

## ANALYSIS OF CONCEPT OF RAKTAASHAYA (BLOOD RESERVOIRS)

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### Abstract

Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs) refers to the pratyanga (Organ or sub part of body) of the body which serves as main seat of the rakta (blood), literary meaning of Ashaya (Abode) is the Place which provides Shelter to a substance or any constituent pertaining to the body, similar is the Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs). The concept of Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs) is more than its literary meaning it has vital importance in the prakrita (Normal), vaikrata (Altered) karma and pathology of certain raktaja vikara (diseases of blood) or in the diseases where the rakta (Blood) is involved. This article focuses on the concept of Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs).

**Keywords:** Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs); Yakrut (Liver); Pleeha (Spleen).

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## INTRODUCTION

Be it the war or medicine, the blood, all that is of importance. The ancient health/medical science Ayurveda postulates that the diseases are the outcome of the vitiation of the Dosha (Humour), which are also responsible for the maintenance of the health in their state of equilibrium. The same importance is also given to Raktadhatu (Blood tissue) that the vitiation of Rakta (Blood) leads to manifestation of many diseases. Ashaya (abode) is the place where the different entities of the body reside, according to Ayurveda. Ashaya not only provides shelter to the dhatus (tissues) even the regulation of the dhatu (tissues) is under the control of ashaya. The ideal example of this is the concept of Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs). In the present study a prompt effort has been done to explore the concept of ashaya and its role in causation of the disease, its role in the manifestation of the symptomatology and the prognosis that the disease can be understood in a better way. In this regard it will be said that the present work analysis of concept of Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs).

### Rakta (Blood)

Normal watery rasa (lymph) when goes to yakrut (liver) and pleeha (spleen) pigmented red by the normal pitta then it is called as rakta.<sup>[1]</sup>

### Ashaya (Abode)

The place which gives shelter to Dosha (Humour), dhatu (tissue), mala (Excreted of body) is termed as Ashaya (Abode).

Main seat of rasa Raktadi dhatu (Blood tissue), purisha mutradi mala (fecal matter, urine etc excretory wastes of our body), vata pittadi dosha (humours of our body), & ingested food is called as Ashaya (Abode).

### Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs)

Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs) is that which provides shelter to Rakta. It is termed as Raktadhara.<sup>[3][4][5]</sup> Raktaashaya is the place where Rakta resides. Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) are the Ashaya (Abode) of Rakta. Rakta residing at these places helps all the other places where Rakta resides.<sup>[6]</sup>

By the above reference it is very clear that apart from Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) Rakta resides at several places. So it is necessary to put light on the places where Rakta resides. Screening the different texts reveals that many places are considered as the place of Rakta by different authors. (Table 1)

**Table 1: The places considered as Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs) by different authors**

Different authors	Raktaashaya
Susruta Sutrasthana 21 <sup>st</sup> chapter Vagbhata and Bhavapraksha Sharangadhara	Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) <sup>[7][8][9][10]</sup>
Susruta shareera sthana 4 <sup>th</sup>	Mamsa (Muscle tissues), sira, Yakrut (Liver), Pleeha (Spleen) <sup>[11]</sup>
Susruta sutrasthana 14 <sup>th</sup> chapter	Hridaya (Heart) <sup>[12]</sup>
Madhukosha Haranachandra	Phuppusa (Lungs) <sup>[13]</sup> Twak (Skin) <sup>[14]</sup>

Rasa when enters the Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) the Ranjakagni present in the organs colours the Rasa dhatu and imparts the red colour to the Rakta.<sup>[15]</sup> By the act of Saman marut brought to Hridaya where pitta does ranjan & pachana of Rasa & forms the rakta.<sup>[16]</sup>

### Anatomical Position

Sharangadhara and Bhavaprakasha mentioned that Raktaashaya lies in Uras (chest).

Adhamalla commenting on this says that the seat of Rakta is Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs) and Pleeha (Spleen) is very popularly known as Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs). He also claim that it lies at the left of Hridaya (Heart) hence in the original text it is told that Uras is the place of Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs).<sup>[17]</sup>

Anatomical position of Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs) is not mentioned in Sushruta samhita. Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) is the seat of Rakta, while describing the Hridaya (Heart) formation and the relations of Hridaya (Heart). In this context that Hridaya (Heart) is the organ originates from prasada of Kapha and Rakta and on which the pranavaha dhamanis depend. The relations of Hridaya (Heart) are told as, below and towards the left Pleeha (Spleen) and Puppusa (lungs) are present, towards the right Yakrut (Liver) and Kloma are present. From this indirect reference the anatomical position of Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) can be said.<sup>[18]</sup>

In other reference Hridaya (Heart) is called as Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs) and it is very popular that it lies in Uras.<sup>[19]</sup>

### **Raktavaha srotas (Blood carrying channels)**

Raktavaha srotas are two in number and their root are Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) and Raktavahi dhamanis (Arteries).<sup>[20]</sup> Injury to this srotas shall manifest into Shyavangata (Bluish black discolouration of skin), jwara (fever), Pandu (Aneamia), shonitagamana (Bleeding) and Raktanetrata (Redness of eye).<sup>[21]</sup> Sharangadhara opines Pleeha (Spleen) as rakta vahi shira mula whereas Yakrut (Liver) is seat of ranjank pitta and stores the blood.<sup>[22]</sup>

### **Raktadhara kala**

The second kala is Raktadhara kala (supporting membrane of blood) it is present in Mamsa (Muscle tissues) especially in sira,

