



## Review Article

**SROTAS: THE VITAL CHANNELS OF LIFE - “AN AYURVEDIC AND MODERN PERSPECTIVE”****Vinod Kumar<sup>1\*</sup>, Pramit Kumar Meher<sup>1</sup>, Shyam Sundar Gupta<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup>MD Scholar, <sup>2</sup>Professor and head, Department of Rachana Sharir, Government Ayurvedic College and Hospital, Patna, Bihar, India.**Article info****Article History:**

Received: 24-09-2025

Accepted: 19-10-2025

Published: 30-11-2025

**KEYWORDS:**Ayurveda, *Srotas*,  
*Srotodushti*,  
*Srotoviddha*.**ABSTRACT**

In Ayurveda, *Srotas* are considered the fundamental channels through which various bodily functions occur, including transport of nutrients, waste products, and vital energies. *Srotas* forms the foundational framework of Ayurvedic physiology, representing the intricate network of channels responsible for circulation of *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, and *Mala*. Ancient texts, especially those of Charaka and Sushruta, emphasize that the integrity of *Srotas* is essential for the sustenance of life, Homeostasis, and optimal physiological functioning. In modern physiological networks such as the circulatory system, lymphatic channels, neuronal pathways, interstitial fluid channels, cellular and endocrine communication closely correlate with the Ayurvedic description of *Srotas*. For example, *Pranavaha Srotas* parallels the respiratory and oxygen-transport system; *Rasavaha* and *Raktavaha* resemble the cardiovascular and microcirculatory networks. Pathological alterations of *Srotas* (*Srotodushti*)- including obstruction, dilatation, narrowing, rupture, and perversion of flow are explained in Ayurveda through mechanisms such as *Avarana*, *Sanga*, *Vimargagamana*, *Ati pravritti*, and *Srotoviddha*. These can be meaningfully interpreted in modern terms as inflammation, microvascular damage, fibrosis, metabolic derangements, oxidative injury, endothelial dysfunction, and neuro-humoral imbalance. The causal factors of *Srotas* derangement such as improper diet, faulty lifestyle, trauma, stress, and environmental toxins closely parallel modern risk factors like sedentary behaviour, processed food consumption, pollution etc. This article explores the classical concept of *Srotas* as described in Ayurvedic texts, their types, importance in health and disease, and attempts to correlate them with modern anatomical and physiological systems. Such a comparative understanding may help in better diagnosis and treatment, especially in the field of preventive medicine and chronic disease management.

**INTRODUCTION**

The term *Srotas* is derived from the Sanskrit root “sru- to flow”, indicating pathways through which various biological substances like *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Meda*, *Asthi*, *Majja*, *Shukra*, *Ojas*, and even subtle energies are transported, transformed, and eliminated. Acharya Charaka defines *Srotas* as the structures responsible for movement of materials essential for the nourishment of *Dhatu*, regulation of *Dosha*, and

evacuation of *Mala*, thereby establishing them as the fundamental framework of physiological homeostasis. The Ayurvedic concept of *Srotas* is thus not merely anatomical but encompasses functional, dynamic, and regulatory processes that support life. The concept of *Srotas* forms the backbone of Ayurvedic physiology and pathology. These channels transport vital substances to nourish and sustain life. Understanding these *Srotas* is crucial for assessing both normal physiological functions and disease conditions (*Srotodushti*).

Modern science, when interpreted through an Ayurvedic lens, offers profound correlations with the *Srotas*. The *Rasavaha Srotas* aligns with the circulatory and lymphatic systems responsible for nutrient absorption and distribution, *Raktavaha Srotas*

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corresponds with blood vessels and hematopoietic pathways, *Mamsavaha* and *Medovaha Srotas* parallel to the musculoskeletal and adipose tissue metabolic pathways, while *Pranavaha Srotas* reflect the respiratory system and oxygen transport mechanisms. Further, *Shukravaha Srotas* correspond to reproductive physiology.

Thus, a detailed comparative study of *Srotas* bridges ancient wisdom with contemporary scientific understanding, enhancing clinical applicability and research potential. The importance of understanding *Srotas* extends beyond theoretical knowledge to practical applications in diagnostics, therapeutics, and preventive medicine. For instance, Ayurvedic therapies like *Panchakarma* aim to restore the flow in these channels, addressing underlying dysfunctions that modern medicine often treats symptomatically. In recent years, growing interest in integrative medicine has sparked efforts to correlate Ayurvedic concepts, including *Srotas*, with modern scientific frameworks, interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation.

