

**VYADHIKSHAMATVA (IMMUNITY): AN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE WITH
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ABSTRACT

In the contemporary era of emerging Pathogens and lifestyle disorders, the immune system's role in maintaining health is of paramount importance. Ayurveda approaches immunity through the holistic concept of *Vyadhiikshamatva* (Disease resistance), which encompasses not only the body's ability to fight manifested diseases (*Vyadhi-Balavirodhitvam*) but also its capacity to prevent the initial pathogenesis (*Vyadhi-Utpadaka Pratibandhakatva*). The foundation of *Vyadhiikshamatva* relies on the equilibrium of *Doshas* (Humors), *Prakriti*, *Jiva Shonita*, *Prakrita Shleshma*, *Sara* (Excellence of Body Tissues), *Ojas* (the vital essence of all tissues) & optimal *Agni* (digestive and metabolic fire). Ayurveda classifies immunity (*Bala*) into three distinct types: *Sahaja* (Congenital or Genetic), *Kalaja* (influenced by time, season, and age), and *Yuktikrita* (acquired through diet, lifestyle, and therapeutic interventions). A synergistic comparison reveals striking parallels between Ayurvedic principles and modern immunology. *Sahaja Bala* directly correlates with innate (Non-specific) immunity, providing the first line of defense. *Kalaja Bala* (Natural Acquired Immunity), modulated by seasonal cycles (*Ritu*) and age (*Vaya*). *Yuktikrita Bala* mirrors acquired or adaptive immunity, which can be enhanced through modern methods like vaccination, or Ayurvedic regimens like *Rasayana* (rejuvenation therapy) acting as immunomodulators and antioxidants. Furthermore, the Ayurvedic emphasis on *Agni* closely parallels modern understandings of the gut microbiome's critical role in immune regulation.

KEYWORDS: *Vyadhiikshamatva*, *Bala*, *Vikaravighatbhava*, *Ojas*, *Pratyanika Bala*, *Prakrita Shleshma*, *Rasayana*, *Abhisamskara*, *Agni*, *Immunity*, *Immunomodulation*.**1. Definition and Etymology of Vyadhiikshamatva**

In *Ayurveda*, terms like *Bala* (strength), *Pratyanika Bala* (counteracting strength), and *Vikara-Vighata-Bhava* (disease-inhibiting factor) are used synonymously with *Vyadhiikshamatva* (Immunity). Although the term *Bala* also encompasses generalized physical and mental strength, its core functional application includes immune defense.

According to *Acharya Chakrapani's* commentary on *Charaka Samhita Sutrasthana 28 / 7 (Vividhashitapitiya Adhyaya)*:

**"Vyadhiikshamatvam Vyadhibalavirodhitvam
Vyadhyutpadapratibandhakatvamiti Yavat"***'व्याधिक्खमत्वं व्याधिबलविरोधित्वं व्याध्युत्पादप्रतिबन्धकत्वमिति यावत्'*

This defines *Vyadhiikshamatva* through two distinct functional mechanisms:

Vyadhibala-Virodhitam: The capacity of the body to counteract or resist the strength / severity of an established disease to arrest its progress or minimize tissue damage or fighting against the strength of the disease till nullification or preservation of health by reducing the strength of disease is established.

- *Modern Parallel*: Fighting against the virulence of the pathogen until its progress is arrested and health is preserved.
- **Vyadhutpada-Pratibandhakatvam**: The capacity of the body to completely inhibit the occurrence or manifestation of a disease.
- *Modern Parallel*: Resistance against the primary cause to check the initial production or establishment of the disease.

Therefore, **Vyadhikshamatva** is the comprehensive resisting power of the body competent enough to arrest both the occurrence and the progress of a disease.

2. The Context of Vyadhikshamatva in Charaka Samhita

The detailed concept of Vyadhikshamatva is introduced in *Charaka Samhita Sutrasthana 28/7, Vividhashitapitiya Adhyaya*. In this section, Agnivesha raises a fundamental query to Acharya Atreya:

Why is it that some individuals who regularly consume a Wholesome Diet (*Hitakara Ahara*) still fall ill or look weak, while some who consume an Unwholesome Diet (*Ahitakara Ahara*) remain healthy and robust ?

Acharya Punarvasu Atreya resolves this doubt with the following assertions:

- **Wholesome Diet is Not the Only Factor**: Consuming a wholesome Diet successfully prevents diet-induced (*Ahara*) disorders. However, diseases can still occur due to three other primary factors (*Trividha Ayatana*):
 1. *Asatmyendriyartham Samyoga* (Unwholesome contact of senses with their objects)
 2. *Pragyaparadha* (Intellectual errors / Blasphemy / Volitional Transgression)
 3. *Parinama* (Seasonal variations or time)
- **Delayed Manifestation of Unwholesome Practices**: Individuals who consume an Unwholesome Diet may appear healthy immediately (*Sadyaha*). This instantaneous appearance of health occurs because the pathologies are latent and will manifest over time (*Kalantara*).

Atreya lists **three critical factors** explaining why unwholesome intake does not produce immediate illness in everyone:

1. **Na Hi Sarvanyapathyani Tulya-Doshani** न हि सर्वाण्यपथ्यानि तुल्य दोषाणि: Not all unwholesome factors (*Apathya*) are equally potent in provoking the *Doshas*.
2. **Na Cha Sarve Doshas Tulya-Balaha** न च सर्वे दोषास्तुल्यबलाः : Not all vitiated *Doshas* possess equal strength to initiate a disease process.
3. **Na cha Sarvani Sharirani Vyadhikshamatve Samarthani Bhavanti** न च सर्वाणि शरीराणि व्याधिक्षमत्वे समर्थानि भवन्ति: Not all bodies possess equal capacity for immunity (*Vyadhikshamatva*).

