



Sharir Pramana in Ayurveda: Diagnostic and Preventive Insights through Traditional Angul Pramana

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Abstract:

Sharir Pramana, an essential *Ayurvedic* concept, emphasizes the measurement of the human body using individualized units such as *anguli* (finger breadth) and *anjali* (cupped palms) to assess physical health, vitality, and constitutional balance. Classical texts like *Charaka Samhita*, *Suaruta Samhita*, *Amarkosha*, and later commentaries (e.g., *Ayurved Dipika*, *Bhanumati*, *Nibandha Sangraha*) outline distinct measurement techniques to evaluate bodily proportions, detect *dosic* imbalances and support diagnosis and treatment. These self-referential frameworks not only guide clinical examinations but also offer preventive strategies by correlating bodily symmetry with health, longevity, and nutritional status.

Comparative tables from these sources reveal standard values, such as a typical height of 84 *angulas* in *Charaka* versus 120 *angulas* in *Sushruta*, indicating diverse perspectives across traditions. The concept supports personalized health interventions—where improper growth or disproportions suggest potential disorders and call for therapeutic corrections through diet, lifestyle, and Panchakarma.

Ultimately, *Sharir Pramana* embodies the *Ayurvedic* philosophy that harmony in body proportions reflects internal equilibrium, and measuring the self with the self (*Sva-Anguli*) enables profound self-awareness and holistic well-being.

KEYWORDS : *Sharir Pramana, anguli, anjali, lifestyle, Ayurvedic.*

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, pramana means "measurement". When applied to the body, *sharir pramana* refers to the quantitative assessment of the human body's dimensions, proportions, and capacities. *Pramana* is used to study the qualitative and quantitative measurement of *Ang pratyang* of the body to know about the health of an individual. In *Ayurveda* examination should be done by

body evidence or the study of tool and technique for determining of various measurement that is volume, length, breadth ,height, circumference etc of a body and the part or organ of body is known as *parman Sharir*. *Aacharya* consider *praman* in *dusvidh pariksha prakriti bhav* it means that the health of an individual, age and strength depend on *anguli praman*¹.

The rationale for body measurement in *Ayurveda*:

1. Identifying the ideal physique corresponding to balanced *dosas*.
2. Detecting abnormalities (e.g., excessive thinness, obesity, or disproportion) that may predispose an individual to certain diseases. Assisting in surgical procedures, location of *marma* point and general medical examination (particularly in *Susruta Samhita*, where detailed anthropometric guidelines help surgeons).

The assessment of quality of life can be compared to the modern techniques of assessing the abdominal girth and body mass index to determine nutritional status as people with good socio-economic status would have well nourished bodies which would be in contrast to famished bodies. Also, the longevity may be assessed because there are large number of clinical conditions like chromosomal abnormalities which present with change in body proportions; such as short height and short webbed neck in Turner's syndrome, large hands of acromegaly, unusually long fingers in Marfan syndrome, short stature in achondroplasia and it is evident that many of these conditions are associated with reduced life span. Also, it may be used to assess the susceptibility of the individuals to disease.

Types of Measurements

❖ *Ayurvedic* texts discuss various units and methods of measuring the body

1. *Angula Pramana*: *Angula* literally means "finger breadth." Often used as a basic unit for measuring length in the body (similar to an anthropometric measure) For instance, the classical texts mention that an individual's height is typically 84 *angulas*, though the exact figure can vary by textual tradition².
2. *Sva-Anguli Pramana*³ (Self-Finger Breadth): That is each individual can measure their body proportions using their own finger breadth emphasizing personalization of measurement.
3. *Anjali Pramana* (Palms-Cup Measure): *Anjali* is formed by joining the two palms together. Used to measure volume (eg, daily recommended quantity of water or certain foods in some contexts). It is also used to estimate the volume capacity of specific body compartments.
4. Other References :Classical texts like *Susruta Samhita* detail *sutra sthana* chapters enumerating body dimensions (e.g., circumference of chest, length of limbs) for both normal and abnormal presentations⁴.

❖ In *Charak Samhita*: *Aacharya Charak* said that there are two kinds of measurement *praman* that is *Kaling* and *Magadh*⁵.

❖ In *Amarkosh* there are three types of *maan*(measurement)⁶:

मानं तुलांगुलिप्रस्थैः ॥

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a) *Tula Maan*b) *Anguli Maan*c) *Prastha Maan*❖ *Vaijayanti kosha samanya kand*पायं हस्तादिभिर्मानं द्रुवयं कुडबादिभिः । पौतवं तुलया तस्य सूत्रं स्याद्रागसूत्रकम् ॥⁷

a) *Payyam maana* -measurement by hand.By this *maana*, we are able to measure the length of the drug ,medical instruments, patients height and other measurements,pharmacy measurements etc.

b) *Druvayam maana* -measurement by *kudava* .It is for measuring volume of liquids in *bhaishajya kalpana* ,amount of body fluids etc.

c) *Pautavam maana* -using a balance or weighing scale.By this *maana* ,we measure weight of drugs ,for example one pala of drug etc.

