

## A CRITICAL REVIEW OF ROLE OF *RAKTAMOKSHANA* WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO *CHARAK SAMHITA CHIKITSASTHAN*

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### ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is not only a system of medicine but also the way of life. The first and most important aim of Ayurveda is not only to alleviate diseases of diseased one but also to promote the health of a healthy individual. *Chikitsa Sthana* of Charaka Samhita is concerned with the study of health preservation, disease prevention and management. According to Ayurveda, there are *Sapta Dhātu*, and *Rakta* is one of them. *Rakta* is vitiated by vitiation of *Pitta* and other causes of *Rakta Dushti* also. *Raktamokshana* is an efficient blood purification technique that involves the carefully regulated evacuation of small amounts of impure blood to neutralize accumulated toxins. *Raktamokshana* comes to the rescue when *Rakta* and *Pitta* toxicity

has become so severe that it cannot be treated with herbs or any other method. In this article, we focused on different ways of *Raktamokshana* in various conditions of different disease in Charaka Samhita *Chikitsa Sthana*.

**KEYWORDS:** Blood, Blood-Letting, *Rakta*, *Raktamokshana*, *Siravedha*.

### INTRODUCTION

According to Ayurveda, there are seven *Dhātu*, and they are *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Meda*, *Asthi*, *Majja* and *Shukra*.<sup>[1]</sup> These *Dhātu* are described based on its intended use. These are crucial for maintaining a healthy physique. In a series of seven *Dhātu*, *Rakta Dhātu* is the

second one. In terms of modern science, *Rakta Dhatu* can be compared to blood, yet Ayurvedic writings show that *Rakta Dhatu* has a much broader concept than blood.

### ***Rakta Vyutpatti and Nirukti***

The *Vyutpatti* and *Nirukti* of *Rakta Dhatu* are described in numerous ways in many literary works, including:

1. *Raktam Kli (Ranjyatengamaneneti, Ranja+Kta)*,
2. *Ranja Karane Kta (Vachaspatyam)*,
3. *Ranja Karane Kta (Shabdakalpadruma)*.

### ***Rakta Dhatu Utpatti and Sthan***

After reaching *Amashay*, this *Rasa Dhatu* acquires red color as a result of *Ranjaka Pitta's* activity.<sup>[2]</sup> The roots of *Raktavaha Srotas* are the spleen (*Pleeha*) and the liver (*Yakrit*).<sup>[3]</sup>

### ***Constitution of Rakta Dhatu***

Every material is composed of the five *Mahabhutas*. They may therefore be found in *Rakta Dhatu*. Due to its typical odour, *Prithvi Mahabhuta* is responsible, *Aap Mahabhuta* is responsible for its fluidity, *Teja Mahabhuta* is responsible for its red color, *Vayu Mahabhuta* is responsible for its palpable flow, and *Akash Mahabhuta* is responsible for its lightness.<sup>[4]</sup> Despite the existence of five *Mahabhuta*, *Teja* and *Jala Mahabhuta* are dominant under *Rakta Dhatu*.

### ***Vishuddha Rakta Lakshana***

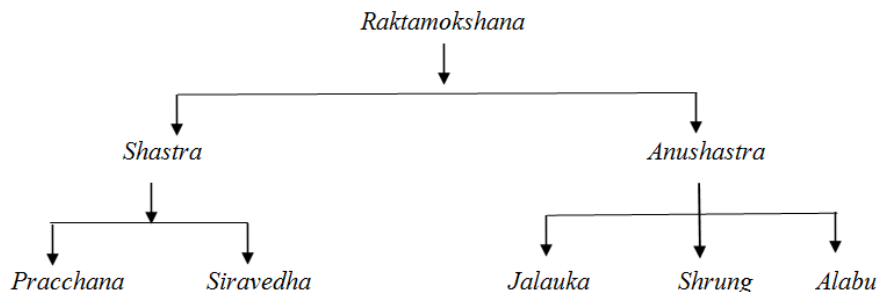
The color of pure blood can be compared to that of gold that has been cleansed with fire, *Indragopa*, crimson lotus, and *Gunja* (*Abrus precatorius*) fruit. There are different colors of these depending on the individual.<sup>[5]</sup>

### ***Importance of Rakta***

According to Sushruta, the body cannot exist without *Kapha*, *Pitta*, *Vata*, or even *Shonita*. These always provide support for the body. *Rakta Dhatu*, according to his description, is crucial to maintaining life. Therefore, whatever means necessary must be used to defend this *Dhatu*. A fourth entity known as *Rakta* is likewise in charge of the existence, support, and maintenance of the body, much as *Vata-Pitta-Kapha* are responsible for the creation of the living body. He claimed that *Rakta* is life.<sup>[6]</sup>

**Raktamokshan**

*Raktamokshana* is the procedure in which letting out vitiated blood from the body.

