Chapter - IV

Concept of Health and Disease
This chapter gives an account on concept of Health and diseases as seen in the Yanadi settlements in the study area. It describes various ideas, beliefs and traditionally established precepts and codes of conduct that are directly and indirectly related to health that explicate health and disease.

Health and disease are the fundamental concerns of human beings in all societies. Every known society has developed certain notions about health and disease which guide the people in dealing with the health status of individuals and community.

4.1 Concept of Health

Health and Disease has been one of the fundamental concerns of man since his emergence on the earth. Every known society has developed its own responses and methods for coping up with disease and ailments, and eventually a body of its own medical system. “Medicine has been practiced one way or another since man became a cultural animal. There even in some evidence that a first and technique derives from our Primate ancestors ... Baboons” (Clune, 1976).

Indigenous people’s concept of health and survival is both a collective and individual inter-generational continuum reflecting their world view incorporating four distinct dimensions of life. The spiritual, the intellectual, the physical, and the emotional. These four dimensions comprise content of the concept of health and disease.

The term health assumes a connotation in the common parlance which refers to the (desired) balanced state of body and mind. Thus, ‘health’ and ‘disease’ are paired polar concepts (Mahapatra, 1986). The World Health organization (WHO) defines health as “A state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity”. Evidently ‘health’ includes physical health (healthy), mental health (happy) and
social health (prosperous and free of strife) (Behura, 1991). The notations of Health and disease reflect both biological and cultural issues.

The importance of being healthy is well recognized in almost all human societies. In India, just as elsewhere, the maxim (axiom), “health is wealth” is quoted contextually in day to day life. In a reductionist sense health may be conceptualized as a state of the human body devoid of any physical disorder, pain and other discomforts. Absence of any symptoms or aberrations in the normal functioning of the human body is the commonly held attribute of health.

Medical anthropological literature is replete with accounts producing evidence to the existence of interaction between culture and illness. Kunstadter (1975) writes that “illness generally seems to imply interference with normal functions, and health seems generally to be considered as a state in which normal functions are possible, but there has been virtually no systematic attempt to discover the content or range of these concepts cross culturally”.

What constitute health and how health is conceptualized and perceived in different cultures are the cultural issues addressed by medical anthropologists. Obviously the notions about health differ cross culturally for the simple reason that the notion of “normal function” is not universally uniform. For instance among the pastoral families in rural Andhra Pradesh, busy and strenuous work schedules of long hours seem to be normal function whereas leisurely trips to forest and short periods of work seem to be the normal functions among the hunter gatherers (for example Yanadis). For some individuals, bubbling, fast behavior is normal function whereas to few others calm, quiet and slow rhythm seem to be normal functioning.

Obviously “healthy state” is universally viewed as essential for life actions performed day in and day out. While physical well being or fitness is thought as essential condition for human survival and for performing the day
today 'normal' chores in a society, the fitness itself is conditioned by other factors / conditions, forces, being etc. Sometimes fitness as a manifestation of health may have several dimensions other than physical strength. Attitudes, behaviors, emotions, reactions and responses, social well being etc., define fitness and reflect the state of health.

Happiness is said to be prime manifestation of healthy state. A sad state is supposed to be a reflection of something that is wrong or unwell with the bodily health or mental health. A smiling face is an index of good health whereas a reserved count ace is resented as unpleasant, branded as pain in the neck. Jealousy is said to be an unhealthy state. In rural Andhra Pradesh, jealous people are said to be very lean and never put on flesh even if fed well. Excessive indulgence in erotic talk is said to be a syndrome of mental illness, or insanity or inconvenient information for the person and others.

Thus physical well being or fitness alone is not regarded as health. However, physical and biological aberrations constitute a significant aspect of health and warrants some action to remain physically healthy or to regain normalcy after afflicted with ill health. Concepts of health is explained by means of certain theories which can be broadly grouped under two classes:

1. Theories pertaining to the biological functioning of the body and rational explanations basing on perceived notions of physiological and anatomical systems and functioning.

2. Theories pertaining to psychic or moral or ethical behaviour of individuals that have bearing on health status.

The most popular theory pertaining to biological functioning of the body is “humoral – theory”. Humoral theories were first elaborated in the classical texts of Hindu and other religions, several thousand years ago. These theories have biological premises, the human body contains blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile. The balanced state of these elements in the body is directly
related to health and disease. The body is said to be in healthy state if these humours are in right proportion. Pain occurs when one of the substances is deficient or present in excess or is separated in the body and not mixed properly with the other (Foster and Anderson, 1978).

The Humoral theory is also observed among tribal communities. However they are differentially explained and interpreted to assess the health status. Theories pertaining to biological functioning of the body also take into consideration certain physical factors such as food, water, air and pollutants. For example food is given almost important to the state of health. Food is considered not only essential for healthy status that also considered as causative factors of diseases. Indigenous people have also recognized that water and air are also important ingredients in the notions of health and diseases. Indigenous people also attribute healthy state to the presence or absence of pollutants what constitute pollution and what is a pollutant depend both on sound reasoning and traditionally defined entities. The almost all indigenous societies fecal matter, urine and menstrual blood are considered pollutants which have implications for health and illhealth.