Thus, the occurrence or non-occurrence of a disease depends heavily on the baseline state of an individual's immunity, alongside the virulence of the unwholesome factor and the strength of the *Doshas*.

Chakrapani further comments:

"Ahitaharopayoginam Punah Karanato Na Sadyo Doshavan Bhavatyapacharah Karanat Iti Nimittantarat Pratibandhakat" अहिताहारोपयोगिनां पुनः कारणतो न सद्यो दोषवान् भवत्यपचारः कारणत इति निमित्तान्तरात् प्रतिबन्धकात् । (*Ch. Su. 28/7*)

This indicates there are certain inhibiting or protective factors within the body due to which hygienic dietary errors (*Apathy Ahara*) fail to produce sudden illness (*Sadyaha Vyadhi*) in certain individuals consuming unwholesome Diet (*Apathyaha*).

3. Equivalents of Vyadhikshamatva in Ayurvedic Literature

Vyadhikshamatva as "Bala" (Strength)

Bala and *Vyadhikshamatva* are functionally synonymous because *Bala* directly prevents pathogenic causes from manifesting. This is supported by several scriptural references:

- **"Balam Hyalam Nigrahaya Doshanam Balakriccha Tat"** बलं ह्यलं निग्रहाय दोषाणां बलकृच्च तत् (*Ch. Chi. 3/166*): An increase or maintenance of *Bala* is sufficient to keep pathogens (*Doshas*) in check.
 - **"Rakshed Balam Chapi Narasya Nityam Tadrakshitam Vyadhibalam Nihanti"** रक्षेद् बलं चापि नरस्यनित्यं तद्रक्षितं व्याधिबलं निहन्ति । (*Su. Chi. 18/3*): One must constantly protect one's *Bala*, because a well-preserved *Bala* effectively destroys the strength of any disease.
 - **"Baladhishthanamarogyam"** बलाधिष्ठानमारोग्यम् (*Ch. Chi. 3/141*): Optimum health relies entirely on the foundation of *Bala*.
 - **"Balasamadhanam Hi Shariram..."** बलसमाधानं हि शरीरं । (*Ch. Ni. 6/4*): Discussing tissue wasting (*Shosha*), it is established that the structural and functional integrity of the body depends on *Bala*.
 - **"Balamulam Hi Jivitam"** बलमूलं हि जीवितम् (*Vagbhata*): The very foundation of life and its daily struggle depends upon *Bala*.
- Vyadhikshamatva as "Pratyanika Bala" (Opposing Strength)**

In *Charaka Samhita Chikitsasthana 3/68-69* अधिशोते यथा.....प्रत्यनीकबलक्षयात् ।, it is stated that when the disease-fighting counter-strength (*Pratyanika Bala*) diminishes, the *Doshas* gain strength over time and manifest severe recurring conditions like Tertian (*Tritiyaka*) and Quartan (*Chaturthaka*) fevers.

Vyadhikshamatva as "Vikara-Vighata-Bhava"

Chakrapani defines this in *Charaka Nidanasthana 4/4*:

"Vikaranam Vighatasypadapratibandhasya Bhavo Vighatabhava"

विकाराणां विघातस्योत्पत्तिप्रतिबन्धस्य भावो विघातभावः।

The internal biological environment that resists and blocks the production of a disease is called *Vikara-Vighata-Bhava*. Since *Vyadhikshamatva* performs this exact function, it is the embodiment of *Vikara-Vighata-Bhava*.

4. Mechanism of Disease Production

When external pathogens or foreign substances come into contact with the body, they trigger a biological reaction. Substances that possess properties opposite to healthy body tissues (*Deha-Dhatu-Pratyanika*) produce systemic resistance:

"*Dehadhatupratyanikabhutani Dravyani Dehadhatubhirvirodhamapyadyante*" देहधातुप्रत्यनीक भूतानि द्रव्याणि देहधातुभिर्विरोधमापद्यन्ते। (Ch. Su. 26/81)

Modern Parallel: This describes the **Antigen-Antibody Reaction**. Host tissues recognize and react against injurious foreign antigens.

In the ensuing clash between the tissue-opposing external agent (Antigen शरीर विरुद्ध द्रव्य) and *Sharira Bala* (Immunity व्याधिप्रतिबन्ध), victory belongs to the mightier force:

"*Virodhigunasannipate Hi Bhuyasalpamavajiyate*" विरुद्धगुणसन्निपाते हि भूयसाऽल्पमवजीयते। (Ch. Vi. 1/14)

When two opposing forces collide, the stronger overrides the weaker.

According to *Charaka Samhita Sutrasthana 28/7*, disease manifestation or non manifestation relies on an interactive matrix between three variables:

Unwholesome Factors / Pathogen (*Apathya-Bala*), Endogenous Humoral Strength (*Dosha-Bala*) & Host Tissue Immunity (*Sharira-Bala*).

- **No Disease:** Occurs when unwholesome factors (Pathogen -*Apathya-Bala*) are weak, *Dosha-Bala* is low, and *Sharira-Bala* (Immunity) is high.
- **Disease Manifestation:** Occurs when unwholesome factors (Pathogen -*Apathya-Bala*) and *Dosha-Bala* are high, overriding a low *Sharira-Bala*.

