SROTAS IN VEDAS

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Abstract

The term srotas means channel meaning to exude, to ooze, to filter, to permeate. Charaka has defined it as structure through which sra\\\text{\texthyp}v\text{\texthyp}anam takes place.

The srotas are the fundamental unit of body. It is an anatomical structure, which carries nutritive materials essential to the growth and development of the body. Grossly they are tracts like ducts, tubular structure, blood vessels, lymphatic channels, etc.

Vedas are considered ultimate source of knowledge and the most ancient written literature of the world. Srotas has been described in Vedas in short form. The terms which are used to describe the srotas in Vedas in the various hymns are Panthan, Srotya, Dhamanyh, Nadhi, Khanin and Sawni. All these words are applied in sense of organs predominantly constituted by Akash mahabhuta.

In Atharva Veda this term has been used in sense of blood flow, which is closely related to Srotas. (Ath.\text{\texthyp}I/214)

Ayurveda, the “science of life” or longevity is the holistic alternative science from India and is more than 5000 years old. It is believed to be the oldest healing science in existence, forming the foundation of all others.

Ayurveda was passed down from God to his angels, and finally to humans.

There were two schools of Ayurveda at the time of Atreya, the school of physicians and the school of surgeons. These two schools transformed Ayurveda into a scientifically verifiable and classifiable medical system.

The unit cell of life is amoeba which performs its all functions desired for keeping up the life.

All the physiological activities are found within such small unit even against the adversities but as the cell multiplies it requires additional communication and supply system.

The life of a cell in multi-cellular animal depends upon the status of interstitial fluid and the supply lines in the forms of capillary vessels, which ultimately lead to respective major vessels. The micro-vascular supply lines are said to be known in Ayurvedic literature as Srotas. This dynamic exchange function takes place in the capillaries which has been called in Ayurveda as Sru Sra\\\text{\texthyp}wan.

Ayurveda had gone to extend by laying the importance of Srotas that Srotas is a cause of health and disease.

\textbf{जीवितायता ............ च।}

The term Srotas has been defined by Sushruta as the channels of the body having originated from vacant spaces spread throughout the body transporting nutrient materials to different tissues of the body but at the same time they are different from Sira and Dhamanies.

\textbf{मुलात्त \text{\texthyp}चदनां\text{\texthyp}देहे प्रसूत्व त्वरित्वा यत्।}
\textbf{स्त्रोताद्विश्वेयः सिराधमनिरज्जितम् ॥५}

The body channels or Srotas are classified as internal channels and external channels, internal channels having their natural orifice on the surface of the body. These openings are nine in number. Two are situated caudally and seven cranially. The cranially situated openings are two Nasika, two karma, two netra and one of mukha. The caudal two openings...
are one of the Guda canus and the other Mutra prasek.

In Bhagwat Geeta, these nine srotas have been terms as ‘navadwar’

Life depends upon three main constituents – Air, Water and Food. The body is constituted by the seven dhatus and the end products formed in the body due to catabolism of Dhatus i.e. mutra, purish and sweda, all total 13 and so Acharyas has also described thirteen internal Srotas carrying each of them. He also considered the clinical signs and symptoms related with their pathology (Srotodusti).

Charak has used different synonyms for the term Srotas. These are as follows:

The “Veda” has a two fold interest: it belongs to the history of the world and to the history of India … As long as man continues to take an interest in the history of his race; and as long as we collect in libraries and museums the relics of former ages, the first place in that long row of books which contains the records of the Aryan branch of mankind will belong for ever to the Rig-veda.

In Vedas the description of word Srotas is available in very short form. So it is very important to collect the scattered knowledge regarding Srotas in Vedas.

**Rigveda**

So called because its Samhita or collection of mantras or hymns consists of Richas or verses intended for loud recitation.

In Rigveda, the following references are found which deals with Srotas

Yajurveda

In Yajurveda, the term ‘Nirabhi Srawanati signifies Srotasas so functionally Srawanati and synonymically (means Sira) is used for Srotas.
Hira

This word stands for Sira. It is mentioned that the blood which flows in the ‘Hira’ contains two peculiar colours viz. ‘Tivra Arun’ (fast red, colour – pure blood) and Tamra Dhumra (blue reddish – impure blood). In this way the word ‘Hira’ has been classified into two groups viz. containing pure blood and containing impure blood.

Dhamani

According to Atharvaveda, the blood flows in the body through hundreds of Dhamanies. It indicated towards the synonyms of Srotas, Dhamani, Sira and Nadi.

In this context this fact is also revealed that there is a network of Sira and Dhamanies in the body for blood circulation and they are thousands in number. These structures are luminous and distributed in each and every part of body.

एवाते मूर्तं मुच्यता बढ़े बलिति सर्वकं [19]

“सहल्ल धमनीहस्तं!”

सदर्शः

1. अ.ह.शा. 3/41-42
2. सुःशा. 1/13
3. सुःशा. 5/10
4. भगवदु गीता 5/13
5. द.शू. 1/12
6. च.वि. 5/6
7. च.वि. 5/9
8. अ. 8/96-98
9. अ. 1/52-19
10. द.शू.वे. 26/8
11. च.शू. 25/1, ग. 438
12. च.शू. 19/10, पृ. 82
13. द.शू.जू. 16/70, पृ. 303
14. अ. 1/2/4
15. अ. 10/1-2-19
16. अ. 10/1-2-19
17. अ. 1/32-3
18. अ. 7/3-36/2