



## Applied aspect of anujyoti indriya adhyaya W.S.R. Arista

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### Abstract

*Anujyoti* explicates the signs and symptoms of imminent death due to the diminution of *Agni* (factor responsible for digestion and metabolism). The components of life like lifespan, strength, complexion, enthusiasm, health, growth, luster, and immunity are dependent upon the status of *Agni*. Diminution of its power causes generalized symptoms indicative of imminent death. Declaration of the estimated time for death might be based on the experience of many experts of that time, which can now be reestablished in light of present scientific developments. The clinical signs and symptoms given in this chapter are useful as additional information for the assessment of prognosis.

**Keywords:** *Anujyoti*, *Arista*, death, digestion

### Introduction

The present chapter, *Anujyotiyamindriyam* or *Anujyoti*, deals with near-death signs that arise due to a decrease in digestive capacity of a person i.e. *jatharagni*. The chapter indicates the importance of the digestive and metabolic functions of *Agni*. The ingested food is helpful and nutritive to the body only if, it passes through various digestive and metabolic processes successfully. This food nourishes the body at the cellular level and it reflects in the form of good complexion, strength, good health, enthusiasm, and nourishment to the formation of *Ojas*. Some part of food digested with the help of *agni* nourishes sensory organs along with *mana* (mind) too. *Anujyoti* has emphasized the importance of quality and quantity of *Agni* for metabolic activity of the body, that if the *agni* works well, the person lives long and if it ceases; the person is going to die.

Some signs seen in diseased or in a healthy person, with or without any significant/visible pathology leading to death, are mentioned. These signs occur due to the initiation of some life-threatening diseases with poor prognosis even in the initial stage.

It is emphasized that any extreme alternation in body physiology or psychology, a person's behavior, mental functions, etc. without any significant reason; is also one of the signs of death.

Mind supremacy is also highlighted, as the mental strength of a person declines due to the advancement of disease; then the person is likely to die. The composition of the physical body (*sharira*), sensoria (*indriya*), mind (*sattva*), and soul (*Atma*) is called life (*ayu*). With the advanced stage of disease, the physical body gets damaged, sensoria may also get affected and the soul becomes ready to leave the diseased body; in such a situation, only strong mind power can sustain life as the physical body follows the mind and vice versa.

It is elucidated that if a person's life span has ended; even good quality physicians, medicine, or caretaker are helpless. In a nutshell person's life span is fixed and when it is gets finished, some signs are manifested called *an arista*.

Further, the status of a dying person is described briefly

that, he may develop an aversion to all loving and respectful persons, friends, food (and other basic essentials for surviving), etc. as his soul is almost in position to detach this body and preparing self to travel to another world. The chapter defines *arista* with a new dimension. The concomitant aggravation of *dosha* (either qualitative or quantitative) with life-threatening diminution of *dhatu* is significant in the prediction of death.

### Tattva Vimarsha (Fundamental Principles)

- Optimum quality and quantity of *agni* are necessary for the sustenance of life.
- Stable mental status, complexion, and mental strength are markers to predict the lifespan of a patient.
- Sudden changes in likings, gentleness, memory, sacrifices, intellect, and strength in a person are pre-indications of death.
- Altered sensorium and psychological status leading to various delusions and hallucinations are pre-indicators of death.
- Near the end of life, there is a general decline in complexion, voice, *agni*, speech, and state of mind, as well as sleep pattern, alters.
- The prognostic signs of life in diseased as well as in healthy person shall always be assessed. This helps to decide the remaining lifespan and planning treatment.
- The signs originated due to extensively vitiated and pervaded *dosha* throughout the body and already transcended the stage of the treatment is called *arista* (signs of death).

### Discussion

Metabolic process and thermoregulatory center situated in the hypothalamus play key roles to generate and maintain body temperature respectively. Reduced temperature shows a slow metabolic process and gradually it ceases completely, causing death. With the help of healthy digestive power and proper metabolic activity; food nourishes the body and provides macro and micronutrients to the body.

In any manner, hampered blood or oxygen supply to the

brain leads to lack of concentration, weakness of mental functions, or agitation. Deposition of any toxic substance or progressive degenerative changes of mind also leads to such symptoms. Aging and death are considered natural processes over time. With the declining phase of life, aging symptoms start to appear, as new cell production is almost stopped and older cell destruction continues. With the passage of senescence; weakness, decreasing appetite, muscular wasting, decreased fluid intake, neurological dysfunctions, decreasing level of consciousness, etc. are common symptoms that manifest and gradually lead to cessation of life.

Every individual has a good appetite and capability of digesting foods he regularly ingests. *Ksheerada* (only on milk), *ksheera-anna* (milk and rice products), *annada* (staple foods), are three basic stages of life. During the aging process, gradual reduction in both qualitative consumption and digestive abilities are observed. This in turn influences the individual's physical and mental wellbeing leading to a reduction in life span ending in death. As per the principle of *Yatha Brahmande Tatha Pinde*, whatever is there in the universe, is there in the human body. Hence there should be some connections between the human body and the universe. When the soul is preparing for detachment from the body to start its journey to the other world, there should be some indications from the universe as an indicator of impending death. As per Indian tradition, offerings of food to birds especially to crow, and non-acceptance of offering by crow may indicate the preparation of the soul for detachment from a living body. The inability to see *Arundhati* in the sky is another indication of the same. Acute loss or gain of luster or body weight can be the result of carcinogenic conditions or severe catabolic changes taking place in the body that can be fatal for the person. The brain regulates multiple functions related to the sensory, motor, and autonomous nervous systems like emotions, intellect, and many other activities. Amygdala, and physiological functioning of the limbic system of the brain, are responsible for proper emotions and their expression. If these deviate grossly, it shows the involvement of the higher center in pathogenesis and poor prognosis.

