

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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DOI [10.22270/hjhs.v6i3.108](https://doi.org/10.22270/hjhs.v6i3.108)

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*, *Abhyanga*, *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**.

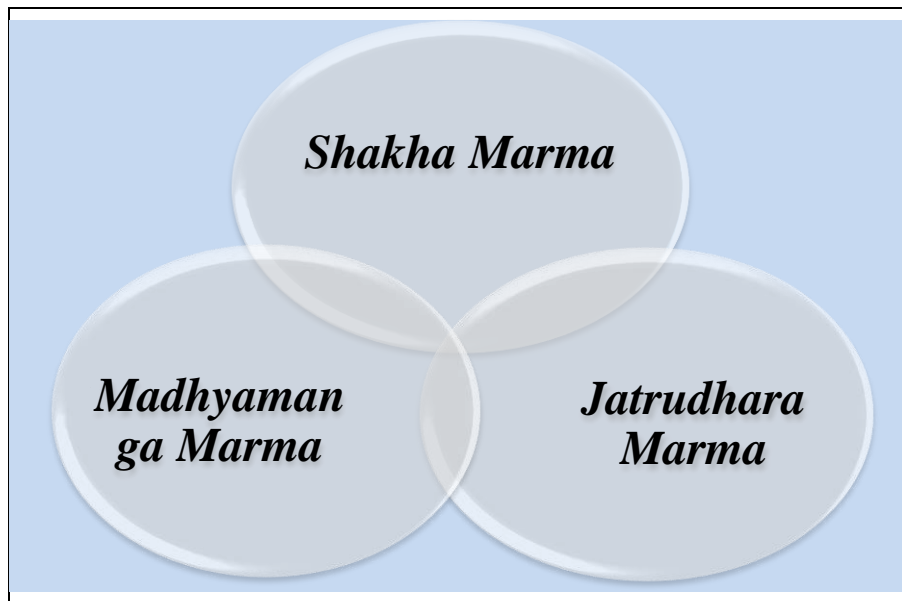


Figure 1. Traditionally categorized *Marma* points

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, Parshvasandhi, 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 utilized 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
- ✦ *Shringataka 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 relieves joints pain.
- ❖ Re-energizes and revitalize body.
- ❖ *Marma chikitsa* boost immunity, improve physiological functioning of body and maintain homeostasis of body.
- ❖ *Marma chikitsa* provides relief 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 performed carefully.

- ❖ *Kshipra Marma, Manibandha Marma* and *Katikatharuna 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 Spondylitis and Cervical Spondylitis

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 spondylitis and cervical spondylitis, etc.

Acknowledgements

The authors are thankful to Himalayan Journal of Health Sciences for publishing this article in the journal.

Financial Disclosure statement: The author received no specific funding for this work.

Conflict of Interest

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

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