

STUDY OF SROTORODHA (OBSTRUCTION OF SYSTEM) -A LITERARY REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a science which focuses not only on treatment but also to prevent disease and to maintain health. When the endogenous factors, the digestive power, the body elements and waste products are in balanced physiological state along with wellbeing of soul, sense organs and mind, then that individual is called as healthy. Due to some reason if these constituents get disturbed, then one has to suffer the disease. Among these factors, aggravated *Doshas* (endogenous factors) are responsible for disease. These aggravated *Doshas* moving around through *Srotasa* (system) get settled in defective site of system which leads *Srotorodha* (obstruction of system) either structural or functional. This is responsible for the abnormal production of *Dhatu* (body elements) which gets vitiated by *Doshas* to produce disease. This study explains the *Srotorodha* (obstruction of channels) is one of important cause of disease and it can be treated by *Shodhana Karma* (Eliminative Therapy) and *Shamana Karma*(Palliative Therapy). Physician should treat it with wholesome diet and lifestyle.

Keywords: *Doshas & Srotasa, Srotasa and Srotorodha, Blockage of system, Obstruction of system, Srotorodha-A cause of disease*

INTRODUCTION

Healthy life relies on the proper union of body, sensory organs, mind and soul.¹ Among these, body undergoes wear and tear constantly from birth to death. This type of degeneration needs the supplementary strength. For its nourishment, supply of food materials and excretion of waste product is done by small hollow pathways, which are called as *Srotasa* i.e. channels of circulation or system. According to their structure and function various systems in the body has given name like *Pranavaha Srotasa* (Respiratory system), *Rasavaha Srotasa* (Body nourishing fluid system) etc. So *Srotasa* is defined as the hollow channel, except *Sira* and *Dhamani*, which originates from root

site, spreads in the body and carries (specific entities) the *Dhatu* (body elements).²

According to *Ayurveda*, specific varieties of the system in the human body are the same in number as the structural entities in it.³

In the same manner, plant gets nutrients from soil to nourish itself. This circulation is carried out by the small channels of it. If there is any obstruction in these systems then the plant gets dried up.⁴

According to *Ayurveda*, *Srotasa* is a system in which *Utpatti* (production), *Parinama* (conversion) and *Vahana* (circulation) of a body element takes place.

If there is any disturbance in these functions then different kinds of diseases can be seen.⁵

This study is proposed to explain the responsible factors for obstruction of system which leads to many diseases and to explain the treatment of it.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

1. To study the fundamental concepts of *Srotorodha*.
2. To spread awareness among physicians to consider *Srotorodha* as one of the causative factors of disease.
3. To propose the wholesome *Ahara* (diet) and *Vihara* (regimen) for the disease caused due to *Srotorodha*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

For this study *Ayurveda* text has been used to evaluate the concepts. The text from *Brihatrayee* i.e. *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita* and *Ashtanga Sangraha*, *Ashtanga Hridaya* and their respective commentaries in *Sanskrit* as well as *Hindi* which were easily available.

Also text from *Laghutrayee* i.e. *Madhava Nidana*, *BhavPrakasha*, *Vriksha Ayurveda* have been used. Various related websites have been searched.

CONCEPTUAL STUDY:

The channels of circulation or system carry the *Dhatus* (body elements or their constituents) undergoing transformation to their destination.⁶

Acharya Sushruta says, system of circulation is called as *Srotasa*.

The concept of *Srotasa* cannot be explained in a single word. The broad meaning can be taken as a system. A *Srotasa* is a hollow structure where body element is produced, nourished, transformed in to another body element, carried and its excretory end product is excreted. It originates from small opening and spread all over the body. *Sira* and *Dhamani* are the alternative names of it but *Srotasa*, *Sira* and *Dhamani* are different

from each other because of their difference in function, difference in number and difference in signs according to *Agama Prama-na*.⁷

In all, all the small openings in the body included as *Srotasa*.⁸ According to *Sushruta Samhita*, aggravated *Doshas* when travel through the body get lodged in the site of *Srotovaigunya* (defective site in *srotasa*) where disease occurs.⁹ Thus *Srotasa* (system) gives a base for the production of a lesion in a disease.

Srotasa has same colour as that of *Dhatu* (body element) produced in it. The shape of a big or small, circular or elongated and tendon-like.¹⁰ Eventhough the number of *Srotasa* described by *Ayurveda* is innumerable, *Acharya Charaka* has described 13 major systems. *Acharya Sushruta* has described 11 pairs of systems. In addition to all these, *Ayurveda* has described two more *Srotasas* i.e. *Manovaha Srotasa* (System of mind), *Stanyavaha Srotasa* (Lactation system).

