



# AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF SHARIR RACHANA IN AYURVEDA: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE WITH MODERN ANATOMY

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## ABSTRACT :

*Sharir Rachana* (Ayurvedic Anatomy) is a fundamental branch of *Ayurveda* that describes the structure of the human body in a unique and holistic manner. Unlike modern anatomy, which is based on dissection and histology, *Ayurveda* conceptualizes human anatomy in terms of *Panchamahabhuta*, *Doshas*, *Dhatu*, and *Srotas*. This paper aims to explore the foundational principles of *Ayurvedic* anatomy, comparing them with contemporary anatomical knowledge and highlighting their clinical significance. It also examines classical texts such as *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya* to understand the ancient approach to body structure.

**Keywords:** Sharir Rachana, Ayurveda, Panchamahabhuta, Dhatu, Srotas, Modern Anatomy

## INTRODUCTION :

Anatomy, or *Sharir Rachana*, is one of the most significant disciplines in the field of medicine. It provides a structural understanding of the human body, essential for the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. The *Ayurvedic* perspective of anatomy is distinct from modern anatomical studies, as it integrates physiological, philosophical, and metaphysical aspects. The concept of *Purusha* (individual) in *Ayurveda* is based on *Tridosha* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*), *Saptadhatu* (seven bodily tissues), and *Srotas* (bodily channels) <sup>1</sup>. This paper aims to analyse the *Ayurvedic* anatomical concepts and compare them with modern anatomical sciences.

## Historical Background of Sharir Rachana :

*Ayurvedic* anatomy has been documented in various classical texts. The descriptions in *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya* illustrate different perspectives on body structures. While *Charaka* emphasizes the functional and physiological aspects, *Sushruta* focuses on surgical anatomy, dissection, and *Marma Sharir* (vital points) <sup>2</sup>.

*Sushruta*, regarded as the father of surgery, emphasized dissection (*Sharira Chhedana*) for anatomical understanding. He classified *Sharira* into various components such as *Asthi* (bones), *Sandhi* (joints), *Peshi* (muscles), and *Snayu* (ligaments) <sup>3</sup>. The concept of *Marma*, which corresponds to modern vital points, plays a crucial role in surgical interventions and therapeutic applications.

## Fundamental Concepts of Sharir Rachana :

**Panchamahabhuta in Ayurvedic Anatomy:** The entire human body is considered to be composed of the five basic elements (Panchamahabhuta): *Prithvi* (earth), *Aap* (water), *Teja* (fire), *Vayu* (air), and *Akasha* (ether). Each anatomical structure is believed to be a manifestation of these elements <sup>4</sup>.

**Saptadhatu: The Seven Tissues of the Body**<sup>5</sup>:

The human body consists of seven *Dhatu* (tissues):

- *Rasa* (Plasma)
- *Rakta* (Blood)
- *Mansa* (Muscle)
- *Meda* (Fat)
- *Asthi* (Bone)
- *Majja* (Bone marrow)
- *Shukra* (Reproductive tissue)

These *Dhatu*s sustain the body and contribute to physiological functions similar to modern tissue classifications.

**Srotas: Channels of Circulation:**

*Srotas* refer to body channels responsible for the transportation of various substances. *Ayurveda* classifies *Srotas* into different types based on their function, such as *Pranavaha Srotas* (respiratory channels), *Raktavaha Srotas* (circulatory channels), and *Annavaha Srotas* (digestive channels)<sup>6</sup>. These can be correlated with modern systems like the circulatory, respiratory, and gastrointestinal systems.

**Comparison Between Ayurvedic and Modern Anatomy:****Table No.-1**

<b>Ayurvedic Concept</b>	<b>Modern Correlation</b>
<i>Panchamahabhuta</i>	Chemical and elemental composition of the body
<i>Dhatu</i>	Tissues (epithelial, connective, muscular, nervous)
<i>Srotas</i>	Circulatory, lymphatic, and nervous pathways
<i>Marma</i>	Vital points (similar to trigger points in modern medicine)
<i>Garbha Sharir</i>	Embryology and fetal development

Modern anatomy primarily relies on microscopic and imaging techniques, whereas *Ayurveda* considers functional and energetic attributes in addition to structural aspects<sup>7</sup>.

**Clinical Significance of Ayurvedic Anatomy :*****Marma and Surgical Applications***

*Marma* points, identified in *Sushruta Samhita*, have significant implications in surgery and trauma care. These points are analogous to acupuncture points and pressure points in modern medicine<sup>8</sup>.

***Dhatu Kshaya and Vriddhi (Tissue Pathology)***

Diseases in *Ayurveda* are often attributed to imbalances in *Dhatu* formation and metabolism. For instance, *Asthi Dhatu Kshaya* (bone depletion) can be linked to osteoporosis, while *Mamsa Dhatu Vriddhi* (muscle hypertrophy) corresponds to conditions like myopathy [9].

***Srotas and Disease Pathogenesis***

The obstruction or dysfunction of *Srotas* leads to diseases such as *Pranavaha Srotodushti* (respiratory disorders like asthma) and *Raktavaha Srotodushti* (blood disorders like anemia)<sup>10</sup>. This highlights the importance of *Ayurveda*'s systemic approach in understanding diseases.

**Conclusion :**

*Sharir Rachana* in *Ayurveda* presents a comprehensive and holistic understanding of human anatomy. Although it differs from modern anatomy in approach and methodology, its concepts remain clinically relevant, particularly in surgical applications, disease pathogenesis, and treatment modalities. Further research integrating *Ayurvedic* and modern anatomical principles can enhance medical knowledge and therapeutic applications.

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