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVE

1. Clarify the conceptual comprehension of *Srotas* as described in Ayurveda.
2. Correlate these channels with analogous structures and functions in modern medical science.

3. Exploring the applied aspects of *Srotas* in diagnostics and therapeutic interventions.

### Literature Review

The term *Srotas* is derived from the Sanskrit root "Sru," meaning "to flow." *Srotas* are channels or pathways that facilitate the movement of nutrients, biological materials, waste products, and life forces.

### *Srotas Paryay* (Synonyms)<sup>[1]</sup>

Acharya Charak has mentioned the synonyms of *Srotas* are *Srotansi*, *Sira*, *Dhamani*, *Rasayani*, *Rasavahini*, *Nadi*, *Panth*, *Marga*, *Ayan*, *Shariracchidra*, *Samvrit*, *Asamvrita*, *Sthana*, *Ashaya* and *Niketa*.

Acharya Vagabhatt has described synonym of *Srotas* in Ashtang Samgrah Sharir Sthan 6<sup>th</sup> chapter. These are *Srotansi*, *Sira*, *Dhamani*, *Rasavahini*, *Nadi*, *Panth*, *Ayna*, *Marga*, *Shariracchidra*, *Samvrit*, *Asamvrita*, *Sthana*, *Ashyaya* and *Niketa*.

### *Srotas Aakriti*<sup>[2]</sup>

**Colour-** According to Acharya Charak, *Srotas* have their color similar to that *Dhatu* which transported through it.

**Size -** *Anu* (microscopic), *Sthula* (macroscopic)

**Shape -** *Vritta* (cylindrical), *Dirgha* (long), *Pratana* (reticulated)

### Types

Acharya Charak <sup>[3]</sup>	Acharya Sushruta	
	<i>Bahirmukhsrotas</i> <sup>[4]</sup> – 9 in male and 12 in female	<i>Antarmukha Srotas/Yogvahi Srotas</i> - 11 pairs
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Pranavaha srotas</i></li> <li>2. <i>Annavaha srotas</i></li> <li>3. <i>Udakvaha srotas</i></li> <li>4. <i>Rasavaha srotas</i></li> <li>5. <i>Raktavaha srotas</i></li> <li>6. <i>Manshavaha srotas</i></li> <li>7. <i>Medovaha srotas</i></li> <li>8. <i>Asthivaha srotas</i></li> <li>9. <i>Majjavaha srotas</i></li> <li>10. <i>Shukrava srotas</i></li> <li>11. <i>Mutravaha srotas</i></li> <li>12. <i>Purishvaha srotas</i></li> <li>13. <i>Swedavaha srotas</i></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Netra-2</i></li> <li>2. <i>Karana-2</i></li> <li>3. <i>Nasika-2</i></li> <li>4. <i>Mukha - 1</i></li> <li>5. <i>Guda-1</i></li> <li>6. <i>Mutramarg - 1 &amp; 3 extra</i></li> <li>7. <i>Stanya-2</i></li> <li>8. <i>Apatyamarg-1</i></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Pranavaha srotas</i></li> <li>2. <i>Annavaha srotas</i></li> <li>3. <i>Udakvaha srotas</i></li> <li>4. <i>Rasavaha srotas</i></li> <li>5. <i>Raktavaha srotas</i></li> <li>6. <i>Manshavaha srotas</i></li> <li>7. <i>Medovaha srotas</i></li> <li>8. <i>Shukravaha srotas</i></li> <li>9. <i>Mutravaha srotas</i></li> <li>10. <i>Purishvaha srotas</i></li> <li>11. <i>Aartavvha srotas</i></li> </ol>

### Modern Correlation

Sr.No	<i>Srotas</i> (Channels)	<i>Moolsthan</i> (Root)	Modern Anatomical Correlation
1.	<i>Pranavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Hridaya</i> (heart), <i>Mahasrotas</i> / <i>Pranvahi Dhamani</i>	Respiratory system– Nose, trachea, bronchi, lungs
2.	<i>Annavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Amasaya</i> (stomach), <i>Annavahini Dhamani</i>	Upper GI tract– Esophagus, stomach, small intestine
3.	<i>Udakavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Talu</i> (soft palate), <i>Kloma</i>	Thirst mechanism– Oropharynx, salivary

