



### Review article

## Marma Chikitsa: A Non-Invasive healing therapy

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### ABSTRACT:

*Ayurveda* is an *Upveda* of *Atharvaveda* and knowledge of *Sharir* is described lucidly in it. In *Atharvaveda* *Marmas* are described for therapeutic and surgical purposes. Among all the body structures described in *Ayurveda* classics *Marma* has special importance. *Marma Sthana* are specific areas on the body which has relation thorough Pranic channels to various internal organs, *Doshas* and *Srotas*, these are Seat of *Prana*. *Acharya Charak* has mentioned 10 *Pranayatana* in which *Marma Sthana* are also included. *Prana* is nothing but source of *Urja* (energy). *Acharya Sushrut* has mentioned that *Marma* knowledge is *Shalyavishayardha*, so during surgical procedures these *Marma Sthana* should be avoided to get injured and if these *Marma Sthana* get injured then the person cannot survive or it will cause some deformity or disability. *Marma Chikitsa* contributes to increase or recharge physical, mental and spiritual energies. If these *Marma Sthana* are properly stimulated then many diseases can be treated, especially the diseases which causes excruciating pain and could not be relieved by analgesics such as osteoarthritis, frozen shoulder, migraine, sciatica, dysmenorrhoea etc. Instant pain relief is the motive of *Marma Chikitsa*. Pain management through *Marma Chikitsa* aims at minimizing the distress, feeling of unrest and improving the quality of life. Life style disorders such as hypertension, diabetes, obesity, stress can also be managed. *Marma Chikitsa* is a non-invasive, non-pharmacological and easy to apply with maximum benefits, if applied properly. It can be a mile stone in the field of medical science.

**KEY WORDS:** *Marma, Shalyavishayardha, Pranayatana, Chikitsa.*

### INTRODUCTION:

*Ayurveda* is India's traditional healing system it's a functional integrity of the human body, remains profound system of mind-body medicine and natural unsolved even today. The correlation in between the living. *Ayurveda*, which means "the science of life," has structure and function of the body is still a subject of become recognized today for its wonderful dietary, interest to the biologist. The scientist find great herbal, life-style, and yogic therapies that help us live difficulty even today, in establishing the link in between longer, happier, wiser, and more in harmony with the the certain ultra microscopic structures of the body and greater universe of life and consciousness. *Ayurveda* is a their response in terms of neurohormonal secretions. part of the older spiritual heritage of humanity that The concept of *Marmas* as advocated by *Maharshi* contains secret knowledge and profound wisdom<sup>1</sup>. *Sushrut* grossly speaks about the juncture of various *Ayurveda* strives to keep the body healthy and prevent cross structures, which when injured are liable to illness. Illness is the condition when the body gets tired precipitate various types of complications<sup>3</sup>. excessively or weak and this condition affects the **Marma:** normal physiological functions of the body. A number of Marmas are not superficial landmarks on the body suitable measures are advocated in *Ayurveda* to prevent surface but these are deep-seated important physio-anatomical structures. *Marma* has been considered as the illness and to keep the body healthy and fit<sup>2</sup>. a very delicate part, having agglomeration of number of tissues and other body structures accounted to be vital

The branch dealing with the anatomical or a structural aspect of the body is dealt under the heading *Sharir*. The *Marma* have been included as one of the important chapters in *Sharir Sthana* of *Sushrut Samhita*.

Besides, the immense advancement in western medicine, the mystery in relation to structural as well as

or even collapse and death instantaneously or late<sup>4</sup>.

**Chikitsa**

The measures by which the bodily *Dhatus* are brought back to equilibrium constitute the therapeutics (treatment of disorders). In other words, “By any method, by any means, by any techniques or system *Dosha, Dhatu, Mala* and *Agni*, between *Prakruti* and *Vikriti*, between *Oja, Teja*, and *Prana* and reestablishes harmony between body, mind and consciousness, that is called Chikitsa.”

Chikitsa means therapy, treatment or management. It comes into play after thorough investigation and diagnosis of the condition of the patient. *Ayurvedic Chikitsa* is a broad umbrella that encompasses many branches and methods of treatment. Among them, *Marma Chikitsa* is the understanding and therapeutic use of *Marmani*- The energy points - to balance the body, mind and spirit. *Marma Chikitsa* is a complete and highly sophisticated science that has been refined over many centuries<sup>5</sup>.

**Marma Chikitsa**

*Marma Chikitsa* can contribute to great deal to enhance vitality and promote health. *Marma* stimulation performed with a pressure nourishes *Oja, Teja* and *Prana* at a subtle level and revitalizes the body, mind and spirit. *Marma Chikitsa* alleviates pain by stimulating the flow of *Prana*, thus pacifying the *Doshas*. *Marma Chikitsa* can significantly calm the mind and reduce stress through their ability to influence the

nervous system and most effective spiritual function is to access consciousness at the deep level. *Marma* are doorways to process the unprocessed thoughts, feeling and emotions stored in nervous system and *Manovaha Srotas*, unblocking the flow of *Prana*. *Marma Chikitsa* balances the subtle *Doshic* essences<sup>6</sup>.

