



Review Article

www.ijrap.net

(ISSN Online:2229-3566, ISSN Print:2277-4343)



A REVIEW ON PHYSICAL SIGNS AS DIAGNOSTIC AND PROGNOSTIC INDICATORS: INSIGHTS FROM AYURVEDA AND SAMUDRIKA SHASTRA

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Received on: 30/9/25 Accepted on: 08/11/25

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DOI: 10.7897/2277-4343.166226

ABSTRACT

Ayurveda integrates principles from allied sciences, including Samudrika Shastra, a branch of Jyotisha Shastra (astrology) to achieve its objective of prevention and cure. Samudrika Shastra examines physical features to predict character, health, and longevity. Rooted in ancient Vedic texts, it complements Ayurvedic concepts, particularly in the assessment of lifespan (Ayu Pariksha). Both disciplines describe signs related to Ayu Pariksha (assessment of lifespan). This study explores the overlap between Ayurveda and Samudrika Shastra and their relevance to modern health paradigms. To compile references to Ayu Pariksha in classical Ayurvedic texts and Samudrika Shastra, compare their approaches, and explore the relevance of physical signs in contemporary health sciences. A literature review was conducted from classical Ayurvedic texts (Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Kashyapa Samhita with commentaries) and Samudrika Shastra (Pandit Shaktidhara Sharma). Supplementary references were identified from online databases and secondary sources. Both Ayurveda and Samudrika Shastra focus on physical features to determine health, lifespan, and destiny. Ayurveda offers a holistic approach to Ayu and Ayu Pariksha, while Samudrika Shastra offers detailed descriptions of visible body parts through palmistry and physiognomy. Similarities were noted in signs related to feet, abdomen, testicles, nails, and eyes. Samudrika Shastra also includes predictive signs about fortune and death, which are not emphasized in Ayurveda. Ayurveda and Samudrika Shastra, though distinct in orientation medical versus predictive share common ground in interpreting physical signs as indicators of health and longevity. Their interdisciplinary insights retain relevance for integrative health and wellness approaches.

Keywords: Ayu Pariksha, Ayurveda, Samudrika Shastra, Physiognomy.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is known as Sarvaparishat Shastra (the scripture acceptable in all assemblies) because it incorporates concepts from other disciplines that support its objective of prevention of health and cure of diseases. Acharya Sushruta emphasized that mastery of multiple sciences is essential for becoming an accomplished physician.¹ Among these supportive disciplines, Samudrika Shastra, the traditional Indian science of physiognomy plays a role in understanding lifespan, health, and destiny through the study of bodily features. The roots of Samudrika Shastra can be traced to the Vedas, Puranas, and epics such as the Mahabharata and Ramayana. It is considered an “ocean of knowledge,” wherein the physical body is seen as a reflection of inner qualities and destiny. Samudrika Shastra studies an individual’s physical features to predict their character, behavior, destiny, lifespan, diseases or death. Ayurveda, similarly, recognizes certain Sharira Lakshan (constitutional signs) indicative of lifespan and vitality. This interconnection emphasizes the significance of studying Ayurvedic concepts within Samudrika Shastra texts and vice versa. This article examines the analogous concepts of Ayurveda and Samudrika Shastra in the context of Ayu Pariksha, highlighting similarities, differences, and their modern-day relevance. Fulfil these purposes, as primary sources: Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Kashyapa Samhita (with commentaries), and Samudrika Shastra by Pandit Shaktidhara Sharma and as secondary sources:

commentaries, research updates, and published literature from online resources reviewed. By this made a qualitative textual analysis with a comparative approach. Relevant Lakshanas were compiled under body parts (Anga-Pratyanga) for Ayurveda and Samudrika shastra, followed by thematic comparison.

