Journal of Ayurveda and Integrated Medical Sciences

Publisher

Maharshi Charaka
Ayuryeda

www.maharshicharaka.in

2025 Volume 10 Number 3 MARCH

Raktapradoshaja Vikara and their Upakrama

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DOI:10.21760/jaims.10.3.52

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In Ayurveda, Rakta Dhatu (blood tissue) is an important component responsible for nourishing the body and maintaining life. It plays a vital role in nourishment, oxygenation, immunity and overall vitality. Rakta is primarily governed by Pitta Dosha and its normalcy or vitiation influences both physical and mental wellbeing. When Rakta gets vitiated due to various factors (like Pitta aggravation, Ama accumulation, and external toxins), it leads to Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara - diseases primarily affecting the skin, blood circulation and overall metabolism. A class of disorders known as "Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara" in Ayurveda are primarily linked to the vitiation or imbalance of Rakta (blood) during the Sharada Ritu, Rakta can be vitiated to cause a variety of conditions, from dermatitis, rashes, and boils to more serious conditions including anaemia, jaundice, and blood-related issues. Ayurvedic medicine, which emphasizes the use of herbal remedies, purifying and cleaning procedures, and dietary adjustments to restore balance, is being used to treat Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara. In the Upakrama treatment, Acharyas emphasize Raktashodhana (blood purification) and Rakta Prasadana (Blood nourishment) through Shodhana (purification therapies) - Raktamokshana (bloodletting), Virechana (Purgation), Basti (Enema) and Shamana (Palliative therapies) through Herbal decoctions made with specific herbal formulations like Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia), Sariva (Hemidesmus indicus), and Manjistha (Rubia cordifolia) are used to purify the blood and decreases symptoms, Rasayana (Rejuvenation) and Pathya-Apathya (Dietary & Lifestyle Corrections) - Cooling foods, avoiding Pitta aggravating factors. Modifying one's lifestyle to incorporate practices like stress management, adequate sleep, and a Pitta-balancing diet is another way to aid in the healing process. Apart from managing the signs and symptoms of the imbalanced Rakta Dosha, this all-encompassing strategy aims to address the root cause of the problem to avoid recurrence.

Keywords: Rakta, Rasa, Pradoshaja Vikara, Raktadushti, Upakrama

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How to Cite this Article

Swati, Kande A, Raktapradoshaja Vikara and their Upakrama. J Ayu Int Med Sci. 2025;10(3):346-352. Available From

https://jaims.in/jaims/article/view/4485/



To Browse

Manuscript Received 2025-02-12

Review Round 1 2025-02-24 Review Round 2 2025-03-04 Review Round 3 2025-03-14 Accepted 2025-03-24

Conflict of Interest

Funding Nil Ethical Approval

Plagiarism X-checker 13.87 Note



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Introduction

According to Ayurveda, the body is made up of seven main "Dhatus," each of which has unique properties and functions.[1] Among these is Rakta Dhatu, which is often rendered as "blood" in the English language. In the hierarchy of body tissues, Rakta is the second Dhatu and is essential to life and well-being. Its main purpose is to give the body nutrition and energy, particularly to the tissues. Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara In Ayurvedic medicine, the term "Vikara" describes illnesses or ailments related to the blood (Rakta).[2] Rakta is regarded in Ayurveda as one of the body's primary Dhatus, or tissues, and is vital to maintaining and nourishing a number of bodily processes.[3] Rakta-related disorders are thought to develop when the Doshas (Pitta, Kapha and Vata) are out of balance, or when there is a bad food, poor digestion, or an unsuitable lifestyle. In Ayurveda, the term "Pradoshaja Vikara" refers to illnesses or conditions that develop as a result of an imbalance during the "Sharad Ritu, and Madhyahna Kala". Disturbances in Doshas during this time might result in a number of ailments, particularly in the blood.