Acharya Charaka states in *Nidanasthana 4/4*:

"*Iha khalu Nidanadoshadushyavishethebhyo Vikaravighatabhavaabhavaprativishetha Bhavanti*"

इह खलु निदानदोषदूष्यविशेषेभ्यो विकारविघातभावाभावप्रतिविशेषा भवन्ति। (Ch. Ni. 4/4)

The ultimate status of Health (*Vikara-Vighata-Bhava* = Non-production of disease) or Disease (*Vikara-Vighata-Abhava* = Failure to inhibit disease / immunodeficiency) depends upon the reciprocal interaction of *Nidana* (Pathogen), *Dosha* (Vitiated Humors), and *Dushya* (Susceptible Tissues).

Vikaranam Vighatasypadapratibandhasya Bhavo Vighatabhava विकाराणां विघातस्योत्पत्ति प्रतिबन्धस्य भावो विघातभावः। (चक्रपाणि)

Chakrapani states that "the factor that prevents the manifestation (or origin) of diseases is called *Vikaravighatabhava*. This itself can be termed as *Vyadhikshamatva* (immunity). "**Vikaranam Vighatsya-Abhava Vikarajanamiti. Vikaranam Roganam Vighatasya Utpattipratibandhasya Abhava.** विकाराणां विघातस्याभावो विकारजननमिति। विकाराणां रोगाणां विघातस्य उत्पत्तिप्रतिबन्धस्य अभावः। (चक्रपाणि)

Chakrapani further states that, the absence of the factors that prevent the manifestation of diseases is called ***Vikaravighata-Abhava***. We can refer to this as a lack of immunity (Immunodeficiency)."

Scenarios of Interaction (Ch. Ni. 4/4)

यदा ह्यते त्रयो निदानादिविशेषाः परस्परं नानुबन्धन्त्यथवा कालप्रकर्षदबलीयांसोऽथवाऽनुबन्धन्ति न तदा विकाराभिवृत्तिः, चिराद्वाऽप्यभिवृत्तिर्नन्ते, तनवो वा भवन्त्यथोक्तसर्वलिंग वा, विपर्यये विपरीताः, इति सर्वविकारविघातभावप्रतिविशेषाभिवृत्तिहेतुर्भवत्युक्तः। (च.नि.4 / 4)

The manifestation or non-manifestation of a disease, as well as whether its onset is rapid or delayed, depends on the mutual interaction between *Nidana* (etiological factors), *Doshas* (bodily humors), and *Dushyas* (tissues / elements susceptible to vitiation). For example—

Biological Interaction	Outcome
No integration / Integration or Mutual binding between Aetiological factors (<i>Nidana</i>) & body internal system (<i>Dosha</i> , and <i>Dushya</i>).	Non-production of disease (<i>Avikarabhinivritti</i>). <i>अविकारोत्पत्ति</i> (चरक) / विकाराजननम् (चक्रपाणि)
Delayed integration / Interaction or Prolonged latency period between aetiological factors (Pathogens) & body internal System (<i>Dosha</i> , and <i>Dushya</i> / Immune system)	Delayed production of disease (<i>Chirena Jananam</i>). चिरेण च जननम् (चक्रपाणि)
Mild / Weak integration involving fractional or less potent components / aetiological factors (Pathogens / <i>Nidana</i>) & body internal system (<i>Dosha</i> , and <i>Dushya</i> / immune System)	Production of a mild disorder with minimal signs and symptoms (<i>Anu-Vikara / Asarva-Linga</i>). अणुविकारजननम् / तनुविकारजननम् / असर्वलिंगविकारजननम् (चक्रपाणि)
Severe, Rapid, or Potent integration of all factors (Opposite condition).	Sudden onset (<i>Kshipra-Vyadhi-</i> क्षिप्रव्याधिजनन) or Severe fully manifested disease (<i>Mahat-Vikara-</i> महतविकारजनन / सर्वलिंगविकारजनन).

5. The Concept of Seed (Beeja) and Field (Kshetra)

If the body's immune capacity is stronger than the virulence of the pathogen, disease will not develop even if the pathogen is present inside the organism. This is explained through the analogy of the Seed and the Field:

"Akshetre Bijamutrishtamantarva Vinashyati" अक्षेत्रे बीजमुत्सृष्टमन्तरेव विनश्यति। (Manusmriti Chapter 10, Verse 71).

"A seed sown in a non-fertile, unploughed field gets destroyed within the soil itself without sprouting." Charaka elaborates on this in the context of disease recurrence:

"Adhishete Yatha Bhumim Bijam Kale Cha Rohati. Adhishete Tatha Dhatum Doshah Kale Cha Kupyati. Sa Vriddhim Bala Kalam Cha Prapya Doshatritiyakam. Chaturthakam Cha Kurute Pratyantikabalakshayat." अधिशेते यथा भूमिं बीजं काले च रोहति । अधिशेते तथा धातुं दोषः काले च कुप्यति ।। स वृद्धिं बलं कालं च प्राप्य दोषस्तृतीयकम् । चतुर्थकं च कुरुते प्रत्यन्तीकबलक्षयात्॥ (Ch. Chi. 3/68-69)

Just as a seed lying dormant in the earth sprouts only when it finds the right season and adequate moisture, pathogens (Doshas) can reside latently within body tissues (Dhatu). They manifest as active disease only when they find a favorable time (Kala) and an increase in strength, typically triggered by depletion in the host's immunity (Pratyanika-Bala-Kshaya).

- **Louis Pasteur** famously echoed this concept on his deathbed: "The Pathogen is nothing; the environment (terrain) is everything."
- **Longley** also noted: "The ability of a Bacterium to produce disease depends not only upon the properties of the organism but also upon the resisting power of the individual. A true understanding of bacterial disease therefore requires consideration of the seed and soil."

