



CONCEPT OF MARMA SHARIR IN ANCIENT AYURVED CLASSICS

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda deals with scientific study of the subject Sharira Rachana (Human anatomy) in Bruhatrayee. “Sharir” means human body and “Rachana” means structure. Sharir Rachana is the branch of Ayurveda which having detailed description of the structures in human body. Marma its definition, types of Marmas, symptoms produced after injuries to these Marmas, and their treatment are described by all Ayurvedic texts, especially “Trimarmiya Siddhi”. Marma Vigyan is one element of Ayurveda gifted by Acharyas. It is not much developed in modern science. Marma are vital point on body surface having importance regarding traumatic effect. Marma is vital point where injuries occur can lead to disability, dysfunctioning or even termination of life. There are one hundred and seven (107) marmas (vital spots) are present in human body, out of which 11 each limbs, 26 in trunk (3 in abdomen, 9 in thorax, 14 in the back) and 37 in head neck region. Marmas are basically comprises of an essential five anatomical structures. – i.e. Mamsa, Sira, Snayu, Asthi, Sandhi. Marma are not only anatomical landmarks but they are also the sites where Tridosha are present with their subtle forms Prana, Ojasa (Soma) and Tejas (Agni). They also contain 3 Gunas namely Sattva, Raja, Tamas (Manas contents) and soul or life force (Bhutatma).

KEYWORD: Ayurveda, Sushruta Samhita, Rachana sharir, Marma Vigyan, Vital points.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of Marmas is one of the important part of Sharira according to the Ayurveda. The chapter ‘Marma Sharira’ of Sushruta Samhita (ancient manuscript of Ayurveda) gives detailed information of Marmas based on the body organs or structures involved, the time bound consequences of the trauma, the area and the sizes, the sites and location over the body fall in various groups have been the probable approaches towards the understanding of the concerned literatures. There are 107 vital points in various parts of the body, which should be carefully dealt during surgical procedure & should always be protected from injury, as the essence of life (Prana) rest in them. Modern science has not realized the perception of Marma yet, but the science of Marmavignyanam is an essential part mentioned in Ayurvedic Samhitas in Sharirsthana of various Samhitas.

MARMA SHARIR

The word ‘Marma’ comes from sanskrit origin word ‘mri’ meaning death. Marma are the vital areas of the body. Marma is the part of body, if any injury occurs to any Marma it results into death or fetal complications hence called as Marma. Marma is a specific anatomical location where five structures of human body viz.

Mamsa (muscles), Sira (vessels), Snayu (ligaments), Asthi (bones) and Sandhi (joints) fusion together at one point. Acharya Vagbhata says that those sites which are painful on application of pressure and shows abnormal pulsation should also be considered as Marmas.

CONCEPT OF MARMA

The term Marma means Prana, Jiva or life of an individual. Marma are involved essentially in five anatomical structures: - i.e. Mamsa, Sira, Snayu, Asthi, Sandhi. All main Ayurvedic texts refer to the total number of primary Marma as 107. Acharya Vagbhata defines that, Marma is the meeting point of Mamsa, Asthi, Sira, Snayu, Dhamni and Sandhi and is where the Prana is present is called as Marma. Vagbhata says that, these are the points which are painful on application of pressure & shows abnormal pulsation.

This Marma concept was firstly mentioned by Acharya Charak but Acharya Sushrut & Acharya Vagbhata have described in detail about Marma in their respective Sharir Sthan. In dictionaries, the word Marma means “Marman” i.e., mortal point, sensitive point, weak vulnerable point.

Acharya Dalhan have defined the Marma as “**Maryanti iti Marmani**” i.e., it is spot on the body surface where if any injury or trauma occur, causes sudden death. So they should be protected from any type of injury.

Arundatta says that these are the vital points on which injury lead to Marana or Maranasagrishya Dukh (death). Marma is the seat of Prana (life) which is constituted by confluence of Mamsa (muscle), Sira (vein), Snayu (ligament), Asthi (bone) & Sandhi (joint).

CLASSIFICATION OF MARMA

The total 107 Marma have been classified under five different groups

1. Structural classification (Asraya Bhedena)
2. Regional classification (Shadanga Bhedena/Avayava Bhedena)
3. Prognostic classification/Traumatological classification (Vepath Bhedena)
4. Dimensional classification (Mana Bhedena)
5. Numerical classification (Sankhya Bhedena)

PROGNOSTIC CLASSIFICATION

Sushruta and Vagbhata divided the Marma into five types depending on the prognosis of Marmabhigata.

Prognostic Classification of Marma

S. No	Prognostic Classification	Doshic Predominance	Total Number
1.	Sadhya Pranhara (threat to life within 7 days of injury)	Agneya	19
2.	Kalantara Pranhara (threat to life within 15 days of injury)	Agneya, Soumya	33
3.	Vishalyagna (fatal after removing the foreign body)	Vayavya	3
4.	Vaikalyakara (structural deformity)	Soumya	44
5.	Rujakara (extremely painful)	Soumya, Agneya, Vayavya	8
		Total	107

Again individual Marmas are included in different groups according to the significance of size or extent of area. It is stated that Urvi, Kurcha Sira, Vitapa and Kakshadhara Marmas measure one finger each. Sthanamula, Manibandha and Gulpha measure two fingers each. Two Kurpara and two Janu Marmas measure three fingers each. Hridaya, Vasti, Kurcha, Guda, Nabhi and four Marmas of head (Sringataka) and five Simantas, twelve Marmas of neck (two Nila, two Manya and eight Matrika) are measured equal to the size of the closed fist and are four fingers each. The remaining Marmas are thought to be measuring half finger only.

