

ROLE OF DIFFERENT METHODS OF MARMA THERAPY IN DISEASE PREVENTION

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ABSTRACT

Today a popular topic in natural healing has become the use of pressure points for massage and acupuncture. The traditional medicine of India as *Ayurveda*, these pressure points are called *Marma* in Sanskrit term for vital points on the *Marmas* body. Injury to *marmas* or vital points quickly affects the health and vitality of a person and in the case of some can even prove fatal. It had an important role in *Ayurvedic* medicine, such point can be used specifically for the diagnosis and treatment of disease, which will be the focus of our discussion here. These *Marma* have control on different body functions and promoting health and longevity but any trauma to these parts may give rise to many complications. By *yoga postures (Asana)* and *pranayama*, their stretch, pressure, vibration and rhythmic movement, the activity of *Marma* get affected. Its key energy center for practice of yoga and it connect to *Nadi* and *Chakras* of the subtle body and mind, so it is apparent that the *yoga postures* and *pranayama* affects the body and mind stimulation of *Marma*. At *Marma* sites toxins, stress and negative emotions get lodged. Disease is reflected in pain, blockage or swelling in these areas even before it may manifest outwardly in the full range of disease symptoms and it is a relieving important therapeutic aid and one of the first stages of many *Ayurvedic treatment*.

Keywords: *Marma, prana, marma therapy, yoga*

INTRODUCTION

Marmas are a common topic in the three great *Ayurveda* classics of *Charaka*, *Sushruta* and *Vagbhata (Ashtanghridaya and Ashtangasangraha)*. All texts have mentioned that total no. of *Marma* is 107¹⁻³. *Charaka* has given various references of important *Marmas* – They are 6 major vital points – *Head, Neck, Heart, Bladder, Ojus* and *Shukra*⁴, but *Sutra Sthana* he has mentioned that they are 3 important vital points – *Basti, Hridaya* and *Shira*⁵ because these are some-

times reduced them. What are *marmas*? *Marmas* are related to the energies of the body, mind, *prana* and *doshas*. They are key connecting points to all aspects of our energies from the in most consciousness to the out most physical organs⁶. *Acharya Charaka* defines *Marmas* as important connection centers or crossroads in the physical body⁷. According to *Sushruta*, *Marmas* are places where the three *doshas* are present along with their subtle forms as *Prana, Tejas* and *Ojas*, and

the three *gunas* of *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*⁸. *Acharya Vagbhata* defines same as *Acharyacharaka*⁹. According to *Dalhana*, 'what can cause death if injured is a marma. Marmas are located and measured in size in terms of 'anguliparimana' or the 'finger unit' and the marmas vary size from half finger lengths or digits (the most common) to four finger lengths or about the width of the hand¹⁰. While there can be a close degree of correlation between smaller marma points and acupuncture points, this is not always the case relative to the larger marmas. Acupuncture points are usually smaller in size and more specific in location. Marmas are of various compositions relative to the tissues that make them up, defined as bone, tendon, muscle, nerve or vein, including relative to channels that carry the doshas (biological humors) and channels that carry thought and emotion. Many marmas are a combination of several such factors. In this regard, all major joints like the elbow, knee, wrist and ankle contain significant marmas. While many marmas are on the surface of the body, like points on the hands or feet, others are internal like the heart and the bladder, which are large marma regions. Blood vessel marmas, like those in the neck, are another type of internal marma. Many marmas are on peripheral regions of the body like the arms and legs. The head has the greatest concentration of marmas, with special marmas governing the eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth and brain. Yet marmas can also be found along the front and back of the trunk as well. There are 107 prime classical marmas according to the *Sushruta Samhita*, one of the oldest Ayurvedic texts, which also mentions marmas relative to the practice of surgery¹¹. However, besides these primary marmas are many other marmas, up to 360 according to some healers. To some extent, any sensitive point on the body of a person is a kind of marma or vulnerable location. The skin itself can be regarded as a greater marma zone in which all the other marmas are contained. Yet besides anatomically defined marmas, which are the same in everyone, other marmas unique to an individual's special anatomical structure also exist. These can result from injury, from postural distortions and other changes in our

physical structure brought on by various factors from our lifestyle to the aging process.

