

## A REVIEW - PAIN MANAGEMENT THROUGH MARMA CHIKITSA

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## ABSTRACT

*Marma* is literary communicate the sense of vital part of the body, these points are important in human body and injuries or mechanical involvement directly affecting the site of *Marma*. In Vedic Science, *Chikitsa* is divided into four parts *Atharvani*, *Anagirasi*, *Daivi* and *Manushyja*. The basics of *Marma Chikitsa* Considered as *Angirasi Chikitsa*. In this *Rasa* refer to the executive elements that control and carries out the various function of the body. Any trauma to *Marma* will surely produce pain or can cause death. Thus, the *Marma Chikitsa* help in maintaining the vitality of the body and treatment of disease.

**Keywords:** *Marma*, Pain, *Shula*, *Vedna*, *Marma Chikitsa*

## INTRODUCTION

*Marma* Science and *Marma Chikitsa* is an untouched chapter of Indian surgery. With the exploration of *Marma* science the whole scenario of Indian surgery may change in multidimensional approaches.<sup>1</sup> These *Marmas* are mentioned and discussed in *Sushrut Samhita* as an anatomical consideration of different parts of the body.<sup>2</sup> Firm unions of *Mansa* (muscles), *Sira*

(veins), *Snayu* (ligaments), *Ashti* (bones) or *Sandhi* (bone-joints) are called *Marmas* (or vital parts of the body) which naturally and specifically form the seats of life (*Prana*), and hence a hurt to any one of the *Marmas* invariably produces such symptoms as arise from the hurt of a certain *Marma*.<sup>3</sup> There are one hundred and seven (107) *Marmas* (vital spots) in the body.<sup>4</sup> In

the chapter on the *Marma*, in his commentary on the *Sushrut Samhita* Dr Ghanekar writes- the definition of *Marma* is mentioned in Different texts as vital parts may lead to death. It is also true about the heart and brain. Trauma to these parts may lead to loss of vitality so these parts are known as vital parts.<sup>5</sup> The word “*Marma*” comes from Sanskrit origin “*Mra*” means place of *Prana* (life). Any direct or indirect trauma to these sites may be fatal or can result in the disability of the person. These *Marmas* points harmonize the nervous and endocrine system and normalize different pathology in the body through vital power itself, with proper stimulations/Manipulation. This technique is known as *Marma Chikitsa*.<sup>6</sup>

### MARMA CHIKITSA

*Marma Chikitsa* contributes to increase or recharge physical, mental and spiritual energies. On the physical level, it helps to revitalize or reenergize the body tissues; at the cellular level, it improves vital functions like digestion, respiration, blood circulation and excretion. On the psychological level, it improves the mental faculty by directing it in a positive direction. It also offers a way to treat many psychosomatic ailments without any drugs. It harmonizes the functioning of nervous and endocrine systems to control psychological disorders. On the spiritual level, the reasoning of mind, regulation and transformation of thoughts in a positive direction helps to concentrate towards the ultimate goal of life. As a preventive measure, it helps to cope with the situations arising from different diseases.<sup>7</sup>

### PAIN-

Pain is indispensable for survival. It serves a protective function by signalling the presence of noxious, tissue-damaging conditions. From a medical standpoint, the subjective description and indication of the location of pain may help pinpoint the underlying cause of the disease.<sup>8</sup>

Nociceptors- the receptors for pain, are free nerve endings found in every tissue of the body except the brain. Intense thermal, mechanical, or chemical stimuli can activate nociceptors. Tissue irritation or injury releases chemicals such as prostaglandins, kinins, and potassium ions (K+) that stimulate nociceptors. Pain may

persist even after a pain-producing stimulus is removed because pain-mediating chemicals linger and because nociceptors exhibit very little adaptation. Conditions that elicit pain include excessive distention (stretching) of a structure, prolonged muscular contractions, muscle spasms, or ischemia (inadequate blood flow to an organ).<sup>9</sup>