6. Concepts of Antibodies and Vaccination in Ayurveda

The principles of modern immunology, such as Antibodies and Vaccination, are traceable in classical Ayurvedic texts as conceptual seeds. "We can assume this based on the following classical views."

"Tathavidhaishcha Dravyaih Purvamabhisamshkarakah Sharirasyeti" तथाविधैश्च द्रव्यैः पूर्वमभिसंस्कारः शरीरस्येति। (Ch. Su. 26/104)

Chakrapani defines Abhisamshkara as: "Abhisamshkarakah Iti Satatabhyasena Sharirabhavanam" अभिसंस्कारः इति सतताभ्यासेन शरीरभावनम्। Conditioning or profiling the body through regular, controlled exposure.

Similarly, Acharya Vagbhata states:

"Dravyaistairjeva Va Purvam Sharirasya-hisamshkritam" द्रव्यैस्तैरेव वा पूर्वं शरीरस्याभिसंस्कृतिम्। (A. S. Su. 9/30 & A. Hr. Su. 7/46)

Therefore, to safeguard the health, before a disease strikes, the body should be processed or conditioned (Samskara / Bhavana) using substances that interact with the system.

- **Chakrapani's view:** Interprets Charaka's phrase Tathavidhaishcha as Tad-Virodhibhihi (substances possessing properties counteracting or opposing the disease-causing agent). This closely mirrors the concept of **Antibodies** or **Passive Immunization**.

- **Atridev Gupta's view:** Interprets Vagbhata's phrase Dravyais-tair-eva as substances having identical or homologous properties to the disease-producing factors. This closely mirrors the concept of an **Antigen** or **Active Immunization**.

Acharya Vagbhata adds:

"Tadgunaireva Chasya Shariramupaskriyate, Tatascha Tadgunapratipakshaih Sahasa Na Badhyate" (A.S. Sha. 8/5) तदगुणैरेव चास्य शरीरमुपस्कियते । ततश्च तदगुणप्रतिपक्षैः सहसा न बाध्यते ।

- **Meaning:** The body of an individual becomes so adapted and desensitized to the qualities of an antigenic material (Dosh) through controlled exposure that it is no longer severely or suddenly affected by it in the future, owing to the development of counteracting defenses (Tadguna-Pratipaksha = Antibodies).

Ayurvedic Concept	Modern Immunological Equivalent
Abhisamshkara Sharirabhavanam अभिसंस्कार / शरीरभावनम्	Immunization / Vaccination
Tad-Virodhibhihi Tathavidhaishcha/ Tadguna-Pratipaksha तदविरोधिभि / तथाविधैश्च तदगुणप्रतिपक्ष	Antibodies / Passive Immunization (Hetu-Viparita Upashaya)
Dravyais-Tair-Eva द्रव्यैस्तैरेव	Antigen / Active Immunization (Hetu-Viparitarthkari / Tadarthakari)

7. Ayurvedic Factors Responsible for Immunity

Core Physiological entities govern the baseline immune status of an individual are:

I. Prakrita Shleshma (Normal Kapha)

Doshas exhibit two functional states: Prakrita (Normal / Physiological) and Vaikrita (Abnormal / Pathological).

Prakrita Shleshma represents Kapha in its homeostatic state, where it serves as the ultimate source of physical stability and immunity (Bala).

Vaikrita Shleshma is termed Mala (waste product), which damages tissues and creates pathology.

"Prakritastu Balam Shleshma Vikrito Mala Uchyate, Sa Chaivajaha Smrito Kaye Sa Cha Pampopadishyate"

प्राकृतस्तु बलं श्लेष्मा विकृतो मल उच्यते। स चैवोजः स्मृतः काये स च पाप्मोपदिश्यते॥ (Ch. Su. 17/117)

Normal (*Prakrita*) *Kapha* is functionally designated as *Ojas* in the body, whereas vitiated (*Vaikrita*) *Kapha* becomes *Papma* (disease). *Chakrapani* clarifies that normal *Kapha* corresponds to *Shleshmika Ojas* (*Apara Ojas*), which has a physiological volume of half an *Anjali* (*Ardha Anjali*) (Ch. Sha. 7/15).

II. Ojas

Ojas is the direct physiological substratum of *Bala* (immunity). It is categorized into two types:

1. **Para Ojas:** Measures 8 drops (*Ashta Bindu*) and resides in the heart. Its destruction leads to instantaneous death; it is the absolute seat of vitality (*Prana*).
2. **Apara Ojas:** Measures half an *Anjali* (*Ardha Anjali*) and is distributed throughout the body.

"*Yacchariorasasneha Pranah Yatra Pratishthitah*"
यच्छरीररसनेहः प्राणा यत्र प्रतिष्ठिताः। (Ch. Su. 30/11)

"*Tatra Rasadinam Bhutanam Shukrantanam Dhatunam Yat Param Tejastat Khlvojas Tadeva Balamityuchyate*" तत्र रसादिनां शुक्रान्तानां धातूनां यत् परं तेजस्तत् खल्वोजस्तदेव बलमित्युच्यते। (सु. सू. 15/19) तन्त्रान्तरे तु ओजःशब्देन रसोऽप्युच्यते, जीवशोणितमप्योजः शब्देनामनन्ति केचित्, ऊष्माणमप्योजःशब्देनापरे वदन्ति। (Dalhana on Su. Su. 15/19)

Ojas is the quintessential, refined essence (*Tejas*) of all the seven *Dhatus* (from *Rasa* to *Shukra*). *Acharya Sushruta* treats *Ojas* and *Bala* as virtually identical for clinical purposes. *Dalhana* notes that while they are identical in therapeutic application, they differ slightly in subtle attributes. *Dalhana* also mentions that in other treatises, *Ojas* is sometimes linked to *Rasa* (Plasma), *Jiva-Shonita* (Vital blood), or internal body heat (*Ushma*), though classically it stands as an independent entity.

