

SROTAS: THEMATIC EXPLORATION OF AYURVEDIC TRANSPORT CHANNELS AND THEIR CLINICAL RELEVANCE

Dr. Vikas Jain*

Professor and Head of the Department, Dept. of Kriya Sharir, Sri Sai Institute of Ayurvedic Research and Medicine,
Kolar road, Bhopal (MP) 462042.

Article Received date: 18 July 2025

Article Revised date: 08 Aug. 2025

Article Accepted date: 29 Aug. 2025



*Corresponding Author: Dr. Vikas Jain

Professor and Head of the Department, Dept. of Kriya Sharir, Sri Sai Institute of Ayurvedic Research and Medicine, Kolar
road, Bhopal (MP) 462042.

ABSTRACT

Introduction: In Ayurveda, *Srotas* are described as the fundamental channels of circulation and communication in the body, essential for transporting nutrients, metabolic products, and vital energies (*Prana, Ojas*). The health of these channels determines the efficiency of physiological processes, while disturbances (*Srotodushti*) lead to disease. This thematic review examines *Srotas* as a unifying concept linking structure, function, and pathology in Ayurvedic medicine. **Methodology:** Primary Ayurvedic texts—Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Ashtanga Hridaya—were studied thematically to identify recurrent concepts related to *Srotas*. Interpretations were compared with modern anatomical and physiological parallels. Clinical case observations and relevant research literature were integrated to highlight diagnostic and therapeutic applications. **Results:** Thirteen principal *Srotas* are identified in classical literature, each associated with specific origins, pathways, and functions. Common pathological patterns include obstruction (*sanga*), abnormal flow (*atipravritti*), and diversion (*vimarga gamana*). Therapeutic strategies focus on restoring patency, balancing doshas, and maintaining optimal flow through *shodhana* (purification), *shamana* (pacification), and dietary-lifestyle interventions. **Discussion:** The thematic analysis reveals that *Srotas* encompass both tangible anatomical structures and subtle energetic pathways, making them a holistic diagnostic tool. This integrated perspective enables recognition of early imbalances, providing preventive healthcare advantages. Comparative analysis with modern medicine suggests potential correlations with circulatory, lymphatic, and metabolic networks, expanding the scope for integrative research. **Conclusion:** The concept of *Srotas* offers a multidimensional framework for understanding health and disease. Incorporating *Srotas*-based assessment in modern integrative practice can enhance personalized healthcare, prevention, and chronic disease management.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, *Srotas*, *Srotodushti*, Dosha, Integrative Medicine.

INTRODUCTION

Numerous structures called *Srotas* make up the living body. Both broad organ systems (*Sthula srotas*) and minute individual channels (*Anu-srotas*), such as cellular pathways, are referred to by the plural form, *Srotamsi*. The *Charaka Samhita* defines a *Srotas* as a structure that facilitates *Sravana*, or the flow or movement of material. It symbolizes the internal transport system of the body and is essential to Ayurveda in both health and illness. *Charaka* underlined that normal physiology is determined by the structural and functional integrity of *Srotas*, whereas pathology results from their degradation.^[1-4]

According to him, because the *Srotas* are always carrying *Dhatus* that is undergoing metabolic

transformation, no part of the body can grow, develop, or degenerate without them.

In terms of function, *Srotas* allow the movement of substances that either aid in the *Prakopa* or *Samana* of *Doṣas*. Since they can be punctured during surgery or wounded during trauma, they have also been identified surgically. When impacted, they frequently cause different kinds of discomfort. Therefore, understanding *Srotodushti* is essential for determining and treating the underlying etiology of a disease as well as for assessing its prognosis.^[4-6]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study conducted a comprehensive assessment of both traditional Ayurvedic texts and current scientific

literature (**Table 1**) in order to fully comprehend *Srotas* and its significance in contemporary medical science.

Table 1: Sources of materials collected for study.