Concept of Ayu and Lifespan Indicators in Ayurveda and Samudrika Shastra

Ayurveda and Samudrika Shastra are integral parts of ancient Indian wisdom. Ayurveda focuses on the concept of Ayu, with the primary goal of preserving the health of a healthy individual and treating ailments in those who are unwell.² Acharyas of Ayurveda emphasize that patient should only be treated if their life span remains.³ Therefore, to determine this, they have outlined various physical signs that indicate the lifespan of an individual. Similarly, Samudrika Shastra also describes physical signs in detail to predict the future including life span of the person. Ayurveda classifies features under Sharira Lakshana and Anguli Pramana (finger measurement), while Samudrika Shastra details physiognomic features of the face, limbs, palms, feet, and moles.

Both the disciplines use various signs and symptoms including shape, dimensions and special features of various body parts for diagnoses and prediction. It covers entire body from feet to head. A detailed comparative table of features (from feet to head) was compiled which is described as Table 1.

Table 1: Anga-Pratyanga Lakshana (features of body parts) and its effect mentioned under Ayurveda and Samudrika Sastra text

Anga-Pratyanga	Lakshana according to Ayurveda ³⁴	Result	Lakshana according to Samudrika Sastra ³⁵	Result
Pada (feet)	Pinna Pada (large foot), well-established and have lines upward.	Having long life, wealth and ruler (master).	Feet are free from sweat, warm, soles are soft like a lotus, toes are curled inward, nails are charming and red, heels are well-formed and devoid of veins, joints are hidden and raised like those of a tortoise.	Attains supremacy over humans
	If marked with auspicious symbols like the Swastika, plow, lotus, conch, wheel, horse, chariot or elephant	The child will be a king.		
	Maha Pada (who has greater length of feet) Fourteen (L), six (W), four (H) Angula ³⁶	Dirghayu (long life)	If marked with auspicious symbols like the half-moon, bow, triangle, fish, swastika, plow, lotus, conch, wheel, horse, elephant, or chariot along with one upward line.	The child will be a king
	Neither excessive fleshy nor excessively emaciated and having the shape like that of tortoise.	Dirghayu (long life)	Large feet	Travels great distances
	Copper-colored, round and smooth feet.	Prosperous	-	-
	Feet are turned inward	Moderate wealth, lifespan	-	-
	Fleshy feet	Madhyama Ayu (70 years).		
	White colored feet	Poor	Feet are like a sieve, particularly rough, with yellow claws, crooked and full of veins, dried up and having sparse fingers.	Experiences poverty and suffering from diseases
	No lines	The person will be engaged in others' work (servitude).	-	-
	If there are many lines,	Ill health		
	Flat feet	Having romantic relationships with other people's women.		
	Small feet	Short lifespan and no children	Kashaya Varna (reddish-brown) feet	Brings ruin to his lineage
	Strong, Small and free from hair and veins	Long life	Not mentioned	-
Gulpha (ankle)	Excessive protruding ankles	Loss of wealth	-	-
	Very large	Misery person	-	-
Jangha (Calf)	Hasva / Tanu Jangha (small calf region) Eighteen (L), Sixteen (C) Angula	Dirghayu (long life)	Round shape along with sparse hair and resemble to trunk of elephant	Destined to be kings
	Neither excessive bulky nor excessively emaciated, having resemblance with that of a deer and having vessels, bone and joints well covered.	Dirghayu (long life)	-	-
	excessive thin or very bulky along with visible vein and hair	Undesirable and cause for widows.	Calf region similar dog or jackal	Impoverished and lack wealth
Janu (knee joint)	Gudha (well covered with muscles)	Long life	Large and equally fleshy knees	Have a long life
	-	-	Wide knees	Impoverished
Uru (Thigh)	Well-formed fleshy, covered veins and smooth thigh	Long life	-	-
Sphik (Buttocks)	Buttocks are round, firm, fleshy, neither excessively elevated nor excessively depressed	Dirghayu	fleshy buttocks	Sukhivant (happy)
	Small buttocks	Virtuous	-	-
	Emaciated buttocks	Devoid of children	Madhyam Spik	Prone to illness
	Large and long buttocks	Indicates flawed characters and loss of authority	Atisthula Sphik (excessive bulky buttocks)	Poor, unfortunate
Vrushana (testicles)	Vrushana resembles like bull, ass, horse, goat and ship	Fortunate and long life	Hidden testicles i.e., encased in flesh and symmetrical	Considered to be the rulers of the earth.
	Elongated	Long life	Elongated	Live for a hundred years.
	Slim	Unfortunate and infertility	Elongated and broken	Deprived of strength.
	Small testicles	Short life span with miseries	Upward rise testicles	Short lifespan
	-	-	Only one testicle	meet death in water.

