

Exploring The Physiological Aspect Of *Hridaya* In *Ayurved*

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ABSTRACT:

In Ayurvedic texts 107 number of Marmas(vital organs) are mentioned, while Trimarmasi.eBasti(Urinary System), Hridayam(Heart) and Shira (Head) are considered supreme among themselves, because they possess Pran (Life force) in them.¹ Among these Trimarmas,Hridayahas its own importance as this is the seat of Chetna. AcharyaCharakexplained aboutDashpranayatan(Ten Principal seatsof life) in which the Prana are established and the Hridaya is one of the Dashpranayatan.²According to Ayurved it is a site of Mana (Mind) and is the Mula of Manovahi Srotas³ and thus related with our thought process and emotions. Rasa Dhatuis essential for Preenan (Nourishment)⁴and Hridaya is considered as the Mula (origin source) of Rasavaha Srotas⁵ through which Rasa circulates all over the body and provide nourishment.Similarly Mula of PranavahaSrotas is also explained as Hridaya.⁵TheHridayais the supreme location ofOjas(Essence of all Dhatus)and locus of consciousness is the reason why physicians call it Hridaya, Mahator Artha.⁶. The present review critically examines the available literatures to evaluate the physiological aspect of Hridayain Ayurved.

Key Words: *Hridaya, Mahat, Artha, Trimarmas, Prana, Rasa.*

Introduction:

In *Ayurved* the term *Hridaya* is not solely used for Heart, it has different meanings in different contexts; AcharyaCharak mentioned that *Shadang* (Six divisions of body the i.e four limbs, head and torso) with internal organs has *Vijnanam* (consciousness), *IndriyaarthaGyan* (motor and sensory perceptions) and the *Atma* (soul), *Mana* (mind) and objects of *Manalike Chintya*etc. are all located in the *Hridaya*.⁷The *Hridaya*sustains *Sparsavijnan* (Tactile perception), life and body.⁸*Hridaya* is referred as *Koshtang*(Internal Organ)⁹and is developed from *Matrija*(Maternal)*Garbhkarabhava*¹⁰(Procreative factors) in the 4th month during foetal life.¹¹*Aahara Rasa* obtained from*Aamashya*(Stomach) is circulated in the whole body by*HridayaMarmawhich* is the seat of *Satva, Raja* and *Tama*and is situated in the thoracic cavity between the *Stanaya Mandalas* (Nipples or Both Lungs).¹²The shape of *Hridaya* is like a lotus whose apex is directed downwards. This *Hridaya* contracts during sleep and dilates when awake.¹³ Development of *Hrdaya* takes place from the *Sara* (Essence) of *Rakta* and *Kapha Dosha*.¹⁴

Aims and Objectives:

Materials and Methods:

Available *Ayurveda* texts like *CharakSamhita*, *SushrutaSamhita*, *Ashtang* etc., reviewed research articles, research papers, authenticated internet sources.

Physiological Aspect of *Hridaya*

Dosha and Hridaya

VATA

PranaVayu resides in the *Murdha* (Brain) and while circulating in *Urah*(Thoracic Region) and *Kantha*(Throat), it controls the *Buddhi* (Intellect), *Hridaya* and *Indriya*(Senses).¹⁵ The main seat of *VyanaVayu* is *Hridaya*, it controls contraction relaxation and rhythmicity of *Hridaya*.¹⁶ *VyanaVayu* maintains the tone of blood vessels so that they are responsible for maintaining blood pressure, control the heart rates.

PITTA

Sadhaka Pitta is located in the *Hridaya* and thus makes it susceptible for *Buddhi* (intelligence), *Medha* (perception of knowledge), and *Ahankar* (Pride).¹⁷

KAPHA

AvalambakaKapha resides in the *Urah Pradesh* (Thoracic region) & involved in the *Avlamban Karma* of *TrikSthana* (Thoracic Region) and provides the necessary lubrication and strength to the *Hridaya* and *UrahPradesha* for its continuous work.¹⁸

Dhatu (Tissue elements) and *Hridaya*

During the process of *AaharaPaka* (Digestion), *AaharaRasa* is distributed to whole body via *Hridaya* and it helps in the *Poshan* (Nutrition) of *Rasa Dhatu* and then there is nourishment of subsequent *Dhatu* takes place through *KsirdadhiNyay*, but if due to some reason *Hridaya* is not working properly then the subsequent *Dhatu* will not get proper nourishment and this leads to different kinds of disease related to particular *Dhatu*. *Hridaya* itself is made up of *Mamasa Dhatu*¹⁹ and it gets nourishment from *Rasa & Rakta Dhatu*.

Ojas (Essence of all *Dhatu*) and *Hridaya*

Ojas is the essence of *RasadhiDhatu* and it is also called *Bala* (Strength)²⁰ and this *Bala* can destroy the strength of the *Doshas* and promotes the strength of body²¹ hence this *Ojas* has the property to prevent and eliminates diseases from the body. It is the *Ojas* which keeps all living beings nourished and refreshed. The *Hridaya* is the supreme location of *Ojas* (Essence of all *Dhatu*) and locus of consciousness is the reason why physicians call it *Hridaya*, *Mahator Artha*.⁶ Arising from the *Hridaya* the *Dash Mahamula* (ten great vessels) that carry *Ojas*, pulsating in the body and suffusing thoroughly.²² *Hridaya* is the seat for *Para Ojas* which is in *Astabindu Pramana*²³ This clear and slightly red-yellowish substance situated in the *Hridaya* is known as *Ojas* and its destruction leads to death²⁴, that is the reason *Hridaya* is considered under *Sadhya Pranahar* (Injury leading to immediate death) *Marma*. During the intrauterine life, production of *Ojas* occurs, then this *Ojas* increases in the quantity and quality through the *Rasa* of the *Garbh*. This type of qualitative *Rasa* formed the *Hridaya*.²⁶ This *Para Ojas* goes into *Hridaya* and Circulation of the *Ojas* through *Hridaya* maintains the life.

