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Concept of *Artavavaha Srotas*

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ABSTRACT

In Ayurveda, the concept of *Srotas* has been propagated very specifically. They are integral part of the body. Body is composed of numerous *Srotas* which have a significant role in maintenance of equilibrium of body elements. They are responsible for maintenance of health as well as disease condition. *Srotas* is a channel through which different elements undergo transformation, circulation and transportation. Pathological changes occurs in the body due to *Srotodushti*, *Srotosanga* etc.

Key words: *Srotas*, *Mulasthana*, *Dustilakshana*, *Artavavaha Srotas*.

INTRODUCTION

The word *Srotas* is derived from Sanskrit root- "*Srugatau (Sru + Tansi = Srotas)*", which means moving, filtering, flowing, secreting and leaking. *Sravanat Srotanshi*^[1] means the "structure through which *Sravanam* (flow) occurs". As per Chakrapani, *Sravanat* means *Sravarnam* of *Rasadi Poshya Dhatu*. *Srotas* are the channel of circulation which carries the *Dhatu*s undergoing transformation to their destination.^[2] According to *Sushrut* and *Vagbhat*, *Srotas* are the fine pores or fine passage (like passages or pores present in the lotus stem) through which *Rasadi Poshya Dhatu* circulate all over in the body to provide nutrition. Human body is made up of numerous *Srotas* which are responsible to carry out

physiological and functional activities of the body and human life cannot be exists without *Srotas*. A health consist of equilibrium stage of *Srotas*,^[3] any imbalance causes disease, so for the proper development of human body a proper functioning of *Srotas* is must. The orifices of the *Srotas* are very small, wide, long and far, like those in the lotus stalk; through them, *Rasa* 'nourishes' the body. The colour and form of the *Srotas* would be similar to the *Dhatu* they transport; they may be cylindrical, either *Sthula* (gross, macroscopic) or *Anu* (atomic or microscopic), *Dirgha* (long) or *Prathana* (reticulated).^[4]

There are 2 types of *Srotas*.

Bahirmukha Srotas

They open outside the body and these are 9 in male and 5 are in female and they are used to administer medicines and to excrete.

In Male: 2 *Nasika*, 2 *Netra*, 2 *Karna*, 1 *Mukha*, 1 *Payu* and 1 *Mehan*.

In Female: 2 *Nasika*, 2 *Netra*, 2 *Karna*, 1 *Mukha*, 1 *Payu*, 1 *Yoni* and 2 *Sthana*.

Antarmukha Srotas

They open and close internally. *Charaka* explained 13 *Abhyantar Srotas* and these are *Pranavaha*, *Udakavaha*, *Annavaha*, *Rasavaha*, *Raktavaha*,

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Mansvaha, Medovaha, Asthivaha, Majjavaha, Shukravaha, Purishvaha, Mutravaha and *Swedavaha*. *Sushruta* described 11 *Abhyantar Srotas* and each one is in pair so that total 22 in numbers. *Sushrut* had not described *Asthivaha, Majjavaha* and *Swedavaha* which was described by *Charaka*. *Sushrut* described 1 additional *Artavavaha Srotas*.

Mulasthanas of Srotas

Every *Srotas* has two *Mulasthanas* – Main organ of it. Each *Srotas* has two main organs that are important to the *Srotas*. *Mulasthana* is very important because if it has a defect in it, the *Srotas* will be defective. The function of the *Mulasthana* is to produce the element that flows through the *Srotas*, carry it and excrete it. If the *Srotas* is *Dushta* does not mean the *Mulasthana* will be affected, but if *Mulasthana* is defective, it will definitely mess up the *Srotas*, which can then cause disease.

