

OJAS

What is it?

Ojas is an invisible, supportive energy that provides a buffer between us and the stressors of life. It's a bit like insulation/bubble wrap for our energy and nervous system, providing every tissue of our body with strength and stability. Its physical manifestation is our immune system, and it is directly correlated to the functionality of our adrenals: dysfunction of the adrenals results in low *ojas*, while proper functioning results in increased *ojas*.

While we are all born with a built-in amount of *ojas*, modern Western life makes it difficult to maintain it over the years. Stress from jobs, families, environments, and life changes all take a toll, as does the high level of sensory input we all are subject to in these days.

When our *ojas* is depleted—when our energetic protective insulation thins—we become susceptible to disease and stress, and we're chronically tired and reactive. Symptoms of low *ojas* are as follows:

- Confused/foggy state of mind
- Prone to infections
- Muscle or joint pain/stiffness
- Feelings of loneliness or insufficiency
- Prone to depression/anxiety

When we have sufficient *ojas*, our body is more resistant to stressors, and we feel fresh and alive. *Ojas* provides stability to the body and mind, allowing us to weather changes with greater ease and grace. Signs of sufficient *ojas* are as follows:

- Bright complexion/eyes
- High energy/stamina
- Good immunity
- Light body
- Clarity of mind/focus
- Creative
- Overall sense of well-being

How do you build it back up?

The best and easiest way to build up ojas is through our diet and digestion. Here are a few tips to keep in mind.

- Eat foods that are high in prana/life force
- Maintain a strong agni (digestive fire)
- Consider your intention/environment when both cooking/eating
- As much as you can, avoid frozen, fried, and canned food
- As much as you can, avoid processed foods, white sugar/flour, and foods with preservatives
- Choose warm, cooked foods over raw, undercooked foods.

Here are some foods that are rich in ojas.

- Ghee
- Nuts
- Dates
- Fresh leafy vegetables
- Avocados
- Banana
- Figs
- Sweet potatoes
- Yams
- Beans
- Tofu
- Whole grains
- Turnip
- zucchini