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Review Article

RASAVAHA SROTAS AND THEIR PHYSIOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE: AN AYURVEDA REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Srotas are channels or pores which provides nourishment to the whole body and responsible for some particular function with respect to specific body parts. The 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 impart some pathological manifestation, therefore it is very essential to understand physiological concepts of *srotas*. This article presenting ayurveda perspective of *Rasa vaha srotasa* and their physiological considerations.

Keywords: *Ayurveda, Srotas, Rasa vaha srotasa, Dhātu, Circulation.*

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INTRODUCTION

Rasa: *Rasa* means 'movement', as per this definition any liquid element in body which flows may be treated as *Rasa* including *Rakta* and lymph etc. The digested food finally contributed to *Rasa-Dhātu* which performs many vital functions of body. *Rasa* is *Jala Mahabhoota* predominant and possessing *Tanu, Swachchha* and *Snigdha* properties it travels through *Dhamanis*¹⁻⁴.

Rasa Savhana: *Vyana Vayu* having ability to move liquid quickly, this *Vyana Vayu* causes circulation of *rasa* in entire body.

Srotas are channels or micropores which mainly perform functions of transportation, ayurveda described many types of *Srotas* and *Rasa vaha srotas* are one of them. There are seven *srotas* (out of 13) which associated with tissues (*dhatus*) and *Rasa vaha srotas* comes first in this category as follows:

Srotas related to *dhatus*

1. *Rasa vaha srotas*: carrying plasma and lymph

2. *Rakta vaha srotas*: carrying blood cells and hemoglobin
3. *Mamsa vaha srotas*: carrying muscle nutrients and wastes
4. *Meda vaha srotas*: supplying to various adipose tissues of body
5. *Asthi vaha srotas*: nutrients to the bones
6. *Majja vaha srotas*: supplying the bone marrow and nerves
7. *Sukra vaha srota*: carrying the sperm and ova and their nutrients

As mentioned above it was clearly indicated that *Rasa vaha srotas* considered as one of the important circulatory system of body transporting nutrients to the *dhātu*³⁻⁷. Ayurveda also describes concept of *Rasadhātu* as precursor of *Raktdhātu* since blood circulation depends upon total level of fluid in blood stream. The *Mulasthan* of *Rasavaha Srotas* is *Dhamani* and *Hridaya* as mentioned below:

Rasavaha srotas

Mula: Heart and great vessels.

Marga: Venous and lymphatic systems.

Mukha: Arteriole, venous junction in capillaries.

Rasavaha Srotas are considered as main *Srotas* since they supply nutrients to all body parts, they also give *Poshana* to *Rasa Dhatu* and *Rakta Dhatu*. *Yakrit* and *Hrdiya* contributes significantly towards *Ahara Rasa Poshanta* through this *Srotas* since food first goes to *Yakrit* then through the circulatory system of *Hrdiya* it will circulate to all body parts. Therefore the concept of *Rasavaha Srotas* in Ayurveda may be correlated with

modern functions of heart, lungs and liver. *Rasa vaha srotasa* circulates *Rasa* including lymphatic system and plasma, this process offers nourishment to other *dhatu*.

Rasavaha srotas perform vital functioning of body related to circulatory process and physiological disturbances to their functioning may leads some pathological manifestation as mentioned in **Figure 1**. The *rasa vaha srotasa* originated mainly from *hrudaya* and connected to all over the body through *Dhamanis*. These *dhamanis* circulated *rasa* all over the body using pumping of *hrudaya*.⁵⁻¹⁰

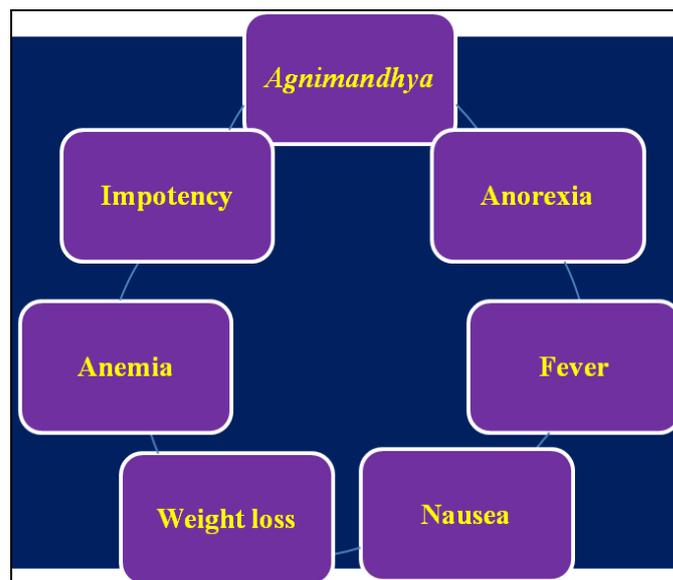


Figure 1: Symptoms associated with disturbed physiological functioning of *rasa vaha srotasa*:

Physiological Importance of *Rasa Vaha Srotas*

- *Paushaka Dhatu* are transported to the *Sthayi Dhatu* through *Srotas*.
- *Dhatu-Vaha Srotas* is specific to *Sthayi Dhatu* to which they transport nutrition.
- *Srotas* carries *Bhava Padarth* from one place to another place.
- It transports materials and impulses also.
- Helps in the absorption of fats and minerals through lymph and utilizing pressure of blood.
- It served as place of transformation of *Ahararasa* to *Rasadhatu*.
- It offers pathways for transporting *Rasadhatu* in the body.
- The proper functioning of this *Srotas* offers excellence of *Twak* characterized by *Snigdha*, *Shlakshna*, *Mrudu*, *Prasanna*, *Sukshma*, *Alpa*, *Gambhira* and *Sukumara* appearance.
- The physiological normalcy of *Rasavaha srotas* offers happiness, power, enjoyment, intellect and longevity.

- *Rasavaha srotas* carry nutrient and other important material which serve important role in normal physiological functioning of tissue.
- The thermostat of body maintained by appropriate circulatory process of *Rasavaha srotas*.
- The assimilation and digestion of *ahara* take places with the help of biochemical process of *Rasa* which transport through *Rasavaha srotas*.
- *Rasavaha srotas* contributed towards immune response of body.
- The healing and defensive mechanism of body act at the site of injury with the help of *Rasavaha srotas*.

CONCLUSION

The major function of *Rasa* is *Prinana*; providing nutrition to other *dhatu*. The function of *Rasavaha Srotas* is very important to maintain physiology of all body tissue, if this *Srotas* not work properly then *Dhatu*s nourishment not take places which may results severe illness. Therefore it may be concluded that the proper functioning of *Rasavaha Srotas* is very important for the nourishment and functioning of vital tissues. The *Rasavaha Srotas* not only transport important materials throughout body but also help in defense mechanism.

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