

## Role of *Rasavaha Srotas* in care of Female Reproductive Health: A Literary Review

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### Abstract

Women's reproductive health is a crucial determinant of fertility, pregnancy outcomes, and overall quality of life. Ayurveda explains female reproductive physiology through the concepts of *Dhatu* and *Srotas*, among which *Rasavaha Srotas* plays a foundational role by nourishing all tissues, including *Artava*. Disturbance of *Rasavaha Srotas* is frequently associated with menstrual irregularities and infertility (*Stree Vandhyatva*). The present study aims to analyse the role of *Rasavaha Srotas* in maintaining female reproductive health and to explore its relevance in preventing gynaecological and fertility-related disorders. A comprehensive review of classical Ayurvedic texts such as Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Ashtanga Hridaya was undertaken, along with a review of relevant modern scientific literature on female reproductive physiology and hormonal regulation.

Result: The analysis reveals that *Rasavaha Srotas* is integral to *Artava Utpatti*, endometrial nourishment, regulation of menstrual cyclicality,

and hormonal balance. *Rasa Dhatu Dushti* manifests as *Artava Kshaya*, irregular menstruation, anovulation, and infertility.

Conclusion: Conceptual correlations suggest similarities between *Rasavaha Srotas* dysfunction and modern concepts of impaired microcirculation, nutritional deficiencies, and endocrine imbalance. Early identification and correction of *Rasavaha Srotas Dushti* through Ayurvedic preventive and therapeutic measures may help maintain reproductive health and prevent gynaecological disorders. Integrating *Srotas*-based assessment with modern diagnostics can provide a holistic approach to women's healthcare.

**Keywords:** *Rasavaha Srotas*, *Rasa Dhatu*, *Artava*, *Vandhyatva*, *Artava Kshaya*.

### Introduction

Female reproductive health depends on the harmonious functioning of multiple physiological systems, including hormonal regulation, tissue nutrition, and cyclic endometrial changes. In Ayurveda, these functions are explained through the balanced

interaction of *Dosha, Dhātu, Mala, and Srotas*. Among the various *Srotas*, *Rasavaha Srotas* is considered the primary channel system responsible for the circulation and nourishment of *Rasa Dhātu*, which in turn sustains all subsequent *Dhatus*.

*Artava*, the functional entity responsible for menstruation and reproduction, is directly dependent on the quality and quantity of *Rasa Dhātu*. Any impairment in *Rasavaha Srotas* leads to inadequate nourishment of *Artava*, resulting in menstrual disorders and infertility. In the present era, lifestyle changes, nutritional deficiencies, stress, and metabolic disorders have led to a rising prevalence of gynaecological problems, making it essential to revisit classical Ayurvedic concepts such as *Rasavaha Srotas* for preventive and therapeutic insights.

*Rasavaha Srotas* is a fundamental concept in Ayurveda, referring to the channels responsible for the circulation and transportation of *Rasa Dhātu*—the primary nutritive fluid formed after digestion [1]. This nutritive fluid plays a vital role in nourishing all body tissues and maintaining systemic homeostasis [2]. Proper functioning of *Rasavaha Srotas* ensures adequate supply of nutrients to various organs, including reproductive tissues [3].

In female reproductive health, *Rasavaha Srotas* is closely linked with menstrual regulation, hormonal balance, and fertility [4]. Any disturbance in these channels may impair tissue nourishment, leading to gynaecological disorders [5].

### Significance of the Study

In recent years, there has been a significant rise in reproductive health issues such as polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), endometriosis, menstrual irregularities, and infertility [6]. Conventional medical approaches, although effective, often involve long-term medication and may produce side effects [7].

There is a growing need for holistic and integrative approaches. Ayurveda, through concepts like *Rasavaha Srotas*, offers a preventive and restorative framework that focuses on maintaining internal balance and proper nourishment of tissues [8]. Understanding its role can provide alternative strategies for improving female reproductive health [9].

