

## CONCEPT OF PRANAVAHASROTASA IN AYURVEDA

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### ABSTRACT

Concept of *Srotasa-sharira* forms an important part of *Sharira-rachana*. *Srotasas* are channels present in the body which are helpful in production and conduction of body constituents from one to another site in the body. The *srotasas* are mainly classified into two types as *Bahirmukha* and *Antarmukha*. Difference of opinion is observed in counting the *Antarmukha Srotasas* by Acharya Charaka and Acharya Sushruta. *Srotasas* are explained in a particular sequence like first described is *Pranavaha* i.e. the one which deals with basic constituent of life. *Moolasthanas* for *Pranavaha Srotasa* are *Hridayam* and *Mahasrotas* according to Acharya Charaka and *Hridayam* and *Pranavahi Dhamani* according to Acharya Sushruta. *Pranavaha Srotasa Dushti* is mainly result of *Vataprakopa* or obstruction or change of the normal *Gati* of *Vata* inside body especially of *Prana*, *Udaana* or *Vyana*. The diseases of pulmonary system like pulmonary hypertension or embolism, COPD etc. can be included in *Pranavaha Srotas Dushti*.

**Keywords:** *Ayurved, Pranavaha Srotas, Srotas sharira*

### INTRODUCTION

Concept of *Srotasa-sharira* forms an important part of *Sharira-rachana*. *Srotasas* are those channels present in the body which are helpful in production and conduction of body constituents from one to another site in the body<sup>1</sup>. The *Srotasas* are made up of *Pancha-mahabhutas*, dominant in *Aakash Mahabhuta*. They are formed by the action of *Vayu* inside the developing *Garbha*<sup>2</sup>. They

form network all over the body and usually obtain the characteristics of body constituents travelling through them i.e. *Swadhatusama varna*<sup>3</sup>. The *srotasas* are mainly classified into two types as *Bahirmukha* i.e. opening outside the body and *Antarmukha / Yogavahi* i.e. not opening outside the body. The external openings are 09 in males which are *Shravana*, *Nayana*, *Vadana*, *Ghrana*, *Guda*, *Medhra*.

Along with these 09, 03 more are present in females which are *Stana* and *Aartavavaha*<sup>4</sup>. Slight difference of opinion is observed in counting the *Antarmukha Srotasas* by Acharya Charaka and Acharya Sushruta. Acharya Charaka has explained 13 *Antarmukha Srotasas* in *Charaka Samhita Vimanasthana* 05<sup>th</sup> Adhyaya<sup>5</sup> and 01 in *Garbhaprakarana*. They are carriers of *Prana*, *Udaka*, *Anna*, *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Meda*, *Asthi*, *Majja*, *Shukra*, *Mutra*, *Purisha*, *Sweda* and *Aartava*. Acharya Sushruta has explained *Srotasas* in *Sushruta Samhita Sharirasthana* 09/11<sup>6</sup>. He has not explained about carriers of *Asthi*, *Majja* and *Sweda*. He has mentioned each *Srotasa* in pair. Thus, total *Antarmukha Srotasa* are in 11 pairs. The *Srotasas* are explained in a particular sequence. *Prana*, *Udaka* and *Anna* are the

basic constituents required for existence and development of body. So, they are described first. Later on, *Srotasas* dealing with individual *Dhatu* based upon *Dhatu-utpatti Krama* and thereafter *Srotasas* dealing with *Trimala* are explained.

The individual *Srotasa* can be described based upon its name, number, type, *Moolasthanas*, *Srotasa Dushti Hetu*, *Srotasa Dushti Lakshana*, *Srotasa Viddha Lakshana* and its *Chikitsa*.

The concept of *Pranavaha Srotasa* can be elaborated as-

NAME:-*Pranavaha Srotasa*

NUMBER:-

According to Acharya Charaka – 01

According to Acharya Sushruta – 02

TYPE:-*Antarmukha* or *Yogavahi*

### MOOLASTHANA:-

*Pranavahanam srotasam hrudayammoolam mahasrotascha |*

*Charaka Samhita Vimanasthana 05/07*

*Pranavahe dwe, tayormoolam hrudayam rasavahinyascha dhamanyah |*

*Sushruta Samhita Sharirasthana 09/12*

According to Acharya Charaka – *Hridayam* and *Mahasrotasa*<sup>7</sup>

According to Acharya Sushruta – *Hridayam* and (*Pathabhedanusaren*) instead of *Rasavahi* we can consider *Pranavahi Dhamanya*<sup>8</sup>

*SROTASA DUSHTI HETU*<sup>9</sup>:-

*Kshayat sandharanat raukshat vyayamat kshudhitasya cha |*

*Pranavahini dushyanti srotamsyanyeschadaarunaehi ||*

*Charaka Samhita Vimanasthana 05/10*

*SROTASA DUSHTI LAKSHANA*<sup>10</sup>:-

*Atisrushtam atibaddham kupitam alpapabheekshanam wa sashabdashoolam ucchavasantam drushtwa pranavahanyasya srotamsi pradushtaneetividnyat |*

*Charaka Samhita Vimanasthana 05/07*

*SROTASA VIDDHA LAKSHANA*<sup>11</sup>:-

*Tatra viddhasya aakroshanam vinamanam mohana-bhramana-vepanani maranam va bhavati |*

*Sushruta Samhita Sharirasthana 09/12*

*SROTASA DUSHTI CHIKITSA*<sup>12</sup>:-

*Pranodakannavahanam dushtanam shwasiki kriya |*

*Charaka Samhita Vimanasthana 05/26*

## DISCUSSION

### DISCUSSION OVER THE MOOLASTHANA:-

**HRIDAYAM:-** It forms the base of existence of life (*Prana*) in an individual, as it deals with circulation of vital energy in the form of oxygen (obtained from pulmonary circulation) and nutrients (absorbed in circulation from GIT), all over the body and helps in collecting the waste matter as well. *Hridayam* is counted as *Moolasthan* by both, Acharya Charaka and Acharya Sushruta.