The second group of theories which explain health and disease are based on intangible notions such as moral standards, and sanctions dispositions and religious / supernatural psychological ailments (for instance leprosy is interpreted as a sanction / decree and also visualized in terms of fatalism). These examples indicate that diseases are conceptualized as preordain entity.

The health related concept and practices among most of the people in the world today are drawn from the tradition. They are evolved during antiquity. Ancient civilizations have developed their own medical systems. The ideas equilibrium of the health was well developed in ancient Greece, China and India.
The non western people tend to believe that unless pain and discomfort are present, there can be no illness. They define health as feeling good or it’s the absence of symptoms of ill health (Ibid, 1978). From the stand point of introducing scientific, medical care into the traditional world, the definition of health as “feeling good” has important negative consequences (Ibid, 1978). However, even in these societies, various dimensions are added to this simplified common sense meaning of health depending upon the dialectical situation of perceiving the overall meaning of health.

4.2 Concept of health among the Yanadis

Many factors determine the health status of the Yanadis. As seen from the descriptive analysis of physical and hygienic conditions surrounding the Yanadis. A few factors do help the Yanadis in avoiding infections and disease but a few other factors are likely to cause infection, disease and sickness. Shifting settlements and geographical isolation in the past did work to their advantage in health. Further as long as deforestation and poaching of non-tribal people in the Yanadi territory was marginal the Yanadi did enjoy a large variety of vegetable food gathered in the forest contributing to their nutritional standards. On the other hand lack of personal care and hygiene have made them vulnerable to a variety of diseases including skin diseases particularly among the children.

This part of discusses the ideas, perceptions, beliefs related to health and disease among the Yanadis.

The Yanadis have clear concepts about health. A person is considered healthy when he is not afflicted by any disease, consumes food as usual and carries out normal functions, without any difficulty. When some are is sick, the Yanadi employ all efforts to heal his illness and bring him back to normal conditions.
Yanadis identify both natural and supernatural causes for the occurrence of diseases. The common natural causes are more prominent and noticeable. They include evil eye, attack of evil spirits, disobedience to supernatural beings/forces etc. The Yanadis classify the diseases according to the nature of the casual agent and the nature of treatment depends upon the causative factor.

However, after contact with the modern civilization, certain new diseases are occurring among them. The Yanadi’s do not know the actual cause behind these new diseases. Therefore, they have no adequate technique or medicine for the treatment of these modern diseases. Often they depend upon modern medicine for them.

When two Yanadi persons from different places meet each other then the usual form of enquiring about the well being is Bagunnard? Which means, is everyone keeping well? The usual way of answering that question is Antha Bagundi which means, all are keeping well. It is noticed that these types of questions arise only when two known persons meet each other. The wider meaning of Antha Bagunaaru is overall happiness. But in that context and tribal point of view it means “healthy”. It was stated that a person may have a number of worries for so many reasons, but worries connect with health problems are more serious than all the other worries. Health for a Yanadi is a state of activity. They opined that healthy persons are free from worries and they carry out their routine work with full of enthusiasm.

Apparently the Yanadi seem to possess good health. The lean and medium statured persons are considered healthy persons. It is stated that these persons can work hard, walk longer distances, carry more firewood and run faster and actively participate in agriculture work and fishing whereas fat individuals have less strength and stamina and they cannot work hard, cannot walk long distance and cannot bring more quantities of firewood.
There is a common understanding among the tribal people that an individual’s suffering means suffering of his / her body and soul together. Outside agents or forces attack the soul and in the process the body gets affected. These agents / forces are identified as hungry or angry spirits or some malevolent deities. They all over around their seats and sites and at the slightest provocation enter the soul of the individual and cause harm to the body. Most of them are blood thirsty and crave for sacrificial blood.

There are few other words which are related to health. The Yanada say that “bidda boddu ga vunnadu” (the child is of solid build). They also compare a healthy person with that of a knife (Chaku / Kathi). A healthy woman is compared with a garden of red gram; Kandi chenu madiriga nava nava laduthunnadi (Red gram garden like agile swaying). This means the woman is twinkling or shining. These terms also convey a meaning that a woman is working as hard as a man and reflects overall healthy state.

Sometimes good health is conceptualized in terms such as kovvu (fat, not fat body). In reality the Yanadi men and women are lean. Obesity is almost absent. However, the Yanadi’s say “vadu baga kovvu meeda vunnadu, meaning that person is possessed with ample fat which means, that person is very agile, underlying and indomitable. Poguru pattindi or madam pattindi or kanda kavaram are terms which indicate full growth replete with vigour usually manifested in aggragation. Conversely a weak person is not capable of exhibiting pogaru. Pogaru literally means arrogance. But poguru pattindi convey that the body has acquired a ‘high’ vigour. Madam means semen, Madam pattindi, means one is lustfully arrogant. The people say that such a person should be married off to reduce his madam. Kanda means muscle; kanda kavaram means fully developed muscles which exude or prompt arrogant behavior. Though these terms kovvu, pogaru, madam, kanda kavaramu are used to reprimand and restrain the ‘unruly’ mobbishness, health of such individuals is considered to be good and agile. Presumably, the Yanadi earn to have such as stage of health. Some Yanadi informants eloquently
proclaimed that such a state facilitate one to become a successful hunter, take several wines, become a leadet, be active in social life, etc., Women whose buttocks are prominent, particularly are considered to be attractive and hence healthy.