Determination of Mulasthana

For the determination of *Mulasthana* of *Srotas*, some points have been considered in various classics such as;

1. *Utpatti Sthana* (*Mulasthana* related with origin point of view)
2. *Sangraha Sthana* (*Mulasthana* related with storage)
3. *Vahan Sthana* (*Mulasthana* related with conduction)
4. *Naidanik Dristikon* (*Mulasthana* related with diagnostic point of view)
5. *Chikitsatmak Dristikon* (*Mulasthana* related with clinical point of view)

Table 1: Showing Mulasthanas according to Acharya Charaka^[6]

Srotas	Mulasthana
<i>Prana Vaha</i>	<i>Hrudaya</i> (Heart) and <i>Maha Srotas</i> (Digestive system)
<i>Udaka Vaha</i>	<i>Talu</i> (Palate) and <i>Kloma</i> (throat)

<i>Anna Vaha</i>	<i>Aamashaya</i> (Stomach) and <i>Vama Parshva</i> (Left lateral region of abdomen)
<i>Rasa Vaha</i>	<i>Hrudaya</i> (Heart) and <i>Dasha Dhamanias</i> (Ten Greater blood vessels of heart)
<i>Rakta Vaha</i>	<i>Yakrut</i> (Liver) and <i>Pleeha</i> (Spleen)
<i>Mamsa Vaha</i>	<i>Snayu</i> (Ligaments) and <i>Twak</i> (Skin)
<i>Medo Vaha</i>	<i>Vrukka</i> (Kidneys or suprarenal glands) and <i>Vapavahan</i> (Apron like fatty layer covering all the organs of abdomen)
<i>Asthi Vaha</i>	<i>Meda</i> and <i>Jaghan</i> (thigh) Region
<i>Majja Vaha</i>	<i>Asthi</i> and <i>Sandhi</i> (Joints and bony cavities)
<i>Shukra Vaha</i>	<i>Vrushana</i> (testis) and <i>Shefa</i> (penis)
<i>Sweda Vaha</i>	<i>Meda</i> and <i>Lomakoopa</i> (hair follicles)
<i>Mutra Vaha</i>	<i>Basti</i> (Urinary Bladder) and <i>Vankshana</i> (Groin region)
<i>Purisha Vaha</i>	<i>Pakwashaya</i> (Large intestine) and <i>Sthoola Guda</i> (Upper part of anus)

Table 2: Showing Mulasthanas according to Acharya Sushruta^[7]

Srotas	Mulasthana
<i>Prana Vaha</i>	<i>Rasa Vahini Dhamanias</i> (Arteries carrying Rasa)
<i>Udaka Vaha</i>	<i>Talu</i> (Palate) and <i>Kloma</i> (throat)
<i>Anna</i>	<i>Aamashaya</i> (Stomach) and <i>Annavahini Dhamanias</i> (Blood vessels carrying the

<i>Vaha</i>	resultant of digestion of food – the nutritive sap)
<i>Rasa Vaha</i>	<i>Hrudya</i> (Heart) and <i>Rasa Vahini Dhamanias</i> (Arteries carrying <i>Rasa</i>)
<i>Rakta Vaha</i>	<i>Yakruta</i> (Liver), <i>Pleeha</i> (Spleen) and <i>Raktavahini Dhamanias</i> (Greater Arteries of body)
<i>Mamsa Vaha</i>	<i>Snayu</i> (Ligaments), <i>Twak</i> (Skin) and <i>Raktavahini Dhamanias</i> (Arteries carrying blood to deeper levels of muscles)
<i>Medo Vaha</i>	<i>Kati</i> (Lumbar region/Low Back/) and <i>Vrukka</i> (Kidneys and Supra renal glands)
<i>Shukra Vaha</i>	<i>Stana</i> (Mammary Glands/Breast) and <i>Vrushana</i> (Testis)
<i>Mutra Vaha</i>	<i>Basti</i> (Urinary Bladder) and <i>Medhra</i> (Penis)
<i>Purisha Vaha</i>	<i>Pakwashaya</i> (Large Intestine) and <i>Guda</i> (Anus)
<i>Aartava Vaha</i>	<i>Garbhashaya</i> (Uterus) and <i>Aartava Vahi Dhamanias</i> (Fallopian tubes)

Lakshanas of Srotas Dushti

Atipravitti – (overformation/overflowing) –If formation is effective then the element that flows through the *Srotas* will be too liquid so it will flow too fast in the body. According to Charaka *Atipravitti* is a prime factor of *Asigdara*.