Strotas (Body channels) and *Hridaya*

Strotas are the minute channels, which are spreaded all over the body. These are the empty space through which *ManasBhavas* (Psychological factors), *Prana* (Vital force), *Anna* (Nutritional factors), *Jala* (liquid contents), *Dosha* (three i.e. *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* Biological humours), *Dhatu*, *Upadhatu* (Secondary tissues in the body), *Dhatumala*, *Mutra*, *Purish* etc. are circulating in body.

Hridaya is the *Mula*(Root) of *Rasavaha*, *Pranavaha* and *ManovahaSrotas*. *SushrutAcharya* said that if there is *viddh* (Injury) to *PranavahaSrotas*, it will leads to *Krodha* (Anger), *Vinaman*(Bending down of the body), *Mohana* (Illusion), *Bhramana* (Vertigo), *Vepana*(Tremors) and at the end *Maran* (Death). This all happens due to the factor that *Hridayais SadhyoPranahara Marma*²⁷and also comes under *Trimarmas*. *RasavahaSrotoviddha* manifestsas *Sosha* (dryness) and ultimately leads to *Maran* (Death).

Hridaya is also the *MulaSthana* of *PranavahaSrotas* , which means *Hridaya* also regulate the circulation of *PranaVayu in body*. In many cardiac diseases it has observed that *Swasa* (*Dyspnoea*) and *Kasa* (*Cough*) are cardinal symptoms. There are many cardiac disorders resulting from *PranavahaSrotodushti*. *AcharyaCharak* mentioned the *Lakshanas* (Symptoms) of *PranavahaSrotodushti*which comes under *Swasa* (Respiratory Disorders).²⁸

Hridaya is the seat of *Ojas*, *Prana* and *Mula* of *RasavahaSrotas* . It is clear that these all are circulates though the channels originates from *Hridaya*and reached upto the smallest unit of the body.²⁹

Aahara Rasa and Hridaya

The Dhatus are regularly nourished from *Aahara*(Food) we consume and this *Poshan Karma* (Nutrition) depends upon the quality and quantity of *Aahara*, *Agni* (*Digestive Power*). *AaharaPachan* (Digestion) occurs in the *Aamashya* (Stomach) and after proper *PachanAahara Rasa*/poshak *Rasa* is formed and this *Aahara Rasa* is pushed by *VyanaVayu*and reaches the *Hridaya*.The *Rasa* from *Hridaya* enters the 24 *Dhamanis* and reaches different parts of the body and by this nourishes the body and *Poshan* of subsequent *Dhatus* takes place. Though the *rasa* is circulating all over the body, its main site is said to be *Hridaya*because it is the *Hridaya*which distributes the *Rasa* through the *Dhamanis*.

Anahata Chakra and Hridaya

In *Ayurveda Chakra* refers to the core energy centers within our body,located along thebackbone and stretching from the base of the spine to the head. *Anahata Chakra* is the most influential energy center out of the 7 *Chakras*. Exploring divinity through pure love inspires this fourth *Chakra*.*Anahata* means unstruck or unbeaten. This signifies an impartial and infinite love allowing a deeper understanding of self and others. It is located in the region of the *Hridaya*, in the center of the chest. The color of *Anahata Chakra* is green and corresponding element is *Vayu* (Air) that represents freedom and expansion³⁰ and represented by a lotus flower with twelve petals.

We can correlate this with the cardiac plexus and the twelve petals are related to the following plexuses:³¹

1. RightDeep Cardiac Plexus.
2. Left Deep Cardiac Plexus
3. Anterior Pulmonary Plexus
4. Posterior Pulmonary Plexus
5. Superficial Cardiac Plexus
6. Cardiac Ganglion of Weisberg Plexus
7. Right Coronary Plexus
8. Ventricular plexus
9. Left Coronary Plexus
10. Endo Cardiac Plexus
11. Remark
12. Bibders Ganglion Plexus

Conclusion:

The concept of *Hridaya* is found in *Ayurveda* which is considered as Heart at some places and at others related with the *Shira* (Brain). As *Chintya* (Thinking), *Vicharaya* (Analysis), *Uhya* (speculation), *Dheya* (Aim), *Sankalp* (Decision) are the *Karma* (Action) of *Mana* and *Hridaya* which is the seat of *Mana* will be affected by these factors. *Hridaya* is also involved in the distribution of *Aahara Rasa* throughout the body for *DhatuPoshan* and is the supreme location of *Ojas* and locus of consciousness. *Trimarmasi*, *Basti*, *Hridayam*, and *Shira* are considered supreme among all *Marmas*, because they possess *Pran* in them and one should make every effort to protect them.

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