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“PURVARUPA AS A PREDICTOR OF VYADHI UTPATTI AND PROGNOSIS”

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Abstract: Purvarupa, the prodromal manifestation of disease described in Ayurvedic classics, represents the preliminary signs and symptoms that appear prior to the full clinical presentation of Vyadhi. Ayurveda considers Purvarupa as a crucial stage in Nidana Panchaka. The presence, intensity, and nature of Purvarupa provide valuable understating into upcoming Vyadhi Utpatti and its prognosis (Sadhyasadhyata). Recognition of Purvarupa enables prompt intervention through Nidana Parivarjana (elimination of causative factors).

The purvarupa is preventing progression and reducing complications. It corresponds to the stage of Sthanasamshraya, during which vitiated Doshas localize in vulnerable Dhatus and initiate subtle pathological change and reflecting the early localization of vitiated Doshas during Sthanasamshraya Avastha in susceptible tissues and initiate pathological changes. Mild and limited Purvarupa often indicate a favorable prognosis (Sadhya), whereas multiple, severe, and persistent prodromal features may suggest Krichra Sadhya, Yapya, or Asadhya conditions. Disease-specific (Vishishta) Purvarupa further enhance both diagnostic accuracy and prognostic assessment.

Early recognition of these signs enables timely intervention through Nidana Parivarjana, Shamana, or Shodhana therapies, thereby preventing progression to the Vyakti stage, where the disease becomes fully manifested. Purvarupa allows timely intervention, preventing progression and reducing complications. In addition to predicting disease onset, Purvarupa holds significant prognostic value.

Thus, Purvarupa functions as a vital predictive and prognostic tool in Ayurvedic clinical practice. Its systematic evaluation underscores the preventive, predictive, and personalized approach of Ayurveda, paralleling modern concepts of prodromal phases and early disease detection, and ultimately contributing to improved therapeutic outcomes and reduced disease burden. This article explores the conceptual basis, pathophysiological background and clinical applicability of Purvarupa in contemporary practice.

Keywords: Purvarupa, Vyadhi Utpatti, Prognosis, Sadhyasadyata, Rognidan, Predictive Ayurveda

Introduction

लिङ्ग अव्यक्तम् अल्पत्वाद् व्याधीनां तद्
यथा यथम्॥ (अ.सं.नि)^[16]

अव्यक्तं लक्षणं तस्य पूर्वरूपम् इति स्मृतं ॥
(मा. नि)^[8]

भावी व्याधि बोधकम् एव लिङ्ग पूर्वरूपम् इति
॥ (मा.नि)^[8]

Ayurveda, the science of life, emphasizes early recognition of pathological changes to prevent the full manifestation of disease. Among the fundamental diagnostic tools described in classical texts, *Nidana Panchaka* occupies a central position. It comprises Nidana (etiology), Purvarupa (premonitory symptoms), Rupa (clinical

process.

Etymology:^[2]

- Purva – prior
- Rupa – manifestation

Thus, Purvarupa denotes early symptoms that precede full disease expression (Vyakti Avastha).

स्थान संश्रयिणः कृद्धात् भावी व्याधि प्रबोधकम्
।

दोषाः कुर्वन्ति यत् लिङ्ग पूर्वरूपं तद् उच्यते ॥
(मा.नि)^[8]

- Recognizing Purvarupa enables:
- Prediction of disease occurrence
- Assessment of disease trajectory

- Improvement of prognosis

Acharya Charaka describes Purvarupa as the early indicators that suggest the upcoming manifestation of a particular Vyadhi.^[2] These signs carry significant diagnostic value when interpreted with clinical Interpretation, they reflect the initial interaction between vitiated Doṣas and susceptible Dhatus or Srotasas before complete localization and expression of pathology.^[3]

From a pathophysiological perspective, Purvarupa corresponds to a stage where Doṣas are aggravated and begin to localize in specific tissues but have not yet produced definitive structural changes. This stage aligns closely with the concept of *Shatkriyakala*, particularly the stages of *Sthanasamshraya* and early *Vyakti*.^[4]