*Ditta maina nadumu* (firm waist) indicate healthy state particularly with reference to women. *Nadumu vongipoyindi* (waist is bent) indicates onset of old age and weakness. The waist is not supposed to develop folds on the back, for, it is thought that waist lost its *biguvu* (firmness). *Mokallalosathava* indicates power in the knees. This is usually applied to adolescent boys and adult males for their sexual capacity and perseverance. Besides a person unable to treck the forest or expressing weakness in legs is supposed to have lost *sathava* (strength) in his knees. *Sathava* is usually applicable to inner rings of the tree trunk which indicate toughness. The implication of applying this word to knee is obvious: strong knees are like matured tree trunk for the arduous trekking in the forest and scaling steep hills. The marrow of the bones is also called *sathava, rasam* or *moolaga*. If marrow is not present in enough quantity, *sathava* is said to be low. If *sathava* is low, the legs too weak and briskness will diminish. Powerful arms are compared to that of eguna’s grip (*udumu pattu*). Grip which do not slacken is attributed to strength of arms. Men are supposed to have this capability. Climbing trees, holding rope in honey collection, catching the animal’s leg or tail in hunting, holding axe during cutting operations etc require firm grip.

The strength of the neck is also assessed. Neck is supposed to be the strongest parts in the body. *Meda vali poyindi* (droop of neck) is an indication of climacteric, where the life of an individual is very critical. Children are prone to exhibit this often and more quickly in the event of serious illness. That is why children’s neck is given care and massaged with oil. The Yanadi say that healthy person would not bent his neck even if head loads carried across the hilly terrain.
4.3 Elements of Health

The Yanadis were asked to explain the elements or forces underlying their health, and what is responsible for health.

At the outset, Yanadis recognize that good health is god’s gift. This conception is widely prevalent among the Hindus. However the Yanadis have other dimensions, regarding the elements influencing their health. Good health depends upon one’s deed and attitudes towards ancestors who are considered to be the potential agents to protect or inflict health. Ancestor’s benevolence is very important throughout one’s life to have good health.

Good health is also attributed to food in-take which in turn depends upon the health (state) of environment. If the forest yields good produce, ample food is available to them throughout the year. The role of food in the maintenance of health, various preparation of food, and food as medicine are discussed elsewhere.

4.4 Health and the bodily elements among the Yanadis

Some elements in the body are supposed to be the chief forces for good health. The first one is netthuru (blood). Blood of a healthy person is believed to be in a state of warmness. Such a blood is considered to be almost red in colour and sticky.

Some people are believed to posses body full of water (neeru vollu). Water is said to enter the body if chedda (bad, undesirable) vasthuvulu (eatables) are eaten. The body becomes bloated with water and such people are also said to have nacchu vollu (indolent body). Warm Blood is believed to carryout sathhava or balam (vital force or energy). The Yanadis hold that as one advances in age, his / her blood tends to loose its ‘heat’ and viscosity thereby its vitality. Such a state is called nethru challa badindi (blood became cold and diluted). This would mean loss of vitality. If blood became darkness, the Yanadis say it is spoiled. The loss of vitality is considered to be normal as a
natural consequence of ageing process, but, change of blood colour is considered to be due to poisoning or presence of an alien fatal substance in the body or due to evil action like black magic.

Menstrual blood is supposed to be chedda (spoiled) and “bad”. However the Yanadis have no idea why the blood of women get spoiled every month.

Semen is also considered to be an element of health. The Yanadi equate a drop of semen with 10 drops of blood (Karkar, 2000). Baba (2000) puts one drop of semen as equivalent to 40 drops of blood) Semen is believed to be specialized form of blood or made out of blood. Loss of semen is considered to result in drowsiness and weakness. Women receiving semen during sexual intercourse gain additional health in compensation of loss of blood during menstruation. Though ‘withdrawl’ technique is known to the Yanadis, some women are said to insist insemination, as this would prevent the body from going hot. The Yanadi males explicitly consider that ejaculation in sleep, dreams etc is bad and cause loss of vitality of the body.

Women also release a sticky whitish mucus which is, however, not semen and do not have vitality. But women to get exhausted due to its release. The essential aspect here is that semen and lubricant secretions carry meanings of potentiality which is regarded as an important ingredient of health.

Thus the Yanadis view blood and semen as the force of vitality. Energy to the body is supplied by blood in order to perform day-to-day chores. Hence blood is considered as essential for healthy state.

Another force of vitality is called dammu or gesa. The rough English equivalent for these terms is stamina on account of good respiration. It is also equated with energy on account of food intake. Stamina and energy are used contextually. For example to undertake an arduous task like honey collection from a cliff, one requires dammu / gesa (stamina). The Yanadi recognize that
stamina though depends upon physical strength an inner drive or perseverance which is more a mentalistic attribute, is needed.

