

## 23. Preventive health: Enhancing immunity and vitality

### Preventive Health in Kalari Tradition

#### Strategies for Immunity (*Vyādhikṣamatva*) and Vitality (*Ojas*)

##### 1 • Ayurvedic View of Immunity

In classical texts the body's resistance to disease is called **Vyādhikṣamatva** and rests on the quality of **Ojas**—a subtle essence distilled from perfectly digested food, balanced doṣas, clear channels (*srotas*), and a calm mind. Declining Ojas shows as fatigue, dull complexion, repeated colds; abundant Ojas reveals itself in bright eyes, stable moods, and quick healing.

##### 2 • How Kalari Methods Build Ojas

- Daily Oil Application (Self-Abhyanga & Uzhichil)**
  - Warm sesame-bala taila nourishes the skin barrier, a first-line immune screen, while rhythmic palm glides stimulate lymph flow—shuttling immune cells from gut to periphery.
- Marma Pulsing for Neuro-Immune Harmony**
  - Gentle holds on **Hṛidaya** and **Nābhi** synchronise vagal tone and enteric immunity; light spirals on **Talahridaya** (sole) ground anxiety that otherwise saps Ojas.
- Kizhi & Steam for Detoxifying Sweat Pathways**
  - Leaf-based **Ela-kizhi** followed by brief steam opens sweat glands, flushing metabolic wastes that clog *srotas* and burden the immune system.
- Chuvadukal Movement Drills**
  - Dynamic **Vatta** pivots and **Neeta** lunges pump interstitial fluid back to central circulation, preventing lymph stagnation and lowering systemic inflammation.
- Seasonal "Karkidaka" Rejuvenation**
  - During Kerala's monsoon the body's agni dips. A 14-day protocol—light diet, dashamūla steam, njavara-kizhi nourish—restores digestive fire and rebuilds marrow-level Ojas before winter pathogens surge.

##### 3 • Herbal Oils & Diet Synergy

Aim	Key Oil Ingredients	Companion Dietary Tips
Baseline immunity	Sesame + <b>Āśvagandhā, Bala</b> ( <i>Dhanvantaram taila</i> )	Morning glass of lukewarm water with ½ tsp <b>chawanprash</b>
Respiratory defence	Coconut-tulasi oil for chest glides	Warm <b>tulasi-ginger decoction</b> after session
Anti-inflammatory reserve	Dashamūla-sahacharādi blend for joints	Golden milk with <b>turmeric &amp; black pepper</b> at bedtime
Post-illness rebuild	Ghee-amla-bala drizzle applied to spine	<b>Moong-rice khichdi</b> with ghee, cumin, fresh amla

##### 4 • Breath & Mind Practices to Seal Gains

- Nāḍī-śodhana (5 min):** balances ida-piṅgalā channels, harmonising cortisol and melatonin cycles.
- Bhrāmārī (9 humming exhales):** vibration enhances nitric-oxide release in nasal epithelium—an innate antiviral.
- Gratitude pause:** therapist and client rest palms over sternum for three slow breaths, anchoring Sattva that protects Ojas.



### 5 • Weekly Immune-Vitality Routine (Self-Care Template)

Day	Morning	Mid-day	Evening
Mon	Self-abhyanga + 8 <b>Aakka</b> steps	Warm water, small lunch	20-min Uzhichil focus on back
Tue	5-min Nāḍī-śodhana	Ginger-lemon drink	Slow <b>Neeta</b> lunges, foot oiling
Wed	Leaf <b>Ela-kizhi</b> on knees	Light khichdi	10-min belly clockwise glide
Thu	Dashamūla steam (5 min)	Tulasi decoction	Head-neck oil with <b>Sthapani</b> hold
Fri	Plyo <b>Chatta</b> hops (20 reps)	Seasonal fruit bowl	Feather palm on sternum, gratitude journal
Sat	Long forest walk	Coconut water	Gentle ankle mobilisations
Sun	Rest, mild stretching	---	Warm sesame bath & early sleep

### Quick-Reference Benefits Matrix

Modality	Direct Physiological Effect	Immunity Outcome
Warm oil glide	↑ skin lipid barrier, ↓ sympathetic tone	Fewer dermal infections, better sleep
Marma thumb hold	Vagal stimulation	Balanced cytokine profile
Kizhi heat	Micro-circulation boost	Faster antibody transport
Steam exit	Opens <i>srotas</i> , raises core temp	Pathogen die-off, clearer sinuses
Movement drills	Lymph pump, myokine release	Enhanced NK-cell activity
Breath/meditation	Cortisol regulation	Reduced viral susceptibility

### Key Points to Remember

- Immunity is multi-layered;** Kalari addresses skin, lymph, gut, nerves and mind in one integrated arc.
- Ojas flourishes where digestion is clean, joints are free, breath is smooth, and thought is bright.**
- Consistency outranks intensity;** a daily 15-minute self-oil and breath ritual protects better than occasional spa marathons.
- Seasonal resets are essential;** leverage monsoon or spring for short rejuvenation programs before stress seasons hit.

Practised as a lifestyle, Kalari's blend of medicinal oils, precise touch, and intelligent movement keeps defence mechanisms vigilant while feeding the deep reservoir of vitality that Ayurveda calls **Ojas**.