Aim and Objective

1. To analyze the clinical important of marma.
2. To study the applied aspect assessed through marma therapy in deferent diseases.
3. To study the preventive aspect of Marmaavighata-janyavyadhi and correlation in deferent therapy.

Material and Methods

Material – Ayurvedic Samhita and their commentaries. Literature related to the title is searched from all authentic Ayurvedic journals and internet. Data evaluation is done.

Methods - Type of study- review study

Marma and Prana: Marmas are most closely connected with prana or our vital energy. They serve as pranic control points on the body, where the energy of prana can be treated, controlled, directed or manipulated in various ways. This is perhaps the key to their importance. Many strictly anatomical marmas are still important pranic zones, like points by the heart or the head, because our anatomy is created by and serves to hold prana¹². Prana and Vatadosha (which is connected to prana), for example, reside and accumulate in the empty spaces in the body, particularly in the spine and the joints¹³. So many marma points are in these regions. Even in a marma area, the main pranic point in it may shift or move over time, which means that the prana at a marma is more important than the general structure of the marma itself. In addition, just as there are special marma points unique to a person's anatomical structure, there are also marma points that are unique to a person's energy patterns, expression or psychology¹⁴. There are non-physical marmas located in the sphere of prana around a person, in the aura, like certain points above or behind the head. Even the more obviously physical marmas are an expression of a deeper energy that is the most important factor, not simply their anatomical location. Besides the classical fixed marmas, we must also recognize such variable and changing marmas. We should view marmas and marma therapy more in terms of prana and energy than in simply physical location or physical manipulation.

DISCUSSION

Marma therapy is an important tool of both disease prevention and disease treatment in Ayurveda. Disease prevention by *yoga postures (Asana)* and *pranayama*, their stretch, pressure, vibration and rhythmic movement, the activity of *Marma* get affected. Its key energy center for practice of yoga and it connect to *Nadi* and *Chakras* of the subtle body and mind, so it is apparent that the *yoga postures* and *pranayama* affects the body and mind stimulation of *Marma*. Treatment point of view it can be used to balance the doshas, to increase Agni (the digestive fire), for detoxification (reduce Ama), as well as to promote energy (Vajikarana) and aid in rejuvenation (Rasayana). It can be part of special clinical methods (like Panchkarma) but also part of self-care and our daily health regimen. For example, massaging marma points on the head, like those around the eyes, ears, nostrils and mouth, is an important way to stimulate one's mind and senses in the morning¹⁵. Relative to diseases, marma therapy is particularly good for arthritis and other structural problems, as well as for treating any type of nerve pain or paralysis.

The treatment of marmas, though having many methods, is primarily a matter of therapeutic touch. Ayurveda employs massage and pressure (like acupressure) to marma points. It has various techniques for massaging marma points either by themselves or along with partial or full body massage (usually the best procedure) in its typical fashion; Ayurveda uses special medicated massage oils or Tails, generally herbs prepared in a sesame oil base, of which dozens of different formulas exist manufactured by various Ayurvedic pharmacies¹⁶. Certain massage oils applied to specific marmas will result in special therapeutic effects to increase energy, reduce toxins, create flexibility or bring about the changes necessary for true. Treatment by applying herbal pastes is called *Lepachikitsa* or paste therapy. Herbal pastes help reduce swelling and pain when applied over an injured *Marma*. For treating *Marma*, Ayurveda uses different herbal teas, powders and pills. Two great herbs for overall treatment of *Marmas* are *Turmeric* and *Guggul*¹⁷.

Turmeric is excellent for all soft tissue injury; improve healing and increasing circulation to Marma regions¹⁸.

Guggul is best overall herb for Marma therapy, working well both soft tissue and bone injures, relieving pain and restoring energy flow¹⁸.

CONCLUSION

Marma therapy and yoga are important to cure the disease and enhance the health status of the body. Nowadays Asana are much popularized in the society for health promotion. It improves the health and tones up the body musculature. These practices affect the body physiology. In the higher stages of yoga, the practice of asana, Mudra, pranayama, Bandha are supportive to higher spiritual activities. Marma therapy and yogic postures, as well as marma stimulation inherent in them, have great impact on nervous system, musculoskeletal system, endocrine glands, respiratory system and organs of abdomen, heart and circulatory system. These marma practices and yogic exercises are developed by ancient rishis by observing Nature.

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