

RASAVAHA STROTAS: AN AYURVEDIC REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Strotas are innumerable channels or pathways which supply nourishment to *dhatu* and whole body. *Strotas* 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 *strotas* may lead to pathological manifestation, therefore it is very important to understand physiological and clinical concept of *strotas* along with its management. Ayurvedic *samhitas* described anatomical and physiological concepts of *strotas* broadly along with the diseases related to *strotodushti*. In this article I try to opt on *Rasavaha strotas* in detail view.

KEYWORDS: Stotasa, *Rasavaha Stotasa*, *Stotodushti*, *Ayurveda*.

INTRODUCTION

Strotamsi stands for the inner delivery system of the body incorporation to that of circulatory system. It indicates all level of exchanging and transportation of *Poshya rasa* from *Ahara rasa* by *Jatharagni* at micro to macro level of cells and tissue. The kind of life style choices are practised nowadays are key contributors in development of *Strotodushti* (vitiation of channels of circulation) leading to progression of diseases. The digested food finally contribute to *Rasa dhatu*, which performs many vital functions of body. *Rasa dhatu* is first *dhatu* and its main function is *Prenanam*.^[1] *Rasavaha Strotasa* are channels carrying *rasa dhatu* and giving *poshan* to *rasa* and *rakta dhatu*.

Rasa Samvahana: *Rasa dhatu* is circulated in whole body by *Vyan Vayu*.

Mulasthanas of *Rasavaha Strotasa*: *Hriday* (Heart) and *dasha dhamani* (10 major vessels).^[2]

Clinical importance of *mulasthanas* of *rasavaha strotasa*:

“*Mulam iti prabhavasthanam*”.^[3]

The working of every *strotasa* are regulated and controlled by its respective *mulasthana* (root place). Hence, to treat any *strotodushti* or its disease we need to emphasize on its *mulasthana*.

Properties of *rasa dhatu*:

“*Rasoapi shleshmvat*”.^[4]

They Possesses similar properties as *kapha dosha*, like *snigdha, guru, shweta* etc.

Number of stotasa

“*Yavantah purushe murtimanto bhavavisheshatavanta evasmin stotasam prakar visheshah*”.^[5]

Strotasa are countless as everybody constituent has its own *strotasa*.

According to *Acharya Charak*, grossly following 13 *strotasas*,^[6] 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*.^[7]

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 dushti hetu* (etiological factors)**^[8]

“*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 strotas dushti lakshana (symptoms)^[9]

“*Ashraddha cha aruchi cha aasyavairasyam arasaudnyata, hrilaaso gauravam tandra saangamardo jwarastamaa.*”

Pandutvam strotasam rodha klaibya saada krishangtaam , naashoagneya ayathakaalam valay palitaani cha.”

Following diseases are caused by vitiation of *rasa dhatu*

Ashraddha – disinclination for any type of food.

Aruchi – anorexia or uninterested in diet.

Aasyavairasya – disgeusia

Arasadnyata – ageusia or loss of taste

Hrilaso – nausea

Gaurav –feeling of heaviness

Tandra- drowsiness

Saangamarda jwara tama- fever with bodyache and fainting

Pandu- anaemia

Strotasaam rodha- obstruction of channels of circulation

Klaibya – impotency

Saada- asthenia

Krishangata – emaciation

Nashoagneya – 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 sarva langhanam aushadham*”^[10]

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 *rasadhatu* 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

tesham (strotas) prakopaat sthanstha cha eva maargaga cha sharirdhaatvah prakopamapdyante”^[11]

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.

Type of langhana according to Acharya Charak

“*chatusprakara samsuddhih pipasa marutatapau; pacananyaupavasasca vyamasceti langhanam*”^[12]

4 type of *panchakarma* purifying therapies –

Vamana therapy- vomiting

Virechana therapy- purgation

Niruha basti- decoction enema

Nasya – nasal drop having cleansing nature

Pipasa – controlling thirst

Maruta- exposure to wind

Atapa – exposure to sun

Pachana – administration of food and medicine that are *ushna virya* (hot in nature), helping in digestion

Upavasa – total fasting

Vyayam- physical exercise

All the above types works by increasing digestive power.

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.

Benefits of langhana

- Removes obstruction in tissues and channels.
- Improve metabolism
- Bring lightness and sense of healthiness in the body.
- Regresses the initial pathological processes.
- Strengthens the digestive system.

Overall, *langhana* treatment principle is adopted whenever there is feeling of heaviness. The purpose is to bring about lightness to the body, to clear body channels, to improve circulation and ultimately good health. *Langhana* also serves the purpose of *deepana* and *pachana*.

Nidan parivarjana

This means avoidance of etiological factors (*dushti hetu*) of disease. *Nidan parivarjana* plays key role in *Ayurvedic* treatment. It emphasizes mainly on improving dietary and lifestyle modifications causing the disease. One should always take wholesome food with a view to preventing the occurrence of such diseases.

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