ANATOMICAL CONSIDERATION RELATED TO THE MARMA SHARIRA:
A REVIEW WSR TO MARMABIGHATA

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Abstract

Ancient medical science Ayurveda deals with complete knowledge of Sharira and is rich in effective therapies such as Panchkarma, Yoga, Marma chikitsa etc. Among all these therapies, Marma therapy is the process of modifying Prana (energy) by stimulating certain specific points on the body. Marma sthanas are the junction point of Asthi (bones), Mamsa (muscles), Sandhi (joints), Sira (veins) and Kandara (ligaments). There are many Ayurveda classics which give detailed information about Marma sthanas in the chapter of Marma Sharira. Marma sharira describe the traumatological anatomy of the human body. Marma sthanas are considered as vulnerable points, any damage or sudden injury to such points can cause disability, severe pain, loss of function or sometimes death also. These are the Jivasthana (site of life) which affect the physical, mental and spiritual functions. Thus Marma sthana should be given special attention while doing the Shalya kriya (surgery) like Agnikarma, Ksharkarma etc.

Key-words :- Marma sthanas, Shalyakriya, Sharira, Prana, Ayurveda
Introduction

*Marma* word is derived from the “Mri dhatu” which means *Sandhisthanam*. It is the junction point of various structures thus considered as the *Sandhisthanam*[^1]. *Marma sthana* are the seat of Prana, Ojas, Guna (Rajas, Tamas, Satwa) and emotions such as anger, fear and attachment. These emotions are regulated by the *Doshas* ie. Pitta, Vata and Kapha. There are total 107 *Marma sthanas* present in body, out of which major *Sthanas* are the seven main energy centres and minor *Sthanas* are present along the limbs and trunk[^2].

*Sharira sthana* is the branch which deals with anatomical aspects of the body. Regional anatomy plays a very important role in guiding the surgeons to protect the vital structures from damage while performing *Shalya kriya*[^3]. *Ayurvedic* texts had emphasized on “*Mriyete asmin iti Marma*” which means if the *Marma sthanas* are damaged or injured, it can be harmful for the health and can also lead to death[^4].

**Classification of Marmas**

*Ayurvedic* scholars have classified *Marma* into various types on the basis of their location, anatomy, size etc.[^5]

According to location in the body:-

1. In upper limbs – 22
2. In lower limbs – 22
3. In *Uddara pradesh* (abdomen) and *Ura pradesh* (chest) -12
4. At the back (*Prustha*) – 14
5. In head and neck – 37

According to the anatomy:-

1. *Snayu Marma* – 27
2. *Asthi Marma* – 8
3. *Mamsa Marma* – 11
4. *Sira Marma* – 41
5. *Sandhi Marma* – 20
6. *Dhamani Marma* -9
According to *Panchabhautika guna*:

1. *Sadyah Pranahara Marma* – 19
2. *Rujakara Marma* – 8
3. *Vaikalyakara Marma* – 44
4. *Kalantara Pranahara Marma* – 33
5. *Vishalyaghna Marma* – 3

**Qualities of Marma according to the *Panchmahabhutas***

According to Ayurveda, Shareera is made up of five components *Prithvi, Tejo, Vayu, Akash*, and *Apya*. Normal human body is consists of balanced *Doshas, Dhatus, Malas, Agni* in which *Prana* circulates freely. *Agni, Satwa, Rajas, Vayu, Bhutatma* and *Panchedriyas* together constitute *Prana*. It is considered as the basic unit of life which resides in the *Marma Sthanas*.

- **Sadyah Pranahara Marma** – It is related to the *Agyena Mahabhuta* thus possess qualities of fire i.e. sharpness and quick action. Any injury to such *Marma* can lead to the dysfunction of sense organs, mind. Severe injury can be fatal. Person may die immediately or within a week [6].

- **Kalantar Pranahara Marma** – It has *Saumya* and *Agneya* quality which resemble properties of fire and water. There is loss of *Soma, Dhatus* and *Agni* when these *Marma sthanas* get traumatized. As they posses both properties of fire and water, *Agni guna* undergoes inflammation but *Saumya guna* takes time. Thus if any injury is caused to such point, then the death can occur within two weeks and any damage to the nearby areas of such *Marma* can result into pain and deformity [6].

- **Vishalyaghna Marma** – They possess properties of air and are associated with *Vata*. When these *Marma sthanas* aredamaged by any foreign body, it results in obstruction and prevents *Shalya* (foreign body) from coming out of the body. As soon as the *Shalya* is removed from the body, *Vata* also leave its place and hence death occurs. [6]

- **Vaikalyakara Marma** – They possess properties of water, thus are considered as *Saumya* in nature. Because of this *Saumya* nature, they help in sustainability of
life. When they are damaged they produces pain and severe injury can be fatal leading to permanent disability of the affected part. [6]

- **Rujakara marma**: They are rich in qualities of *Vayu* and *Agni*. Trauma diminishes *Agni* but due to the presence of *Vayu*, pain is produced at the site of the injury. [6]

