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# MARMA (VITAL POINTS) - A CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Neenu Jessy Sabu<sup>1</sup>, P.P. Kirathamoorthy<sup>2</sup>, K.K. Bindu<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>PG Scholar, Department of Samhitha, Sanskrit and Siddhantha;

<sup>2</sup>Professor and HOD, Department of Samhitha, Sanskrit and Siddhantha;

<sup>3</sup>Professor and HOD, Department of Racana Sareera;

VPSV Ayurveda College, Kottakkal, Kerala, India.

Email: neenuurumbil@gmail.com

#### **ABSTRACT**

Ayurveda is one of the ancient medical science and *Marma* (*Vital points*) (vital point) is a speciality of Ayurveda. The Ayurvedic science of *Marma* (*Vital points*) is itself a treatise on surgico-anatomical learning. It is the confluence of five types of tissues namely, *Mamsa* (Muscles), *Sira* (Vessels), *Snayu* (ligaments), *Asthi* (bones), *Sandhi* (joints) and *Prana* (life) dwells at these sites. Medical man must deal with various problems at the time of war while treating the injured one in ancient times. With the invention of new military armaments and heavy road traffic people are more prone to accidents which cause injury to *Marma* (*Vital points*) (Vital points). So, it is essential for person in medical field to have complete acquaintance *Marma* (Vital points) of for surgical/medical management of the injury at the *Marma* (*Vital points*) and it should be carefully protected during surgical procedures. Every individual must know about *Marma* (*Vital points*) point in our body so that they protect them from various injuries.

Keywords: Marma, Sira, Mamsa, Snayu, Sandhi, Prana.

#### INTRODUCTION

Marma (Vital points) is defined as anatomical site where muscles, veins, ligaments, bones and joints meet. They are the sites of Tridosha (humors), Prana (Life), Ojus (Essence) and Tejus and Satva, Rajas and Tamas (components of mind). Vagbhata defines Marma (Vital points) as the meeting place of Mamsa (muscles), Asthi (Bones), Sira (vessels), Snayu(ligaments), Dhamani (vessels) and Sandhi (joints) and the seat of prana. However, it is also opined that Marma (Vital points) can be constituted by the one or more of the above. This is like the meridian concept of Chinese in which points

appear either on single meridian line or meeting different meridian line<sup>1</sup>. Vagbhata also states that *Marma* (*Vital points*) is a place where unusual pulsations can be felt and where shall be the tenderness on pressure. Susrutha defined *Marma* (*Vital points*) as the collective point of meeting of the *Mamsa* (muscles), *Asthi* (Bones), *Sira* (vessels), *Snayu* (ligaments) and *Sandhi* (joints) except *Dhamani* (vessels). He used the term *Marma* (*Vital points*) both for diseases of vital organs as well as topographical cure points. The *Marma* (*Vital points*) in the system should be saved by stimulating topographical points. According to Siddhar Varma,

points are the places in the body where subtle Varmam energy is found<sup>2</sup>. Marma (Vital points) is the point on the body where the blockage of energy is felt<sup>3</sup>. It is the junction between physiology and consciousness, and by touching it changes the body's biochemistry and can unfold radical and alchemical change in one's make up<sup>4</sup>. Stimulation of these inner pharmacy pathways signals the body to produce exactly what it needs including hormones and neurochemicals that heal the body, mind and consciousness<sup>5</sup>. Marma (Vital points) s are the areas having relation to various internal organs, Doshas (humors) and Srotas (Channels) in the body through Pranic channels (life channels). These points are being used during Abhyanga (massage) along with the application of different kinds of medicated and aromatic oils to stimulate internal organs<sup>6</sup>.

According to Siddar, Varmam is a subtle energy which helps in the proper functioning of the body and life force. Marmas (Vital points) are invisible but could be traced at a point where body, mind and psychic energies are concentrated together. These points are located at nadis, nerves, blood vessels, junction of bones, muscles and tissues and are spread throughout the body. Though classical texts of Marma (Vital points) mention the existence of 8000 Varmam points in the body but there is general notation that there are 108 Varmam points which serve as the basis for the art of Varmam. They are classified in to 12 PaduVarmam (points which relate to the nerves of the brain directly or indirectly and these points aid in alleviating brain related disorders) and 96 thodu Varmam<sup>7</sup>. Ayurveda is a science of life which believes in treating mind, body and soul for ensuring a complete state of health.

