



“CRITICAL REVIEW OF AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE ON VYADHIKSHAMATVA”

Amit Rameshkumar Dhane¹

1. MES ayurved Mahavidyala. Ghanekhunt-lote. Tal khed, dist Ratnagiri.

Corresponding Address

Amit Rameshkumar Dhane , MES ayurved Mahavidyala. Ghanekhunt-lote. Tal khed, dist
Ratnagiri.

Email ID:- dhaneamit@gmail.com

ABSTRACT:

The supreme life essence of all body tissues, known in Ayurveda as Ojas, is in charge of defending the human body against illness and infirmity. The state of resistance to infectious disease is referred to as immunity. In Ayurveda, the term *Vyadhikshamatva* is used to give a very concise explanation of immunity. Several Acharyas and their commentators had outlined different elements—like Bala, Ojas, Agni, etc.—which contribute to the development of the *Vadhikshamatva* in ayurvedic texts. An attempt is made to present Ayurveda theories on immunity and vaccination in this review paper. According to Ayurveda, Ojas, the higher life essence of all bodily tissues, is in charge of protecting the body against illness and infirmity. The ability to fend off infectious disease is referred to as immunity. The term *Vyadhikshamatva* is used in Ayurveda to give a very simple explanation of immunity. The *Vadhikshamatva* is developed by a number of variables, including *Bala*, *Ojas*, *Agni*, and others, which were detailed by several Acharyas and their commentators in ayurvedic texts. The goal of this review paper is to present Ayurveda theories on immunity and immunization.

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda*, *Vyadhikshamatva*, *Bala*, *Ojas*, immunity.

INTRODUCTION:

The primary goal of Ayurveda is a long, healthy life. Ayurveda included detailed explanations of topics connected to health and disease, as well as information on aetiology, symptomology, treatments, numerous ways to maintain health, and reasons why people get sick.ⁱ Ayurveda's primary goals are the eradication of curable disorders and the maintenance of health in healthy individuals. According to Charaka Acharya, the combination of the body, sense organs, mind, and soul is Ayu (life).ⁱⁱ In other words, Ayurveda places a high focus on living a long, healthy life. The principles of health and disease were thoroughly discussed in almost all traditional Ayurvedic writings, together with the knowledge of aetiology, symptomology, treatments, multiple ways to maintain health, and reasons why people get sick.ⁱⁱⁱ While many people are prone to disease as a result of dietary irregularities and environmental changes (*Aharaja*), some people maintain their health and remain immune to disease despite these changes in their environment or dietary routine.

The idea of *Vyadhiksamatva* (immunity) is crucial for human wellness on a daily basis, as well as for disease prevention and recovery. Etiological factors attempt to cause disease when they come into touch with the body. The body works to fend against the illness concurrently. Immunity refers to the capacity of the body to fend off disease development or to withstand an existing illness. In Ayurveda, *Vyadhikshamatva* refers to more than just immunity against a particular pathogen or illness, such as typhoid, measles, or rubella, for which contemporary medicine offers "immunisations". Instead, *Vyadhikshamatva* denotes a struggle against the erosion of the proportion, interdependence, and integrity of a person's doshas (bioenergies) (tissues). There are two types of disease resistance or immunity: those that lessen the effects of manifested diseases and those that stop diseases from manifesting. It is also well recognised that while some people engage in incorrect habits and seldom ever get sick, many people with proper daily and seasonal routines also suffer disease. The body of the individual serves as a favourable environment for the disease-causing agents as a result of efforts to address the aforementioned circumstances. The resistance of the individual affects the disease in addition to the etiological cause. Thus if we are in good health, we will be more protected against the sickness (*Deha Bala*).

According to Ayurveda, *Vyadhi* refers to conditions in which the *Doshas* (physiological elements such as *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*), *Dhatus* (tissue systems), and *Malas* are out of equilibrium (excretory products of body). Moreover, the maintenance of both physical and

mental health is accomplished through the normal condition of *Tridosh* (physiological elements such as *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*). The term "*Vyadhikshamatva*" refers to a factor that limits illness aetiology and dampens its potency.^{iv}

NIRUKTI

It is made up of two words i.e. *Vyadhi* and *Kshamatva*.