The three fundamental components of the body are Dosha, Dhatu and Mala.[4] Dhatu performs Dharana Karma, one of seven of these.[5] The Second Dhatus is Rakta Dhatu, Bhutagni and Rasa Dhatwagni assist in producing it from Rasa Dhatu's Prasada Bhaga. Sneha, Ushna, Tikshna, Drava, and other Gunas of blood are also like to Pitta Gunas. It performs Shareera Jeevana and Mamsa Pushti and is mostly composed of Apa and Teja Mahabhuta.[6] It circulate throughout the body from Hridaya through Dhamanis. It gives Ayu, Sukha, Varna, and Bala.[7] The immunological condition of the body's Dhatu, which is reliant on the nourishment obtained from Ahara Rasa, determines how diseases emerge. Therefore, it should be protected with appropriate Ahara and Vihara, without any carelessness. "Rakta Pradoshaja Vikaras like Kushtha, Raktapitta, Mukhapaka" result from vitiation of Rakta by the Doshas. Understanding Rakta Dhatu, physiological and pathological states, and the effects they have on the body is crucial.[8]

Nirukti of Rakta

Rakta: Rakta means to stain and is derived from the Sanskrit term "Raj Ranjane." Compared to Rasa Dhatu, it is heavier and in liquid form.

Rakta Dhatu is best when it is Asamhatam, which means it is neither viscous nor liquid. One of the seven Dhatu that are found throughout the body is this one. [9] Rakta is considered to be derived from Rasa Dhatu (plasma), which is first absorbed by the body and subsequently changed into Rakta through a number of processes. Rasa (plasma) is precursor.

Pradoshaja: The term "Pradoshaja" refers to a connection to vitiated Doshas.[10]

Vikara: Dhatu Vaishamyata is implied by the term *Vikara*.[11]

Rasa Dhatu, the essence of food, is described in Ayurveda as becoming coloured and forming Rakta after passing via Yakrit and Pleeha. There is a variant of Medas Sarakta Medas that may be comparable to red bone marrow, but it is not identified as a location for Rakta Production.

Rakta Dhatu Sara Purush Lakshana

Sarata is the name given to a person who has a *Dhatu* in good condition; *Rakta Sarata* is the name given to a person who possesses pure *Rakta* in excellence. Unctuousness, a gorgeous, sparkling appearance of the ears, face, tongue, nose, lips, soles of the hands and feet, nails, forehead, and genital organ are what define people with *Rakta* excellence. Additionally, it will be shiny and appealing. They are content and possess wisdom, mental peace, and compassion. They are more vulnerable to stress and are unable to withstand high temperatures. They still have a heated body. A person with *Raktasara* has unctuous, red nails on their hands, feet, mouth, palate, tongue, and lips.

Shuddharakta Purusha Lakshana

A person is considered to have the purest blood quality based on certain characteristics, such as a decent skin tone, healthy sense organs, an unimpaired digestive system, and palatable, well-nourished tissues with good endurance.[14]

Functions and benefits of a healthy Rakta Dhatu

रसस्तुष्टिं प्रीणनं रक्तपुष्टिं च करोति, रक्तं वर्णप्रसादं मांसपुष्टिं जीवयति च, (Su.Su.15/1)

1. Jeevana (Life-Sustaining) - Rakta supports Prana (life force) and ensures proper functioning of organs.

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- 2. Pushti (Nourishment) It nourishes all tissues (*Dhatus*) and helps in their regeneration.
- 3. Varna Prasadana (Skin Glow & Complexion) Pure Rakta gives radiant, healthy skin and a natural
- 4. Sharira Ushma Satva (Body Heat Regulation) Maintains body temperature and balances metabolic activities.
- 5. Bala Vriddhi (Strength & Immunity) Healthy blood enhances stamina, muscle strength, and disease resistance.
- 6. Sukha Nidra (Good Sleep) Balanced Rakta supports mental calmness and deep sleep.
- 7. Indriya Prasadana (Sense Organ Health) Maintains sharp vision, hearing, and mental clarity.
- 8. Vikara Pratibandhakatva (Disease Prevention) Prevents skin disorders, bleeding issues, and infections.

Raktakshaya Lakshana

When blood flow is reduced, rough skin, a desire for sour foods, cold, and dilated blood vessels are observed.[14] According to *Acharya Vagbhata* in cases when *Rakta* is diminished, the skin becomes rough, dry, and cracked, and its lustre is lost.[15]

Rakta Kshaya interferes with the sense of touch. Amla and cold are created by the Kshaya of Rakta Dhatu, which causes the vessels and Rukshata to relax. Pitta Dosha and fire lose their properties when Rakta Dhatu is exhausted. A person experiences coldness, their skin becomes dull and dusty gray, and their body retains heat by getting constipated and limiting sweating and urination. When the Rakta Dhatu is depleted, the mind becomes sluggish and finds it difficult to process and comprehend new knowledge. This frequently results in misconceptions and confusion.