Marma (Vital points) Chikitsa is the stimulating Marma (Vital points) points or manipulating Marma (Vital points) in the treatment of disease and it is an inherent power of human to heal itself by use of this point. Through stimulation of Marma (Vital points) by various means and methods, the Prana existing in it may be directed to remove blockages and stimulate energy flow thus resulting in a state of healthy body, mind and spirit. A judicious application of pressure on appropriate Marma (Vital points) can restore the normal

functioning of prana whereas their improper manipulation may cause severe pain, disability, deformity and even death.

Marma (Vital points) science is a part of Vedic science. It influenced all other science like yoga, Ayurveda, Dance, music, mantra, Martial arts, arts, Astrology, Philosophy, siddha system of medicine and sexology. Marma (Vital points) sastra is part of Vedic science. It has influenced all other sciences like Ayurveda, Yoga, Martial arts and siddha. In Vedic period people were using different weapon like spears, daggers, maces, bows and arrows. These are made up of copper or bronze. For defensive purpose they were using body shields. The first reference of Marma (Vital points) is found in Rig Veda that is the reference of words like Varman or drapi, which is body armour or corselet to protect the body from the assault of enemy weapons. In Atharvaveda also we find the reference of the term kavacha or corselet or breast plate for protection. In Mahabharata the great epic also we find many references for Marma (Vital points) or Varma. (Karnaparva, salyaparva, Dronaparva, Bhismaparva). It is interesting that there are references of protective clothing's of the Marma (Vital points) of elephants and horses also. Arthasastra of Kautilya mentions the use of arrow heads made up metal and some protective instruments against the injury to Marma (Vital points)s. Martial art became effective and popular for self-defence because the monks were able to protect themselves against weapons due to knowledge of Marma (Vital points)<sup>8</sup>. As nonviolence was taught by this religion, they were not allowed to use weapons even for their self-protection, hence the art of Marma (Vital points) was taught to all monks for unarmed self-protection. This art was kept as secret for centuries, as it was taught only to certain disciples. As the monks started travelling to various countries like Japan, China, Indonesia etc. this art also spread to these countries. It is therefore very certain that the traditional Chinese medicine had adopted this science from Ayurveda.

## **Synonyms**

Marma (Vital points), Varmam (Sidda), Pranasakthi (Sage Patanjali), Vethasakthi (Thriumoolar), Kalam,

Puravi, Yogam, Saram, Pranam, Swaasam, Kalai, Sivam, Vassi.

The word *Marma* (*Vital points*) comes from Sanskrit origin word 'mri' meaning death. *Marma* (*Vital points*) are the vital areas of the body. Its importance is explained by the Sanskrit phrase '*Maryanti iti Marma* (*Vital points*) ni' which means that any harm to these points is hazardous or any injury to these parts may lead to severe pain, disability, loss of function, loss of sensation and death<sup>9</sup>. Acharya Susruta mentioned that these points should be protected from any injury during surgery. *Marma* (*Vital points*) also means secret or latent power<sup>10</sup>.

# Composition of Marma (Vital points)

- Mamsa: Various structures like fascia, serous membrane, sheath and muscle can be compared with Mamsa.
- 2. *Sira*: These are channels like supplying water or energy to the field or body. There are 4 types of *Sira*.
- a) *Vata vaha Sira*: Carrying vata are having black colour.(nerves)
- b) *Pitta vaha Sira*: Carrying pitta and having yellow colour.( lymphatic vessels)
- c) *Kapha vaha Sira*: Carrying Kapha and are whitish in colour.(Lymphatic vessels)
- d) Raktha vaha Sira: Carrying Raktha and are red in colour. (Artery and vein).

According to Gananath Sen, these can be again divided into

Aruna- Sympathetic; Nila- Vein; Rohini- Artery; Keshika- Capillaries; Gauri- Lymphatic Vessels; Dhamani - nerves.