To the Yanadis, stamina is an important aspect of health. One’s health is judged in terms of his stamina. Lack of stamina is a clear indication that one is not healthy though he may not exhibit any symptoms of disease or illness. They recognize that stamina decreases with advancement of age. However elderly persons may undertake an activity stoically though not briskly and may require rest before resuming another activity.

Health is also gauged by facial expressions, body postures, body movements and physiological functions like sleep, appetite, digestion, hearing, eyesight, sensitivity etc., In day-to-day life, the Yanadis use certain words which reflect a specific meaning regarding facial expressions. To an outsider, the Yanadi temperament appears to be that of reservedness manifested usually by solitude or aloofness. However, the Yanadi delineate individual differences among themselves. Facial expressions on the other hand reflect general well-being, a day-to-day condition of the self. Countenance as an attribute of health is concerned more with facial expression in accordance with the context, event, incidence.

The Yanadis hold that a person should not lie down during day time to take rest. Squatting is the normal mode of resting wherein, the legs are drawn close to the chest and buttocks touch the ground. An individual lie down only when something is wrong with the health. If a person is found lying down, the Yanadi usually enquire about the state of his health. A person who cannot walk fast, carry and work actively is not considered healthy. Good sleep, good appetite and digestion are considered as attributes of good health. Vision and hearing are also indicators of health.

As already pointed out blood is identified with energy. This notion is only vague and the Yanadis do not explain the actual relationship between
blood and energy. The Yanadis have no idea about blood circulation. They only feel that muscles or body contain blood. They say blood loss will be high in injuries causing a cut in the naram (Vessel). Thus there is a vague idea that blood passes through vessels but have no idea of blood circulation with its significance.

The presence of water in the body is also very important. Dryness in the mouth known as betta is an obvious identification of dehydration. The Yanadi call a serious form of dehydration as vadadebbha - a term very popular throughout the arid regions in Andhra Pradesh. Betta is used for mild sun stroke. Too much of sweating calls for a temporary rest and splashing of water on face, neck, arm and chest followed by gulping palmful of water a few times. Yanadis are very conscious of thirstiness. They usually consume a lot of water. Water is carried to work places in sorakaya (Bell shaped vegetable). The Yanadi believe that water is essential for maintenance of body temperature and for digestion of food. Uduku chesindi, literally means the body has become hot, is a symptom that water loss in the body is substantial as a result of which urination becomes painful as urine comes out drop by drop. Prolonged exposure to hot sun result in the loss of water in the body leading to increase in body temperature. When adequate quantity of water is absent in the body, the skin as well as organs dry up just as a plant dry up without water. Yanadis believe that whether the Yanadi body is cold or hot is determined at birth. On the basis of human body qualities, individuals are classified into:

i) Vedi vollu (hot bodied persons)
ii) Neeru vollu (cold bodies persons)

i) Vedi vollu (Hot bodied persons)

The vedi vollu indicates the hot bodied persons. People believed that by birth, persons get either hot or cold components and no one can change these components. According to them this category of persons have more stamina. This type of persons work hard and not get tired even if they walk a long
distance. They do not sweat while on normal work. People prefer this type of body because they can work hard, can bring more firewood, can walk longer distances in forest.

ii) Neeru vollu (cold bodies persons)

The neeru vollu means water bodied persons. They also opine that the persons with excess of water get tired very soon. They opined that these persons have less strength and stamina, compared to other persons. These persons sweat too much and cannot do hard work and walk longer distances. They don't prefer this type of body because they cannot carry enough firewood, can not walk long distances in forest to collect minor forest produces, cannot escape from wild animals and also cannot do much agricultural work. This variety of persons can be recognized be frequent occurrence of cold related diseases. During winter and rainy seasons they should restrict themselves to cold category foods, otherwise diseases like cough, cold, throat pain, heaviness of head etc., occur. These people do not feel any difficult during summer.

4.5 Food beliefs

Food is a very important subject in the life of the tribal people and matters related to food is largely reflected in their cultural orientation.

Ragi sangati (Ragi ball) and Thotakura (green leafy) constitute Yanadi main food habit. Ragi is considered as a very healthy and hard food. They eat a variety of green leafy vegetable and they state that leaf vegetables are good for health and disease won't come. Yanadi said that they hardly purchased vegetables because the whole year they get one or the other variety of leafy vegetables of variety food. They classify their food items into three categories on the basis of its character.

i) Vedi padarthalu (hot foods)

ii) Seethala padarthalu (cold foods)
iii)  *Vayu padarthalu* (Gaseous foods)

Almost all in the settlements know these categories of foods. Only a few elderly persons give number of food items categorizing them. It is believed that excess of consumption of one category of food leads to disease. That is how they have so many beliefs relating to food. Some of the important beliefs are given below.

During pregnancy consumption of chicken, drumstick leaves, meat of *yantava* and raw *papaya* are avoided as it is believed to cause miscarriage. Egg is totally discarded during pregnancy and tamarind are considered as gaseous food items and consumption of these items are restricted during pregnancy. The mother, during her confinement period, should follow a strict diet in order to prevent other complications. Food like *ragi*, meat of pig, sheep, jack fruit, guava, banana, are avoided as these are considered cold foods. Leafy vegetables are not given to the mother during the period as it causes dysentery to both mother and the child. The bottle gourd and raw-papaya are encouraged as these are considered breast milk enhancers. While suffering from fever, taking bath in hot water and intake of egg, chicken and crab are believed to cause poisoning. After delivery mid wives gives white rice mixed with pepper powder.

