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CONCEPT OF SROTAS IN RELATION TO BODY CHANNELS

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Abstract:

Ayurveda is an ancient Indian practice of holistic medical science which stresses upon the equilibrium of *Dosha, Dhātu, Agni & Mala*. This equilibrium helps in living a healthy life. Although, to attain such an equilibrium it is very important that these bodily elements should continuously be transported & circulated throughout the body. ‘*Strotas*’ perform this function of transportation in the body. Proper functioning of these *Strotas* is necessary to maintain the health & wellbeing of an individual. The *Strotas* mentioned by our *Acharyas* can be correlated with various body channels. Any obstruction in these body channels causes several diseases in the body. Hence, to understand the disease process, & develop a cure for the same there is a need to study the fundamental concept of *Strotas* in relation to various body channels

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INTRODUCTION:

There are various factors that help in the body's development process such as, *Dosha*, *Dhatu* & *Mala*. These elements should keep flowing in the body round the clock, to ensure health of an individual. For these elements to flow we require various large & small hollow channels working as a transport system, throughout the body.

"*SravanaatSrotaamsi*" (Ref- *Ch. Su 30/12*). Means, those from which *sravana* or flow of body substances takes place are called as "*Srotas*". The word '*Srotas*' got its derivation from another Sanskrit term '*Sravana*', which means oozing. The materials in these *srotas* pass through them very slowly, & their movement is ensured by the dominance of *Aakash* & *VayuMahabhoot*.

Our *acharyas* have described *srotas* in different ways, for instance –

Acharya Sushrut described *srotas* as structures that get their origin from organs that are hollow & their function is to transport various elements & materials throughout the body. Whereas, *AcharyaCharak* opines that *srotas* are *Sira*, *Dhamani*, *Nadi*, *Rasavahini* etc. One particular *srotas* can serve only to one particular *dhatu*, as different *dhatu*s are situated at different places.

TYPES OF SROTAS:

Basically, the *srotas* are of two types:

- *BahirMukhSrotas* (*MahantiSrotas*)
- *AntarMukhSrotas* (*YogavahiSrotas*)

"*BahirMukhSrotas*" are 10 in number- 02 each for Nose, Ears & Eyes.

01 each for Penis, Mouth & Anal Orifice, & 10th is located in the head. In females, there are 3 more orifices mentioned- 02 in *Sthana* (breast) & 01 in *GarbhaVartam* (Cervical opening). The "*AntarMukhSrotas*" are basically the body channels, & are mentioned in the table below.

These channels have the same colour & texture as that of their corresponding *dhatu*s. *AcharyaCharaka* has described 13 main *Srotas* in the 5th chapter of *Vimansthana* as per their origin and abnormality produced when they get vitiated. Whereas, *AcharyaShusrut* described only 11 pairs of *srotas*, & called them *Yogavahi*. All the *srotas* have their own *moolsthan*. Any infection caused at

the root or *moolsthan* of a particular *srotas* causes the vitiation of that *srotas*, thus hampering its functions & causing various diseases related to it. The table below shows the *moolsthan* of various *srotas* explained by our *acharyas*.

S.NO	SROTAS	MOOLSTHAN
1.	Pranavaha	Hridaya (Brain and heart), Mahasrotas
2.	Udakavaha	Talu, Kloma (oropharynx)
3.	Annavaha	Stomach, left flank
4.	Rasavaha	Hridaya (heart), ten dhamani
5.	Mamsavaha	Ligament, skin
6.	Medovaha	Kidneys, omentum
7.	Asthivaha	Adipose tissue, Jaghan
8.	Majjavaha	Bones, joints
9.	Shukravaha	Testes, pudendum
10.	Mutravaha	Urinary bladder, vankshanas (kidneys)
11.	Purishvaha	Large intestine, rectum
12.	Svedavaha	Adipose tissue, hair follicles
13.	Artavavaha	Uterus, fallopian tubes
14.	Manovaha	Hridaya (Heart and Brain)

FUNCTIONS OF STROTAS:

- All *dosh, dhatu & Mala* are dependent on *srotas* for their formation.
- The *sravana* or oozing is caused due to very slow movement of dhatus in their respective channels.
- Metabolism of *poshyadhatu* occurs in *srotas*.
- Each *srotas* provides nutrition to their respective *dhatu*.
- *Srotas* are responsible for growth, development & depletion of body tissues, etc.

BODY CHANNELS:

The body contains various channels, tubular, transportation & duct system, which can otherwise be called as *Srotas*. Extensive knowledge of *srotas* is needed, since the whole body is made up of millions of *srotases*. The beautifully crafted transport system of our inner world (our body) operates with its own intelligence, similar to that of the external world around us. Being updated about this transport system will help us to keep a track of our condition of health or ill-health.

For example- if a person is having difficulty in breathing we can straightaway guess that his *PranavahaSrotas* is vitiated. Same way, if a person has digestion related issues we can blame the *AnnavaahaSrotas*. This helps the patient to properly explain his/her health issues & also helps the physician to decide which particular *srotas* is vitiated, in turn helping in providing the best possible treatment to the diseased

CONCLUSION:

Srotas are basically the transport system of the body, in addition to the circulatory system. They perform various functions such as- excretion, transportation & exchange of materials carried by them. They are specific to the carrier substances which they transport. This can even be noticed in the nomenclature given to the *Srotas* (for ex- *UdakvahaSrotas, AnnavaahaSrotas, RaktavahaSrotas* etc). These *srotas* are very important to transport material which required maintaining health and fighting various diseases. The *srotas* are believed to be hollow channels of the body, whose vitiation causes severe health issues. Hence, by thoroughly understanding the concept of *srotas* in relation to body channels, a physician can take an accurate decision with respect to the treatment & prognosis of a disease.

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