

CONCEPT OF RAKTADHATU – A REVIEW ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

All the dhatus are evolved in the foetal stages of development, and nourished by the ahara rasa thereafter the verse 'rasat raktam' implies the replenishment of the rakta dhatu; the ras dhatu nourishes the already existent rakta dhatu and replenishes it in quality and quantity. The poshak rakta dhatu formed during the formation of rasa dhatu, enters the raktavaha strotas where it is acted upon by the rakta dhatvagni to produce stable, nourished form of rakta dhatu. This article revolves around the detailed description of rakta dhatu.

KEYWORDS: Rakta dhatu, jivana, rakta dhatu formation.

INTRODUCTION

Human physiology depend on dosha, dhatu, mala. dhatu are building blocks of body. Among these seven dhatus, rakta is the most important dhatu as it carries out function of jeevan. Entity that sustains & grows, nourishes the body is called dhatu. sharir dharnat dhatavh dhatu indicates sustenance of body and nourishment from only & only sara portion of aahar. these dhatus are of 7 types. Ras, rakta, mansa, med, asthi majja, shukra.^[1] Out of these seven rakta is second dhatu. Which is responsible for the further formation of five dhatus. Whatever food we are taking, after digestion it is divided into 2 parts: sara (useful part) and kitta (kitta). useful part is converted into ras dhatu. while unuseful part is excreted from body in the form of urine, sweat, stool. If we take aahra ras in good form it will be converted into good form of ras dhatu and these sara ras dhatu will be used for formation of rakta dhatu.

DISCUSSION

- **Mahabhut Pradhanya**

Ras dhatu predominantly have tej and jala mahabhut in its constitution.^[2]

- **Location**

According aacharya charak, hriday is the special stan of rakta dhatu.^[3] spleen and liver is the principle organs of raktavaha strotas.^[4] from heart ras and rakta dhatu are circulated in whole body.

- **Alternative Names**

Rudhira, asruk, shonita, kshataja, lohita and asra are alternative names of rakta. The names rakta, lohita, shonita indicates its red colour, while kshataj implies the substance which oozes or flows out of an open wound.

- **Physiological Measure of Rakta Dhatu**

Rakta dhatu is eight anjali in measure.^[5] One anjali is equal to the quantity that can be filled in a space formed from joining one's palms together.

- **Kala:** The production of rakta dhatu requires a period of five days after the production of rasadhatu.^[6]

- **Mala:** Mala of rakta dhatu is pittadosha.^[7]

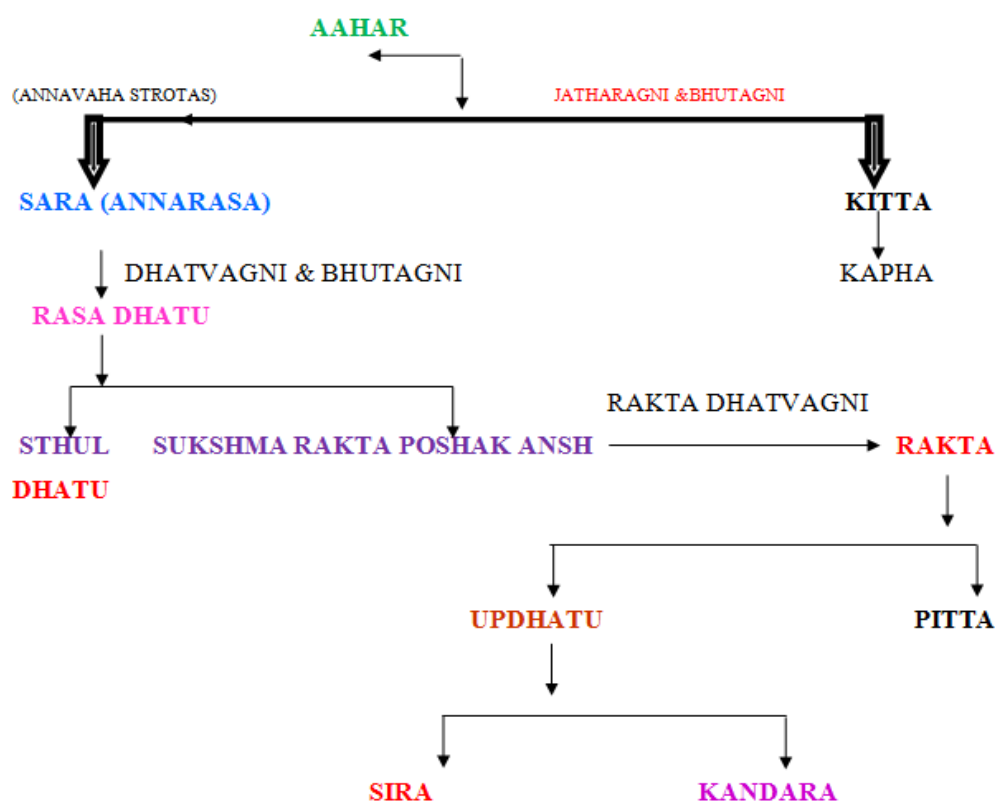
- **Formation of Rakta Dhatu**

All the dhatus are evolved in the foetal stages of development and nourished by the ahara rasa thereafter the verse 'rasat raktam' implies the replenishment of the rakta dhatu; the ras dhatu nourishes the already existent rakta dhatu and replenishes it in quality and quantity.