Meha / Linga / Shishna (Penis)	Soft, long, erected, big, coppery, uncovered glance, large prepuce, and large meatus	Praiseworthy and fruitful	Straight Linga	Have children.
	-	-	Small Linga	Wealthy
	Thin, extremely short, long, without covering, white or black discharge, covered on left side	Not good	Sthula Linga	Impotence
	-	-	Curved Linga	Childless, destitute.
	-	-	Bent left side	Poverty
	-	-	Slender Linga	Suffer from severe diseases like diabetes etc. eventually leading to death
	Waist is less than 3/4 of the chest in circumference, even and plump with muscles. ³⁷	Dirghayu	Waist is like that of a lion	Considered to be a king.
Kati (Waist)	-	-	Waist resembles that of monkey or camel's calf	Considered to be poor.
	Samaunnata (evenly elevated)	Long life	Uniform Kukshi	Moderate pleasures.
Kukshi (flank)	Hairy flank	Mobile person	Kukshi are high	Considered to be king.
	Visible vessels on flank	Indulge impure food	Kukshi are deep	Without indulgence.
	Flat flank	Poor	Kukshi are uneven	Deceitful/crooked.
	Large abdomen	Indulgence	Large Abdomen (like well-rounded shape)	Pleasure-seeking.
Udara (Abdomen)	Firm, slightly elevated, soft, not excessively large	Long life	Abdomen resembles a pot or a brass vessel	Extreme lustful.
	Atishushka (excessive emaciated)	Infertile	-	-
	Shushka Udara	Poor	Abdomen resembles to snake	Poor and big eater
	Abdomen is pressed above the naval	Anayushkara (unfavorable to long life)	-	-
	Single fold at Udara	Favorable	Single fold	Will meet death by a weapon
	Two-folds	Intelligent	Two-folds	Indulgent pleasures with women
	Three folds	Good fortunate	Three folds	Destined to become a teacher or scholar
	Four folds	Children and longevity	Four folds	Blessed with many children
	Many folds	Unfavorable and not desirable	No fold	Person should be regarded as a protector of others/guardian.
Nabhi (Navel)	Gambhir Nabhi (deep seated navel)	Dirghayu	Navel is wide and elevated on all sides	Happy beings.
	Deep, turned to the right, round, with raised edges, and free from hair, veins and wrinkles.	Dirghayu	Navel spirals to the right	Bring intelligence and wisdom
			Navel resembles a lotus petal (or a shape similar to a lotus)	Considered to be king.
			Navel is wide at the upper part	Wealthy person
			Navel is wide on both sides	Long-lived and prosperous.
	Large, serious, and elevated navel	Leader (master)	Navel is located in the center but is uneven (irregular).	Suffer from Shoola (pain) and poverty.
	Concave and non-elevated navel	Indicative of both happiness and sorrow	Navel is small, invisible, and deep	Distressing for such beings.
Urah (Chest)	Small-shaped navel	Infertility	Navel spirals to the left	Bring deceit and misfortune.
	Vistirna Urah (Broad and fleshy)	Dirghayu	Symmetrical	Wealthy
	Twenty-four (W), twelve (H) Angula	Dirghayu	Broad Chest	courageous and warriors.
Parshva (sides of chest and abdomen)	-	-	Chest is thin, uneven or twisted	Poor and meet their death through external injuries.
	Maha Dirgha Pashva, Amsapatini (firm, well-formed and well covered) and stable	Dirghayu	Smooth and even	Wealthy and fortunate.
	Round, fleshy, unctuous, devoid of hair and veins	Dirghayu	-	-
Parshva (sides of chest and abdomen)	Along with hair and veins	Wandering person	Deep and crooked	Devoid of pleasures.