### Objectives of the Study

- **Primary objective:**  
To evaluate the role of *Rasavaha Srotas* in maintaining female reproductive health.
- **Specific Objectives:**
  - To understand the physiological role of *Rasavaha Srotas*
  - To analyse its influence on reproductive functions
  - To explore its role in the pathogenesis of gynaecological disorders

### Materials and methods

**Study Design:** The present study is a conceptual and literary review.

**Data Collection:** Classical Ayurvedic texts including *Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya* and *Bhavprakash Samhita* were systematically reviewed with reference to *Rasavaha Srotas, Rasa Dhātu, Artava, and Stree Roga*. Relevant research articles were also reviewed for deeper understanding. In addition, available modern literature related to female reproductive physiology, hormonal regulation, endometrial health, and microcirculation was reviewed to establish conceptual correlations.

### Concept of *Rasavaha Srotas*

*Rasavaha Srotas* are the channels responsible for the formation, transportation, and nourishment of *Rasa Dhātu*. According to Charaka, the Mula of *Rasavaha Srotas* are *Hridaya* and *Dash Dhamani*, indicating its systemic influence. Proper functioning of

*Rasavaha Srotas* ensures adequate nourishment of all tissues, clarity of sense organs, and maintenance of vitality. If *Srotas* are in healthy state the formation of *Dosha, Dhātu & mala* are good, but when these *Srotas* are vitiated then *Dosha, Dhātu & mala* also become vitiated and body becomes diseased. [10]

#### **Rasa-Dhātu:**

*Rasa Dhātu* is the first *Dhātu* formed after digestion and metabolism of *Ahara Rasa*. Any qualitative or quantitative disturbance in *Rasa Dhātu* directly affects the subsequent *Dhātus*, including *Rakta, Mamsa, Meda, Asthi, Majja*, and *Shukra/Artava*. [11]

#### **Upadhātu**

*Stanya* and *Aartava* are the *Upadhātu* are *Rasa dhātu* and gets its nourishment through *Rasa dhātu*.

If *Rasa dhātu* is good in terms of quality & quantity, *Aartava & Stanya* too get there in good form. If there is any Vitiating of *Rasadhātu* or in *Rasavaha Srotas* it will lead in Vitiating of its *Upadhātu's* also.

*Dushti* of any *Dhātu* can lead to *Dushti* of its own *Upadhātu's*. As we know that *Aahar Rasa* after its metabolism through *Rasadhātavaagni* is turned into *Rasa dhātu*. And after generation of *Rasa dhātu*, it replenishes its *Upadhātus*. [12]

So, if there is any Vitiating in *Rasa dhātu* or *Rasavaha Srotas* where the *Aahar Rasa* is converted into *Rasa dhātu* can lead to Vitiating of its *Upadhātu* also.

According to *Aacharya Charak*, *Stanya & Aartava* are the *Upadhātu* of *Rasadhātu*, while according to *Aacharya Sharangdhar*, *Stanya* is the *Upadhātu* of *Rasa & Aartava* is the *Upadhātu* of *Rakta Dhātu*.

In *Bhavprakash*, *Raja* is said to be which is expelled out every month for 3 days as menstrual flow. *Rasa* gets matured and processed over a period of one month & at the

end of month, the *Rasa* gets converted into *aartva* in women.

#### **Factors Causing Dushti of Rasavaha Srotas:**

[13]

<i>Guru ahara</i>	excessive intake of heavy diet like cheese, fast-food, Chinese, bakery products.
<i>Sheeta ahara</i>	excessive intake of cold food or products.
<i>Atisnigdham</i>	eating too oily, unctuous food, it increases viscosity in blood creating obstruction in <i>srotas</i> and hampering circulation.
<i>Samashan</i>	taking wholesome and unwholesome diet together.
<i>Manasika hetu</i>	<i>chinta</i> (stress/worry) leads to <i>rasavaha strotodushti</i> causing cardiac diseases, hypertension etc. and ultimately hampers mental and physical health.

#### **Role of Rasavaha Srotas in Female Reproductive Health**

##### **Functions of Rasavaha Srotas:**

Circulation and distribution of *Rasa Dhātu*.  
Nourishment of all body tissues.