The prognostic significance of Purvarupa is equally noteworthy. The nature, intensity, and duration of these premonitory symptoms help assess the strength of Doṣa involvement, the resilience of Dhatus, and the status of Agni. Purvarupa may indicate mild Doṣha disturbance with favorable prognosis (*Sadhya*), whereas intense and persistent premonitory signs often suggest deeper pathological involvement and possible progression toward chronicity (*Krichra*

Sadhya, *Yapya*, or *Asadhya*). Thus, careful clinical evaluation of Purvarupa aids not only in predicting Vyadhi Utpatti but also in estimating disease outcome.^[5]

Integrating the classical understanding of Purvarupa with contemporary clinical assessment can strengthen early diagnostic frameworks and promote personalized therapeutic strategies. This approach aligns with the preventive and predictive Patterns of modern medicine. A systematic understanding of its manifestations, diagnostic interpretation, and prognostic implications is essential for strengthening Ayurvedic clinical practice. The present article aims to explore Purvarupa as a predictor of disease manifestation and prognosis, emphasizing its relevance in early diagnosis and preventive healthcare.

प्राग्रूपं प्राग् उत्पत्ति लक्षणं व्याधेः। (च.सू.)
....प्राग्रूपं येन लक्ष्यते॥

उत्पित्सुरामयो दोष विशेषेण अनधिष्ठितः^[1]

Aim: To critically analyze the concept of Purvarupa in Ayurveda and evaluate its role as an early predictor of Vyadhi Utpatti (disease manifestation) and prognosis.

Objective: To explain the role of Purvarupa in the pathogenesis of disease

with reference to Shat Kriya Kala and analyze significance of Purvarupa in predicting specific Vyadhi before full clinical manifestation. To evaluate the prognostic value of Purvarupa in determining Sadhya, Krichra Sadhya, Yapya, and Asadhya conditions and assess the relationship between Purvarupa and Dosha-Dushya involvement.

Materials and Methods:

Study Design: This study is a conceptual and descriptive review study. It is based on classical Ayurvedic texts and related modern literature to understand the role of Purvarupa in early disease detection and prognosis.

Protocol Selection: Relevant references were collected from major Ayurvedic classics such as Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Ashtanga Hridaya. Modern medical literature related to prodromal symptoms and early disease stages was also reviewed. The collected material was analyzed and compared systematically.^[6]

Inclusion Criteria for Ayurvedic Interventions: References explaining the concept of Purvarupa, Descriptions of Purvarupa in different diseases, Textual references related to Nidana Panchaka, Concepts explaining early stages of

disease (Shatkriyakala), Preventive measures suggested at Purvarupa stage

Terminology: Ayurvedic terms such as Purvarupa, Doṣha, Dhatu, Agni, and Vyadhi Utpatti are used according to classical definitions. Modern terms like prodromal stage and early disease detection are used for better understanding and correlation.

Ethical Considerations: This study is based only on classical texts and published literature. No human or animal subjects were involved. Therefore, ethical approval was not required.

Results:

The present conceptual review of classical Ayurvedic literature (Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya) revealed the following observations regarding Purvarupa as a predictor of Vyadhi Utpatti and prognosis:

1. Stage of Manifestation

Purvarupa was consistently identified as occurring during the Sthanasamshraya stage of Shat Kriya Kala, where vitiated Doshas localize in susceptible Dhatus (Kha Vaigunya) without producing complete clinical features. This stage

represents a transitional and reversible phase in disease development.

2. Predictive Value for Disease Manifestation (Vyadhi Utpatti)

Classical texts describe disease-specific Purvarupa that precede full manifestation (Vyakti Avastha).

The analysis indicates:

Each Vyadhi has characteristic prodromal features. Recognition of these features allows prediction of the upcoming disease. Purvarupa serves as an early diagnostic indicator before structural pathology develops.

Examples identified:

- Jwara – Angamarda, Aruchi, Jrimbha, Tandra
- Rajyakshma – Swarabheda, Kasa, Daurbalya
- Prameha – Ati Sweda, Kleda, Gaurava
- Unmada – Chitta Vaikrita

These findings demonstrate the anticipatory and disease-specific nature of Purvarupa.