Prushta (Back)	Even, fleshy, broad from upper, devoid of hair and vein and centrally positioned lower.	Dirghayu	Back is flawless and free from hair (smooth)	wealthy and prosperous.
	Bending	Miseries people	Irregular or deformed back	Face misfortune
	Small	Alpayu	-	-
	Hairy back	Friendless and lack of children	-	-
Jatru (collar bone)	Covered with muscles	Dirghayu	High and thick	Wealthy, pleasure-seeking individuals.
	-	-	Uneven Jatru	Immoral
	-	-	Collarbone is low	Poor
Griva (Neck)	Hasva Griva (Short neck) Twenty Angula circularly	Dirghayu	Neck resembles to conch shell (Kambugriva)	Become kings
	-	-	Buffalo-like neck	Brave, courageous.
	-	-	long neck	Indulgent pleasures.
	-	-	Ox-like neck	Meet their end by a weapon strike
	-	-	Thin, dry and covered with veins	Poor
Kaksha (Axilla)	Elevated, broad, thick, clearly distinct	Dirghayu	Thick, high, free from sweat, covered Roma and fragrant.	Wealthy individuals.
Skandha (Shoulder)	Maha Skandha (Broad)	Long life with virtuous	Broad, high and well-formed	Beings endowed with strength and happiness
	Elevated shoulder	Dirghayu	-	-
	Hard	Warrior	-	-
	Slack shoulder	Weak	Devoid of flesh, covered with hair, and broken	Appears to be poor
	Emaciated shoulder	Poor		
	Hairy	Weightlifter		
Bahu (Hands)	Dirgha Bahu Thick at upper and gradually thinner towards bottom, with firm elbow, long enough to touch the knee with visible veins	Dirghayu	Round, thick, long, equal in size and resembling an elephant's trunk, extending up to the elbow	Rulers of the earth, i.e., they are the protectors of the world.
	Without veins	Infertile	-	-
	Oblique veins	Difficult to survive	Arms are small and covered with hair	wretched beings, i.e., they are poor.
Manibandha (Wrist)	Thick, smooth, unbroken, clear and deep three lines on wrist	rulers of the earth	Strong, hidden and covered with tight ligaments, unbroken, clear and deep three line on wrist	rulers of the earth
	-	-	Weak and loose and accompanied by a clicking sound	Devoid of wealth
Karatala (Palm)	-	-	Elevated	Donor
			If marked with auspicious symbols like the half-moon, bow, triangle, fish, swastika, plow, lotus, conch, wheel, horse, elephant	King
	-	-	Circular, deep, reddish color like Laksha	Wealthy
	-	-	Dry	Poor
	-	-	Yellow color	Parstreegamana (indulge with other partner)
Nakha (Nail)	Firm, round, unctuous, coppery colored, properly elevated and convex like the back of a tortoise.	Dirghayu	Nails are copper-colored and red	Protectors of the earth.
	Snigdha (unctuous), Tanu (thin), Slakshana (smooth), Tamra (coppery colour)	Adhipati (ruler)	-	-
	Sthula (thick)	Acharya	-	-
	Rajimanta (liner marking)	Dirghayu	-	-
	Nimna (depressed), resemble like Shukti, Tusha	Daridra	-	-
	Ruksha (dry)	Unfortunate	-	-
	Sweta (white) and Mandalakara (circular)	Alpayu	Nails resembling with barley husk.	Transgender
	Sphutita (braked)	Aswatantra (dependent)	Flattened, split nails	Devoid of wealth
	Vivarna (discolored)	Vyasani (addicted)	Bad color along with disfigured	Individuals who have an evil eye
Mukha (Face)	-	-	Beautiful, round, soft clear, symmetrical	Become king
	-	-	Completely charming face	Pleasure-seeking individuals