व्याधि – व्याधत्तदने i.e. it denotes the circumstance in which the body or *Adhistan* develops *Pida*.

क्षमत्व - क्षमस् सहने। It denotes *Samarthya* or *Shakti*.

DEFINITION

व्याधिक्षमत्वं व्याधिबलविरोधित्वं व्याध्युत्पाद प्रतिबन्धकत्वमिति यावत्।^v

The ability to resist a disease's progression, occurrence, or recurrence is referred to as *Vyadhikshamatva*.

SYNONYMS

Synonyms for *Vyadhikshamatva* that appears in Ayurvedic scriptures are: *Sleshma*, *Bala* and *Ojas*.^{vi}

Ayurvedic outlook on Immunity

The broad definition of *Vyadhikshamatva* in Ayurveda aligns with how immunity is currently understood. *Vyadhikshamatva* refers to both the ability to ward against disease and the method by which it develops.^{vii} This has been described by Chakrapani in two ways: as being opposed to the severity and virulence of disease (*Vyadhi Bala Virodhitva*) and as having the ability to impede, contain, or bind the causes and contributing factors of disease (*Vyadhi Utpadaka Vibandhakatva*). After the sickness has emerged in the body, *Vyadhi Bala Virodhitva* is interested in the subsequent action or procedure. This procedure shows that the disease's virulence is being held in check and its progression is being restrained. Only during the *Samprapti* does *Vyadhi Utpada Vibandhakatva* have control over the illness. Actually, by doing this, illness manifestation is being prevented.^{viii} Charaka asserts that not all people possess the same level of *Vyadhikshamatva*. *Ojas*, *Bala*, and *Vyadhikshamatva* are dependent on nourishing food, hence this is owing to the various nutritional status of the individuals. The *Bala* and *Vyadhikshamatva* vary as a result of changes in the nutritious value of food.

Also, it should be noted that each person's constitutional state, or Prakruti, is unique, and as a result, so is the *Vyadhikshamatva*.^{ix}

Factors responsible for *Vyadhikshamatva*

Vyadhikshamatva depends on the maintainance of the equilibrium of doshas and the healthiness of *Dhatus*. The factors which have to be checked while examining a patient have been described by Charaka and *Bala*(strength) is one of them. This *Bala* depend upon the healthiness of *Dhatus*. As *Dhatus* are the factors which protect the body and enable to resist the disease and *Bala* is depended up on *Dhatus*, it may be said that *Vyadhikshamatva* is mostly dependent on *Dehabala* and *Sattwabala*. If we consider the factor described by Charaka as being responsible for increasing *Bala* it will become clear that most of these factors are related to the healthiness of *Dhatus*. Factors responsible for promotion of *Bala* (strength) There are 12 factors responsible for growing *Bala* (strength) of the body.^x

- 1) Being born in a nation where people are inherently powerful.
- 2) *Hemanta* (between November and January) and *Shisira* were born during a period when people naturally gain strength (January to March)
- 3) Favorable deposition of time (pleasant and moderate climate)
- 4) Perfection in the characteristics of the seed, or the sperm and egg, as well as the *Asaya*, or the normal anatomical and physiological condition of the mother's uterus
- 5) Excellence of ingested food
- 6) Excellence of the physique
- 7) Supremacy of the *Satmya* (wholesomeness of various factors responsible for maintenance of the body)
- 8) Excellence of the mind
- 9) Favorable deposition of the nature
- 10) Both parents should be young, that is, they shouldn't be too old.
- 11) Consistent workout behaviour
- 12) A positive outlook and deep affection for one another.

Those who possess the majority of the aforementioned characteristics are inherently immune to diseases, or *Vyadhikshamatva*.

