

Review Article

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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 *Sandhistanam*. It is the junction point of various structures thus considered as the *Sandhistanam*^[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 of *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 consitute *Prana*. It is considered as the basic unit of life which resides in the *Marma Sthanas*.

- ***Sadyah Pranahara Marma*** – It is related to the *Agnya 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* are damaged 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]

Marmabhighata

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 *Aksepa* (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, *Aksepa* (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]

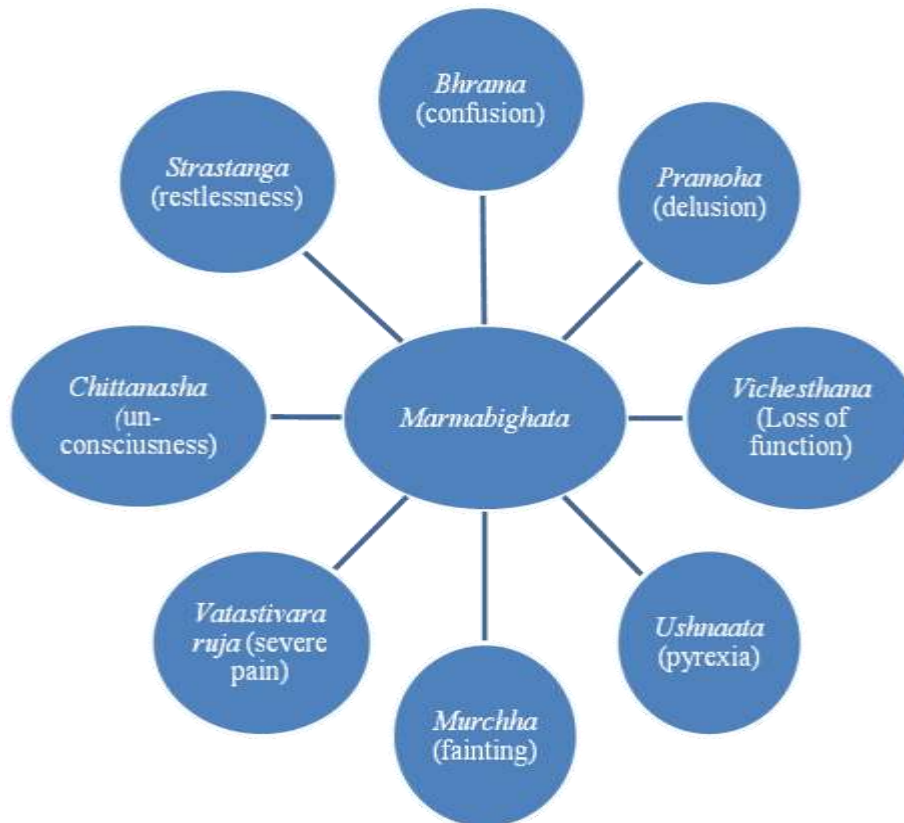


Figure 1 – Lakshana (symptoms) of Marmabighata

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. [9][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. [9][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, unconsciousness, dizziness, dysfunction of sense organs etc. [6][9]

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 Dosh* 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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