The role of *Ojas* in immunity is highlighted by *Indu*:

"*Dosha Sama Apyojasa Vihinam Deham Samvahitumashaktaha*" दोषाः समा अप्योजसा विहीनं देहं संवाहयितुमशक्ताः। (Indu Commentary on A. S. Su. 19/40)

"Even when the *Doshas* are in perfect equilibrium, they cannot sustain or protect a body that is depleted of *Ojas*." Furthermore, "*Ojasovridhdhau Hi Dehasya Tushti-Pushti-Balodayaha*" ओजोवृद्धौ हि देहस्य तुष्टिपुष्टिबलोदयाः (A. S. Su. 19/40) — an increase in *Ojas* manifests as psychological contentment, optimal tissue nourishment, and high immunity. In wasting diseases like *Rajayakshma* (Tuberculosis), depletion of *Ojas* causes an immediate collapse of the host's immune defense.

Tasmat Purisham Sanrakshya Visheshadrajyakshminah. Sarvadhatukshayartsya Balam Tasya Hi Vida Balam. तस्मात् पुरीषं संरक्ष्य विशेषाद्राजयक्ष्मिणः। सर्वधातुकषयार्तस्य बलं तस्य हि विद् बलम्॥ (च.चि. 8/42)

III. Sara (Excellence of Tissues)

Sara refers to the purest, most structurally and functionally excellent state of the *Dhatus*. Assessment of tissue excellence (*Sara Pariksha*) determines an individual's specific immune status. Individuals possessing *Sarva-Sara* (excellence in all tissues) are extraordinarily strong, highly tolerant to physical hardships and pain (*Klesha-Saha*), and develop only mild, easily manageable disorders. This proves the role of *Sara* in *Vyadhikshamatva*.

"*Sarataschetyadau Sarashabdena Vishuddhataro Dhaturuchyate*" सारतश्चेत्यादौ सारशब्देन विशुद्धतरो धातुरुच्यते। (Ch. Vi. 8/102 on *Chakrapani*)

"*Tatra Sarvaih Sarairupetah Purusha Bhavantiatibalah... Kleshasahaha... Mandavikarakha*" तत्र सर्वैः सारैरुपेताः पुरुषा भवन्त्यतिबलाः परमसुखयुक्ताः क्लेशसहाः मन्दज्वरसो मन्दविकाराः। (Ch. Vi. 8/111)

IV. Prakriti (Genetic & Epigenetic Constitution)

The innate constitution (*Sahaja Prakriti*), determined at the time of conception by genetic and maternal factors, regulates innate immunity. Among the seven types of *Prakriti*, **Sama Prakriti** (equally balanced humors) is the most excellent. Individuals with *Sama Prakriti* are naturally resilient to disease, whereas *mono-Doshika* constitutions (*Vatala*, *Pittala*, *Shleshmla*) are constantly prone to illnesses.

"*Teshamanaturah Purve Vataladyah Sadaturah*" तेषामनातुराः पूर्वं वातलाद्याः सदाऽऽतुराः (Ch. Su. 7/40)

"*Samadhatuh Samastas Shrestha*" समधातुः समस्तासु श्रेष्ठा। (A. S. Su. 1)

V. Daiva Bala (Latent / Idiopathic Factors)

Daiva refers to unseen, latent causes, including past action imprints or unknown environmental variables. It can positively influence resistance or recovery. As *Charaka* notes, "*Apratikurvan Sidhyati*" अप्रतिकुर्वन् सिद्ध्यति (Ch. Su. 10/4) — certain patients recover from illnesses spontaneously without active medical intervention, driven by *Daiva* (idiopathic resistance factors).

VI. Jiva Shonita (Pure, Non-vitiated Blood)

Healthy, unvitiated blood is essential for vitality.

"*Tadvishuddham Hi Rudhiram Balavarnasukhayusha*" तद्विशुद्धं हि रुधिरं बलवर्णसुखायुषा। (Ch. Su. 24/4)

Pure blood provides strength (*Bala*), vibrant complexion, happiness, and an extended lifespan, directly supporting the immune framework.

VII. Samagni (Balanced digestive and metabolic fire)

Samagni is considered the gold standard of health. It digests food efficiently, extracts nutrients perfectly, and leaves zero toxic residues (*Ama*). Through *Samagni*, food is perfectly converted into *Ahara Rasa* (nutrient essence) and all seven *Dhatus* are nourished optimally resulting in optimum *Ojas* formation, a key factor in *Vyadhikshamatva*. On the other hand nutritional

starvation from derranged Agni leads to poor quality of body tissues and finally weak Ojas, which ultimately causes loss of Vtyadhikshamatva.

VIII. Unobstructed Body Channels (Srotosuddhi)

Unobstructed body mico channels (Srotasa) lead to proper supply of Ahara Rasa (Poshaka Dhatu) formed from Samagni to body tissues (Poshya Dhatu) for their maintenance and nourishment; ultimately formation of excellent Ojas. Blockage in micro channels (Srotorodha) prevents nutrients from reaching the tissues and prevents cellular waste from leaving. Ultimately indirect effect in weakening of Vyadhikshamatva.

