

BOOSTING IMMUNITY

BREATHONTOLOGY & AYURVEDA



Ayurveda & Immunity

In Ayurveda, immunity isn't just about fighting off infections; it's a reflection of your overall health and balance. Ayurveda refers to it as **Ojas** — the essence of vitality. Ojas is a subtle, vital energy that nourishes your body and mind, making it resilient to disease. Ojas is produced through optimal digestion and assimilation of nutrients at both the physical and more subtle levels.

Strong Ojas enhances the body's natural defense mechanisms.

Key Factors Influencing Ojas

1. **Agni (Digestive Fire):**

Agni refers to our digestive fire, which is responsible for breaking down food and transforming it into energy. A strong Agni ensures proper digestion, absorption of nutrients, and the elimination of toxins. Agni goes beyond breaking down food; it's a vital force that governs all metabolic processes in your body. A strong Agni means:

- **Efficient Digestion:** Your food is properly broken down and assimilated into nutrients.
- **Optimal Metabolism:** Your body efficiently converts food into energy.
- **Enhanced Immunity:** A strong Agni helps fight off infections and diseases.
- **Clear Mind:** A well-functioning digestive system contributes to mental clarity and focus.

Signs of weak Agni include indigestion, bloating, gas, constipation, poor appetite, fatigue, weight gain or loss, and skin problems. Poor digestion leads to the accumulation of toxins (Ama), which can weaken Ojas. **Ama** is a Sanskrit word that refers to toxic buildup in the body which weakens immunity. Ama is a sticky, toxic substance that is a byproduct of improper digestion and can manifest in various forms, from physical discomfort to mental foginess.

2. **Balanced Doshas:**

- Vata, Pitta, and Kapha are the three fundamental energies that govern your body and mind.
- Imbalances in these doshas can compromise your immunity.

3. **Healthy Lifestyle:**

- Prioritize adequate sleep.
- Manage stress through practices like yoga, meditation, and pranayama (breathing exercises).
- Maintain a regular daily routine (Dinacharya).

4. **Diet:**

- Consume a balanced diet rich in fresh, seasonal fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- Include spices like turmeric, ginger, and cumin, which have immune-boosting properties.
- Limit processed foods, sugar, and excessive caffeine and alcohol.
- Ashwagandha, Tulsi, and Turmeric are herbs that can be used to support immunity.

Nasya & Immunity

Nasya, an Ayurvedic technique involving the administration of medicated oils through the nostrils, plays a significant role in strengthening the immune system. Here's how:

1. **Cleansing the Nasal Passages:**

- **Removal of Toxins:** Nasya helps remove toxins and impurities from the nasal passages, sinuses, and respiratory tract.
- **Improved Breathing:** Clear airways facilitate better oxygen intake, enhancing overall health.

2. **Balancing the Doshas:**

- **Vata, Pitta, and Kapha:** These three doshas govern the body's functions. Nasya helps balance these doshas, promoting optimal health.
- **Reduced Inflammation:** Balanced doshas lead to reduced inflammation, a key factor in immune function.

3. **Strengthening the Senses:**

- **Improved Sensory Perception:** Nasya can enhance the senses of smell, taste, and hearing.
- **Balanced Mind-Body Connection:** Clear senses contribute to a balanced mind-body connection, which is essential for overall well-being.

4. **Nourishing the Tissues:**

- **Hydration and Lubrication:** Medicated oils nourish the delicate tissues of the nasal passages, preventing dryness and irritation.
- **Enhanced Tissue Repair:** The oils promote tissue repair and regeneration, strengthening the body's defense mechanisms.

5. **Calming the Mind:**

- **Stress Reduction:** The soothing nature of Nasya helps reduce stress and anxiety.
- **Improved Sleep:** Better sleep quality contributes to a stronger immune system.

In Ayurveda, the nose is considered the direct route to the brain and the doorway to consciousness. It is the entrance for prana, the life force, which is carried into the body through the breath. Healthy uncongested breathing is important to ensure proper flow of prana throughout the head and body, which has a reverberating effect on the health of the entire body-mind.

