



# ARTAVAHA SROTAS - A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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## ABSTRACT

The number of *Srotas* are specifically compared with the number of *Bhavas* in our body. In our body, there is *Aparisankheya* (innumerable) *bhava*, so the number of *Srotas* is also *Aparisankheya* these *srotas* are very closely associated with their respective *moola sthana*. These *moola sthana* are very important from treatment and prognostic aspect as its involvement in the formation, examination and control over the *bhavapadartha* flowing through the *srotas*. Number of *Srotas* are different by different *Acharyas*. The *Srotas* have their own *Moola sthana* or root. *Chakrapani* mentioned *Moola sthana* of *Srotas* as *Prabhavasthan* means the origin or birth place. According to *Acharya Shushruta* there are two roots of *Artav-vaha srotas*, *Garbhashaya* (uterus) and *Artav - vaha dhamani* Injury to *artavavaha srotas* leads to infertility, dysperunia, and amenorrhea. As per context *Artava* can be considered as ovum and menstrual bleeding i.e. *Beejarupi artava* and *drustaratva* respectively The *Beejarupi artava* released from ovary reaches the *garbhashaya* and unites with *shukra* (sperm) to form *garbha* (fetus). *Artava* which is accumulated in a month is drawn towards the vaginal orifice by *vata* through the *dhamanis* and this is called *drustartava*. Considering two dimensions of the word *artava* (*beejarupi*, *drustartava*) and *garbha* formation, *mula* of *artavavaha srotas* is being mentioned as *garbhashaya* and *artavavahi dhamani*.

**KEYWORDS:** *Srotas*, *artava*, *garbhashaya*, *beejarupi*, *drustaratva*.

## INTRODUCTION

The *srotas* (systems) are fundamental and basic concept in Ayurveda accepted by all contemporary *Acharya*. The energy required for our day to day activity bodily metabolic processes is been provided by the external basic factors *Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned 11 pairs of *srotas* in *Sushruta Samhita* while *Acharya Charaka* has realized the presence of 14 *srotas*. All these *srotas* are grossly classified as *Antarmukha* and *Bahirmukha srotas* on the basis of their external and internal appearance. *Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned *Artava vaha srotas* as the '*Antarmukhi srotas*' which is also known as '*Yogavahi srotas*'<sup>1</sup>. *Acharya Charaka* has not mentioned about *Artava vaha srotas* while explaining about the *srotas* in *vimanasthana* but he has mentioned about '*Retovahi siras*' in *chikitsa sthana*<sup>2</sup>. *Acharya Kashyapa* also mentions about '*Rajovahi siras*' in *Rakta gulma adhyaya*.

### Aim & Objective

To evaluate the study on Physio- Anatomical Correlational Study on *Artavaha Srotas*.

### Methodology

Different Ayurvedic and modern text books, authoritative pages, reputed journals, literature, manuscripts, Sanskrit *Shabdakosha*, etc. were supplied with materials pertaining to *Artavaha Srotas*

### Anatomical contemplation of *Srotas*<sup>3</sup>

The tubes, which are common in all the spaces (Intra, Inter and Extra-cellular spaces) of the body, where the fluid circulation exists irresistibly and constantly, are known as *Srotas*, according to *Acharya Sushruta*. It is clear from this description that *Srotas* are distinct from veins and arteries and are distributed across the body extensively. The structures that hold or circulate the *Doshas and tissues (Dhatu)* or their components to the different organs are the *Srotas*.

### Artava Nirukti

The word *Ritu* means a specific time and *Bhavam* means Occurrence. Thus, the whole term denotes a substance of the body, which flows out at a specific time, or period is called as "*Artava*".<sup>4</sup> One of the synonyms for *Artava* is *Rajah*, the etymology of the *Rajah* is as follows That substance which stains the vagina, or the yoni is termed as *Rajah*, since its purity and impurity is to be tested by means of the stained it stains the cloth also and as such it is termed as *Rajah*.<sup>5</sup>

### Definition of Artava

*Rakta* reaching the uterus and coming out from Yoni for 3 days in every month is called *Rajah*. The substance which is formed only in female from *Rasa* and is having colour of *Rakta*, flowing through the female genital tract, commencing at the age of 12 years and ceasing at the age of 50 years (except during *Garbhavastha*, *Sutikavastha*, *Stanyakalavastha*) and which flows for a duration of 3 to 7 days is called *Artava*.<sup>6</sup>

### Synonyms of Artava

*Artava*, *Shonita*, *Asrik*, *Raja*, *Rakt*, *Lohita*, *Rudhira*, *Pushpa*.<sup>7</sup>

### Moolsthan of Artavavaha Srotas

आर्तवहे हे तयोर्मूल गर्भाशय आर्तववाहित्य धमन्यः तत्र विद्धाया वन्ध्यात्वं मैथु नासहिष्णुत्वमार्तवनाश सेवनीच्छेदाजाप्रादुर्भाव बस्तिदविद्धलचणं प्रागुक्तमिति स्रोतोषिद्धं प्रत्याख्यायोपचरेत् उद्धतशल्यंत चतविधाने-नौपचरेत् १२

