

Srotāmsi - Bodily Systems or Channels

The srotāmsi are the systems of the body through which various substances are carried. Srotas (plural srotāmsi) means "river." The srotāmsi may be thought of as rivers through the body which carry food, water, wastes, tissues, and reproductive fluids. These may be called abhyantara srotāmsi (internal channels) to differentiate from the bāhya srotāmsi (the nine gates or external channels). They may also be called sthūla srotāmsi (physical channels) to differentiate from the sūkṣma srotāmsi (the subtle channels or nāḍīs). There are 14 abhyantara srotas in the body of both males and females and 2 additional srotas for females. The first three relate to the intake of nutrients (air, food, water). The next three deal with the removal of wastes (Sweat, urine, feces). The next seven deal with the seven tissues (dhātus). There is one additional srotas for the mind. There are two additional srotas for women (for lactation and menstruation).

3 Channels Carrying Nutrients

Srotas (Channel)	Primary Functions	Mūla (Beginning)	Mārga (pathway)	Mukha (opening)
prāṇa vaha srotas (life / breath carrying channel)	respiration, energy, consciousness	Heart	respiratory tract	nose
anna vaha srotas (food carrying channel)	Digestion, absorption, assimilation	Stomach	GI tract from lips to the small intestine	ileocecal valve (joining large intestine and small intestine), mouth
ambu vaha srotas (water carrying channel)	moisturization, lubrication, body temperature	pancreas, soft palate	GI tract, mucous membranes	kidneys, tongue, sweat glands

3 Channels Carrying Wastes

Srotas (Channel)	Primary Functions	Mūla (Beginning)	Mārga (pathway)	Mukha (opening)
sveda vaha srotas (Sweat carrying channel)	Perspiration, water / temperature regulation, elimination of liquid waste	fat, hair	sweat ducts	pours
mutra vaha srotas (Urine carrying channel)	Excretion of urine, liquid waste, electrolyte balance	Kidneys, bladder	urinary tract from (kidney to urethra)	urethra
purīṣa vaha srotas (Feces carrying channel)	Formation and excretion of feces, nutrient absorption	colon (cecum, intestines, rectum)	large intestine, colon	anus

7 Channels Carrying the Dhātus (Tissues)

Srotas (Channel)	Primary Functions	Mūla (Beginning)	Mārga (pathway)	Mukha (opening)
rasa vaha srotas (plasma carrying channel)	nourishment	heart and ten vessels (leading to the 10 external channels)	veins and lymphatic system	junction of veins and arteries
rakta vaha srotas (Red blood carrying channel)	giving prana / life, oxygenation	liver, spleen	arteries and veins	Junction of veins and arteries
māṁsa vaha srotas (muscle carrying channel)	movement, protection, strength, form	small tendons, ligaments	smooth and voluntary muscles	pores
meda vaha srotas (fat carrying channel)	insulation, lubrication, love	waist, kidneys,	subcutaneous (superficial) fat	sweat glands
asthi vaha srotas (bone carrying channel)	support, protection, structure	pelvis, sacrum, meda (fat)	skeletal system	nails, hair
majjā vaha srotas (nerve / marrow carrying channel)	fills the bones, responses, coordination, nerves	brain, spinal cord, bone joints	nervous system	Nerves
śukra / ārthava (male / female reproductive tissues carrying channel)	reproduction, progeny, creativity	Testes / ovaries	male reproductive system / female reproductive system	Urethra / vaginal opening

Channel for the Mind

Srotas (Channel)	Primary Functions	Mūla (Beginning)	Mārga (pathway)	Mukha (opening)
manovaha srotas (mind carrying channel)	mental and emotional functions, mind / body connection	heart	entire body especially the nine channels to the external openings and the 10th from the suṣumṇa	nine baahya srotaamsi plus the 10 th (brahma randhra)

Two Additional Channels for Women

Srotas (Channel)	Primary Functions	Mūla (Beginning)	Mārga (pathway)	Mukha (opening)
rajaḥ vaha srotas (menstruation carrying channel)	Elimination of menses purification of the blood	Uterus	Female reproductive Channel	Vaginal opening
stanya vaha srotas (milk carrying channel)	Lactation	Mammary glands	Milk ducts	nipple

Nava Bāhya Srotāmsi (9 external channels or opening)

Also called Nava Dwara (nine gates or doors)

1) Right Eye	2) Left Eye
3) Right Nostril	4) Left Nostril
5) Right Ear	6) Left Ear
7) Mouth	
8) Anus	
9) Urethra	

There is a 10th, subtle dvara (opening) called brahma randhra. It is located at the termination of the suṣumṇa nāḍī at the location of the fontanelle (crown of the head). The iḍā and piṅgala nāḍīs lead the the left and right nostrils respectively. The suṣumṇa leads to an inner opening for consciousness into the higher realms. This gate is located a the crown of the head at the termination of the suṣumṇa nāḍī. It is through this gate that Yogis pass into samādhi and that that souls that have resolved all worldly karmas pass from the body at the time of death to merge into the formless absolute. The brahma randhra is not physical but subtle.

10) brahma randhra (<i>subtle opening at the fontanelle or crown of the head</i>)

There are three additional (physical) external channels for women, creating a total of 12 dvaras (opening) for women.

10) Right Nipple	11) Left Nipple
13) Vaginal Opening	