BALA

तत्र बलेन स्थिरोपचितमांसता सर्वचेष्टास्वप्रतिघातः सर्ववर्णप्रसादो बाह्यानाम् अभ्यन्तरान कार्य प्रतिपति भवन्ति ॥^{xi}

Means *Bala* gives the muscles a firm integrity, enhances the voice and complexion, and helps the person carry out his or her natural tasks. The strength of a person's body tissues determines their level of health. When a person's physical strength is inadequate, treating a condition that has affected them might be challenging.^{xii} Hence, Acharya Charaka preferred to assess a patient's *Bala* (strength) before beginning treatment. According to Acharya Sushruta, all *Dhatus*, from *Rasa* to *Shukra*, have an excellent core known as *Ojas*, which is also referred to as *Bala*. *Ojas* is the reason for the preponderance of *Bala* in the entire body, according to a comment made by Dalhana.^{xiii} Additionally, Acharya Vagbhata agreed with Acharya Sushruta's assessment and offered a competing hypothesis that unquestionably outlined the relationship between *Ojas* and *Vyadhikshamatva*.^{xiv}

Types of *Bala* (*Vyadhikshamatva*):-

There are three ways to acquire this *Bala* (the ability to fend against sickness) i.e.

- 1) *Sahaja*
- 2) *Kalaja*
- 3) *Yuktikrita*

Sahaja Bala–

सहजं वत् शरीरसत्वयोः ।^{xv}

This kind of resistance, known as *Bala*, is associated to being *Prakruta* (natural, innate, genetic), and it exists from birth. It includes both *Sattwa* and *Sarira*. It is claimed that it grows together with *Dhatus* and is independent of all other factors. So, it depends on *Shukra* and *Aartava*'s health as well as the appropriateness of the time and location.

Kaalaja Bala (seasonal resistance)

कालकृतं ऋतुविभागजं वयकृतं च ।

The age of the person and seasonal characteristics are said to have an impact on this kind of Behavior.

Rutu Janya Bala:- According to the *Aadanakala*, which corresponds to the *Shishira*, *Vasanta*, and *Grishma Rutus*, which symbolise the hottest seasons of the year, this *Bala* dissipates and reaches its lowest ebb at those times. Yet, it is claimed that this form of *Bala* is preserved at its best in the *Visargakala*, which corresponds to *Varsha*, *Sharada*, and *Hemant Rutus*, which symbolise the milder seasons of the year.

Aalpa Bala - *Aadana Kala* (*Shishira, Vasant* and *Grishma Rutus*)

Uttam Bala - *Visarga Kala* (*Varsha, Sharada, Hemanta Rutus*)

Vayakrit - Older people will have weaker resilience, whereas people in their middle years will naturally have stronger resistance.

***Yuktikrita Bala* (artificially acquired)**

युक्तिकृतं पुनस्तद्याहारचेष्टा योगजं |

This kind of *Sharira Bala* refers to boosting the body's resistance to diseases by consuming foods like meat, ghee, milk, fruits, and other proper nourishment. This kind of *Bala* can also be acquired through relaxation, *Rasayana* therapies, and physical exercise in accordance with seasonal requirements. Only *Yuktikrita Bala* is covered by the artificial immunity brought by vaccination and inoculation.

According to *Ashtaninditiya Purush*, there are about nine different sorts of causes responsible for lowering immunity.

अतिदीर्घश्च अतिह्रस्वश्च अतिलोमाच अलोम च, अतिकृष्णश्च, अतिगौरवश्च, अतिस्थूलश्च. अतिकृशश्च |^{xvi}

1. *Ati- Sthoola* (Excessively obese persons)
2. *Ati-Krishna* (Excessively emaciated person)
3. *Anivista-Mamsa* (Individual having improper musculature)
4. *Anivista-Asthi* (persons having defective bone tissues)
5. *Anivista-Shonita* (persons with defective blood)
6. *Durbala* (Constantly weak person)
7. *Asatmya-Aaharopachita* (Those nourished with unwholesome food)
8. *Alpa-Aaharopachita* (Those taking diet in small quantity)

9. *Alpa-Sattva* (Individuals with feeble mind)

The following are the primary elements Acharya Charak identified as influencing *Vyadhikshamtva*^{xvii}- *Desha, Kala, Samyoga, Virya, Pramana, Oja, Bala, Jatakarma, Lehana Karma, Suvarna Karma, Dhoopana Karma, Niyamita Vyayama*.

