

REVIEW ON CONCEPT OF SROTAS W.S.R. RASAYANA CHIKITSA

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ABSTRACT

The concept of *srotas* broadly described in *Ayurveda samhitas* in both anato-physiological aspects. The word *srotas* is derived from the Sanskrit root *shu- gata dhatu*, which means to exude, to flow, to filtrate. *Srotas* is nothing but the *Aakash mahabhuta* (space). The concept of *srotas* indicates all macro, micro level description applicable to exchange, transportation and excretion. *Chakrapani* has described *Moolsthana* of *Srotas*. *Srotas* mainly controls process of circulation in human body. The *srotas* perform many functions in body but when it get disturbed may convey some pathological manifestation, therefore it is very essential to understand physiological concepts of *srotas*. This article presenting *Ayurveda* concept of *srotas* in systematic manner, to understand functions carried out by *srotas* in physiological conditions, its *mulasthanas*, causes of *srotodusti*, its characteristics and clinical importance of *srotas* and *rasayana chikitsa* for strengthening of *srotas*.

Keywords: ???

INTRODUCTION

The word *Srotas* is derived from the Sanskrit root “*Shu-gatau*” which means to exude, to flow, to filtrate. Channels of circulation or tracts within the body are called *Srotas*. They are named so because of their tendency of trickling or oozing of secretions through them.¹

As per *Acharya Srotas* are the channels of circulation (*Murtimanthabhawwishesha*) which carries the *dhatu* i.e. tissue elements or their constituents undergoing transformation (*Parinamapadhyamana*) to the destination.²

They are physical structures (*murtimantah*), & specific in their functions. While the basic sites of

srotas with different functions are fixed depending on the biological material that they are carrying, their openings are innumerable.³

The concept of *srotas* of both the *Acharyas* has been mentioned differently in their views, *Charka* broadly considered the concept of *srotas* on Physiopathological (i.e. on functional abnormalities), whereas *Sushruta* considered on Anatomopathological (i.e. on structural abnormality).⁴

The existence of *srotas* can be proved with the help of *pramanas* as *Aptopadesh* (Authoritative statement), *Pratyaksha* (Direct Perception), *Anuman* (Inference), *Yukti* (Rationale –logical reasoning).

Aim: To study the physiological and clinical significance of *srotas* as it is involved in pathogenesis of disease.

Objectives:

1. To understand concept of *srotas* in detail by review of literature.
2. To get knowledge of functions of *srotas*.
3. To understand clinical significance of *srotas* in disease condition.

Materials and Methods:

Review of Literature

Formation of *srotas*- In intra-uterine life, *srototpatti* takes place. *Vayumahabhuta* is responsible for generation of *srotas*. With appropriate *Agni*, when differentiation takes place, *vayu* creates *srotas*.⁵

Synonyms of *srotas*-

Sira, dhamanyaha, rasayanaya, naadya, panthana, margha, aashaya etc.⁶

In most of the texts it has been considered that all above mentioned are as synonyms of the *srotas*. But

when we consider them as synonyms of *srotas* then they should perform the same functions of *srotas* but it is not observed like that. In *samhita* the significance as per sutra is in single word i.e. “*Sharirdhatuavkashanam*” it means *charaka* stated that above all structures of the body are sites where *sharir dhatu* will reside. The functions of the *srotas* can't be perform by any other structures or parts of the body, so above all structures are only the *Sharirdhatuavkashanam*.⁷

Types of *srotas*

Chakrapani commentator mentioned “*Srotomayam hi shariram*” that means as human body contains so many *srotas*, it is the cluster of *srotas*. The types of *srotas* has been explained by *charka* as – every *murtimanta bhavas* in the body should be considered as the types of *srotas*.⁸ In spite of that the numerous *srotas* *charka* has explained 13 number of *srotas* and *sushruta* has explained 11 number of *srotas*.

Table 1: Types of *srotas*

Classification of *Srotas*

Acc. <i>Samhita Bheda</i>	<i>Charakokta</i>	<i>Sushrutokta</i>
Acc. <i>linga Bheda</i>	<i>Purushasapeksha</i>	<i>Strisapeksha</i>
Acc. <i>Samkhya Bheda</i>	<i>Aparisamkheya</i>	<i>Parisamkheya</i>
Acc. <i>Aakar Bheda</i>	<i>Sthula</i>	<i>Sukshama</i>
Acc. <i>Disha Bheda</i>	<i>Bahirmukha</i>	<i>Antermukha</i>
Acc. <i>Mukha Bheda</i>	<i>Samvruta</i>	<i>Asamvruta</i>

Form of *srotas*

According to *Charkacharya* structure of *srotas* The colour – is as same as *dhatu* and circular in shape, large as well as small in size, large in length and reticular in structure.⁹

According to *Sushrutacharya* structure of *srotas* except *sira* and *dhamanis* all *srotas* are like a root of lotus flower.