While considering the *Moolsthan* of any *Srotas*, following points are taken in consideration like *Utpattisthan* (origin point of view), *Sangrahashthan* (storage) and *Vahanasthan* (conduction). The *Moolsthan* or source is considered that without which the origin, maintenance and destruction of that specific carrier of body nutrient cannot be possible and the place which controls the entire functional dealings and processes of the specific carrier. In females, additional *Srotas* is explained named as *Artavavaha Srotas*. Ayurveda mentions the *Garbhashaya* and *Artavavahi Dhamani* as a *Moolsthan* of *Artavavaha Srotas*. *Garbhashaya* is mainly responsible for conception, production and expulsion *Artava*, from origin point of view<sup>8</sup>. It shows same structural and functional characteristics of uterus along with ovaries and both have same pathological and clinical conditions after injury. *Artavavahi Dhamani* can be taken as fallopian tube which conducts *Artava* (ovum) towards uterus during menstrual phase and ovarian and uterine vessels, *Dhamana* word refers to contraction, hence in this study as by contracting fallopian tube conduct the ovum so it works like an *Artavavahi Dhamani*. In *Garbhashaya*, the word *Ashaya* refers as cavity or space in that particular organ which are prime functional areas or cavities of the body<sup>9</sup>. *Garbhashaya* is a space which helps in implantation and development of *Garbha* (foetus) here it doesn't refers to only a single organ but it is the hollow space in the body where various bio physiological activities happens. Yoni is a very important structure of female body, shaped as "*Shankha Nabhi Akriti*", contains three *Avarta* (circular folds) in its structure. *Garbhashaya* or *Garbhashayya* is an important structure situated in third *Avarta* of Yoni. Here the term Yoni has ample meaning represent the whole reproductive system of female in which shows three circular folds or subdivision yoni(vagina), *Garbhashayamukha* (cervical canal) and *Garbhashayya* (uterus) from external to internal respectively<sup>10</sup>.

## Qualities of Aartava

शशासृक्प्रतिमं यत्तु यद्वा लाक्षारसोपमम् तदार्तवं प्रशंसन्ति यद्वासो न विरञ्जयेत् १७

Normal Aartava flows without *Piccha* (sliminess), *Daha* (burning sensation), and *Arti* (pain) i.e. normal Aartava which has equilibrium of Dosha will not have these three properties. It flows out 3 to 5 days, quantity is neither too excessive nor too less. Aartava appears like colour of *Gunjaphala*, *Padma Sannibha* (colour of the lotus petals, colour of insect *Indragopa*, colour of *Shashaasrak* (blood of rabbit), *Laksharasop* (colour of resin of *laksha*), *Yadvasonaviranjayet* (not stains to cloth) <sup>11</sup>.

### Artava Pravritti Kala (Srava Kala) <sup>6, 7, 9</sup>

Different Acharyas coated different *Sravakaala* of Aartava as below;-

According Various Samhita's Artava *Pravritti Kala* (*Srava Kala*)

*Bhaavprakash samhita* -3

*Asthang hridayam* - 3

*Ashtang sangrah* -3

*Charak samhita* -5

*Harit samhita* -7

### Artava Nivritti Kala

All Samhitas have mentioned the *Artava Nivritti Kala* as 50 years <sup>6, 4, 12</sup>.

### Aartava Dushti

When Aartava gets *Vruddhi*, it produces symptoms like *Atipravrutti* (excessive flow of Aarthava), *Angamarda* (Body pain), *Daurgandya* (Bad smell). [When Aarthava gets *Kshaya* then it produces symptoms like *Yatochita Kaala Adarshana* (occurs at improper time), *Alpata* (less quantity), *Yonivedana* (vaginal pain) <sup>5</sup>.

### Aartava Vaha Sroto Viddha Lakshana

If any injury to Aartavavaha Srotas that leads to *Vandhyatwa*, *Maitunaasahishnuta*, *Aartava Nasha* <sup>8</sup>.

### Symptoms of Injury of Artavavahasrotas

When the AartavaVaahini *Dhamanis* are injured, they cause: - 1. *Vandhyata* – infertility 2. *Maithuna asahishnutaa* – Intolerance to sex, difficulty in sex or painful sex (dyspareunia) 3. *Aartava naasha* – Amenorrhoea or Dysmenorrhoea <sup>12</sup>.

### Management of Artavavaha Srotodushti (Vitiation of Artavavaha Srotas)

The vitiation of Artavavaha srotas should be managed on the lines of treatment of *Yoni vyapad* (vaginal, uterine disorders) and *Artavavyapat* (disorders of menstruation) <sup>13</sup>.