How to Do Nasya at Home

If you're able to lie down:

- Lie comfortably on your back and tilt your head back with your nostrils opening towards the sky. If you are lying on a bed, you may hang your head off the edge of the bed or place a small pillow beneath your neck for support.
- Place 3 to 5 drops of Nasya Oil in each nostril. With skill, you can administer the oil, drop by drop, circling the inside perimeter of the nostril, thoroughly coating the nasal membranes.
- Take a big sniff in, then rest for a few minutes allowing the nasya to penetrate.

If lying down is not convenient:

- Place a drop of Nasya Oil on the little finger and carefully insert it into the nostril.
- Gently massage the inner walls of the nasal passage.
- Alternate left and right nostrils until each nostril has received a total of three applications of oil.

Here's a great video that demonstrates how to do Nasya at Home: [Ayurvedic Nasya Oil](#)

Contraindation: Sinus Infection

While using Nasya Oil as preventative care is recommended, it is contraindicated if you have a cold or sinus infection. Because oil has a protective nature, there is a chance that it could coat the infection and cause it to spread.

Turmeric & Honey Immune Booster

This immune boosting paste is potent and easy to prepare. Children love it too!

Honey is an amazingly energy booster, giving you the sugars you need while maintaining an excellent blood sugar level compared to the other types of sugars. Honey is an immune system builder, cancer-inhibiter, soothes sore throats, and helps you calm down and sleep soundly. Honey is rich in antioxidants, riboflavin, Vitamin B6 and magnesium.

Ingredients:

1/4 tsp turmeric
1 tsp honey

Directions:

Put turmeric in a small bowl and add honey. Chant OM, or something that invokes healing for you, while you mix this healing combination into a paste. Mix in a counter clock-wise direction. Put mixture onto your tongue and swallow with a glass of warm, pure water.

Tea to Restore Internal Fire

In Ayurveda the concept of digestive power or digestive strength is called Agni. And, it is a terribly important concept because Ayurveda says that if you are so blessed in this lifetime to have a good Agni, you will have excellent health.

Agni is the "fire" that drives all digestion and metabolism. The digestive and absorption process is called Pakwagni (digestive fire). Agni includes all of the enzymes systems for digestion from the mouth to the anus as well as all the bacterial systems from the mouth to the anus. Yes, the main center is in the stomach; however, we need to think of Agni as a force that gives vitality, transformation and clarity of mind when it is balanced.

If our Agni is strong, we're able to digest food efficiently and easily assimilate our daily experiences. On the other hand, if the Agni is weak, our body won't digest well, creating toxic residue, or Ama, that lodges deep in our cells.

Our lifestyle, poor knowledge of food combinations, excess of food or eating with no hunger disturb our internal fire. This simple tea can restore your internal fire. Use the tea with a few days of simple food like soupy oatmeal.

Ingredients:

| | |
|------------|--|
| 1 tsp | dry ginger powder |
| 10 to 12 | tulsi leaves, you can use dry tulsi (2 tsp) |
| 10 | mint leaves |
| 2-3 cloves | garlic |
| 1 tsp | honey (add at the end) or jaggery |

Directions:

Boil the ingredients in one cup of water and reduce it to ½ cup. Drink the tea every 2-3 hours for 2 or 3 days.

Wake up Digestive Tea

This delicious tulsi smoothie will help soothe your nerves and clear the clutter from your mind. Tulsi, or Holy Basil, was used by ancient cultures for its healing and rejuvenating qualities. In India, it is considered a sacred plant with sattvic characteristics. It is pungent, heating, dry, and light, simultaneously promoting mental clarity and calming the nervous system. Studies confirm its many therapeutic benefits including its use as an adaptogen. Adaptogens improve your body's ability to adapt to stress (e.g., a hectic schedule, heat or cold, high altitude).

Tulsi has also been shown to help the body cope with stress, anxiety, and fatigue, promote healthy blood sugar levels already in the normal range, and support the immune, respiratory, and digestive systems!

It's easy to see why including a daily dose of tulsi can help you feel and look amazing! Try it for breakfast or a mid-afternoon break.

Makes: 1 smoothie

Ingredients:

| | |
|---------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | thin slice of lemon (with peel) |
| 1/2 tsp | fresh turmeric |
| 1-2 tsp | honey |
| ¾-inch | fresh ginger |
| 2 cups | warm water |
| pinch | fresh chili |
| ½ tsp | tulsi powder. |

Directions:

In a vitamix (or high powered blender), blend all for 2 minutes. Strain if there are sediments. Drink warm before meals.