

**A REVIEW ON CONCEPT OF PURISHVAHA SROTAS**

**Rathod Chetana D.<sup>1\*</sup>, Chhangani Jaikrishna S.<sup>2</sup>, Garje Pramod F.<sup>3</sup> and  
Gotmare Ashish Y.<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>PG Scholar, <sup>2</sup>Guide and Associate Professor, <sup>3</sup>Professor and HOD, <sup>4</sup>Assistant Professor

Department of Rognidan Evum Vikriti Vigyan,

Shri Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India.

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**\*Corresponding Author**

**Dr. Rathod Chetana D.**

PG Scholar, Department of  
Rognidan Evum Vikriti  
Vigyan Shri Ayurved  
Mahavidyalaya, Nagpur,  
Maharashtra, India.

**ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda is an ancient science of health promotion, disease prevention and treatment. The chief aim of Ayurveda is to promote health of healthy individual and secondary aim is to treat illness. Swastha (health) of an individual is purely depending upon the balanced state of dhosha, dhatu, mala and Agni. Our human body is made up of Srotas (macro and microchannels). Channels of circulation or tracts within the body are called Srotas through which various physiological and pathological process are carried out. Manifestation of a disease occurs in the body as a result of defective Srotas of the body. So, any defect of Srotas must be corrected as soon as possible, for the restoration of normal health. Any slight disturbance at the level of srotas either structurally or functionally leads to dosha-dushyasammurchhana and

as a result disease manifests. Purish is the faeces and it is also known as "vit" or "mala". It represents the undigested residue left over after the nutrient fraction of the food has been separated and absorbed. The function of Purishvaha Srotas is to excrete solid waste outside the body. In this, efforts will be taken to study sthan, dushti hetu, dushti lakshanas and viddha lakshanas of purishvaha srotas. **Aim:** To study ayurvedic concept of purishvaha srotas. **Materials and methods:** Literature review of ayurvedic Samhita's, modern texts of physiology along with internet material and research papers.

**KEYWORDS:-** Srotas, Purishvaha srotas, Mulasthan, Dushti hetu, Dushti lakshanas.

**INTRODUCTION**

प्रयोजनं चास्य स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्यरक्षणमातुरस्य विकारप्रशमनं च॥ च.सु.३०/२६

Ayurveda aims<sup>[1]</sup> primarily to maintain healthy life in healthy individuals and secondly to treat the disease.

समदोषः समाग्निश्च समधातुमलक्रियः ।

प्रसन्नात्मेन्द्रियमनाः स्वस्थ इत्यभिधीयते ॥४१॥ सु.सु.१५/४१

Swastha<sup>[2]</sup> (health) of an individual is purely depending upon the balanced state of dhosha, dhatu, mala and agni. The different constituents of body are grouped in three basic ayurvedic principal categories Dosha, Dhatu and Mala. Normal functioning of Dosha, Dhatu and Mala maintain the homeostasis in the living body. In ayurveda the concept of formation of body is mentioned as” Dosha Dhatu Mala Mulam hi”.<sup>[3]</sup> According to Acharya Charak, no structure in the body can grow and develop or waste or atrophy independent of srotas.<sup>[4]</sup> Srotas<sup>[5]</sup> is one of the Ayurvedic terminologies and is a basic element of Ayurveda, as the whole body is made up of millions of Srotas(channels). Srotas is defined as the passage through which various dhatus that are undergoing the process of metabolic transformation are transported and through which various physiological and pathological process are carried out. Because of their pervasion all over the body, the aggravators of doshas moves in the body through these channels. As long as these channels of circulation performs their normal functions, the body is free from disease.<sup>[6]</sup> Srotas are innumerable but grossly 13 srotas are enumerated in Asthang Hridaya. Srotas are of two types<sup>[7]</sup> external and internal. External srotas<sup>[8]</sup> are 9 and 11 in male and female respectively and internal srotas are said to be 13 in number according to Charak<sup>[9]</sup> Asthang Hridaya<sup>[10]</sup> and in 11<sup>[11]</sup> (pairs) according to sushrut. Internal srotas are seats of life (activities essential for existence of life) they are, pranavaha, annavaha, udakavaha, 7 dhatuvaha and 3 malavaha srotas. These 3 mala (purish, mutra, sweda) are formed on daily basis and they keep the body healthy by getting excreted out from the body at proper time and in right quantity through their respective srotas. If they remain in the body, they would cause many diseases. Stools are the waste product of the human gastro intestinal system. The srotas, which carry the purish, or faeces are called as "purishvaha srotas". Purishvaha Srotas is one of the important abhyantara Srotas, related with the formation of mala & separation of the dravamala and sthulamalas and evacuation of purish mala (vivechana). The function of purish is maintainance of strength of the body<sup>[12]</sup> and supports vata and pitta<sup>[13]</sup> Faulty dietary habits disturb the balanced state of tridoshas and these doshas get aggregate in the body. Vitiated doshas then disturbs the dhatus and malas which results