- 3. *Snayu*: These are sub tissues which binds the bones and muscles. These are 4 types Ligaments, tendons, sphincter muscle and aponeurosis.
- 4. *Asthi* Can be classified into bone, cartilage, teeth and nails.
- 5. *Sandhi* Body joints are classified into movable, partially movable and non-movable.

#### **Individual finger unit**

All *Marma* (*Vital points*) are explainsed in *Anguli pramana* (finger length). This is the finger unit of respective individual. For assessing the individual finger unit.

- 1. Join both open palms at ulnar side.
- 2. Measure the width of both palms at meta carpophalangeal joints.
- 3. Divide this by 8.

This is the one finger unit.

## Classification of Marma (Vital points)

In Ayurveda there are total 107 *Marma (Vital points)* (upper and lower limbs - 44, back-14, chest and abdomen-12, neck and head-37) in the body. These are divided into different groups according to the physical matrices and based on their special features. The classification according to Susruta is only five but according to Vagbhata are six with inclusion of *Dhamani Marma (Vital points)*.

**Table 1:** No of *Marma* (Vital points)

| Place on the body     | Number |  |  |
|-----------------------|--------|--|--|
| Upper and lower Limbs | 44     |  |  |
| Back                  | 14     |  |  |
| Chest and abdomen     | 12     |  |  |
| Neck and head         | 37     |  |  |

**Table 2:** Details of *Marma* (Vital points)

| Sl. No | Classification | Marma (Vital points) |      |       |       |        |
|--------|----------------|----------------------|------|-------|-------|--------|
| 1      | Physical       | Mamsa                | Sira | Snayu | Asthi | Sandhi |
|        | Component      |                      |      |       |       |        |
|        | Number         | 11                   | 41   | 27    | 8     | 20     |

|    |               | Talahrdaya  | Urvi-4 Lohitaksha-4     | Ksipra-4      | Katikataruna-2        | Kukundara-2     |
|----|---------------|-------------|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
|    |               | -4 In-      | Nabhi-1 Hrdaya-1        | Kurca-4 Kur-  | Nitamba-2 Amsapha-    | Gulpha-2,       |
|    |               | dravasti -4 | Stanamula-2 Apalapa-    | caSira4       | laka-2 Sankha -2      | Janu-2 Kurpar-  |
|    |               | Sta-        | 2 Apasthambha-2         | Ani -4        |                       | 2, Manibanda-   |
|    |               | narohita-2  | Parsva <i>Sandhi-</i> 2 | Vitapa-2      |                       | 2               |
|    |               | Guda-1      | Brhati- 2 Manya,-2      | Kaksadhara-2  |                       | Krikatika-2     |
|    |               |             | Nila-2, Matrka-8        | Amsa -2       |                       | Aavarta-2       |
|    |               |             | Phana -2, Apanga-2      | Basti-1       |                       | Adipati-1       |
|    |               |             | Srngataka -4            | Utksepa-2     |                       | Simanta-5       |
|    |               |             | Sthapani-1              | Vidhura-2     |                       |                 |
| 2. | Special fea-  | Sadhya      | Kalantara Pranahara     | Visalyaghana  | Vaikalyakara          | Rujakara        |
|    | tures         | Pranahara   | (agni+soma)             | (vayu)        | (soumaya)             | (agni+vayu)     |
|    |               | (agni)      |                         |               |                       |                 |
|    | Numbers       | 19 Death    | 33 Death within 15      | 3 Death being | 44 Causes deformity   | 8 Causes ex-    |
|    | and prognosis | within 7    | days to month           | the foreign   |                       | cruciating pain |
|    |               | days of in- |                         | body removed  |                       |                 |
|    |               | jury        |                         |               |                       |                 |
|    |               | Hridya,     | Ksipra, Talahridya,     | Utksepa       | Lohitaksha, Sthapani, | Gulpha-2        |
|    |               | Nabhi,      | Indravasti, Katikata-   | Sthapani      | Janu, Ani, Urvi,      | Manibandha-2    |
|    |               | Basti,      | runa, ParsvaSandhi,     |               | Vitapa, Kurpara, Ku-  | KurcaSira4      |
|    |               | Guda,       | Brhati, Nitamba, Sta-   |               | kundara, Kaksadara    |                 |
|    |               | Matrka,     | namula, Stanarohita,    |               | Vidhura, Krkatika,    |                 |
|    |               | Srngataka,  | Apalapa,                |               | Amsa, Amsaphalaka,    |                 |
|    |               | Sankha,     | Apasthambha,            |               | Nila, Manya, Phana,   |                 |
|    |               | Adhipati    | Simanta                 |               | Avarta, Apanga        |                 |

