

A REVIEW ON *OJAS* WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO *VYADHIKSHAMATVA* (IMMUNITY)

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ABSTRACT

The requirement of today's world is to boost up immunity (*Vyadhikshamatva*). *Ayurveda* assumes an entity, which gives strength (*Bala*) to keep body, sense organ, mind and soul together in functional harmony. *Ojas* is considered as an essential factor for survival of human as it is supreme essence of all *Saptadhatu*s from *Rasa* to *Shukra*. As per concept of *Ojas*, the body's resistance has tremendous importance in daily welfare of living beings not only for prevention of disease but also for rapid recovery after disease affliction. So here an attempt made to study *Ojas* in details including its formation, site, functions along

with its *Vikruti* and relation with immunity according to various *Acharyas*.

KEYWORDS: *Ojas*, *Vyadhikshamatva*, Immunity, *Bala*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda has great emphasis on prevention of diseases and maintenance of good health. *Vyadhikshamatva* is the principle described in *Ayurveda* which plays an important role in prevention of diseases. *Ayurveda* assumes an entity, which has strength to keep body, sense organ, mind and soul together in functional harmony. *Ojas* is correlated with the concept of strength (*Bala*) and defence capacity or immunity (*Vyadhikshamatva*).

Ojas is the first thing present in the form of *Sara* as a result of union of *Shukra* and *Shonita* or *Garbharasa*. It is present in heart and get circulated to whole body with the help of ten great vessels attached to it.^[1] Just like *Ghrta* is present in milk, *Ojas* is present in all *Dhatu* in the form of *Saransha*.^[2] *Ojas* is best in all *Pranayatana* i.e. responsible for sustenance of life in

normalcy and result in death if diminished.^[3]

It provide stability, strength, nourishment of *Mamsa Dhatu*, facilitate the smooth functioning of internal as well as external sensory and motor organs, maintains voice and complexion.^[4]

Ojas is responsible to maintain immunity (*Vyadhikshamatva*). It is important for preservation of health and prevention of diseases. It also plays a vital role in combating disease pathogen if the disease occurred.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

1. To study the concept of *Ojas* as per *Ayurvedic* literature.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Literature related to *Ojas* taken from various *Samhitas*, reference books, journals, publications and magazine.

Ojas

Ojas derived from *Dhatu* or Sanskrit root sound element, *Ubja* (force) and *Asun* (powerful).

Is is active and potent principle of body that is responsible for strength, vigor and vitality of an individual.^[5]

According to *Acharya Charaka*, *Ojas* is appeared foremost in the human body (during embryogenesis). Also they mentioned *Ojas* in context to *Rasadhatu*.^[6]

According to *Acharya Sushruta*, *Ojas* is essence of *Saptadhatu* and power of body.^[7] As per *Sharangdhar*, *Ojas* is *Upadhatu* of *Shukra Dhatu*.^[8]

Acharya Vagbhata stated that *Ojas* is essence of *Saptadhatu* and formed as *Mala* of *Shukra Dhatu*.^[9]

Primary site (*Sthan*) of *Ojas*

According to *Acharya Charaka*, primary site of *Ojas* is heart from where it circulates to the entire body.^[1]

Acharya Bhela has mentioned 12 sites of *Ojas* i.e. *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Meda*, *Asthi*, *Majja*, *Shukra*, *Shukla*, *Sweda*, *Pitta*, *Sleshma*, *Mutra* and *Purish*.^[10]

Formation (*Parineeti*) of *Ojas*

In Shukra(sperm) and *Shonita*(ovum) *Ojas* is present as dormant form. After conception, it is present as the first body component in intrauterine life.

After birth, *Ojas* is formed as essence of seven Dhatus which are *Rasa* (plasma), *Rakta*(blood), *Mamsa*(muscle), *Meda*(fat), *Asthi*(bone), *Majja*(bone marrow) and *Shukra*(semen and ovum) by influence of *Agni* (digestive fire). The process of formation of *Ojas* is similar to how a bee collects honey from the essence of many flower.

Ojas is nourished from the *Ahara Rasa* as like other *Dhatu*.

Types^[11]

	<i>Para Ojas</i>	<i>Apara Ojas</i>
Origin	originated in intrauterine life of an individual.	Generated by excellence of seven <i>Dhatavah</i>
Location	Heart	whole Body
Quantity	Eight drops, if decreases person will die.	<i>Ardhanjali</i> , if decreases or vitiated manifest abnormalities.
Characteristics	white, slightly red and yellowish tinged	Colour of <i>Ghee</i> , smell like parched cereal, taste like <i>Madhu</i>

Constitution of *Ojas*

Ojas is constituted by water chiefly (*Somatmak*), is unctuous(*Snigdha*), white in colour(*Shukla*), cool(*Sheet*), Stable(*Sthir*), mobile(*Saram*), distinctive(*Viviktam*), soft(*Mrudu*), smooth(*Mrutsna*), is one of the vital entity (*Pranayatanamuttamam*).^[3]

Concise table for *Ojas*^[12]

