

"AYURVEDIC IMMUNITY BOOSTERS: NATURE'S PHARMACY"

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ABSTRACT

The modulation of immune response by using Ayurvedic herbal medications as a possible therapeutic measure has now become a subject of scientific investigation. Ayurveda is an ancient Indian system of medicine that emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance between the mind, body, and spirit. According to Ayurveda, a strong immune system is a product of good digestion, strong agni (the metabolic fire), healthy liver function, and a balanced endocrine system. Ayurveda also emphasizes the importance of ojas, a Sanskrit word that means "vigor," in maintaining a strong immune system. Ayurveda, the traditional medicine system of India, has a huge potential in preventive and curative healthcare. Covid pandemic has ushered in an era of renaissance for AYUSH in which enhancing immunity has been projected as the outmost strategy to combat the

disease. Ayurveda, since times immemorial has emphasized more on body's response and occurrence of disease occurs only if the *Bala* (Body immunity) is reduced. Ayurveda compares the concept of healthy body to a barren land. Just as a barren land cannot bear fruits or flowers, similarly healthy body cannot favour infectious conditions.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda also emphasizes the importance of ojas, a Sanskrit word that means "vigor," in maintaining a strong immune.

INTRODUCTION

The basic concept of immunomodulation not only existed in Ayurveda but is being really

practiced by the Ayurvedists for centuries. In fact, one of the therapeutic strategies in Ayurvedic medicines is to enhance the body's overall natural resistance to the disease causing agent rather than directly neutralizing the agent itself. Here lies the difference between the fundamental therapeutic approach of Ayurveda and modern medicine, which emphasize on direct attack on the disease causing agents using chemotherapeutic drugs. In Ayurvedic practice, the objective of immune enhancement is achieved through the use of the Rasayana and Vajikarana therapy, following Achar Rasayana measures and also by use of Ojovardhaka remedies. vyadhi-ksamatwa, as it is understood in Ayurveda has much wider implications than the term "Immunity" used in modern medicine. Chakrapanidatta has interpreted the term Vyadhi-ksamatwa as Vyadhi bala Virodhitwa i.e., antagonistic to the strength and virulence of the disease and Vyadhyutpada Pratibandhakatwa i.e., the capacity to inhibit and bind the causes and factors of the disease. Charaka has also described Bala as the factor, that destroys the Dosas or disease causing factors.

The Bala is used as synonym to Ojas. It have underlying meaning of biostrength and vitality with natural resistance against ageing and disease. Ojas has the property similar to 'Slesma but in the Ayurvedic texts it is stated to stand not only for Sleshma (*Tavadeva Slaismika syaujasah – Ch.Sh. 7/15*) but also for Rasa (*Rasacaujah Samkhyatah-Ch.Ni.4/7*) and Rakta (*Jiva sonitam api Ojah- Dalhana on Su.Su. 15/91*). Reference has been made of the two kinds of Ojas viz., Ardhanjali or Slaismik Ojas and Para or Asta Bindu Ojas. They are important and significant in the context of Vyadhikksamatwa. The two kinds of Ojas have direct influence on the body's defense mechanism. The Ojas prevents, resists and overcomes such factors which are produced in the course of the vital activities of the organism and may lead to decay and degeneration of the tissues (Dhatus) of the body.

Acharya Sushruta mentioned that the final and excellent essence of Dhatus begins with Rasa to Shukra is Ojus and this Ojus is said to be Bala. Dalhana has commented on this as Ojus is the cause for predominance of Bala of whole body.

Acharya Vagbhata also supported view of Acharya Sushruta and mentioned similar concept which clearly indicates the close relation between Oja and Vyadhikshamatva.

Types of Bala

It is of three types Sahaja (constitutional), Kalaja (temporal) and Yuktikrutajabala (acquired).

Sahaja Bala- Constitutional strength is the one which exists in the mind and body from the

very birth.

Kalaja Bala- Temporal strength is the one which is based on division of seasons and age of the person.

Yuktikrit Bala- Acquired strength is the one which is achieved by the combination of diet and physical activities.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The article draws on a range of Ayurvedic texts such as charak samhita and sushrut samhita etc. provide a comprehensive overview of the concept of immunity in Ayurveda. It discusses the role of digestion, metabolism, liver function, and the endocrine system in maintaining a healthy immune system. It also explores the use of Ayurvedic herbs and medicines to boost immunity and provides an overview of the various foods dietary habits, life style that are believed to support the immune system. It also discusses how Ayurveda, a traditional system of medicine, views the immune system and its modulation by various therapies, especially Rasayanas, which are rejuvenating agents that enhance vitality, resistance, and longevity.

DISCUSSION

According to Ayurveda, strong immunity is a product of good digestion, strong *agni* (the metabolic fire), healthy liver function, and a balanced endocrine system.¹ Immunity is also very much connected to *ojas*.

Relation between Agni and Vyadhiksham

Acharya Charaka in the context of functions of Agni narrated that, Dehagni or Jatharagni (digestive power of stomach) is responsible for life, color (luster of the skin), strength, health, enthusiasm, complexion, Ojas (energy), Tejas. Extinction of this Jatharagni leads to death. Its proper maintenance helps a person to live a long life and its impairment gives rise to diseases. In this way immunity is influenced by the power of Agni, digestive fire and our ability to digest, assimilate and absorb nutrients in human bodies.