❖ Other than these there is one important *maana* ,i.e. *kaala maana* (the measure of time)

An ancient Indian *Ayurvedic* text there has been important information for the assessment of health well being and longevity and the whole body . It was not only for physical and mental health of a person but also for the *dosa* is in equilibrium state the most important technique was a self finger measurement that which was done by measuring of each person by own finger (*swa- anguli*)for example 84 *angul pramana* (*aayam* and *Vistara*) that was described by *Acharya charak* and 120 *angul pramana* by *Acharya Sushrut* .

Table No.1 : *Anguli Pramana* According To *Ayurved Dipika*⁸

<i>Pratyanga</i>	Length in <i>Anguli Pramana</i>
<i>Prashani</i>	4
<i>Jangha</i>	18
<i>Jaanu</i>	4
<i>Uru</i>	18
<i>Udara</i>	12
<i>Prushhta</i>	18
<i>Uru</i>	4
<i>Shir</i>	6
Total	84

Table No.2 : Anguli Pramana According To Charak⁹

<i>Pratyanga</i>	Length in Anguli Pramana
<i>Prashani</i>	4
<i>Jangha</i>	18
<i>Jaanu</i>	4
<i>Uru</i>	18
<i>Udara</i>	12
<i>Uru</i>	12
<i>Anaan</i>	12
<i>Shirodhara</i>	4
Total	84

Table No.3 : Anguli Pramana According To Bhanumati¹⁰

<i>Pratyanga</i>	Length in Anguli Pramana
<i>Prashani</i>	5/6
<i>Jangha</i>	24
<i>Jaanu</i>	4
<i>Uru</i>	24
<i>Mehan to Nabhi</i>	12
<i>Nabhi to hridya</i>	12
<i>Hridya to greeva</i>	12
<i>Greeva</i>	4
<i>Mukha</i>	12
<i>Keshanta to mastak</i>	11
Total	120

Table No.4 : Anguli Pramana According To Nibhandha Sangrah¹¹

<i>Pratyanga</i>	Length in Anguli Pramana
<i>Prashani</i>	5/6
<i>Jangha</i>	18/24
<i>Jaanu Sandhi to kati Sandhi</i>	32
<i>Mehan to Nabhi</i>	12
<i>Nabhi to hridya</i>	12
<i>Hridya to greeva</i>	12
<i>Greeva</i>	4
<i>Mukha</i>	12
<i>Keshanta to mastak</i>	10
Total	118

METHODS

Literature Review: Comparative analysis of *Charaka Samhita*, *Susruta Samhita*, *Amarkosha*, *Ayurved Dipika*, *Bhanumati*, and *Nibandha Sangraha*.

Measurement Frameworks:

- **Anguli Pramana:** Self-referential unit based on individual's own middle phalanx.
- **Anjali Pramana:** Volume estimation via cupped palms.
- **Tula & Prastha Maan:** Weight and volume metrics from *Amarkosha*.
- **Tabular Compilation:** Standardized tables comparing body part dimensions across texts.

RESULT

Diagnosis: Detecting disproportionate measurements can hint at *dosic* imbalances or congenital anomalies.

Therapeutics: Adjusting diet, exercise, and treatments (like panchakarma) may aim to bring an individual closer to ideal proportions or healthy *pramana*.

Preventive Medicine: Encourages maintaining body proportions that support longevity and disease-free life.

Assessment of Nutritional Disorders: Deviations in body proportions (e.g., height <84 *anguli*) may indicate: Malnutrition, Growth retardation, Developmental anomalies etc.

So; If we look at the whole body, a person can also grow by focusing on nutrition and cell growth. As *Acharya Sushrut* says that a man and a woman reach full maturity at the age of 16 to 25 years. And this is possible only when the person consumes *sattvik* food (healthy diet) in proper quantity, which leads to proper formation of blood, flesh, fat, bones etc. If an individual does not consume food in proper quantity, then their development is affected and related disorders occur so; therefore *Acharya Sushrut* has used *anguli pramanas* to classify a person as long-lived, middle-lived and short-lived according to their body.

DISCUSSION:

Sharir Pramana serves not only as a diagnostic tool but also as a guide to preventive health in Ayurveda. Its foundational principle—that proportion reflects internal equilibrium—bridges the mind-body spectrum and personalizes treatment.

Modern medicine's turn toward personalized diagnostics (e.g., genomics, biometric tracking) echoes Ayurveda's ancient use of *Sva-Anguli* as a unit of individualized care. Incorporating traditional anthropometric insights into contemporary practice may enhance integrative care, promote longevity, and foster a deeper understanding of somatic harmony.

This study proposes validating classical frameworks through empirical and clinical research, thereby reawakening an ancient methodology for use in modern health landscapes.

CONCLUSION :

Sharir Pramana Involves measuring the body via *angula pramana*, *anjali pramana*, and other anthropometric methods to maintain proportional health and diagnose imbalances.

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