

THE CONCEPT OF *OJAS* IN VARIOUS SAMHITAS AS THE ESSENCE OF SAPTDHATU

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ABSTRACT

According to Ayurveda, ojas is defined as the final and excellent of dhatus beginning rasa and ending with Shukra, 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. It is the Ojas which keeps all the living beings nourished and refreshed. There can be no life without Ojas. Ojas marks the beginning of the formation of Garbha (embryo). It is the Sharira Rasa (nourishing) fluid from the Garbha (embryo). It enters the heart right at the stage of the Garbha (embryo's) initial formation. Loss of Ojas amounts to the loss of life itself. It sustains the life and is located in the heart. It constitutes the essence of all the Dhatus (tissues). The chief function of Ojas is vyadhikshamatva. Capability or power of body to fight against disease and to resist against occurrence

of disease is known as vyadhikshamatva. Actually according to Ayurveda the defensive power against diseases, which makes an individual capable to protect from disease i.e. immunity, is created and promoted by ojas. Therefore this review article tries to make certainty of Ojas understandable in scientific way and it's over all properties on human body which will be helpful for scholars in treatment of diseases and advising safety measures.

KEYWORDS: Vyadhikshmatava, Saar, Bala, Avara oja.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the science of life and its main object is to retain healthy status of healthy living being, i.e., deterrence of disease and management of disease. The healthy state of the body rests on the state of dynamic equilibrium of Dosha, Dhatu & Mala components. According to

the perspective of physical health and vitality, Ojas means "vigor". In Ayurvedic literatures, Bala, Prakriti and Kapha theses types of words are used as an alternative expression of Ojas.

According to Charaka Samhita, (during embryogenesis) the Ojas seems to be first in the human body. The resistance supremacy, immunity is shown by this Ojas constituent accessible throughout the body.

According to Sushruta, Ojas is the fine crux of all the Dhatus and the superfine crux of Shukra dhatu (reproductive tissue) which are accountable for biological strength, vigor and immunity in the body which make a individual physically vigorous.

In Astanga sangraha, it is said as mala of shukra dhatu. Though positioned in hrudaya, it permeates all over the body and pedals the working of body. By its loss or demolition, the demolition of body (life) is sure to occur and by its existence, the body is sure to persist and diverse state (condition, activity, vitality etc.) related with the body are carried out appropriately. Body is originally made up of dosas, dhatus and malas. As moola, i.e., root is the main aspect in stage of foundation, sustenance and devastation of plants, in same way dosa, dhatu and mala for the body. Beyond this dosa, dhatu and mala, there is one distinct entity due to which every tissue of the body remains integrity in different acts and structure for strength and vivacity of human body is called as ojas. The bodily, mental and spiritual power totally depends on ojas. Ojas becomes designed first in the body of living beings

Development of ojas

The finest way to define development of ojas is to understand how honey is prepared. As the bees collect honey from the fruits and flowers, so the ojas. It maintains the body of human being by virtue of its properties. Ojas constitutes the essence of all seven dhatus taken together.

Form and place of ojas

The ojas which dwells in the heart and is predominantly white, yellowish, and reddish in color. The form in which the ojas is produced in the body of the human beings for the first time is of the color of ghrut, in taste is like that of honey, in smell it is like that of fried paddy (laja). In Bhela samhita Acharya Bhela has labeled sites o of ojas in body. They are as follows; Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Meda, Asthi, Majja, Shukra, Sweda, Pitta, Shleshma, Mutra and Purisha.

As per Charaka, the heart is the substratum of the Para Ojas excellence and it is also the controller of the mind. That is why the physicians have designated the heart as Hrudya, Mahat, and Artha.

As per sushruta, ojas is watery in nature (Somatamka) unctuous, pure, white, cold, stable, pervading, pure, soft, pure, soft, delicate, and excellent, seat of life force, the entire body parts of the living being is pervaded by it, and in its absence all the body parts wither off.

