

A Conceptual Study of Function of *Ojas* w.s.r. to *Vyadhikshamatva* and its Clinical Significance

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Abstract

Ayurveda is the science of life and its main aim is to maintain healthy status of healthy living being, i.e., prevention of disease and treatment of disease. To fulfill these purposes, Ayurveda has mentioned various fundamental principle in reference of Sharir Rachna, Sharir kriya, Chikitsa, etc. Concept of oja and vyadhikshamatva explained in Ayurvedic texts is one among them. Though located in hridaya, ojas pervades all over the body and controls the working of body. By its loss or destruction, the destruction of body (life) is sure to happen and by its presence, the body is sure to survive and different state (condition, activity, etc) concerned with the body are brought properly. The main function of Ojas is vyadhikshamatva. Capacity or power of body to fight against disease and to resist against production of disease is known as vyadhikshamatva. Immunity is defined as the capacity of the body to resist the pathogenic agents. So the concept of ojas and vyadhikshamatva are similar as that of immunity of modern science. Understanding the concept of ojas and vyadhikshamatva will be helpful in fulfilling both the aims of Ayurvedic science, i.e., in contribution of implementation of positive health and in seeking solution of immunological disorder through Ayurveda.

Keywords: Ayurveda, ojas, vyadhikshamatva, hridaya, immunity

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INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the science of life and its main aim is to maintain healthy status of healthy living being, i.e., prevention of disease and treatment of disease [1]. To fulfill these purposes, Ayurveda has mentioned various fundamental principle in reference of *Sharir Rachna*, *Sharir kriya*, *Chikitsa*, etc. Concept of *oja* and *vyadhikshamatva* explained in Ayurvedic texts is one among them.

Ojas is the final and excellent essence of *sapta dhatu*. Similar to *sapta dhatu* it gets nourishment by *ahara rasa*. Some scholars explain it as *upadhatu*. But as we know, *ojas* does not nourish the body, so cannot be explained under *dhatu*. Dissimilar to *upadhatu*, it circulates all over the body through *mahadhamnis* so cannot be explained under *upadhatu*. Although it is explained as essence of *sapta dhatu*, but due to its *prana dharak Karma*, cannot be explained as *dhatu* [2].

In *Astangasangraha*, it is said as *mala of shukra dhatu*. Though located in *hridaya*, it pervades all over the body and controls the working of body. By its loss or destruction, the destruction of body (life) is sure to happen and by its presence, the body is sure to survive and different state (condition, activity, etc.) concerned with the body are brought properly [3].

Body is originally composed of *dosas*, *dhatu* and *malas*. As *moola*, i.e., root is the chief factor in stage of origin, sustenance and destruction of plants, in same way *dosa*, *dhatu* and *mala* for the body [4]. Beyond this *dosa*, *dhatu* and *mala*, there is one separate entity due to which every tissue of the body remains integrity in functions and structure for strength and vitality of human body is called as *ojas*. The physical, mental and spiritual strength totally depends on *ojas*. *Ojas* gets formed first in the body of living beings [5].

The *oja* provides *vyadhikshamatva* power in the body because function of *Oja* is to prevent manifestation of disease in the body and oppose and defense from the disease which already exist. The *ojas* is strength. Actually *ojas* is the cause and strength is the function of *ojas*. But being very important function of *ojas* and performing all other function of *ojas*, by strength *ojas* itself is known as strength. *Oja* which is situated all over the body is known as *Apara oja* and its amount in the body is half *anjali*. Opposite to *dhatu*, *ojas vruddi* does not occur in the body, inspite its decrease in the body produces different symptoms and stages [6].

By using *Ojavyasthapakdravya* in healthy stage of the body, it helps in maintaining normal amount of *oja* in the body and when *oja* is present in its normal amount, then all the function of *Ojas* occurs properly in the body and there is less chances of the body to become diseased.

To maintain health of a healthy person and to prevent infection in the body, one should use *ojavyasthapakdravya* regularly [7] so that all the physiological activities of the body should go on properly.