During summer cold foods and during winter and rainy season hot foods are preferred. While suffering from *Ammavaru* (measles) intake of *Vepaku* (Azadiracta Indica) is believed to prevent a patient from deterioration. It is believed that *langati gadda* (a type of tuber) is good for health during summer. When a person is suffering from cough and cold, consumption of *cucumber* is not encouraged. Fried cereals are considered as ‘hot foods’, whereas boiled cereals have neither cold or hot character.

The strength of individuals is believed to be associated with food habits. Meat of wild animals such as *Kundelu, Yantava, Adavi pandi, kanitha* (black
deer) and goat are considered more strength giving food items. It is stated that earlier they had more strength and stamina because they were hunting and eating wild animals but now the forest department does not allow them to enter the forest. Besides the meat of wild animals, *ragi* and green leafy vegetables are also considered as strength giving food items and hence they are consumed at least four to five days in a week. It is believed that whatever food is consumed is going to be converted into blood. But they do not know about the way blood is formed or about the circulation of blood inside the body. They know that less blood causes weakness and in old age the quantity of blood decreases.

4.6 Concept of Disease

Illness is viewed from a larger social perspective. When a Yanadi suffers from illness, it may only mean curing the disease but the illness has its multidimensional effects like economic loss, physical suffering, mental strain, or all combined depending on social, economic, and cultural matrix. To understand illness behaviour, the native perceptions regarding the disease are necessary. Systematic analysis of disease perception includes investigations into native system of nomenclature, classification, meaning of disease terminologies and the related domains are presented.

4.7 Concept of disease among the Yanadi

The concept of disease among the Yanadis is the state of not feeling well. The diseased person can be easily found out through his indifferent behaviour, dull face and non-participation in his routine work. Usually all members of the family go for routine work and only elderly persons remain in the settlement. Hence the diseased person prefers to take rest in their hut only. If the disease does not come down then he chooses one among the several suggestions given by the people. Even if it does not come down, then he approaches *soade* (divination) to find out the cause. Accordingly he chooses *Pinapedda* or *Pedda Yanadi* (Native health care specialist) and takes treatment.
The Yanadis consider ill-health is normal to the human body. They say that due to wear and tear, due to the action of environmental agents, due to strain of the body upon working, the body is prone to disturbances which in turn lead to impairment, ailment, sickness or ill-health. In the same way as the age advances, csava (strength) decreases, susceptibility to sickness increases and hard work results in 'blow' to health ultimately leading to reduced vigour and a crippled life. Any normal body is subjected to stresses and strains. The body gradually undergoes a process of decay ultimately ending in death. The above account is philosophical or generalised response related to theory of disease. The Yanadis have several other concepts of disease.

At the outset, the Yanadis conceptualise the disease as panam baagaledu (the life-force is not well or indisposed). This means that a person is not well or incapacitated, or bed-ridden and may or may not require the help of somebody to perform normal chores. A person whose panam is not well, may not like to eat food, may be disinclined to perform daily chores. But strong bodied persons tend to ignore indisposition and may continue to participate in daily chores. Thus panam baagaledu indicate an uncertainty with respect to one's own health condition. Such persons may stay back but may not lie down.

Another concept of disease among the Yanadis is a state of not feeling well. Ill health is termed as 'Jabbu'. If someone asks about the health condition, the afflicted person may say that jabbuchesinde', meaning inflicted with sickness. Compared to the earlier phase, that is Panam baagaledu, "Jabbu" connotes definite condition or certainty of ill-health. Jabbu is a state of the body where the affected person is incapacitated and fail to carry out normal activities. The Yanadis prefer to be confined to the home and remain lie down. A person suffering with Jabbu is usually advised to avoid sleep. Besides he is encouraged to do errands instead of remaining idle. Jabbu also connotes fever. When the body's temperature is higher than normal, the Yanadi say Jaramvachindi connotes that a person is bed ridden. Jabbu does not include
pains, itches, wounds, aches etc. Jabbu manishi is a phrase used to designate an individual who is suffering with some disease for a prolonged period of time. Tuberculosis (T.B), leprosy, are some examples of jabbu. Thus jabbu is a word used to designate fever and also certain critical diseases.

A persons who is slightly unwell is said to be in a state of nalatha. This state is characterized by feverish feelings, body pains or reeling, drowsiness, slight shivering. Most likely Nalatha may turn into jabbu if proper precaution is not taken. Food restrictions and restriction from getting exposed to cool weather and getting wet are to be observed in order to prevent ill-health getting aggravated. There is one more term for ill-health, it is rogamu. But the word rogamu is usually applied to individuals who are exposed to repeated sickness. Rogamu is also a derogatory term, a term of scorn, a term of exasperated enquiry over an unknown and unyielding illness. However rogamu also means serious illness causing concern among the kin members.

