

OJUS - THE IMMUNOLOGICAL FACTOR OF PHYSIOLOGY

Richa Sharma¹, Rajesh Kumar Sharma², Dinesh Chandra Sharma³

¹P.G. Scholar, P.G. Dept. of Kriya Sharir, DSRRAU, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India

²Professor & H.O.D., P.G. Dept. of Kriya Sharir, DSRRAU, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India

³Associate Professor, P.G. Dept. of Kriya Sharir, DSRRAU, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India

Corresponding Author: richashan1996@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a traditional old age system of medicine that has been practised in India for thousands of years and has endured the test of time due to its comprehensive approach to disease prevention and treatment. In literature, the entire *Ayurveda* science is based on basic life principles known as *Siddhant*. *Panchamahabhuta*, *dosha*, *dhatu*, *mala*, *agni Siddhanta* etc. are some of the essential *ayurvedic Siddhanta*. *Oja Siddhanta* is one of the main *Siddhant* who is always out of the spotlight. The scientific and research community are still unsure about the term *oja*. In terms of modern characteristics, its exact significance and relevance in life are still unknown. The term *oja* has a variety of meanings in Ayurvedic literature. In terms of immunity, it has a close relationship with *Vyadhikshamatva*. The goal of this review is to better understand the idea of *oja* and its link to immunity.

Keywords: *Oja*, Immunity, *Vyadhikshamatva*, Disease.

INTRODUCTION

Oja is an essential element of the human body without which life is impossible to live, according to Ayurvedic literature. The majority of the actions that occur in the human body throughout one's life are dependent on *oja*. The perpetual *Oja*, which is the essence of all the *dhatu*s, is responsible for *bala* and

immunity in the body. The *Ojas* is primarily responsible for internal immunity. The cause-and-effect relationship between the *Ojas* and resistance power or immunity is demonstrated. We become more comfortable, pleasant in the modern period of modernization, due to sedentary dietary and lifestyle alteration

which compromises and affects the health element overall. All of this eventually compromises the human body's immunity or resistance power. The contribution of one more unavoidable factor towards reduced immunity is highly significant which is stress. As a result, understanding the creation, storage, and use of *oja* is critical for the management of lowered immunity. In today's world, the implementation of the concept of *oja* is extremely beneficial.

Material and Methods:

This article is analyzed on the basis of different Ayurvedic classic literature. Materials on *oja*, *Vyadhikshamatva*, immunity, and other related issues were gathered, evaluated, and discussed to gain a full and in-depth understanding of the notion of *oja* about immunity.

Review of Literature:

Ojas is a Sanskrit word that means "strength and power." It is the most important substance in our lives, energy, and it resides in the body on a subtle level.

Definition: *Oja* is the most important part of the human body and the most important component of all tissues (*sara* of *dhatu*)¹. *Bala* is another name for it (Strength). There are different sorts of *oja*: *para oja* and *apara oja*.

Formation of Oja^{2,3}:

Understanding how honey is formed is the greatest approach to discuss the formation of *Ojas*. Approximately 10,000 to 20,000 bees collect the nectar or essence of thousands of fruits and flowers and store it in their hives to make honey. Similarly, *Ojas* is the nectar or essence that is produced by a variety of physiological processes. This *ojus* will execute its

avastambha role and support *Garbha's* life (fetus). *Ahararasa* (nutrient materials), which is obtained from the mother's body and has properties comparable to *ojus*, provides additional nutrition and increases the quantity of *ojus* in *ardhanjali*. All stages of intrauterine life are believed to be dominated by *ojus*. **Oja from various perspectives:** The term *oja* can be investigated in a variety of ways: *Oja* in the form of *sleshma*.

- *Oja* in the form of *dhatu sara*.
- *Oja* in the form of *dhatu mala*.
- *Oja* in the form of *pranayatana*.
- *Oja* in the form of *bala*.
- *Oja* in the form of *Upa Dhatu*.

Types of Oja⁴

Para Oja: The *para oja* is found in the heart and influences all developmental processes from there. It is in charge of all *atma*, *mana*, and *indriya* functions. The colour is reddish, yellowish, and whitish. It has a honey flavour and a puffed rice aroma. It's meant to be eight drops in all^{5,6,7}.

Apara Oja: The arteries known as *ojavaha dhamani* transport *apara oja* throughout the body. It is also formed throughout prenatal life. *Para oja* is the *oja* that resides in the heart and *apara oja* is the *oja* that circulates throughout the body. During the eighth month of pregnancy, *apara oja* transforms from foetus to mother and back. It is supposed to be *ardha anjali* in *pramana*⁸.

Properties of Oja^{9,10,11}: *Dravya* is the substance that possesses traits and actions and reflects them according to those qualities and actions. *Oja* is *dravya* because it has properties and functions.

