Clinical importance of Marma w.s.r. to Role in Pathological Condition: An Ayurveda Review

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REVIEW ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda as science of life and spiritualism provides many ways of healthy living and focused towards the prevention and treatment of diseases. The observation, supervision and practical understating contributed towards the built up of principles of Ayurveda. Ayurveda presented several concepts related to the physiological functioning and anatomy of body. Marma is one such aspect of Ayurveda considered as resuscitative and penetrable area of the body. These Marma points are presents all over the body including neck, head, trunk & extremities. Marmas points in body mainly built up by groups of muscles, ligaments, vessels, tendons and bones, etc. Marma points are related with Tridosha, Bhutatma and Triguna therefore any injury and trauma to the Marma can lead painful manifestations which may be lethal sometimes. Generally 107 Marma’s described in various Ayurveda literatures which are responsible for many clinical events. The knowledge of Marma points can be utilizes for diagnostic, clinical and therapeutic purposes.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Marma, Jeevsthan, Pranayatana, Vital

1. Introduction

Ayurveda described various principles related to the physiological and anatomical aspects of human body. The concept of Marma is one such principle of Ayurveda theories which resembles some vital and delicate points of body. As per Ayurveda the Marma can be described as a junction of Mansa, Sira, Snayu, Asthi and Sandhi, etc. The literature suggests that Vata, Pitta and Kapha elements meet at this junction therefore Marma points are responsible for physiological as well as pathological events. The deep-seated Marma are physio-anatomical structures having specific dimensions, depth and clinical utility. (1-4)

The Marma points possess clinical importance and knowledge of these points can be utilizes to treat common health ailments including headache, pain in joints and bodyache, etc. The therapeutic Ayurveda procedures like Swedana, Abhayanga, Kizhi and Pizhichil can be considered as specific modalities of Marma Chikitsa since these procedures affects particular Marma points and exhibited biological responses.

Marma therapy manipulates subtle energy (Prana) in the body to support healing process. Marma therapy affects body, mind and consciousness thus helps to restore health and peace of mind. Marma therapy belief in concept of that “a strong blow can cause injury while a mild touch on same point can cause healing”. Marma therapy works on principle of massage or stimulation of Marma points gently. Marma Chikitsa when utilizes to perceive and direct the flow of Prana then it has becomes a powerful tool for inducing healing process. However knowledge of Marma is very essential to utilize these points for clinical and therapeutic purpose. (3-6) Traditionally Marma points were broadly categorized into three categories on the basis of their location; Marma of legs & feet, Marma at trunk and Marma of neck & head, the
Ayurveda descriptions of these three types of Marma depicted in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. Traditionally categorized Marma points](image)

2. Anatomical aspect of Marma

As per Ayurveda there are 107 Marma points in human body which are located as follows:

- 11 Marma points in limbs
- 26 Marma points in trunk region
- 37 Marma points in head and neck region
- 33 Marma points located elsewhere in body

Kshipra, Kurcha, Janu, Indrabasti, Parshwasandhi, Manya, Krikataka, Amsa, Amsaphalaka, Shakha, Shringataka, Adhipati and Sthapani, etc. are some Marmas described in Ayurveda text. The ancient philosopher described various types of Marmas based on the effects of injury which are as follows:

✓ Sadyah Pranahara Marma

When this Marma injured due to the loss of Prana vayu the death is certain.

✓ Kalantara Pranahara Marma

Injury to these Marmas result gradual loss of life, after lapse of time.

✓ Vishalyaghna

When foreign material pierces these Marma then injured person survives till foreign material remains inside but on removal of piercing material death may occur.

✓ Vaikalyakara

The injury to these Marma causes deformity of organs which are dependent on these specific Marma.

✓ Rujakara Marma

The injury to these Marmas generally not causes death, but leads Ruja.

3. Clinical Importance of Marma

Marmas are area of body which needs to be protected from injury since injury to these delicate points may leads serious complication including death. The physicians & surgeons must be aware about Marma point while treating or performing surgical interventions. The Marmas points play important role in diagnostic and therapeutic purpose and this Marma chikitsa helps to prevent disorders associated with physical and psychological disturbances. The awful life style, stressful job, poor food habits, pollution, physical exertion and sedentary life style, etc. can affect vital parts of body leading to the pathological manifestations. The Marma chikitsa help to detoxify, strengthen,
revitalize and relax body physically as well as mentally thus reduces strain and provides relief in psychological or somatic disorders. *Marma chikitsa* can be utilizes effectively for the treatment of various disorders of musculoskeletal and nervous system. *Marma chikitsa* offers great therapeutic advantages in lower backache, knee pain, neck sprain, ankle sprain, cervical neck pain, migraine, sciatica, paralysis, stress and anxiety, etc. (7-12)

The particular *Marmas* affects specific body parts as follows and this theory helps in *Marma chikitsa*:

- **Sthapani marma** affects mind, brain, and nerves
- **Shringatataka marma** affects eyes, nose, tongue and nerves
- **Talhridayam marma** affects lungs
- **Phana marma** affects sinuses, ears and sense of smell
- **Nabhi marma** affects small intestines
- **Janu marma** affects heart, liver and spleen
- **Talhridayam marma** affects lungs
- **Indravasti marma** affects small intestine

**Advantages of Marma chikitsa:**

- *Marma chikitsa* provides natural way for treating disease and improves process of recovery inherently.
- Release stress, stiffness of muscles and relives joints pain.
- Re-energizes and revitalize body.
- *Marma chikitsa* boost immunity, improve physiological functioning of body and maintain homeostasis of body.
- *Marma chikitsa* provides relieves in disorders related to the body postures and seating job.
- *Marma chikitsa* reduces pain of nerves, ligaments, bones and joints.
- *Marma chikitsa* offers therapeutic benefits without invasive and medicinal intervention thus does not impart adverse effects if perform carefully.
- *Kshipra Marma, Manibandha Marma* and *Kattikatharuna Marma*, etc. are some *Marma* which provides relief in many health ailments.

4. **Therapeutic indication of Marma therapy**

- Muscular and joint pain
- Frozen joints
- Digestion problems
- To facilitate detoxification of body
- Headaches and migraines
- Anxiety and depression
- Paralysis and Sciatic pain
- Lumbar Spondilitis and Cervical Spondilitis

5. **Conclusion**

*Marma Chikitsa* is an important aspect of Ayurveda in which application of pressure on *Marma* point control flow of vital energy (*Prana*) and provides therapeutic benefits in many health problems. Massage and gentle pressure on *Marma* gives biological response of therapeutic value while injury to *Marma* leads health complications including death. Ayurveda emphasized on anatomical knowledge of these *Marma* points to acquire their diagnostic and therapeutic benefits. The surgical interventions also require knowledge of *Marma* to avoid any complications during surgical procedure. The misconception regarding anatomical framework of *Marma* may lead failure of medical procedure. The *Marma* therapy can be used effectively for treating various problems including muscular & joint pain, headaches, migraine, anxiety, depression, paralysis, sciatic pain, lumbar spondilitis and cervical spondilitis, etc.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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