**MAHASROTASA:-** Acharya Charaka has counted *Mahasrotasa* as *Moolasthan* along with *Hridayam*. The *Mahasrotasa* is explained as the long channel present from *Mukha* to *Guda* i.e. alimentary canal along with the allied organs. Nutrients absorbed from GIT play a major role in maintaining the life of a person. Out of the total *Mahasrotasa* (which forms main part of *Annavaha Srotasa*), a muscle separating thorax and abdomen i.e. diaphragm can be considered as a part of *Pranavaha Srotasa* as it is a chief muscle of respiration. One more reference can be considered over here from *Sharangdhara Samhita*. Acharya Sharangdhara has explained *Shwasana prakriya* in detail. According to him, the process of respiration initiates from *Naabhi*.

**PRANAVAH DHAMANI:-** Acharya Sushruta has counted *Pranavahi Dhamani* as *Moolasthan* along with *Hridayam*. As the name suggests, these are the vessels which help to carry *Prana*. Thus, they can either be correlated with bronchi or pulmonary vessels. The right and left bronchi carry inspired air from trachea to lungs. The pulmonary vessels form the pulmonary circulation and are of two types as 02 pulmonary arteries and 04

pulmonary veins. Pulmonary arteries carry deoxygenated blood from heart to lungs whereas pulmonary veins carry oxygenated blood from lungs to heart.

**DISCUSSION OVER THE SROTASA DUSHTI HETU:-** *Dhatukshaya* (emaciation), *Vegavidharana* (forcefully controlling natural urges), *Rukshasewana* (consumption of items dominant in dryness), exercise when one is hungry or heavy work immediately after having food are the main factors responsible for vitiation of *Pranavaha Srotasa*. One more important thing explained is vitiation of any other *srotasa* in the body will ultimately result in vitiation of *Pranavaha Srotasa*. All the factors explained here either result in *Vataprakopa* or change the normal *Gati* (direction) of *Vata* inside our body. Although all the types of *Vata* are related with *Pranavaha Srotas*, more significance should be given to *Pranavayu*, *Udanavayu* and *Vyanavayu*.

**DISCUSSION OVER THE SROTASA DUSHTI LAKSHANA:-** The vitiation of *Pranavaha Srotasa* leads to breathing difficulties and abnormal breathing patterns. Various abnormal respiratory sounds are heard on auscultation. The patient may complain about pain during respiration. All these symptoms are caused by obstruction or change in *Vata Gati* especially of *Prana*, *Udaana* or *Vyana Vayu*.

**DISCUSSION OVER THE SROTASA VIDHA LAKSHANA:-** Acharya Sushruta has explained *Viddhata* as it leads to all the conditions which result either from abnormal circulation or oxygen deficiencies in the body. It includes tetany, disorientation, giddiness, tremors and even death.

**DISCUSSION OVER THE SROTASA DUSHTI CHIKITSA:-** According to Acharya Charaka, *Pratyakhyeya Chikitsa* is indicated in vitiation of any *Srotasa*. In case of *Pranavaha Srotasa Dushti*, the treatment should be similar to *Shwasa Roga*.

ACCORDING TO MODERN SCIENCE, the conditions that can be considered under the vitiation of *Pranavaha Srotasa* include pulmonary hypertension, pulmonary embolism, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, infective pathologies of respiratory system etc., where breathing difficulties and abnormal breathing patterns are the main presenting features.

## CONCLUSION

*Srotasas* are those channels present in the body which are helpful in production and conduction of body constituents from one to another site in the body.

The *Srotasas* are explained in a particular sequence like first described is *Pranavaha* i.e. the one which deals with basic constituent for maintenance of life.

The *Moolasthanas* for *Pranavaha Srotasa* are *Hridayam* and *Mahasrotas* according to Acharya Charaka and *Hridayam* and *Pranavahi Dhamani* according to Acharya Sushruta. This covers the respiratory tree and pulmonary circulation as well.

All the factors explained as *Srotasa Dushti Hetu* either result in *Vataprakopa* or change the normal *Gati* (direction) of *Vata* inside our body.

All these symptoms mentioned as *Pranavaha Srotasa Dushti Lakshana* are caused by obstruction or change in *Vata Gati* especially of *Prana, Udaana or Vyana Vayu*.

Major portion of the *Lakshanas* mentioned as *Viddha Lakshanas* are results of abnormal circulation or oxygen deficiency to the body tissues.

In the disease explained as *Shwasa*, somewhat same symptoms are observed as that of *Dushti* of *Pranavaha Srotasa*. Thus, treatment is same for both the conditions.

The diseases of pulmonary system like pulmonary hypertension or embolism, COPD etc. can be included in the diseases of *Pranavaha Srotasa*.

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