Rakta Vriddhi Lakshana

As Rakta Dhatu increases, illnesses such as Kustha, Vatasra, Pittasra, Visarpa, Pleeha, Vidradhi, Gulma, Upakusha, Kamla, and Vyanga may arise. It impairs the person's ignition as well. Such an individual's skin, eyes, and urine seem red.[16]

An excessive amount of blood causes the body to flush, especially the eyes, and the blood vessels to become full.[17]

Hetu of Raktadushti

Blood becomes impure due to a variety of factors, including excessive consumption of spoiled,

Plentiful, sharp, and hot wines and similar beverages; excessive consumption of salt and alkali; sour and pungent substances; horse gram, black gram, legumes, sesamum, oils, tubers, salads, meat from aquatic and marshy animals, those living holes, and snatching birds; excessive consumption of curd, sour curd-water, vinegars, and other sour fermented liquids; use of antagonistic, stale, and decomposed food items; excessive daysleep after consuming liquids; excessive anger; exposure to the sun and wind; suppression of the urge to vomit; avoidance of blood-letting during the prescribed time (autumn); excessive exertion; injury; heat; indigestion; overmeal; and naturally in the autumn, blood becomes impure.[18]

Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara

In the human body, the *Doshas*, *Dhatus*, and *Malas* have a cordial interaction while functioning in a healthy and balanced manner. We refer to this relationship as Ashrayashrayee-Bhava.[19] Another way to look at it is that the Doshas and the Dushyas, the host and the visitor, have a lot in common. But this positive relationship has a catch. Although the *Doshas* do not harm the host as long as they are in a balanced state, when they are vitiated by the aforementioned etiological factors, they fail to maintain the friendship, become aggressive, and attempt to harm the host by causing potential disruptions in their normal function at first. Once they reach the next stage of Samprapti, they attempt to manifest a number of symptoms at different locations that culminate in a clinical entity. Dosha-Dushya Sammurchhana is the name given to this distressed partnership.

The group is displaying signs of a disease. This is where the actual conflict between vitiated *Doshas* and *Dushya* takes place, along with several other symptoms. manifest as a consequence. According to *Rakta Pradoshaja Vikaras*, *Rakta* is vitiated, which raises the question of *Vata Dosha* is vitiating *Rakta*. Manifestation of symptoms dictates response.

As an illustration, the following characteristics of Rakta may be observed if Vata has vitiated it. अरुणाभं भवेद्वाताद्विशदं फेनिलं तनु I (Ca.Su.24/20)

पित्तात् पीतासितं रक्तं स्त्यायत्यौष्ण्याच्चिरेण च I(Ca.Su.24/20) is one of the characteristics that are vitiated by *Pitta*.

The following characteristics are present if *Kapha* is vitiated: ईषत्पाण्डु कफाद्दुष्टं पिच्छिलं तन्तुमद्घनम् । (Ca.Su.24/20)[**20**]

Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara by various Acharyas

Vyadhi	Charaka[21]	Sushruta[22]	Bhela[23]
Kustha	+	+	+
Visarpa	+	+	+
Pidaka	+	+	-
RaktaPitta	+	+	-
Asragdara	+	+	-
Guda, Medhra, Asyapaka	+	+	-
Pleeha	+	+	-
Gulma	+	+	_
Vidradhi	+	+	_
Neelika	+	+	_
Kamala	+	_	_
Vyanga	+	+	+
Piplu	+	_	_
Tilkalaka	+	+	_
Dadru	+	_	_
Charmdala	+	_	+
Shwitra	+	-	-
Pama	+	-	+
Kotha	+	-	-
Raktamandal	+	-	-
Mashak	-	+	-
Nyachha	-	+	-
Indralupta	-	+	-
Vatarakta	-	+	-
Arsha	-	+	-
Arbuda	-	+	
Angamarda		+	-
Kachhu			+
Charmkeela			+
Vicharchika	-	-	+

Upkrama of Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara

कुर्याच्छोणितरोगेषु रक्तपित्तहरीं क्रियाम् | विरेकमुपवासं च स्रावणं शोणितस्य च | (Ch.Su.24/18) तेषु स्रावियतुं रक्तमुद्रिक्तं व्यधयेत्सिराम् ।। (As.H.Su.27/5)

Raktapittaharikriya: According to the "Uddeshya Tantrayukti" in the first line, "Raktapittaharikriya" must be accepted. Its "Nirdesha," or "Virechana Upavasa and bloodletting (Raktamokshana)," are the other management principles as Raktapittaharikriya.