	-	-	Large and heavy face.	Individuals with bad fortune.
	-	-	Square face.	Deceitful individual.
	-	-	Low face	Individuals without offspring.
	-	-	Very small face	Miserly person
Oshtha (Lips)	Neither very thick nor very thin, adequate width, capable of covering the mouth cavity and red colored	Dirghayu	Lips are like a cucumber and thick	protectors of the earth
	-	-	Thin lips	Impoverished
	-	-	Cracked, broken, discolored, rough lip	Individuals are devoid of wealth.
	Compact aligned teeth	Dirghayu	Large, sharp, smooth and uniform teeth	Auspicious for those individuals.
Talu (Palate)	Smooth, well formed, hot in touch and red colored	Dirghayu	Red, smooth and adequate measures	Indulge wealth
	-	-	Black, white, rough	Poor
Jihva (Tongue)	Smooth, thin, adequate length and breadth, endowed with natural color	Dirghayu	Red, thin, adequate, long, smooth	Indulge wealth
	-	-	Black, white, rough	Poor
Nasa (Nose)	Straight, capable of taking deep breath, well ridged and slightly curved at tip	Dirghayu	Straight, long nose with curved tip, small nostrils along with round opening	Fortunate and wealthy
	Urdhva Nasagra (raised tip of nose) ³⁸	Madhyama Ayu	Nose resemble to beak of parrot	Indulge happiness
	Nose located upwardly	Alpayu	Dry nose	Long life
	-	-	Crooked nose	Thieves
	-	-	Braked nose	Engage with unattainable women.
	-	-	Inclined to the right	Cruel and gluttonous
	Thick, large, having even lobes, equal in size, having elongations downwards, bent towards back side, having compact tragus and having a big earhole.	Dirghayu	Ear covered with hair	Long life
Karna (Ears)	Fleshy ear with covered hair	Long life	Broad ear	Wealthy
	Fleshy ear	Madhyam Ayu	Fleshy ear	Happy
	-	-	Flat ear	Indulging pleasures
	-	-	Conical shape	Bhupati
	-	-	Small ear	Misery person
	Ear located upwardly	Alpayu	Devoid of flesh	Death occurs through Sinful deeds.
	-	-	Exceptionally long and covers with veins	Cruel (Krura)
Akshi (Eyes)	Dirgha Prekshana (elongated eyes)	Dirghayu	Eyes are red colored with red edges	Endowed with wealth of Lakshmi
	Sama (symmetrical), Samahita Darshana (having concentrated vision), Vyakta bhagavibhage (with clear division and subdivision of Mandala), Balavati (proper strength to see), lustrous, having beautiful fronts and corners	Dirghayu	Smooth, deep-set pleasant, resembled with lotus petals	Great wealth and indulgence in pleasures.
	Two, three or more line are present beneath eyes	Madhyama Ayu	Honey colored and yellow eyes	Great wealth and Good fortunate
	-	-	Eyes resemble to eyes of cat	Sinful individual
	-	-	Eyes are like black coal	Intelligent
	-	-	Large eyes	Minister
	-	-	Dull eyes	Poor
Bhru (eyebrow)	Slightly arched downwards, separated from each other, equal large size, compact	Long life	Resembling crescent moon, long flexible, and outward arched	Wealthy
	-	-	Large and elevated	Happy
	-	-	High and arched	Short life
	-	-	Uneven and broken	Devoid of wealth
Lalata (forehead)	Broad, strong, even, compact having firm union with bones, having three transverse lines, wrinkles and having shape of a half moon	Long life	Three transverse lines	Lived hundred years
			Four transverse lines	Ninety-five years
			Five lines	Seventy years
			Too many lines	Fifty years
			Curved lines	Forty years
			No lines	Ninety years
			Elevated	King
			Large and resemble a conch	Attain position of Acharya
			Elevated veins in Swastika form	Wealthy
			Depressed	Engaged cruel deeds.