Decrease in quantity of *ojas* leads to a pathological condition called as *Ojakshaya*, deficient *oja* not only produces *ojakshayalakshana* and different three stages. But also *ojakshaya* occur in pathology of different disease. So for a physician it is mandatory to have the knowledge of *ojavyasthapan* treatment. In this study, an attempt was made to understand the function of *Ojas* w.s.r. to *vyadhikshamatva* and its clinical significance. All the literatures are reviewed to understand the same.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- To study the concept of *ojas* and its function in detail.
- To study the role of *ojas* in Shareera.
- To study the concept of *vyadhikshamatva*.
- To study the role *ojas* in prevention of disease.
- To study the concept of *Ojavayasthapanchikitsa*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Source of Data

Different Ayurvedic classical books, modern medical books, research papers and journals were referred to understand the concept of *ojas*, *vyadhikshamatva* and immunity.

Methods

- To compile the available literatures on *ojas*.
- To compile the importance of *vyadhikshamatva*.
- To compile the importance of *ojas* in maintenance of health of healthy individual.
- To compile the importance of *ojas vayasthapanchikitsa*.

This is a literary research study. In this study all the references from Samhitas and respective commentaries regarding “A conceptual study of function of *ojas* w.s.r. to *vyadhikshamatva* and its clinical significance” is compiled.

CONCEPTUAL STUDY

Although Ayurveda is science, based on Tridosabaad, but still we find some such reference in *brahatrayi*, based on them, importance may be given to Jivanubaad.

The body is not desired for the purpose of eating by those evil spirits, who eat only *oja* and move in night [8]. Here the term ‘*rajnichara*’ is used for *jivanu*, etc. Here it can be understood that, when *Rajnichara* attempt to destroy the *oja*, first there is fight between *oja* and *Rajnichara*, and depending on their strength they fight and win. This concept is also acceptable in modern science. *Oja* provide *vyadhikshamatva* to the body and strength of *oja*, in form of action is known as *vyadhikshamatva*.

Ojas present in the human body are of two types: (1) *Apara Ojas*, and (2) *Para Ojas*. The amount of *Apara Ojas* in the body is half *Anjali*. *Apar Ojas* circulates in the dhamnis and it is *apradhan*. Its decrease produces different *ojaskshaya* symptoms in the body. The amount of *Para ojas* is eight drops. It is situated in the heart and it is *pradhan*, and its decrease produces death [9].

Ojas maintains the life of living beings by its saturation. Without *ojas*, life in living being does not exist. *Ojas* is the initial essence of embryo and also the essence of its nourishing material. *Ojas* enters into the cardiac region before circulation. When *Ojas* is destroyed, it leads to destruction of body means *Ojas* is the sustainer of life, and is located in the heart. *Ojas* is the cream of nutrient fluid in the body and where vital factors are established [10].

The normal functions of *bala (Ojas)* are as follows, firm and well developed muscles, unobstructed movements, clarity of voice and complexion and normal functioning of external (motor) and internal (sensory) organs [11].

The strength of body is capable to destroy vitiated *dosas* [12]. Though located in the *hrdaya*, it pervades all over the body and controls the working of body. By its loss or destruction, the destruction of body (life) is sure to happen and by its presence, the body is sure to survive and different state (condition, activity etc) concerned with the body are brought properly [13]. The entire body with all the part of the living being is pervaded by it and in its absence, all the body parts wither off [14]. In brief, function of *Ojas* can be summarised as:

- Maintain life of living being.
- Without it life does not exist.
- Initial essence of embryo.
- Vital factors are established here.
- Homeostasis, i.e., maintaining the equilibrium of body.
- Controls the working of body.
- Different states concerned with the body are brought properly.
- Destroy vitiated *dosa*.
- Produce firm and well developed muscles.
- Unobstructed movements.
- Clarity of voice.
- Clarity of complexion.
- Normal functioning of external (motor) organs.
- Normal functioning of internal (sensory) organs.
- By its presence, the body is sure to survive.

- Destruction of *Ojas* leads to destruction of the body [15].

The detailed description of *vyadhikshamatva* is not available in the classical text of Brahtrayi. In *Charaksamhita Sutrasthan*, word *vyadhikshamatva* is used under following reference:

up lokZf.k “kjhjkf.k O;kf/k{keRos
leFkkZfu HkofUrAA ¼p- 1w-½

The power of *vyadhikshamatva* is not equal in all human being.