Physiological Aspect of *Srotas*

The *srotas* are energetic channels within the body and are responsible for to carry out all majority body functions. *Srotas* are described as like little rivers with continuous flow of *bhavas* within the body,

doing nourishment and transportation in the body. It is essential to understand the functions of *srotas* as per physiological condition.

Every *dhatu* is generated by *srotas*. This space or channel is as called *srotas*, which is responsible for:

1. Receiving nutrients from *aaharrasa* and nourishes the all *dhatu*.
2. *Srotas* Manages required p^H , temperature, enzymes and hormones and maintain the electrolyte balance etc. to get bio-transformed *aaharrasa* into body entity.
3. After biotransformation, body entity is needed to shift from its place of origin to its place of destiny.¹⁰

Kshaya vrudhi of body components

All the components of the *purusha* can't be under go for *kshya* or *vrudhi* without the help of *srotas*. The actual metabolization are carried out at capillaries, membranes and interstitial space level, in case exchanges takes place at any other part of the body it will be considered as pathological condition.¹¹

□ **Sravanam (oozing):** The word *sravan* means flowing, trickling and oozing. Exchange of the substances in the body at capillary level is because of *sravan karma* of *srotas*.

□ **Vahanam (transportation):** *Ahararasa* is fluid, which circulates through different channels in entire body. This fluid reaches every *srotas* and supplies required nutrients for the purpose of nourishment of each *dhatu* etc. The *srotas* are main tool for transportation of body components.

□ **Site of Biotransformation:** *Charaka* has very clear about the concept of *srotas*, he mentioned that the *srotas* carries the *poshyabhavas* (nutrients) which are ready to undergo transformation. In the systemic circulation all the *poshyabhavas* will be circulating in the body which are in *asthaya dhatu* form, which can be used by all tissue but when those substance enter

into the respective tissues they have to undergo many other processes where they will be converted into muscle tissue or fat tissue at their levels.¹²

□ **Absorption:** *Srotas* also has property of selective absorption. Nutrients of different *dhatu*s are present in *ahararasa* while travelling through it. But only concerned *srotas*'s nutrient gets selectively absorbed there. E.g. In the *mootra-nirmiti* process (urine formation), at the site of *pakvashaya* only *mootraposhaka* part gets absorbed and *poshyabhavas* it oozes in *basti* (urinary bladder) where urine is stored.

Clinical aspect of srotas

Charak has explained the common pathological or organic damage of *Srotas* i.e. *khavaigunya* they are *Atipravritti* (an excessive flow), *Sanga* (retention or holding up), *Sira granthi* (dilatation veins or varicose veins), *Vimarg gaman* (flow of content other than routine channels).

To understand the above phenomenon of *Srotodusti* goes through the following examples

Atipravritti- excessive flow-increased flow of the content in excess to its normalcy

Table 2: Examples of *Atipravritti*

<i>Annavaha Sroto-atipravritti</i>	Excessive secretion of <i>pitta</i> at stomach - <i>Amlapitta</i>
<i>Artavaha Sroto-atipravritti</i>	Excessive flow of <i>rakta</i> or <i>artava</i> - <i>Raktapradara</i>
<i>Mutravaha Sroto-atipravritti</i>	Excessive flow of urine - <i>Bhumutrata</i> or <i>Prameha</i>
<i>Purisvaha Sroto-atipravritti</i>	Excessive flow of feces - <i>Atisara</i>

Sanga (obstruction)**Table 3:** Examples of *Sanga*

Intra luminal obstruction	<i>Malavshambha, Mutraavrodha</i>
Extra luminal obstruction	Any tumors /growths causing obstruction of <i>Srotas</i> externally

Siragranthi - means dilated mutilated vessels causing stoppage of flow of blood through it due to volvulus e.g. varicose veins

Vimarg gamana - flow of content other than routine channels for example *vimargaman* of *prakrut pitta* in to *rakata dhatu* causes *bahu pittakamla*.¹³

Chikita of srotodusti

1. **Nidanparivarjan** – avoid all *nidana* (causative factors)
2. **Srotoshodhan** –*dushta srotas shodhan* through *panchakarma*, for example- *vaman* for *pranvaha srotas*

3. **Apunarbhava chikitsa** –*rasayana* drugs are used in this.