Shira (head)	Having a natural shape, somewhat larger in proportion, which is in accordance with the body and resemble to umbrella shape.	Dhirghayu	Round Shape	Wealthy
			Umbrella shape	King
			Long head	Long life
			Flat head	Cause the death of their parents

DISCUSSION

Ayurveda and Samudrika Shastra both are ancient systems of knowledge. Source of origin for each is believed from the Atharvaveda. Ayurveda is considered an Upaveda, while Samudrika Shastra is a branch of Jyotisha Shastra,⁴ making both sciences interconnected at their core. Both systems highlight physical signs and offer predictions about the future, though they differ in their approach and purpose. Ayurvedic classical texts describe the signs primarily to define Ayu (life), whereas in Samudrika Shastra, these signs help determine the types of Ayu, such as Sukhayu (long life), Dukhayu (short life), Hitayu (happy life), or Ahitayu (unhappy life). When comparing these two systems, Ayurveda provides a comprehensive description of the entire body (Sharir Lakshan), while Samudrika Shastra focuses more on body parts that are visible to the naked eye. For example, Samudrika Shastra elaborates on the features of the forehead, ears, eyes, nose, lips, hands, feet, and moles on various parts of the body, which are not as detailed in Ayurveda. Additionally, Samudrika Shastra includes specific branches like palmistry and physiognomy, which are absent in Ayurveda. Furthermore, Samudrika Shastra includes signs related to death, which are not found in Ayurveda. For instance, a thin, uneven, or twisted chest might indicate death due to external injuries, while an ox-like neck suggests a death by weapon strike. Samudrika Shastra often compares body parts to animals, plants, or objects for better understanding and retention. For example, the softness of the feet is likened to a lotus, the calf to a dog or jackal, the eyes to lotus petals or a cat's eyes etc. These metaphors are used to help people easily understand and apply the knowledge.

Ayurveda, on the other hand, describes these physical signs directly without such analogies. Another significant difference is that Ayurveda provides specific measurements in Anguli Pramana (finger measurement) for diagnosing diseases, something that is not found in Samudrika Shastra. These measurements are important in Ayurveda because the science is treatment-based, focusing on health and wellness, and requires knowledge of the normal size and proportions of body parts to diagnose and treat ailments with surgery. In contrast, Samudrika Shastra does not emphasize such precise measurements. While Ayurveda is primarily concerned with predicting a person's lifespan and diagnosing and treating diseases, Samudrika Shastra focuses more on aspects of a person's life related to happiness, wealth, and prosperity.

Despite differences, both sciences highlight the diagnostic and prognostic value of physical features. Some glimpses of the features described in both the sciences has been discussed here with their contemporary relevance.

Pada (feet): In both Ayurveda and Samudrika Shastra, certain features of a person's feet and palms are believed to reflect their health and lifespan. Feet that are large, round, soft, smooth, well-formed, coppery-coloured and raised like a tortoise with auspicious signs are seen as indicators of a long life and prosperity. Fleshy feet in Ayurveda are associated with Madhyama Ayu,⁵ indicating a moderate lifespan, often linked to conditions like obesity,⁶ hypothyroidism,⁷ or Cushing's syndrome, which may reduce life expectancy. Acharya Kashyapa suggests that pale or white feet are signs of poverty,⁸ as they are often seen in people with anaemia, leading to weakness and a lack

of physical strength. According to Ayurveda, feet with no lines symbolize servitude. The absence of creases on the soles may indicate gestational immaturity, suggesting the person may remain subservient in the future. Feet that are rough, yellowed, crooked, veiny, and dry, with sparse fingers, may indicate conditions such as Peripheral Arterial Disease.⁹ Samudrika Shastra also warns that reddish-brown feet may bring ruin to one's lineage,¹⁰ which can be associated with hemochromatosis, a genetic disorder that causes excessive iron buildup, affecting the liver, pancreas, and reproductive system. It is a cause of infertility in both men and women, usually because iron deposition in the pituitary or the gonads leads to hypogonadism.¹¹