While commenting on the above Shloka, Acharya Chakrapani explained as:

Capacity or power of body to fight against disease and to resist against production of disease is known as *vyadhikshamatva*. Word *vyadhikshamatva* is used for:

- *Vyadhibalavirodhitvam*: It fights against diseases which are already present in the body means strength of the body, which defense the body against the disease, already existing in the body or prevents further complication etc., is known as *vyadhikshamatva*.
- *Vyadhyi Utpaadprati bandha katvam*: Before production of disease in the body, *vyadhikshamatva* prevent its manifestation, and resist against production of disease.

Means strength of the body, which defenses the body against production of disease or maintain healthy status of a person [16].

The *oja* provide *vyadhikshamatva* power in the body because function of *oja* is to prevent manifestation of disease in the body and oppose and defense from the disease which already exist.

Kapha in normal state, is (responsible for) strength but when abnormal or vitiated becomes excretory product. In other words, the normal *kapha* is said as *ojas*, while the abnormal one is sinful, i.e., cause of various disorder [17]. The qualities of *ojas*, as explained earlier have similarity with qualities of *kapha*. So it is said, *ojas* and *shleshma* are somewhat similar substances and both affect each other. The strength of body is capable to

destroy vitiated *dosas*. Strength (*bala*) is of following three types:

1. *Sahaj*, i.e., congenital.
2. *Kalaj*, i.e., time affected.
3. *Yuktikrut*, i.e., acquired [18].

Sahaj Bala, i.e., Congenital

Physical and psychological strength which is present naturally is known as *sahaj* or congenital strength. Congenital strength is present since birth. Congenital strength is of following three types:

1. *Pravarabala*: Sama sannipata and Kaphaj prakriti purusha.
2. *Avarabala*: Vataprakirti purusha.
3. *Madhyambala*: Pittajprakirti purusha.

Kalaj Bala, i.e., Time Affected Strength

Kalaj bala depends on seasonal variation and age of person. Strength of person, which depends on *kala* is known as *kalaj bala*.

Ritu, i.e., season is of following six types:

1. *Shishira*
2. *Vasanta*
3. *Greeshma*
4. *Varsha*
5. *Sarada*
6. *Hemanta*

Above said six *ritus* come under two types of *kala*:

1. *Aadan kala*—Shishira, vasanta, Greeshma.
2. *Visarga kala*—Varsha, Sharad, Hemanta.

Depending on above said two *kala* and six *ritus*, *kalaj bala* is of following three types:

	<i>Kalaj Bala</i>	<i>Visarga Bala</i>	<i>Aadan Bala</i>
1. <i>Uttam</i>	<i>Anta</i> (End)	<i>Prarambha</i>	<i>Prarambha</i> (Beginning)
2. <i>Madhyam</i>	<i>Madhyam</i> (Middle)	<i>Madhyam</i>	<i>Madhyam</i> (Middle)
3. <i>Heena</i>	<i>Prarambha</i> (Beginning)	<i>Anta</i> (End)	<i>Anta</i> (End)

Another factor, on which *kalaj bala* depends is age which is of following three types:

1. *Balya avastha*: Stage of childhood and adolescence
2. *Madhyam avastha*: Stage of adult
3. *Vruddaavastha*: Stage of oldness

Depending on age, *Kalaj bala* is of three types:

1. *Uttam*: *Madhyama Avastha*, i.e., middle age
2. *Madhyam*: *Balya Avastha*, i.e., young age
3. *Heena*: *Vrudda Avastha*, i.e., old age

Yukti Krutaj Bala

Yukti krutaj bala is the *bala* which is acquired or obtained by following proper dietary habit, diet and other rules and regimen. Diet with six taste increase the strength of body and with single taste decrease the strength of body. Depending on diet, *yuktija bala* is of following three types:

1. *Uttam*: Consumer of all six tastes, follower of Astaaharavidhivisheshyatan.
2. *Madhyam*: Consumer of two or three taste.
3. *Heena*: Consumer of single taste, excess food intake. Not at all intake of food, opposite food intake.

