



CONCEPTUAL REVIEW OF RASA DHATU

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the ancient holistic medical approach which aims towards maintaining the health in its utmost normalcy by various preventive regimes to be adopted rather than treating and curing the diseases. The chief objective of Ayurveda is to prevention instead of the cure and treatment. Various ancient authors of Ayurveda have written Samhitas regarding the preventive and curing the ailments if occurred. The body as per Ayurveda is made up of basic components called Dosh, Dhatu and Mala. Doshas in them are chief motors whereas the Dhatus are said to be bodily various forms of tissues and Mala are the excretory products of metabolic processes. Ayurveda described 3 Doshas viz. Vata, Pitta and Kapha. Seven Dhatus viz. Rasa, Rakta, Mamsa, Meda, Asthi, Majja, Shukra, and 3 Mala viz. Mutra, Sweda, Purisha. The Doshas appear to be the motive subtle energies to drive the changes in the Dhatus, to make them in motion and to regulate their functions in normalcy but creation of diseases by vitiating them in their affected forms. Again the Dhatus appear to be the tissue getting transformed and developed as per body demands and needs. The transformation processes end up with the desired outcomes as qualitative and /or quantitative change in the Dhatus with the production of metabolic wastes called Mala. The first Dhatu described is Rasa. The article reviews the Dhatu Rasa conceptually.

KEYWORDS : *Rasa, Ayurveda, Dosh, Dhatu*

INTRODUCTION:

Dhatus are bodily building tissue elements described 7 as a whole and having a capacity to further produce some more byproducts after transformation termed as Upadhatu. The Dhatus as per Samhita are defined as the tissue elements which are having Dharana capacity (to retain as it is) are to be termed as Dhatu. They are actually continuously nourished by the Ahara Rasa and in continuous qualitative and quantitative transformation. The first Dhatu nourished from Ahara Rasa is Rasa Dhatu. The Dhatus has been described separately with respect to their Pramana, Parinamana (transformation), Paryaya (Synonyms), their corresponding Upadhatu, Karya of the Dhatu (functions) at their normalcy, functions of the Upadhatus in their normalcy, their Kshaya and Vriddhi Lakshanas and their respective Chikitsa. The preponderance or excellence of any Dhatu in the human body is termed as Sarata¹. The body may have one Dhatu Sarata or any person may have all Dhatu Uttama Sara. Rasa Dhatu is the first Dhatu of the body and is chief Dhatu with respect to its functions. The article mainly deals with the overall information about Rasa Dhatu by observing it's all available literature.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

1. To review and understand the Vyutpatti (etymology) of the word Rasa Dhatu
2. To review and understand Nirukti (definition) of Rasa Dhatu described by various ancient authors of Ayurveda.
3. To review and understand the various Paryaya of Rasa Dhatu (synonyms) described in Samhitas
4. To review and understand the Panchabhautika Predominance (composition of Rasa Dhatu as per five element theory)
5. To review and understand Srotasa (cavity through which Dhatus gets circulated) and Sthana (Locations where it is chiefly found) of Rasa Dhatu And transformation of Rasa Dhatu
6. To review and understand the Gunas (qualities by which it is recognized) of Rasa Dhatu.
7. To review and understand Karyas (functions by which

entity of the Rasa Dhatu can be identified) of Rasa Dhatu.

8. To review and understand the Pramana (physiological volume) of Rasa Dhatu.
9. To review and understand the Rasa Dhatu Sarata (qualities found in Uttama Rasa Sara persons)
10. To review and understand Upadhatu and Mala of the Rasa Dhatu.
11. To review and understand Kshaya and Vriddhi of the Rasa Dhatu.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

1. Samhitas, Granthas regarding the concept of Rasa Dhatu,
2. Textbooks of various authors,
3. Various national and international peer reviewed indexed impacted articles regarding the concept under study, published and available on internet.
4. Magazines and souvenirs of Ayurveda regarding the concept of Rasa Dhatu

LITERATURE REVIEW:

VYUTPATTI (ETYMOLOGY AND DERIVATION):

The Dhatu continuously in motion and getting circulated is called Rasa Dhatu². The Dhatu in its Srotasa and Sthanas keep always going is called Rasa Dhatu.