Vrushana (testis): In both Ayurveda and Samudrika Shastra, individuals with long testicles are associated with longevity. Ayurveda also links thin and small testicles to misfortune and infertility¹², similar to conditions like Klinefelter Syndrome¹³ and Hypogonadism.¹⁴ These genetic disorders often result in smaller testicles and low testosterone levels, leading to infertility and increased risks of cardiovascular disease, osteoporosis, and metabolic issues, which can reduce life expectancy.¹⁵ Samudrika Shastra mentioned upward-rising testicles.¹⁶ This is seen in conditions like cryptorchidism (undescended testicle). While cryptorchidism itself doesn't directly shorten lifespan, associated complications such as testicular cancer or infertility can impact long-term health.¹⁷

Udara (abdomen): Both Ayurveda and Samudrika Shastra share the view that a large abdomen may indicate wealth and a comfortable life due to indulgence, but the effects of an excessively enlarged abdomen are described differently. While Ayurveda does not specifically mention the negative effects of an enlarged abdomen, Samudrika Shastra associates a very large abdomen (like a pot) with lustful traits.¹⁸ This idea is also linked to obesity in contemporary medical terms, which is often seen as lustful. According to Ayurveda, a firm, slightly elevated, and soft abdomen is considered healthy, contributing to a long life.¹⁹ Shushka Udara (emaciated abdomens) are seen as signs of poverty, typically due to malnutrition or starvation. Atishushka Udara (Excessively shrunken) is linked to infertility, often caused by hormonal imbalances or reproductive disruptions due to severe weight loss or malnutrition.²⁰ Samudrika Shastra suggests that a snack-like abdomen indicates poverty and a big eater,²¹ while an emaciated abdomen with a large appetite point to pathological conditions like hyperthyroidism, malabsorption, or chronic illness. Ayurveda associates a single abdominal fold with a normal, healthy condition, though Samudrika Shastra ties it to death by weapon, there is no evidence found to justify this statement. Two abdominal folds in Ayurveda are seen in intelligent people, while Samudrika Shastra links them to indulgence in pleasures, particularly with women, which can be correlated with intelligence attracting women. Three abdominal folds suggest good fortune and potential to become a teacher, and similarly, four folds are linked to a destined path. Ayurveda provides further predictions about multiple folds,²² but Samudrika Shastra does not. A smooth abdomen with no folds indicates a person with good body composition, muscle tone, and skin elasticity, often seen in a protector or guardian figure, associated with the role of a Narapal (protector of others).²³

Griva (neck): In Ayurveda, there is minimal description of the neck related to longevity, with focus mostly on measurements

associated with a long life. However, Samudrika Shastra provides detailed insights into both normal and abnormal neck shapes. A buffalo-shaped neck in Samudrika Shastra refers to a thick, broad, and muscular neck, symbolizing physical strength, endurance, resilience, and strong willpower, much like the buffalo, an animal known for its ability to withstand harsh conditions. In Samudrika Shastra, a neck resembling that of an ox is ominously linked to death by weapons.²⁴ In modern medicine, an ox-like neck may be associated with benign growths such as lipomas, or more serious conditions like thyroid disorders (e.g., goiter), tumors, acromegaly, or infections like Ludwig's angina.²⁵ Surgical treatments for these conditions, such as pituitary tumor removal (for acromegaly) or thyroidectomy for goiter or cancer, carry fatal risks, particularly due to complications like airway obstruction or sepsis.²⁶ Lastly, a thin, dry neck covered with veins is most commonly seen in conditions like malnutrition, which is often associated with poverty, reflecting the lack of adequate nutrition.