**Review of literature**

The word *Marma* is derived from “*Mri Dhatu*” + “*Manin*” *Prataya* which means causes death, *Jeeva Sthana, Sandhi Sthana*. *Marma* are the site of “*Prana*” & these areas are spread all over the body i.e. head, neck, trunk & extremities. It is the spot of the body which exhibits a peculiar pulsation and cause pain on pressure. These are formed by confluence of five important structure like *Mamsa, Sira, Snayu, Asthi* and *Sandhi*. *Acharya Sushruta* has also described that *Vatta, Pitta, Kapha* as well as *Sattva, Raja* and *Tama* along with *Chetana Dhatu* resides in *Marma*, that is why trauma over *Marma* causes severe pain. Injury to these areas causes aggravation of doshas which destroy mind and body. *Marma* are very important from traumatological point of view, any trauma at these points can cause death or pain equivalent to pain of death<sup>7</sup>.

**Classification of Marma**

Our *Acharyas* enumerated 107 *Marmas*, on different criteria

**Table No. 01. Classification on the basis of Parinam<sup>8</sup>**

Si. NO.	Type of Marma	Number	Predominance of Mahabhuta
1	<i>Sadyo Pranahara Marma</i>	19	<i>Agni</i>
2	<i>Kalantara Pranahara</i>	33	<i>Agni+ Soma</i>
3	<i>Vishalyaghna Marma</i>	3	<i>Vayu</i>
4	<i>Vaikalyakara Marma</i>	44	<i>Soma</i>
5	<i>Rujakara Marma</i>	8	<i>Agni+ Vayu</i>

Table No. 02. Classification on the basis of *Rachna*<sup>9,10</sup>

S. No.	Type of Marma	Number as per Sushrut	Number as per Vagbhata
1	Mamsa	11	10
2	Sira	41	37
3	Snayu	27	23
4	Asthi	8	8
5	Sandhi	20	20
6	Dhamni	-	9

Table No. 03. Classification on the basis of *Pariman*<sup>11</sup>

Si. No.	Type of Marma	Number
1	Half Angula	56
2	One Angula	12
3	Two Angula	6
4	Three Angula	4
5	Four Angula (Swapnitala)	29

Table No. 04. Classification on the basis of *Shadang Sharir*<sup>12</sup>

Si. No.	Type of Marma	Number
1	Shakha	44
2	Udar	03
3	Urah	09
4	Pristha	14
5	Urdhvajatrugat	37

**Protocol of Marma Chikitsa:**

For the purpose of Marma Chikitsa, one has to sit or lie in relaxed position and according to anatomical location of *Marma Sthana*, Marma will be stimulated for 15-18 times on an average in single sitting with the help of thumb. A steady and moderate pressure will be applied slowly and gently. Pressure will be increased gradually depending upon patient's strength and tolerance.

**DISCUSSION:**

In history, we found many great personalities who died due to injury on *Maram Sthana*. Some examples are

*Ravana* who died due to injury on *Nabhi Marma*, Lord Krishna who died due to injury on *Pad Talahridaya Marma*. In Vedic period knowledge of Marma science was very well known. In *Samhita kaal* Marma science is described in all the major treatise in the form of *Maryanti Iti Marmani*. *Acharya Charak* has given brief details of Marma in *Chikitsa Sthan* there is enumeration of Marma i. e. 107 and in these three Marma are Chief which are *Basti*, *Hridaya* and *Shira* which are *Sthana* of *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* respectively<sup>13</sup>. In *Siddhi Sthan* *Acharya Charak* described that as the sun is the origin

of all the rays in the whole sky likewise body is also pre-empted by *Srotas* and the *Moola* of these *Srotas* are mainly *Hridaya*, *Shira* and *Basti*<sup>14</sup>. *Acharya Sushrut* has given detailed knowledge of *Marma* along with its anatomical location and *Aghat Lakshan*. According to *Acharya Vagbhatta* those places where any injury may lead to different kind of pain and tremors are known as *Marmas*. By stimulation of this special points treatment of many diseases and optimal health status could be achieved. *Marma Chikitsa* chiefly depends on the correct location of a particular *Marma Sthana*. The actual location of *Marma Sthana* varies for every individual based on the dimensions of the body and its parts. The measurement of *Marma* has described in *Angula Pramana* of the individual body. It varies from half *Angula* to four *Angula*. This plays a very important role in the application of *Marma Chikitsa*.

### Probable mode of action of Marma Chikitsa

#### Gate Control theory: -

The first pain modulatory mechanism called the Gate Control theory was proposed by Melzack and Wall in the mid-1960s. The concept of the gate control theory is that non-painful input closes the gates to painful input, which results in prevention of the pain sensation from traveling to the CNS (i.e., non-noxious input [stimulation] suppresses pain). The gate theory was the rationale for the idea behind the production and the use of transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS) for pain relief.

#### Neuromodulation

Neuromodulation is technology that acts directly upon nerves. It is the alteration or modulation of nerve activity by delivering electrical or pharmaceutical agents directly to a target area.

On the basis of above discussion, it could be concluded that *Marma Chikitsa* work on the principle of gate control theory and neuromodulation.

#### CONCLUSION:

*Marma* are the life spots situated all over the body. *Marma Chikitsa* is a cost effective, time saving and safer treatment for the management of pain. Main motive of *Marma Chikitsa* is instant pain relief. With the help of *Marma Chikitsa* analgesia could be produced because it secretes a number of prostaglandin inhibitors, interferons and other opioid like substances. From the above information it could be concluded that *Marma Chikitsa* is a boon in today's era because it is not only useful in pain management but also in mental disorders. It also helps to rejuvenate the body and keep balance between body and mind relationship. *Marma Chikitsa* is ready to cope with the challenge of present times as a non-medicinal, non-pharmacological or non-surgical option.

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