



## A CRITICAL REVIEW OF RASAVAHA SROTAS IN THE CONTEXT OF AYURVEDA & MODERN SCIENCE

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Article Received on 29/07/2024

Article Revised on 18/08/2024

Article Accepted on 07/09/2024

### ABSTRACT

Human body is mainly composed of three types of substances viz. Dosha, Dhatu and Mala. Although all these entities are present in body itself, but some kind of transportation system is required to carry these substances from the site of production to the site of action. For transportation mode of such body constituents, the special term 'Srotasa' is used which denotes a channel through which substances flow from one part to another part of body. Srotas are innumerable channels or pathways which supply nourishment to dhatu and whole body. Srotas carry all like poshya rasa to poshaka rasa, specific materials, hormones, enzymes, thought process, stimulus. It is such a minute supply that is not seen but visible by their actions or by functioning that occurs. Any disturbance in physiology of srotas may lead to pathological manifestation, therefore it is very important to understand physiological and clinical concept of srotas along with its management. Brihatrayee with their commentaries. Conclude that transportation is the key for evolution of mankind. The word Srotamsi in the context of srotas indicates all level of exchanging and transportation of Posahya Rasa from Ahara Rasa at micro to macro level of cells and tissue. The sapta dhatu are the product of ahara rasa. The poshya Ras Dhatu is the first tissue. This comes in the heart and is circulated all over the body providing nourishment.

**KEYWORDS:** Srotas, Rasavaha srotas, Hraday, Rasa samvahana.

### INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda has accepted the human body to be made up of innumerable Srotas (channels) which are responsible for performing all the physiological and functional activities. All dosha, dhathu and mala perform their functional activities with the help of these Srotas. It has been a practice since long, to recognize all the vyadhi laskhana. The body is divided into small units depending upon their chief function or structure. Each unit comprises of many avayavas (Organs) and each organ is made up of innumerable Srotas. Hence these units are generally called Srotas. Srotas are the complex pathways or channels of the nervous system governed by Vayu for carrying out the functional and physiological activities of the human body. The following synonyms of Srotas Sira (Vein), Dhamani (Artery), Rasayani (Lymphatics ducts), Rasavahini (capillary), Nadi (Tubular conduits), Pantha (Passages), Marga (Pathways, tracts), Sharirachidra (Body orifices), Ashaya (Repertories), Niketa (resorts), Sthanas (Sites), Samvrutsamvrutani (open / closed passages). Rasa Savhana: Vyana Vayu having ability to move liquid quickly, this Vyana Vayu causes circulation

of rasa in entire body. Srotas are channels or micropores which mainly perform functions of transportation, ayurveda described many types of Srotas and Rasa vaha srotas are one of them. There are seven srotas (out of 13) which associated with tissues (dhatus) and Rasa vaha srotas comes first in this category as follows:

#### Srotas related to dhatus

1. Rasa vaha srotas: carrying plasma and lymph
2. Rakta vaha srotas: carrying blood cells and hemoglobin
3. Mamsa vaha srotas: carrying muscle nutrients and wastes
4. Meda vaha srotas: supplying to various adipose tissues of body
5. Asthi vaha srotas: nutrients to the bones
6. Majja vaha srotas: supplying the bone marrow and nerves
7. Sukra vaha srota: carrying the sperm and ova and their nutrients.

**Number of stotasa**

“Yavantah purushe murtimanto bhavavisheshatavanta evasmin stotasam prakar visheshah.”<sup>[1]</sup> Strotasa are countless as everybody constituent has its own strotasa. According to Acharya Charak, grossly following 13 strotasas.<sup>[2]</sup>, are enumerated 1)Pranahava strotas 2) Udakvaha strotas 3) Annavaha strotas 4) Rasavaha strotas 5) Raktavaha strotas 6) Mansavaha strotas 7)Medovaha strotas 8)Asthivaha strotas 9) Majjavaha strotas 10) Shukravaha strotas 11) Mutravaha strotas 12) Purishvaha strotas 13) Swedavaha strotas. While according to Acharya Sushrut, there are 11 types of strotas.<sup>[3]</sup> 1)Pranahava strotas 2)Udakvaha strotas 3)Annavaha strotas 4)Rasavaha strotas 5) Raktavaha strotas 6)Mansavaha strotas 7)Medovaha strotas 8)Mutravaha strotas 9)Purishvaha strotas 10)Shukravaha strotas 11)Artavavaha strotasa.

**Rasavaha strotas**

**Mula** Heart and great vessels.

**Marga** Venous and lymphatic systems.

**Mukha** Arteriole, venous junction in capillaries.

Rasavaha Srotas are considered as main Srotas since they supply nutrients to all body parts, they also give Poshana to Rasa Dhatu and Rakta Dhatu. Yakrit and Hrdiya contributes significantly towards Ahara Rasa Poshanta through this Srotas since food first goes to Yakrit then through the circulatory system of Hrdiya it will circulate to all body parts. Therefore the concept of Rasavaha Srotas in Ayurveda may be correlated with modern functions of heart, lungs and liver. Rasa vaha strotasa circulates Rasa including lymphatic system and plasma, this process offers nourishment to other dhatus. Rasavaha strotas perform vital functioning of body related to circulatory process.