Vyaadikshama Sarira (Individual having good immunity): Those with balanced musculature, physical compactness (*Samhanana*), and healthy *Indriyas* are less susceptible to sickness. They are resilient to fatigue, cold weather, hunger, thirst, and the heat of the sun. They can also adequately absorb and assimilate meals. Those who are capable of fending off illnesses are those whose bodies are neither excessively fat nor excessively lean, who have healthy and good blood and bone tissue, who are well-nourished with wholesome and sufficient food, and who have strong minds.

Role of Agni in *Vyadhikshama*:

According to Acharya Charaka, the *Agni*, specifically the *Dehagni* or *Jatharagni* (digestive power of the stomach), is the only source of longevity, strength, health, enthusiasm, plumpness, complexion, *Ojas* (energy), *Tejas* (gleam of the body), various forms of *Agni*, and *Prana* (vitality). The termination of this *Jatharagni* is a sign that someone has passed away. A person may live a long and disease-free life if *Jatharagni* is functioning properly. As it deteriorates, several diseases may develop. *Jatharagni* is therefore seen as the foundation of life or the primary source of sustenance for all living things.^{xviii} In this way, the power of *Agni*, the digestive fire, and our capacity to digest, assimilate, and absorb nutrients in human bodies predispose immunity. Invaders are neutralised, killed, and ejected from the body in a robust, healthy, and immunological body. Metabolism, immunological response, and natural resistance will all be compromised if *Agni* is weakened by an imbalance within the *Tridosha*.

Ojas

The seat of strength, known as *Bala*, and the essence of the *Saptadhatus* are both named *Oja* and are located in the heart. Its characteristics include being thick, unctuous, oily, *Somatmaka* (predominantly watery), clear (transparent), and slightly reddish yellow in hue. Its absence, destruction, or loss could result in death, yet its existence in the body (and life) ensures survival.^{xix}

Ojas classification; *Ojas*, according to Chakrapani, comes in two varieties.^{xx}

Para Ojas: Prime *Ojas* is where *Prana*, the life force, lives. It is 8 drops in number, present in the heart, and even a small amount of *Para Ojas* destruction causes death. Its colours are white and yellowish red.

Apara Ojas: *Apara Ojas* is less significant than *Para Ojas* and is only half as plentiful as *Anjali*.

Ojakshaya (decrease or loss of *Ojas*)

Ojas is reduced by rage, hunger, anxiety, grief, and effort. With such a decline, the person gets anxious, weak, and worries a lot again. They also experience discomfort in their sense organs and have a terrible complexion, a negative reputation, and dry skin.^{xxi}

The three stages of *Ojas* anomaly, according to Sushruta, are^{xxii}

Ojovisransa: Loose joints, physical aches, the displacement of the *Doshas* from their seats, fatigue, and difficulty performing an action are all signs of *Ojovisransa*.

Ojovyapada: *Ojovyapada* causes body heaviness, stiffness in the joints, depression, discoloration, body aches, tiredness, excessive sleep, and non-pitting edoema as symptoms.

Oajokshaya: Unconsciousness, wasting of the flesh, semi-consciousness, coma, and death are signs of *Ojokshaya*.

A commentator on the Charaka Samhita named Chakrapani Datta used the word *Vyadhikshamatva* and provided a brief explanation in two sections^{xxiii}, i.e.

(a) **Vyadhi-Balavirodhitvam:** It is the ability to combat or thwart the strength (severity) of the diseases, or the capacity to thwart the onset of disease.

(b) **Vyadhi-Utpadakapratibandhakatva:** The counterattacking strength of the body to inhibit the occurrence and re-occurrence of the disease.

Together, these *Vyadhikshamatva* subtypes create immunity, which is a defence against a variety of ailments.

The health of the three *Dhatus*—*Mamsa*, *Asthi*, and *Sonita*—has a significant impact on the body's strength. Those with faulty physiological processes in these three *Dhatus* are therefore by nature quite frail. *Mamsa*, *Asthi*, and *Sonita* have been specifically addressed by Caraka as

having a direct connection to a good immune response. Several possible causes are listed below.