**Marmabhighbata**

It refers to the trauma of *Marma sthana* caused by any incision, stabbing or fighting. It can produce severe pain, dysfunction of sense organs, disability of affected area and sometimes death also. Some common symptoms of *Marmaghata* are depicted in figure 1. [7]

When there is any damage to *Sira Marma*, it produces feeling of thirst, delusion, dyspnoea etc. due to the loss of blood in large amount. Injury to *Mamsa Marma* causes unconsciousness, anemia due to the continuous loss of blood. Due to the injury of *Asthi Marma*, pain is produced. *Snayu Marma* when damaged produces severe pain, difficulty in movement, bending of body (*Ayam*) and stiffness (*Stambha*). According to various scholars, damage to *Sandhi Marma* can cause loss of movement, decrease in strength, atrophy of the affected area and edema. [8]

Damage to the *Marma* located in the upper arm such as *Kshipra, Kurcha, Indravasti, Kurcha sira* etc. can cause *Aksepaka* (clonic spasm) of hands, severe pain, shivering, *Kunitwa* (deformity), stiffness, paralysis, Shosa (atrophy), haemorrhage and death. [9][12]

Any injury to the *Marma sthana* present in the lower limb such as *Kshipra, Kurcha, Indravasti, Janu, Ani, Urvi* etc. result into pain, *Aksepaka* (clonic spasm) of legs, shivering, bending, lameness (difficulty in walking), *Urusthambha* (Excessive swelling of the thigh), oligospermia, *Pakshaghata* (hemiplegic) and *Shosa* (atrophy) of affected part and death. [9][12]

Consequence caused by injury to *Marma sthanas* present in head and neck (*Matrika, Vidhura, Phana,Avarta, Sankhya,Sthapani* etc) are loss of speech, defective voice, loss of taste, smell; *Andhatwa* (blindness), *Chittanasa*, *Mookarwa* (hearing loss) and death. [9][12]
Any injury to the Marma sthana present in abdomen (Guda, Nabhi, Vasti) and thorax region (Hridya, Stanamula, Apalapa, Apasthambha etc) can produce cough, dyspnoea, haemorrhage and immediate death also.\textsuperscript{[9]}\textsuperscript{[12]}

When the Marma sthanas present at the back (Katikataruna, Nitamba, Brihati, Amsa etc) get traumatized, they produce stiffness in the upper extremity, loss of sensation in lower part of the body, Pallor, Shosa of arm and excessive bleeding leading to death.\textsuperscript{[9]}\textsuperscript{[12]}

Ayurveda consider Hridaya (heart), Vasti (urinary bladder) and Mastishka (brain) as the most vital part of the body and together they are termed as Tri-marma. Any damage to these three organs can have harmful impact on the body causing death in severe conditions. Marmaghata of Hridaya can produce psychotic disorders like Apasmara (epilepsy), Pralapa (delirium), Chittanasha (emptiness of mind), Kasa (cough), Shwasa (breathlessness), Jihwa nirgaman (protraction of tongue) etc. Any damage to Vasti Marma can lead to Nabhikukshi-gudashronigraha (spasm in lower...
abdomen and hip region), Apanavayu-mutra-varchanigraha (retention of urine and faecal matter), Vankshana - mehana-vasti shoola (pain in groin area), Vatashthila, Upastambha (stiffness) etc. Injury to Shira Marma can produce Cheshtanasha (loss of movement), Moha (mental confusion), Manyastambha (neck stiffness), Ardita (facial paralysis), Uddveshtana (cramps), Shwasa (breathlessness), Hanugraha (locked jaw), Gadgadatva (stammering), Lalashrava (excessive salivation), deformation of face, Jrambha (yawning) etc.¹⁰

Samprapti of Marmabighata

When the Marma sthanas are injured or traumatized, Sira present in them also gets injured. Sira are tubular structures providing nutrition to the body as Vatavaha, Raktavaha, Kapha vaha, and Pittavaha. Injury to Sira causes expulsion of blood which results in depletion of Dhatus. Due to the trauma, vitiation of Vata occur which affects all types of Siras. This produces pain, thirst, unconciousness, dizziness, dysfunction of sense organs etc.⁶⁹

Management of Marmabighata

Marmabighata can be treated by using different treatment principles such as Lakshanika chikitsa, Vata Vyadhi Chikitsa, Vranopachara etc.⁶

Conclusion

Ayurveda is an ancient medical science which provides both medicinal as well as surgical cure for the various diseases. It has a unique concept of Marma which is considered as the reservoir or Prana, Atma, Triguna and Tridosha. It is vulnerable to any injury as it is the site of junction of Sira, Mamsa, Snayu, Asthi and Sandhi. Damage to such Sthanas can produce serious consequences. Due to the injury, Sharirika and Manasika Dosha gets intensified which destroy body and mind resulting into death.¹¹ Sharira sthana is the branch of Ayurveda which deals with the anatomical structures of body in detail and thus provide great help in performing Shalya Kriya (surgery).

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