Table 3: Marma (Vital Points) Abhighata Lakshana (Injured features)

| Shakha Marma<br>(Vital points)<br>(44) | Marma (Vital points)                      | Pramana<br>(measure-<br>ments) | Location of Marma (Vital points)  | Injury features                         |
|--|---|--------------------------------|---|---|
| 1                                      | Ksipra                                    | ½ Angula                       | In between big toe and next toe   | Death from convulsion                   |
| 2                                      | Talahrdaya                                | ½ Angula                       | In line with the middle toe upwards in the centre of sole                                 | Death from pain                         |
| 3                                      | Kurca                                     | 4 Angula/<br>Svapani tala      | Situated above kshipra  | Difficulty in walking and bending       |
| 4                                      | KurcaSira                                 | 1 Angula                       | Below ankle joints  | Pain and swelling                       |
| 5                                      | Gulpha (mani-<br>bandha in upper<br>limb) | 2 Angula                       | Meeting place of foot and leg   | Pain, stiffness and lameness            |
| 6                                      | Indravasti                                |                                | Middle of calf  | Death by loss of blood                  |
| 7                                      | Janu (kurpara)                            | 3 Angula                       | Meeting place of calf and thigh   | Lameness                                |
| 8                                      | Ani                                       | ½ Angula                       | 3 angula above knee joint   | Increase of swelling, loss of movement. |
| 9                                      | Urvi                                      | 1 Angula                       | Middle of thigh   | Wasting by loss of blood.               |
| 10                                     | Lohitaksha                                | ½ Angula                       | Above the urvi <i>Marma</i> ( <i>Vital points</i> ), below groin and at the base of thigh | Wasting or thinning due to blood loss   |

| 11 | Vitapa (Kaksadara)          | 1 Angula                  | In between groin and scrotum  | Impotency, deficiency of se-<br>men   |
|----|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---|---|
|    | Udara-ur                    | a Marma (Vital p          | points) (12   |   |
| 1  | Guda                        | 4 Angula/<br>Svapani tala | Which eliminates flatus and faeces, and which is attached to large intestine        |   |
| 2  | Basti                       | 4 Angula/<br>Svapani tala | Present inside pelvis, consisting of less muscles and blood                         | Death quickly   |
| 3  | Nabhi                       | 4 Angula/<br>Svapani tala | Present in between the stomach and large intestine                                  | Death quickly   |
| 4  | Hrdaya                      | 4 Angula/<br>Svapani tala | Situated in between the two breasts in the chest at the mouth of the stomach        | Death quickly   |
| 5  | Stanamula (2)               | 1 Angula                  | Situated below breast   | Kapha filling inside the chest causing cough, dyspnoea and finally leading to death |
| 6  | Stanarohita(2)              | ½ Angula                  | 2 angula above nipples on both sides  | Leading to death by blood filling in the chest.                                     |
| 7  | Apalapa (2)                 | ½ Angula                  | Below the shoulder joint and the top of the flanks                                  | Death from attaining the qualities of Pus   |
| 8  | Apasthambha (2)             | ½ Angula                  | Two sides of the chest  | Accumulation of air in the chest causing death.                                     |
|    | Prista Ma                   | ırma (Vital point         | s) (14)   | -   |
| 1  | Kukundara                   | ½ Angula                  | Present in the two flanks, outer side of buttocks, on two sides of vertebral column | Loss of sensation and function.   |
| 2  | Nitamba                     | ½ Angula                  | Above pelvis covering internal organs attached to flanks                            | Death due to wasting of the lower body and debility.                                |
| 3  | ParsvaSandhi                | ½ Angula                  | Lower end of flanks in between buttocks, flanks to the side and above buttocks.     | Accumulation of blood in abdomen.   |
| 4  | Katikataruna                | ½ Angula                  | On both sides of vertebral col-<br>umn near bone of pelvis                          | Loss of blood, anaemia, loss of sensation.  |
| 5  | Brhati                      | ½ Angula                  | Straight line from stana moola on both sides of vertebral column.                   | Accumulation of blood leading to death.   |
| 6  | Amsaphalaka                 | ½ Angula                  | Upper part of the back on the two sides of vertebral column                         | Loss of tactile sensation and wasting.  |
| 7  | Amsa                        | ½ Angula                  | Present in between arm, head and neck   | Loss of function of arm.  |
|    | Jatrurdh                    | va Marma (Vital           | points)(37)   |   |
| 1  | Dhamani, Manya,<br>Nila – 4 | 4 Angula/<br>Svapani tala | Two sides of trachea  | Muteness, abnormality in voice and inability to understand.                         |
| 2  | Matrka -8                   | 4 Angula/<br>Svapani tala | Two sides of neck   | Sudden death.   |
| 3  | Krikatika – 2               | ½ Angula                  | Meeting place of head and neck  | Shaking of neck   |