CLASSIFICATION OF OJAS

Ojas is of two types

1. Para ojas, 2. Aparaj ojas /Avaraj ojas / Shlaishmika ojas

On the above statement of Charaka, Chakrapani commented that ojas is of two types the ojas of excellent type (para oja) is eight drops (ashta bindu) in quantity; the other type is known as Shlaishmika ojas the quantity of which is described here as Ardha Anjali. The latter type of ojas circulates through Ojavaha dhamanis and its attributes are similar to those of pure Shleshma. These two types of ojas, Para s and avara (Apara).

Chakrapani in Bhanumati commentary said that Ojas is of two types Para and Aparaj among these Para is of eight drops in quantity and its dwells in heart and the other Aparaj ojas circulate in the whole body. This ojas stays in human body since the time of fertilization Of ovum by sperm to whole life.

Qualities of Oja

Acharya Charak has designated ten qualities of Ojas which are similar to ksheer and Ghruta while totally opposite to Madya (Alcohol) and Visha (poison). They are as follows: **Guru** (heavy) **Sheetaj** (cold) **Mriduj** (soft in nature) **Shlakashnaj** (smooth) **Bahalam** (which spreads into the minute channels). **Madhura** (sweet in nature) **Sthiraj** (stable or firm) **Prasanna** (pleasant) **Picchilam** (sticky) **Snigdhaj** (unctuous or oily).

Characteristic features of Ojas

Somatmakaj (Contains predominance of Jala Mahabhuta) **Snigdhaj** (unctuous or oily) **Shuklaj** (white coloured) **Sheetaj** (cool in potency). **Sthiraj** (stable or steady). **Saraj** (Moving forth or expensile) **Viviktam** (clear or transparent) **Mriduj** (soft in nature) **Mritsnam** (slimy or moist).

Functions of Ojas

Ojas is the essence of all seven dhatus and very useful to sustain the condition of the good health. It not only nurtures all the body constituents but also nourishes the mind. It controls or regulates all the physiological activities and immunity power of the body. In Ayurveda Ojas is the supreme essence of all dhatus, beginning with Rasa and ending with the Shukra and it is supposed that life cannot exist without Oja in the body. Some of the functions are as follows.

Balen (strength bestows) **Sthira Upachita Mamsata** (stability and growth of muscles) **Sarva Cheshta Swapratighatah** (ability to execute all activities without any interference) **Swara Varna Prasado** (clarity of voice and brilliance of color or complexion) **Karana Nama Aatma Karya Pratipatti** (ability of external and internal sense organs to execute their own functions).

Abnormalities of Ojas

Oja Visransa, Oja Vyapada and Oja Kshaya are the three stages of Oja Vikriti (abnormalities) which may ensue in various conditions and diseases extending from physical and mental fatigue to acute and chronic mild and severe types of diseases. According to Ayurvedic view these conditions may arise as a result of metabolic abnormalities leading to reduced formation of Ojas They are as follows.

Symptoms of Ojas Visransa (first stage)

Sandhi Vishlesh (looseness of joints) **Gatra Sada** (weakness of the body) **Dosha Chyavanam** (triggered tri doshas move away from their Prakrata Sthan) **Kriya Sannirodha** (Improper execution) **Shrama** (lethargy in organs). **Aprachuryam Kriyanam** (It also results in the impairment of Kayik (physical), Vachik (vocal) and Mansik (mental) functions of the body.

Symptoms of Ojas Vyapad (second stage)

Stabha Gurugatrata (Stiffness and feeling heaviness in the body, **Vata Shopha** (oedema caused by Vata dosha) **Varna Bheda** (change in complexion or discoloration) **Glani** (exhaustion) **Tandra** (drowsiness or stupor) **Nidra** (more of sleep).

Symptoms of Ojas Kshaya (third stage)

A. According to Sushruta Samhita· **Murchha** (unconsciousness or fainting)· **Mansakshaya** (loose or decrease of muscle tissue) **Moha** (Delusion) **Pralap** (Delerium), **Purvauktani** (Symptoms mentioned in the 1st and 2nd stages) **Mrityu** (death).

