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Importance of “Envagai thervugal” in Siddha diagnosis

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Among the indigenous medicinal systems in Asian world Siddha System is the most ancient, holistic & popular system practiced by Tamilians. Siddha is derived from the word “Siddhi” which means “Perfection of life” in “Heavenly bliss”

The Siddha Medical science is still pulsating with life and vibrant with world-wide recognition because of the intrinsic values of the science.

The Siddha system is first system which emphasized health is a perfect state of physical, mental, social and spiritual components of a human being.

There are 4448 diseases described in Siddha texts. But only a limited number of books are available at present. Noi Naadal is a prerequisite in the complete treatment. If we do not diagnosis a particular disease correctly of a patient, treatment is not successfully completed. In some situations improper diagnosis may worsen the disease.

This is quoted as,

“நோயறிந்து நோய் ஈதலி நோக்கறிந்து
நோயறா நாயறிந்து காக்கும் வலையறிந்து - சாயுதினா
நோந்துயிர வல்கை மருந்து செயலியாயே
தந்தையெனும் நடுபண்பு”

These verses emphasized the importance of Noi Naadal in effective manner.

In Noi Naadal Siddhars marked out causes, classification, premonitory symptoms, sign and symptoms, pathogenesis, pathology, diagnosis and prognosis.

In any system of medicine diagnosis is the mandatory process in the treatment of a patient. In Siddha respect of diagnosis are done by the unique diagnostic methods called the “Envagai thervugal”. They provided priority to the “Envagai thervugal” by observed with the aid of Periyal arithal, Pulanal arithal and Vinaathal.

"Poriyal arithal" and "Pulanal arithal" methods are used to examine the patient Pori and Pulan by those of the physician. These examinations give much information about the sign and symptoms of the diagnosis.

Mei, Vai, Kan, Mooku and Sevi are included in "Poriyal arithal" and Sparisam Rasm, Rubam, Kantham and Sapham are included in "Pulanal arithal". Inspection palpation and percussion are engage in these methods.

Vinathal is the process of learning the history and symptoms of the disease by questioning the patient or care taker if the patient cannot communicate or he/ she happen to be a child.

Envagai thervagai is quoted by "Theraiyar" as,
 "செய்தகுறி தறத்தொணி விழிந் விருமையி கைக்குறி"

In the above verse, inspection, palpation, percussion and interrogation are mentioned. The pulse is mentioned in the last. This order is suitable for the diagnosis and prognosis. Pulse and urine are indispensable method in diagnosis. What we see in the inspection, palpation, percussion and interrogation is confirmed by pulse.

According to Kunavarkada nandi,

".....
 திரையிடுதொள் நனவு கைகால் சத்தத்தீரொடு
 தேகத்தினது பரிசல் வறுமை நங்கு
 யிரை மறைத்திரையிவைகொட்டும்
"

In the above verse sparisam is mentioned instead of mei kuri in the "Theraiyar's poem.

"Tharvadhiri" stated as,

".....
 நடியாறு சென்ற முக மல தீரையு
 செறிவிழி ஞானினதுத் தந்தைக் கைத்தினையு
"

According to "Paramjasegaram, Angathi patham",

"நயமுறு வாக டத்தீநர் கைவினா முயை நண்ணலை
 வியுறு கண்ணை செய்யெ விளங்குவார் முகத்தையு பண்ணைக்
 கயமுறு மலர் வதனதக...."

In the above verse colour and sound are not mentioned, but instead face and teeth are mentioned.

1. Mei kuri – signs in the body

Vatha thegi	Reduce warmth
Pitta thegi	Increase warmth
Kapha thegi	Cool
Thontha thegi	Different condition according to the disease

2. Niram – Colour

Vatha thegi	Black
Pitta thegi	Yellow
Kapha thegi	White
Thontha thegi	Different colours

3. Thoni – Sound of speech

Vatha thegi	Normal pitch
Pitta thegi	High pitch
Kapha thegi	Low pitch
Thontha thegi	Various pitch

4. Vizhi – Eye

Vatha thegi	Black with watery eye
Pitta thegi	Yellowish or reddish eye
Kapha thegi	White with sticky discharge
Sannipatha thegi	Reddish or yellowish eye with irritation
Kaamaalai	Yellowish eye

5. Na - Tongue

Vatha thegi	Black with fissured
Pitta thegi	Yellow or red and inflamed
Kapha thegi	Pale with salivation
Thontha thegi	Different colours

6. Malam - Faeces

Vatha thegi	Black colour stools with constipation
Pitta thegi	Yellowish red colour with loose stools
Kapha thegi	White colour with mucous
Thontha thegi	Different colours according to the doshas

7. Mooththiram - Urine

Vatha thegi	Clear white urine
Pitta thegi	Yellow colour
Kapha thegi	Frothy

"Therayar" emphasizes two types of urine examinations called Neerkuri ; Neikuri. The diagnostic value of urine is observed for two peculiar studies Neerk and Neikuri.