Relation between Oja and Vyadhikshamatva

According to Acharya Charaka, oja appeared foremost in the human body during embryogenesis. The essence of Saptadhatus i.e. Rasa (plasma and lymph), Rakta (blood cells), Mansa (connective and muscular tissue), Meda (body fats e.g. adipose tissue), Asthi (bones), Majja (bone marrow) and Shukra (reproductive systems) is called Oja and it is the

seat for strength, hence called Bala. Ojas is Sara (essence) of Dhatus ending with Sukra; through located in the heart, it control the working of the body. It is viscous, unctuous, greasy, Somatmaka (preponderant in watery principal), clear (transparent) and slight reddish yellow in colour By its loss (destruction, absence) death will occur and by its presence the body (and life) sure to survive. Oja is the reason for different condition and activities related with the body.

So now the question how can we improve or increase vyadhishamtav or immunity with help our ayurveda!

Since **Rasayana Tantra** is one of the eight clinical specialties of Ayurveda. It refers to nutrition, natural resistance and geriatrics. Rasayana can be a drug, diet or even a life style and conduct i.e., Achar, which may be helpful in achieving the above goal. The Rasayanas are supposed to strengthen Oja and Bala i.e., vitality and biostrength with natural resistance against ageing and disease. It is stated to contribute to the integrity of body tissues and thus increases longevity. The other benefits of this therapy are the promotion of memory and intelligence, the preservation of youth, luster, complexion and voice. The various measures comprehended by this therapy are termed as Rasayana, because they conduce to the replenishment of Rasa and other body tissues.

Ayurveda describes a number of drugs as Rasayana and Ojovardhak remedies, which are claimed to posses' immunomodulatory effect. Some of the Rasayans which have been subjected to scientific studies and found to possess immunomodulatory effect are Aswagandha (*Withania somnifera*), Shilajatu, Amalaki (*Emblica officinalis*), Tulasi (*Ocimum sanctum*), Guduci (*Tinospora cordifolia*), Pippali (*Piper longum*) and Punarnava (*Boerhaavia diffusa*).

Haritaki -(*Terminalia Chebula*)- It is one of the prime drug mentioned in Ayurveda which has Rasayana properties. Seasonal intake of Haritaki with different Anupana is indicated in Rutu Haritaki for maintaining healthy. in Charak Smhita **HARITAKI PATHYANAM** is mentioned as it clears the channel of the body(shtrotoshodhan). Feluric, vanillic and caffeic aciids along with phloroglucinol and pyrogallol are isolated from fruit which shows high anti-oxidant properties. Ether extracts of the same had showed higher antioxidant property.

Amalaki- (*Emblica officinalis*) It is the only fruit having the huge amount of vitamin C in it.

Vitamin C has the rejuvenating effect on soft tissues of the body and also plays important role in building ones immunity. The fruit contains protein and ascorbic acid as that to an apple. It has mark effect on blood constituents and also replenishing effect on major organs such as liver, spleen, kidneys and brain.

Guduchi -(*Tinospora cordifolia*) It is well known for its immunomodulatory effect. It is rightly called as Amrita; meaning nectar which can be used for any disorder. Extracts and alkaloids of Guduchi shows antipyretic, anti- inflammatory, antirheumatic, hypoglycemic and hepatoprotective activity.

Bhallatak (*Semecarpus anacardium*) It is the prime Rasayana mentioned in Ayurveda. It has Tridosha balancing property. Among which it mainly acts on Vata and Kapha dosha and diseases caused by them. Extracts shows anti-inflammatory activity.

Yastimadhu (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), another important Rasayana drug has been found to be immunostimulative, which accelerates lymphocytic transformation activation of macrophage and increases the leucocyte count.

Rasayana drugs considering according to Deha Prakrti (Constitution)

S.NO.	Prakriti	Drugs
1	Vata Prakriti	For body: Bala, Nagabala with Ghrta For mind: Asvagandha, Sankhapuspi
2	PaittikaPrakirti	Amalaki, Satavar
3	Kaphaja Prakriti	Bhallataka, Rasona, Guggulu, Pippali.

Some ayurveda medicine to boost immunity

Chayavanprash-increase general immunity against viral infection.

Brahmrasayana-increase immunity against chronic disease.

Agastya haritaki- improve respiratorysystem and immunity strength.

Amalak rasayana-natural source of vitamin c and anti oxidants.

Arogyavardhani vati-increases immunity and useful in skin disorder and liver infection.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda; an ancient science of life suggests simplifying the lifestyle, and also promotes awareness in uplifting and maintaining one's immunity via the utilization of many plants/herbs which are easily available in the kitchen and garden of a majority of the society. Ayurvedic concept of Vyadhikshamatva is simillar as normal condition of the Kapha, Bala

and Oja. Oja is final and excellence of the product Dhatu and Vyadhikshamatva depends on it. Production of excellence of Dhatu depends on the Hita and Ahita Ahara and Agni. Rasayana therapy help in produce excellence Dhatu and lastly it convert into Oja, ultimately increase in Oja and similarly increase in immunity. Many researches proved immunomodulatory effect of drugs which are used in Rasayana therapy. Medhya Rasayana (Nootropics drugs) is life-promoting, disease alleviating, promoters of strength, Agni, complexion, voice and intellect-promoting.

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