It means that the bodily tissue element which is always kept in motion by circulating it from one place to another is Rasa Dhatu.

NIRUKTI (DEFINITION) OF RASADHATU:

Dhatu which is always in motion and circulated in the body of human is called Rasa Dhatu.³ Acharya Charaka described the Rasa Dhatu as the first formed product from the Ahara rasa⁴ (digested food).

PARYAYA (SYNONYMS) OF RASADHATU:

Saumya Dhatu: for having Saumya/Sheeta Guna
Ahara-prasada: as it is formed from Ahara-rasa
Some other Paryaya are also used by authors of Ayurveda like Dhatusara, Aharateja, Agnisambhava, Asrik-kara etc.

PANCHABHAUTIKA PREDOMINANCE:

Acharya Susruta considered the *Rasa Dhatu* derived from *Jala Mahabhuta* predominantly⁵

This dominance of water element makes the *Rasa Dhatu* liquid and keep it the same.

The *Guna* of *Rasa* is similar to the *Guna* of *Kapha*.⁶

SROTASA AND STHANA AND METABOLIC TRANSFORMATION OF RASADHATU:

Rasa Dhatu is always in the motion from one place to the other so complete body can be considered as the *Sthana* of *Rasa Dhatu*. As per opinion of *Acharya Charaka*⁷, *Hridaya* and *Dhamani* (blood vessels) are the origins of *Rasavaha Srotasa*. It means that *Rasa* is freely found and carried by *Hridaya* and *Dhamani* (blood vessels). Any deformity at the origin place or in the course of *Srotasa*, the disease related to *Rasavaha Srotasa* may appear.

Also when the vitiated (*Rasa Dhatu* with its altered *Gunas*) *Rasa Dhatu* reaches to the *Hridaya*, it damages the *Hridaya* to cause *Hridroga*⁸

Rasa Dhatu is nourished by *Ahararasa*. The *Ahara Rasa* is formed after digestion of food by *Jatharagni*. It contains the nutrients to nourish all the seven *Dhatu*s. It is further absorbed by *Grahani* and brought in the heart (origin of the *Rasavaha srotasa*). With the action of *Rasa Dhatwagni* the nutrients of the *Rasa Dhatu* are converted into *Rasa Dhatu*. Then this *Rasa Dhatu* is further pumped by *Hridaya* and gets circulated. During the action of *Rasa Dhatwagni*, two components are formed : one nourishes the *Rasa Dhatu* called the *Poshya* and the other *Mala* component formed is called *Rasamala Kapha*. *Kapha* as an excretory product gets excreted. Here *panchabhautikagni* also play their role of transformation of *Gunas* of nutrients into *Gunas* of *Poshya Rasa*.

As per *Acharya Dalhana*⁹, *Tridha-Parinamana* (three level metabolisms) takes place:

Dhatwagni of *Rasa Dhatu* converts nutrients of *Rasa Dhatu* and forms following three elements in *Tridha Parinamana*:

1. *Sthoola Rasa Dhatu*
2. *Rakta Poshakansha*
3. *Rasamala Kapha*

Again *Acharyas* of *Ayurveda* described the *Utpattikala* of *Dhatu*s.

As per *Vagbhata*, 24 hours (1day) is required to form *Rasa Dhatu* from *Ahara Rasa*.

GUNAS OF RASADHATU:

Acharya Vagbhata says, *Gunas* of *Rasa Dhatu* are similar to *Kapha Dosha*.

Main *Gunas* described by all *Acharyas* are: *Drava* (liquid), *Snigdha* (unctuous), *Manda* (dull), *Sheeta* (cold). The taste of *Rasa* is described as *Madhura*.

KARYAS (FUNCTIONS) OF RASADHATU:

As per *Acharya Vagbhata*¹⁰, *Preenana* (satisfaction and freshness) is the chief function of the *Rasa Dhatu*.

As per *Acharya Susruta*¹¹, *Preenana* as well as *Rakta Pushti* (nourishment of *Rakta Dhatu*) are the *Karyas* of *Rasa Dhatu*.