B. According to Charak samhita. *Bibheti* (Fear complex). *Durbalo* (constant weakness) *abhiikshanam* (physical and mental frailty). *Dhyayati* (Worries always without apparent reason). *Vyathita Indriya* (Affliction of senses organ with pains). *Dusshaya* (loss of complexion of body). *Durmana* (cheerlessness) · *Ruksha* (dryness or roughness). *KShama* (skin becomes black). *Ksaya* (Emaciation).

Causes of oja ksaya

Abhigat (injury of the body), *ksaya* (loss of tissue) *Kopa* (anger) *Soka* (grief) *Dhyan* or *cinta* (worry) *srama* (exertion) *ksut* (hunger).

DISCUSSION

Ojas a dhātu or not? Ayurveda admits seven dhātus and ojas is not among these dhatus, actually ojas is the essence of the seven dhatus. A few commentators describe that ojas has got the only quality of retaining the body and it does not nurture the body, so it can not be recognized as dhātu. Ojas is not described either as dhatu or upadhatu. Because it is the essence of all seven dhatus and thus, it is not included within the seven dhatus. It is because of this, no dhatwagni relating to ojas is separately classified. Acharya Charaka discussing the digestion of food and nourishment of body tissue has described ojas in the end of seven dhātus after sukra which shows that it is the finest essence (*prasāda amsa*) of all the seven dhātus. Though it is the essence of seven dhātus ojas can be understood having a special quality of maintaining the life, so it has been described separately. A few scholars describe ojas as a special type of sukra but this idea is also not acceptable to the majority of scholars.

Ojas as Vyadhikṣamatva: Ayurveda presents a comprehensive concept of immunity intertwined with the fundamental concept of nutrition and dhātu pariṇāma. The essence of all dhatus (tissues) is ojas. The same is *bala* and is responsible for immunity or resistance against disease i.e. *vayadhikṣmatva* (as described by Charaka). *Vyadhikṣamatva* as described in Ayurveda is not necessarily a *kṣamatva* (immunity) against an infection or specific antigen but essentially a resistance (*kṣamatva*) against the loss of dhātu *sāmya* or homeostasis which is considered Ayurvedic physiology is originated from ojas (or to say remains in ojas) existing in each cell or (living entity) and protects it from any disorder.

The oja provides *vyadhikṣamatva* power in the body because function of Oja is to prevent manifestation of disease in the body, 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 (Bala). Oja which is situated all over the body is known as Aparaoja and its amount in the body is half anjali. Opposite to dhatu, ojas vrudhi does not occur in the body, inspite its decrease in the body produces different symptoms and stages. By using Ojavyasthapakdravya in healthy stage of the body, it helps in sustaining 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 avoid infection in the body, one should use ojavyasthapakdravya regularly 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.

Ojas as vital essence: It is the ojas which keeps all the living beings refreshed. There can be no life without ojas. Ojas makes the beginning of the formation of embryo. It is the nourishing fluid from the embryo. It enters the heart right at the stage of the latter's initial formation. Loss of ojas amounts of the loss life itself. It endures the life and is located in heart. It constitutes the essence of all the tissue elements. The vital owes its existence to it. But all this action of ojas evident itself in different ways, only with the help of various vessels known as dhamanī, sirā and srotas. So these vessels play an important part in the maintenance of health.

The actions described here refer to both the types of ojas. It is the ojas where the soul is stayed after the union of the sperm and ovum. It is the essence of the slime material formed as a result of the union of the sperm and ovum. Entrance of ojas into the heart of the embryo manifest the cardiac activities. Thus, in the three different stages of the foetus, ojas plays an important role. At the time of conception, it is the essence of the sperm and the ovum. In the second stage, it is the essence of the slim material which delivers nutrition to the embryo. In third stage, when there is formation of various organs, ojas manifests its own actions. Because it permeates all the stages of life, the synonym 'mahat' attributed to it is justified. Death occurs due to loss of ojas even if there is no loss of other tissue elements of the body. It is called 'dhari' because it is important in bringing about co-ordination among all the factors

responsible to sustain life. Here the various properties of ojas have been enumerated with a view to emphasising its importance. Thus, the vessels carrying ojas serves many purposes. They, even only ten in number, when attached to the heart go on branching and become numerous spreading all over the body.

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