Gradual cessation of the functions is a clear indication of either degenerative changes or space-occupying lesion (SOL) in the specific area. Acute toxicity of the brain also leads to acute degeneration of brain cells or infarction that leads to hampering of function<sup>[7]</sup>. The sudden appearance of crescent-shaped streaks or blood vessel networks on the forehead may relate to Amyloidosis. It is a rare disease that occurs when a protein (albumin) substance gets deposited in a person's organ. This abnormal protein is usually produced in the bone marrow and can be deposited in any tissue or organ. The prognosis is poor.

If a person having a combination of the dual type of activity of mind i.e. exaggerated (in form of tremor), and diminished activity (in form of stupor), simultaneously; is supposed to die within a month. These dual types of signs may indicate increased intracranial pressure (ICP) due to localized mass like hematoma, neoplasm, abscess, edema, infarction, obstruction in CSF circulation, diffuse brain edema (like encephalitis, meningitis, or diffuse head injury), thrombosis, or idiopathic intracranial hypertension. Symptoms of raised ICP are altered mental state, lethargy, irritability, slow decision making, and abnormal social behavior. The ultimate result of the pathophysiology of such a condition is

stupor, coma, and death. Rapidly rising ICP leads to syncope, seizures. These neurologic changes seen in increased ICP are mostly due to hypoxia and hyper apnea. If fecal matter or other excreta are mixed with *ama*, it sinks straight into the water due to its heaviness. The same concept is applied to other body discharge or *dhatu*s too. Fecal matter is the end product of digestion. Hence, if it sinks in water it shows incomplete or improper digestion of food. *Shukra* is the last *dhatu* and hence all *dhatvagni* contribute (directly or indirectly) to its formation. To sink *Shukra* in water is indicative that the *dhatu* is in the same stage. To get dipped all the three i.e. feces, urine, and semen show impairment of *jatharagni* along with *dhatvagni* functions leading to qualitative mal-formation of all *dhatu*s. Such a situation has been considered fatal.

Muscular wasting of hands and feet is a type of neurogenic muscular atrophy with a poor prognosis. Swelling over both extremities along with the face is an indication of damage of two vital organs simultaneously i.e. heart and kidney and hence the survival of the patient is difficult. The appearance of blue lines occurs in various conditions. This may be an indication of venous congestion due to heart, lungs, and liver diseases, requiring attention while scaling the span of life.

Immediate disappearance of manifested smallpox subsequently develops acute toxemia and hence leads to death. Combined manifestation of the stiff neck along with inflamed throat and scrotum and swollen tongue is the condition of tertiary stage of syphilis when the person develops syphilitic meningitis (a complication of untreated syphilis), is a life-threatening condition.

Visual (or even other sensorial) hallucinations are often part of the dying experience. A person may unknowingly involve in such activities with such illusions. This is the phase when the soul is getting ready to detach from the body and travel to another world. The dying may turn their focus to "another world", and thus may see (or feel other sensorial hallucination of) some unusual things, he may see or talk to such people who are already died.

Various kinds of hallucinations are indications of the altered psychological state of a dying person, and to have laughter without any specific cause is also the result of such hallucinations. To lick own lips is the sign of dehydration and coldness of breath and extremity are the indication of almost reducing the function of the heart and hence, stoppage of blood flow to the concerned area. Delusions along with altered sensorial organs are the sign of death. Days or hours before death, the dying person becomes less and less responsive to voice and touch and may not awaken. (Sometimes, quite unexpectedly, the person may appear well and even look as if he/she is going to recover. The person may be alert and talkative. But it does not mean that he is getting well; of course, the time may be used as a "window of opportunity" to say what you need to say and have closure).

These all of the sudden recovery changes are also signs of near death.

As per ancient classical texts, the life span of everyone is fixed and pre-ordained. No one can add years to life only quality of life can be improved with medications. The same thing is meant here when it is said that death is the destiny of the patient and that desirable quality of medicine, human resource, and all other things cannot make the person outlive his destined lifespan.

## Conclusion

Ayurveda is a systematic knowledge of medicine that defines Ayu (life) as a combination of sharira, indriyas, satva, and atmaa with an objective of Dhatu Samya kriya (to bring dhatus in their equilibrium state) each section of Charak Samhita is focusing on the betterment of Ayu. In this context indriyasthan was designed to tell the Ayu (life span) of the diseased person with the help of arista. Arishtas is the fatal signs of death that definitely occur in a diseased person before death just like flowers indicate upcoming fruit and smoke indicates agni (fire) and cloud indicates srain. Different acharyas of Ayurveda described them (arista) in different sthana of their text (Sushruta acharya in sutrastha & vagbhata acharya in sharirsthana) and accept its importance. Hence physicians must keep a keen observation on such fatal signs. A physician who acquired mastery in arista vidgyang its success in his treatment, fame, and prosperity. Arishtas are wrongly interpreted due to the subtle nature of these symptoms, ignorance or stupidity of the physician, or because such symptoms are very closely followed by the death of the patient.

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