| 4  | Vidhura – 2   | ½ Angula     | Back of ear                    | Inability to hear                 |
|----|---------------|--------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 5  | Phana – 2     | ½ Angula     | Two sides of nose, near to na- | Loss of sensation of smell.       |
|    |               |              | sal passage                    |                                   |
| 6  | Apanga – 2    | ½ Angula     | Tail end of brows, below and   | Blindness, loss of eyesight.      |
|    |               |              | outside of eyes.               |                                   |
| 7  | Avarta – 2    | ½ Angula     | Above the eyebrows             | Blindness, loss of eyesight.      |
| 8  | Sankha – 2    | ½ Angula     | Above the eyebrows level and   | Sudden death                      |
|    |               |              | between ear and forehead       |                                   |
| 9  | Utksepa - 2   | ½ Angula     | Above temples at the border of | If the salya is removed from its  |
|    |               |              | hair                           | place it causes death.            |
| 10 | Sthapani - 1  | ½ Angula     | In between the eyebrows        | Like Utkṣepa maṛma                |
| 11 | Simanta -5    | 4 Angula/    | 5 in number and present in     | Insanity, fear and loss of intel- |
|    |               | Svapani tala | head.                          | lect                              |
| 12 | Srngataka - 4 | 4 Angula/    | Middle of the veins supplying  | Sudden death                      |
|    |               | Svapani tala | nose, ear, eye and tongue      |                                   |
| 13 | Adhipati – 1  | ½ Angula     | Inside the head and at its top | Sudden death                      |

The three *Marma* (*Vital points*) *Sira*, *Hrdaya* and *Basti* are the important sites. *Basti* related with *vata*, *hrdaya* related with *pitta* and *Sira* related with *kapha*.

#### Channels and Marma (Vital points)

- 1. *Pranavaha Srotas* Respiratory channels- Lungs and Bronchi- *Talahrdaya*, *Ksipra* and *Hrdaya*.
- 2. Annavaha Srotas- Digestive channel- Nabhi, Indravasti.
- 3. *Udakavaha Srotas* Water metabolism channel-*Apasthambha, Urvi*
- 4. Rasavaha Srotas- Plasma and lymph channels-Hrdaya, Ksipra, Stanamula, Lohitaksha and Amsaphalaka.
- 5. Rakthavaha Srotas- channel for blood- Nabhi, Kurpara, Brhati, Janu.
- 6. *Mamsa vaha Srotas* channels for muscle tissue-*KurcaSira, Kaksadhara, Ani* and *Stanarohitha*.
- 7. *Medovaha Srotas* channels for fatty tissues- *Guda*, *katikataruna*.
- 8. Asthivaha Srotas- channels for bones- Kukundara, Manibanda.
- 9. Majjavaha Srotas- channels for nerve tissue- Adhipati, Sthapani, Apalapa, Apasthambha and Srngataka.
- 10. Sukravaha Srotas- channels for reproductive tissues- Guda, Vitapa, Gulpha.
- 11. Mutravaha Srotas- channels for Urinary system-Guda.

- 12. *Purisa vaha Srotas* channels for excretory system-Guda.
- 13. Sveda Vaha Srotas- Channels for Sweat- Nila, Manya and Katikataruna.

