

**AN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE OF PHYSIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE OF RASAVAHA SROTAS: A REVIEW****Dr. Shrikant W. Mude<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Mrunalini D. Gundre<sup>2</sup>**

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Article Received on  
01 June 2020,

Revised on 22 June 2020,  
Accepted on 13 July 2020,  
DOI: 10.20959/wjpr20208-18153

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**ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda is ancient science of life. Swasthyarakshanam and Vyadhiparimoksha are its main objectives. Many Fundamental principles and concepts are explained in Ayurveda. Concept of srotas is one of them. Srotas are the channels or pores which provides nourishment to the whole body and responsible for some particular function with respect to specific body parts. Ayurveda samhitas described anatomical and physiological concepts of srotas broadly. Srotas mainly regulates process of circulation in human body. The srotas not only perform various functions but disturbance in srotas may also impair some pathological manifestations, therefore it is very essential to understand physiological concepts of srotas. Rasavaha

srotas is an important srotas related to rasadhatu formation and transportation of various nutritive substances throughout all over the body. So this present article presenting an Ayurvedic perspective of Rasavaha srotas and its physiological importance.

**KEYWORDS:** Srotas, rasavaha srotas, dhatu.

**INTRODUCTION**

The term srotas means a channel through which poshak dhatu pass to form sthayi dhatu. According to Charakacharya srotas means the structure through which sravanam takes place.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup> Srotas are the channels or microspores which mainly perform functions of transportation. Ayurveda described many types of srotas and Rasavaha srotas is one of them.

There are seven srotas (total 13) which associated with tissues (dhatu) Rasavaha srotas comes first.

Rasa means movement as per this definition any liquid element in body which flows may be treated as Rasa including Rakta (blood) and lymph etc. The digested food finally contributed to Rasa dhatu which performs many vital functions of the body. Rasa is predominant of Apa (water) mahabhuta and possessing Tanu (soft), swaccha (clear) and snigdha (smooth) properties it travels through Dhamanis.<sup>[4]</sup> Rasa savahanam in our body takes place with the help of Vyan vayu. Vyan vayu having ability to move liquid quickly, this Vyan vayu causes circulation of Rasa in the entire body.

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To study concept of Rasavaha srotas through Samhita granthas.
2. To study the physiological importance of Rasavaha srotas according to Ayurveda.

### MATERIAL AND METHODS

It is a conceptual study. The material is collected from the classical texts of Ayurvedic literatures.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Punarvasu Atreya, srotas is defined as the channel or structure through which Sravanam i.e. oozing, moving and permeation of different constituents and nutrients takes place. Again it is described as channels of circulation that transport the dhatus which are constantly subjected to metabolic transformation (Parinamamapdya mananam). They work as communicating channels for nutrient tissues (Asthayi Dhatus) which are to be utilized for formation of permanent dhatu (Sthayi dhatu).<sup>[5]</sup>

Sushruta describes that srotas are the channels of the body having originated from organ cavity i.e. khadantaram spread throughout the body excluding sira and dhamani.<sup>[6]</sup>

Vagbhata compared srotas to the extremely fine passages and pores present in the lotus stem. He observes, "Rasa spreads throughout the body through very fine dvaras (pores) of strotamsi which are distributed extensively in the body, very much like minute channels, present in the lotus stem."<sup>[7]</sup>

According to Chakrapanidatta srotas are the channels which serve as vehicles of transport of

both Prasad and mala dhatus and also serve as the place of their entry (or exit).

#### **Srotasas related to dhatus**

1. Rasavaha Srotas- carrying plasma and lymph.
2. Raktavaha Srotas- carrying all types of blood cells including hemoglobin.
3. Mamsavaha Srotas- carrying muscle tissue nutrients and its waste products.
4. Medovaha Srotas- provides supplements to various adipose tissues of the body.
5. Asthivaha Srotas- carrying nutrients of bones.
6. Majjavaha Srotas- related to bone marrow and nerves (cranial and spinal including brain and spinal cord).
7. Shukravaha Srotas- related to reproductive system. It supplies nutrients to sperm and ova.

As mentioned in above text it was indicated clearly, the Rasavaha srotas is considered as one of the essential as well as important circulatory system of the human body, which performs transportation of nutrients to all six dhatus including it.<sup>[8]</sup> As Ayurveda describes the concept of Rasa dhatu as precursor of Raktadhatu since blood circulation depends upon total level of fluid in blood stream.

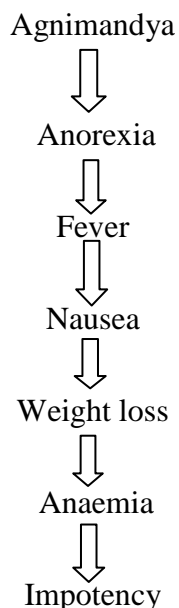
#### **Mulasthanas (origin) of Rasavaha srotas**

**According to Charakacharya-** Hridaya (heart) and Dash dhamani (great vessels).

**According to Sushrutacharya-** Hridaya (heart) and Rasavahi dhamani (lymphatic vessels). Rasavaha srotas is considered as main srotas since it supplies nutrients to all body parts. It also gives poshana to Rasa dhatu and Rakta dhatu. Ahara rasa poshana through this srotas is significantly carried out by Yakrut (liver) and Hridaya (heart). In this process food first goes to yakrut then through circulatory system of Hridaya it will circulate all over the body. Therefore this concept of Rasavaha srotas according to Ayurveda can be correlated with modern medical science, as functions of heart, lungs and liver. Rasa is the fluid matrix including lymphatic system and plasma which is carried out by Rasavaha srotas offers nourishment to other dhatus.

It means that from the above mentioned paragraph it is to be indicated that Rasavaha srotas performs vital functioning of the body related to circulatory system and physiological disturbances in their function leads to pathological manifestations.

Following example shows symptoms associated with disturbances in physiological functioning of Rasavaha srotas-



## DISCUSSION

The rasa is the fluid matrix which not only serves as vehicle of transport of sthayi raktadhatu but also nutrients to nourish other sthayi dhatus. Dhatusvaha srotas acts as a transportation channel or a pathway of nutrition which transports essential materials and impulses too. It helps in absorption of vitamins and minerals through lymph and blood. Proper functioning of rasavaha srotas gives excellent skin (Twak) characterized by snigdha, shlakshana, prassana, sukshma, mrudu, alpa, gambhira and sukumar loma (hairs). The rasavaha srotas physiologically offers happiness, enjoyment, power, intelligence, longevity of life also. Rasavaha srotas is also important for proper physiological functioning of tissue. The temperature regulatory system is also worked out by rasavaha srotas. The assimilation and digestion of ahara carried out with the help of biochemical process of rasavaha srotas which regulates the circulatory system of the body. Rasavaha srotas is also contributing in the healing and defensive mechanism of the body which indirectly boosts the immune system of the body.

## CONCLUSION

The internal transport system of the body represented by srotasmsi has been given a place of fundamental importance in Ayurveda both in health and disease. Acharya Punarvasu Atreya and Dhanvantari were the first to correlate the structural and functional integrity of this system to physiological states and impairment of their integrity to pathological states. The

main function of rasa is parinaman providing nutrition to other dhatus. So from the above discussion it can be concluded that according to Ayurveda the proper functioning of Rasavaha Srotas is very important for the nourishment and functioning of vital tissues of the body. The Rasavaha srotas not only transports essential nutrients throughout the body but also helps to immune system of the body.

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