

## Scientific and Clinical Explanation of *Aristlakshanas* described in Charak Samhita

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### Abstract

In *Ayurveda*, treatment of all diseases is not recommended therefore before treatment proper examination of diseases is recommended in each and every *Samhita Grantha*. This examination can avoid unnecessary loss of money knowledge and glory. Because *Charaka samhita* is the base of chikitsa, so before starting the treatment portion Acharya Charka has explained the symptoms and sign by which a *Vaidya* can examine the diseases properly and in *Indriyasthan* it is clearly indicated that after seeing some sign and symptoms a *vaidya* can deny for treatment. Such signs and symptoms which indicate mortality are called as *Arista lakshana*. As science has grown it is necessary to know and correlate these *aristalakshana* on modern clinical parameter also. Therefore in present paper an effort has been made to plain these *Arista lakshana*.

### Keywords

*Samhita Granthas, Arista lakshana*



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## INTRODUCTION

In *Ayurveda* two types of diseases are described i.e. *sadhya* and *asadhya* and on the basis of their nature these can be further divided into *sukhsadhya*, *krichsadhya*, *yapya* and *anupkrmya*, respectively<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, before treatment it is very important to know the prognosis of disease otherwise it can lead to loss of the social respect, money and knowledge of a physician<sup>2</sup>. For the proper knowledge of *asadhya lakshana* there is description of *Aristas* in *Samhita Granthas*. In the whole *Indriyasthanas* of *Charaka Samhita*, Five chapters of *Shushrut samhita sutra sthana* and in two chapters of *Astang Hridaya Sutra Sthana*, different type of *Arista* i.e., about colour, voice, smell of body, dietary habits, nature of a person has been clearly mentioned. These are very helpful to explain the prognosis of a patient. Even that it is said that *Arista* indicates deadly sign and symptoms of diseases. In modern era there are many diseases which have a particular sign and symptom. On the basis of these sign and symptom they can be identified easily.

So here an effort has been made to correlate ancient *Arista lakshana* to modern signs and symptoms of diseases.

**A-ARISTA OF SMELL<sup>4</sup>**—In *charak samhita* it has been mentioned that if odour of a person's body suddenly become foul or fruity it is bad prognosis and such persons are known as "*pushpit purusha*". In modern science following diseases are related to smell in the body.

1-Fish odour Syndrome-(TMA i.e.-Tri methylaminurea –In this disease fishy smell or garbage like smell has been observed.

2-Gas gangrene—It is a medical emergency which leads to shock. In this condition foul smell of hydrogen -sulphide felt by observer.

3-Diabetic -ketoacidosis—In it fruity smell of ketone from breath is felt, it is also a medical emergency.

4-Faecal odour- Faecal odour from the body is seen in intestinal obstruction and in acute liver failure.

5-Mouse ammonia smell- Liver diseases.

6-Fishy smell in urine-kidney failure.

7-Garlic like smell from mouth- Phosphorous poisoning.

**B-ARISTA OF CHANGE IN NATURE<sup>5</sup>**—Nature or *Prakruti* of a person is unchangeable because it takes origin at the time of birth from *shukra* and *shonita* and if change in the *prakruti* has been observed it is *Arista lakshan* and indicates bad prognosis. In modern science Personality

may change<sup>6</sup> with illness, drug abuse, and presence of some kind of toxins in the body for example frontal lobe damage may cause disinhibition, abuse of Alcohol and drug like benzodiazepines can also change the personality. Erethism.<sup>7</sup> It is peculiar disturbance of the personality characterized by shyness, irritability, tremors, loss of memory and insomnia, commonly seen in Mercury poisoning It is peculiar disturbance of the personality characterized by shyness, irritability, tremors, loss of memory and insomnia, commonly seen in Mercury poisoning. Similar condition is seen in lead poisoning, where permanent mental change or insanity has been observed. In Heat stroke and Acute liver failure confusion, hostile toxic behaviour with change in nature is also seen.