Rasayan chikitsa of srotasas

Rasayana stands as an answer to solve the problem of healthful longevity including mental development and resistance against disease. *Rasayana* is specialized type of treatment influencing the fundamental aspect of body i.e. *dhatu*, *agni*, *srotasas*. It is possible that different *rasayana* drugs may act with predominance effect at different levels. These comprehensive effects are brought about with the help of

the varied pharmacodynamics properties of these drugs. *Rasayana* effect is not a specific pharmacological action but is a complex phenomenon operating through a comprehensive mechanism involving the fundamental factors like *rasa-samvahan*, *dhatu*, *agni* and *srotasas*. It may ultimately be leading to the achievement of the comprehensive effect as stated by *charak* “*Labhopayo Hi Shastanam Rasadinam Rasayanam.*”

Flowing is *rasayana* used in respective *srotodushti*

Table 4: Rasayana used on respective srotodushti¹⁴

Name of stoas	Rasayan chikitsa
1. Pranvaha Srotas	Pimpili, Bhallatak, Amalaki, Marich, Kasturi
2. Udakavaha Srotas	Gudardark, yashti, musta, trifala, abhrak bhasma
3. Annavaha Srotas	Panchkol especially marich, Kapardik, Shankh Bhasma, Parpati kalp, Hing, Nagkeshar.
4. Rasavaha Srotas	Kharjurmanth, Lajamand, Guduchi, Yashtimadhu, Manjistha, Shounthi.
5. Raktavaha Srotas	Loha Bhasma, Gorechan, Guduchi, Bhrungaraj, Sariva, Manjistha, Amalaki.
6. Mamsavaha Srotas	Suvarna Bhasma, Ashwagandha, shatavari
7. Medovaha Srotas	Guggulu, Shilajit, Patol, Musta, Guduchi, Bhunimbha
8. Asthivaha Srotas	Aabha, Asthishrunkhala, Shallaki, Shankh Bhasma, Kukkutand twak Bhasma.
9. Majjavaha Srotas	Roupya Bhasma, Vacha, Bhrungaraj, Brahmi, Shankhpushpi, Jatamunsi.
10. Purishvaha Srotas	Kutaj, Bilva, Haritaki, Suvarnapatri, Goghrot
11. Mutravaha Srotas	Shilajit, Gukshur, Punarnava, Varun, Pashanbhed
12. Swedavaha Srotas	Vatsanabh kalpa, Nag-vang Bhasma.

DISCUSSION

The internal transport system of the body, represented by *srotasas*, has been given a place of fundamental importance in *Ayurveda*—both in health and disease—an importance, which recent developments in the field of medicine have begun to emphasize. No structure in the body can grow and develop or waste and atrophy, independent of *stoases* that transport seven *dhatu*s, which latter are constantly subjected to transformation. The *srotasas* sub-serve the needs of transportation. When the integrity of *srotasas* is impaired both *sthayi* and *asthayi dhatu*s involved, and morbidity spreads by one *dhatu* vitiating the other and a *srotus*, another *srotas*.

Rasayan drugs and therapeutic measures act on *Dhatu*s, *Agni*, *Srotas* and produce healthy tissues

development in the body and in turn it provide a person longevity, immunity, resistance against diseases, strength, happiness and intellect promotion in the mind.

CONCLUSION

This review article describes significant information regarding to various *srotodushti* and its *rasaayan chikitsa* as per *Ayurveda* *vanaspati dravya* and combinations with *bhasma*. In the treatment of *srotodushti* there are three steps involved first is *nidanparivarjan* means avoid all causes of *srotodushti* then second step is *shodhan* of *dushta srotas* with the help of *panchakarma* and final and last step is *apunarbhava chikitsa* to avoid *srotodushti* again and in turn it provide a person

immunity, resistance against disease, strength. Rasayana acts in various ways through sukshma srotases in body and increases the strength of agni. For srotodushti chikitsa rasayana should be used due to three reasons- first to maintain parkrutavstha of srotases, second to prevention of diseases and last third one is to avoid the recurrence of disease.

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Journal of Research in Ayurved Science, Special Issue: 6th | Volume: 6th | 30 Sept 2018.

Source of Support: Nil

Conflict Of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Amruta A. Vedpathak et al: Review On Concept Of Srotas W.S.R. Rasayana Chikitsa. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2018 {cited December, 2018} Available from: http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/2362_2366.pdf