Maintaining homeostasis, immunity, and general health. Indirectly supports reproductive health, especially *Artava Utpatti* in females.

##### **Artava Utpatti**

*Artava* is considered an *Upadhātu* or functional manifestation dependent on *Rasa Dhātu*. Proper circulation and nourishment through *Rasavaha Srotas* are essential for timely and adequate *Artava* production. [14]

## Menstrual Cycle Regulation

Balanced *Rasavaha Srotas* supports rhythmic menstrual cycles by ensuring proper endometrial nourishment and timely shedding. Vitiating may result in *Artava Kshaya*, *Artava Vriddhi*, or irregular menstruation.

## Endometrial Nourishment

*Rasa Dhatu* provides nutrition to the uterine tissues. Healthy *Rasavaha Srotas* ensures optimal endometrial thickness and receptivity, which is essential for implantation and maintenance of pregnancy.

## Hormonal Balance

From a conceptual perspective, *Rasavaha Srotas* can be correlated with circulatory and endocrine regulatory mechanisms. Proper *Rasa* circulation supports hormonal transport and tissue responsiveness.

## Rasavaha Srotas Dushti and Gynaecological Disorders

In Vitiating of *Rasavaha Srotas*, it will lead to either *Atipravrutti*, *Sanga*, *Vimarggaman* or *Siragranti* which will affect the *Upadhatu* in the same manner.

- *Atipravrutti* of *Rasadhatu* can lead to *Atipravrutti* of *Stanya* or *Aartava* leading to their hypersecretion.
- *Sanga* is obstruction and can lead to obstruction of its *Upadhatu's* also leading to amenorrhea like condition.
- *Vimarggaman* is flow of contents in other channels.
- *Siragranti* can lead to formation of different cyst into mammary glands or ovaries, or *amenorrhea* like condition by blocking the formation of its *upadhatu's*.<sup>[14]</sup>

Modern correlations include nutritional anaemia, hormonal imbalance, poor uterine perfusion, and metabolic disorders affecting reproductive function.

## Abnormal state of *rasa dhatu* and its *dushti lakshanas* in *stree roga*

According to Ayurveda, *Rasa Dhatu Dushti* can occur due to the vitiating of any of the three *Doshas* or combination of *doshas* in *tara tama bhava*.<sup>[15]</sup>

### 1. *Vataja Rasa Dushti lakshana:*

This is characterized by symptoms like dryness, emaciation, and coldness in the body. It can lead to issues such as oligomenorrhea (scanty menstruation), delayed menstruation, and general debility in women.

### 2. *Pittaja Rasa Dushti lakshana:*

Symptoms include burning sensations, excessive thirst, and heat in the body. It often presents with conditions like menorrhagia (excessive menstrual bleeding), inflammation of reproductive organs, and irritability.

### 3. *Kaphaja Rasa Dushti lakshana:*

It manifests as heaviness, lethargy, and excessive secretion. This type is linked with conditions like leucorrhoea (excess vaginal discharge), obesity, and sluggish reproductive function.

### *Ashta artava dushti*

The normal function of *Artavavaha Srotas* maintains the menstrual cycle however there may be abnormality in the *artava chakra* due to various causes where *rasa dhatu* vitiating is one of the prime causes that leads to blockages, depletion, or vitiating in *Artavavaha srotas* leading to conditions like Amenorrhea, Dysmenorrhea, or Menorrhagia.<sup>[16]</sup>

### *Vandhyatwa*

*Acharya Bhela* explains that a woman remains *vandhya* due to defects in *beeja* (sperm and ovum) or when the woman is not adequately nourished and this generally occurs due to malnourishment due to *Rasa Dhatu dushti (kshaya)*. In case the woman conceives the vitiated *rasa dhatu* can lead to complications in pregnancy. <sup>[17]</sup>

#### **Shweta Pradara:**

Excessive and abnormal vaginal discharge, often caused by *Kapha* vitiation in *Rasa Dhatu*, is a common complaint in women. <sup>[18]</sup>

#### **PCOS (Polycystic Ovary Syndrome):**

Imbalance in *Rasa Dhatu* due to *Kapha* and *Vata Dushti* can contribute to the pathogenesis of PCOS, characterized by irregular periods, obesity, and hormonal imbalances. Metabolic dysfunction is also observed in such cases where after *rasa dhatu dushti uttarotara dhatu dushti* occurs leading to menstrual irregularities, overweight, hyperandrogenism and insulin resistance.

