



RESEARCH ARTICLE

NADI YANTRA: A CRITICAL REVIEW

^{1,*}Dr. Himani and ²Dr. Ajay Kumar Gupta

¹PG scholar, P.G. department, Uttarakhand Ayurveda University, Rishikul Campus, Haridwar, Uttarakhand Indian Pin code-249401; ²H.O.D. and Professor, P.G. department of Shalya Tantra, Uttarakhand Ayurveda University, Rishikul Campus Haridwar, Uttarakhand Indian Pin code-249401

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ABSTRACT

Acharya Sushruta has described 'Shalya' as those factors which produces discomfort or obstruction in the body and mind. The instruments used for the extraction or removal of these *Shalya* are called as *Yantra*. *Yantras* are an essential component of all major and minor surgical procedures. Among these instruments, *Nadi Yantra* is an important instrument. New developments in *Nadi Yantra* have made it possible to resolve issues for both therapeutic and diagnostic aspects ^[1].

Keywords:

Yantra, Nadi Yantra, Roga-darshanarth, Aachushanarth, Srotogata-shalyauddharana, Endoscope, Laparoscope.

*Corresponding author: Dr. Himani

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INTRODUCTION

Among the eight branches of *Ayurveda* (*Ashtanga Ayurveda*), *Shalya Tantra* has a unique and significant position. *Shalya Tantra* is the branch that deals with the diagnosis and management of diseases along with surgical intervention. The term *Shalya* refers to any foreign body or harmful factor that causes pain or disturbance in the body, and *Tantra* refers to the systematic knowledge. Thus, *Shalya Tantra* mainly focuses on the removal of such harmful entities through surgical procedures ^[2]. *Nadi yantra*- As it's name suggests, *Nadi* is a tubular hollow instrument characterized by specific features such as *Anekapravyojanani* (it has multiple uses) and *Anekaprakarani* (multiple types are available), *Ekatomukhani* (single opening), and *Ubhayatomukhani* (two openings).

"नाडीयंत्राणि- अत्यनेकप्रकाराणि अनेकप्रयोजनानी एकतोमुखानी, उभयतोमुखानी च ।

तानी स्रोतोगतशल्योद्धारणार्थ, रोगदर्शनार्थम् आचूषणार्थ, क्रियासौकार्यार्थं चेति" ^[3]।

These instruments are mainly used for *Srotogata-shalyauddharana* (removal of foreign body from *srotasas* or body channels), *Rogadarshanarth* (for visualization of diseases

located within channels or body cavities such as *arsha* in anal canal, nasal polyp in nasal cavity & foreign body in ear canal), *Aachushanamarth* (for suction or aspiration of fluids such as blood, pus & secretions from body cavities), *Kriyasaukaryarth* (for therapeutic purposes like application of medicines, *kshara* or excision of mass).

तानी स्रोतोद्धारपरिणाहानि, यथायोगदीर्घाणि च ^[4]।

The circumference or thickness of these *Nadi Yantras* should be according to the size and openings of the *srotasas* (body channels) and their length should be appropriate according to need and site of procedure. According to the classical text, *Nadi Yantra* are described in twenty different types, each designed for specific disease condition and surgical purposes ^[5].

Modern aspect of different types *Nadi Yantra*-^[6]: Various *Nadi Yantras* described in *Ayurvedic* surgical texts are tubular or hollow instruments used for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes. *Shringa Yantra* and *Alabu Yantra* are mainly used for *Raktamokshana* (bloodletting) by creating suction, while *Ghati Yantra* is a pot-shaped instrument used to suck out vitiated blood. *Bhagandara Yantra*, described by

Sushruta, helps in the diagnosis and treatment of *Bhagandara* (fistula-in-ano), and it is of two types- *Ekachhidra* and *Dwichhidra*. *Arsho Yantra* is similar to a modern proctoscope, is used for examination and treatment of *Arsha* (hemorrhoids). *Nadi Vrana Yantra* is used for irrigation of wound, whereas *Mutravridhhi Yantra* and *Dakodara Yantra* are used for drainage of urine or accumulated fluids. *Niruddhaprakasha Yantra* is used as a urethral dilator, and *Sanniruddha Guda Yantra* is used as an anal dilator.