8. Causes of Immunodeficiency (Ojas Kshaya)

Since Ojas is the substratum of immunity, any factor that depletes Ojas directly compromises Vyadhikshamatva. Acharya Charaka identifies the following primary causes of tissue and Ojas depletion:

"Vyayamoanashanam Chinta
Rukshalpapramitashanam..." व्यायामोऽनशनं चिन्ता
रूक्षाल्पप्रमिताशनम्। वातातपौ भयं शोको रूक्षपानं
प्रजागरः। कफशोणितशुक्राणं मलानां चातिवर्तनम्। कालो भूतोपघातश्च
ज्ञातव्याः क्षयहेतवः॥ (Ch. Su. 17/76-77)

Primary Depletion Factors

- **Vyayama:** Excessive physical over-exertion.
- **Anashana:** Prolonged or frequent starvation.
- **Chinta:** High levels of anxiety and psychological stress.
- **Rukshashana:** Consumption of fat-free, completely dry foods.
- **Alpa and Pramitashana:** Intake of an incomplete, restricted, or deficient diet.
- **Vatataapa:** Over-exposure to scorching sun and heavy winds.
- **Bhaya:** Intense fear
- **Shoka:** Deep grief.
- **Rukshapana:** Intake of dehydrating or toxic alcoholic beverages.
- **Prajagara:** Prolonged night awakening (Sleep deprivation).
- **Excessive Evacuation:** Massive loss of vital body constituents like blood (Shonita), semen (Shukra), or excessive excretion (Mala).
- **Kala:** Specific debilitating seasons (like Adana Kala / Summer) or natural tissue degeneration due to advanced old age.
- **Bhutaghata:** Severe microbial or parasitic infections. (Charaka also details Ojasashana or Nishachara in Sharirasthana 2/10, which aligns with exogenous infectious pathogens).

Acharya Sushruta contributes an additional concise list:

"Abhigataatksheyatkopatshokaddhyanacchramatkshehah..." अभिघातात्क्षयात्कोपाच्छोकाद्दयानच्छ्रमात्क्षुधः। ओज संक्षीयते
.....॥ (Su. Su. 15/23)

- **Abhigata:** Mechanical trauma or physical injury.
- **Kshaya:** Chronic wasting disorders (e.g., cachexia).

- **Kopa:** Chronic Anger.
- **Note on Terminologies:** Sushruta substitutes Charaka's Vyayama with Shrama (fatigue), Chinta with Dhyana (excessive mental preoccupation), and Anashana with Kshudha (morbid hunger).

Negative psychological traits like Anger, Jealousy, and Malice degrade Ojas, as highlighted in the pathogenesis of Rajayakshma (Ch. Chi. 8/24-27). Pathological blockages in the micro-channels (Srotorodha) and a subsequent drop in tissue metabolism (Dhatvagni-Kshaya) also induce systemic Ojas depletion (Ch. Chi. 8/41). यथास्वेनोष्णः.....मलीभवति तत् प्रायः कल्पते किंचिदोजसे। (Ch. Chi. 8/41).

9. Individuals Vulnerable to Disease (Low Immunity / Vyadhi-Asahishnu)

Acharya Charaka specifies certain physical and psychological profiles that lack immune resilience:

"Sharirani Chatishthulanyatikrishanyunivishtamamsashonitasthin i..."

शरीराणि चातिस्थूलान्यतिकृशान्यनिविष्टमांसशोणितास्थीनि
दुर्बलान्यसात्स्याहारोपचितान्यत्याहारण्यल्पसत्वानि च भवन्त्यव्याधिसहानि,
विपरीतानि पुनर्व्याधिसहानि। (Ch. Su. 28/7)

The following types of individuals are Vyadhi-Asahishna (intolerant to disease stress):

- **Atisthula:** Severely obese individuals.
- **Atikrisha:** Severely emaciated individuals.
- **Anivishta-mamsa-shonita-asthi:** Individuals with asymmetric, poorly developed, or loose muscle, blood, and bone frameworks.
- **Durbala:** Chronically weak or frail individuals.
- **Asatmya-ahara-upachita:** Those habituated to or sustained by unwholesome diets.
- **Alpahara:** Individuals consuming insufficient amounts of food.
- **Alpasattvavan:** Individuals with poor psychological strength or low mental resilience.

Conversely, individuals with opposite attributes are classified as Vyadhi-Saha (highly resilient/tolerant to disease). Acharya Vagbhata (A.S.Su.9/29) adds that the consumption of Viruddha Ahara (incompatible dietary combinations) serves as a potent agent that destroys overall vitality, memory, and immunity:

"Tejobalasmritimatindriyachittanashan...KuryadViruddhasanam" तेजोबलस्मृतिमतीन्द्रियचित्तनाशान्। कुर्याद्विरुद्धाशनं.....
.....॥ (A. S. Su. 9/29)

10. Factors Enhancing Immunity (Bala-Vridhikara Bhava)

Acharya Charaka lists 13 factors that naturally enhance and optimize immune function:

"Balavridhikaranitvame... Samgharshashcheti" बलवृद्धिकरास्त्वमेसंहर्षश्चेति॥ (Ch. Sha. 6/13)

1. **Characteristic Nativity (Balavat-Purusha-Deshe Janma):** Being born in a geographical region where

the inhabitants are naturally robust (e.g., Sindhu-Desha).