The Yanadis also have explanations regarding what caused the illness to occur. Usually the Yanadis hold the view that illness occur as matter of fact. In their own language “Rogalu” (ill-health) mansushulaku (to human beings) raka (Come or inflict) manulaku (to trees) vasthaya(come or inflict). According to this statement, it is natural that human beings get afflicted with ill-health and not trees or stones. The Yanadi seem to be not believing in contagion.

Deities, ancestors, environmental conditions, sorceress and wrong diet are believed to be the causes for the occurrence of the disease. Disease like Manovyaadha (psychosis) are believed to be caused by deities for not fulfilling vows made by their parents or grand parents. Chenchu Devatha, Gangalamma, Pallamma thalli, Ankalamma are believed to cause disease such as Ammavaru, measles and Cholera etc.,

The Tridosha theory plays an important role in understanding of disease of the Yanadi. They believe wrong diet produces certain elements in the body
namely, \textit{vayu} (gas), \textit{pitha} (bile), \textit{kapha} (phlegm) which disturb normal health of a person. It is also believed that excess of \textit{vedi} (hot) and excess of \textit{sheethalam} (cold) cause diseases.

The following are some of the beliefs related to the diseases existing among the Yanadis. They are:

- Diseases can be prevented by eating all varieties of leafy vegetables;
- Food prepared in earthen vessels are very tasty and keeps body healthy;
- Decrease in the quantity of blood causes weakness;
- Food prepared in aluminum vessel is the cause for so many diseases;
- Working for too long under the hot sun causes headache;
- Carrying of heavy articles heavy firewood bundle or running too much causes body pain and stomach ache;
- Vows which are not fulfilled for generations cause mental illness;
- Persons taking bath in cold water are free from headache;
- Rice eaters do not have stamina, whereas \textit{ragi} eaters have more stamina; and
- In summer eating of yesterday’s rice, yesterday’s \textit{ragi} ball, yesterday’s curry is considered healthy.

Food is the prime factor for the causation of diseases. Eating of wrong kind of foods is the most common cause. Accordingly, their food habits are divided into different kinds of food, i.e., hot food, cold food and \textit{vayu} foods.

Yanadis are identify the causes for the occurrence of diseases are natural means, supernatural powers and magical means. The Yanadis classify the diseases according to the nature of the casual agent. The nature of treatment also depends upon the causating factor.
4.8 Classification of the Causation of diseases

According to Yanadi beliefs, the causes of illness are classified into three categories. i.e., disease caused by natural means, disease caused by supernatural powers and disease caused by Magical means.

A. Diseases caused by Natural means

Yanadi believe that certain physical elements in the body such as vayu, pitha, kapha, vedi and sheethalam are responsible for causation of diseases. They opine that the body is capable of strong certain quantity of those elements. If the quantity of these elements increases or becomes excessive, then respective disease occur. Like wise, some environmental components such as water, hotness and coldness are also categorized as disease causing agents.

The diseases caused by natural means are:

i. Diseases caused by vayu

ii. Diseases caused by pitha

iii. Diseases caused by kapha

iv. Diseases caused by vedi

v. Diseases caused by sheethalam

vi. Diseases caused by bad water

vii. Diseases caused by worms

i. Diseases caused by vayu

The term vayu indicates air or gas, i.e., vatha in tridosha theory. They believe that the production of excessive air inside the body causes disease. Some of the food items like tamarind, cow pea, etc., are considered as vayu padarthalu (gaseous food items). They have recognized three types of vayu. They are a) vatha vayu b) udara vayu and c) utha vayu.

a) Vatha vayu - Vathavayu is believed to be tightening of nervous systems, due to this joints pain occurs

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b) *Udara vayu* - *Udara vayu* is believed to cause enlargement of stomach, lack of appetite and uneasiness are its symptoms.

c) *Utha vayu* - *Utha vayu* is believed to cause swelling of hands, legs, body etc. They believe that it commonly occurs among middle aged people.

ii. Diseases caused by *Pitha*

*Pitha* is believed to be an yellowish bitter taste fluid produced inside the body. Among Yanadis *pitha* is divided into three types i.e., *Chorintha daggu*, *Kakkaya daggu*, *Daggu*, is believed to be caused due to excess of sweating i.e., due to excess of environmental hotness. *Daggu* is believed to be caused by wrong diet, rains, winter, cold, bitter-tasty items, "beedi" smoking, chewing of betel leaves, areca nut and tobacco. Disease caused on account of this are one side headache, itching of skin, rashes on the body, giddiness and vomiting. These diseases are treated at home, and if it is not cured they visit the herbalist.

iii. Diseases caused by kapha

*Kapha* is a white jelly type of element coming out of the mouth. Consumption of too much of cold category food items in the cold seasons produce this element.

