

Chapter 6. Srotas (Body Channels) and Their Significance in Cleansing

Sarvaśārīreṣु srotāṁsi — “Everything the body does, it does through channels.”
(*Suśruta Saṁhitā, Sūtra 9.12*)

Cleansing in Ayurveda is not about “flushing organs” but about **re-opening microscopic highways—srotas—so nutrients reach the tissues and wastes leave without obstruction**. Understanding these pathways lets a cosmetologist decide which Panchakarma tool, where, and for how long.

1 · What Exactly Are Srotas?

Sanskrit Root	Literal Sense	Modern Correlate
वृशु (“to flow”)	A conduit, channel, pipeline	From obvious vessels (blood, lymph) to invisible pores, micro-vessels, gland ducts, nerve filaments

Key Idea: Every tissue (dhātu) has its own dedicated inlet (*mūla* = root) and outlet (*mukha* = mouth). Block either, and waste stagnates → shows on skin & hair.

2 · Cosmetic-Relevant Srotas at a Glance

#	Srotas	Root (Mūla)	Opening (Mukha)	Cosmetology Manifestation When Blocked
1	Rasavaha (Plasma / lymph)	Heart & blood vessels	Sweat pores	Dull, dehydrated face; slow post-peel healing
2	Raktavaha (Blood micro-circulation)	Liver & spleen	Capillary beds	Melasma, erythema, dark circles
3	Māmsavaha (Muscle / dermis)	Fascia & small veins	Hair follicles	Loss of firmness, sagging, atrophic scars
4	Medovaha (Sub-cut fat / sebum)	Kidneys & omentum	Sebaceous & sweat glands	Oily acne, cellulite, scalp grease
5	Svedavaha (Sweat ducts)	Hair follicles & adipose tissue	Sweat pores	Miliaria, dull sweat-film, toxin build-up
6	Śukravaha / Ārtavavaha (Reproductive)	Testes / ovaries	Genital tracts	Hormonal acne, telogen effluvium, melasma flare
7	Nādivaha / Prāṇavaha (Nervous & respiratory)	Brain & lungs	Nostril/sinuses	Stress-shed, dull complexion, dark circles

3 · “Clog Signs” & Matching Cleanses

Blocked Srotas	Classical Signs	Modern Cosmetic Sign	Targeted Cleanse / Panchakarma
Rasavaha	Heaviness, thirst, sticky tongue	Patchy glow, cracked lips	<i>Nādi sweda</i> (localized steam), light <i>tikta ghṛita</i> internal, hydrosol mists
Raktavaha	Red eyes, boils, bitter taste	PIH*, rosacea, heat acne	Virechana , manjishta decoction, leech micro-therapy
Medovaha	Oily skin, fatigue, lethargy	Greasy T-zone, open pores	Vamana + <i>udvartana</i> + <i>trikatu</i> diet

Blocked Srotas	Classical Signs	Modern Cosmetic Sign	Targeted Cleanse / Panchakarma
Svedavaha	Anhidrosis or foul sweat	Rough texture, "dirty" tone	Steam tent, vetiver hydrosol spritz, light exercise
Māṃsavaha	Flaccid muscles, loss of tone	Jowls, nasolabial folds	<i>Sneha-basti</i> nutrition + collagen-boost rasāyana + face yoga
Śukravaha / Ārtavavaha	Irregular cycles, low libido	Hormonal jaw acne, diffuse hair shed	Shatavari ghṛita, seed cycling, gentle basti
Nāḍivaha	Anxiety, breathlessness	Stress lines, dull under-eyes	Nasya (Brahmi taila), pranayama, head-oil dhāra

*PIH = Post-Inflammatory Hyper-pigmentation

4 · Step-By-Step “Channel-Opening” Playbook

- Locate the Block** — Use touch (oiliness vs dryness), look (colour, pores), ask (bowel, sweat, stress)
- Liquefy & Mobilise** — Snehana + Swedana matched to doṣa (see Chap 2)
- Choose Exit Door** —
 - Kapha/Medovaha → **Vamana**
 - Pitta/Raktavaha → **Virechana** or micro-Raktamokṣaṇa
 - Vāta/Rasavaha + deep tissues → **Basti** + **Nasya**
- Seal with Rasāyana** — Nourish freshly opened srotas (amla, bhringraj, ghrita)
- Maintain Flow** — Dinacharya mist-spritz, movement, season-wise diet

Mnemonic: “F.L.E.S.M.” → Find Liquefy Eject Seal Maintain

5 · Herb & Oil Cheat-Sheet for Each Srotas

Srotas	Clearing Herb/Oil	Daily External Use	Oral Beauty Dose
Rasavaha	Coriander-fennel water	Vetiver-rose hydrosol 4x	400 ml warm infusion
Raktavaha	Manjishta + Neem	Manjishta-licorice gel 2 %	20 ml manjishta kvātha BID
Medovaha	Trikatu, Triphala	Horse-gram udvartana, mustard oil 2 g	Triphala guggulu HS
Svedavaha	Usheera, Sandal	Vetiver steam, sandal mask	10 ml usheera syrup TID
Māṃsavaha	Bala, Ashwagandha	Bala-ashwagandha oil massage	1 tsp bala ghṛita AM
Śukravaha	Shatavari, Kapikacchu	Shatavari ghṛita scalp drops	500 mg cap HS
Nāḍivaha	Brahmi, Jatamansi	Brahmi-ghṛita Nasya 2 drops	250 mg tab HS

6 · Red-Flag Channel Crises & Emergency Fixes

Alarm Sign Post-Cleanse	Likely Srotas Collapse	Quick Ayur Fix	Refer If...
Persistent gush diarrhea > 48 h	Rasavaha & Raktavaha over-purged	Warm rice-cumin gruel + 1 g nutmeg	Electrolytes drop, severe cramps
Severe urticaria flare	Raktavaha rebound	Coriander juice 50 ml + cold rose compress	Spreads with fever
Faintness, palpitations	Vāta surge in Nāḍivaha	Sneha basti 60 ml + warm jaggery water	BP < 90/60; arrhythmia



Key Take-Aways

1. **Srotas are the delivery & drainage grid.** Cleansing succeeds only when the right channels are cleared.
2. **Each doṣa blocks its favourite srotas.** Match your Panchakarma “exit.”
3. **Observation > guesswork.** Tongue coat, sweat pattern, pore look tell you which channel is jammed.
4. **Post-cleanse rasāyana keeps channels supple.** Otherwise āma sneaks back in.
5. **Emergency protocol ready.** Know rebound signs and soft fixes before they escalate.

Clinic mantra: “Open the way, clear the flow, nourish the glow.”