A. The balance of the three *Doshas*, which is necessary for disease resistance, will automatically keep these three *Dhatus* in good health. This is due to the dependency between *Rakta* and *Pitta*, *Mamsa* and *Kapha*, and *Asthi* and *Vata* (*Ashraya-Ashrayee-Bhava*).

B. The blood's white blood cells (WBC) fend off illnesses and shield the body from harmful external substances.

C. Formation of the red and white blood cells takes place in the red bone marrow of the *Asthi* (bone).

The cause and the place where the cause is active determine how diseases and the spectrum of autoimmune disorders manifest in various body sections. In more specific terms, the region in which *Kha Vaigunya* has manifested moves on to the *Dosha Dushya Samurchana* and eventually culminates in the manifestation of sickness. Even in contemporary medical literature, autoimmune illnesses are divided into organ-specific and organ-non-specific categories, as well as systemic categories, depending on where the autoantibodies engage. There is no doubt about the state of *Kapha* because there is *Prakopa* of *Vata* and *Pitta*. *Kapha* will be somewhat reduced, or to some extent, *Malarupi Kapha* will form (altered leucocytes). *Balakrut*, or giving the body strength, is a recognised property of the *Kapha Dosha*. One of the synonyms for *Kapha Dosha* is *Bala*. *Bala* can be seen in this context as the *Slaishmika Ojas* or *Apara Ojus* that bestows *Vyadhikshamatva Shakti*, or the ability to fend off and defeat the energies or elements that cause illness and decay. Acharya Dalhana explains that *Ojas* is the fundamental component of all *Dhatus*, all of which are *Moortimat*. *Ojas*, then, is a material (which can be understood as the white portion of blood, or leucocytes), and *Bala*, which is transmitted, is the functional result or component. Although though *Vata* and *Pitta* have separate roles in attack and judgement, both are decided by the *Kapha Dosha*. *Anyadosha* (apart from *Kaphadosha*) *Prakopa* results in *Kshaya* to *Kapha* conversion or the production of *Malarupi Kapha* (altered leucocytes), which compromises the immune system.^{xxiv}

CONCLUSION:

The Ayurveda idea of immune mechanism understanding is comprehensive but exact. The *Vyadhikshamatva* idea in Ayurveda is comparable to the *Kapha*, *Bala*, and *Oja Doshas* in their natural states. *Oja* is the last word, and the quality of *Dhatu's* and *Vyadhikshamatva's* output depends on it. Many facets of contemporary immunology are covered by *Vyadhikshamatva*, as well as prospective immunopathological insight. In the study of immunology, the mechanism of autoimmunity is the least known. The ancient science of Ayurveda provides valuable insight into understanding immune tolerance, which is described as *Sahaja Satmya*, and autoimmunity, which is understood as *Ojovisramsya* when a *Dosha* is malfunctioning. It is concluded that *Bala* manifests both externally and inside as *Vyadhikshamatva* (vital strength). Comparing people with *Pitta* and *Vata* body types, the *Kapha Prakriti* body type has the best *Sahaja* (natural) *Bala*. However, as lower immune levels are inevitably a formula for disease transmission, understanding and practising *Vyadhikshamatva* can also be used as a preventive measure.

ⁱ Sharma PV, Charaka. Charaka Samhita, Part 1.. Sutrasthana, Chapter 1 Verse 42 Varanasi Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan [2011];4.

ⁱⁱ Charaka. Charaka Samhita, Part 1. Sharma PV, editor. 1 st ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Orientalia; 2011. Sutrasthana, 1/42. p.6.

ⁱⁱⁱ Charaka. Charaka Samhita, Part 1. Sharma PV, editor. 1 st ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Orientalia; 2011. Sutrasthana, 1/42. p.4.

^{iv} Sharma MK. Concept of vyadhikshamatva (immunity) and its relationship with Bala (Vital strength). Global J Res. Med. Plants & Indigen. Med, 2013; 2(5): 386–391.

^v Dr. Subhash Ranade, Dr. Anand Kalaskar Rog-Nidan Part 1 Chapter - 2 Vyadhi Nidan Profishunt publication house Jan 2017 ; 166.

