Critical Analysis of Srota: A Literature Review

Arpita Sarkar 1, Debnarayan Maity 2

1-Lecturer, Department Of Sharir Kriya, J. B. Roy State Ayurvedic Medical College And Hospital
2-Senior Ayurvedic Medical Officer, Govt. Of West Bengal

ABSTRACT:

Human body is nothing but a combination or aggregation of innumerable srota, which means minute individual channels. The word srota etymologically derived from the Sanskrit root “sru-srabane” dhatu which means oozing, permeation, filtration, to flow, exudation, to move etc. Sira, dhamani, marga, rasayani, nadi, pantha, sharir chidra, samvrita-asambrita,shana, aashaya, niketa, sharir dhatu avakasha, lakshya- alakshya – all these words are synonymous to srota. Some of the srota are visible but some are minute so invisible. This srota or internal transport system has been given a place of basic importance in Ayurveda. According to Charak Samhita, in the human body there is no structure which can originate or synthesize, develop, persist and be wasted or atrophied without srota. This srotas continuously transport dhatus for deposition or transformation. Again there are dosha-vaha srotas. Any type of disease occur due to abnormality in srotas and there are some sign and symptoms due to specific type of srotadushti. But still we do not have a clear understanding about srota in perspective of modern medical science. So in this article we tried to find out way for better understanding about srota.

Keywords: Srota, dhatu, dosha-vaha srota, srotadushti

INTRODUCTION

Human being or purush is composed of two components, one is panchabhoutik sharir and other is shariri or atma.1 The component of atma is responsible for giving life. Another component sharir is a physical one which is made up of panchamahabhuta and has a shape.2 This sharir is again composed of innumerable murtiman bhava that means physical entities. All these innumerable physical entities have their respective srota.3 In human body there is no such physical entity which can be originated, can persist or can be destroyed without srota. Srotas are responsible for transportation and transformation of dhatu that means body components. So human body is fully composed of srota. Some of these srotas are visible (sthulasrota) but some others are invisible (anusrota). Acharya Charaka has described about 13 types of srotas like – pranavaha, udakavaha, annavaha,rasavaha, raktavaha, mamsavaha, asthivaha, majjavaha, shukravaha, purishvaha, mutravaha, swedavaha and another one artavavaha srotas. Other than these srotas there are dosavaha srotas also for vata, pitta, kapha dosa accordingly.

From dictionary meaning of the word srota, we get - a current, a stream, a river. Again, from panchabhoutik composition, srotas have predominance of aakash mahabhuta in them. So they have qualities like patency,
porosity, cleanliness, softness, slightly unctuous, minuteness, colorlessness and transparency. Again there is a structure named kala which is located between dhatus and aashaya. These kalas act as membrane (semi-permeable membrane). They allow selected substances to pass through them. There are seven kalas for seven dhatus respectively. Acharya Susruta has mentioned 11 pairs of srotas. For better understanding there are synonyms of srota mentioned in Charak Samhita.

**AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

1. To understand concept of srotas in detail by review of literature.
2. To get knowledge of function of srotas.
3. To get relation between srota and srotamula.
4. To understand clinical significance of Dr in genesis of disease.

**MATERIAL AND METHOD**

The study was planned on conceptual basis using its literary study of classical and modern texts. After a comparative study the logical thinking was applied to conclude the main points of study and for those major approaches of literary study involved –

a) Compilation of literatures related to srotas according to various Ayurvedic classics, commentaries and research work.

b) Comparison of srotas with capillary system of body and interpretation with respect to biochemistry and biophysics and metabolism of the body.

c) The Laghutrayee, Brihatrayee literatures.

d) Commentaries on Samhita Granthas were studied for compilation of study.

**Review of literature:**

**Origination of srotas**

Srota utpatti happens in intra-uterine life. Genesis or formation of srota occurs due to vayumahabhuta. With the help of appropriate agni there is differentiation due to vayumahabhuta in the garbha and as a result there is genesis or formation of srota in the garbha.