Other instruments such as *Uttara Basti Yantra* are used for administration of *Uttara Basti*, and *Dhoom Yantra* is used for *Dhooopan* (medicated smoke inhalation). These various instruments are used for better understanding of surgical and therapeutic procedures in *Ayurveda*. *Acharya Vagbhatta* has also mentioned six additional types of *Nadi Yantras*, which are used for examination and management of different conditions [7].

- *Kantha Shalya Avlokini Nadi* – It is used to examine the throat and to remove foreign bodies from throat.
- *Shalya Nirghatini Nadi* – It is used for removal of embedded foreign bodies
- *Anguli Tradaka Yantra* – It is a finger-like instrument used to explore narrow passages.
- *Shami Yantra* – It is used for examination of internal structures, it is similar to *Arsho Yantra*.
- *Ghrana Arbuda Arsho Yantra* – It is used for examination and treatment of nasal polyps, growths or lesions.
- *Yoni Vranekshana Yantra* – It is used for examination of wounds, growths or lesions in the *yoni* (vaginal region).

In allopathic medical science, instruments similar to *Nadi Yantra* are hollow tubular tools, which are used for diagnostic as well as therapeutic purposes. Important examples include:

Endoscope^[8]

Endoscopy is a minimally invasive procedure to visualize internal organs using an endoscope (flexible tube with light, camera, channels).

Types: Includes upper GI endoscopy, sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy, bronchoscopy, cystoscopy.

Uses

- Diagnostic purpose: For visualization and diagnosis of ulcers, tumors, polyps, inflammation, bleeding, foreign bodies and also biopsies.
- Therapeutic purpose: For polyp removal, foreign body removal, bleeding control, stricture dilatation, stent placement.

Advantages: It provides better and direct visualization of internal structures, is minimally invasive, fulfills both diagnosis & treatment purposes, early recovery. **Contraindications:** Peritonitis, obstruction, abdominal trauma/surgery, severe GI bleeding, paralytic ileus, coma, pyloric stenosis.

Laparoscope^[9]: It is a hollow tubular slender instrument with a camera and light source, used to visualize the abdominal cavity through small incisions (ports).

Pneumoperitoneum is created by inflation of abdomen with Carbon-di-oxide gas for better visualization of viscera and abdominal cavity. It is used nowadays for diagnostic and therapeutic (surgical) procedures such as appendectomy, cholecystectomy, hernia repair, diagnostic laparoscopy, etc. Its benefits include lesser pain, smaller scar, minimal blood loss, less hospital stay and faster recovery. Ryle's tube - It is a flexible tube inserted through the nose into the stomach and it is used for enteral feeding, gastric contents aspiration, gastric lavage and removal of toxic substances^[10]. Kehr's T-tube - It is placed in the common bile duct after biliary surgery to allow bile drainage and maintain duct patency^[11]. Flatus tube - It is inserted into the rectum to relieve abdominal distension by allowing the passage of intestinal gas^[12]. Drains - These are tubes placed in surgical wounds to remove accumulated blood, pus, or other fluids, thereby promoting healing^[13]. Intravenous cannula - It is a small hollow tube inserted into a vein for intravenous administration of fluids, drugs, and parenteral nutrition, and collection of blood sample^[14]. Urinary catheter - It is a flexible rubber tube inserted into the urinary bladder through the urethra for drainage of urine, for monitoring urine output, for bladder irrigation, and administration of medications, etc^[15].

CONCLUSION

Nadi Yantra described in the classical texts of *Ayurveda* shows the advanced surgical knowledge of ancient *Acharyas*. These tubular instruments are designed with specific shapes, sizes, and functions to facilitate both diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, such as visualization of internal structures, removal of foreign bodies, suction of fluids, administration of medicines, etc. *Acharya Sushruta* and *Acharya Vagbhatta* have described multiple types of *Nadi Yantras* according to different disease conditions and anatomical locations, highlighting the systematic approach of *Ayurvedic* surgery. Many of these instruments closely resemble with allopathic medical devices such as endoscopes, laparoscopes, catheters, drains, cannulas etc. which are widely used in current medical practices. Thus, learning the concept of *Nadi Yantras* demonstrates the salient foresight of *Ayurvedic* scholars and establishes a clear connection between classical surgical instruments and today's existing sophisticated minimally invasive techniques or devices.

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