Category	Sources / References
Original Sources	Ayurvedic classics: <i>Charaka Samhitā</i> , <i>Suśruta Samhitā</i> , <i>Aṣṭanga Hṛdaya</i> (for anatomy, physiology, and pathology of <i>Srotas</i>). Classical commentaries: <i>Chakrapani</i> (on <i>Charaka Samhita</i>) and <i>Dalhāṇa</i> (on <i>Suśruta Samhita</i>) for technical clarity.
Secondary Resources	Ayurvedic textbooks, commentaries, and review papers on <i>Srotas</i> and their therapeutic aspects. Peer-reviewed Ayurveda journals for modern perspectives and scientific validation.
Modern Medical References	Standard medical texts: <i>Principles of Neural Science</i> (Kandel), <i>Guyton and Hall's Physiology</i> , <i>Gray's Anatomy</i> (for parallels with <i>Srotas</i>). Databases: PubMed, Scopus, and Science Direct for studies linking Ayurvedic concepts with vascular, lymphatic, neural, and molecular transport systems.

CLASSIFICATION OF SROTAS

As mentioned in **Figure 1**, according to the *Anantya* category, there are countless in the body, mind, and spirit systems, which correspond to the myriad life processes and functional variables that are present in them. The *Srotas* of the *Sankhyatmaka* category are divided into two categories: *Antarmukha* and *Bahirmukha*.^[5-7]

- The nine common apertures found in both sexes two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, one mouth, the anus, and the urinary tract make up the *Bahirmukha*.

- Three further openings two breasts and one vaginal opening are taken into account in females, making a total of twelve.
- Classical scholars listed thirteen different kinds of *Srotas*, such as *Majjavaha*, *Swedavaha* and *Asthivaha*.
- *Acarya Susruta* lists eleven categories, including *Artavavaha* but excluding *Majjavaha*, *Swedavaha*, and *Asthivaha*.

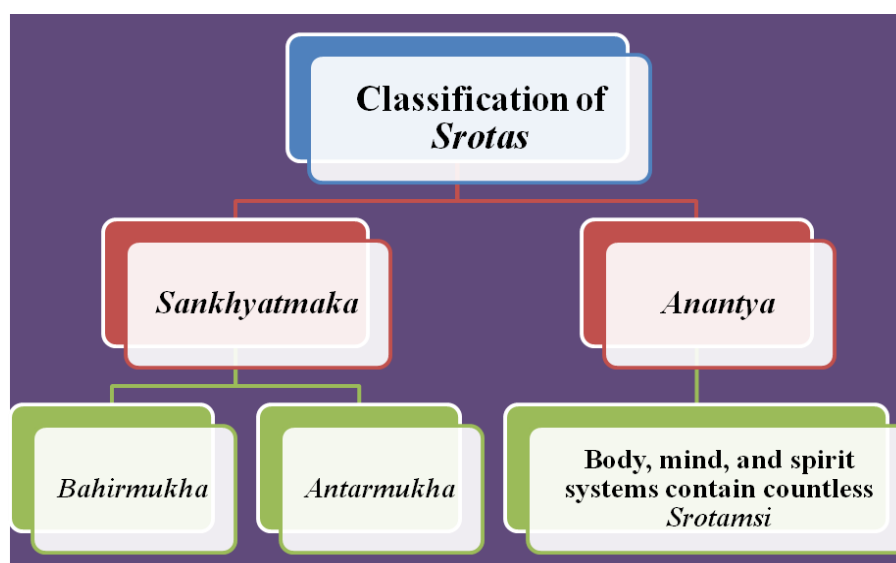


Figure 1: Classification of Srotas.

CHARACTERIZATION OF SROTAS

Feature	Description
Color	Resembles the color of the <i>Dhatu</i> they carry
Size	<i>Anu</i> : Microscopic <i>Sthula</i> : Macroscopic / Gross
Shape	<i>Vṛtta</i> : Cylindrical <i>Dirgha</i> : Elongated <i>Pratan</i> : Reticulated