### MARMA AND SHULA

Pain is one of the most common features of traumatic lesions and understanding its nature and properties is important for the successful management of pain. In *Ayurvedic* medicinal therapy, this is the only lacuna, that is, the immediate management of pain. *Marma* Science and *Chikitsa* have an answer to this and hence, if we incorporate *Marma* science in the broad field of *Ayurvedic* therapy, we can overcome this lacuna. *Marma* science also draws its basic premises from the same body of texts as the other disciplines of *Ayurvedic* practice.<sup>10</sup> *Marmas* are considered as half of the surgery subject as any injury to *Marmas* Can prove to be fatal so if the patient is promptly treated by the skilled doctor even though the patient will suffer from excessive pain.<sup>11</sup> In *Susruta Samhita*, Maharshi *Susruta* has mentioned that the commonest cause of pain is *Vata*.<sup>12</sup> Wound and pain are both coexisting features of trauma. Pain is a feeling of uneasiness. In *Ayurveda*, *Vedana*, *Dukha*, *Pida*, *Sula*, *Ruk*, *Ruja*, *Bheda*, *Sadana*, *Avasada*, are words used for pain. According to *Susruta Samhita*, the main causative factor of pain is *Vata*. The seat of pain is *mana* (psyche) and *Sharira* (body).<sup>13</sup> In all cases of *Vatika* predominance, the chances of pain are quite common along with other clinical presentations of *Vatika* anomalies. In a normal state, the *Vata* is responsible for the activation of several functions of different systems.<sup>14</sup> According to the *Astanga-hridaya*, *Sutrasthana* 12/49-50, derangement, displacement, dilatation, piercing pain, anaesthesia, lethargy, pricking and incising pain, constricting pain, breaking pain, twisting pain, excitation of the hair follicle and thirst due to severe pain, tremor, hardening, porosity, dryness, stimulation, spasm, distaste of mouth, black and reddish black discoloration are due to the *Vata*.

According to *Susruta Samhita*, *Marmas* causing pain are predominant in qualities of *Agni* and *Vayu* as they particularly cause pain; some on the other hand quote that pain is related to all five elements (*Panchamahabhutas*).<sup>15</sup>

#### TYPES OF PAIN IN WOUND—<sup>16,17</sup>

**Vatika Vedana:-** *Todana* (pricking pain), *Bhedana* (cutting/ incising pain), *Tadana* (pain due to blunt injury), *Chedana* (cutting/ excising pain), *Ayamana* (stretching pain), *Manthana* (gripping pain), *Viksep-ana* (pulling pain), *Cumcumayana* (tingling sensation), *Nirdahana* (burning pain), *Avabhanjana* (breaking pain), *Sphotana* (bursting pain), *Vidarana* (perforating pain), *Utpatana* (tearing pain), *Kampana* (tremoring pain), *Vislesana* (dislocating pain), *Vikirana* (radiating pain), *Purana* (distending pain), *Stambhana* (stiffness/ ankylosing pain), *Swapana/ Swapa* (anaesthesia), *Akuncana* (spasmodic pain), *Ankusika* (anchoring/ hanging pain), *Atimatra Vedana* (sudden excessive pain), *Vividha Shoola* (different pain).

**Paittika Vedana:-** *Osa* (burning pain), *Chosa* (scalding pain), *Paridaha* (burning sensation all around), *Dhumayana* (sensation of hot smoke), *Gatrangaravakirnamiva pacyate* (sensation of touch by burning coal), *Usmabhivridhi* (increased temperature), *Kshate ksharavasiktavaccha Vedana* (caustic application overwound like pain).

**Kaphaja Vedana:-** *Alpavedanama* (mild pain), *Sup-  
tatvama* (numbness), *Avedanam/Aruja* (analgesia), *Parsvasubheda* (pain in flanks)

**Tridosaja/ Sannipataja Vedana:** - *Vividha Vedana* (different kinds of pain), *Sarva Vedana* (all kinds of pain).

#### THE SITES OF PAIN<sup>18</sup>

The sites of pain are the precordial region, flanks, back, sacral and suprapubic regions.

