

## CONCEPT OF SNAYU AND ITS CLINICAL IMPORTANCE WITH ANATOMICAL ASPECT

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### ABSTRACT

Anatomy is studied as part of Ayurveda in Sharira Rachana, which contains many structural terminologies that need to be accurately interpreted to allow for clinical application. One of these terms is Snayu, which has been discussed throughout the classical texts of Ayurveda. The Snayu is described in the classical texts as being responsible for binding joints together as well as providing structural support to the body to help in weight-bearing functions. Classical descriptions of Snayu are suggestive for being a fibrous nature, indicating that it has a composition similar to the fibrous connective tissues that are found in the human body. Snayu plays an essential role in motion as well as in binding Medas, Mamsa, Asthi and Sandhi. Due to the fibrous and binding characteristics, Snayu may correlate with dense, fibrous connective tissues, such as ligaments. This article emphasizes concept of Snayu and its clinical importance with anatomical aspect.

**KEYWORDS:** Ayurveda, Snayu, Sharira Rachana, Anatomy, Ligaments.

### INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda's foundational basis is facilitated by a branch of study called *Sharira Rachana*, which forms the basis for understanding the anatomy of the human body as well as how its parts function and how they function clinically. However, many of the different parts of the body described in the *Samhitas* do not correspond to terms that are currently used in traditional anatomical studies, thus requiring an understanding of the context in which an anatomical term was used by classical authors, so that they can be meaningful to modern anatomists. Considering this aspect present article explore anatomical perspective of *Snayu*.<sup>[1-4]</sup>

The human body's structural framework is made up of *Asthi* which are tightly held together through the *Snayu*, which found below the skin and is intimately attached to the bones and muscles, giving support and holding things together. The *Snayu's* purpose is to provide support at all points within the body in order to hold the body up and allow weight to be placed on top of it. Individual can bear weight on the joints of his or her body because all of

the joints are strongly tied together through many *Snayu*. Therefore, injury to the *Snayu* is considered to be more significant than injury to the *Asthi*, *Peshi* or *Sira*, as this pain can cause instability and loss of function of the body. The *Snayu* hold the *Mamsa*, *Asthi* and *Meda* together to ensure that the body remains structurally compacted.<sup>[4-6]</sup>

### Anatomical Aspect

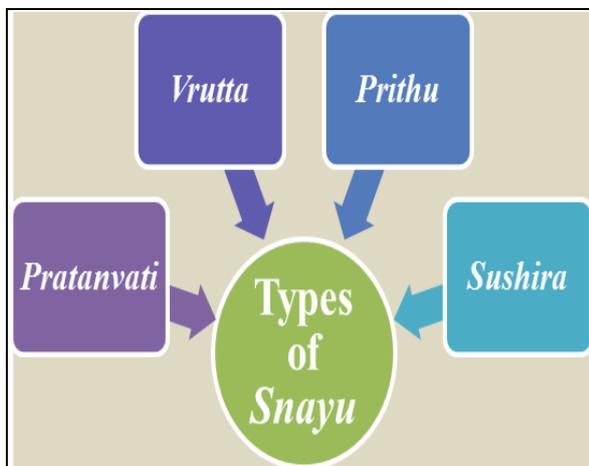
*Kashyapa Samhita* describes *Snayu* as *Moolasthan* of *Mastulunga*, and *Sushruta Samhita* designated the *Mastulunga* itself as a type of *Medas* indicating a potential developmental relationship; therefore, the relationship between both *Medas* and *Snayu* exist at their respective levels. There are 900 *Snayu* in numbers, 600 of them found in the *Shakha*, 230 in *Madhya Sharira/Koshtha* and 70 above the clavicle in the *Urdhva Jatrugata Bhaga*, which includes both *Griva* and *Murdha*. There are large distributions of *Snayu* in legs, arms, feet and trunks. The *Utpatti* of *Snayu* occur from the unctuous portion of *Medas*. *Sira* originates at *Mrudu Paka*, *Snayu* at *Khara Paka*. The essence of *Medas* form

*Asthi, Snayu* and *Sandhi* and the waste of *Medas* is *Sveda*.<sup>[5-7]</sup>

Injuries to *Snyus* can produce symptoms such as *Shoola*, *Stambha* and *Kampa*. They are considered much more serious injuries than those to *Asthis*, *Peshis* or *Siras* due to the greater anatomical and physiological effects associated with their injury. Ayurveda describes them as binding elements of *Mamsam*, *Asthi* and *Medas* to support the body.