Origin and *Panchabhoutika* Composition

- ✓ Formed by *Vayu*, which creates gross channels dominated by *Akasa Mahabhuta*.
- ✓ The function of *Vayu*, known as *Bhedana*, is responsible for the formation of *Srotas*
- Correlation of *Srotas* with Modern Physiology
- ✓ *Udakavaha Srotas* control the distribution of bodily fluids.
- ✓ *Praṇavaha Srotas* are the respiratory channels that sustain the life force's flow through breathing.
- ✓ The alimentary canal, represented by the *Annavaha Srotas*, ensures that food is properly digested and assimilated.
- ✓ The *Raktavaha Srotas* create the vascular system that performs blood circulation.
- ✓ *Rasavaha Srotas* represent the lymphatic system, which transports nutrients in the form of *Rasa dhatu*.
- ✓ *Medovaha Srotas* are focused on channels supplying and controlling adipose tissue.
- ✓ *Majjavaha Srotas*, supply bone marrow, and the *Asthivaha Srotas* support bone tissue.
- ✓ *Mutravaha Srotas* control urine channels.
- ✓ *Śukravaha Srotas* maintain reproductive components.^[6-8]

SROTAS'S PHYSIOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE

- ❖ They ensure nourishment, balance, and interconnection of all bodily systems.

- ❖ The body uses this transport to move waste materials, metabolic intermediates, and vital nutrients throughout.
- ❖ In biotransformation, one *Dhatu* changes into another at these locations of metabolic conversion.
- ❖ Prevent illness and preserve life by maintaining the balance of *Doshas* and *Dhatus*.
- ❖ *Rasavaha srotas* preserve fluid balance, while *Praṇavaha srotas* controls oxygen.
- ❖ Play a crucial role in sustaining health, preventing diseases, and supporting growth and development by distributing micronutrients to every tissue.^[7-9]

SROTODUSHTI

When the flow of the contents of the body channels (*Srotas*) becomes excessive, clogged, misdirected, or collects abnormally, the channels become unhealthy. These changes lead to the development of many pathological diseases. Four primary categories of *Srotodushti* are described in classical texts as mentioned in **Figure 2**. These four types of *Srotodushti* may occur alone or in combination (**Table 2**). Importantly, no disease can manifest without *Srotodushti*, as it is central to *Dhatu vaishamyā* and thus the root of all pathology. Some of the examples of *Srotodushti* are mentioned in **Tables 3-5**.^[7-10]

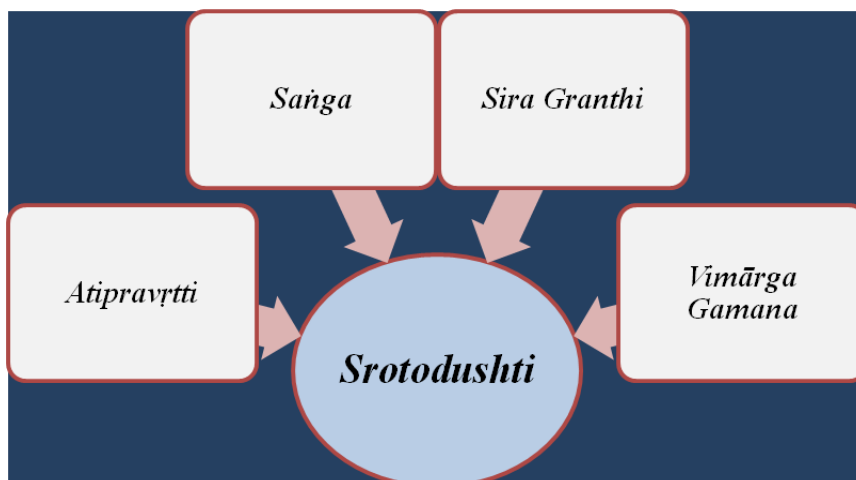


Figure 2: Types of *Srotodushti*.

Table 2: Descriptions of *Srotodushti*.

Pathological Condition	Description
<i>Atipravṛtti</i>	Caused by hyperactivity of the concerned organ/system, leading to excessive movement or secretion.
<i>Sāṅga</i>	Blockage in channels due to vitiated <i>Dōṣas</i> ; opposite of <i>Atipravṛtti</i> ; impedes normal transportation.
<i>Sira Granthi</i>	Formation of masses like cysts, tumors, or dilated vessels within channels; causes obstruction of normal flow.
<i>Vimarga Gamana</i>	Contents of a channel move through an abnormal pathway instead of their normal route.