In this way during the intrauterine life, due to differentiation of fertilized zygote sthula srotas are created and in those srotas various body entities take their origin. Again, there is differentiation of various physiological processes which lead to genesis or origination of anusrota.

**Form of srotas :**

According to Charak Samhita color of srotas are same as the respective dhata. They are circular in shape, large as well as small in size, large in length and reticular in structure.

According to Sushruta Samhita structure of all srotas are like radiating from the root or mula throughout the body.

**Types of srotas :**

According to Acharya Chakrapani “Srotamayam hi shariram” that means as human body contains innumerable srotas it is the cluster of srotas.

According to Acharya Charaka there are srotas for every murtimanata bhava in the human body. Among them specifically he has mentioned about 13 srotas as they play major role in maintaining body physiology and clinical perspective also.

Acharya Sushruta has mentioned about 11 pairs of srotas and in another chapter he has mentioned that there are 9 srotas in male body – in mouth, rectum urethra, two in eyes, two in ears and two in nose and along with these there are 3 more srotas in female body – two in breasts and one in vagina. Other than these visible srotas there are internal srotas for prana, anma, udak, seven dhatus and three malas.

According to Acharya Kashyapa srotas are of two types – sukshma and mahan. He has described nabhi and romakupa as sukshma srota. While mahan srotas are present in head region according to him.

**Importance of srotas :**

From literary study based on various Ayurvedic texts we found that srotas are essential to perform various vital functions. Such as –

1. To excrete the waste materials (mala) from the body.
2. Transport vital supports to the body (prana, anma, udaka).
3. Dosa (sharir, manas), dhatu, upadhatu, prana, anna, udaka, mala and prasad bhaga of dhatus – all are transported to the specific required parts in the body with the help of srotas.

4. Srotas also carry sensory and motor impulses throughout the body.

5. Mana in chetan sharir is transported by the srotas.

6. All body elements or physical entities are synthesized through srotas. They persist or develop with the help of srotas and after all when they are destroyed or atrophied they get removed from the body through srotas or transformed into another physical entities through srotas.

**Physiological aspect of srotas:**
The srotas are energy driven channels within the body and are responsible for carrying out all body functions. Srotas are compared as little rivers with continuous flow of bhavas within the body, doing nourishment and transportation in the body. It is essential to understand the functions of srotas according to the physiological condition.

All the seven dhatus are synthesized by srotas and these are responsible for –
1) Receiving nutrients from aahara rasa and nourishing all the seven dhatus.
2) Maintaining pH, temperature, electrolyte balance and hence regulating neurotransmitter secretions & maintaining hormone balance.
3) Shifting of body entities to their respective place of density (from their place of origination) after biotransformation.12

**Clinical importance of srotas:**
Acharya Charaka has explained the dusti or abnormality in srotas. There are four types of abnormalities or khavaigunya (impairment of function of srotas due to abnormality of the site of biochemical reactions in the srotas). They are as follows –
- Atipravritti - excessive flow or fastness of reactions. Example- Atisweda, Atisara.
- Sangha - retention or obstruction in biochemical reactions. Example- Mutraghat.
- Siragranthi - dilatation of vessels due to retention or deposition of certain physiological entities. Example- Arsha
- Vimargagaman - due to some pathology at the level of srotas there is flow of certain physiological entity through another channels except its own or synthesis of another product/ byproducts in place of certain expected entity. Example- Raktapitta.

