

## SAMHITOKTA CONCEPTUAL REVIEW OF MARMA AND PRANAYATANA

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### ABSTRACT

Ayurveda, the science of life, its approach of assembling subtlest information about facts associated with life or liveliness makes it unique. Its methodology of describing every aspect from anatomical and physiological approach leads to gaining knowledge from every possible dimension and that too fits with the concept of *Marma* and *Pranayatana*. *Acharya Sushruta* states that human body consists of twelve *Prana* namely *Agni, Soma, Vayu, Raja, Tama, Panchindriyaani and Bhutatma*. These twelve live attributes constitutes human body. *Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned the functional entity of the concept of *Prana* but *Acharya Charak* has anatomically positioned them as *Dashapranayatana* in *Charak Sutrasthana* chapter twenty-nine. These ten sites are being mathematically enumerated but not rationally defined. Probably, therefore *Acharya Charak* has again sited ten *pranayatana* in *Sharirsthana* chapter seven. *Acharya Sushruta* has clearly mentioned that *Marma* are the points where *Prana* resides “*Svabhavata*” (naturally or obviously). Therefore though no relationship is ever stated between *Pranayatana* and *Marma*, but a little in-depth knowledge proves it to be obvious.

**Keywords:** *Prana, Pranayatana, Marma.*

### INTRODUCTION

The association of twelve live attributes or characteristics namely *Agni Soma.Vayu, Satwa, Rajas, Tamas*, five sense organs and *Bhutatma* are *Prana*<sup>1</sup> or life, the entity which lives or survives(.....*Jivitama Sthitama*).<sup>2</sup> Now the question arises where are these live attributes or *Prana* resides or located in human body. That is mentioned by *Acharya*

*Charak* in *Charak Sutrasthana* chapter twenty-nine *Dashapranayataniya*

*Pranayatan = Prana+Ayatan*

*Prana = live attribute/characteristic*

*Ayatana = residing place/location/house/site*

***Pranayatan***

These places are<sup>3</sup> – Two *Shankha Pradesh, Marmatraya, Kantha, Rakta, Shukra, Oja, Guda.*

<i>Pranayatana</i>	<i>Charaka Sutrasthana chapter-29</i>	<i>Charaka Shaarirsthana chapter-7</i>	<i>Ashtanga Hridaya Shaarirsthana chapter-3</i>
<i>Shankha Pradesh</i>	+	-	-
<i>Shankha Pradesh</i>	+	-	-
<i>MarmaTraya-Hridaya</i>	+	+	+
<i>- Basti</i>	+	+	+
<i>-Nabhi</i>	+	+	+

<b>Kantha(neck region)</b>	+	+	+
<b>Rakta ( blood)</b>	+	<b>Shonita ( blood )</b>	+
<b>Shukra(semen)</b>	+	+	+
<b>Ojas(immunity)</b>	+	+	+
<b>Guda(Anal Region)</b>	+	+	+
<b>Murdha</b>	-	+	-
<b>Mamsa</b>	-	+	-
<b>Shirobandha</b>	-	-	+
<b>Rasanbandha</b>	-	-	+

Here in *Sutrasthana* Acharya has collected facts which will be discussed in detail in further *sthana* as stated by him<sup>4</sup>Hence it can be interpreted that *Sutrasthana* is basically an outlay plan of further study. Therefore while moving from *Sutrasthana* to *Shaarirsthana*, Acharya has replaced two *Shankha Pradesh* with *Nabhi* and *Mamsa*<sup>5</sup>.

Acharya's point of including *Mamsa* as seat of *Prana* can be understood by two facts. Firstly *Mamsa* is one among *Maatrija Bhava* accepted by both Acharya Charak and Acharya Sushruta. If one counts the number of *Maatrija Bhava* they stand second highest among the six *Garbhotapadak Bhava*, falling just short to *Aatmaj Bhava*, exhibiting their significance in human body .Secondly *Mamsa* is one among the *Marma*

[*Marma* = the vital points of body which when get assaulted leads to feeling of pain whose magnitude equals death]

At the very same time Acharya Charaka says that the initial six (among the ten *Pranayatana*) are *Marma* namely *Murdha*, *Kantha*, *Hridaya*, *Nabhi*, *Guda* and *Basti*<sup>6</sup>.