C-ARISTA BASED ON COLOUR<sup>8</sup>- In *Ayurveda* *krishna*, *syam ayamavdat* and *avadata* are natural colour while *Neela*, *Shyava*, *Tamra* *Harita* are unusual colour or when half part of body has natural colour and half has unusual colour it is also a bad prognosis. In modern sciences unusual colour is seen in poisoning of hydrocyanic acid, phenol poisoning, and copper poisoning.

D-ARISTA BASED ON TOUCH-In *CharakSamhita Parimarshniymindiyam*

*adhyaya*<sup>9</sup> it is said that pulsatile organs become non pulsatile and soft organs become hard, such sign and symptoms related to tactile stimuli are indications of bad prognosis. Today such condition is seen in carcinoma of liver, pancreas and lungs(Malignancies) and mitral regurgitation.

If the inspiration of a person is too large or too shallow the patient is about to die<sup>10</sup>. In the modern medical science this condition may occur in Anxiety, Asthma, Pneumonia, Hyper-ventilation, Pulmonary edema, Neuromuscular disorder, Polio, post polio syndrome etc in such condition it can lead to hypoventilation and it increases Carbon dioxide concentration i.e.-hypercapnaea, which is dangerous for life.

If both *Manyas* are not palpable a person is considered as *parasu*<sup>11</sup>, it is very common condition seen in a patient of collapse and patient may die without emergency medical care.

If a person has excessive deposition on teeth, he may considered as *parasu*<sup>12</sup>, These days it is seen that excessive deposition of tarter on teeth causes gingivitis, periodonites and carries. Some clinician refers that prolonged tarter deposition may lead to heart disease and stroke.(Dr.Danjenkins et al.)

**E-ARISTA BASED ON EYES:-**If the eyes of a person are unnatural i.e., excessive bulged or shrunken, one eye is smaller other; one is in larger or vitiation of vision is observed or eye is covered with black yellow, green and other atypical colour, the person is about to die<sup>13</sup>. Such condition i.e., bulging of eyes are observed in Grave's disease (hyperthyroidism), Glaucoma, Haemangioma, Neuroblastoma, Leukaemia and cellulites of eyes while shrinking of eye is seen in trauma, Burkett's lymphoma and yellow or brown eyes are seen in exposure to ultraviolet light and excessive jaundice.

**F-ARISTA BASED ON HAIRS:-**If the hair of a person detaches from head without pain it is dangerous condition for a person<sup>14</sup>, today such condition is seen in loose anagen syndrome and Ultra Violet light exposure. In children traction of hair without pain is seen in severe protein energy malnutrition and in diseases like kwashiorkor.

**G-ARISTA BASED ON VEINS AND NAIL -** If prominent veins of red, blue or yellow colour are visible on abdomen it is an indication of fatal condition of patient. Prominent superficial vein may be apparent in three situation, thin veins over costal margin, occlusion of inferior vena cava and venous anastomoses in portal hypertension. Inferior vena caval obstruction not only

causes oedema of limbs, buttocks and groin but also distended vein on abdominal wall appears<sup>15</sup>. In ascities and liver failure prominent vein on abdomen of different colour are seen. If the colour of the nails of a person is like ripen jambu (Eugenia) such person should be considered as parasu<sup>16</sup>. Finger nails can indicate following diseases: Blue nails i.e.-Argyria - A condition caused by exposure to chemical compounds of the element silver. Hepatolenticular degeneration (Wilson's disease) Reynaud's disease (The fingers and toes blanch, then turn blue and may become numb or painful on exposure to cold). Septicaemia (also known as bacteraemia or blood poisoning) occurs when a bacterial infection enters the bloodstream. Lung and breathing problems – Including asthma, emphysema, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, chronic bronchitis and other respiratory disorders Blue fingernails may represent a type of cyanosis caused by a lower level of lack of circulating oxygen in the red blood cells, may also represent a high level of an abnormal form of haemoglobin in the circulation. If normal colour returns upon warming and/or massage, the cause is due to the body part not getting enough blood supply due to cold, constriction (of the tissues or the blood vessels that supply the

tissues) or some other reason. If the fingernails remain blue, then there may be an underlying disease or structural abnormality interfering with the body's ability to deliver oxygenated red blood cells to the body.