Table 1: Properties of *oja* in *samhitas*.

<i>Charaka</i>	<i>Sushruta</i>	<i>Vagbhatta</i>
<i>Guru</i>	<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Snigdha</i>
<i>Sheeta</i>	<i>Sthira</i>	<i>Shukla</i>
<i>Mrudu</i>	<i>Mrudu</i>	<i>Ishita Lohita Pitkam</i>
<i>Snigdha</i>	<i>Snigdha</i>	
<i>Slakshna</i>	<i>Sara</i>	
<i>Bala</i>	<i>Mrutsna</i>	

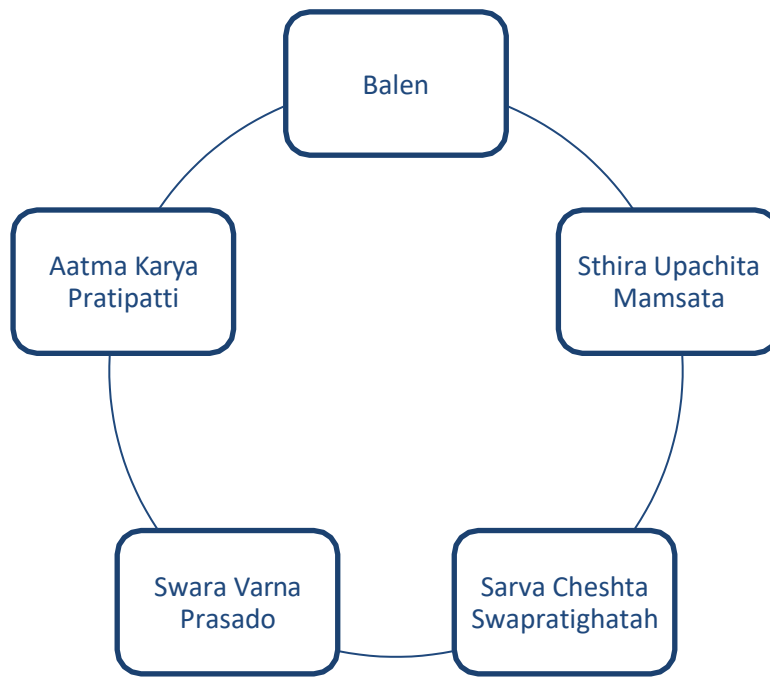
Madhura	Vivikta	
Sthira	Pranayana	
Prasanna	Somatamaka	
Piccil		

Function of Oja¹²

Ojas is beneficial in maintaining excellent health. It nourishes not only the body's elements but also the mind. All of the body's physiological functions and

immune power are controlled or regulated by it. According to Ayurveda, one cannot live without Oja in the body. The following are some of the functions:

Figure 1: Function of Oja.



- Gives and enhance strength.
- Helpful in muscle stability and growth.
- Provide the Ability to perform all activities.
- Enhancement of complexion and colour of the body.
- Gives the ability of external and internal sense organs to perform their functions.

