

**CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF RAKTAVAHA SROTAS AND  
VATARAKTA W.S.R. GOUTY ARTHRITIS.****Dr. Parag M. Salvi<sup>1\*</sup> and Dr. Ravindra P. Bhurke<sup>2</sup>**\*<sup>1</sup>P.G. Scholar, <sup>2</sup>Guide and Asso. Professor

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Mumbai-18.**ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda is an ancient healing science with number of fundamental principles which are important in view of treatment. The concept of srotas has laid down a unique peculiarity in the treatment system. Srotas are the channels or systems in the body through which nutritive elements or poshya bhavas are transported to the Dhatus. Each srotas represents a dhatu in the body. As 'dhatu-samya' is the primary aim of our science, each srotas should function properly for maintaining health. The srotas concerned with Raktadhatu is Raktavaha srotas. Any disturbance in the normal functioning of raktavaha srotas leads to various diseases. Vatarakta is one of the disease of Raktavaha srotas

vikruti which is usually correlated with Gouty arthritis. Vatarakta is caused due to vitiated Vata and Rakta by their own causes. Though the manifestation of Vatarakta takes place in Sandhi Sthana, the main causative factor is Raktavikruti in the pathology. Gouty arthritis is due to raised uric acid levels which is usually the outcome of pitta vikruti. According to Ayurveda, blood-letting therapies and other internal raktaprasadan medicines are useful in treatment of Raktavaha Srotas dushti. Hence, even though the presentation of Gout is in the musculoskeletal system, treatment of Raktavaha srotas is beneficial in this disease.

**KEYWORDS:** Raktavaha Srotas, Vatarakta, Gouty Arthritis.**INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda is a time tested ancient system of medicine of Indian origin. It is able to withstand the effect of time only because of its unique fundamental principles. These fundamentals can be compared with gems in the ocean full of knowledge of life – Ayurveda. Panchamahabhuta siddhanta, Tridosha siddhanta, Concept of Agni, Concept of Dosha, Dhatu, Mala etc. make

Ayurveda unique from other health sciences. The concept of Srotas is one of the most unique concepts or fundamentals of Ayurveda. According to Ayurveda, the human body is made up of innumerable channels which are responsible for performing all the physiological and functional activities. These channels are termed as Srotas by our Acharyas.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Our body is the result of amalgamation of the Panchamahabhutas. It constitutes certain elements which exhibit dominance of Akasha Mahabhuta, known as Srotas. They are described as hollow spaces or channels spreading throughout the body and represents the Nabhasa Bhava. The body which undergoes constant attrition has to be nourished and replenished. The different places where the regeneration of different bodily elements takes place are known as Srotas.

The production of any bodily element requires raw material or basic ingredients from which the elements can be produced. The Srotas are responsible for the transportation of these nutritive elements or poshaka bhava and not the stable or poshya dhatu are transported are known as Sira, Dhamani, Nadi, etc. Therefore, Sushruta particularly mentions that srotas are bodily channels other than those like Sira, Dhamani, Nadi etc. Charaka also clarifies that the srotasa channels of transportation only meant for the elements or bodily factors which are underlying the process of transformation. Srotas are so called because they have the property of 'Sravana' (oozing)- allow materials to pass through them very slowly. Sira, Dhamani, Rasayani, Rasavahini, Nadi, Panthan, Marga, Sharircchidra, Sthaan, Ashaya, Niketa, etc. are the names of the visible and invisible spaces within the body. The production or regeneration of any particular bodily element requires nutritive or poshaka factors of that particular element and an 'agni' factor to aid digestion of this nutritive factor. This process of transformation is carried out in the srotas and hence the presence of agni is evident in these spaces. The passage for the flow of intermediary metabolite is separate for each dhatu. One passage cannot save different dhatus, as they are situated at different places. The channels have the same color and texture of the dhatu in which they are located or embedded. They are of varying sizes like minute or large and of varying shapes like round, long and flat.

The number of srotas is equal to the structural and physiological entities present in the human body. Charakacharya has described 13 main srotas depending upon their mulasthanas and abnormalities produced due to their vitiation.

Sushruta has described 11 pairs of srotas and called them 'Yogavahi'.

According to Chakrapani, Srotomula or Mulasthana is the area of influence from which the particular srotas evolves or arises similar to the root of the tree. Srotomula regulates the functioning of the entire srotas.

### **Raktavaha Srotas**

The essence of ahara after being subjected to paka by Ranjaka pitta attains red color and becomes Rakta dhatu. Sushruta states that Rakta is formed from the ahara rasa after reaching Yakruta and Pleeha from the Koshtha. Yakrut, Pleeha and Raktavahi Dhamani are the mulasthana of Raktavaha Srotas.

