

Review Article

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A REVIEW ON *RAKTAVAHA SROTAS* AND ITS CLINICAL DISORDERS IN AYURVEDIC PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Srotas are channels for the transport of body substances, specifically those in the process of metabolic conversion. *Srotas* have been seen by some researchers as being micro-vascular channels for the substance exchange. This exchange between interstitial fluid and intravascular elements is done through *Ayana*, which are specialized pores. The number of *Srotas* depends on various Ayurvedic scholars and each *Srotas* contains an individual *Mulasthana*. *Raktavaha Srotas* is the vessel through which *Rakta* passes. Its *Mulasthana*, consists of the *Yakrit*, *Pleeha* and *Raktavahini Dhamani*. Unhealthy food habits like taking *Vidahi* articles, *Snigdha* and *Ushna Drava* and external conditions like sunlight exposure and wind can cause *Dusti* of the *Raktavaha Srotas*. *Raktavaha Srotas* are therefore essential in the formation as well as flow of blood. The diseases that occur due to its failure are *Kustha*, *Visarpa*, *Pidika*, *Kamala*, *Asrigdara* and *Arbuda*, etc. The therapeutic interventions for managing *Dusti* of the *Raktavaha Srotas* are *Raktamokshana*, *Virechana* and *Upavasa*.

Key-Words: *Ayurveda, Raktavaha Srotas, Dusti, Mulasthana, Channels*

Introduction

Srotas are the channels in the body, which refers to processes such as flowing, filtering, oozing and exuding. According to *Charaka Samhita*, *Srotas* are bodily structures upon or through which the process of *Stravana* takes place. *Raktavaha Srotas* are the pathways that perform the formation, transport and metabolism of *Rakta Dhatu*. It is tasked with transporting oxygen and nutrients to the body, thus maintaining general nourishment and vitality. The *Mulasthanas* of *Raktavaha Srotas* are the *Yakrit* and *Pleeha*. Lack of physical activity in modern sedentary lives is major contributory factor towards *Dushti* of these channels. These vitiations frequently cause disorders of the liver, spleen and skin [1-4].

Some of the symptoms, such as *Pandu* and *Kamala*, particularly point towards liver involvement. Other presenting symptoms like *Daha*, *Jwara*, *Kotha* and *Asra Mandalam* represent systemic inflammatory processes. Diseases like *Shwitra*, *Pama* and *Vyanga* imply *Rakta Dushti*, which tends to weaken the immune system. As per the classical Ayurvedic literatures, *Rakta Dhatu* is created due to the conversion of *Rasa Dhatu*, which is helped by *Ranjaka Pitta* in the *Yakrit* and *Pleeha* [3-5].

Physiological Significance

- ✚ *Rakta Dhatu* is transported throughout the body carries *Pranavayu* and essential nutrients
- ✚ It supports *Ojas*, *Tejas* and *Prana*.
- ✚ It keeps the deeper tissues nourished and the skin and complexion healthy.
- ✚ This *Srota* is essential for preserving the body's healthy oxygenation, nutrition and vitality.

Raktavahasrotas Dushti Hetu

- ✓ Consumption of *Vidahi Ahara* and *Pana*
- ✓ Excessive consumption of *Snigdha* and *Ushna Drava*
- ✓ Exposure to *Atapa* and *Anila* for prolonged periods can also interfere with the normal functioning of *Raktavaha Srotas*.

Pathogenesis

Raktavaha Srotas are the conduits through which *Rakta Dhatu* circulates in the body, and their integrity and functioning are important for the upkeep of general health and vitality. When the conduits get vitiated or disturbed, a variety of clinical conditions may develop. The main reasons for such vitiation are overindulgence in hot, spicy, or oily foods and beverages, which worsen *Pitta* and *Rakta*, causing more heat and inflammation in the blood channels. Moreover, excessive exposure to external factors such as sunlight and wind causes further aggravation of the *Doshas*, primarily *Pitta* and *Vata*, which is responsible for the disturbance. Other contributing factors are the lifestyle habits, trauma, accumulation of *Ama* and inefficient digestion, etc. Derangement of the *Raktavaha Srotas* can manifest in several pathological changes and symptoms, including cyanosis due to compromised circulatory and oxygenation of the blood; *Jwara* (reflecting systemic inflammatory processes); *Pandu* (indicating deficiency or derangement of *Rakta Dhatu*), *Raktapitta* (due to fragile or damaged channels of the blood) and reddish coloration of the eyes, usually indicative of *Pitta* and *Rakta* aggravation. In addition to that, *Kushtha* such as rashes, boils and abscesses may arise from vitiated *Rakta* acting on the skin, as well as abscess formation through local infection of the blood channels [5-8].