**Types of *Raktamokshana***<sup>[7]</sup>**Season for *Raktamokshana* - Sharad Ritu****According to vitiation of *Dosha* -**

- 1) *Shrung* (horn of animals) method is used for *Vata Dosha* vitiated blood.
- 2) *Jalauka* (Leech) method is used for *Pitta Dosha* vitiated blood.
- 3) *Alabu* (Pitcher gourd) method is used for *Kapha Dosha* vitiated blood.

**Indication of *Raktamokshana***<sup>[8]</sup>

*Raktamokshana* is indicated in blood disorders such as *Mukhpaka* (stomatitis), *Akshiraga* (Redness of eyes), *Putighrana* (foul smell in nose and mouth), *Gulma* (lump abdomen), *Upakusha* (inflammation of gum leads to falling teeth), *Visarpa* (erysipelas), *RaktPitta* (bleeding disorder), *Prameelaka*, *Vidradhi*, *Pradar*, *Vaataashonita*, burning sensation after meal, *Kushtha*, excessive anger, etc.

**Contra-indication of *Raktamokshana***<sup>[9]</sup>

1. *Sarvaga Shopha* (General Anasarca),
2. Oedema in an emaciated person caused by excessive intake of sour articles of diet and those suffering from oedema as a complication in cases of *Pandu*, *Arsha*, *Udararoga*, *Shosha*, *Garbhini* (Pregnant women).

**OBJECTIVES**

- 1) To compile the *Raktamokshana* chikitsa in Charak Samhita Chikitsasthana.
- 2) To study the role of *Raktamokshana* in chikitsa.

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

Ayurvedic information about all article gathered from important literature, including the Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita and Ashtanga Hridayam, Research journals and other related Ayurvedic texts.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. *Sannipataja Jwara* can result in a dangerous disorder called *Karnamulika Shotha* (inflammation near the root of the ears). Patients with this illness have a very low survival rate. As a result, efforts must be taken right away to treat it using *Kapha* and *Pitta* relieving therapeutic methods such bloodletting, ghee consumption, *Pradeha* (applying unction), *Navana* (instilling in the nose), and *Kavala Graham* (taking liquid medication by mouthful).<sup>[10]</sup>
2. The *Jwara* should be regarded as *Shakhanusari* (that which is located in the peripheral tissues) if it is not treated by heat, cold, unctuous, or dry therapies, etc. By using bloodletting therapy, this kind of fever is treated.<sup>[11]</sup>
3. *Abhigataja Jwara* can be treated by consuming ghee, massaging it into the affected area, drawing blood, and eating rice with a hearty meat soup.<sup>[12]</sup>
4. Bloodletting is indicated to treat *Vata Gulma* if it persists despite the adequate management of *Vata*.<sup>[13]</sup>
5. Bloodletting is used to treat patients with *Pitta*-dominant gulma if they exhibit symptoms such as anorexia, impaired digestion, thirst, fever, searing pain, and sweating.<sup>[14]</sup>
6. In *Vataja Kushtha*, provide ghritapana initially; in *Kaphaja Kushtha*, perform a vamana procedure; and in *Pittaja Kushtha*, begin treatment with a combination of *Raktamokshana* and *virechana*.<sup>[15]</sup>
7. If the patches are stable and firm, apply fomentation using the *Prastara Sweda* or *Nadi Sweda* method, and then scrape the patches with a *Kurcha* (a surgical instrument) to promote enhanced *Rakta* flow in that particular area in addition to blood-letting.<sup>[16]</sup>
8. Treatments at the local level: *Swedana* with a lukewarm poultice of aquatic animal meat should be used if the patches are elevated. This should be done after a scrub with a sharp surgical instrument to draw blood. *Shringa* (horn) and *Alabu* (gourd) are both acceptable tools for drawing blood. *Prachana*, *Virechana*, and/or the use of *Jalauka* are recommended, especially in *Alpa Kushtha*.
9. *Pitta* and *Rakta* should be eliminated as part of the *Pittaja Kushtha* line of treatment, which is similar to the *Vata Kaphaja Kushtha* line of treatment, and *Tikta* (bitter) and

*Kashaya* (astringent) medications should be employed to calm the *Dosha*.<sup>[17]</sup>