^{vi} Karam Singh Bhavna Verma the concept of vyadhikshamatva (immunity) in ayurveda - Ayurpharm Int J Ayur Alli Sci., Vol.1, No.5 (2012) Pages 99 – 108

^{vii} Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita with Ayurveda Dipika Commentary, Ed. Acharya Y.T, reprint ed. Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2009:178.

^{viii} Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita with Ayurveda Dipika Commentary, Ed. Acharya Y.T, reprint ed. Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2009:178.

^{ix} Agnivesha, Charaka Samhita with Ayurveda Dipika Commentary, Ed. Acharya Y.T, reprint ed. Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi, 2009:178.

^x Charaka. Charaka Samhita (Vaidya manorama Hindi commentary). Shukla V, Tripathi R, editors. 1st ed. New Delhi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Publication; 2010. Chikitsasthana, 15/3-4. p.358.

^{xi} Shastri K. Susrutasamhita of Maharsi - Susruta edited with Ayurveda-Tattva-Sandipika Sootra Sthana; Chapter - 15, verse 25. Varanasi The Kashi Sanskrit Series 156, 2011; 79.

^{xii} Patil SB, Chowdhury K, Rao MV. Vyadhikshamatva - An Ayurvedic aspect of immunity. Pharma Science Monitor, 2013; 4(4S1): 32-42.

^{xiii} Sushruta. Susruta Samhita (Ayurveda tatvasandipika Hindi commentary), Part - 1. Shastri A, editor. 1st ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan, 2011; Sutrasthana, 15/30, p.80.

^{xiv} Vagbhata. Ashtanga hridayam, Part 1. Murthy KRS, editor. 9th ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Krishnadas Academy, 2013. Sutrasthana, 11/41. p.164.

^{xv} Upadhyaya Y: Editor, Astangahrdaya of Vagbhata.; Sutrasthana, chapter 11, Verse 37-38 Varanasi: Chaukhamba Prakashan, Ed., 2007; 54.

^{xvi} Tripathi B, editor (1st) Charaka-Samhita of Agnivesa , Sootra Sthana Chapter 21, Verse 3 Varanasi Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan (2008); 398.

^{xvii} Tripathi B, editor (1st) Charaka-Samhita of Agnivesa , Sootra Sthana Chapter 28, Verse 7 Varanasi Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan (2008); 547.

^{xviii} Charaka. Charaka Samhita (Vaidya manorama Hindi commentary). Shukla V, Tripathi R, editors. 1st ed. New Delhi: Choukhambha Sanskrit Publication; 2010. Chikitsasthana, 15/3-4. p.358.

^{xix} Upadhyaya Y: Editor, Astangahrdaya of Vagbhata,; Sutrasthana, chapter 11, Verse 37-38 Varanasi: Chaukhambha Prakashan, Ed., 2007; 54.

^{xx} Dr. Brahmanad Tripathi and Dr.Ganga Sahay Pandey, charak ssamhita with charak chandrika Hindi commentary, Sutrasthana, chapter 12, Verse 75 Varanasi: Chaukhambha Prakashan, Ed., 2007; 353.

^{xxi} Upadhyaya Y: Editor, Astangahrdaya of Vagbhata,; Sutrasthana, chapter 11, Verse 39-40 Varanasi: Chaukhambha Prakashan, Ed., 2007; 54.

^{xxii} ShastriK.Susrutasamhita of Maharsi - Susruta edited with Ayurveda-Tattva-SandipikaSootraSthana;Chapter - 15,verse 28-29.Varanasi The Kashi Sanskrit Series 156,2011;80.

^{xxiii} Charaka. Charaka Samhita (Ayurveda Dipika Commentary by Chakrapanidatta) Yadavaji Trikamji, editor. 1st ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surbharti Prakashana, 2014; Sutrasthana, 28: 178.

^{xxiv} Krishnan RN, Mohan N. Concept of Vyadhikshamatva with special reference to Immune tolerance and Auto-Immunity. Journal of Ayurveda and Integrated Medical Sciences. 2016 Jun 30;1(01)68-72.