			glands, hypothalamus (primary thirst centre)
4.	<i>Rasavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Hridaya, Dasha Dhamani</i>	Circulatory system– Blood plasma/ interstitial fluid pathways, lymphatics
5.	<i>Raktavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Yakrit (liver), Pleea (spleen), Raktavahi Dhamani</i>	Hemopoietic and circulatory system – Blood vessels, liver, spleen
6.	<i>Mamsavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Snayu (ligaments), Twak (skin)</i>	Muscular system– Connective tissues and dermis
7.	<i>Medo Vaha Srotas</i>	<i>Vapavahana (omentum), Kati (hip region)/ Vrikkau</i>	Adipose tissue and fat metabolism pathways – Omentum, fat pads
8.	<i>Asthivaha Srotas</i>	<i>Majja (bone marrow), Sandhi (joints)</i>	Skeletal system– Bone and marrow
9.	<i>Majjavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Asthi (bones), Sandhi</i>	Nervous system– Spinal cord, brain and nerve sheaths
10.	<i>Shukravaha Srotas</i>	<i>Vrisheka (testes/ovaries), Medhra (penis)</i>	Reproductive system– Spermatic ducts, gonads
11.	<i>Mutravaha Srotas</i>	<i>Basti (bladder), Vankshana (pelvic region)</i>	Urinary system– Ureters, bladder, kidneys
12.	<i>Purishavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Pakvashaya (large intestine), Guda (anus)</i>	Large intestine and anus
13.	<i>Svedavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Meda (fat tissue), Romakupa (sweat pores)</i>	Sweat glands and skin pores
14.	<i>Aartavavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Garbhashaya (uterus), Artavavahi Dhamani</i>	Female reproductive system– Uterus, uterine tubes

### Srotoviddha

**Sroto** = Channel

**Viddha** = Pierced or injured

- ❖ *Srotoviddha* refers to trauma or breach of integrity in any bodily channel, leading to dysfunction of the concerned physiological system.
- ❖ It refers to puncture, traumatic injury (accidentally or surgical injury) or iatrogenic to *Srotas* at their specific sites.

mechanical trauma or internal rupture of *Srotas* leading to disturbed flow and function of *Dosha, Dhātu, and Mala*.

**Common symptoms of *Srotoviddha*:** Delusion, illusion, tremors, delirium, distension of abdomen, pain, anorexia, vomiting, fever, excessive bleeding, obstruction of urine and stool are common symptoms of *Srotoviddha*.

**Definition:** *Srotoviddha* is the condition caused due to  
**Specific Symptoms**

Sr.No.	<i>Srotas</i>	<i>Srotoviddha Lakshana</i> <sup>[5]</sup>
1.	<i>Pranavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Akroshan</i> (demand for oxygen), <i>Vinaman</i> (bending of the body), <i>Moha</i> (loss of consciousness), <i>Bhraman</i> (giddiness), <i>Vepana</i> (tremors), <i>Maran</i> (death).
2.	<i>Annavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Adhmana</i> (painful condition with distension), <i>Shoola</i> (pain) <i>Annadweshā</i> (disliking food), <i>Chhardi</i> (vomiting), <i>Pipasa</i> (thirst), <i>Andhya</i> (blackouts), <i>Marana</i> (death).
3.	<i>Udakavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Pipasa</i> (thirst), <i>Sadyomaranam</i> (immediate death).
4.	<i>Rasavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Shosha</i> (emaciation), <i>Marana</i> (death), symptom of <i>Pranvahi Srotas</i>
5.	<i>Raktavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Shyavangatva</i> (unnatural discolouration), <i>Jwara</i> (fever), <i>Daha</i> (burning sensation), <i>Panduta</i> (pallor), <i>Shonitagamana</i> (haemorrhage), <i>Rakta Netrata</i> (red colouration of eye).
6.	<i>Mamsavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Svayathu</i> (swelling), <i>Mamsa-Shosh</i> (muscle emaciation), <i>Sira Granthi</i>

		(abnormal growth of <i>Siras</i> ), <i>Marana</i> (death).
7.	<i>Meda Vaha Srotas</i>	<i>Swedagamana</i> (excessive perspiration), <i>Snigdhagata</i> (excess unctuousness/smoothness), <i>Talu Shosha</i> (emaciation of palate) <i>Sthulasophata</i> (generalise oedema), <i>Pipasa</i> (thirst).
8.	<i>Shukravaha Srotas</i>	<i>Klibata</i> (impotence), <i>Chirat Shukra Praseka</i> (delayed ejaculation of semen), <i>Rakta Shukrata</i> (semen mixed with blood).
9.	<i>Mutravaha Srotas</i>	<i>Anaddha Vasti</i> (obstruction of bladder), <i>Mutranirodh</i> (obstruction in urine), <i>Sthabda Medhra</i> (stiffness).
10.	<i>Purishavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Anaha</i> (distension of abdomen), <i>Durgandhata</i> (foul smelling,) <i>Grathit Antrata</i> (nodulation of <i>Antra</i> ).
11.	<i>Aartavaha Srotas</i>	<i>Vandhyatva</i> (infertility), <i>Maithunasahishnuta</i> (intercourse intolerance), <i>Artavanasha</i> (amenorrhoea).