Physical findings of urine according to "Theray neerkuri neikuri nool"

7. a. Neerkuri

"வந்த நீர்நீர்மென, மணம் நன்றி எஞ்சினால்
எந்தநீர்மெனவென யன்றந்த முன்றியே"

7. b. Neikuri

"நிறக்கறிக் குன்றத்த நீருமண நீரிற்
சிறக்கமென்மென்பினர் சிறவுள் நடுவீடுத
...."

A drop of gingili oil is added to the urine and the position and spreading of the oil drop is keenly observed.

According to "Theriyar"

"அரகண நீண்டது அ.சித வாதம்
அழிபெயர் பரவின் அ.சித பித்தம்
முடிபொத்து நிற்கின் மொழிவெதன் சுபம"

Oil spreading on the surface like snake indicates vatham, oil spreading on the surface like ring indicates pittam, oil floating as a pearl without spreading indicates kapham and mixed reaction of any two of the above indicates thontham.

The spreading of urine depends on the specific gravity & constituent of the urine. Neikuri elicit the curable disease, hardly curable disease & incurable disease according to the spread.

Eg: In incurable condition the oil may mix with urine or sink within the urine or spread like a sieve & spread very quickly. The shape & spreading speed decide the condition of the disease. Eg: In curable disease the shape may be round shape and slow spread or umbrella or lotus shape. In so much Siddhars relied on this methods for prognosis of the disease and classify the disease as curable, hardly curable and incurable.

1. Naadi - Pulse

Naadi is defined by the Siddhars as "உடலில் உயிர்தரீ, பித்தம்பற்றி சுருண்டன சகிதி எதுவே அதுவே தாது அல்லது தாது அடவ".

Pulse is wave form that is felt by the fingers, produced by cardiac systole, which traverses the arterial tree in a peripheral direction at a rate much faster than that of the blood column.

Naadi is the most important diagnostic tool used by Siddhars. Theriyar in his verse mentioned naadi only at the end of Envagai theruvagal. It is used to confirm the diagnosis of a disease.

Naadi is considered as the functional manifestation of the uyir thathukkal which control the entire body. It serves as a reliable indicator of all diseases. If there is any imbalance in the normal proportion of uyir thathukkal, it is reflected through naadi.

Naadi can be felt through ten arteries.

“தாதுமுறைகளின் தனித் தகுதிக் குறிப்பிடு
ஒழுங்காக்கியமுத்தி தெடுகுபு
காது தெடு ஒத்தகக் கண்டம் கரம் புதனம்
கொழுமுச்சி புது புத்தம் பாரத்தெ...”

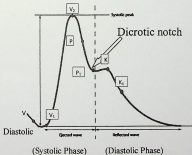
In normal condition the ratio of the naadi is as follows.

“மெய்யளவு வாதகொன்று
மேல்பித்தம் மேறளையம்
ஐயம் கை கொன்றே அறி”

- Vatham - 1 mathirai
- Pitham - ½ mathirai
- Kapham - ¼ mathirai

Mathirai mean the duration taken for the upstroke and & downstroke of the blood which means the volume of the pulse and this is mentioned by Siddhar as a size of wheat in normal condition.

In disease condition increase vatha means the volume of the pulse is increase by 2 times- 2 mathirai. The same way as increase pitta means 1 mathirai and increase kapha means 1/2 mathirai. This is depends on the stroke volume.



In our texts the time taken for the death is clearly mentioned according to the character of the pulse.

Eg: If the vatha & pitta naadi are unable to feel & only kapha naadi is palpable. This is the end stage of the disease & medicine is not use in this condition.

In the palpation of naadi the following should be noted

1. The time and season for naadi examination
2. Rate
3. Volume
4. Character
5. Condition of the arterial wall

The seasonal variation depends on the changes of the 3 humors.

Eg. கடகம் முதல் தூணம் வரை வாதம்

ஆடி முதல் ஜூன்

July to October - increase vatha

March to June - increase pitta

November to February - increase kapha

In the seasonal variation we can see the common disease of the particular season according to increase dooha.

According to the character they describe the sign & symptoms

"வாதமேஜம் நாயுறு தோன்றில்

சீத மத்தமெடு வயிற்றுப் பொழுல் திரட்டு வாய்வு

....."

The physician should carefully study the nature of the beat which is felt under his fingers. The beats are described in an intelligible manner in various ways according to the rate, volume and character by comparing them with the movements of those animals, reptiles and birds.

"வானில் வானம் கோழி மயிலென நடக்கும் வாதம்

உயிர் வானமய்க்க மீளையென நடக்கும் பித்தம்

பொயிர் தவளை மயிர் மொலவம் சேத்துமத்தாம்"

Vatha nadi	Movement of swan, hen and peacock
Pitta nadi	Movement of tortoise and leech
Kapha nadi	Movement of frog and snake

If the uyir thatthakkal are vitiated these are elicited as,

Vatham	Erratic and irregular
Pittam	Quick and jumping
Kapham	Low and heavy

The knowledge of the pulse is gain by the experience. Eg: If one examines 100 azhalkeel vayu patients then he/she can get an idea about the pulse azhalkeel vayu. Nadi & Neikuri are used as confirmatory test for diagnosis of disease by the Siddhars. Envagai theruvu is essential in the completion of diagnosis & prognosis of the disease.