

ROLE OF YOGA AND MARMA CHIKITSA ON DIGESTIVE PROBLEMS

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ABSTRACT

One of the primary causes of poor digestive health is changing one's lifestyle, changing one's nutrition, and experiencing mental stress. Toxins that have been slowly deposited in the GI tract make it difficult for nutrients to be absorbed. Nutritional deficiencies and toxin accumulation bring on more digestive issues. The finest options for purifying the body and mind and establishing a healthy state are *Yoga* and *Marma* therapy. Therefore, the most significant natural treatment for central digestive system issues is *Yoga* and *Marma* chikitsa. Bad eating habits, mental strain, and sedentary lifestyles disrupt the body's homeostasis. Several *Yoga* poses directly stimulate the *Marma* point. They remove the obstruction, which permits appropriate prana flow.

Key words: Digestive problems, GI tract, Lifestyle, Marma therapy, Prana Yoga.

INTRODUCTION

Due to *Jatharagni*'s creation of *Aam ras*, many ailments occur. It is thought that *Mandagni* is the source of all illnesses¹. By contaminating all the *Doshas* and *Dhatus*, *Aam ras* produced by fire is the cause of the beginning of numerous ailments.

The following are the causes of GI tract disturbances.

1. Consuming too much food
2. Eating too late.
3. Consuming poor food
4. *Jatharagni* distortion².

Acharya *Sushruta* has described the following symptoms when the GI tract is disturbed -

Bloating, pain, anorexia, vomiting, thirst, blindness, death³. Incorrect dietary and lifestyle choices ultimately affect *Agni* (the digestive fire), which burns within our stomach. This affects the digestive process, causing food to be partially digested and creating *Ama*. In addition to giving birth to pollutants, improper digestion also impairs the mechanism that supports the digestive process. The assertion that *Agni*'s malfunction causes every sickness thus highlights the significance of *Pachakapitta* (*Agni*). Acharya Charaka says, "Better health depends upon the increased and decreased functional capacities of *Pachakapitta*⁴. Yoga poses directly impact the Marma points, which are critical to their stabilization, sustenance, and refining. Through regular cleaning, new toxins are not allowed to get stored there, and a disease-free healthy state is attained. *Yogasanas* cause the periodic contraction and expansion of the physical and subtle body parts, such as veins, muscles, vertebrae, etc., resulting in removing the toxins stored there⁵.

In digestive system diseases, following *Yoga* therapy is useful.

1. *Asana*: - *Vajrasana, supta vajrasana, Ardhamatsyendrasana, Paschimuttana -Sana. Mayurasana, Pavanamuktasana. Kati Chakrasana, Sarpasana. Dhanurasana, Sarvangasana, Trikonasana, Akarnadhanurasana, surya-Namaskara*. These *Aasanas* are given stimulation to abdominal organs.
2. *Pranayama*: - *Nadi Shodhana, bhastrika*.
3. *Bandha*: - *Moola bandha, Uddiyana bandha, etc.*
4. *Mudra*: - *Ashwini mudra, tadagi mudra, maha mudra etc.*
5. *Kriya*: - *Kunjala, vasti, sankh aprakshalana, Nauli, vastradhauti, agnisara etc.*
6. *Dhyana*⁶. Also, provide strength to GI-related mechanism.

Marma-marma points that are used for digestion-related manifestation are as follows: -

1. *Guda*
2. *Nabhi*
3. *Indrabasti*
4. *Kurpara*

DISCUSSION

Marma therapy and yogic techniques are used to treat several terminal ailments. The neural system, musculoskeletal system, endocrine glands, respiratory system, and organs of the belly, heart, and circulatory

system are all significantly impacted by *Marma* therapy and *yoga* postures, as well as by the *Marma* stimulation these practices naturally include. Ancient *Rishis* devised these *Marma* rituals and *Yogic Asanas* by studying nature. Effect of *Yoga* and self-*marma* therapy on the digestive system: *Yoga* and self-*marma* therapy regularly help the body's digestive strength. The body receives the necessary nutrients regularly by absorbing them through the intestine's digestion of meals. The liver is where food is metabolized. Excessive available nutrients are deposited in different parts of the body. During necessity, the body itself utilizes these nutrients.