Along with *Upavasa*, *Virechana*, and *Raktamoksana*, *Raktapittaharikriya* need to be regarded as an independent therapeutic approach. In addition to the *Pachana* therapy, which is *Upavasa*, and the *Sodhana* therapy, which is *Virechana* and *Raktamokshana*,

Raktapittaharikriya suggests the Shamana therapy for reducing Pitta Dosha. Depending on the disease's stage, these treatment options should be employed.

Upavasa (fasting): Fasting helps to reduce *Pitta* and toxins in the blood. Excessive consumption of spicy, hot, and heavy foods worsens *Raktapitta*, hence fasting permits the digestive fire (*Agni*) to reset and balance the *Pitta Dosha*. Light and cooling foods such as pomegranate juice, sugarcane juice, and *Shadangapaniya* are advised.

Raktamokshana: Blood purifying techniques like *Siravyadha* (venesection), *Jalaukavacharana* (leech therapy), and *Alabu* (cupping therapy) are referred to as *Raktamokshana*. It works especially well to rid the body of vitiated blood. *Raktamokshana* helps in boils, acne, inflammatory illnesses, and chronic skin issues.[25-26]

Shaman Chikitsa of Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara

- Manjishtha (Rubia cordifolia): A renowned herb in Ayurveda for purifying the blood. It detoxifies and clears toxins, and it also promotes healthy skin and alleviates inflammatory conditions.
- Neem (Azadirachta indica): Known for its bloodpurifying and antimicrobial properties, neem helps to cleanse the blood and skin, treating conditions like acne, eczema, and psoriasis.
- Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia): This herb balances the three Doshas and is particularly beneficial in purifying the blood and strengthening the immune system.
- Chandan (Sandal wood): Known for its cooling effects, sandal wood can be used for skinrelated issues and to cleanse the blood.
- Amla (Emblica officinalis): A rich source of Vitamin C and antioxidants, Rasayan, Amla supports detoxification and strengthens the immune system.

Discussion

Dosha (a biologically active entity), Dhatu (tissue), and Mala (waste products) are considered to be the foundational elements of the body. Both Rasa (plasma) and Rakta (formed portions of blood) are liquids as their measurements are described in terms of Anjali Pramana (measuring liquid by combining both hands) and both are in constant circulation.

The first *Dhatu* that occurs after food has been fully digested is called *Rasa* because of its continuous circulation. *Rasa Dhatu's* function (nutrition) is fulfilled by *Preenana. Rakta Dhatu* has historically been considered the most significant of the seven tissues (life) since it is referred to as the *Pranayatana* among the ten seats of *Prana*.[27]

Since acute blood loss of greater than 10% can lead to potentially fatal conditions such hypovolemic shock, Rakta is essential for sustaining life. Blood is also responsible for the growth or decline of other Dhatus since it supplies nutrients to all tissues; if it is insufficient, this will lead to ischemia, hypoxia, and incorrect feeding of other tissues, which ultimately results in tissue death. Thus, the nutritional status of every tissue will depend on Rasa's condition. Blood is an example of a fluid connective tissue. Since both Rasa and Rakta Dhatu move through the intravascular compartment as liquids, they can be thought of as blood when combined. The term "Rasa" refers to intravascular circulating fluid, or "Drava," which includes blood cells and plasma. "Rasateeti Raso Dravadhatuuchavate Taenrudhiraadinaamapi Dravaanam Grahanam Bhavati" is how Chakrapani described Rasa in reference to the movement of Rasa caused by Vyana Vayu, a subtype of Vata Dosha. Bhela also used the word "Rasa" while talking about how it moves through the heart and blood vessels. Again, the term "Rasa-Rakta" describes the most significant and tiniest material that has undergone complete digestion (bloodabsorbed nutrients).[28]

Conclusion

The concept of Rakta Pradoshaja Vikara emphasizes the need of preserving the equilibrium of Rakta, or blood, and its relationship to general health and wellness. Rakta imbalances, which are frequently brought on by Pitta Dosha vitiation, can result in a variety of skin, blood circulation, and metabolic conditions. Blood cleansing (Raktashodhana), blood nourishment (Rakta Prasadana), and dietary and lifestyle changes are all part of the comprehensive approach used in Ayurvedic medicine, which aims to restore equilibrium. Through the use of herbal treatments, cleansing therapies, and rejuvenating practices, Ayurveda seeks to address imbalance's underlying causes as well as its symptoms, promoting long-term health preventing recurrence.

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