



SNAYU IN AYURVEDA: STRUCTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND CLINICAL RELEVANCE

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda Acharya described various structures like Dhamani, Sira, Snayu and Kandara. Snayu is one such structure, associated with Sandhi and acts as fibrous bands that maintain posture and support weight-bearing. The term Snayu itself resembled joint which provides stability and integrity of body frame. According to modern concepts these structures can be align with ligaments and tendons. There are various type of Snayu distributed throughout the body. Pratanvati Snayu present in the Shakha and all bony joints. Vrutta Snayu is round or cylindrical in shape. Pruthu Snayu is thick or large, found in the Parshva, Uras and Prustha. Sushira Snayu is hollow/ring-like structure, located at the terminal parts of the Amashaya and Pakvashaya. The distribution of Snayu in the body varies by region. The Shakha contain the majority, with 600 Snayu. The Madhya Sharir has 230 Snayu, and the Urdhva Jatrugata Bhaga has 70 Snayu located in the head and neck region. Disorders of Snayu result symptoms of stiffness, swelling and severe pain, etc. Snayu not only has anatomical importance but also possess clinical significance in various means. This study explores various aspects related to Snayu and its structural descriptions according to Ayurveda.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Snayu, Joint, Sandhi, Ligaments, Sharira.

INTRODUCTION

The human framework is an assembly of numerous components, each components functioning specifically to maintain integrity of body. These component works in coordination to maintain physiological activities of body. Damage to these structural components can lead structural deformities and pathological manifestations.

Snayu is one such vital component described by Acharya Sushruta. Snayu is elements can be compared to materials like horse tail hairs, fibers and silk threads, etc. There are many Snayu in which are closely associated with Sandhi. Based on the structural characteristics, Snayu can be categorized into four types as depicted in Figure 1.^[1-4]



Figure 1: Various types of Snayu.

As mentioned above the different types of Snayu are Pratanvati, Vrutta, Pruthu and Sushira. Pratanvati Snayu found in Shakha and Sarva Sandhi, these Snayu have a branching pattern, lie ligaments. Vrutta Snayu is round or cylindrical in shape; Vrutta Snayu described as Kandara can be compared with tendons due to their

shape. Pruthu Snayu are thick & big found in Parshva, Uras and Prustha, Prathu Snayu is flattened structures like sheets of connective tissue. While Sushira Snayu is hollow, ring like structure, resemble sphincters and visceral ligaments; maintain the function of hollow organs. Sushira Snayu found in Amashaya, Pakvashaya

and *Basti*. The total number of these *Snayu* and their distribution is mentioned in **Table 1**.^[3-6]

Table 1: Number of *Snayu* and their distribution.

Region	Number of <i>Snayu</i>
<i>Shakha</i> (Extremities)	600
<i>Madhya Sharir</i> (Trunk)	230
<i>Urdhva Jatrugata Bhaga</i> (Region above the clavicle)	70

As mentioned above *Snayu* is distributed in the legs, feet, trunk and arms, etc. *Kashyapa Samhita*, regarded *Snayu* as *Moolasthan* of *Mastulunga*. *Snayu* plays important role in movement as well as in binding of *Medas*. Due to fibrous nature and role in binding, the *Dura mater* can be correlated with *Snayu*. *Snayu* serves as a binding structure for joints, muscles, bones and fat. The *Utpatti* of *Snayu* involves *Medas* since *Snayu* is derived from the *Khara Paaka* of *Medas*. Thus the essence of *Medas* forms *Snayu* and *Sandhi*. There are many pathological conditions associated with *Snayu* involving impairment of *Snayu*, possess symptoms of *Shoola*, *Stambha* and *Kampa*. When *Snayu* get injured, the effects are more severe compared to injuries in *Asthi*, *Peshi* and *Sira*. Injuries to *Snayu* can cause serious health issue anatomically as well as physiologically. Physiologically

Snayu is involves in many functions as mentioned below.^[5-7]

Prayojana of *Snayu*

- ✓ *Snayu* binds the *Mamsa*, *Asthi* and *Meda* together, providing structural integrity to the human body.
- ✓ *Snayu* maintain compactness of body; thus make it stable and rigid with flexibility to move.
- ✓ The body's ability to bear weight is attributed to the proper functioning of *Snayu*.
- ✓ Movement capabilities also can be attributed to the smooth functioning of *Snayu*.
- ✓ *Snayu* holds together all *Sandhis* and facilitates movement of body parts.
- ✓ The compact arrangement of body parts ensured by *Snayu* which allows proper physiological functioning especially movement related work.
- ✓ *Snayu* play central role in maintaining the body's stability and structural frame.

As mentioned above *Snayu* plays a role to maintain strength, flexibility and stability. It ensures the structural integrity of joints and facilitates smooth movements. Some specific *Snayu* distributed in particular parts of body and offers various physiological attributes as mentioned in **Table 2**.^[7-10]

Table 2: Specific distribution of *Snayu* and their physiological importance.

Region	Role of <i>Snayu</i>
Head and Neck	<i>Snayu</i> binds structures like the scalp, jaws and neck muscles. Stabilizes cervical vertebrae and supports movements.
Arms and Shoulders	<i>Snayu</i> connects bones of the shoulder girdle with the upper arm, allows range of motions. It also binds elbows and wrists for stability.
Trunk and Back	<i>Snayu</i> surrounds the spinal column, holds vertebrae, support posture and flexibility. Maintains attachment of the trunk muscles to the ribs and spine.
Lower Extremities	<i>Snayu</i> in the hip joints and knees, supporting the knee joint, stabilizes the joint and binds the bones, helps in locomotion.
Abdominal and Pelvic	<i>Snayu</i> surrounds the abdominal muscles, maintaining the structure of abdominal wall. In pelvic region, it supports pelvic joints.

MODERN ASPECTS

Based on structure and functions the *Snayu* can be correlated with modern anatomical structures like ligaments, tendons, aponeuroses and fascia. Tendons are fibrous connective tissue; connect muscles to bones, similar to *Vritta Snayu*. Parallel bundles of fibers constitute tendons which are designed to withstand tension. Ligaments are fibrous thick bands of parallel bundles of connective tissue, capable to resist strain. They hold bones together and connect bones to other bones. Aponeuroses are broad, flat bands of connective tissue which are dense, they are similar in structure like to tendons. They serve as sheets, help in muscle attachment and provide mechanical supports to the bones in joints. Fascia is a sheet of connective tissue which are fibrous in nature, separates muscles and organs. It link muscles to other muscles or other structures of body.

CONCLUSION

Snayu as vital structure of body binds bones, muscles and other tissues. *Snayu* withstand tension and can be correlated with modern structures like tendons, ligaments and aponeurosis. *Snayu* are different types including *Pratanavati Snayu*, *Vrutta Snayu*, *Pruthu Snayu* and *Sushira Snayu*. *Snayu* supports the weight of the body and maintaining proper posture. *Pratanvati Snayu*, found in the limbs, has a branching pattern. *Vrutta Snayu* is cylindrical; *Pruthu Snayu* found in chest and back as thick sheet while *Sushira Snayu* is hollow and ring-shaped, supports hollow organs like stomach. *Snayu* is distributed across the body, with 600 in the extremities, 230 in the trunk, and 70 in the region above the clavicle. *Snayu* is essential for movement, binding muscles and bones. *Snayu* ensures the body's structural integrity, stability, movement and the ability to bear weight.

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