**Physiological Importance of Rasa Vaha Srotas**

Paushaka Dhatu are transported to the Sthayi Dhatu through Srotas. Dhatu-Vaha Srotas is specific to Sthayi Dhatu to which they transport nutrition. Srotas carries Bhava Padarth from one place to another place. It transports materials and impulses also. Helps in the absorption of fats and minerals through lymph and utilizing pressure of blood. It served as place of transformation of Ahararasa to Rasadhātu. It offers pathways for transporting Rasadhātu in the body. The proper functioning of this Srotas offers excellence of Twak characterized by Snigdha, Shlakshna, Mrudu, Prasanna, Sukshma, Alpa, Gambhira and Sukumara appearance. The physiological normalcy of Rasavaha strotas offers happiness, power, enjoyment, intellect and longevity.

**Rasavaha strotas dushti hetu (etiological factors)<sup>[4]</sup>**

“Gurusheetam atisnigdham atimatram samashnataam, Rasavahini dushyanti chintyanaamapi chintanaat.” Guru ahara - excessive intake of heavy diet like cheese, fastfood, Chinese, bakery products. Sheeta ahara – excessive intake of cold food or products. Atisnigdham –

eating too oily, unctuous food, it increase viscosity in blood creating obstruction in strotas and hampering circulation. Samashan –taking wholesome and unwholesome diet together. Manasika hetu- chinta (stress/worry) leads to rasavaha strotodushti causing cardiac diseases, hypertension etc. and ultimately hampers mental and physical health.

**Rasavaha Srotasa Dushti Lakshana (symptoms)<sup>[5]</sup>**

Following diseases are caused by vitiation of Rasa Dhatu

- Ashraddha - unwilling to eat any type of food.
- Aruchi - Anorexia or a lack of interest in food.
- Aasyavairasya - dysgeusia
- Arasagyata - ageusia or loss of taste.
- Hrilaso - nausea
- Gaurava - feeling of heaviness
- Tandra - drowsiness
- Saangamarda Jwara Tama - fever with bodyache and fainting
- Pandu - anaemia
- Strotasaam Rodha - obstruction of channels of circulation
- Klaihya - impotency
- Saada - asthenia
- Krishangata – emaciation
- Nashoagneyah - decrease power of digestion
- Vali and Paalitya - premature appearance of wrinkles and grey hairs.

**Chikitsa (management of rasavaha strotodushti)**

Acharya Charak mentioned the treatment for vitiated rasa dhatu, causing diseases as- “rasajaanaam vikaaranaam aushadham”.<sup>[10]</sup> sarva langhanam For all the cure of diseases caused by vitiation of rasa dhatu, one should take recourse to fasting of all type. As rasavaha strotas are channels which carry rasa dhatu. Hence, the dushti of rasa dhatu ultimately means dushti of rasavaha strotas. As rasadhātu is first dhatu and rasavaha strotas is channel which carry it, so dushti of rasa dhatu leads to vitiation of other six dhatu and their strotasas. Hence, it is very important to treat rasavaha strotas dushti to avoid rasa dushti and ultimately further dhatu dushti and strotas dushti. Acharya Charak explains the relation of dhatu and strotas as cha sharirdhaatvah prakopamapdyante”.<sup>[11]</sup> According to above shloka, vitiation of strotasas causes vitiation of dhatu. So the treatment for vitiated dhatu is applicable for the vitiated strotasas also. Rasavaha strotodushti is mostly caused by agnimandya and ama hence langhan is first line of treatment. Langhan – langhan is first therapy among shat upakrama. The purpose is to make the body light by relieving heaviness.

**Indication for panchakarma therapy**

Panchakarma therapy is used to expel out increased doshas out of the body. It is recommended when the disease and the strength of patient both are strong (bahudoshavastha).

**Indication of pachana treatment** Madhya bala roga- in disease with moderate strength. When doshas are moderately vitiated. Indication for control of thirst and fasting – if the diseases are of mild nature or vitiated doshas are not so strong, they are to be treated by the control of thirst and hunger. This helps in balancing the doshas. Indication for exercise, sun, wind exposure – If strong individual suffer from diseases of mild nature, such diseases can be cured by physical exercise and

exposure to sun and wind. Medicines which helps to induce langhana are Shunthi (*Zingiber officinale*)• Triphala (fruit of *Terminalia chebula*, *Terminalia ballirica*, *Emblica officinalis*)• Musta (*Cyperus rotundus*)• Madhu (Honey)• Mudga (green grams)• Arogyavardhinivati• Tribhuvankirti• Sutshekhar rasa etc. •

### CONCLUSION

Srotasa is found to be the chief functioning centre. Any kind of vitiation of Srotasa either straight or through its Dhatu leads to the vitiation of its Mula and when Srotomula is pretentious it leads to the vitiation of Srotas. The first Dhatu is Rasa Dhatu and Preenanam is its primary purpose. Every Srotasa is governed by its particular Mulasthana (place of origin). Therefore, we must highlight the Mulasthana of each Srotasa in order to treat it or its sickness. Langhana helps in removing obstruction in body tissues & channels, improves metabolism, regresses the initial pathological processes, and strengthen the digestive system. Langhana is consider as first line treatment to cure Rasavaha Sroto Dushti.

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