into manifestation of various diseases in the body.<sup>[14]</sup> And this diseased state of the body can be examined through srotas dushti lakshanas.

### Review of Literature

- Acharya Charaka has explained the Sthan,<sup>[15]</sup> Hetus<sup>[16]</sup> and Lakshanas of Purishvaha srotas dushti in Vimansthan 5th chapter.<sup>[17]</sup>
- Acharya Sushrut described the sthan and vidhya lakshanas of purishvaha srotas in Sharirsthan 9th chapter.<sup>[18]</sup>
- Ashtang Sangraha described the sthan<sup>[19]</sup> and vidhya lakshanas<sup>[20]</sup> of srotas in Sharirsthan 6th chapter.
- Ashtang Hridayam described the sthan<sup>[21]</sup> and dushti lakshanas of Purishvaha srotas in sharirsthan 3rd chapter.<sup>[22]</sup>

### Purishvaha Srotas

#### 1. Mulasthana

Regarding the origin, position and extent of purishvaha srotas there is a slight difference in respect of mulasthana between Charak and Sushrut.

#### According to Charaka

पुरीषवहानां स्रोतसां पक्वाशयो मूलं स्थूलगुदं च॥

Mulasthana<sup>[15]</sup> of purishvaha srotas are pakwashaya and sthulaguda (colon-large intestine and the rectum) which can be correlated with the region of colon of GIT.

#### According to Sushrut

पुरीषवहे द्वे, तयोर्मूलं पक्वाशयो गुदं च,। सु.शा.९/१२

Purishvaha Srotas mulasthana<sup>[18]</sup> are two in number and their mulasthana is pakwashaya and guda. Pakwashaya is considered as the region of intestine present below the umbilicus or Nabhi and guda refers to rectum and anal canal.

#### According to Ashtang Sangraha

शकृद्वाहिनां पक्काशयः स्थूलान्त्रं च । अ स् शा.६/४३

Mulasthana of purishvaha srotas are pakwashaya and sthulantra.

One portion is used for the formation of purisha (pakwashaya) and other portion is used to help in defecation by receiving the defecation signals from rectum (sthool antra) to be used in initiation of defecation reflex (guda and sthoola guda). So, it can be concluded that one portion of purishvaha srotas is involved in the formation of purish and other portion is involved in defaecation process for the expulsion of flatus and faeces.<sup>[23]</sup>

## 2. Purishvaha Sroto Dushti Hetu<sup>[16]</sup>

Due to indulgence of unusual practices of ingestion of food and suppression of natural urges, the vitiation of Purishvaha Srotas takes place. These factors are:

**Sandharanat:** Suppression of natural urges like purishvega, mutravega, apanavata vega etc.

**Atyashanat:** Consumption of excessive amount of food.

**Ajeernat:** The condition developed due to indigestion of food.

**Adhyashanat:** Intaking of food before the digestion of previous taken food.

**Durbalagni:** Decrease in the power of the agni.

**Kriushasya:** The condition of body due to emaciation of Dhatus.

## 3. Purishvaha Srotodushti Lakshanas<sup>[17]</sup>

According to Charaka these Lakshanas are

**Kruchrenalpalam:** There occurs difficulty in the defection and almost no or very little amount of stool is evacuated.

**Sashabda:** The process of defecation occurs with production of certain sounds.

**Sashula:** The process of defecation occurs along with pain.

**Atidrava:** The stool forms or defecated is liquid in nature.

**Grathita:** The stool sometimes very hard in nature is evacuated.

**Atibahu:** Large amount of faecal matter is formed.

On the basis of these lakshanas the physician can come to the conclusion that the Purishvaha Srotas has been vitiated.

## 4. Purishvaha Srotas Vidhya Lakshanas

### 1. According to Sushrut

**Anaha:** Distension of abdomen

**Durgandhata:** Foul smelling of the stools.

**Grathitantra:** Due to hardness of mala the person feels as if Granthi is formed over the intestine which will be noticed during palpation.

Due to vitiation of Purishvaha Srotas certain lakshanas are produced in the body.

## 2. According to Asthanga Sangraha

Bhrama, Moha, Kampa etc.

## 5. Purishadhara Kala<sup>[24]</sup>

यैव कला पुरीषधरा सैवास्थिधरेति ||

Kala is defined as the separator between Dhatu and its Ashaya. The fifth kala is Purishdhara which is located in the pakwashaya inside the kostha. This kala particularly located in the intestine at the level of yakrit and kostha differentiates the mala. Acharya Dalhan has quoted “Kala Purishdhara Saa Eva Asthidhara”.

In the intestine the smooth layer consists of Ca-Na ion channel. According to modern science the function of large intestine is mainly the formation, holding, proper excretion of stool (Purishavaha srotas) for appropriate time. The calcium sodium ion channels, necessary for the motor functioning of the intestine, present in the intestinal layer can be correlated to the purishdhara kala of the pakwashaya.<sup>[25]</sup>

## 6. Examination of Purishvaha Srotas

It can be done by

### 1. Purish Pariksha

There are two methods of Purisha Pariksha described in Ayurveda:

#### I. Physical examination of stool<sup>[26]</sup>

- a) Akriti or appearance of stool
- b) Samhatatva or consistency
- c) Colour of Purisha(stool)
- d) Gandha or smell
- e) Presence of froth
- f) Sparsh pariksha

#### II. Time, number and quantity of motions

#### III. Jala Nimajjana Purisha Pariksha to detect the presence of Ama.<sup>[27]</sup>

## 2. Assessment of Purishvaha Srotas Dushti Lakshanas

## DISCUSSION

Both Acharyas (Charak and Sushrut) have considered Pakwashya as one of the mula sthana, while defining the other Mula of Purishvaha Srotas Acharya Charaka has given Sthula Guda, which can be interpreted as the Physiological explanation of Guda. As the Charka commentator Chakarapani has clearly demarked the Guda in two parts i.e., Uttar and Adhar guda. The first one which is meant for storage of mala and the second one which is meant for excretion of the same. Regular formation and elimination of purish is essential to maintain equilibrium in the body physiology and preserve health.

## CONCLUSION

1. This article helps us to understand the importance of srotas disease manifestation. So, any defect of Srotas must be corrected as soon as possible, for the restoration of normal health.
2. Both Acharyas have considered Pakwashaya as one of the mula sthana of purishvaha srotas. Thus, from all the above fact one can have co-relative knowledge of Purishavaha Srotas to the large intestine.
3. Also, by understanding the purishvaha Srotas dushti, symptoms can be treated according to ayurvedic point of view.
4. Pakwashaya can be considered as sthan of both purishvaha srotas and purishdhara kala. Hence the present study can be used in understanding purishvaha sroto dusthi hetu and lakshanas.

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