AYURVEDA CONCEPTS OF SROTAS AND THEIR PHYSIOLOGICAL ROLE IN BODY: AN AYURVEDA REVIEW

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ABSTRACT
Ayurveda classics emphasized concept of “Srotomayam hi shariram” which indicates that human body is comprised of innumerable minute channels which helps to perform transportation of many nutrients and waste. Ayurveda described these minute channels as Srotas which govern gross and subtle energetic. Srotas are macro and micro pathways of body which are filtering, leaking and secreting in nature. Srotas are systems of body in which material get metabolized, transported and secreted. Srotas transport nutrients thus potentiates Dhatus and helps to maintain normal circulatory process of body. Srotas are fine capillary routes which a help in perfusing micro pathways of body which are also perform function similar to that of materials transporting through them. Vagbhata described two types of Srotas as depicted in Figure 1.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Srotas, Physiology, Channels.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda mentioned that human body comprises innumerable channels (Srotas) which performs many physiological activities. The Dosha & Dhathu exhibited their physiological role inside the body with the help of Srotas and elimination of Mala and toxins also facilitated by Srotas. The Ayavayas (organs) associated with Srotas and these minute channels support each organs of body to perform their function. The term Srotas derived from the word “Susravana” which means process of exudation, to ooze and to filter. The flow and transportation of substances takes place through the Srotas therefore these channels needed for nutritional supply, tissue building and detoxification.[1-4]

Sushruta mentioned that Srotas helps in the transportation of Prana, Anna, Vari and Dhathu. Srotas are pathways of nervous system governed by Vayu and play important role in physiology of human body. The other anatomical structures of human body i.e. vein, artery, lymphatics ducts, capillary, body orifices, repertories and resorts, etc. are also perform function similar to that of Srotas therefore described as synonyms of Srotas in some classical texts of Ayurveda.[3-6]

Srotas are Shthula, Anu, Vrutta, Deergha and Pratanasadruasha in nature, the colour of Srotas is similar to that of materials transporting through them. Vagbhata described two types of Srotas as depicted in Figure 1.

The Sthula Srotas are perceptible while Sukshma Srotas are imperceptible. Charaka has said that biochemical molecules under metabolic process are held and carried through Srotas. These Srotas are considered functional pathways for Prasadhakya and Malakhyya molecules, thus Srotas are important for maintaining supply of essential nutrients and to eliminate waste from the body.[6-8]

The specific properties of Srotas support their physiological functioning in following ways
- Gross nature helps to carries bulk of biochemical process.

Figure 1: Types of Srotas as per Vagbhata.
The microscopic nature support transportation of small molecules, absorption and diffusion of biomolecules and dugs.

The round shape helps to retain substances within Srotas.

Elongated shape provide directive transportation.

Ayurveda described clinical aspect of Srotas, the disturbance in Srotas regarded as Atipravritti, Sanga, Sira granthi and Vimarg guman, etc. Atipravritti means excessive flow thorough Srotas, Sanga means retention of materials by Srotas, Sira granthi means dilatation veins and Vimarg guman indicates flow of other content or opposite way flow.

Importance of Srotas

- Any corporeal entities can’t arise or decay without Srotas.
- They are transporting passages for metabolic transformation.
- The pervasiveness and diffusiveness of Srotas aggravates and pacifies Dosha.
- Srotas forms both gross channels i.e. gastrointestinal tract, respiratory tract and genito-urinary tract, etc., as well as micro channels including capillaries, lymphatic system and vessels, etc.,
- Srotas also associated with molecular channels and membranous pores of body.
- It is stated that healthy state of Srotas is prerequisite for the maintenance of good health.
- Disturbance in Srotas may leads to Sammurchana of Dosha and Dushya which results pathological condition inside the body.
- Kshaya & Viradh of body components not possible without the help of Srotas.
- Srotas by eliminating waste prevent condition of edema and swelling.

Physiological role of Srotas

Srotas manages pH, maintain body temperature and regulate thermostat of body.

Srotas helps to regulate enzymes activities and hormonal functioning.

Srotas maintain electrolyte balance and prevent deprivation of body.

Srotas helps in biotransformation and metabolic process of body.

Srotas carries Poshyaabhavas which can be used by tissue, these Poshyaabhavas transported by Srotas support tissues to perform their functioning.

Srotas facilitate selective absorption and diffusion of substances which forms essential biological products i.e. urine, blood and sweat, etc.

Srotas facilitate process of sweating which is important for detoxifying body and maintaining temperature of body.

Srotas helps to maintain fluid level of body thus retain circulatory process.

Srotas as mentioned above nourishes body thus regulates process of growth and development.

Srotas transport Rasa which carries inherent antibodies, in this way Srotas support defense mechanism of body facilitate transportation of antibodies at the site of action.

Srotas provides energy by circulating essence of Ahara therefore helps to perform routine work.

Rejuvenates body and maintain exchange of gases.

Srotas helps in reproductive functioning and play vital role in regulating menstrual cycle in female.

Specific functioning of Srotas

There are different types of Srotas based on their origin and distribution, these Srotas perform particular action and govern normal physiology of human body, Pranavaha Srotas, Udakavaha Srotas, Rakta vaha Srotas, Mutravaha Srotas, Anna Vaha Srotas, Rasa Vaha Srotas, Sukra Vaha and Artava Vaha Srotas, etc. are some Srotas which control specific activities of body. Pranavaha Srotas helps in transporting Prana, Udakavaha Srotas transport water and other fluids. Rakta vaha Srotas carries Raktu, Mutravaha Srotas involves in transportation of urine and waste products. Anna Vaha Srotas transports Ana Rasa and nutrients, Sukra Vaha & Artava Vaha Srotas support reproductive system and Rasa Vaha Srotas perform transportation of Rasa.1-10

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda Acharyas described importance of Srotas towards health and integrity of physiological system. Srotas are considered inner transport system of human body which support many physiological activities related to the Doshas, Dhatu, Oja and Agni, etc. Srota are mainly perform function of transportation of biomaterials therefore provides nourishment to the tissue and facilitate elimination of waste materials from the body thus govern detoxification process which is very important for retaining normal health. Metabolism of Poshya dhatu also occurs in Srotas these metabolites as essence of
Ahara reaches to the various parts of body through Srotas. The formation, transportation and destruction of Dosha, Dhatu and Mala depends upon physiology of Srotas therefore normal functioning of Srotas is important for maintain good health status.

REFERENCES