

ELEMENTARY DOCTRINE OF SROTAS AND MAHASROTAS

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Abstract: The basic theory of srotas is mentioned in ayurved by various aacharyas like Charak, Sushrut and Vagbhat. By its essential aspect, srotas is divided in to Bahirmukha srotas and Antarmukha srotas. This categorization is mentioned by Charakacharya and Sushrutacharya. But Ashtanghridayakar i.e. Vagbhatacharya has explained the concept of Mahasrotas. This concept of Mahasrotas is explained in Ashtang Hriday Sutrasthan 12th adhyaya and 46th shloka. According to Vagbhatacharya, he has used the phrase Antahkoshtha. Antahkoshtha is not anything but Mahasrotas. This Antahkoshtha is present in the ashraya of Amashay and Pakwashay. So, this Mahasrotas is considered as the third type of srotas along with antarmukha srotas and bahirmukha srotas according to Ashtanghridayakar. This srotas is biggest, so it is called as Mahasrotas. As far as anatomy concerns, this Mahasrotas can be taken as alimentary or digestive canal along with its components. According to Sushrutacharya, mahasrotas is termed under the perception of Annavaha Srotas. This annavaha srotas can be taken as digestive system as per the modern anatomical aspect. So, Brihatrayi in Ayurved has given more stress on the srotas concept. In that also, on the Mahasrotas which can be compared and taken as annavahasrotas. So, Mahasrotas can be taken as the organs involved in alimentary system or digestive system. Antarmukh srotas are 11pairs as per Sushrutacharya and 13 according to Charakacharya. Bahirmukh srotas are 9 in males and 12 in females. Srotas are also termed as one of the rogmarga. So, study of basic aspect of srotas is essential.

Keywords: Srotas, Antarmukh, Bahirmukh and Mahasrotas

INTRODUCTION –

The word srotas in Ayurved is defined as sravanaat srotansi. Sravan means vahan or circulation of any liquid, semisolid or solid material. This srotas are the channels, tube or cord like structure, any cavity inside any organ or any entire organ in the human body which circulates the various materials through themselves. The functions of srotas are as, Grahan (storage), Sravan (secretion), Vahan (carry), Shoshan (absorbtion), Nissaran (elimination) and Vivechan (selectiveness). Srotas are also considered as one of the rogmarga in Ayurved. The concept of srotas is divided in to bahirmukh srotas which are nine in males and twelve in females. Second division is antarmukha srotas which are thirteen as per Charakacharya and eleven pairs as per Sushrutacharya. But Vagbhatacharya has mentioned the theory of Mahasrotas.

MAHASROTAS

This concept of Mahasrotas is explained in Ashtang Hriday Sutrasthan 12th adhyaya and 46th shloka. According to this reference, Vagbhatacharya has termed the word Antahkoshtha. Antahkoshtha is Mahasrotas. This Antahkoshtha is relates with amashay and pakwashay. This srotas is prime, so called as Mahasrotas. According to modern aspect of anatomy, this Mahasrotas can be taken as alimentary canal or digestive system along with its organs. Mainly one can take amashay (stomach) and pakwashay (intestines) in this as mentioned various acharyas. The similar concept is mentioned by Sushrutacharya and Charakacharya but in other words as Annavaha Srotas. So, Charak, Sushrut and Vagbhat have given more importance on the srotas concept. In this, on the Mahasrotas which can be considered as components of digestive system particularly amashay and pakwashay.

BAHIRMUKH SROTAS –

Bahirmukh srotas means the srotas or channels or openings which opens externally on the body. According to Sushrut Sharirasthan 5th aadhyay and 9th shloka, these bahirmukh srotas are 9 in males and 12 in females. These srotas are as, Shraavan (external ear openings), Nayan (eyeball), Vadan (oral cavity opening), Ghran (nostrils), Guda (anus), Medhra (external opening of penis). In females these are 13 additionally as 2 Stana (breast opening) and 1 Yoni (vaginal opening).