10. When there is pain in the head, flanks, or shoulder area, the contaminated blood should be eliminated by the use of *Jalauka* (leeches), *Alabu* (bottle gourds), *Siravyadha* (venesection), or other methods.<sup>[18]</sup>
11. In cases of *Unmada*, *Visham Jwara* and *Apasmar*, the doctor should draw blood from the vein near the junction of the temple and the end of the hairline.<sup>[19]</sup>
12. Managing *Jalakagardabha*: Treatment options include *Amalaki* usage, bloodletting, ununctuous therapy, *Virechana*, *Langhana* (lightning therapy), and application of cold-potency medicinal paste.<sup>[20]</sup>
13. Treatment options for *Plihodara* include sudation, *Virechana* (therapeutic purgation), *Niruha* (decoction enema), *Anuvasana Basti* (oil enema), *Raktamokshana* (blood-letting) by sectioning the vein in the left arm, all of which should be done after a thorough analysis of the pathogenesis.<sup>[21]</sup>
14. In *Ama* and *Pitta Sthanagata* (the abdominal and central regions of the body) *Visarpa*, *Raktamokshana* (bloodletting) and *Virechana* (purgation therapy) are additionally specifically advised.<sup>[22]</sup>
15. Formulas for *Dosha* located in *Shakha* and methods of blood-letting: If *Shakha Dosha* (body elements) vitiate the blood, *Raktamokshana* should be provided first. The physician should use *Vishana* (deer horn) in *Vata* dominance, *Jalauka* in *Pitta* dominance and *Alabu* in *Kapha* dominance for blood-letting or physician should perform *Siravyadha* (blood-letting through vein) promptly from the adjacent vein to the affected part, without which *Rakta Kleda* (putrifying blood content) gives rise to decomposed skin, flesh and ligaments.<sup>[23]</sup>
16. Treatment for *Granthi Visarpa*: After doing *Vamana* and *Virechana* to cleanse the body,
17. *Raktamokshana* should be given, and *Vata-Kapha*-alleviating measures should be taken.<sup>[24]</sup>
18. *Nishpidana* (squeezing out blood from the place of the bite), *Raktamokshana* are one of the different treatment techniques of *Visha*.<sup>[25]</sup>
19. Firstly, *Venika* (rope) tied at the site of *Dansha*. And, after that, blood should be drawn via *Siravyadhana* (venesection), *Prachhana* (scratching with abrasive objects), *Shringa* (horn), or *Jalauka* (leech).<sup>[26]</sup>
20. Guidelines for treating ulcers: If a doctor notices *Shopha* (swelling) as a prodromal sign early on, blood-letting should be applied to stop the development of wound.<sup>[27]</sup>

21. In *Raktaja Svarabheda*, *Siravedha* is beneficial.<sup>[28]</sup>
22. In *Raktatgat Vata* (blood is impacted by *Vata*), purgation, bloodletting, and thick, cold external applications are required.<sup>[29]</sup>
23. Venesection of the vein between the *Gulpha* and the medially located tendon (*Kandhara*), enema, and cauterization should be used as treatment options for *Grudhrasi* (sciatica).<sup>[30]</sup>
24. In *Vatarakta*, Depending on the patient's morbidity and strength, the blood should be released in this situation using a *Shringa* (horn), *Jalauka* (leech application), *Suchi* (needle), *Alabu* (hollow bitter gourd), *Pracchana* (scratching), or *Siravyadha* (venesection). Modes of *Raktamokshana*: If you are experiencing discomfort, a burning or stinging feeling, pain, or prickling, you should apply a leech for bloodletting. Both *Shringa* (an animal horn) and *Alabu* (a hollow gourd) should be used to let the patient's blood flow if they are experiencing tactile dysfunction, itching, or tingling. Blood should be released by *Siravyadha* (venesection) or by *Pracchana* if the *Vatashonita* symptoms and consequences are not restricted to a specific part but rather are of a transient character. Bloodletting should not be performed if there are *Angaglani* (*Angashosha*, or atrophy), dryness, or other signs of *Vata* dominance.<sup>[31]</sup>
25. If a *Vatarakta* patient exhibits redness, pain, or a burning feeling, bloodletting should be done before applying an external remedy.<sup>[32]</sup>
26. *Pradeha* and *Parisheka* or *Snehapana*, bloodletting (*Raktamokshana*), and therapeutic induction of purgation with unctuous drugs are all ways to cure impotence brought on by wounds in erectile dysfunction.<sup>[33]</sup>