Most important cause to produce any disease is *Srotovaigunya* (defective site in a system). And according to *Ayurveda* causes of defective site in a system are *Kulaja* (hereditary), *Jataja* (congenital), *Aaharaja* (Dietary), *Agantuja* (External), *SheshaDoshaja* (Remanant causes) and *Srotodushti* (Vitiated system).

Causes of *Srotodushti* (vitiating of systems) are two: 1) The diet and daily regimen which is having similar qualities to that of *Vata*, *Pitta* & *Kapha* will cause their aggravation. This lead to disease, 2) The diet and daily regimen which is having qualities opposite to that of body elements will cause abnormal production of them. This abnormal body element forms the defective site in the system. The defective site forms the basis for the settlement of aggravated *Doshas*. Thus it

will lead the disease. From these two causes of vitiation of a system, structural or functional abnormality is developed in that system.

Srotodushti (vitiating of system) can be seen by four signs i.e. *Atipravrutti* (increase of the contents of the system), *Sanga* (non-flow of the contents of the system), *Siragranthi* (Reduction of lumen of the system) and *Vimargagamana* (diverted movement of the contents of the channels) .¹¹

Among these *Sanga* (non-flow of the contents of the system) and *Siragranthi* (reduction of lumen of the channels) can be included under obstruction of system. *Sanga* is a cause of functional obstruction of system and *Siragranthi* is a cause of structural as well as functional obstruction of system.

TABLE NO.1: CAUSES OF STROTORODHA (OBSTRUCTION OF SYSTEM)

<p>A) Consumable substances which are the causes of obstruction of system.</p>	<p><i>Snigdha</i>(lubricity) and <i>Picchila</i>(slimy)<i>guna</i>¹² Sweet and Pungent taste¹³ <i>Guru</i> (heavy) ¹⁴ <i>Nava Madya</i> (newly prepared wine)¹⁵ <i>Gokshira</i> (cow milk)¹⁶ <i>Mahisha Dugdha</i> (Buffalo milk)¹⁷ <i>Guda</i> (Jaggery)¹⁸ <i>Navadhanya</i>(new cereals)¹⁹</p>
<p>B) Obstruction of system due to <i>Adhyashana</i>(eating food before the digestion of prior food)²⁰</p>	
<p>C) Obstruction of system due to <i>Viruddha Ashana</i>(incompatible food)²¹</p>	
<p>D) Obstruction of system due to <i>Abhishyandi Bhojana</i>(intake of secretive food intake)²</p>	<p>These leads to <i>Ama</i> which act as a cause of obstruction of system.²³</p>
<p>E) Obstruction of system due to <i>Vihara</i> (lifestyle)</p>	<p>Sleep at inappropriate time.²⁴ At night due to aggravated <i>kapha</i>.²⁵ Due to in appropriate <i>Vamana</i>(Emesis) therapy.²⁶ Giving <i>Nasya</i>(nasal administration)after <i>Niruhabasti</i>(decoction enema)²⁷ Excessive <i>Snehapana</i> (excessive drinking ghee)²⁸ <i>Snehana</i> (oleation therapy)²⁹</p>
<p>F) Obstruction of system due to aggravated <i>Rasadhātu</i> (tissue, blood devoid of erythropoietic elements)³⁰</p>	

SYMPTOMS OF OBSTRUCTION OF SYSTEM:

Obstruction of system leads the aggravation of *Shariradhatu* (body elements) which resides or flowing through system.³¹

SIGNS OF OBSTRUCTION OF SYSTEM:

Decrease of function and quality of the contents of *Srotasa* due to *Shalya* (foreign body) can be seen.³²

As long as all systems in the body perform their normal functions, there is no development of diseases. On the other hand, the obstruction of system leads the disease.³³

TABLE NO.2: SIGNS OF SROTORODHA ACCORDING TO PARTICULAR SROTASA:

Sr. No.	Name of <i>Srotasa</i>	Signs of <i>Srotorodha</i> or leads diseases
1	<i>Pranavaha Srotasa</i> (Respiratory system)	<i>Hicca</i> (Hiccup) ³⁴ <i>Shwasa</i> (Asthma) ³⁵ , <i>Kasa</i> (Cough) ³⁶⁽ⁱ⁾ .
2	<i>Annavaha Srotasa</i> (Digestive system)	<i>Annanaabhlasha</i> (disclination for food), <i>aruchi</i> (anorexia)and <i>avipaka</i> (indigestion). ³⁶⁽ⁱⁱ⁾
3	<i>Udakavaha Srotasa</i> (Water metabolism system)	<i>Pipasa</i> (Thirst) ³⁷ , <i>Udararoga</i> (Ascites) ³⁸ .
4	<i>Rasavaha Srotasa</i> (Body nourishing fluid system)	<i>Jvara</i> (Fever) ³⁹ , <i>Panduroga</i> (Anaemia) ⁴⁰ <i>Shoth-vyadhi</i> (Oedema) ⁴¹ , <i>Hridayaroga</i> (Heart Disease) ⁴²
5	<i>Raktavaha Srotasa</i> (Haemopoetic system)	<i>Kama-la</i> (Jaundice) ⁴³ , <i>Visarpa</i> (Erysepalas) ⁴⁴ , <i>Vatarakta</i> (Gout) ⁴⁵ <i>Rajayakshma</i> (Tuberculosis) ⁴⁶ , <i>Pandu</i> (An aemia) ⁴⁷ .
6	<i>Medovaha Srotasa</i> (Fatty tissue system)	<i>Sthoulsya</i> (obesity). ⁴⁸
7	<i>Majjavaha Srotasa</i> (Bone marrow tissue system)	Leads <i>Murccha</i> (fainting) ⁴⁹
8	<i>Shukravaha Srotasa</i> (Reproductivesystem)	<i>Clibata</i> (male infertility)can be seen. ⁵⁰
9	<i>Mutravaha Srotasa</i> (Urinary system)	Leads <i>Prameha</i> (Diabetes) ⁵¹ , <i>Ushnavata</i> (Gonorrhoea) ⁵² <i>Ashmari</i> (urinary calculi) ⁵³ .
10	<i>Purishavaha Srotasa</i> (Defaecation system)	<i>Arsha</i> (Piles) ⁵⁴ , <i>Sannirudha Guda</i> (Anal Stricture) ⁵⁵ can be seen.
11	<i>Swedavaha Srotasa</i> (Perspiration system)	<i>Indralupta</i> ⁵⁶ , <i>Khalitya</i> (Alopecia) ⁵⁷ , <i>Jwara</i> (Fever). ⁵⁸
12	<i>Aartavavaha Srotasa</i> [nutrients of the female reproductive system (ova)]	leads <i>NaArtavamDrushyateGarbham</i> (Amenorrhoea due to foetus) ⁵⁹ <i>Vandhyatva</i> (female infertility). ⁶⁰

13	Manovaha Srotasa(System of mind)	Unmada(Insanity)⁶¹.
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In Charaka Samhita, Mamsavaha (Muscular, Asthivaha(Skeletal) srotodushti (vitiation of system) is not explained but its pradoshaja vyadhi(diseases) are explained as follows:

In Mamsavaha Pradoshaja Vyadhi(diseases of Muscular system)

Adhimamsarbuda (Granuloma), *Arbuda*(myoma),*Kila*(piles),*Galashundika* (uvul-tis),*Galashundika*(tonsillitis),*Putimamsa*(slo ughing of flesh),*Alji*(boils),*Ganda*(goiter), *Gandamala*(cervicaladenitis),*Upjivhika* (Inflammation of epiglottis) are included. ⁶²

In Asthivaha Pradoshaja Vyadhi (disease of skeletal system) *AdhiAsthi* (Extra bone), *AdhiDanta* (extra teeth), *Danta Bheda* (den-tal caries), *Danta Shula* (dental pain) are included. ⁶³

TREATMENT OF SROTORODHA:

- Destruction of *Dosha Dushya Sammurchana* (combination of *Dosha & Dushya*

i.e tissue elements) is the only treat-ment. ⁶⁴

- Due to *Vishyandana*(increase fluidity), *Vruddhya*(aggravate d*Dosha*), *paka*(suppuration), *srotomukhavishodhana*(removal of ob-struction of channels),the vitiated *dosha* leave *shakha* (periphery) and come to the *koshtha*(alimentary tract) from which it can be easily removed. ⁶⁵
- By *Samanya Vishesha principle* ,*Samanya* - a state of generality or similarity is al-ways responsible for augmentation of all three catagories - i.e.matter, quality and action.The *Vishesha* is the cause of dimi-nution only in the absence of an inhibit-ing factor. ⁶⁶
- *Srotorodha* can be removed by normal *Vyana Vayu*. ⁶⁷

