

Critical appraisal of immunity in ayurveda

Byadgi P. S

Banaras Hindu University, India

During certain conditions, or due to certain factors, even unwholesome food does not produce diseases immediately. All unwholesome food articles are not equally harmful, all doshas are not equally powerful, and all persons are not capable of resisting diseases. The human immune system has evolved over millions of years from both invertebrate and vertebrate organisms to develop sophisticated defense mechanisms to protect the host from microbes and their virulence factors. The normal immune system has three key properties: a highly diverse repertoire of antigen receptors that enables recognition of a nearly infinite range of pathogens; immune memory, to mount rapid recall immune responses; and immunologic tolerance, to avoid immune damage to normal self-tissues. From invertebrates, humans have inherited the innate immune system, an ancient defense system that uses germ line-encoded proteins to recognize pathogens. According to ayurveda immunity depends on ojas, equilibrium state of kapha and udana vata. There are two terminologies used in ayurveda to discuss about the concept of vyadhiksamatwa (immunity) namely ojas and bala. Diseases of immune system arise due to disturbance in ojas, kapha, bala and udanavata.

Aims and Objectives: Justification for the different status of immunity in parlance to modern immunity

1. Apathy ahara (Unwholesome food) is causing diseases in all individuals- All unwholesome food articles are not equally harmful
2. Role of doshas in the determination of immune status- all doshas are not equally powerful
3. All persons are not capable of resisting diseases because immune status differs due to certain reasons

Materials and Methods: Justification for the different status of immunity

Apathy ahara (Unwholesome food) is causing diseases in all individuals- All unwholesome food articles are not equally harmful

Unwholesome food substances become more harmful depending upon the nature of the locality, time, combination, potency and excessive quantity.

Role of doshas in the determination of immune status- All doshas are not equally powerful

The dosas are exceedingly painful, acute and difficult to cure during their multiple combinations, if they require mutually contradictory therapies, if they are deep seated i.e. deeper dhatu like majja etc., are involved in the pathogenesis of disease. If disease is chronic it becomes very difficult to cure because they are deep seated and gives displeasure and disease becomes incurable. If dasha pranayatana are involved in the disease process along with other vital organs like hridaya etc., then disease becomes difficult to cure. If vital organs afflicted, then disease becomes difficult to cure. If disease manifest instantaneously indicates disease becomes very difficult to cure.

All persons are not capable of resisting diseases because immune status differs due to certain reasons

Over obese individual; over emaciated person; whose muscles and blood are diminished markedly; debilitated person; one who consumes unwholesome food; one who consumes less amount of food; whose mental faculties are weak; on the other hand, individuals having opposite type of physical constitution are capable of resisting diseases.

Ojas is the essence of saptadhatu and it is the seat for strength.

Dhatugrahana refers to dhatuvaha srotas. It is also called ojavaha srotas as stated by Cakrapani. Ojas is the essence of saptadhatu and it is the mala of shukra. During the process of paka, two things are observed i.e., mala and sara. Mala is the malarupi ojas and sara is the garbha. If astabindu quantity ojas (para ojas) decreases then person will die. On the contrary, if ardhanjali (apara ojas) ojas decreases or vitiated, it manifests 3 kinds of abnormalities i.e., ojahakshaya, ojo vyapat and ojoivramsas. But person may die due to ardhanjali ojekshaya also.

Conclusion: The human immune system has evolved over millions of years from both invertebrate and vertebrate organisms to develop sophisticated defense mechanisms to protect the host from microbes and their virulence factors. The normal immune system has three key properties: a highly diverse repertoire of antigen receptors that enables recognition of a nearly infinite range of pathogens; immune memory, to mount rapid recall immune responses; and immunologic tolerance, to avoid immune damage to normal self-tissues. Resistance to diseases or immunity against diseases is of two kinds i.e., the one which attenuates the manifested disease and other variety prevents the manifestation of diseases. This paper critically discusses the ayurvedic approach to immunopathology.

Biography

Byadgi P. S is working as a teacher in the area of Roga Nidan (Ayurvedic diagnostics) since 11 years. He began his teaching in 2000 and has been writing books and publishing many articles. He has expertise in research related to rogi-roga pariksha (clinical examination tools) and their applied aspect, clinico-etiological studies of diseases in relevance to present clinical knowledge, studies of prakriti, genes and their correlation to diabetes mellitus, and a scientific approach to fundamental principles of ayurveda. He earned BAMS degree in the year 1995 from Karnataka University, Dharwad and completed internship from Ayurveda Mahavidhyalaya, Hubli in the year 1997 and joined M.D. (Ay.) RogaVijnan & Vikriti Vijnan in the year 1997 and completed post graduate degree from Calcutta University in the year 2000 and later joined for Ph.D. in Kayachikitsa in the year 2001 and completed post doctor degree from Banaras Hindu University in the year 2003. He did his post graduate work on Amavata (Rheumatoid Arthritis) and post doctor research on leishmaniasis both at BHU and CDRI, Lucknow. Advisory board member for International Journal of Research in Ayurveda & Pharmacy and serving as an editorial board member of reputed journals- Journal of AYUSH: Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy (STM journals), Journal of Medical Science & Technology (STM journals), A Journal of Medicine (STM journals) and American Journal of Research in Biology-An International Open Access Journal. He also published 5 books and wrote 2 chapters in a book and contributed significantly for MD scholars research work as a supervisor as well as co-supervisor and guided them to publish their work in reputed journals. Presently working on relationship between Genes, Prakriti and diseases and their role in diagnosis and treatment. Effort is continuing to provide scientific explanation to fundamental principles of Roga Nidan. He lives in BHU, Varanasi.

psbyadgi@gmail.com