The five common sites of *Prana* mentioned by Acharya Charak in both *Sutrasthana* and *Shaarirsthana* are- *Kantha* (neck region), *Guda* (anal region), *Shukra* (semen), *Shonita* (blood) and *Oja* (immunity). First two are anatomical sites and later are the functional entities residing in complete body.

Acharya Sushruta's illustration of twelve *Prana* together constituting life is explained by Acharya Dalhana as follows<sup>7</sup> *Agni* (*Tejas* fire) is present in the body in the form of five kinds of *Pitta* and firey element present in the *Dhatu*s (tissues) it is the presiding deity of *Vaak* (speech) and supports life by performing functions such as digestion of food etc , *Soma* (*Ap*-water) is present in the form of five kind of *Kapha*, moisture in the *Dhatu*s (tissues) is the presiding deity of *Rasenendriya* (tongue) and supports life by nourishing all liquid tissues. *Vayu* is present in the body in five kinds (*Prana*, *Udana* etc) and supports life by respiration, movement and regulations of *Doshas*, *Dhatu*s and *Malas*. *Satva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* exert influence on the *Manas* (mind) and decides its nature. *Panchenendriya* (five sense organs) support life by perceiving objects such as light, sound etc. *Bhutatma* (soul) also known as *Karmapurusha* is the cause of consciousness (activity) of all factors and is the performer of all actions both good and bad. All the above together constitute *Prana* (life).

In the above aphorism the mentioning of *Agni*, *Soma* and *Vayu* together represents *Tridosha*, hence the presence of *Prana* in complete body is indirectly highlighted.

Acharya Vagbhata in *Ashtanga Hridaya Shaarirsthana* states that *Marma* is that place which has unusual throbbing and pain on touch. The *Marma* (vital spots) are

so called because they cause death; and they are the meeting place of muscle, bones, tendons, arteries, veins and joints, life entirely resides in them (any injury or assault to these causes danger to life). They; are indicated by the predominant structure found in them; on this basis the *Marmas* (vital spots) are of six kind only on the common factor 'as seats of life'.<sup>8</sup>

The practical utility of *Pranayata*-cum-*Marma* in therapeutics is exhibited by *Acharya Vagbhata*<sup>9</sup> 'Though wounded greatly in places other than *Marmas* (vital spots), the person survives but not so when injured in the vital spots; for, these are destroyers of life, some may survive by the expertise of the physician and partial injury to them, even then they cause distortions (irregularity). Hence the use of *Kshara*, *Visha Agni* etc on the vital spots should be avoided as far as possible.

Again *Acharya Vagbhata* lays emphasis that injury to vital spots, though slight (mild) usually produces severe pain (trouble); so also the diseases which are localised in the vital spots do not get cured in spite of great effort<sup>10</sup>.

These all explanations by various sages make it inferentially important to accept the locations of *Prana* as not only *Pranayata* but *Marmas* also. The total of one hundred and seven *Marma* can be seen as the elaborations of *Dasha Pranayata*. The six kinds classification of *Acharya Sushruta* based predominantly on structure includes *Guda* (Anus) as *Mamsa Marma*, *Basti* (urinary bladder) as *Snayu Marma*, *Hridaya* (heart or mind) under *Siramarma* and *Nabhi* (umbilicus) is also considered as *Siramarma*. The further classification based on time duration of injury to be fatal or fatal outcome places *Guda* (anus), *Hridaya*, *basti* (urinary bladder) and *Nabhi* (umbilicus) under *Sadya-Pranahara Mar-*

*ma* (that causes instant death on being hurt)

## DISCUSSION

The anatomical and functional vital points are of utmost importance in body. Though these vital points are not distinctly mentioned by the sages of *Brihatrayee* still one cannot deny the truth that these (*Pranayata* and *Marma*) when discussed by *Acharyas*' separately as their respective headings of *Pranayata* and *Marma*, present their description finely taking into consideration the minutest details attached with it.

Hence it can be interpreted that *Pranayata* and *Marma* are like the two faces/sides of coin (body) and in the absence of any one of them, the very presence of coin (~body) get lost.

## CONCLUSION

Therefore one should take proper care of *Pranayata* as one takes proper care of body as guided by *Acharya Charak* in *Charak Samhita Sutrasthana* chapter five, applying *Tantrayukti* (methodical device) called *Upadesha* (authoritative injunction).

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