- Favorable Climate of Birth (Balavat-Purusha-Kale Janma):** Being born during seasons when baseline human strength is naturally at its peak (Shishira and Hemanta — Winter).
- Favorable Time-Logistics (Sukhascha Kala-Yogaha):** Experiencing a pleasant, moderate, or supportive seasonal climate (Visarga Kala).
- Excellence of Genetic Material (Beeja-Kshetra-Guna-Sampat):** Healthy, unvitiated qualities of the paternal sperm (Beeja), maternal ovum, and uterine environment (Kshetra).
- Excellence of Nourishment (Ahara-Sampat):** Access to and intake of nutrient-rich, optimal food (Balya Dravya).
- Excellence of Body Constitution (Sharira-Sampat):** An anatomical build characterized by optimal tissue compactness (Samhanana), symmetry & excellence of body tissues (Sara).
- Excellence of Adaptability (Satmya-Sampat):** Habituation to healthy dietary patterns and lifestyle practices, particularly the practice of consuming all six tastes (Sarva-Rasa-Abhyasa).
सर्वरसाभ्यासो बलकराणाम्। (च.सू.25/40), तत्र ये घृतक्षीरतैलमांसरसात्याः सर्वरसात्याश्च ते बलवन्तः क्लेशसहाश्विचरजीविनश्च भवन्ति। (च.वि.8/118)
- Excellence of Mind (Sattva-Sampat):** A dominant, courageous, and clear psychological disposition (Sativika mindset).
- Natural Propensity (Svabhava-Samshiddhi):** Innate, spontaneous physiological vitality.
- Divine Grace / Latent Merit (Daiva):** Favorable unseen latent metaphysical factors.
- Youthfulness (Yauvanam):** Being in the prime age group where tissue regeneration exceeds degeneration.
- Proper Action (Karma):** Engaging in regular, calculated physical exercise and wholesome occupational tasks.
- Exuberance (Samgharsha):** Maintaining a state of mental cheerfulness, optimism, and emotional happiness.

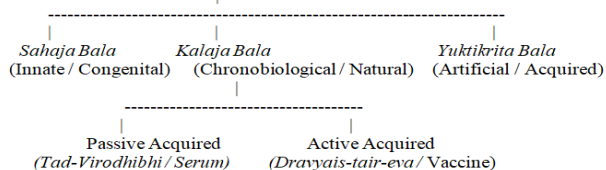
11. Classification of Bala (Immunity Types)

Ayurveda divides Bala into three distinct categories:

"Trividham Balamiti- Sahajam, Kalajam, Yuktikritam Cha" त्रिविधं बलमिति- सहजं, कालजं, युक्तिकृतं च। (Ch. Su. 11/36)

- Sahaja
- Kalaja
- Yuktikrita

Vyadhikshamatva / Bala / Immunity



1. Sahaja Bala (Innate / Congenital Immunity)

"Sahajam Yaccharirasattvayo Prakritam" सहजं यच्छरीरसत्त्वयोः प्राकृतं। (Ch. Su. 11/36)

Sahaja Bala is the baseline, natural strength of the body and mind that is present from birth. It is genetically determined and functions independently of external interventions. Chakrapani defines the mental aspect of this immunity as Utsaha (enthusiasm/drive). यथा- सत्त्वं मनः, मनसो बलं वा यत् उत्साह उच्यते (चक्रपाणि च.सू.11/36)

It is an unvitiated, inherent quality of the tissues:

"Prakritamiti Janmadipravrittam Prakritadhatuvridhya Hetvantar Nirapeksham Vridham" प्राकृतमिति जन्मादिप्रवृत्तं प्राकृतधातुवृद्ध्या हेत्वन्तर निरपेक्षं वृद्धं, दृश्यन्ते हि केचित् स्वाभावदेव बलिनो दुर्बलाश्च केचित्। (चक्रपाणि च.सू.11/36)

Naturally good / poor immunity since birth, unaffected by other factors.

Sahaja - Sahajatah Sahajah, Janmanaha Prabhrithi Sharirina Sangatah सहज- सहजातः सहजः, जन्मनः शरीरिणा सङ्गताः (अ.स.सू.1/1 पर इन्दु)

"That which takes birth, or has been associated with the body right from birth, is called Sahaj (innate/natural)." or " Sahaja is Inseparable from the body right from the beginning (birth)."

सततानुसक्ताः सर्वकालं प्रसृताः सहजाः। (अरुणदत्त)

Continuous and closely attached through all times, widespread, and innate."

सततानुसक्ताः नित्यमनुलग्नाः, न कदाचितैर्वियुक्ताः संसारि भवति। (चन्द्रनन्दन)

"Continuously attached and eternally clung to, the worldly being is never separated from them."

तत्र प्रकृतिर्जातिप्रसक्ता च, कुलप्रसक्ता च..... भावविशेषा भवन्ति। (च.इ. 1/5)

"From birth, a balanced constitution (Sama Prakriti) is also responsible for innate strength (Sahaj Bala). It is stated in Ayurveda that individuals with a balanced constitution possess immense strength. According to modern views, innate immunity (Sahaj Vyadhikshamatva) is caused by hereditary/genetic factors. This can be specific or non-specific. Ayurveda also notes that innate differences exist among individuals based on their race (Jati) and lineage / family (Kula)."

The term innate would indicate that the response to an infection was determined by the inherited qualities of the animal, and was uninfluenced by any prior event in his life (Wilson & Miles).

Modern Parallel: **Innate Immunity**. It represents genetic resistance determined by inherited qualities, unaffected by prior exposure to specific pathogens. This includes both species-specific and family-specific resistance profiles (Prakritizati-Prasakta and Kula-Prasakta) (Ch. In. 1/5).

