

PRAANAVAHA SROTAS AND ITS MOOLA – AN ANALYTICAL OUTLOOK

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ABSTRACT

In an equilibrium state, the *tridoshas* conduct and control all the physiological functions of the body. But only *vayu* has the capacity to move the *dhatwadi* from one place to another for the nourishment. For this purpose body provides separate pathways called *Srotas*. All the physiological and pathological processes are mainly dependent on these *srotas*. In Ayurvedic classics, *srotas* is defined as the channel through which *poshaka dhatus* which are going to be transformed into next *dhatu* moves within and exudates out. There are totally eleven pairs of *yogavahi srotas* or thirteen *sthoola srotas* in human body and each *srotas* have their particular *moola sthanas*. Also there are nine *baahya srotas* or *chidra* i.e external openings of the body. *Praanavaha srotas* is the pathway for *praanaswaropi vayu* and hence sustains life. *Acharya Sushruta* considered *Hrudaya* and *Rasavaha dhamani* as *moola sthana* of *Praanavaha srotas*, whereas *Acharya Charaka* considered *Hrudaya* and *Mahasrotas* as its *moola sthana*.

This review gives an analytical look over the *moola sthanas* of *Pranavaha srotas* in Ayurvedic perspective.

Keywords: *Praanavaha srotas, Hrudaya, Mahasrotas, Rasavaha dhamani.*

INTRODUCTION

The term *srotas* means a structural and functional passage or channel for the flow of *dhatus*. Along with the *dhatus*, other entities like *doshas*, *anna*, *udaka*, *prana* and *malas* also move within the channels. The *dhatwadi* will flow out by diffusion and hence nourishes whole body.

Srotas are considered as two types i.e *Abhyantara srotas* and *Baahya srotas*.

Abhyantara srotas are the one which have their opening within the body and *dhatus* passing through them nourishes whole body and *baahya srotas* are the external openings.

Praanavaha srotas is an *abhyantara srotas* which does *sravana of praanarupi vayu* and sustains life. *Acharya Sushruta* said its number as two and *mula* as *Hrudaya* and *Rasavaha dhamani*. *Acharya Charaka* mentioned *mula*

of *pranavaha srotas* as *Hrudaya* and *Mahasrotas*.

Literary Review:

Srotas:

Srotas are defined as the channel through which *dhatu* that are going to be transformed

into another *dhatu* (*parinaama apadhyamaananam*) will be carried to various parts of body and nourishes whole body.^[1]

Enumeration of Srotas:

Acharya Charaka has said that there are innumerable *srotas*.^[2] Among them *sthoala srotas* are thirteen in number.^[3]

<i>Praanavaha srotas</i>	<i>Asthivaha srotas</i>
<i>Udakavaha srotas</i>	<i>Majjavaha srotas</i>
<i>Annavaha srotas</i>	<i>Shukravaha srotas</i>
<i>Rasavaha srotas</i>	<i>Mutravaha srotas</i>
<i>Raktavaha srotas</i>	<i>Pureeshavaha srotas</i>
<i>Maamsavaha srotas</i>	<i>Swedavaha srotas</i>
<i>Medavaha srotas</i>	-

According to Acharya Sushruta:^[4]

Acharya Sushruta considered eleven pairs of *yogavahi srotas*.

<i>Praanavaha srotas</i>	<i>Medavaha srotas</i>
<i>Annavaha srotas</i>	<i>Mutravaha srotas</i>
<i>Udakavaha srotas</i>	<i>Pureeshavaha srotas</i>
<i>Rasavaha srotas</i>	<i>Shukravaha srotas</i>
<i>Raktavaha srotas</i>	<i>Artavavaha srotas</i>
<i>Maamsavaha srotas</i>	-

Praavanavaha srotas and its moola:

Praanavaha srotas is the channel for the *praana swaroop vayu*, i.e *praana vayu* which we inhale as it is said “*praana sagnyaka vatavahanaam*”.^[5]

Acharya Sushruta considered *Hrudaya* and *Rasavaha dhamani* as *moola sthana* of *Praanavaha srotas*^[6], whereas *Acharya Charaka* considered *Hrudaya* and *Mahasrotas* as its *moola sthana*^[7].