### Types

The Ancient Texts classify *Snyu* into four categories as depicted in **Figure 1**. *Pratanvati*, *Prithu*, *Vrutta* and *Sushira* are various categories of *Snyu*. *Pratanvati* includes broad and wide *Snyu*; found in the extremities and across the joints. *Vrutta* includes round/cylindrical types of *Snyu*. *Prithu* includes *Snyu* which are broad and thick; located on the flanks, spine, chest back and head region. *Sushira* types of *Snyu* are hollow/ring-like structure found close to *Amashaya* and *Pakvashya*.<sup>[6-8]</sup>



**Figure 1: Types of Snayu.**

The concept of *Kala* describes the structural layers formed by the processing of moisture that has occurred within *Dhatu*s by *Ushma*, which are covered with *Snyu*, *Sleshma* and *Jarayu*. *Mamsadhara Kala* produced by *Snyu* enables *Sira*, *Dhamani* and *Srotas* to spread throughout the muscle.

### Physiological Importance

- ✚ The *Snyu* connects different parts of the body together; this includes *Mamsa*, *Asthi* and *Meda*.
- ✚ By providing physical support to the entire body, *Snyu* helps to keep our body parts in a compact manner.
- ✚ *Snyu* provides stability and rigidity; providing the flexibility needed for movement.
- ✚ *Snyu* attach bones together to provide support and the ability for the body to support itself.
- ✚ The body's weight-bearing capacity is primarily dependent upon the anchoring ability of *Snyu* which holds *Sandhi* together, thereby allowing various body parts to function cohesively.

*Snyu* allows optimal performance for all activities related to transportation and to maintain good postural habits.

Within the head and neck region, *Snyu* connects structures such as scalp/jaw/neck musculature, stabilizes cervical vertebrae, and supports loads in multiple planes. At the shoulders and in the arms, it connects the shoulder girdle with the upper arm and allows movement of the arms. Within the trunk/back, *Snyu* surrounds the vertebral column, holds the vertebrae, provides stability to the vertebral column's lateral and anterior/posterior position, provides the necessary motion for movement in a vertical orientation, and secures the muscles of trunk and spine. *Snyu* supports and stabilizes the hip and knee joint and helps to move lower extremities. *Snyu* surrounds the muscles of the abdomen, supporting the integrity of the abdominal wall, as well as assists with supporting the pelvic joints, helping to maintain overall structural balance and functional efficiency from the abdominal and pelvic regions.<sup>[7-9]</sup>

### Injury and Pathological Aspect

In Ayurveda, the fibrous connective tissues that bind structures together, stabilize, strengthen and allow for joint movement are known as *Snyu*. They are similar to ligaments and tendons. *Snyus* are primarily related to *Vata* and diseases that affect *Snyus* include; *Snayugata Vata*, *Sandhigata Vata* and *Gridhrasi*. Injuries from sprains, ruptured ligaments and trauma may also influence *Snyu*. Each of these conditions is characterized by vitiated *Vata* causing Pain, *Stambha*, *Toda* and limitation of movement. Trauma also may produce a partial or complete rupture of the *Snyu* tissue leading to joint swelling and instability.

Management of the injured *Snyu* tissue must be focused on calming *Vata* and restoring the structural relationships of the tissue. The initial management approach of an acute injury is rests, immobilization, cold therapy, followed by *Snehana* and *Swedana*. The use of external treatments such as *Abhyanga*, *Upanaha* and *Bandhana* may be considered useful. The use of some *Panchakarma* procedures such as *Basti* is considered beneficial for disorders affecting *Snyu*. Some internal medications such as *Yogaraja Guggulu*, *Rasna* and *Dashamoola* preparations may help to reduce pain and inflammation.<sup>[8-10]</sup>

### CONCLUSION

*Snyus* refer to the structural components of the multiple tissues found in the human body, including *Asthi*, *Mamsa* and *Meda*. The structure and function of the *Snyu* is an important element of the anatomy and physiology as described within Ayurvedic texts. Both the *Kashyapa Samhita* and *Sushruta Samhita* indicate through their descriptions that *Medas*, *Mastulunga* and *Snyu* have a close developmental association, and therefore an origin that is interrelated to one another as well. The *Snyu* has developed from the unctuous part of the *Medas* through

*Khara Paka*, and is composed of specialized fibrous tissue serving the functions of structural stability, binding, and facilitating movement in a coordinated manner. The anatomical significance of the *Snayu* is significant as there are 900 *Snayu* which are distributed primarily in the extremities, trunk and *Urdhva Jatrugata* region. The *Snayu* provides the binding element for connecting *Mamsa*, *Asthi* and *Meda*, which ensures that the tissues maintain compactness, can support weight, keep the joints intact and provide stability. Additionally, the *Snayu* helps to achieve the appropriate placement of *Sira*, *Dhamani* and *Srotas* within the muscles by functioning through *Mamsadhara Kala*. Clinical relevance of the *Snayu* for patient presentation can be observed with conditions such as *Snayugata Vata*, *Sandhigata Vata*, and *Gridhrasi*. The management of these conditions may include utilization of *Vata Shamana* and *Panchakarma* therapies to restore stability and functionality of the *Snayu*.

Choukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan, Volume 1, Sharir Sthan Chapter 4 Verse 29Page 42.

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