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## CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF VYADHIKSAMATVA (IMMUNITY)

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**Abstract:** The quotation 'Dosa dhatu mala mulo hi sariram' signify that dosa, dhatu, mala are the structural and functional entities of the body. But the ojas is a vital force or factor which is superior to all the body tissues being their essence and in its absence or loss or derangement the body withers off. It is responsible for strength, which is the root cause of arogya.

**Key words:** Ojas, bala, vyadhiksamatva

**Introduction:** The concept made its appearance as a result of observation. It was noticed that in spite of living in same infected surrounding and utilizing the unwholesome and contaminated materials, only some person get affected while others remain unaffected. It was also seen that some of the diseased persons got rid of their disease even without any treatment. Further, the occurrence or non-occurrence, mildness or severity, rapid and slow onset of disease in persons living in same environment and using same materials in every aspect forced the ancient scholars to think of every factor which as responsible for these inter-individual variations. The same was named as vydhiksamatva by Charaka. The idea was that every individual is having some resistant power to cope up with unfavorable situations, which may be inherited or acquired in nature.

The two healthy persons also showed variations psychosomatically in spite of having same body constitution, environment and practicing almost similar dietetic and behavioural regimen. It was indicative of some internal energy or force later on described as 'ojas' or 'bala'. It was held responsible for maintenance of vigor, vitality and strength. It may be innate or inborn or constitutional and may be acquired after birth by appropriate diet, behavioral regimen and rejuvenation therapy.

The quotation 'Dosa dhatu mala mulo hi sariram'<sup>[1]</sup> signifies that these *dosa, dhatu, mala* are the structural and functional entities of the

body. But the *ojas* is a vital force or factor which is superior to all the body tissues being their essence and in its absence or loss or derangement the body withers off. It is responsible for the strength also which is the root cause of *arogya*.

**Concept of Vyadhiksamatva:** The word *vyadhiksamatva* has come once in *Charka Samhita (Ch.Su.28)*. The description is very short and lucid. The context is regarding wholesome and unwholesome food and its role in maintaining health and producing disease.

It was concluded that diseases occurs as a result of unwholesome food, abnormality in time factor, intellectual error and unsuitable sound, vision etc. Apart from these factors, an important factor *vydhiksamatva* was taken into consideration (*Ch.Su.28/7*). A well known commentator of *Charka Samhita Acharya Chakrapani* in his commentary *Ayurveda-Dipika* have defined very beautifully the word *vyadhiksamatva* which itself explanatory. He says-

व्याधिक्षमत्वं व्याधिबलविरोधित्वं व्याध्युत्पादप्रतिबन्धकत्वमिति यावत्।<sup>[2]</sup> (*Ch.Su.28/7-ck*).

**Vyadhibalavirodhitavam:** Capacity of body to fight against the manifested disease.

**Vyadhiutpadpratibandhakatvam:** Resistant of body against disease to be produce or to check the disease process or pathogenesis.

**Avyadhisaha and Vyadhisaha Sarira:** The person too obese, too lean, having incompact muscles, blood and bones, weak and indulged in unsuitable food, undernourished and having

weak mental strength are not able to resist disease, contrary to them are resistant to disease<sup>[3]</sup>. (Ch.Su.28/7).

Chakrapani says vyadhisaha means the body which can resist the disease to be produced. व्याधिसहानीति व्याध्युत्पादक प्रतिबन्धकानि

Gangadhara says the persons who take unwholesome diet sometimes do not get diseased because of the presence of pratibandhak karana in their bodies<sup>[4]</sup>, (It indicates some intrinsic resistant factors) (Ch.Su28/7-GA).

Vyadhiksamatva is responsible for causation or non causation or severity of disease. <sup>[4]</sup> (Ch.Su.28/7-GA). In similar context Vagbhata in Astanga Samgraha has described vyadhiksamatva as<sup>[5]</sup>

न सर्वाणिवपुषि च व्याधिक्षमत्वे शक्तानि। (A.S.Su 9/89)

The commentator Indu Says

बहुरपि दोषः कुपितो व्याधिक्षमे देहे न लक्ष्यते।

पीडाकरणाशक्त्वात्।

Even if *dosas* are severely vitiated they don't cause disease in vyadhiksama body.