The poshak rakta dhatu formed during the formation of rasa dhatu, enters the raktavaha strotas where it is acted upon by the rakta dhatvagni to produce stable, nourished form of rakta dhatu.^[8]

Acharya sushruta says that the fluid rasdhatu is dyed into red colour in the organ of liver and spleen. The liver and spleen are the main destination of rakta vaha strotas, where the action of rakta dhatvagni takes place.^[9] acharya sushruta also uses the word 'ranjakagni for rakta dhatvagni'. This ranjakagni is responsible for the transformation of ras into rakta, and

importing colour to the rakta dhatu.^[10] the astanga sangraha states that the main location of ranjakagni is the amashaya.^[11] It is possible that the word amashaya actually implies all the organs in the vicinity of amashaya(amashaya pradeshi) which also includes the liver and spleen as evident from the study of anatomy of visceral organs.



CLINICAL IMPORTANCE OF RAKTA DHATU

• Rakta sara^[12]

The person with rakta sara exhibits qualities of a healthy and well nourished rakta dhatu with essence traits. The earlobes, eyes, oral cavity, nose, palms of hands and feet, lips and nails of a raktasara person are snigdha, radiant and exhibit a reddish hue. The rakta sara personalities are intellectual with sharp grasping powers, tenders, enthusiastic and with average physical strength and a peaceful lifestyle, they are intolerant to heat and strain.

• Rakta vruddhi^[13]

Rakta vruddhi is indicated by symptoms like craving for blood and an overfull state of sira or vessels carrying rakta.

- **Rakta kshaya**^[14,15]

Rakta kshaya causes dryness (roughness) and cracked skin, the complexion appears dull and dry. The sira turns slack and the patient craves for amla and sheeta substances.

A craving of meat recipes treated with black currants, pomegranates, lavana and sneha is also typical in the patients of raktakshaya. The patient also craves for substances amla in rasa and those mixed with curds.

- **Raktavaha strotas**^[16]

Diseases caused by the raktavaha strotas (channels of rakta dhatu) dushti are: Kushtha, visarp, pidaka, raktpitta, pradar, gudmendrapak, pleeha, gulma, vidradhi, nilika, kamla, dadru, tilkalak, charmdal, pama, koth, raktamandal.

- **Functions of rakta dhatu**^[17,18,19]

The main function of rakta dhatu is described as 'jivana' which means the indication and sustenance of life force. The pran vayu circulates along with the blood imbibes life into all the living cells. The pran vayu from the external atmosphere is transformed into its bodily assimilable form and then circulated with the blood in the entire body, and the rakta dhatu thereby performs its function of jivana, it therefore occurs that, on stoppage of blood flow to any of the bodily organs or limbs, the particular part dies and withers off.

The health and care of complexion and a pleasant expression as regards of physical health is also the function of rakta dhatu. It also imparts strength, health and thereby happiness and also a distinct sense of touch. The rakta is also responsible for production of mansa dhatu.

- **Rakta can be termed as fourth dosha ?**^[20]

Acharya sushruta, who primarily deals with the field of 'shalyatantra' has extensively described the subject 'vrana'. The rakta, in the incident of vrana, invariably gets contaminated and hence acharya sushruta refers to rakta as dosha while dealing with this specific topic. He does not refer too rakta being the fourth dosha anywhere other than this particular subject in his compendium neither does he mention rakta as the foundation of bodily constitution along with vata, pitta and kapha.

The doshas are present since the time of conception or the initiation of life, rakta does not find its existence from this stage, and hence cannot be referred to as dosha. (Prakruti arambhakatva).

Thus, chakradutta elucidates that the rakta cannot be termed as the fourth dosha since it doesnot exhibit the two basic properties of doshas which are their ability to get infected themselves and then affect other element, and their existence since the time of initiation of life or conception. Hence it is reiterated that vata, pitta and kapha alone come under the category of doshas. It is thereby important to understand that the disease of rasa, rakta and other dhatus are infact diseases caused as a result of doshas affecting those specific dhatus.

CONCLUSION

The tissue framework of the body comprise of seven sorts of fundamental tissues or sapta-dhatu. one among those is rakta. Which helps in the formation of further other dhatus. Its main function is jivana. The poshak rakta dhatu formed during the formation of rasa dhatu, enters the raktavaha strotas where it is acted upon by the rakta dhatvagni to produce stable, nourished form of rakta dhatu. Acharya sushruta says that the fluid rasdhatu is dyed into red colour in the organ of liver and spleen. the liver and spleen are the main destination of rakta vaha strotas, where the action of rakta dhatvagni takes place. Rakta supports the mamsa dhatu, carries shine to the skin and keeps an individual alive. Rakta dhatu circles in the body and supplies supplements to all dhatus and is in charge of the presence, backing and upkeep of body.

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