2. Kalaja Bala (Chronobiological / Natural Acquired Immunity)

"Kalajakritamrituvibhagajam Vayah Kritam Cha" कालकृतमृत्वविभागजं वयः कृतं च। (Ch. Su. 11/36)

आदावन्ते च दौर्बल्यं विसर्गादार्णवम् । मध्ये मध्यबलं, त्वन्ते श्रेष्ठमग्रे च निर्दिशेत् ॥ (च.सू.6/8)

This form of immunity is modulated by seasonal cycles (*Ritu*) and age (*Vaya*).

- **Seasonal Influence:** Immunity is at its peak during the early and late phases of *Visarga Kala* (Winter — *Hemanta* & *Shishira*) and drops to its minimum during the peak of *Adana Kala* (Summer / Monsoon) (*Ch. Su. 6/8*).
- **Age Influence:** Functional immunity reaches its optimum level during youth (*Yauvana*) and is lower during childhood and old age.
- **Modern Parallel: Natural Acquired Immunity.** This aligns with the natural physiological development and maturation of immune systems (like antibody-producing pathways) across different life stages and environmental exposures. "Even in scientific opinion, natural antibodies in a particular individual attain maturity at different times during the stage of development (Wilson & Miles). These mature antibodies then generate immunity (or disease resistance)."

3. *Yuktikrita Bala* (Artificial / Induced Acquired Immunity)

"*Yuktikritam Punastadyadaharacheshtayogajam*"
युक्तिकृतं पुनस्तद्यदाहारचेष्टायोगजम् । (Ch. Su. 11/36)

***Yuktikrita Bala* (Acquired/Induced Immunity)** is produced by the combination of diet (*Ahara*) and physical activities / habits (*Cheshta*). According to *Chakrapani*, the proper planning and management of diet and physical activity within the body is called *Yukti*. As stated: "*Yukti* is the proper planning of diet and activities according to the body."

Chakrapani further states that: "Diet implies substances like meat and *Ghrta* (clarified butter), and activities imply appropriate rest and exercise; the combination of these is called *Ahara-Cheshta-Yoga*." That means the proper and balanced use of foods like meat and *Ghrta*, along with activities like rest and exercise, is termed *Ahara-Cheshta*.

Some Acharyas (scholars) interpret the word *Yoga* in the term *Ahara-Cheshta-Yoga* to mean *Rasayana*

(rejuvenation therapy)—"Others understand the word *Yoga* to mean *Rasayana*" (*Chakrapani*). According to the modern view, this can be called **Artificial Acquired Immunity**.

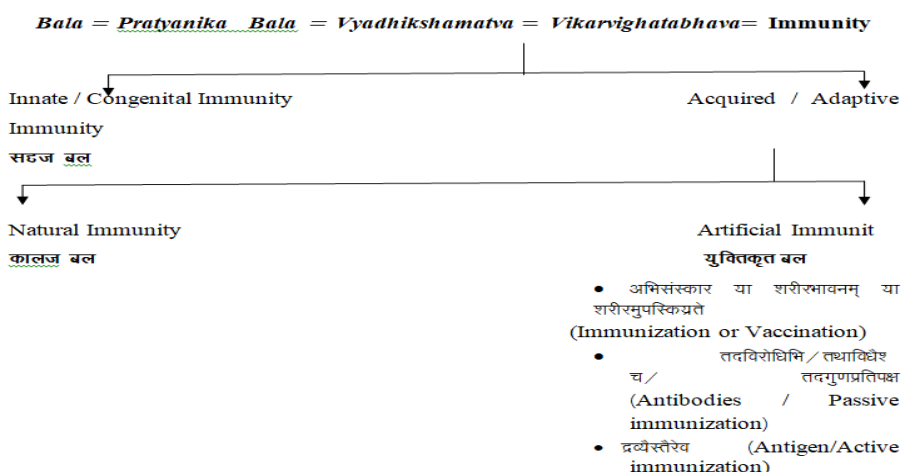
In brief, under *Yuktikrita Bala*, strength / immunity is enhanced intentionally and strategically through substances like *Rasayana* (rejuvenation), *Vrishya* (aphrodisiacs / vitalizers), *Brimhaniya* (nourishing agents), *Jeevaniya* (life-enforcing agents), *Balya* (strength-promoting agents), and through proper physical activity. *Yuktikrita Bala* can also be achieved by systematically making the practice of consuming all six tastes (*Shad-Rasa Abhyasa*) wholesome to the body (Homologation to all the components of diet).

In the modern era, **Artificial Acquired Immunity** is divided into two types: **Active** and **Passive**.

Artificial Active Acquired Immunity is obtained by introducing dead or live-attenuated bacteria or viruses (**Antigen**) into the body through a vaccine. This can be compared to the previously mentioned statement of *Vagbhata*: "*Dravyaistairéva*" (by using similar / the same substances).

Artificial Passive Acquired Immunity is achieved by introducing pre-formed **Antibodies** directly into the body. This can be compared to *Charaka* and *Vagbhata*'s previously mentioned concepts of "*Tadvairodhikabhi*" (Antagonistic substances), "*Tathavidhaishcha*" (of that specific nature), and "*Tadgunapratipaksha*" (possessing opposite qualities).

Artificial Active Acquired Immunity is obtained by introducing dead or live-attenuated bacteria or viruses (**Antigen**) into the body through a vaccine. This can be compared to the previously mentioned statement of *Vagbhata*: "*Dravyaistaireva*" (by using similar / the same substances).



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