Gynecology is the study of female organs of reproduction and their diseases. In Ayurveda, these are studied in “*Stree Roga Vigyan*” <sup>10</sup> Causes of Stree Roga (Gynecological diseases) are mainly:-

- *Artavadosha* (Menstrual irregularities)
- *Bijadosha* (Defect in Ovum / genetic mutations)
- Abnormal diet and habits
- Excessive coitus etc.

Gynecological diseases are described as “*Yoni Vyapad*” which are 20 in numbers and cover most of the diseases prevalent in this era. Diseases and their management can be understood as under - *Yoni Vyapad* <sup>14</sup>:-

- 1) *Pittaja* (Pelvic Inflammatory Disease)
- 2) *Shleshmiki* (Trichomoniasis)
- 3) *Raktayoni* (Dysfunctional Uterine Bleeding)
- 4) *Arajaska* (Secondary Amenorrhoea)



- 5) *Upapluta* (Candidiasis)
- 6) *Karnini* (Cervical ectopy)
- 7) *Vandhya* (Primary Amenorrhoea)
- 8) *Putraghni* (Recurrent Pregnancy Loss)
- 9) *Udavartini* (Dysmenorrhoea)
- 10) *Phalini* (Cystocele)
- 11) *Mahayoni* (Prolapse).
- 12) *Asrigdhara / ArtavaVyapad* (Menstrual Irregularities).
- 13) *Arbuda & Granthi* (Tumours & Cysts) eg. Uterine Fibroid, Follicular Cysts.
- 14) *Vandhyatva* (Infertility).
- 15) *Rajonivritti* (Menopause).

Management of *Stree Roga* (Gynecological diseases) is by *Panchakarma* (five methods of purification) especially *Uttar basti*; Oral medicines and Local application of medicine in the form of oil, decoction, paste etc. as vaginal tampons, douche, fumigation etc. The Ayurvedic treatment not only cures the pathology in reproductive organs but with holistic approach, treats the woman as a whole, thereby improving the general health also<sup>12</sup>.

## DISCUSSION

*Artavavaha Srotas* (channels which carry the menstrual blood). Their roots are located in *Garbhashaya* (Uterus), *artavavahidhamanis* (fallopian or uterine tubes or the arteries) which take part in supplying the uterine blood and also in the menstruation process. *Srotas* are appropriated from the root to any terminal piece of the design or body. *Srotas* are situated inside the spaces of the body; they spread all through the body and convey fundamental materials. They are entirely unexpected designs from *Siras* (veins, lymphatics and so on) and *dhamanis* (supply routes, nerves). *Srotas* are distributed from the root to any terminal portion or the structure of the body. *Srotas* are located within the spaces of the body, they spread all through the body and carry essential materials. They are totally different structures from *siras* (veins, lymphatics etc.) and *dhamanis* (arteries, nerves). The *Srotas* has the colour of the *dhatu* (tissue) that they are carrying or transporting. They are of different shapes and sizes namely round, thick, large, small, macroscopic, and elongated and form network and branches. With the description, each and every cell can be considered as a *srotas* if the transportation mechanism is taking place in and out of the cell. While describing the varieties of *srotas*, Acharya Charaka specified that as many solid structures are present in the body, the same number and types of *srotas* are also present.

## CONCLUSION

*Srotas* are the channels different from the *sira* and *dhamani*, which carries nutrients to the body organs and widely spreads all over the body. It also carries waste material for the removal from the body, without *srotas* existence of life cannot be possible. Every *srotas* have 2 *mulasthanas* and function of this *mulasthanas* is to produce the elements which flow through the *srotas*. If *mulasthanas* is defective, *srotas* will be defective, but if *srotas* is defective, does not mean that *mulasthanas* will be defective. *Garbhashaya* and *artavavahi dhamani* are the *mulasthanas* of the *artavavaha srotas*. *Garbhashaya* is mainly responsible for the production of the *artava*, so it can be considered as the *mulasthanas* of the *artavavaha srotas* of origin point of view. *Artavavahi dhamani* conducts *artava* towards uterus during menstrual phase. The *Srotas* are of two types, *Bahirmukhasrotas* (External openings or apertures) and *Antarmukha srotas* (Internal channels of the body). *Bahirmukha srotas* are 10 in number. According to Acharya Charaka *Antarmukha srotas* are of 13 types and According to Acharya Susruta they are 11 pairs of *Antarmukha srotas* - *Pranavaha*, *Annavaha*, *Udakavaha*, *Rasavaha*, *Raktavaha*, *Mamsavaha*, *Medovaha*, *Shukravaha*, *Mutravaha*, *Purishvaha* and *Artavavaha srotas*. Acharya Susruta was the only one, who considered *artavavaha srotas*. Knowledge of *artavavaha srotas* (anatomy and physiology of female reproductive system) is necessary to find appropriate etio-pathogenesis and treatment of gynaecological disorders. Ayurveda classics have put emphasis on applied aspect of science and hence instead

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