

A Critical Review of Rasavaha Srotas from the Diagnostic Perspective

Vd. Archis Ravindra Patil

Professor, Rognidan Evam Vikruti Vigyan Department, Shreemati Shantibai Otarmal Jain Ayurvedic Medical College & Hospital, Velshet, Maharashtra 402106

ABSTRACT

Rasavaha Srotas, one of the key Srotas described in *Ayurvedic* literature, is responsible for the transportation of *Rasa Dhatu*, which nourishes all subsequent tissues and maintains systemic equilibrium. From a diagnostic point of view (*Naidanik Drishti*), *Rasavaha Srotas* holds immense importance due to its role in the origin and manifestation of various diseases. This article critically evaluates the anatomical, physiological, pathological, and diagnostic aspects of *Rasavaha Srotas*, emphasizing its clinical relevance in current *Ayurvedic* practice.

Keywords: *Rasavaha Srotas*, *Rasa Dhatu*, *Srotas Vigyana*, *Ayurveda*, Pathogenesis, Diagnosis

INTRODUCTION

The concept of *Srotas* (channels) is foundational in *Ayurvedic* physiology and pathology. *Rasavaha Srotas*, being the first and foremost among them, carries the essence of digested food (*Ahara Rasa*) and is crucial in the nourishment and sustenance of life. The assessment and understanding of *Rasavaha Srotas* from a diagnostic perspective provide valuable insights into the early detection and prevention of diseases.

Rasavaha Srotas: Ayurvedic Overview¹

Rasavaha Srotas are the pathways responsible for circulating *Rasa Dhatu* throughout the body. According to *Acharya Charaka* and *Sushruta*, these *Srotas* are the primary channels involved in the immediate post-digestive distribution of nutrition.

Mula Sthana (Root): As per *Charaka*: *Hridaya* (heart) and *Rasavahi Dhamani* (arteries related to circulation) As per *Sushruta*: *Hridaya* and ten *Dhamanis*.²

Prakrit Karma (Normal Function):³

- Distribution of nutrient essence (*Ahara Rasa*)
- Maintenance of vitality and *Ojas*
- Initiation of tissue nourishment

Utpatti Sthana (Origin): *Rasavaha Srotas* originate from the digestion and absorption processes in the *Amashaya* and *Grahani* and are closely associated with the circulatory and lymphatic systems.⁴

Rasavaha Srotas: Anatomical and Modern Correlation⁵

The functions and structures of *Rasavaha Srotas* show similarity with the cardiovascular and lymphatic systems, particularly the heart, blood vessels, and plasma transport systems. *Hridaya* as the *Mula Sthana* may be correlated with the heart, while *Rasavahi Dhamani* can be compared to arteries carrying plasma and nutrients.

Diagnostic Importance (Naidanik Drishti)⁶

Samprapti Ghatakas (Pathogenesis factors):

- *Dosha*: Mainly *Kapha* and *Pitta*
- *Dushya*: *Rasa Dhatu*
- *Agni*: *Jatharagni* and *Rasagni* involvement
- *Srotodushhti*: *Sanga* (obstruction), *Atipravritti* (excess flow), *Sira-Granthi* (vascular tumors or nodules)

Lakshanas of Dushti (Signs of Vitiation):

- *Aruchi* (anorexia)
- *Alasya* (lethargy)
- *Gourava* (heaviness)
- *Angamarda* (body ache)
- *Hridaya Shoola* (cardiac pain)

Disorders Associated:

- *Hridaya Roga* (Cardiovascular disorders)
- *Rasa Pradoshaja Vikara*
- Anemia, Hypotension
- Poor circulation disorders

Diagnostic Tools in Ayurveda:

- *Nadi Pariksha* (Pulse diagnosis)
- *Jihva, Netra, and Twak Pariksha*
- *Dashavidha and Ashtavidha Pariksha*

Contemporary Diagnostic Correlations:

- ECG, Echocardiography
- Lipid profile, Blood pressure monitoring
- Clinical signs like fatigue, weakness, and anorexia

Role of *Rasavaha Srotas* in Disease Pathogenesis:⁷

Rasavaha Srotas Dushti is often the first step in the disease chain as the *Rasa Dhatu* is the first to be affected post *Ahara-Pachana*. Improper diet, sedentary lifestyle, mental stress, and *Ama* formation are primary contributors to *Rasavaha Srotas* dysfunction, leading to chronic disorders.

Examples:

- *Rasa Dushti* due to *Ahara-Vihara* leading to *Sthaulya* (obesity)
- Chronic stress vitiating *Rasavaha Srotas* causing Hypertension
- Emotional disturbances affecting *Hridaya*, reflecting on circulatory function

Chikitsa Siddhanta (Therapeutic Guidelines):⁸

Nidana Parivarjana:

- Avoidance of causative factors like heavy, greasy food
- Managing stress and emotional disturbances

Agni Deepana and *Ama Pachana*:

- Use of *Trikatu*, *Panchakola*
- *Langhana* and *Pachana Chikitsa*

Rasayana Therapy:

- Use of *Rasayana* drugs to strengthen *Rasa Dhatu* (e.g., *Amalaki*, *Guduchi*)

Panchakarma Procedures:

- *Vamana* in cases of *Kapha Dushti*
- *Basti* for *Vata*-related disorders
- *Hridya Basti* and *Nasya* for *Hridaya Shuddhi*

Lifestyle and Diet:

- Balanced *Ahara* rich in *Rasa*-enhancing qualities
- *Yoga* and *Pranayama* to support circulatory and emotional balance

CONCLUSION

Rasavaha Srotas plays a pivotal role in maintaining health through efficient circulation of *Rasa Dhatu*. Its diagnostic and therapeutic understanding is vital for early identification and management of systemic disorders. A *Naidanik* approach to *Rasavaha Srotas* offers profound potential in prevention, diagnosis, and treatment, especially in lifestyle and cardiovascular diseases.

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