3. Dosha-Based Correlation

Purvarupa symptoms were found to correlate with specific Dosha predominance:

- Vata – Toda (pricking pain), Rukshata (dryness), Shoola
- Pitta – Daha (burning), Ushnata (heat), Trishna
- Kapha – Gaurava (heaviness), Alasya, Tandra

This establishes Purvarupa as an indicator of Dosha dominance and pathophysiological direction.

4. Indicator of Disease Severity

The intensity and number of Purvarupa were observed to reflect the strength of Dosha-Dushya interaction:

- Alpa (mild) Purvarupa – Suggest early and superficial pathology
- Bahu (multiple) Purvarupa – Indicate strong Dosha involvement
- Atyarth (severe) Purvarupa – Suggest rapid progression and deeper tissue involvement
- Thus, Purvarupa helps assess the probable severity of disease.

5. Prognostic Implications (Sadhya–Asadhyata)

- Diseases identified during Purvarupa stage are generally

Sukha Sadhya due to absence of structural damage.

- Extensive or severe Purvarupa may indicate Krichra Sadhya or Yapya conditions.
- Early intervention at this stage improves therapeutic outcomes.

Discussion

Purvarupa occupies a pivotal position in the Ayurvedic understanding of disease evolution. It represents the stage at which vitiated Doshas localize in susceptible tissues (Kha Vaigunya) and initiate Dosha-Dushya Sammurchana without producing fully manifested symptoms. This stage corresponds to Sthanasamshraya in Shat Kriya Kala and serves as the critical transition between functional imbalance and clinical disease expression^[7]

Purvarupa as a Predictor of Vyadhi Utpatti Charaka defines Purvarupa as the preliminary manifestations of a disease that indicate its impending development^[8]. These prodromal features are incomplete and subtle but disease-specific. Their identification enables the physician to anticipate Vyadhi before the appearance of classical Lakshanas (Rupa).

For instance:

- In Jwara, Angamarda, Jrimbha, Aruchi, and Tandra precede the rise of fever (Charaka Samhita, Nidana Sthana 1).
- In Rajayakshma, Swarabheda and Kasa appear before advanced pulmonary involvement (Charaka Samhita, Nidana Sthana 8).
- In Prameha, Kleda and Ati Sweda signal early metabolic disturbance (Charaka Samhita, Nidana Sthana 4).

These descriptions demonstrate that Purvarupa has predictive specificity and reflects early pathophysiological changes.

The mechanism underlying Purvarupa can be explained through Dosha Prakopa followed by Prasara and eventual localization in a susceptible Dhatu. Sushruta describes that disease manifests when aggravated Doshas interact with weakened tissues^[9]. Therefore, Purvarupa signifies the initial interaction stage prior to structural damage.

Dosha Predominance and Pathological Direction

Purvarupa also indicates Dosha dominance:

- Vata-related prodromes include Shoola, Toda, and Rukshata.
- Pitta-related prodromes include Daha and Ushnata.
- Kapha-related prodromes include Gaurava and Tandra.

This Dosha-specific expression aids in identifying the underlying pathogenesis and guides early therapeutic planning^[10]

Thus, Purvarupa serves not only as a disease predictor but also as a guide to Dosha-based management.

Prognostic Significance (Sadhya–Asadhyata):

In Ayurveda, prognosis depends upon factors such as Dosha Bala, Rogi Bala, Kala, and Avastha. Since Purvarupa occurs before structural damage, diseases detected at this stage are generally considered Sukha Sadhya.

Charaka emphasizes that diseases treated in their early stages are easier to manage^[11]. Conversely, if Purvarupa are numerous (Bahu) or intense (Atyarth), it suggests strong Dosha-Dushya Sammurchana and possible rapid progression toward Vyakti and Bheda stages. Such conditions may fall under Krichra Sadhya or Yasya categories.

The absence of noticeable Purvarupa, particularly in Agantuja or Aupasargika

disorders, may indicate sudden onset and potentially severe prognosis.

Preventive and Clinical Implications:

The concept of Purvarupa aligns with the preventive approach central to Ayurveda.

Intervention during Sthanasamshraya through:

Nidana Parivarjana, Shamana therapy, Shodhana procedures can prevent progression to the Vyakti stage.

