

Sattwa, Ojas and the Lifestyle Factor

Yoga philosophy and Ayurveda utilize the 'Gunas' to illustrate the way that our universe comes to life. The gunas are the 'creative' impulse that sparks life into nature.

The **Sattwic** impulse is the sweet, pure, loving impulse to evolve. These are the qualities that we most want to cultivate if we are on the spiritual path. We also need to cultivate Sattwa even if we just want a little more peace in our lives!!

The Sattwic impulse is balanced by Rajas and Tamas, the impulse of inertia and destruction, respectively.

The sattvic impulse leads to the creation of **Ojas**, the most highly refined form of consciousness in the physical body. Ojas pure life-force manifest in our body!!

The bottom line in Ayurveda is increasing ojas. This is what makes it possible to feel good, 100% healthy on all levels. And that truly is the possibility for everyone.

How we live, whether the Sattwic impulse, or Rajas or Tamas predominate in our lives is what I call the **Lifestyle Factor**.

To increase Ojas, we need to live a **Sattvic Lifestyle**.

- Eat primarily a Sattvic Diet
- Cultivate peaceful & loving thoughts
- Take responsibility for our old 'baggage' and habits of negative thinking. It is important to take inventory of ourselves, to become the loving objective observer.
- Avoid and/reduce Alcohol. By it's nature alcohol counteracts all the aspects of ojas.
- Cultivate an Ayurvedic Daily Routine
- Let go of anger. Pitta emotions will tend to 'burn' our ojas. Over time our 'sweetness' will be less. People of a Pitta nature especially need to watch this.
- Avoid and or/reduce foods and habits that don't make ojas: eating leftovers, cheese, eggs, poultry, meat, and eating unconsciously and/or without proper hunger.

Sattvic Diet

- primarily sweet: not refined sugar, but the sweet taste in rice, milk, ghee, almonds, sesame seeds, dates, mung beans, fresh fruit and produce.
- Food that is easily digested, light and soothing
- moderate portions
- contains all 6 tastes: sweet, salty, sour, bitter, astringent, pungent
- fresh produce
- clean, fresh water

Don't be intimidated! Even an little increase in Sattwa will bring more peace into your life. Increase Sattwa a little at a time - pick one Sattvic habit a month and focus on cultivating that. The habits that don't serve you can simply fall away as you increase Sattwa in your life.