Sanga – *Dhatu* which forms the *Srotas* lining, if it is defective then it will causes inner lining to become thick resulting decreasing the lumen size which will reduce the flow of elements . ex- *Dhamanikathinya*.

Siragranthi – It denotes the obstruction of *Srotas* by all other factor around the *Srotas*. It blocks the passage but not internal passage of *Srotas*. It indicates the growth, excessive expansion or enlargement (tumour or cancer).

Vimargagaman – It means the entry in to the wrong passage or encroachment. ex – *Vamana* (vomiting).

Shrotodushti Lakshana of Artavavaha Srotas

Atipravitti - through the *Artavavaha Srotas* results in a larger volume or longer duration of menstrual flow. This is called hyper menorrhoea and menorrhagia.

Sangha - through the *Artavavaha Srotas* results in a low volume or scanty menses. This is caused by the dryness created by *Vata* vitiation.

Siragranthi - through *artavavaha Srotas* results in amenorrhoea. This may occur due to either *vata* or *kapha* vitiation.

Vimargagaman - out of *Artavavaha Srotas* is characterised by the menstrual blood entering the stools via a vaginal-rectal fistula, or the urinary system via a fistula connecting the uterus or vagina with the bladder.

With a *Vata* vitiation in the *Artavavaha Srotas* there is scanty menses with either the volume or duration being lessened. In addition amenorrhoea may occur.

If *Pitta* becomes vitiated in *Artavavaha Srotas* then the tissue of the *Srotas* becomes overheated, resulting in inflammation and infection. Vaginitis, endometritis (inflammation and or infection of the uterus) and oophoritis (infection and inflammation of the ovaries) are just some of the conditions that may occur. Menstrual bleeding may also be more intense than usual.

With *Kapha* entering the *Artavavaha Srotas* the tissue becomes overly moist and mucous forms thus menses becomes heavy and may be mixed with a fairly large amount of mucous.

Artavavaha Srotas

According to *Acharya Sushruta*, they are two in number, their roots in *Garbhashaya* and *Artavavahi Dhamanias* injury to these produces infertility, dyspareunia and amenorrhoea.^[8] As the word *Artava* has got two meanings viz. the *Artava Shonita* (menstrual blood) and the *Stri Beeja* (ovum), the *Artavavaha Srotas* can be meant for the blood vessels and capillaries of the uterus and fallopian tubes.

Garbhashaya

The word *Garbhashaya* is composed of two words i.e. *Garbha* and *Ashaya*. The word *Ashaya* means the place to rest thus the *Garbhashaya* is a place where the *Garbha* lies or develops. *Purusha Shareera* is comprised of *Sapta Ashaya*, where stri possess *Garbhashaya* as one extra *Ashaya*.^[9] *Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned the shape of *Garbhashaya* resemble mouth of rohit fish.^[10] *Garbhashaya* is situated in third *Avarta* of *Yoni* /behind the *Basti*, in between *Pittashaya* and *Pakvashaya*.^[11]

Artavavaha Dhamani

There are *Adhogamini Dhamanis*, 2 *Dhamanis* meant for the formation (*Pradurbhava*) and 2 *Dhamanis* meant for excretion (*Visarga*) for *Artava*.^[12]

CONCLUSION

Srotas are the channels different from the *Sira* and *Dhamani*, which carries nutrients to the body organs and widely spreads all over the body. It also carries waste material for the removal from the body, without *Srotas* existence of life can not be possible. Every *Srotas* have 2 *Mulasthanas* and function of these *Mulasthanas* is to produce the elements which flow through the *Srotas*. If *Mulasthana* is defective, the *Srotas* will be defective, but if *Srotas* is defective does not mean that *Mulasthana* will also be defective. *Garbhashaya* and *Artavavahi Dhamani* are the *Mulasthanas* of the *Artavavaha Srotas*. *Garbhashaya* is mainly responsible for the production of the *Artava*, so it can be consider as the *Mulasthana* of origin point of view. *Artavavahi Dhamani* conduct *Artava* towards uterus during menstrual phase, so in this regard *Artavavahi Dhamani* is justified as a *Mulasthana* as conduction point of view.

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