TABLE NO.3: TREATMENT OF PAR-TICULAR SROTORODHA:

Sr. No.	Name of Sro-tasa	Treatment		
		<i>Shodhana Karma (Eliminative Therapy)</i>	<i>Shamana Karma (Palliative Therapy)</i>	<i>Other</i>
1	<i>Pranavaha Srota-sa</i> (Respirator y system)	Emesis, Purgation therapy ⁶⁸	<i>Dipana</i> (digestive stimulants), <i>Bruha-na</i> (Nourishing Therap y). ⁶⁹	—
2	<i>Annavaha Srota-sa</i> (Digestive system)	—	<i>Dipana</i> (digestive stimulants), <i>Pachana Dravyas</i> (Digestive substances). ⁷⁰	—
3	<i>Udakavaha Srotasa</i> (Water metabolism system)	—	same as that of <i>Trushna</i> (Thirst). ⁷¹	—
4	<i>Rasavaha Sro-tasa</i> (Body nourishing	—	fasting of all types. ⁷²	—

	fluid system)			
5	Raktavaha Srotasa (Haemopoetic system)	Purgation,fasting,blood-letting. ⁷³	<i>RaktaVilayana Dravya(substance which dialates the Rakta)</i>	-
6	Mamsavaha Srotasa (Muscular system)	-	-	<i>Shastra(surgery), Kshara(alkalies),and Agnikarma(cauterization).</i> ⁷⁴
7	Medavaha Srotasa (Fatty tissue system)	<i>Ashtouninditaadhyaya</i> enema with drug of sharp, hot and unctuous quality. ⁷⁵	-	-
8	Asthivaha Srotasa (Skeletal system)	five elimination therapy. ⁷⁶	-	-
9	Majjavaha Srotasa (Bone marrow system)	bitter tastes and timely elimination of <i>doshas</i> in proper quantity. ⁷⁷	-	-
10	Shukravaha Reproductive system)	timely elimination of <i>doshas</i> in proper quantity. ⁷⁸	-	-
11	Purishavaha	-	-	wholesome food which charifies the channels. ⁷⁹⁽ⁱ⁾
12	Mutravaha	-	-	wholesome food which clarifies the channels. ⁷⁹⁽ⁱⁱ⁾
13	Swedavaha	-	-	wholesome food which clarifies the channels. ⁷⁹⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾
14	Artavavaha	<i>Panchakarma</i> in a mild form. ⁸⁰	-	-
15	Manovaha	Elimination therapy whatever needed as per the predominance of <i>dosha</i> . And patient should be consoled by friends with religious and moral state-	-	-

Diet substances through which Srotorodha can be removed are as follows;-

Yava(Barley)⁸², *Manda*(liquid portion of rice gruel)⁸³, *Jirnamadya*(old wine)⁸⁴, *Madya*(wine)⁸⁵, *Takra*(buttermilk)⁸⁶, *Mastu*(whey-watery portion of curd)⁸⁷, *Lavana*(salt)⁸⁸, *Katurasa*(pungenttaste)⁸⁹, *Chagamamsa*(meat of goat)⁹⁰, *Ushna jala*(hot water)⁹¹, *Guggulu* (Commiphora wightii)⁹², *Mudga*(Green gram- Phaseolusaureus)⁹³, *Madhu*(honey)⁹⁴, *Dhanyaka Hima* (cold infusion of corianderum sativum)⁹⁵, *Panchakola*(combination of drugs like *Pippali*, *Pippalimula*, *Chavya*, *Chitraka*, *shunthi* in equal quantity).⁹⁶

These all substances can be use as wholesome diet for the diseases occurred due to *Srotorodha*.

DISCUSSION

Till all the *Srotasa*(systems) in the body are normal, there is no development of diseases. Defective site of *Srotasa* is equally important as that of provoked *Doshas*. Even though the aggravated *Doshas* are moving around through various systems, they are not capable of producing a disease, if there is no defective site available for their settlement. Once a defective site is developed, the *Doshas* get settled over there and produce either structural or functional obstruction in that system. This results in abnormal production of *Dhatu* (body element) of that system. This *Dhatu* gets vitiated by the *Doshas*, giving rise to a disease

Cause of disease is mainly due to obstruction of channels of circulation or *Srotasa*. Most of the times *Srotorodha* occurs due to aggravated *Vata Dosh*, abnormal functioning of organs and foreign body.