### **Srotas Dushti Hetu**

Indulgence in foods and drinks that are irritant, unctuous, hot and liquid and excessive exposure to the heat of the sun and fire.

### **Raktaparakopa Lakshanas**

According to Vagbhata, the Raktaparakopa Lakshanas are Visarpa, Pleeha, Vidradhi, Kushtha, Vatarakta, Raktapitta, Gulma, Upakusha, Kamala, Vyanga, Agninasha, Sammoha, Rakta twak-netra-mutrata.

### **VATARAKTA**

**Hetu (Causative factors)** – Lavana, Amla, Katu, Kshara, Snigdha, Ushna food, ajirna Bhojan, Klinna shushk a bhojan, Ambuja mamsa, Anupa mamsa, Pinyaka, Moolaka, Kulattha, Masha, Nishpava, Shaka, Dadhi, Adhyashana, Krodha, Diwaswaap, Ratri jagaran and Sukumaratva.

### **Pathogenesis**

When a person takes excessive foods and exposes to lifestyle activities which aggravate Vata and is indulged in rides on 'Dushta yaan' (faulty vehicle), the Vata gets vitiated due to its own causes. On the other-hand Rakta gets vitiated by consumption of lavana, amla, katu, kshara etc causes mentioned above. The vitiated rakta quickly blocks the passages of vayu and interferes with its smooth movements. The vata, whose passages are blocked by rakta further undergoes vitiation and further contaminates the rakta. The blood contaminated by vitiated vayu leaves its place and gravitates towards the foot. This vicious amalgamation of

vitiated vata and rakta is called Vatarakta. This is said to be a dangerous amalgamation which causes serious painful symptoms.

### GOUTY ARTHRITIS

Gout is a form of inflammatory arthritis characterized by recurrent attacks of a red, tender, hot and swollen joint. It is caused due to raised uric acid levels in blood. At high levels, uric acid crystallizes and the crystals deposit in joints, tendons and surrounding tissues, resulting in an attack of gout. Over the time, it can harm joints, tendons and other tissues of the body. The joint at the base of the big toe is affected in about half of the cases. It may also result in tophi, kidney stones or urate nephropathy.

### Symptoms

- Most common sign of gout is a night-time attack of swelling, tenderness, redness and sharp pain in big toe (Metatarsal Phalangeal joint).
- Attacks of gout can also be experienced in foot, ankle, knees or other joints.
- Long standing Hyperuricemia may result in other symptoms including hard, painless deposits of uric acid crystals known as tophi, or crystals precipitating in the kidneys, resulting in stone formation and subsequent urate nephropathy.

### DISCUSSION

According to Ayurveda, Vatarakta is a disease of raktavaha srotas. It can be related to gouty arthritis which is related to skeletal system. Vatarakta initially manifests as skin discoloration but later on involves deeper tissues of the body. These are the two types or stages of Vatarakta as described in Ayurveda – Uttana and Gambhira.

Uttana Vatarakta Lakshana- blackish, red and coppery skin associated with itching, burning sensation, pain, stretching, piercing pain, quivering and contraction.

Gambhira Vatarakta Lakshana- swelling, stiff and hard, with severe pain inside, blackish or coppery, having burning sensation, piercing pain, quivering and inflammation, associated with distress and burning in stomach. Vayu moves with force frequently in joints, bones and marrow as if cutting and making them crooked produces limping or lameness while moving all over the body.

The final site of manifestation of Vatarakta is Padangushthamula sandhi or probably the small joints of the limbs. These small joints are mainly related with Sarakta Meda and Sarakta Majja. Sandhi sthana is a place in the body where both Vata and Kapha respect each other and work in harmony. Vitiated Vata and Rakta leads to the Sthansamshraya of the doshas in the Sandhi Sthanas. As there is predominance of Vata and Rakta, Ruja(pain) and Vaivarnya(discoloration) are the cardinal features of Vatarakta. Modern medicine claims that hampered uric acid metabolism is responsible for gout. Uric acid can be related to the pitta which is vitiated and ultimately vitiates rakta due to their Ashraya-ashrayi relation. Thus, it can be concluded that Vatarakta is a disease of Raktavaha srotas though it is manifested in the joints. Blood-letting therapies and other measures for blood purification have been proved beneficial in such cases. Hence, though it is a type of arthritis according to modern science, the root cause lies down in the Raktavaha srotas according to Ayurveda.

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