## RESULTS

**Table 1: Shows different conditions of *Raktmokshana* in diseases.**

Sr.No.	Conditions of <i>Raktamokshana</i>	
1	<i>Karnamulika Shotha</i>	<i>Raktamokshana</i>
2	<i>Shakhanusari Jwara</i>	<i>Raktamokshana</i>
3	<i>Abhighataja Jwara</i>	<i>Raktamokshana</i>
4	<i>Vata Gulma</i>	<i>Raktamokshana</i>
5	<i>Pitta-Dominant Gulma</i>	<i>Raktamokshana</i>
6	<i>Pittaja Kushtha</i>	<i>Raktamokshana</i>
7	<i>Kushtha</i> - Patches are stable and firm	Scrapping with <i>Kurcha</i>
	If patches are elevated	Scrubbing with sharp edge and then for bloodletting <i>Shring</i> and <i>Alabu</i>
	In <i>Alpa Kushtha</i>	<i>Pracchana</i> , <i>Jalaukavacharan</i>
8	<i>Shira-Parshwa-Ansa Shula</i> (Pain in Head, Flanks and Shoulder Region)	<i>Jalauka</i> , <i>Alabu</i> , <i>Siravyadha</i>
9	<i>Unmada</i> , <i>Visham Jwara</i> and <i>Apasmar</i>	<i>Siravyadha</i> of vein near the junction of the



		temple and the end of the hairline.
10	<i>Jalakagardabha</i>	<i>Raktamokshana</i>
11	<i>Plihodara</i>	<i>Raktamokshana</i> (blood-letting) by sectioning the vein in the left arm
12	In <i>Ama</i> and <i>Pitta Sthanagat Visarpa</i>	<i>Raktamokshana</i>
	<i>Vata Dominant Visarpa</i>	<i>Vishana</i> (Deer Horn)
	<i>Pitta Dominant Visarpa</i>	<i>Jalaukavacharana</i>
	<i>Kapha Dominant Visarpa</i>	<i>Alabu</i>
13	<i>Granthi Visarpa</i>	<i>Raktamokshana</i>
14	<i>Visha Chikitsa (24 Upakrama)</i>	<i>Nishpidana</i> (squeezing out blood from the place of the bite), <i>Raktamokshana</i>
15	At the site of <i>Dansha</i>	<i>Siravyadhana</i> (Venesection), <i>Prachhana</i> (scratching with abrasive objects), <i>Shringa</i> (Horn), or <i>Jalauka</i>
16	Prodromal signs of <i>Shopha</i> (Swelling)	<i>Raktamokshana</i>
17	<i>Raktaja Svarabheda</i>	<i>Siravedha</i>
18	<i>Raktagat Vata</i>	<i>Raktamokshana</i>
19	<i>Grudhrasi</i>	<i>Siravedha</i> in between <i>Gulpha</i> and <i>Kandhara</i>
20	<i>Vatarakta</i>	<i>Siravyadhana</i> , <i>Prachhana</i> , <i>Shringa</i> or <i>Jalauka</i>
21	In <i>Vatarakta</i> patient exhibits redness, pain, or burning	<i>Raktamokshana</i>
22	<i>Dhwajabhanga</i> (wounds in erectile dysfunction)	<i>Raktamokshana</i>

## DISCUSSION

*Raktamokshana* is the principal treatment in diseases due to vitiation of *Rakta*. In *Raktamokshana*, removal of vitiated *Rakta* results in removal of vitiated *Pitta*, due to *Ashraya- Ashrayi Sambandha*. The blood loss due to *Raktamokshana* causes formation of pure blood. Hence, vitiated *Doshas* gets reduced qualitatively. *Raktamokshana* helps in reducing skin diseases.

*Raktamokshana* means blood-letting therapy is described in various diseases' treatment of *Chikitsasthana* of Charak Samhita. Although Acharya Charaka does not mention *Raktamokshana* in the five *Shodhana Karma*, but he has given various description in the treatment of disease. However, depending on the situation, *Raktamokshana* is said to be done in different ways. In some diseases, type of *Raktamokshana* is specified in *Samhita* as given in results table no. 1. In this table, *Raktamokshana* is indicated because involvement of *Rakta* as *Dushya* in *Samprapti* (Pathogenesis).

Nowadays, *Raktamokshana* procedure consists of -

1. Cupping therapy - Drawing blood with the help of specialized cup.
2. Therapeutic phlebotomy - Vein / artery puncture.

## CONCLUSION

*Rakta* gets vitiated by vitiation of *Pitta* and/or *Raktadushti* itself. This results in various conditions of diseases. By observing results, treatment of various diseases with the help of *Raktamokshana* gives great results in various diseases.

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