Under vihar orchestra, different types of daily rules and regimen, seasonal rules and regimen are studied. Different types of vaccination used in the modern science to provide immunity also comes under this. For easy understanding and study, three types of strength can be summarized as:

Strength (*Bala*) [19]

1. *Sahaj* (congenital strength)
2. *Kalaj* (time affected)
3. *Yuktija* (acquired)

- Pravara*, i.e., maximum: *Kaphajprakirti Sama sannipata Prakirti purusha*
- Madhyam*, i.e., moderate: *Pittajprakirti Purusha*
- Avara*, i.e., minimum: *Vatajprakirti Astanindita Purusha*, etc.

Oja which is situated all over the body is known as *Aparaaja* and its amount in the body is half of *anjali*. Opposite to *dhatu*, *ojasvrudhi* does not occur in the body [20].

CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE

By using *Ojavyasthapakdravya* in the healthy stage of body, it helps in maintaining normal amount of *oja* in body and when *oja* is present in its normal amount, then all the function of *Ojas* occurs properly in the body and there are less chances of the body to become diseased.

Table 1: Indicating Relation Between Strength, Kala, Age and Diet.

Strength	Kala	Age	Strength	Diet	Rule and Regimen
i. Maximum	Beginning of <i>aadan kala</i> . End of <i>visarga kala</i>	Middle age	i. Maximum	Consumer of all <i>rasas</i>	Proper daily and seasonal regimen Vaccination
ii. Moderate	Middle of both <i>kala</i>	Young age	ii. Moderate	Consumer of 3-4 <i>rasas</i>	Does not follow daily and seasonal regimen
iii. Minimum	Beginning of <i>aadan kala</i> and End of <i>visarga kala</i>	Old age	iii. Minimum	Consumer of 1 and 2 <i>rasas</i>	Does <i>Pragyaparadha</i>

So to maintain health of a healthy person and to prevent infection in the body, one should use *ojavyasthapakdravya* regularly so that all the physiological activities of the body should be going on properly (Table 1).

While explaining the pathology of Rajyakshma, Acharya Charak mentioned about *Ojakshaya*. In this disease, due to obstruction in srotus, and due to *dhatu kshaya* along with deficient *dhatu ushma*, pathology of Rajyakshma occurs. In this condition, after digestion of *ahar*, *prasadaansha* is not formed properly, instead *kittaansha* is formed in more quantity as a result production of *oja* decreased [21].

While explaining the pathology of Abhinyaasjwara, Acharya Susruta named it '*Hatojous*' means in this disease due to different toxin produced in the body, *oja* decreases [22].

Furthur while explaining *sannipatjwara*, Acharya Susruta explained a condition, where due to increase in *vata* and *pitta*, *oja* is displaced from its normal place, as a result symptoms of *visramsavastha* occurs.

While explaining the pathology of Madhumeha, Acharya Charak said, due to obstruction by *dosas* and due to rukshaguna of *vayu*, *oja* flows out of the body through *mutra marga* and *madhumeha* is produced.

In same way, during the explanation of pathology of *pandu*, Acharya Charak mentioned vitiated *dosas* and deficient *dhatu* produces loss of strength, complexion, unctuousness. As a result *dhatu saar (oja)* decreases.

From the above example, it is clear that deficient *oja* not only produces

ojakshayalakshana and different three stages. But also *ojakshaya* occur in pathology of different diseases. So for a physician it is mandatory to have the knowledge of *ojavyasthapan* treatment.

DISCUSSION AND RESULT

Vyadhikshamatva plays an important role in getting rid of diseases and maintenance of health by providing the resistance power in the body. *Ojas* is to be protected and only then, minor ailments and immunological disorder will not attack our body.

Ayurveda incorporates both the preventive and curative aspects of human ailments, promising it as a holistic science. This holistic approach of Ayurveda resembles to the entire function of *vyadhikshamatva*.

In this study, I tried to collect all the important references regarding *Ojas* function w.s.r. to *vyadhikshamatva* and its clinical significance.

CONCLUSION

Prakrutojas plays an important role in maintaining healthy status of healthy individual, i.e., normal physiological function of the body and *Ojasvikriti* plays an important role in pathogenesis of disease. *Vyadhikshamatva* ultimately depends on the status of *ojas*. Ayurvedic Rasayan treatment corrects the *agni* and thereby produce best *Dhatus* as *dhatwagnis* are also at their best ability; hence *ojas* can be produced at their optimum level which corrects *ojovikriti*.

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