PRAMANA OF RASADHATU:

As per *Acharya Charaka*, 9 *Anjali* is the *Pramana* of *Rasa Dhatu*¹²

SARATA OF RASADHATU:

The word "*Sara*" denotes the qualities associated with full development of the particular *Dhatu* in human beings. *Twak*

is the term used by ancient ayurvedic *Acharyas* to depict the *Lakshanas* of *Rasa sara* as there are more *Twak* (skin) related excellencies found in *Rasa sara* persons. *Samhitas* described it thoroughly. A wholesome account of *Rasa sara* of all ayurvedic *Samhitas* is presented here:

As per *Charaka*, persons having excellency of *Twak* or skin have unctuous, smooth, soft, clear, fine, less numerous, deep rooted and tender hair and lustrous skin¹³. These persons have excellence of skin and are gifted with health and longevity. They are endowed with happiness, fortune, power, intellectual capacity, knowledge and excitement.

As per *Acharya Susruta*, these persons have clean and soft hairs¹⁴. They are knowledgeable.

According to *Kashyapa Samhita*, *Rasa sara* persons have clean and well marked complexion and rapid wound healing¹⁵.

As per *Briht Samhita* these persons have unctuous soft, thin skin by virtue of which they become wealthy, fortunuous and erudite¹⁶.

UPADHATU AND MALA OF RASADHATU:

Stanya and *Raja (Artava)* are the *Upadhatu* of *Rasa Dhatu*¹⁷.

KSHAYA AND VRIDDHI OF RASADHATU:

Kshaya: the quantitative and qualitative decrease in *Rasa Dhatu* describes the *Kshaya* of *Rasa Dhatu*. The *Lakshanas* described by *Vagbhata* include *Raukshya* (dryness of skin, hairs, nails), *Shrama* (fatigue due to exertion) *Shosha* (dryness of mouth), *Shabda-asahishnutaa* (intolerance of speech), *Ghani* (weakness/giddiness)¹⁸

More *Lakshanas* described by *Acharya Susruta* are *Hritpida* (pain in cardiac region/ cardiac abnormalities), *Kampa* (cramps), *Shunyataa* (feeling of lightness), *Trishna* (excessive thirst)¹⁹

Vridhhi: the quantitative and qualitative increase in *Rasa Dhatu* describes the *Vridhhi* of *Rasa Dhatu*. The *Lakshanas* described by *Vagbhata* include *Agnisadana* (indigestion), *Praseka* (nausea), *Alasya* (laziness), *Gaurav* (heaviness), *Shwaiitya* (whitish coloration to body parts), *Shaitya* (coldness to body parts), *Shlathangataa* (laxed body parts)²⁰

More *Lakshanas* described by *Acharya Susruta* are *Utkleda* (nausea), *Praseka* (excess salivation)²¹.

OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS:

The *Rasa Dhatu* is described in details by all *Acharyas* of *Bhihat trayee*.

The *Rasa Dhatu* has a normal *Pramana* of 9 *Anjali*. The deviation from normalcy may give rise to diseases of *Rasa Dhatu*.

The preponderance of *Rasa Dhatu* called *Rasa Sarata* can be assessed by examining the *Twak* (skin) of the individual and hence also called *Twak sara*.

The *Dhatu* called *Rasa* gives the body gratification and freshness which keep up the tone of skin and makes the skin lustrous.

Rasa Dhatu is of prime importance when it comes to the *Kshaya* and *Vridhhi*. Both include mild to severe *Lakshanas* some of them require immediate treatment.

CONCLUSION:

1. As per *Ayurveda*, the *Rasa Dhatu* get transformed from *Ahara Rasa* during which *Mala Kapha* and *Rakta*

Poshakansha are also formed.

2. *Thidha Parinamana* makes the *Sthoola Rasa*, *Rakta Poshakansha* and *Rasamala Kapha* to be produced. The process is carried out by the *Rasadhatwagni*.
3. The circulating motion of the *Rasa Dhatu* and its enrichment at the skin level makes the skin fresh and lustrous. The *Sheeta*, *Snigha* Guna of the *Rasa Dhatu* makes it resemble the *Kapha Dosh*.
4. The *Lakshanas* of *Kshaya* and *Vridhhi* ranges from less to more severe. Some of them really need to be treated immediately.

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