Pleeha (Spleen) and Yakrut (Liver). When muscles are cut Rakta flows from the wound just as a milky sap when trees are cut.<sup>[23][24]</sup> Acharya sharangadhara mentioned dvitiya rakta dhara kala but he differs in his opinion he claims that Yakrut (Liver) Pleeha (Spleen) is the 4<sup>th</sup> kala where sleshma dhara kala is present.<sup>[25]</sup>

### **Raktadushti as nidana for its ashaya (abode) dusthi and vice versa**

In the context of Raktavridhhi while mentioning the symptomatology the term Pleeha (Spleen) is used. It means Rakta vridhhi is an abnormal condition where the dushti of Rakta leads to Pleeha (Spleen) vridhhi.<sup>[26]</sup>

In sushrutta samhita in the context of Pandu (Aneamia) roga it is said that due to morbid dosha are going vitiate Rakta dhatu and cause Pandu (Aneamia) in Twacha.<sup>[27]</sup> But charaka opines that Pandu (Aneamia) is Rasavahasrotogata vyadhi.<sup>[28]</sup> According to him the pitta pradhana morbid dosha vitiating the dhatus manifest in the form of Pandu (Aneamia). Truly speaking it is an interesting reference where the post effects of the morbidity are very practically explained. Though it is rasavaha srotogata vyadhi the rasakshaya leading to improper formation of Rakta manifests in the form of Pandu (Aneamia). The longstanding effects of this are very interesting. If Pandu (Aneamia) is not treated and the person indulges in pittakara ahara vihara the person lands up with Kamala. If Kamala (Jaundice) is not managed properly it ends up with Kumbha Kamala (Jaundice) where he claims that Kamala (Jaundice) on long standing causes Kharatwa.<sup>[29]</sup> Here the kharatwa (Hardness) can be interpreted as hardening of the organ involved in the pathogenesis of Kamala. The structural changes that are taking place in the organ are very practically observed by the author and it is obvious that the organ involved in the pathogenesis of Kamala (Jaundice) is Yakrut

(Liver). The clinical presentation may be of two types.

1. Either the person presents with the history of bleeding where the bleeding can be interpreted as Raktapitta which is again the disease due to vitiation of Rakta.<sup>[30]</sup>
2. The second presentation could be oedema which is mentioned in Sushruta as Shotho mahaan and it is variant of Kumbhakamala. The details of this pathogenesis are elaborated from Yakruddalyudara.<sup>[31]</sup>

In the context of Arsha (Piles) Charaka while mentioning the complications of cessation of dushtarakta in sravi Arsha (Piles) claims “if one stops the bleeding in Arsha (Piles) when dushtarakta tends to bleed it causes many diseases as complications” Kamala (Jaundice) is one such disease mentioned by him. In this context also manifestation of Kamala (Jaundice) is secondary to Raktadushti.<sup>[32]</sup>

The above are the best examples to say that Raktadushti leads to affect the Ashaya and the Ashaya vikruti manifests in the form of dhatu dushti. In case of Rakta pitta also the same thing can be elaborated. Charaka very directly mentions the involvement of Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) in the disease rakta pitta.<sup>[33]</sup>

Vagbhata too says that Raktapitta manifests from Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen).<sup>[34]</sup> Sushruta is also have the same opinion.<sup>[35][36]</sup>

## DISCUSSION

Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs) means the place where rakta resides means the organ which acts as reservoir.<sup>[37]</sup> In Ayurvedic literature the organs Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) are concerned with Rakta. The relation between Rakta, Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) is analyzed by the authors and

considered in many ways. At instances Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) are considered as Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs). In another context the same are called as Mula of Raktavaha srotas.<sup>[38]</sup> In Sushruta samhita while describing Ranjakagni it is claimed that Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) are the seats of Ranjakagni where Rasa dhatu imparts colour from the ranjakagni and gets converted to Raktadhatu.<sup>[39]</sup> Considering the above opinions it can safely be said that the meaning of Ashaya (Abode) is not only confined to the storage it seems that something still more is hidden in the meaning of Ashaya (Abode). To explore the significance of the same the present work has been taken and from the above said opinions the following facts can be observed. From Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs) it clear that Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) are the storage houses of Rakta.

If the same organs are observed from the srotas point of view the meaning is some shat extensive that these are concerned with the regulation of blood, Or having the controls on Raktadhatu, Or they are the organs concerned with the homeostasis (maintenance of the physiological state of equilibrium) of Raktadhatu.

If analyzed on the basis of Ranjakagni no doubt they are involved in the production of blood. This could be the reason even though many organs like Phuphusa, sira, Twacha etc are considered as Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs) Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) are given prime importance by the authors.

The concept of Ashaya has the ample scope from the point of shareera kriya and rachana. The Field of Ashaya is extensive even in different specialties of Ayurvedic medical sciences like Nidana, Chikitsa, Prasuti, Shalya etc.<sup>[40]</sup>

The morbidity taking place in Rakta has the impact on its Ashaya. The Ashaya if gets

affected it also leads too different sets of symptomatology because of Raktadusti. Means both have the impact on the other.

## CONCLUSION

Even though many organs like Yakrut (Liver), Pleeha (Spleen), puppusa, Hridaya (Heart), Twak (Skin), sira, are documented as Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs) by different acharyas. Yakrut (Liver) is involved in genesis of Rakta. Yakrut (Liver), Pleeha (Spleen) are the organs concerned with regulation and control of Rakta too. The two organs are significantly involved in the pathological events of Rakta also. After meticulous screening texts of Ayurveda as well as the contemporary sciences safely it can be concluded that Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) are the Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs). Hence the present literary research work carried on analysis of concept of Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs) concludes Yakrut (Liver) and Pleeha (Spleen) are Raktaashaya (Blood reservoirs).

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