ANTARMUKH SROTAS –

Antarmukh srotas means the channels which opens within the human body. These are 13 according to Charakacharya and 11 pairs according to Sushrutacharya. Its distribution is as follows,

Sr. No.	Name of Srotas as per Charakacharya	Name of Srotas as per Sushrutacharya
1	Pranavaha srotas	Pranavaha srotas
2	Annavaaha srotas	Annavaaha srotas
3	Udakavaha srotas	Udakavaha srotas
4	Rasavaha srotas	Rasavaha srotas
5	Raktavaha srotas	Raktavaha srotas

6	Mansavaha srotas	Mansavaha srotas
7	Medavaha srotas	Medavaha srotas
8	Asthivaha srotas	Shukravaha srotas
9	Majjavaha srotas	Purishavaha srotas
10	Shukravaha srotas	Mootravaha srotas
11	Purishavaha srotas	Aartavvaha srotas
12	Mootravaha srotas	-----
13	Swedava srotas	-----

The basic difference between the two aacharyas is in the number of anatarmukh srotas. The second difference is that, Charakacharya has mentioned each srotas as single, but as per Sushrutacharya, each srotas is present in pair. According to modern science, these srotas can be compared with the certain structures within the human body. ^{1, 2, 3 & 4}

Sr. No.	Name of Srotas as per Charakacharya	Anatomical comparative Structures
1	Pranavaha srotas	Lung capillaries
2	Annavaha srotas	Oesophagus, Duodenum
3	Udakavaha srotas	Lymphatics
4	Rasavaha srotas	Capillaries
5	Raktavaha srotas	Capillaries of the Liver and Spleen
6	Mansavaha srotas	Capillaries of the muscles
7	Medavaha srotas	Capillaries of the perinephric tissue and the omentum
8	Asthivaha srotas	Bony system, Osteology
9	Majjavaha srotas	Bone marrow
10	Shukravaha srotas	Ductus deferens
11	Purishavaha srotas	Caecum and Colon
12	Mootravaha srotas	Renel tubules
13	Aartavvaha srotas	Blood vessels of the Uterus

DISCUSSION –

Srotas are nothing but fine channels or only channels, duct or cord like structure, capillaries, lymphatics, vessels or vessels of any organ and organs itself. These all mentioned structures can be compared with the word srotas. There are innumerable srotas are present in the human body which is mentioned by Charakacharya in Vimansthan 5th adhyay. Some of the srotas are not seen by bare eyes. But many of them can be easily seen. The basic division of srotas is made by various aacharyas. As per Vagbhatacharya, he has mentioned the word Mahasrotas. This Mahasrotas can be taken as entire alimentary or digestive system of the human body. Digestive system as mahasrotas means the different organs with their vessels, capillaries and lymphatics in this system. Bahirmukh srotas means the srotas or channels or openings which opens externally on the body. According to Sushrutacharya these bahirmukh srotas are 9 in males and 12 in females. These srotas are as, Shravan (external ear openings), Nayan (eyeball), Vadan (oral cavity opening), Ghran (nostrils), Guda (anus), Medhra (external opening of penis). In females these are 13 additionally as 2 Stana (breast opening) and 1 Yoni (vaginal opening). Antarmukh srotas means the channels which opens within the human body. These are 13 according to Charakacharya and 11 pairs according to Sushrutacharya. The difference is that, Charakacharya has mentioned Asthivaha, Majjavaha and Swedavaha srotas while Sushrutacharya has omitted the same and additionally explained Artavvaha srotas. Each srotas is having its moolasthan (origin point). Srotas is also considered as one of the rogmarga according to Ayurved. ^{1, 2, 3&4}

CONCLUSION –

Srotas are fine channels or only channels, duct or cord like structure, capillaries, lymphatics, vessels or vessels of any organ and organs itself. Srotas basically divides in to 3 types as Bahirmukha, Antarmukha and Mahasrotas. Antarmukha srotas are 13 and 11 pairs respectively as per Charkacharya and Sushrutacharya. The concept of Mahasrotas is explained by Vagbhatacharya. Srotas is also considered as one of the rogmarga. Each srotas is having its moolasthan.

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