**Ojas** : Classical literature states that *ojas* is the substance which is the basis of strength and which protect the person against disease.

Charaka says that the one which dwells in the heart and predominantly white, yellowish and reddish in color is known as *ojas* of body, and if the *ojas* is destroyed the human beings will also perish, The form in which the *ojas* is produced in the body for the first time is of the color of ghee, in taste it is like that of honey and in smell it is like that of fried paddy.<sup>[6]</sup> (Ch.Su.28)

Shusruta describes, *ojas* as the final and excellent essence of *dhatu* and *sama* is known as *bala*.<sup>[7]</sup> (Su.Su.15/20).

In Astanga Hridaya Sutrasthana, *ojas* has been called as essence of all the seven *dhatu*s. But in Sarirsthana it has been called as 'Mala of Sukra dhatu.

Vagbhata I shares the same view in Sutrasthana but in Sarirsthana it has been called as Sukrasara.

Bhavaprakasa says *ojas* as *sneha* of all the *dhatu*, as *ghrita* is of milk. (B.M. 502/281)

Hemadri has again quoted one reference which means *ojas* is the excellent and *saumya* product of *Rasadhatu* produced as a result of *paka* of *Rasadhatu* prior to the formation of *Raktadhatu*. (A.H.Su11/37-Hem)

According to Sarangdhar *ojas* is *updhatu* of *Sukradhatu*. (Sa F<sup>t</sup>/S/29).

According to Charka (Ch.Chi24/34) the ten attributes of *ojas* are Guru (heavy), Sita

(Cool), Mrdu (Soft), Slaksna (Smooth), bahala (dense), Madhura (Sweet), Sthira (responsible for stability), Prasanna (Clear), Picchila (Slimy) and Snigdha (unctuous)<sup>[8]</sup>.

Shusruta (Su.Su15/21-22) says it is of watery nature, unctuous, pure white, cold, stable, pervading, pure, soft, delicate and the excellent seat of life force.<sup>[9]</sup> Charka (Ch.Su.30/7-8) says that the seat of 'Para' *ojas* is *Hridaya* which is also the controller of mind. "Ojovaha" *dhamanis*

are ten in number attached to the heart and are responsible for transport of *ojas*. Sushruta says it is present in every constituent of the body.<sup>[10]</sup> (Su.Su15/22)

Vagbhata I & II says that while residing in heart, it is present all over the body and responsible for life. Chakrapani on Ch.Su.30/7 says that *para* means 'srestah'. The *para* word here indicates that there are two type of *ojas*-*para* and *apara* (excellent and general one). The measurement of *apara ojas* is equal to half of the volume of an *anjali* and *par ojas* is of eight drops and located in heart site of *apar ojas* is vessels attached to the heart.

In (Ch.Sa7/15) the amount of *slesmik ojas* is said to be half *anjali* which means '*apar ojas*' only<sup>[11]</sup>.

**Importance and function of Ojas:** All the scholars have kept *ojas* under the heading of "pranayatanam" which signifies the importance for vitality. According to Shusruta (Sh.Su. 15/20) the normal functions of *ojas* are as follows. Firm and well developed muscles, unobstructed movement, clarity of voice and complexion and normal functioning of external and internal organs.

There are three stages of fetus, *ojas* plays an important role. At the time of conception, it is the essence of sperm and ovum. After sometimes in *kalal* stage it is essence of live material which provides nutrition to embryos. In third stage, when there is formation of various organs, *ojas* manifest its action like vitality and maintenance of organs. Common causes for all diminutions of *ojas* are:

- Excess physical exercise, fasting, anxiety.
- Intake of ununctuous food and in small quantity.
- Habitual intake of food having one Rasa only.
- Exposure to wind and sun rays.
- Not having sufficient /required rest.
- Old age and Aadan kala.
- Demoniatic Seizures.

According to *Shusruta* there are three stages of abnormality of *ojas-Visranmsa, vyapada & ojoksaya*<sup>[12]</sup>.