Sharirika Srotorodha can be perceived from *Khavaigunya of Srotasa*(defective site of system) and *Manasika Srotorodha* can be perceived from *Hina Satva*(lower quality of mind).

By abnormal *Ahara Vihara*, *Sharirika Doshas* get aggravated which travel through body, lodged in the site of *khavaigunya of srotasa*(defective site of system)) which leads disease.

By abnormal *Ahara Vihara*, *Manasika Doshas* – *Raja* and *Tama* gets disturbed which cover the *satvaguna* of mind and leads to *Manasika vyadhi*.

Charakacharya has explained the symptoms of vitiation of *Doshas* among which *Sanga* and *Siragranthi* leads obstruction of system. But *Sanga* & *Siragranthi* have not been focused to great extent in the texts.

Charakacharya has explained *Srotomula*(root of channel)along with *Srotodushti Lakshana*(signs vitiation of channels)which leads to physiological abnormality.

Acharya Sushruta has explained *Srotomula*(root of channel)along with *Srotoviddha Lakshana*(signs of injury of *srotasa*)which leads to anatomical abnormality.

Comparative study reveals that the symptoms which are described in *Charaka Samhita* as *Srotodushti*(vitiation of system), some of them are explained in *Sushruta Samhita* as *Srotoviddha Lakshana*(signs of injury to system). This shows that the symptoms of obstruction of system decrease the own function and quality of particular system which are as *Srotodushti*(vitiation of system)and *Srotoviddha Lakshana*(injury to the system).

For example, in *Charaka Samhita* among the symptoms of *Annavaha Srotodushti*

Arochaka(Anorexia), *Avipaka*(Indigestion),*Annaanaabhilasha*(disclination for food)are due to *Ama- Srotorodha*.The same symptoms are seen as *Aadhmana*(distention of abdomen due to flatulence),*Annadvesha*(disclination for food/hatred to food)as *StrotoviddhaLakshana* in *Sushruta Samhita*.

Both symptoms can be included as the cause of *Srotorodha* due to *Ama*.

CONCLUSIONS

- *Srotasa*(System) is structure in body, in which transformation of *dhatu*(tissue)and its circulation takes place.
- *Doshas* by nature have the power of vitiating tissue elements. Tissue elements on the other hand, do not possess this power of vitiation. Whenever, anything is said to get vitiated by *Dhatu*, this by implication means that the *Doshas* located in the vitiating *Dhatu*s play that role.
- Due to *srotorodha*,the function and quality of the dependent *Dhatu* get disturbed or decreased.
- Among the signs of *Srotodushti*, *Atipravritti* and *VimargaGamana* can be treated by *Shodhana*(Eliminative) Therapy. *Sanga* can be treated by *Shamana*(Palliative Therapy) and *Siragranthi* can be treated by surgical treatment.
- Aggravated *Rasa Dhatu* causes *Srotorodha* where as normal *Vyana Vayu* removes *Srotorodha*.
- *Srotorodha* leads to abnormality in organs and to death also.
- Affliction of the channels leads to the vitiation of the tissue elements residing there or passing through them-vitiation of one leads to the vitiation of other. The vitiated channels and *Dhatu*s (tissue

elements) on their part vitiate other channels and *Dhatu*s respectively.

- In the treatment of *Srotorodha* conservative as well as surgical therapy is needed.
- In the treatment of *Manovaha Srotorodha* along with *Anjana* (collyrium therapy),*Nasya* (nasal therapy) and *Ashvasana* (Assurance)is also needed.
- In the treatment of *Sharirika Srotorodha*, purificatory therapy is needed.
- The *substances* which have *Guru*(heavy), *Manda*(slow), *Hima*(cold), *Snigdha*(unctuous), *Sthira*(stable), *Picchila*(slimy), *Abhishyandi*(secretive)quality are responsible for *Srotorodha*.
- For its treatment,substances of exactly opposite to these quality i.e.*Laghu*(light),*Ruksha*(rough),*Ushna*(hot),*Chala*(unstable),*Vishada*(lucid),*Anabhishyandi*(Non Secretive)can be used.
- Usually *Madhura Rasa* (sweet taste) and *Kashaya Rasa* (astringent taste)are responsible for *Srotorodha* and *Katu* (pungent) and *Lavana*(salt)taste are used to remove the *Srotorodha*.

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