- The *Vatika Sula* is characterized by being spasmodic having periods of exacerbations and remissions repeatedly with the retention of urine, flatus and faeces. It can be identified as a pricking or tearing type of pain.
- The *Paittika Sula* is very severe and sudden in onset. The colicky pain is associated with thirst, fainting, burning sensation and pain in the

umbilical region. Excessive perspiration, vertigo is also accompanied by the *Paittika Sula*.

- The *Kaphaja Sula* is low-intensity colicky pain in the abdomen. It is associated with nausea, cough, malaise, anorexia, excessive salivation, and heaviness of the abdomen. The colicky pain is aggravated after meals and in the early morning. In *Sannipataja Sula* all three *Dosas* get vitiated. The clinical presentation may be varied accordingly. All the symptoms may be in an aggravated state.

#### MANAGEMENT OF PAIN-

The management of pain comprises a multi-fold approach. It can be categorized into local management and systemic management. The pain caused by traumatic lesions can be managed by local fomentation, irrigation, application of local medicament and bandaging. In *Ayurveda*, the term *Vedana* is more or less used for the feeling. It may be the feeling of wellbeing or the feeling of illness (*Sukhatamaka* and *Dukhatmaka*).<sup>19</sup> In *Ayurveda*, there is no particular uniform medicine for any kind of pain. Management of pain depends upon the causative factor or *Doshika* predominance responsible for the pain. In conventional (allopathic) pain treatment several analgesics, anti-inflammatory, antipyretic drugs, chemo trypsin and serrati-peptidase like chemicals and opioids are used, but there is no universal drug for all kinds of pain to date. Every individual response to pain is in a different way. In the same way, every analgesic chemical acts pharmacologically in a different way. Only one analgesic preparation cannot solve the problem of pain. So, the management of pain is not so simple and satisfactory with the aforesaid drugs. Instant pain relief is the motive of *Marma* therapy. Stimulation of *Marma* can produce analgesia by secreting several prostaglandin inhibitors, endorphins, interferon and other opioid-like substances which are a hundred times more potent than opium. Instant pain relief by *Marma* therapy is possible within no time.

Following *Marma* points are responsible for the relief of pain in different organs.

1. Shoulder pain - *Kshipra marma* and *Kurpara marma*.
2. Pain in abdomen - *Kurpara* and *Urvi marma*.

3. Chest Pain - *Kurpara, Urvi and Ani.*
4. Cervical (neck) pain - *Kshipra, Kurpara, Ani marma*
5. Leg and knee pain - *Kshipra, Gulpha*
6. Sciatic pain - *Kshipra, Gulpha*

Pain management aims at minimizing distress, feeling of unrest, and improving the quality of life. A cardinal point in the management of pain is that it should be holistic and patient-centred in its application. This can be fulfilled in the Ayurvedic approach only in terms of *Marma Chikitsa*.<sup>20</sup>

## DISCUSSION

In *Ayurveda*, the term *Vedana* is more or less used for the feeling. It may be the feeling of well-being or the feeling of illness. The governance of all kinds of body sensations is the subject of the *Vata*. But during the vitiation of *Vata*, all these functions get disturbed and the excessive activity of vitiated *Vata* may cause pain sensation. From the above and according to the literature we can conclude that *Marmas* should be stimulated in every type of pain for its analgesic effect. Every *Marma* points have their measures, so *Marmas* points should be stimulated to their measures.

## CONCLUSION

The present article shows the mode of action of *Marma Chikitsa*, as suggested in the literature, which has been discussed. The special capability of *Marma Chikitsa* in Treating any kind of pain disorders, Thus, it can be concluded that *Marma* science, which is an extremely ancient field of Facts, holds significant promise in being used to maintain the vitality of the body and treatment of diseases.

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