Nakha (Nails): Both Ayurveda and Samudrika Shastra agree on the significance of coppery-colored nails, but their predictions differ. In Ayurveda, coppery nails are linked with long life, while in Samudrika Shastra, they signify protectors of the earth. Ayurveda, however, provides a more detailed description, mentioning that the nails should be firm, round, unctuous, properly elevated, and convex like the back of a tortoise. This aligns with modern interpretations, where firm, round, and unctuous skin suggests good health and nourishment. The tortoise metaphor represents physical resilience and a well-protected body. In Ayurveda, rough nails are seen as indicative of suffering, suggesting that individuals with such nails may experience physical or emotional pain. Modern health conditions like dehydration, hypothyroidism, or nutritional deficiencies could be the causes of rough nails, as well as stress or emotional strain. Shweta and Mandalaka (whitish and round) nails in Ayurveda are linked to Alpayu (short life), as pale nails are associated with anaemia, poor circulation, or malnutrition, which can negatively impact overall health and longevity.²⁷ Broken nails, symbolizing dependence in Samudrika Shastra, may suggest that someone is reliant on others for support. In modern terms, broken nails often result from trauma, nutritional deficiencies, or hormonal imbalances and can be a sign of emotional stress or weak immune function.²⁸ Discolored nails, as per both traditions, are associated with addiction or substance abuse. In modern medicine, discolored nails are often signs of poor circulation, nail infections, or toxic substances in the body, typically linked to smoking, alcohol, or drug use.²⁹ Finally, in Samudrika Shastra, bad-colored or disfigured nails are thought to be a sign of the evil eye or negative spiritual influence. From a modern perspective, these nails could be caused by chronic fungal infections, trauma, or autoimmune diseases like psoriasis. The concept of the evil eye might be seen metaphorically, suggesting negative external influences that affect a person's well-being.

Akshi (eyes): When comparing the Lakshana (signs) of the eyes in both sciences, Samudrika Shastra focuses primarily on external features to identify normal and abnormal eye characteristics, whereas Ayurveda not only discusses the external features but also includes the function of the eyes, though it doesn't specifically address abnormalities. Acharya Kashyapa emphasized the significance of the eyes, stating they reflect the mind.³⁰ This aligns with the predictions made in Samudrika Shastra, where the eyes are associated with traits such as intelligence, cunning nature, and other characteristics. In Ayurveda, eyes that are Sama (symmetrical), have Samhita Darshana (concentrated vision), and are lustrous with a smooth, deep-set, pleasant appearance, often resembling lotus petals, are associated with good vision, optimal health, wealth, pleasure, and a long life.³¹ The lotus-like comparison in Ayurveda may

symbolize spiritual purity, emotional balance, and inner peace, reflecting modern psychological concepts of well-being. When two, three, or more lines are present beneath the eyes, it is indicative of Madhyama Ayu (medium lifespan)³², which correlates with modern science, where lines under the eyes often signify aging or stress,³³ factors that can decrease the quality and span of life. As per Samudrika Shastra, Eyes resembling those of a cat are linked to individuals who may be cunning or deceptive, reflecting traits of alertness and sharpness similar to the nature of a cat. In modern psychology, cat-like eyes could also indicate someone who is highly observant and capable of staying alert. Black coal-like eyes are often associated with intelligence. Black eyes are common across various populations, and individuals with such eyes may be perceived as focused, driven, and mentally sharp. Large eyes are considered a sign of leadership and are associated with those in positions of power, such as ministers. Large eyes often indicate physical beauty and the ability to engage with others effectively, which can enhance leadership potential in both social and professional spheres. Dull eyes can be linked to health issues like fatigue, malnutrition, or chronic illness, which are commonly associated with poverty and can reduce vitality.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda and Samudrika Shastra, though distinct in purpose, converge on the principle that physical signs reflect health, lifespan, and quality of life. Ayurveda emphasizes health maintenance and disease management, whereas Samudrika Shastra provides insights into fortune and destiny. Together, they enrich our understanding of the human body as a mirror of inner vitality and future potential. Their interdisciplinary insights remain valuable in contemporary discussions on holistic health and integrative diagnostics.

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Cite this article as:

Rinku Gulani, Hitesh Vyas, Nikita Gohel and Tanvi Soni. A review on physical signs as Diagnostic and Prognostic indicators: Insights from Ayurveda and Samudrika Shastra. *Int. J. Res. Ayurveda Pharm.* 2025;16(6):129-136
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.7897/2277-4343.166226>

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

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