DISCUSSION

Praavanavaha srotas:

Praanavaha srotas is the channel for the *praana swaroop vayu*, i.e *praana vayu* which we inhale as it is said “*praana sagnyaka vatavahanaam*”. The word *Praana* is derived from the Sanskrit root “*An*” with a prefix “*Pra*”, “*An*” means to breath, to live. “*Pra*” = fulfil, movement, initiation “*Na*”= the nasal, Knowledge.

Thus, the whole word *Praana* means the initiation of nasal breath, which is necessary for the prolongation of life.

Moola:

Commenting on the word *Moola Acharya Chakrapani* has said “*moolamiti prabhavasthana*”^[8] means *moola* may be the site of origin of *srotas*, it can be the governing or protecting site or it may be considered as the place where first signs and symptoms manifest when injured.

Hrudaya as a moola:

Hrudaya is formed from *shonita kapha prasada* and it is the *aashraya* for *praanavaha dhamani*. Below and to left of *hrudaya*, *pleeha* and *phupusa* are present and to the right *yakrut* and *kloma* are situated. *Hrudaya* is *vishesha sthana* for *chetana*.^[9]

Hrudaya is *aashraya* for *dasha dhamani* i.e *ojhavaha dasha dhamani* which carry *prana* along with them. These *dhamani* arise from *hrudaya* and are spread around *hrudaya* like *nabhyaamara* (spokes of a wheel) and helps in *uchwasa* and *niswasa*. Also *hrudaya* is *aashraya* for *mana*, *buddhi*, *chetana* and *mahabuta* which helps in maintaining life.^[10]

Hrudaya is also considered as one among *dasha pranaayatana*.^[11]

By the above explanation, we can justify that *Hrudaya* is the *moola* of *pranahava srotas*.

Mahasrotas as a moola:

Mahasrotas is considered as *abhyantara rogamarga* and the synonyms given are *Kosta*, *Shareera Madhya*, *Mahanimna*, *Amashaya* and *Pakwashaya*.^[12]

In *Praanavaha sroto dusti*, the *laxanas* mentioned are *atisrusta* (continuous or long breathing), *atibadha* (obstructed breathing), *kupita* (irregular breathing), *alpaalpa* (shallow breathing), *abhikshna* (frequent breathing) and *sasabdha shoola* (breathing with sound and pain) – all these *laxanas* are produced due to involvement of *nidanas* which causes *dusti* of *mahasrotas*. Hence *mahasrotas* can be considered as *moola* of *praanavaha srotas*.^[13]

In the context of *praanavaha srotas chikitsa* it is said that *praanavaha srotas* should be treated as like that of *shwasa roga*^[14] and *shwasa roga* is *pittasthana samudbhava vyadhi* i.e *aamashayajanya vayadhi* (*kostha* or *mahasrotas*)

Rasavaha dhamani as a moola:

Rasavaha dhamani carries *prana swaroopa oaja* along with *rasa*.^[15] *Pranavayu* reaches every part of body through *rasavaha dhamani*. In the context of *dhamani*, it is mentioned that there are two *urdhwagata rasavaha dhamani*,^[16] two *adhogata rasavaha dhamani*^[17] and four *tiryakgata rasavaha dhamani*^[18] which carry *rasa* to both different parts of the body.

Thus *rasavaha dhamani* can be considered as *moola* of *praanavaha srotas*.

CONCLUSION

Praana here refers to *praana swaroopi vayu*. *Hrudaya* is considered as *moola* of *praanavahasrotas* as *Praanavaha dhamani* are situated here, *Mahasrotas* as a *moola* because the *srotodusti laxanas* are produced due to the involvement of *nidanas* which causes *dusti* of *mahasrotas* and *Rasavaha dhamani* as *moola*

because they carry *prana swaroopa oaja* along with *rasa*.

Dusti of these *srotas* may lead to vitiation of *dhatwadi* passing through them. As *pranavaha srotas dusthi* leads to impairment in *swasha prashwasha kriya* one should be cautious and avoid the *nidana* causing *pranavaha srotodusthi*.

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