### Marma (Vital points) and Yoga

There are 7 *cakras* and 3 *nadi* distributed throughout the body.

The 3 *nadis* are *iḍa*, *Pingala* and *Susumna* connect the cakra to the brain.

- 1. *Muladhara Cakra*: It is root center, is situated in the perineum, at the base of the spinal cord. This chakra related to the primordial elements of the earth, the sense organ of the nose. It has 4 crimson coloured petals.
- 2. Swadhistana Cakra: Is the sex center, it is situated between the genitals. This is in close correlation with hypo gastric plexus. It is related to the sense of tongue and has 6 petals.
- 3. *Manipuraka Cakra:* It is the naval center and is situated at the umbilicus. It is associated with coeliac or solar plexus. It is related to the sense organ of eye and has 10 petals and dark purple in colour.

- 4. *Anahata Cakra:* It is situated in the heart region. It is correlated with cardiopulmonary plexus. It is related to the sense organ of skin. It has 12 petals which are deep red colour.
- 5. *Visuddha Cakra:* It is situated in the region of throat.it is related to the sense organ of hearing and it has 16 smoky petals.
- 6. *Ajna Chakra:* Is situated in between the eyebrows and has only 2 petals of pure white colour. Has close relation with hypothalamus, limbic system and neighboring regions with connections to pituitary gland.
- **7.** *Sahasrara cakra*: It is situated in brain. It has only one petal.

**Table 4:** Cakras and *Marma* (Vital points)

| Name              | Plexus and Glands                                  | Ayurvedic Marma (Vital points) |
|-------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Muladhara Cakra   | Sacral, coccygeal plexus, tastes                   | Guda                           |
| Swadhistana Cakra | Hypogastric, lumbar plexus, ovaries and adrenals   | Kukundara                      |
| Manipuraka Cakra  | Solar, Coelic Plexus, Pancreas                     | Nabhi and Brhati               |
| Anahata Cakra     | Cardiac Plexus, Thymus Gland                       | Hrdaya                         |
| Visuddha          | Cervical, Carotid, Pulmonary plexuses, parathyroid | Nila, manya                    |
| Ajna              | Cavernous plexus, optic chaisma, thalamus          | Sthapani                       |
| Sahasrara         | Brain  | Adhipati                       |

#### Marma (Vital points) and Siddha

According to Siddha system all Marmas (Vital points) are invisible but could be traced at points where body, mind and psychic energies. Marma (Vital points) is nothing but blockage of vital energy in the body. This blockage could be due to external physical injuries, psychological passions and their effects through dosas. The cosmic forces also have direct effect on the body through Tithi Varman concept, which is a unique concept of Siddha. Tithi is the phase of moon and effect on the body takes place through certain Marma (Vital points) points. The Marmas (Vital points) are divided into two types: Padu Varmam and thodu Varmam. The place where the energy is blocked is called PaḍuMarma (Vital points). They are 12 and points where this energy must struggle to get through are called Thodu Varmam. These are 96 in number. Each Padu Varmam is the junction of 8 thodu Varmam sites.

#### Padu Varma

Padu *Varma* are nothing but the meridians travelling through the entire body. These are subdivided into *Siav kaļai*, *shakthi kaļai* and param *Kaļai*.

- 1. *Thilartha Kalam*: this meridian is in the center of the two eyes.
- 2. Pidari Kalam: like ida nadi.
- 3. Sumari Varman: like visudha Cakra.

- 4. Ner Varman: site is Hrdaya.
- 5. Urumi Kalam: Manipuraka.
- 6. Kallidai Kalam: between two testicles.
- 7. Sevi Kutri Kalam: Like Shrungataka Marma (Vital points)
- 8. Natachathiri Kalam: Apanga Marma (Vital points).
- 9. Urakka Kalam: center of Jawbones.
- 10. Adappu Varman: located in chest.
- 11. *Periya Asthi Churukki*: located one finger below the floating rib cages.
- 12. *ceriya Asthi Churukki*: Located one fingers below the above *Marma (Vital points)*.

Sage Agasthya is considered as the founder of *Varmam*.122 vital points are explained by some authors.