### Bala

*बलं ह्यलं निग्रहाय दोषाणां। (Ch.Ci 3/167)*

*Bala* is assessed by working capacity of the individual. *Bala* or immunity can be classified into three types:

1. **Sahaja**: Congenital or Natural
2. **Kalaja**: Time, season, age
3. **Yuktikruta**: Acquired

*Sahaja Bala* comes from the parents and is inherited. Today in our modern society, many children have allergies to various foods and substances, and appear to be less strong than their parents. These inherited qualities come from their ancestors. According to *Ayurveda* theory on genetics, genetic factors are defined at the cellular level. The entire cell is referred to as *beeja*; *beeja bhaga* is the nucleus, and *avayava* are the chromosomes. If two parents' genetic makeup is healthy, the same health is seen in the children, whereas if their genetic makeup includes susceptibility to certain diseases, those diseases will be carried over into the next generation. The effect will be at the cellular, nuclear or chromosomal level. As this immunity is inherited, there is not much one can do except to avert the defects through various modalities of *Ayurveda*.

*Kalaja Bala*, the time of day, season, and one's age are important factors for enhancing immunity: strength is greater in the early morning, spring and youth than in evening, summer and old age. *Kalaja Bala* is inclusive of one's age, day of the week and place of birth and their impact, marked or subtle, on immunity. Certain places have stronger and healthier climatic and environmental conditions. For example, places with an abundance of water, ponds, cool and pleasant climatic conditions are *kapha*-dominating areas and contribute to stronger immunity.

*Yuktikruta Bala* represents acquired immunity, in which disease can be defended through *Ayurveda*. *Ayurveda* focuses on three plans for acquiring or enhancing immunity: Degree of strength (*Bala*) can be assessed by estimation of body constitution, pathological state, and significant development of body tissues, compactness, body measurement, adaptability / suitability, psychiatric nature, capacity of food assimilation, physical exercise and age.

The *ojas* is not only providing the power of resistance to disease but is a source of mental & physical energy and strength. The strength should always be restored because it is the roof cause or pillar for *arogya* or disease free condition.

**Conclusion:** In *Ayurveda*, the term '*vyadhi*' is defined as that which brings about the different form of happiness and the word '*roga*' is defined as that which causes discomfort. It is believed that an equilibrium of somatic *dosas* ie *vata, pitta, kapha* maintain homeostasis and brings harmony in functioning of the body.

Derangement or change in proportion and action of the *dosas* bring suffering. If we go through *Ayurvedic* literature we happen to find some factors which can be held responsible for equilibrium of *dosa* in the body and hence vigor, vitality and maintenance of good health. These words are *vydhiksamatva, ojas* and *bala*, which directly or indirectly indicate towards the body resistance.

The body resistance in view of prevention and recovery from disease plays a significant role. Among the persons living in infected surroundings and taking unwholesome food, Only some of them were found to affected, while others were left without any effect. It shows that pathogenic causes require some of the essential favorable conditions, and susceptibility of individual for getting flare up. In absence of such conditions, the disease will not come into appearance so, we can have a greater safety from the disease if we possess a good body resistance. The manifestation and severity of disease does not only depend upon the etiologic factor but also upon the resistance power of the individual. *Ayu* is four dimensional; composed of *sharir* (the soma), *indriya* (the cognitive and co native organs), the mind or psyche and *atma* (the soul). Health is also four dimensional covering the physical, mental, social and spiritual aspects of disease.

*Ojas* takes care of all the aspects of *ayu* and health which proves its significance. At the level of soma, it imparts nutrition to the body tissues and every constituent is provided by it, loss or diminution of this leads to degeneration or decay and ultimately death. The body humors even being in equilibrium are incapable to regulate the body in absence of *ojas* it provides the body resistance and arrest the progress of disease. It maintains the smooth functioning of cognitive or sensory organs thus making those to

perceive vision, audition etc. at their optimum level.

As well, it makes co native organs (motor system) work soundly. As for as mind or psyche or soul is concern it endows an individual with a feeling of strength and delightness. It is well observed in cases of diminutions of *ojas* where the person is always in grief and miserable and in a state of exhaustion as well. It makes a person mentally strange to compact with odd situation .Despite all this perspective, the *ojas* is a vital factor, maintain integrity of body and mind.

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