endings of index finger perceives the best qualities of vata (light, subtle, mobile, dry, rough) similarly middle finger for pitta and ring finger for kapha. Tridosha flows through the nadi and as there is diurnal variation of tridoshas, in order to avoid the influence of diurnal dosha variation, early morning hours is considered the best for Nadi Pareeksha.

**CONCLUSION**

Nadi Pareeksha is a diagnostic tool in Ayurveda, the treatises of Ayurveda lacks systemic and elaborative description of methodology on Nadi Pareeksha. There are evidence of practice of Nadi Pareeksha by folklore practioners, hakims, vaidyas. The knowledge of this practice has been passed from generation to generation from father to son or through guru shisya parampara, limiting the wisdom to few people. A collective approach of methodologies mentioned in the classics help to draw an insight into systemic understanding of the procedure of carrying out Nadi Pareeksha.

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