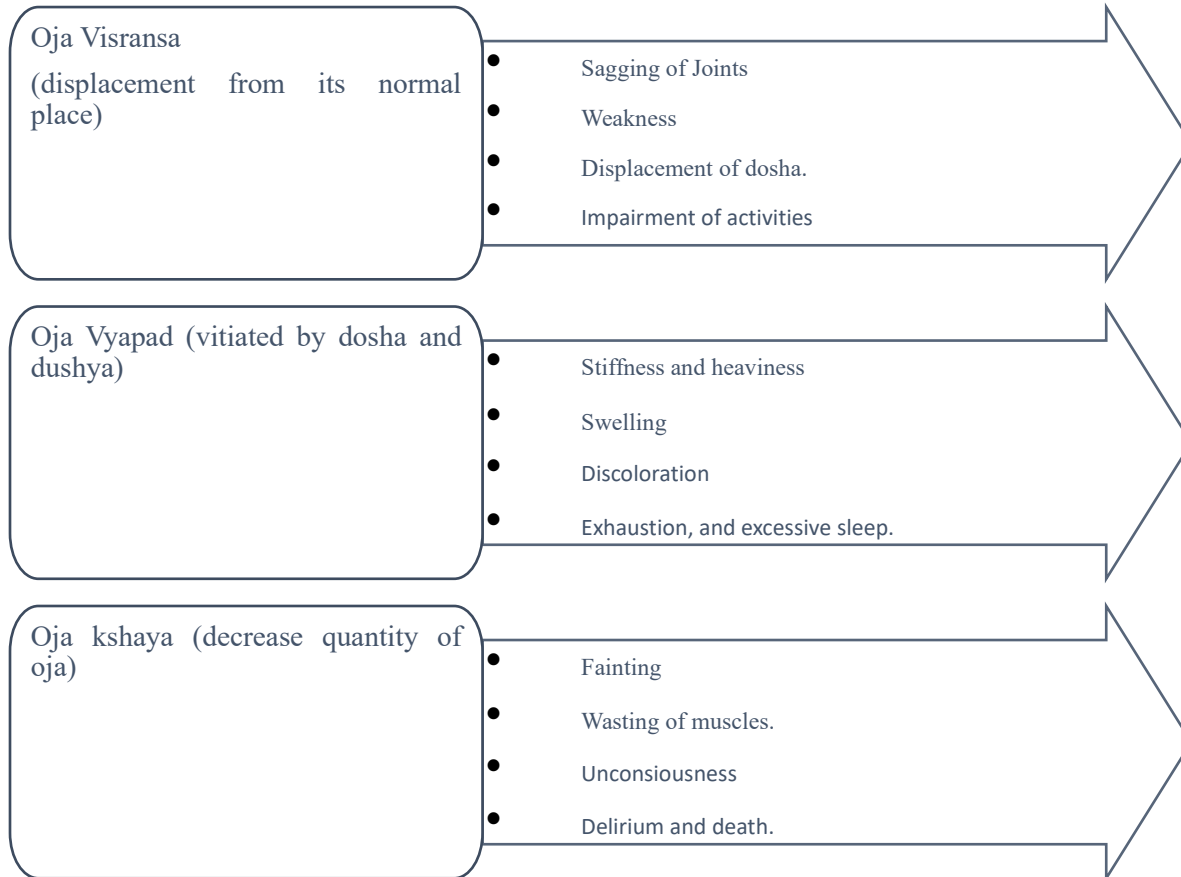
Oja kshaya¹³: *Abhigat* (injury), *Dhatukshaya* (tissue depletion), *Kop*(anger), *shoka*(grief), *dhyana* (worry), *shram* (exercise), *Kshudha* (hunger), and other factors deplete Ojas. Acharya described various causes of *oja kshaya* which are mentioned below:

- Exhaustive exercise.
- Low caloric diet.
- Consumption of a small amount of food.
- Having food of single rasa or taste.
- Prolonged Fasting.
- Excessive mental strain.
- Excessive exposure to sun and wind.
- Night awakening.
- Substantial loss of blood.
- *Shukra Kshaya* (Loss of semen).
- Ageing.

Acharya not only addressed the physical reasons of *ojakshaya* but emphasized the relevance of mental aspects. Any psychosomatic condition is caused by stress, which has become more widespread in recent decades. All of these variables also lead to a reduc-

tion in human immunity.

Types of Oja Kshaya^{14,15,16}: Acharya *sushruta* described three types of *oja kshaya*. Figure 02: Types of *oja kshaya*.



Ojas as Immunity:

In literature, there is no direct reference to immunity. However, acharya coined the phrase *vyadhishamata*, which refers to a person's natural and inbuilt resistance to sickness. According to *Charaka*, *vyadhikshamatwa* does not occur in the same order in all constitutions; it varies from person to person depending on nutritional, environmental, and personality factors, as well as physical and psychological aspects. Now the question arises which constituent of the body provides us *vyadhishamatva*, the answer is *oja*. The function of *oja* is so much correlated with the immune system of the body without which the body is susceptible to varieties of illness. *Oja* support

and maintain the healthy immune system of the body. The two tasks of *ojus* are to supply sustenance and strength to the body. *Ojas* can be compared to the immune system because their tasks are similar, such as protecting the body from infections and maintaining physical strength. Lysozyme, antibodies, white blood cells, complement complex, properdin, and other components of the immune system protect the body from microbes. *Ojas* also refers to a collection of body elements including *kaphadosha*, *rak-tadhatu*, and the essence of the seven *dhatu*s. All of these elements contribute to body strength. *Ojas* is the stuff that is stored in the body and used as energy to continue general living activities as well as to

combat various ailments. Then any impairment in the elements that cause *Oja* to diminish leads to the same of *Oja kshaya* (defective immune system). As a result, it is critical to store and safeguard the existing oja-related materials in the body to maintain the immunological response and the body's defensive system. Both the *ojus* and the immune system require a nutritional diet to function properly. *Rasa* and *rakta* (lymphatics and blood capillaries, as well as entire blood) are performing the function of *ojus* because they both include antibodies and cells that help the body's immunity.

CONCLUSION

The immune system is described in *Ayurveda* as *ojus*, which is responsible for maintaining good health and strengthening the body's ability to fight diseases. *Ojas* is the vital essence of all tissues; when there is enough of it, there is health; when there isn't enough, there are diseases.

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