**Black finger nails** indicate signs of Anaemia vitamin B-12 deficiency, Bacterial infection, Chronic kidney disease, Adrenal gland problems, Liver disease, Cancer or melanomas, Silver deposits (heavy metals), Trauma. **White or Pale Finger nails** May be indicative of kidney or liver disorders or Anaemia. White lined bands across the nail beds can signal a protein deficiency. White nails with a rim of darker colour at the tip of the nail is called Terry's nail and can be a sign of cirrhosis of the liver. **White Spots on Nails** In most cases this is due to a zinc deficiency or injuries to the nail bed. Indicative of certain internal problems such as arthritis, or poisoning although it has been noted that white lines can be symptoms of a serious disorder, their presence is more than likely a result of iron or zinc deficiency.

**H-ARISTA BASED ON PRODERMAL SIGNS** -In 5<sup>th</sup> chapter on the basis of prodermal sign and symptoms *Arista* has been described, Actually these indicates severity of diseases when the disease

increases it affects physical and mental condition also that is why different type of dreams are also seen. In case of disturbed sleep, post traumatic stress disorder, dissociative disorder nightmares may seen. Drugs like Antidepressant, stimulant can cause different type of dream.

According to Sigmund - fried (Interpretation of dreams) dream may be direct foretelling a future event or symbolic dreams. So it may seem that if our body is affected by some disease our mental condition may change accordingly and such type of dreams are seen.

In 6<sup>th</sup> chapter *Katimania Sharirendriya* it is indicated that in certain condition *vaidya* should not do any treatment e.g. The person who have excessive pain during conversation, increase thirst, excessive vomiting, lacking power of body, excessive hiccough, bleeding per rectum, distension of abdomen and loose motion simultaneously<sup>17</sup>. These days such a condition like pain during conversation, thirst and vomiting is seen in Angina pectoris and other respiratory disorder like pneumonia acute bronchial asthma. Bleeding per rectum without pain is seen in carcinoma of rectum, this type of disease require very specific set up and their

treatment on OPD basis is not recommended.

Person who have fever and dry cough in morning or fever at afternoon or excessive swelling in whole body, or purulent viscid blue coloured sputum and whole body have loosen its power also has bad prognosis<sup>18</sup> Now a day fever and dry cough are easily treated but swelling in whole body may be some time due to severe anaemia or renal failure. While blue coloured sputum is seen in *Pseudomonas pyocynaea* infection

**I-PROGNOSIS BASED ON SHADOW OF BODY:-**In seventh chapter prognosis based on shadow of body and change in natural lustre has been considered as bad for health<sup>19</sup>, toady such condition can be chronic illness like Tuberculosis, HIV infection and malnutrition, If a person becomes unconscious repeatedly (status epileptics, ) or praises himself (narcissistic personality) he may die within 7 days. One who has increased appetite in spite of lean and thin body and low urine or stool output has a bad prognosis. Similarly if the penis of a person is buried and testicles are enlarge it is also a bad prognosis, such condition is seen in trauma, testicular cancer orchitis , hydrocele, torsion of testis, inguinal hernia etc.

**J-ARISTA BASED ON INDRIYAS:-**In eight chapters it is indicated that if Eye lashes are so viscid the eye are unable to open it is bad prognosis. Eye lashes become sticky due to excessive secretion from eyes and hair follicles, it is commonly seen in conjunctivitis, blephritis, allergy, corneal ulcer, and scleritis<sup>20</sup>. Widely opened Nares of a person, swollen nose or deviated nose indicates bad prognosis. Deviated nose is commonly seen in Williamson syndrome, and Nasal septum deviation it is treated surgically<sup>21</sup>. If the tongue of a person is heavy, full of papillae and unable to detect test sensation it is bad prognosis. It is commonly seen is chronic cigarettes smokers, GERD, ulcerative colitis, oral cancer patients. Some times loss of test sensation is due to neurological damage, deficiency of vitamin B<sub>3</sub>, liver failure, amoeboid meningo encephalopathy<sup>22</sup>.