Table 3: Examples of *Atipravṛtti*.

<i>Srotas Involved</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Condition</i>
<i>Annavaha Srotas</i>	Excess acid secretion	<i>Amlapitta</i>
<i>Annavaha Srotas</i>	Excess bowel movement	<i>Atisāra</i>
<i>Mūtravaha Srotas</i>	Excess urine flow	<i>Bahumutrata / Prameha</i>

Table 4: Examples of *Sanga*.

<i>Srotas Involved</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Condition</i>
<i>Swedavaha Srotas</i>	Blockage of sweat	<i>Swedarodha</i> (seen in <i>Jwara</i> /fever)
<i>Annavaha Srotas</i>	Blockage of feces	Constipation

Table 5: Examples of *Vimarga Gamana*.

<i>Srotas Involved</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Condition</i>
<i>Annavaha Srotas</i>	Upward movement of food	<i>Chhardi</i>

DISCUSSION

Srotas have two roles in the human body: they are essential for the development of illnesses and for preserving healthy physiological processes. They serve as conduits of communication, allowing the flow of temporary tissues and nutrients needed for the development of permanent *Dhatus*. They also carry the three different kinds of *Mala*, *Udaka* and *Praṇa*. Since the *Srotamsi* carrying *Dhatus*, which are constantly undergoing metabolic transformation, no body structure can develop or deteriorate without their assistance. Human being is just a collection of *Srotamsi* that are present throughout the body. *Srotas* are necessary for the development, movement, and removal of all types of *Mala*. When their normal functioning is impaired, it results in *Srotorodha* or *Srotoduṣṭi* which further causes pathological conditions.^[1,5,10]

CONCLUSION

The body's *Srotas* are channel-like structures that perform nutrient distribution and transportation. Every *Srotas* serves a certain purpose and feeds the *Dhatu* that it corresponds to it. Various problems, including breathing difficulties, dry mouth, anorexia, skin diseases, impotence, urinary issues or tumors (*arbuda*), might arise from defective functioning of these *Srotas*. Thus, it is crucial to comprehend the idea of *Srotas* and *Srotoduṣṭi* as well as their complexities. Maintaining health requires proper *Srota* management, which can be accomplished by practices like detoxification, *Yoga*, meditation, *Praṇayama*, *Sadvṛtta*, adherence to daily and seasonal routines and balanced lifestyle. These actions promote general well-being and stop the pathogenesis of *Srotoduṣṭi*.

REFERENCES

1. Sushruta Samhita- Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri, Part 1st, Chaukhambha Sanskrit series, Varanasi 14th edition, 2001; 97.
2. Charak Samhita - Vidyotini Hindi Commentary- Pt. Kashinath Shastri and G.N. Chaturvedi, Part 1st, 710.

3. Charak Samhita - Vidyotini Hindi Commentary-Pt. Kashinath Shastri and G.N. Chaturvedi, Part 1st, 709.
4. Sushruta Samhita- Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri, Part 1st, Chaukhambha Sanskrit series, Varanasi 14th edition, 2001; 96.
5. Shabdakalpadrum - Raja Radhakantdeva, Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series office, Varanasi PartV, 1961; 467.
6. Charak Samhita- Ayurveda Deepika, Commentary of Chakrapanidutta, Edited by- Vaidya Yadavji Trikamji Acharya, Published by Satyabhamabai Pandurang, Bombay. IIIrd Edition, 1941; 249.
7. Charak Samhita - Vidyotini Hindi Commentary - Pt. Kashinath Shastri and Dr. Gorakhnath Chaturvedi, Part 1st, 712.
8. Charak Samhita - Vidyotini Hindi Commentary - Pt. Kashinath Shastri and Dr. Gorakhnath Chaturvedi, Part 1st, 714.
9. Ashtang Hridayam by Atridev, Edited byYadunandan Upadhyaya, Published by - Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series Office, Varanasi, 1959; 188.
10. Tewari PV. Kashyapa - Samhita or Vriddhajivakiya Tantra. (Khila sthana-16/14,15). 1st ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Visvabharati, 1996; 631.