Opined By	Colour and appearance	Odor	Taste	Touch	Special information
<i>Charaka</i>	Red, yellowish	Parched cereals (<i>Laja</i>)	sweet	Cool, soft, smooth, unctuous, slimy, fresh, heavy	Located in heart, excel part of all <i>Dhatu</i> , <i>Prakruta Sleshma</i> , strength to mind
<i>Chakradutta</i>	White	-----	----	----	<i>Pradhan - Apradhan</i>
<i>Sushruta</i>	White, yellowish	-----	Sweet	Unctuous, cool, heavy, durable, mobile, soft, slimy, pure	<i>Pranayatana</i> , unctuous part of <i>Dhatu</i> , body strength, <i>ParamTeja</i>
<i>Dalhana</i>	White, oily	---	---	-----	Jivashonita, Ushma
<i>Vagbhata</i>	Reddish yellow	---	---	Unctuous, fluidy	Located in heart, <i>Ashtang Hriday</i> – <i>Shukramala Ashtang Sangrah</i> – <i>Shukrasara</i>
<i>Arundatta</i>	----	----	---	----	Measure 6 drops
<i>Sharangdhar</i>	----	----	---	----	<i>Upadhatu</i> of <i>Shukra</i>

Functions of *Ojas*

Important function is to keep body alive.

Ojas function is parallel with *Bala* i.e. individual shows well-nourished fleshy body with durability, all movements becomes smooth and without any obstruction, voice and colour become pleasant, functions of sense organ become smooth.^[4]

In intrauterine life, *Ojas* is chief participating entity in union of sperm and ovum, in formation of morula and in differentiating further fetal development.

Etiological factors (*Hetu*) affecting *Ojas*

Ojas undergoes depletion due to *Abhighat*(injury), *Dhatukshaya* (tissue depletion), *Kop*(anger), *Shoka*(grief), *Dhyan*(worry), *Shram*(exertion), *Kshudha*(hunger) etc. resulting into the flowing out from the *Dhatus* and getting associated with *Tejas* (heat factor from the body) and instigated by *Vata* which gives various discomforts to the body.^[13]

Ojas Abnormalities (*Vikruti*)^[14]

1. *Ojovisransa*

Symptoms observed due to displacement from its normal place- *Sandhivishlesh* (Looseness of joints), *Gatranamsadanam* (debility), *Doshachyavanam* (displacement of three *Doshas*) and *Kriyasannirodha* (impaired body functions).

2. *Ojovyapat*

Symptoms observed due to vitiation by *Dusha Dosha* and *Dushya* – *Stabdha* (Heaviness and stiffness in body), *Vatashopha* (Swelling due to *Vata*), *Varnabheda* (discolouration), *Glani* (Exhaustion), *Tandra* (stupor) and *Nidra* (excessive sleep).

3. *Ojokshaya*

Symptoms due to decrease in quantity are – *Murchha* (Fainting), *Mamsakshaya* (wasting of muscles), *Moha* (unconsciousness), *Pralap* (delirium) and *Maran* (death). According to *Charaka* – *Bibheti* (full of fear), *Durbalo* (generalized weakness), *Dhyayati* (worries a lot), *Vyathitendriya* (discomfort in sense organs), *Dushchhaya* (loss of complexion), *Durmana* (mindset becomes unstable), *Ruksha*(roughness) and *Ksham* (emaciation).^[15]

Ojovridhi

Elevation in the properties and functions of *Ojas* is responsible for *Tushti* (nourishment),

Pushti (unique growth) and *Bala* (strength).^[16]

Ojas and Bala^[17]

Even if '*Ojas*' and '*Bala*' are stated to be synonyms, it is needed to understand difference between them. It is as follows-

<i>Ojas</i>	<i>Bala</i>
realized by nourishment (<i>Upachaya</i>) and which is unctuous	realized by weight carrying capacity
does bear physical characteristic like colour and odor and chemical characteristics like potency of biological actions.	does not bear any physical or chemical characteristics.

Ojas and Sleshma

Sleshma in normal state is called *Bala* and *Ojas* while in abnormal state called as *Mala* and *Papma*.^[18]

Functions of normal *Sleshma* is like that of *Ojas*- oily, compactness, stability, heaviness, virility, immunity, resistance, courage and greedlessness.^[19]

Vyadhikshamatva (Immunity)

Vyadhikshamatva is the capacity to oppose the genesis of disease meaning mechanism to stop any facility to fabricate disease.^[5] As per modern science, immunity means the ability of human body to resist almost all types of organisms or toxins that tend to damage the tissues and organs. This definition clearly indicates that modern immunity matches with *Ayurvedic Vyadhikshamatva*.

Ayurveda described three types of immunity that are responsible for *Bala* of person^[20]:

- 1) *Sahaja Bala* - A natural, inborn immunity that is inherited congenitally and comes through genetic pathways.
- 2) *Kalaja Bala* - Strength dependent upon the time, age and season.
- 3) *Yuktikruta Bala* – Acquired immunity, slowly generated and cultivated through healthy lifestyle and specific food intake.

DISCUSSION

In *Ayurveda*, the concept of *Vyadhikshamatva* is described to prevent the manifestation of diseases which is correlated with modern immunity. After various evidences, it is clear that *Ojas* is that entity which is responsible for resistive power against diseases. Among three

biological humors, *Kapha* may resembles with *Ojas* as both are *Somatmaka*. So it is essential to store and protect the existing *Ojas* or *Kapha Dosha* to sustain the immune response and keep defense system of body active. *Ojas* is also termed in context to *Rasa Dhatu* which contain variety of antibodies and cells which develop immunity. Thus *Ojas* provide strength, stability, immunity and defense mechanism.

CONCLUSION

Ojas is the essence of all *Dhatu* which provide nourishment to the body. It is important entity regulating the functions of *Dosha* as well as substance of life. It can be also considered as an entity responsible for the defense mechanism (*Vyadhikshamatva*).

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