**Srota and srotamula:**
Literary study of Charak Samhita suggests the following concepts related to srota and srotamula.
- Pranavaha srota - mula - hridaya and mahasrota. Dysfunction may cause frequent respiration, lack of breath or pain during breathing.
- Udakavaha srota - mula - talu and kloma. Dysfunction may cause dryness of tongue, palate, lips, throat and excessive thirst.
- Annava srota - mula - aamashaya and yamaparshva. Dysfunction may cause anorexia, indigestion, vomiting.
- Rasavaha srota - mula - hridaya and dhamanis. Dysfunction may cause anorexia, nausea, heaviness, drowsiness, fever.
- Raktavaha srota - mula - yakrit and pleeha. Dysfunction may cause various skin diseases, bleeding disorder.
- Mamsavaha srota - mula - snyau and tvak. Dysfunction may cause adhimansa, arbuda, galashindika and putimamsa.
- Medovahsa srota - mula - vrikka and vapaavaha. Dysfunction may cause prodromal stage of prameha.
- Asthivaha srota - mula - meda and jaghana. Dysfunction may cause adhyasthi, adhidanta, asthibhedha and asthishula.
- Majjavaha srota - mula - asthi and sandhi. Dysfunction may cause joint pain, fainting.
- Shukravaha srota - mula - vrishan and shepha. Dysfunction may cause impotency, erectile dysfunctions.
- Mutravaha srota - mula - basti and vankshana. Dysfunction may cause excessive excretion, obstruction, burning micturition.
- Purishvaha srota - mula - pakwashaya and sthulaguda. Dysfunction may cause constipation, burning sensation during defeacation, abnormality in consistency of stool.
- Swedavaha srota - mula - meda and romakupa. Dysfunction may cause excessive sweating, lack of sweating, burning sensation.13

Again, literary study of Sushruta Samhita suggests the following concepts
- Pranavaha srota - mula - hridaya and rasavahini. Injury may cause tremors, vertigo, illusion or even death.
- Annava srota - mula - aamashaya and annavahini dhamani. Injury may cause abdominal distension, pain, anorexia, vomiting, thirst even death.
- Udakavaha srota - mula - talu and kloma. Injury may cause thirst and instant death.
• Rasavaha srota- mula- hridaya and rasavahini dhamani. Injury may cause cachexia, death.
• Raktavaha srota- mula- ykr, and raktavahini dhamani. Injury may cause blackish or bluish discoloration of body, fever, burning sensation, anaemia or redness of eyes.
• Mamsavaha srota- mula- snayu, tvacha and raktavahini dhamani. Injury may cause swelling or muscular distrophy or death.
• Medovaha srota- mula- kati, vrikka. Injury may cause sweating thirst etc.
• Mutravaha srota – mula- basti and medhra. Injury may cause obstruction of urine formation and micturition.
• Purishvaha srota- mula- pakwashaya and sthulaguda. Injury may cause painful distension of abdomen, bad smell in stool.
• Shukravaha srota- mula- stana and vrishan. Injury may cause impotence, delayed erection and ejaculation.14

DISCUSSION
Srotas are the internal transport system of the body. So it has been given a place of basic importance in Ayurveda – both in healthy and diseased conditions. There is no such physical entity which can be generated, developed and persisted or destroyed without the help of srotas. All the seven dhatus are synthesized and transformed constantly through their respective srotas. The srotas sub- serve the needs of transformation. In surgery related texts more emphasis is given on visible srotas in manifestation of diseases. While in medicine related texts emphasis is also given on invisible srotas in synthesis of dhatus and manifestation of diseases.

CONCLUSION
This article emphasized on proper understanding of concept of srotas in a systematic way. Proper understanding of the functions of srotas according to their srotomula with respect to the physiological entities is discussed. Different types of srotadushiti is explained. The role of srotas in manifestation of any disease is discussed very well in almost all Ayurvedic texts. An Ayurvedic physician should have a complete knowledge of srotas, to approach to a patient in a holistic way as no disease can manifest without srotodusti.


**How to cite this article:** Sarkar A, Maity D “Critical Analysis Of Srota: A Literature Review” IRJAY. [online] 2022; 5(7); 180-184
Available from: https://irjay.com
DOI link: https://doi.org/10.47223/IRJAY.2022.5725