If a patient is devoid of interest in luxurious things or his neck is unable to hold head or unable to intake food or water properly it is bad prognosis. Lack of interest is seen in depressed patient, Alzimers disease; Schizoid personality disorder such condition is called as Anhedonia<sup>23</sup>

In ninth chapter description of *Shyava* i.e., dark brown Colour of eyes, excessive sweating and prominent vein on the body

indicates bad prognosis. In modern science different colour of eye is seen in heterochromia which is due to mutation of gene that determine eye colour seen in Horner syndrome, Waardenburg syndrome, acquired iris atrophy, hemolytic anemia, Neoplasm. Excessive sweating is termed as hyperhidrosis commonly seen in Obesity, Menopause, Tumour, Hyperthyroidism, Alcohol abuse, HIV, Malaria, TB and hypoglycemia<sup>24</sup>.

If the Semen, stool or sputum of a patient does not float in water he will die soon. In modern science there is no clear indication about semen because semen contains most part of water; probable cause of sinking of semen may be occurrence of sexually transmitted diseases or venereal diseases. Stool normally sinks in the toilet, however, a variety of things, mainly diet, can cause a change in consistency of stool and it floats in water. In diseases like lactose intolerance, Giardiasis Malabsorption syndrome, Chronic pancreatitis, Celiac disease does not sink in water but purulent sputum which sink in water indicates tuberculosis. Severe emaciating patient will die within 45 days it can be correlated with end stage of cancer, severe malnutrition and in prolonged fasting. In *Sadyo marneeyadhyaya arista* based on body

pathophysiology indicative of death within 7 days. e.g. if the *Astheela* i.e., prostate of a person is enlarged that it touches the heart person may die soon. (Enlargement of prostate in CA pancreas). If a person is feeling that his body is covered with wet cloth it is dangerous for him (such condition is seen in severe hypoglycaemia).<sup>25</sup>

In the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter i.e., *Anujyotiyadhyaya arista* of one year has been described. It is clearly indicated that if a person with fluctuating mind and unhappy mood, low digestive power, suddenly becomes glorious or loses his glory, dies within one year. Such condition may be seen in depression, Malabsorption syndrome, When animal and birds (dog and crow) do not eat the food given him, he may die soon. Probable cause of this may be due to horrible behaviour of human being which can terrify simple pet animals, it clearly indicates that mental condition of patient is not well. If a person has tearing pain in bone he may die soon. Tearing pain in the bone is seen in osteomyelitis and metastasis of bone.<sup>26</sup>

In *Gomay churniya adhyaya* it is indicated that there is a powdery substance from head falls regularly such person will die within one month. (The presence of a very fine, snowflake-like, powdery substance on the patient's head and neck is called as Uremic



frost caused by the accumulation of urea and other nitrogenous waste products in sweat that crystallize with evaporation. This is a rare but well recognized manifestation of untreated uraemia in patients with advanced CKD.)<sup>27</sup>

## DISCUSSION

*Aristas* are indicator of bad prognosis if *Vaidya* can understand and explain them. There are many trees in nature in which flower is not seen but fruit formation occurs in the same way though *Arista lakshana* were not noticed by physician but death occurs after the appearance. So it is duty of a wise physician to notice them and analyze properly. Our *Samhitas* were written thousands of year back but their prognosis explanation is very accurate till today. Now a days when Medical science has developed too much we can see that the things told by our *Acharyas* has been proven true. Some *Aristas* seem to be curable today but it is due to development of technology not misdiagnosis of our *Acharyas*. So knowledge of *Arista* is gold standard to know the prognosis of disease.

## CONCLUSION

Besides these there are other *Aristas* based on messenger and inauspicious marks also indicated in our literature, but the *arista* (prognosis) based on patient, body can be felt better by *Vaidya*. Now a day due to invention of many techniques many diseases with bad prognosis earlier are being treated easily but still in many part of India where these techniques are not available, knowledge of these *Arista lakshana* and their modern correlation can save a lot of time, money and patient's life.



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