Diseases of *Raktavahasrotas Dushti*:

- ✓ The *Raktavaha Srotas* related diseases, described in the *Brihatrayee* which cover a broad range of conditions including *Kustha*, *Visarpa*, *Pidika*, *Raktapitta*, *Gulma*, *Kamala*, *Pleeharoga* and *Vidradhi*.
- ✓ Other symptoms involve *Nilika*, *Pipalava*, *Dadaru*, *Charmadal*, *Switra*, *Pama*, *Kotha*, *Rakta Mandala*.
- ✓ Inflammatory disorders like *Gudapaka* and *Medhrapaka*, *Mukhapaka*, *Lingapaka* and *Vatarakta* are all part of *Raktavaha Srotas*.
- ✓ Others diseases are *Indralupta*, *Arsha* and *Arbuda*.
- ✓ General systemic signs are *Angamarda*, *Daha*, *Agninash*, *Murcha* and *Tama Pravesh*.
- ✓ Other symptoms like *Lalima* and *Upakosh* can also be found.

Specific Diseases of *Raktavahasrotas Dushti*:

Category	Clinical Conditions
<i>Rakta Dushti</i>	<i>Kustha, Pama, Kitibha</i> <i>Visarpa</i> <i>Charma Roga</i>
Liver & Spleen Disorders	<i>Yakritodara</i> <i>Plihodara</i> <i>Kamala</i> <i>Pandu</i>
Systemic Inflammatory Conditions	<i>Jwara of Raktaja origin</i> Blood-borne infections Autoimmune conditions where <i>Rakta</i> is a <i>Dushya</i>

***Raktavaha Srotas Chikitsa*:**

Disorders of the *Raktavaha Srotas* should be treated according to *Raktapitta Chikitsa*, using techniques like *Virechana* and *Raktamokshana*. *Rakta Vimargagamana* is treated using *Kashaya Rasa* and *Raktastambhak* medicines, such as *Nagakeshara* and *Raktabol* for downward movement and *Vasa* for upward movement. *Raktavaha Srotas* diseases can be effectively treated with *Tikta Rasa* medications such as *Karanja*, *Nimba*, *Sariva*, *Khadira* and *Manjistha*, etc. *Shodhana* can be employed which includes therapies such as *Virechana*, *Raktamokshana* and *Basti*, etc. *Abhyanga* and *Parisheka* with *Sheeta Dravyas* in hemorrhagic conditions can be employed. Therapies like *Abhyanga* with *Taila*, *Nasya* and *Ghritapana* are prescribed in *Kushtha*. *Raktavasechana* in *Shaka Dushti*, *Vamana* or *Virechana* in *Visarpa* are selected based on *Dosha* predominance. *Virechana* may be employs using *Aragwadh* and *Triphala* to cure *Kamala* [7-9].

Medicines in *Shamana Chikitsa* are selected based on their properties as mentioned in **Figure 1**. *Rakta* is enhanced by *Madhura Rasa* dominating medications, blood is detoxified by *Rakta Shodhaka dravyas* such as; *Sariva*, *Khadira* and *Manjistha*, etc.

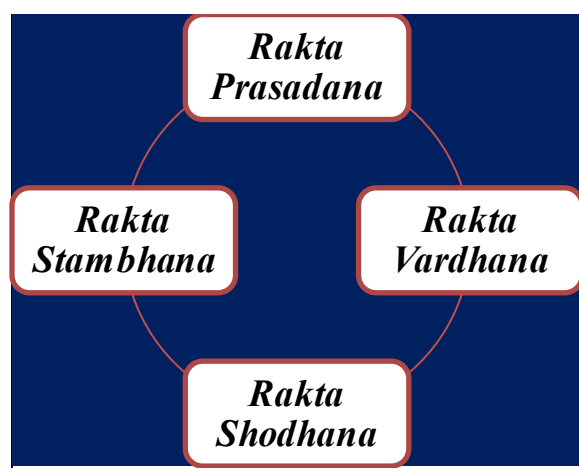


Figure 1: Properties of Ayurvedic Drugs required treating *Raktavaha Srotas* Disorders

Blood flow is normalized by medications such as *Gairik*, *Priyangu* and *Madhuka*, etc. While *Asruk Vahana* medications like *Tagara* like *Sarshapa* improve circulation, *Pipplyadi Gana dravyas* breaks up clots. The quality of *Rakta Dhatu* is improved by *Raktaprasadana* medications such as *Manjistha*, *Mandur* and *Punarnava*, etc [8-10].

Conclusion

Structurally, *Srotas* are empty tubes that arise from certain areas of the roots, extending into the whole body to serve as a transport system that supplies the needs of the organism for nutrition. The *Raktavaha Srotas*, depending on their *Utpattisthana*, can be related to the haemopoietic system. The liver and spleen, as per the *Sangrahashthana*, serve as large reservoirs of blood. *Raktavaha Srota* is involved in the production, movement and operation of *Rakta Dhatu*, which is necessary for immunity, vigor and sustenance. Systemic and localized diseases might result from their vitiation brought on by poor food, lifestyle, and environmental factors. Ayurvedic treatments such as *Raktamokshana*, *Virechana* and herbal cures help to restore normal functioning of *Raktavaha Srotas*.

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