Peoples state that kapha related diseases are more among children and cold bodied persons. Cough and throat pain are kapha related diseases.

iv. Diseases caused by Vedi

Consumption of too much hot category foods is believed to produce over-heat in the body and cause diseases. This type of diseases is common among hot bodied persons. In summer, they should be cautious while taking hot food. Diseases caused by vedi element are:

- *Vollu manta* (Burning sensation in body)
- *Kadupulo manta* (Burning sensation in stomach)
- *Thalanoppi* (Headache)
Kallumanta (Burning sensation in eyes)
Dappika (Thirsty)
Kallu yerra baruta (Redness of eyes)
Pothi kadupulo manta (Burning sensation in urinary tract)

These diseases can be prevented by eating cold food items. These diseases are usually treated at home, otherwise the herbalist's help is sought.

v. Diseases caused by sheetalam

An excessive cold element in the body causes diseases like cold, sneezing, heaviness of head, throat pain, etc. Too much consumption of cold category foods especially in winter and rainy season cause these diseases. People opine that this kind of disease commonly occurs among cold bodied persons.

vi. Diseases caused by bad water

Yanadi classify water into three categories on the basis of sources, they are:

Vaana neellu (Rainy water)
Kunta neellu (Pond water)
Kalava neellu (Canal water)

Among all these, vaana neellu and kalava neellu are considered pure waters. They state that earlier they were free from diseases, but now-a-days they are suffering from so many diseases. This is due to aluminum vessels. Cough, cold, throat pain and fever are common diseases that occur on account of bad water taking bath in kunta neellu is believed to cause Theeta (scabies) and also other skin diseases.
vii. Diseases caused by worms

People believe that worms enter into the body through food and bad water. It is commonly found among children. The main symptoms associated with this are bulging of stomach, stomach pain and more appetite. This is treated with home medicine.

B. Diseases caused by supernatural powers

This category is considered an important one for the causation of diseases and is recognized to be produced by supernatural powers. The causative agents are again divided into three categories:

i. Wrath of deities

ii. Prethatham

iii. Spirit intrusion

i. Wrath of deities

Yanadis believe that many diseases are caused due to wrath of the deities. They worship deities at the village and family levels. The deity which protects the whole village is pallamathalli (village deity).

Every year they perform Jathara (fair) to the Gramadevatha. This is done in summer and it mostly falls in the month of March or April. The temple is situated inside the forest, where almost all members of the village participate in the fair. Relatives from the surrounding areas also participate. Food is prepared there and distributed to all the associated members. During the fair a ceremony of walking over burning charcoal is arranged for those who have made vows for the deity to walk on the fire on that day. The village head or pinapedda performs the pooja to Grama devatha. Yanadis firmly held the belief that annual fair cannot be postponed or cancelled. Failure to perform this may cause misery and misfortune on the village.
The village Deity Pallammathalli, Ankalamma, Gangalamma are believed to be the causative agents for diseases like Atalamma, Nukalamma, Ammathalli and Cholera. People believe that at least, once in a year each family is expected to perform pooja and sacrifice a sheep to the deity. Each family has got its own Ini devatha (family deity), which is believed to be protecting the interest of the family. Hence all the members of family visit their family deity's temple to perform pooja and at the same time they offer cereals or money. Manovydha (psychosis) is believed to be caused for the failure of not fulfilling the vows.

ii. Prethathma (soul not put to rest)

The Yanadis believe that the souls of their dead ancestors remain in the settlement for a minimum of two years. Even subsequently they watch their descendant's activities from the medium of cosmos. When the descendants do not lead their lives properly i.e., do not pay obeisance or forget them the angry ancestors cause various kinds of troubles which include health problems also. To get rid of all these problems people take steps not to ignore their ancestors. Simple occurrences of the diseases are not considered as ancestor caused disease, because it has certain symptoms such as repetition of illness and illness persisting even after the usual therapies.

When a child is born in a family it acquires its dead ancestor's name. The purpose of naming the child after one of the child's ancestor is to please the ancestor in the firm belief that they always safeguard the child. It is believed that the frequent occurrence of illness in a child is an indication of wrong name chosen. In such a case parents change the child's name to another ancestor's name.

iii. Spirit intrusion

The spirits among the Yanadis are designated as "gali". Intrusion of spirit is called "gallipattindi". When a person passes through a place occupied
by *gali* place then the spirit intrudes into his/her body. Symptoms associated with this are glommines hysteria, shivering of the body, fright and unconsciousness. In such cases "Bandeyya", "Akkadevathalu" (spell-curers) gives a spell-cast coconut and the victim is asked to keep it for 3 to 5 days with him. Afterwards it has to be left in flowing water together with betel leaves, areca nut and incense sticks.

If a spirit of another caste intrudes into the body, then it is believed only the exorcist can drive out the spirit through his divining power. In such cases they depend on the other community's exorcist because there is no exorcist in their own community. Exorcists are also called as "Akkulaiah". They believe that full moon Sundays and Wednesdays are more auspicious to exercise the spirit. The patient is supposed to approach the "Akkulaiah" with pooja materials. Through divination he speaks to the spirit and asks the reason for intrusion and conditions for going out. After wards he takes a betel leaf and keeps it in an earthen pot. After fulfilling its desires he burns the spirit. If the spirit is strong then it nearly takes four to five hours to drive it out. On the whole the ritual is conducted for two days.