Thodu Varmam-96

Thattu Varmam- 08

Thadavu Varmam – 04

Nakku Varmam – 01

Nokku Varmam-01

Medical *Varmalogy* affirms 12 stimulation methods for each *Varmam* point to alleviate 48 different diseases. The uniqueness of the art of *Varmam* is in abating 48 different diseases by stimulating a single *Varmam* point.

#### Measurement and pressure

The knowledge of the finger measurement and the amount of pressure to be applied is essential for rendering *Varmam* treatment. Mathrai means the method of touching the *Varmam* point by the fingers and can be considered as a measure.

If the *Varmam* point is touched either with the interphalangeal joint of the thumb or the side tip of the thumb, it is considered as ¼ Mathrai. If a point is stimulated with the soft pulp portion of the middle finger that is from the tip of middle finger to the distal inter phalangeal joint, then it is 1 Mathrai. Similarly, it is ¾ measures when the *Varmam* point is stimulated with ¾ portion of this region and when ½ of this portion is used then it is ½ mathrai<sup>11</sup>. In the art of *Varmam* the pressure that must be applied for treatment is the same as the pressure that is applied in the snapping of a finger. One snap of a finger is divided in to four stages:

- 1. Placing ¼ mathrai pressure
- 2. Pressing − ½ mathrai pressure
- 3. Twisting  $-\frac{3}{4}$  mathrai pressure
- 4. Releasing 1 mathrai pressure

Using above stated four different Mathrai along with the 12 application methods will enable 48 types of applications on a single *Varmam* point.

<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> mathrai pressure- to cure bone marrow ailments.

½ mathrai pressure- to cure nerve ailments.

3/4 mathrai pressure – to cure bone ailments.

1 mathrai pressure- to cure bone, bone marrow, nerve ailments.

*Marma* (*Vital points*) points are a double-edged sword, whose results primarily depend upon the nature and extent of their stimulation. Therefore, in Siddha system of medicine one fourth and half *matra* pressure is indicated for therapeutic purpose for beginners.

#### Role of Marma (Vital points) Therapy<sup>12</sup>

- 1. Removes blocks in energy channels (*Srotas*).
- 2. Pacifies *dosas* bringing it to normal path (especially *vyana vayu* which controls autonomic nervous system).
- 3 Creates physical, mental and emotional flexibility.
- 4 Creates an opportunity to experience powerful and dynamic transformation at physical, mental, emotional and spiritual level by building a positive link with the unconscious mind.

## Disadvantages of Marma (Vital points) Chikitsa

During ancient times, knowledge of *Marma (Vital points)* was known to kings and warriors. It was applied in battle fields to hit and achieve maximum lethal effect on enemies. This science was used both in warfare, surgery and later martial arts too. Therefore, if not used judiciously it can cause minor pain and disability to death of a patient or person.

## **DISCUSSION**

The concept of Marma (Vital points) is one important element of Ayurveda and it can be traced back to the Vedic period too as its references are found in Upanishads, epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata. Acharya Susrutha mentioned that Marma (Vital points) is the conglomeration of Mamsa, Sira, Snayu, Asthi, Sandi and Dhamani. But Acharya Vagbhata considered Marma (Vital points) as the confluence of Sira, Snavu, Asthi, Sandhi and Dhamani. Both the Acharyas (Masters) have given the detailed list and injury features of each Marmas (Vital points). The understanding of the facts of Marma (Vital points) is considered as half of the knowledge. In siddha system of medicine also, Marma (Vital points) is also explained in detail. So, it is essential for medical man to have the complete understanding about Marma (Vital points) and its traumatic effects.

#### CONCLUSION

Marma (Vital points) knowledge is extensively well known since Vedic period. Later, its progression can be seen in Samhitha Kala through the texts emerged during that period like Susrutha Samhitha. The knowledge of Marma (Vital points) dependent on the clinical experience and if it studied in detail, there will be success in treatment methods aside from traumatology. The surgical intervention needed great consideration of anatomical perspective any mishandling may leads to failure of medical procedure. They are the integral to all Ayurvedic therapies from simple self- treatment to complex clinical procedure. This paper tried to obtain all the information's related to Marma from classics and highlight its importance from Ayurvedic point of view.

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