Modern medicine recognizes a comparable “prodromal phase” in many infectious, metabolic, and neurological disorders. The Ayurvedic framework, however, integrates prodromal symptoms within a comprehensive Dosha-Dushya model, making it both predictive and therapeutic.

Integrative Perspective:

- Purvarupa may be correlated with:
- Subclinical inflammatory states
- Pre-diabetic metabolic alterations

The review establishes that Purvarupa:

- Marks the Sthanasamshraya stage of pathogenesis
- Predicts specific disease manifestation
- Reflects Dosha predominance

Assists in determining prognosis:

- Provides a therapeutic window for preventive intervention
- Recognition of Purvarupa enhances diagnostic precision and supports early, individualized treatment strategies.

Conclusion

Purvarupa represents a crucial diagnostic and prognostic concept in Ayurveda, marking the transitional stage between Dosha vitiation and full clinical manifestation of disease. Occurring during the Sthanasamshraya phase of Shat Kriya Kala, Purvarupa reflects early Dosha-Dushya interaction before irreversible structural damage develops.

The analysis establishes that Purvarupa serves as a reliable predictor of Vyadhi Utpatti by indicating the specific disease likely to manifest, identifying Dosha predominance, and revealing the direction of pathogenesis. Its recognition enables early diagnosis and timely therapeutic intervention, thereby preventing progression to advanced stages such as Vyakti and Bheda.

From a prognostic perspective, the nature, number, and intensity of Purvarupa provide valuable insight into disease

severity and curability. Mild and limited prodromal features generally indicate favorable prognosis, whereas extensive or severe Purvarupa suggest stronger Dosha-Dushya involvement and potentially guarded outcomes.

Thus, Purvarupa functions not only as an early warning sign but also as a preventive and prognostic tool in Ayurvedic practice. Incorporating careful assessment of Purvarupa into clinical evaluation strengthens diagnostic precision, supports individualized treatment planning, and reinforces the preventive approach that forms the foundation of Ayurveda.

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EXAMPLES:-

Table 1: Disease-Specific Purvarupa and Modern Correlation

Disease	Ayurvedic Purvarupa	Classical Reference	Modern Correlation	Predictive Significance
Jvara	Angamarda, Jrimbha, Aruchi, Tandra	Charaka Samhita, Nidana Sthana 1	Prodromal phase of fever (fatigue, malaise, anorexia, yawning)	Indicates early systemic inflammatory response before temperature rise
Rajayakshma	Swarabheda, Kasa	Charaka Samhita, Nidana Sthana 8	Early respiratory irritation, chronic cough	Suggests early pulmonary involvement before structural lung damage
Prameha	Kleda, Ati Sweda	Charaka Samhita, Nidana Sthana 4	Early metabolic disturbance, insulin resistance, hyperhidrosis	Reflects metabolic imbalance before overt diabetes

Table 2: Mechanism of Purvarupa (Ayurvedic vs Modern View)

Ayurvedic Concept	Explanation	Modern Interpretation
Doṣa Prakopa	Aggravation of Vata, Pitta, or Kapha	Functional imbalance (metabolic, inflammatory, neuro-hormonal changes)
Prasara	Spread of aggravated Doṣas	Systemic circulation of inflammatory mediators
Sthānasamśraya	Localization in susceptible Dhatu	Target organ vulnerability / tissue susceptibility
Purvarupa	Early warning signs before Vyakti	Prodromal or subclinical stage
Vyakti	Fully manifested disease	Clinical disease with clear diagnostic criteria

Table 3: Doṣa Predominance in Purvarupa

Doṣa	Ayurvedic Purvarupa	Classical Reference	Modern Clinical Correlation	Pathological Direction
Vāta	Shoola, Toda, Rukshata	Ashtanga Hridaya, Nidana Sthana 1	Pain, neural irritation, dryness	Neurogenic / degenerative tendency
Pitta	Daha, Ushnata	Ashtanga Hridaya, Nidana Sthana 1	Burning sensation, inflammation, hypermetabolic state	Inflammatory progression
Kapha	Gaurava, Tandra	Ashtanga Hridaya, Nidana Sthana 1	Heaviness, lethargy, metabolic slowing	Congestive / metabolic disorders