Considering the sites and location of Marma based on the Shadangas (six part of body) of the body, Sushruta has given only five regions, (1) the head and neck (2) the chest (3) the abdomen (4) the back (5) the extremities dealing with the distribution of 107 Marmas. He has also clearly stated that there are 37 in the head and neck, 12 in Uddara pradesh (abdomen) and Ura pradesh (chest), 14 in Prustha (back) and 11 in each of the extremities (superior and inferior).

This classification is done on the basis of injury results on Marma points. It shows the vitality of Marma points based on the predominance of Dosha. But it not fixed that one Marma which is classified under one category should always belongs to that category, in case of ignorance or avoiding therapeutic procedures one type of Marma may change into another type of Marma.

The main body organ and structures involved in the site of Marmas have been Mamsa (muscles), Sira (blood vessels), Snayu (nerve or tendon or ligament), Asthi (bones) and Sandhi (joints). Depending upon the structure, the body Marma has been designated as Mamsa Marama, Sira Marma, Snayu Marma, Asthi Marma & Sandhi Marma. Under the consideration of consequences or prognosis of trauma over Marmas, Sushruta has classified into five groups i.e., Sadya Pranhara Marma (death immediately after injury), Kalantara Pranhara Marma (death after lapse some time), Vishalyaghna Marma (death soon after removing the Shalya), Vaikalyakara Marma (injury precipitating the restlessness) and Rujakara Marma (injury causing severe pain) and their total numbers are 19,33,3, 44 and 8, respectively.

INJURY TO MARMA (MARMABHIGHATA)

Marmabhigata suggests any injuries to Marma in the body due to incision, stabbing, burning or external blow which is mild or severe in nature. Marmabhigata is likely to produce subjective manifestations governed by the extent and the nature of injuries to the Marmas. Considering these factors Sushruta has dealt them in three broad headings namely, (1) General symptoms (2) Particular symptoms (3) Consequential prognosis. More emphasis has been given in dealing with the manifestations based on the consequences precipitating during the course of the trauma. Certain general manifestations like Bhrama (confusion), Pralapa (delirium), Dourvalya (weakness), Chittanasha (lack of consciousness), Strastanga (restlessness), loss of sensation of parts, rise in body temperature, loss of function of the joints, unconsciousness, shallow breathing, severe pain, bleeding, loss of perception of senses, giddiness, paleness of the body, burning sensation over the cardiac area and postural instability are commonly seen in Marmabhigata. Above all the sign and symptoms are results when Marma is injured. Apart from these sign and symptoms some specific disease are produced in individual Marma also.

THERAPY OF MARMA

Utilization of external stimulation, pulling techniques, Panchkarma and massage etc. are the part of Marma therapy along with Abhyanga and Mardana. Marma is related to the Prana which associated with Vata Dosha therefore Marma mainly deal with Vata Dosha. Different Marma points are considered for Vata Vyadhi depending upon involvement of Vata such as; Prana Vata, Udana Vata, Vyana Vata, Samana Vata and Apana Vata. Marma therapy not only helps in Vata Vyadhi but also helps to clear the channels (shrotas) and improves circulation of body. It develops physical & mental flexibility, removes Ama (toxins) & clinically applied for many disease specially heart problem. Marma therapy provides stimulation of vital points and thus removes blockages from the shrotas & offer physical and psychological repose. Marma therapy applied around the Asthi, Snayu, Sira & Sandhi etc. since this therapy mainly covers diseases related to neuro muscular system, nervous system, loco motor system and blood circulation systems. Marma Chikitsa help to flow positive Prana through the various channels using pressure on Marma points and this Prana manage to treat diseases such as; headache, joints pain, paralysis Hridaya Roga, mental stress and muscular sprain, etc. Various therapies such as; Swedana, Abhyanga, and Pizhichil are recommended by the traditional text of Ayurveda as Marma Chikitsa. Abhyanga (Shirobhyanga) help in diseases such as; Shirshoola, Hanustambha, Manyastambha, Badhiry etc.

MARMA HELP TO TREAT FOLLOWING DISEASE CONDITIONS

- Joint pain
- Respiratory obstructions
- Nervous system disorders
- Muscular pain
- Headaches & migraines
- Fatigue
- Mental stress
- Paralysis
- Blood pressure
- Hridaya Roga

CONCLUSION

Marmas are integral to all Ayurvedic therapies from simple self treatments to complex clinical procedures. Marma are the critical points of body associated with different organs and nerves. Ayurveda describe use of Marma therapy for various diseases and identification of Marma points which is to be cure since injury to these Marma points may causes serious harmful effect. They form one of the main pillars of Ayurvedic thought and practice. Most of all Acharya has described about 107 total numbers of Marmas in the human body. The knowledge of Marma were since Vedic period. Different types of muscles, veins, bones, ligaments and joints meets with each other at the Marma point thus these points acts as a physiological junction. Marma

therapy can be used along with all Ayurvedic therapies like Panchakarma.

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