C. Diseases caused by magical means

Illness caused in this category is believed to be due to intervention of a human being (sorcerer). Among the Yanadi two types of human agents are recognized.

i) *Chethabadi* (sorcery)

ii) *Dhristi* (evil eye)

i. *Chethabadi* (Sorcery)

*Chetabadi* among Yanadis is considered as one of the causes of the disease. Two types of sorcery can be found among Yanadis. The main intention of this art is to harm one's enemies. Doing sorcery is a secret art and no one is
willing to disclose details about this. This is because in the village, those who indulge in these activities are ill-treated and looked down upon.

ii. Drishti (evil eye)

It is considered as one major causes of diseases. Yanadis opine that some persons eyes cast certain amount of evil powers on victims. Whenever those persons remarks about children’s beauty, face, eyes and activities, immediately the child starts weeping and develops some disease. Finally the child gets weaker and losses activeness. It is also stated that even grown up persons are also affected.

4.9 Disease Classification

The diseases are classified into five categories on the basis of certain criteria like causative factors, kind of treatment given and the location in the body. They are:

i. Body diseases

ii. Prethatham diseases

iii. Hospital diseases

iv. Wrath deity diseases

v. Hereditary diseases

i. Body diseases

The term body diseases designates 'vonti vyadulu'. These disease are believed to be caused by natural means i.e., by wrong diet and environmental conditions. People believe that food habit stands for the causation of diseases on account of excessive heat, cold and vayu (air). Like wise environmental heat and cold also cause diseases. They are some of the disease which are considered as body diseases.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Daggu} & \quad \text{Cough} \\
\text{Jwaram} & \quad \text{Fever} \\
\text{Vayu} & \quad \text{Gas}
\end{align*}
\]
Vapu (Eczema)
Kadupulo purugulu (Worms in stomach)
Vantulu (Vomting)
Bedulu (Dysentery)
Gajji (Scabies)
Vishamu (Poisoning)

ii. Prethatma diseases

The term Prethatma diseases means ancestor's diseases which indicates in the tribal context diseases caused by the ancestors. Repetition of illness and illness persists even after treatment irrespective of the usual therapies which are believed to be the symptoms of Prethatma diseases.

People opine that the soul of their ancestors remain in their settlement atleast for two years. Even after that they watch the activities of their descendants from above the medium of cosmos. Their ancestors become angry by the acts of negligence and disrespect. Besides, a new born child is named after one's deceased ancestors. If the child gets illness repeatedly then they change the child's name to other ancestors.

iii. Hospital Diseases

In the folk parlance of the Yanadi, Hospital diseases are nothing but the diseases of hospitals which means diseases for which they depend on hospital or doctors. People opine that certain diseases which they had never heard of are considered as new diseases and these are tuberculosis, cancer, cholera, diarrhea etc. Yanadis also state that the younger generation are born and brought up in the present environmental conditions. If a disease occurs then either they wait for one or two days or try some home medicine. If it is not cured then only they visit the doctor. Some people before administering any treatment call their deity and get confirmation as to which category the disease belongs.
Accordingly they choose the line of treatment. Some of the hospital diseases are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>(Cancer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaanthi bedhi</td>
<td>(Diarrhea)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunde noppi</td>
<td>(Chest pain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chevi noppi</td>
<td>(Ear pain)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kshaya rogam</td>
<td>(Tuberculosis)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

iii. Wrath deity diseases:

The term wrath deity diseases means diseases that occur on account of the wrath of the deity. People believe that if they commit any evil actions, their deities show their sudden anger by inflicting dangers. Wrath of the deities may occur in any form of a disease which cannot be cured by any other means. In such cases they consult Pinapedda (Health Care Specialist) to find out their evil actions. People state that at least once in a year they have to perform pooja and also offer some contributions either in the form of grains or money. If any family members fails to do so then he is made to remember his failure through troubles given by the deity.

Deities also are believed to cause diseases for not fulfilling vows, in a stipulated period. The occurrence of disease psychosis is believed to be caused for not fulfilling vows which are made by their parent or grand parents. In such a case the diviner finds out which parents didn't fulfill and which kind of vow was made at that time. Afterwards the family members fulfill it to get rid of the disease.

iv. Hereditary Diseases

A disease which transfers itself from one generation to another is designated as Vamsha paramparaya vyadulu. People believe that if a person suffering from any disease which wasn't cured within his life time it is transferred to his descendants. Moorcha (fits), Pedda rogam (Leprosy) and
Ubbasam (Asthama) are the three diseases which are considered vamsa paramparya vyadulu.

The Yanadis observe that the occurrence of diseases was very rare in the past, when they were following the hunting-gathering mode of life. Their herbal remedies were effective in checking the diseases that occurred. In the present age, an increase number of diseases are inflicting the people and traditional medicine is helpless to control them. In former times, their diet consisted mainly of tubers, fruits, wild vegetables, green leaves, honey, fish, crabs, tortoises, rats and so many. In other words their food regime was wide and balanced.

Due to the restrictions of the forest department Yanadis are not able to roam around freely the forest. The present diet of some of the Yanadis consists of rice and other food items purchased from the market and from ration shops. Most of these food articles are less nutritious and adulterated. Therefore, they adversely affect the health of the Yanadis. The deterioration of health due to change in the diet paves for occurrence on a large scale.