### Srotodushti (Vitiation of Channels)<sup>[6]</sup>

Factors such as improper diet, stress, suppression of natural urges, or *Dosha* imbalance lead to *Srotodushti*. It manifests as:

- *Atipravritti* (excessive flow)
- *Sanga* (obstruction)
- *Vimarga Gamana* (diverted flow)
- *Siragranthi* (abnormal growths)

Timely diagnosis and treatment can restore normal flow and prevent complications.

### Pathophysiological Aspects of Srotas

Type	Description	Modern Correlation/ Examples
<i>Atipravritti</i> (Hyperactivity)	Excessive flow through the channel caused by over-functioning of the respective system or organ.	Diarrhoea, menorrhagia, polyuria etc.
<i>Sanga</i> (Obstruction)	Blockage in the channel due to endogenous or exogenous factors, leading to stagnation of flow.	Atherosclerosis, thromboembolism, urinary stone, obstructive jaundice etc.
<i>Siragranthi</i> (Nodular growths)	Abnormal growths or swellings obstructing or narrowing the lumen of the channel.	Tumor, fibroid, lymphadenopathy etc.
<i>Vimarga</i> (Diversion) <i>Gamana</i>	Abnormal flow or leakage of substances from the channel, causing pathological effects elsewhere in the body.	Fistula, ectopic pregnancy, peritonitis due to perforation etc.

### Applied Aspects of Srotas

The application of *Srotas* theory in clinical practice provides a unique framework for diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of diseases.

**Diagnostic Approach:** The Ayurvedic diagnostic process evaluates the health and pathology of *Srotas* using both observational and investigative methods.

(A) *Nidana Panchaka* (Fivefold Diagnosis): The healthiness of *Srotas* is assessed based on:

- *Nidana* (Causative Factors): Identification of dietary, lifestyle, and environmental causes contributing to *Srotodushti*.
- *Purvarupa* (Prodromal symptoms): Early warning signs indicating impending dysfunction of specific *Srotas*.
- *Rupa* (Symptoms): Manifest clinical symptoms provide clues about the affected *Srotas*.

- *Upashaya* (Therapeutic trial): Relief or exacerbation of symptoms with specific treatments confirms the diagnosis.

- *Samprapti* (Pathogenesis): The sequential development of *Srotodushti* is mapped to understand the disease process (from *Nidan sewan* to until the disease occurs).

(B) Modern diagnostic tools such as imaging techniques like ultrasonography, MRI, and CT scans identify blockages (*Sanga*), abnormal growths (*Siragranthi*), or leakage (*Vimarga Gamana*).

- Blood tests assess abnormalities in nutrient transport (*Rasa Vaha Srotas*), while urine analysis evaluates renal function (*Mootra Vaha Srotas*).



**Therapeutic Approaches for *Srotodushti*<sup>71</sup>:** The treatment of *Srotodushti* involves a combination of detoxification (*Shodhana*), channel cleansing, herbal medication, dietary interventions, and lifestyle modifications.

## DISCUSSION

Understanding *Srotas* is not just academic; it has practical implications in diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment. A blockage in a *Srotas* can be seen as a root cause of disease, which aligns with the modern idea of dysfunction in pathways or systems (e.g., metabolic syndrome, ischemia, neural conduction disorders).

The holistic view of Ayurveda emphasizes maintaining *Srotas* potency through proper *Ahara-vihara* (diet and lifestyle), purification (*Shodhana*), and strengthening therapies.

## CONCLUSION

The Ayurvedic concept of *Srotas* offers a unique and systemic approach to health and disease. Integrating this knowledge with modern science opens new avenues for research, diagnostics, and therapy, particularly in chronic diseases, preventive medicine, and holistic wellness. The integration of *Srotas* based concepts with modern medical practices offers a holistic approach to health and disease management.

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### Cite this article as:

Vinod kumar, Pramit Kumar Meher, Shyam Sundar Gupta. Srotas: The Vital Channels of Life - "An Ayurvedic and Modern Perspective". AYUSHDHARA, 2025;12(5):236-240.

<https://doi.org/10.47070/ayushdhara.v12i5.2333>

**Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared**

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