Mode of action

Yoga causes internal organs to be massaged, vibrated, stretched, and given strength. Through several investigations, it has been found that *Yogasana* increases the peristaltic motions of the colon by stimulating the glands that secrete enzymes, hormones, and peristaltic movement. More than those meals are absorbed like a towel and the desired number of foods is made available to each person or object that makes up a component of the body⁷. One of the main factors harming the digestive system is lifestyle change. Dietary changes cause the majority of digestive issues. *Yoga* can, therefore, be the most effective treatment for many general digestive system issues. *Yoga* has a direct beneficial effect on the digestive system by massaging the stomach region, intestines, liver, and pancreas, as well as the tube that runs from the mouth to the anus. This massage strengthens the inside organs' muscles and ensures blood flow and oxygen. Organs and tissues are stimulated by processing and consuming food, preventing them from becoming bad by remaining immobile. Enzymes are produced in great quantities to help the digestion of substances that serve as liquid feeds, while intestinal peristalsis is enhanced, excretory functions are improved, etc. Various poses, such as *Apanasana*, the "Wind-Relieving Pose" in Sanskrit, benefit our digestive system. The poses that directly affect the parts of the body relating to the stomach and intestines⁸. The stimulation of *Marma* points, which are directly and indirectly associated with glands and organs related

to digestion, results in properly operating those structures. The points are as follows: -

1. Guda Marma There are two ways to perform Marma therapy: with and without medication. Medicated Marma therapy like Basti⁹. Basti (Niruha, Anuvasana, Matra basti) alleviates lower GI tract issues through Vata Shaman and Anukoman¹⁰.

2. Nabhi Marma - Any injury to Nabhi, one of the Sira Marma, could suddenly cause the individual to die. Accepting Nabhi as capillaries makes it simple to understand why Rakta is stated as one of the Pranas, and bleeding from an organism's plexus might interfere with the functionality of many mechanisms. With the aid of Samana Vayu, which is present at Nabhi, the digestive process is carried out through Grahana (consumption/selection), Pachana (conversion), Vivechana (separation), and Munchana from a physiological perspective¹¹.

Although Acharya Sharangdhara has brilliantly described the natural physiology of respiration, recognizing Nabhi as the umbilicus makes it impossible to understand how the process described there might be used in real life. Deoxygenated blood is present in capillaries and can be transformed into oxygenated blood by the lungs or nabhistha prana¹². In the same way, if Vaidya accepted Nabhi as capillaries, he would understand the mode of action of Basti as indicated in the description of Basti. Basti expels out the vitiated Doshas and Malas from the body by entering and lubricating the core part, surrounding part, and lateral portion of Kukshi¹³. Basti's effectiveness is felt throughout the body because of capillaries found in the small and large intestines, which absorb the therapeutic oil or decoction when administered.

3. Kurpar and Indra Basti marma - More directly affecting digestion is the parasympathetic outflow through the vagus nerve, which increases the gastrointestinal tract's peristalsis as well as the release of digestive juices and enzymes from the stomach, pancreas, and gallbladder. To facilitate defecation, the PNS also promotes relaxation of the internal anal sphincter and contraction of the rectum. The vagus nerve forms the two plexuses that run the entire gut length, which also innervates the abdominal viscera.

Only parasympathetic input from the vagus nerve (CN X) is present in the submucosal neural plexus (of Meissner), located in the digestive tube's submucosa. Located in the muscularis externa of the digestive tube is the myenteric nervous plexus (of Auerbach). Both sympathetic and parasympathetic fibers from the thoracic splanchnic and vagus nerve are found in it. A group of sympathetic nerves known as the thoracic splanchnic nerves contribute to the autonomic supply of the pelvis and abdomen. - T1-L2¹⁴. Lower trunk root value of the brachial plexus C8-T1 contributes to the development of the median and ulnar nerves, which explains how upper limb Indrabasti and Kurpar Marma are connected to this T1 and the thoracic splanchnic nerves they share. The tibial nerve root value in the lower limb is S1-S2-S3, and the parasympathetic from roots S2 through S4. The sympathetic component reaches the pelvis through the superior hypogastric plexus.¹⁵ They have the same root value, so impulses through the tibial nerve transmit to the pelvic visceral organ.

CONCLUSION

Marma points can be manipulated in yoga postures with the help of pressure, heat, needles, massage oils, herbs or aromatic oils, and even self-Marma Therapy, which helps to remove the blockages, swelling, pain, etc. Marma chikitsa and yoga play a significant role in curing digestive problems.

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