#### **Endometriosis:**

*Rasa Dushti*, especially involving *Pitta*, can lead to inflammatory conditions like endometriosis, which affects the reproductive organs and can cause severe pain and infertility. <sup>[19]</sup>

#### **Result**

The concept of *Rasavaha Srotas* holds a central place in Ayurveda, representing the intricate network of channels responsible for the circulation of *Rasa*, the vital nutritive fluid formed after digestion. This fluid serves as the primary source of nourishment for all body tissues and plays a crucial role in maintaining overall physiological balance. When viewed through the lens of female reproductive health, *Rasavaha Srotas* becomes even more significant, as it directly influences the nourishment and proper functioning of

reproductive tissues. A healthy flow of *Rasa* supports regular menstrual cycles, balanced hormones, and optimal fertility, highlighting its foundational role in a woman's reproductive well-being.

Female reproductive health itself is multifaceted, involving not only physical processes but also hormonal regulation and psychological stability. In recent years, conditions such as PCOS, endometriosis, and unexplained infertility have become increasingly common, posing challenges for modern medicine, which often focuses on symptomatic management and may involve side effects. In this context, Ayurveda offers a more holistic perspective by addressing the root cause of imbalance. The idea of *Rasavaha Srotas* emphasizes the quality, movement, and purity of nutritive fluids, suggesting that proper nourishment at the cellular level is essential for reproductive health. <sup>[20]</sup>

According to classical Ayurvedic texts, *Rasavaha Srotas* is responsible for transporting *Rasa Dhatu* throughout the body, forming the basis for all subsequent tissues, including the reproductive tissue, known as *Shukra Dhatu*. <sup>[21]</sup> When these channels function efficiently, they ensure that reproductive organs receive adequate nutrition, thereby supporting processes like ovulation and maintaining a healthy endometrium. However, any disturbance in these channels—whether due to poor diet, stress, or dosha imbalance—can disrupt this flow, leading to irregular menstruation, absence of periods, or fertility issues.

#### **Discussion**

Disruptions in *Rasavaha Srotas* are also associated with various gynaecological disorders. For instance, imbalances in *Rasa* can manifest as painful menstruation, abnormal discharge, or even structural issues like cyst formation. These conditions are often seen as a result of stagnation or blockage within the channels, preventing the proper circulation of

nutrients and waste products. Ayurveda interprets these disorders not just as isolated problems but as signs of deeper systemic imbalance.

To address these issues, Ayurvedic treatment focuses on restoring the integrity and smooth functioning of *Rasavaha Srotas*. This is achieved through a combination of herbal formulations, detoxification therapies like Panchakarma, and lifestyle modifications that promote balance and vitality. Special emphasis is placed on *Rasayana* therapies, which rejuvenate the body and improve the quality of *Rasa*, thereby enhancing overall reproductive health. These interventions aim not only to treat existing conditions but also to prevent their recurrence by strengthening the body's natural systems.

Interestingly, modern scientific understanding aligns with some of these principles, particularly the importance of proper circulation and nutrient delivery to reproductive tissues. Improved microcirculation and cellular nourishment are known to enhance fertility and menstrual health, echoing the Ayurvedic emphasis on the flow of *Rasa*. This overlap suggests a promising scope for integrating traditional Ayurvedic knowledge with contemporary medical practices to develop more comprehensive and effective approaches to women's health.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, *Rasavaha Srotas* serves as a fundamental concept in understanding female reproductive health from an Ayurvedic perspective. By focusing on the nourishment and circulation of vital fluids, it provides a holistic framework for maintaining reproductive balance and addressing disorders. Exploring this concept further through scientific research and integrative approaches could open new pathways for supporting women's health in a more natural and sustainable way.

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