

AN INSIGHT INTO PAIN MANAGEMENT THROUGH MARMA: A CONCEPTUAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Marma Chikista is a significant method among all other Ayurvedic treatments where specific points are present on the body where the application of pressure induces the flow of vital energy. In *Marma Chikista* the treatment is through the specific points which is used in order the specific points targets the nourishment of each organ and these points are known as *Marma* points. These *Marma* points which are known as doorways into the body's inner pathways, when gently pressed on these *Marma* points it can stimulate a chain of positive events and act effectively on the human energy levels. This article provides the space of discussion about *Marma Chikista* which is a good old technique used for relieving pain and used as analgesic in older days. The aim of the article is that, the technique of pain reliving which is the prime problem for all symptoms should be available in hands to all people.

Keywords: *Marma*, Lifestyle, Pain management, *Marma chikista*

INTRODUCTION

In India, we still have some unique technique of treatments which still stays a secret to modern medical sector. One of magical secret to the rest of the world is the "Field of Ayurveda". In Ayurveda there are many techniques which have a wonderful network behind its action which has been explained in consisted form and one such technique used in Ayurveda named as "*Marma Chikitsa*". *Marma Chikista* is a significant aspect of the Ayurvedic treatments where specific points are present on the body where the application of pressure on those specific *marma's* induces the flow of vital energy (*Prana*) along a complex system of subtle channels called (nadis)¹. Such vital points get affected very badly by the present day activities with

modification of lifestyle, by which *Marma Chikitsa* role in management of pain which has been established since years. These *Marma* points which is known as doorways into the body's inner pathways, when gently pressed on the skin can stimulate a chain of positive events². So, here an attempt has been made to establish the importance of *Marma Chikitsa* in the management of pain³.

Marma Chikitsa:

History of *Marma* starts from the reference from *Atharva Veda*, which has been used in battle field as it is the Art of healing and killing, since olden days *Marma* is the most important tool to maintain both the physical and mental fitness.

Knowledge of *Marma* has got wide implication in the field of medical practice and diagnosis of illness in martial art and welfare and in surgical importance.

Role of Vayu In Marma⁴:

The entire galaxy is made up of *Panchamahabhuta*, the general sustenance is maintained by *Shita* and *Snigdha Guna*. The basic nature of the body is *kapha*, the transformation process is mainly due to *Pitta* and *Vata*, *Vayu* is held in *Agni*, which in turn is supported by *Shitatva of jala*.

The bodies, even though *Panchabhautika* in nature, has in it certain vital points where *Agni* and *Vayu* are predominant.

Such *Vata* points on body that are *Agneya* in nature are called *Marmas*. This predominance of *Agni* and *Vayu* over these area marks them vital and more prone to injuries that leads to diseases or death. *Marma Chikitsa* is basically *Vatapittahara Chikitsa*, it comes under *Madhyama rogamarga*.

Lifestyle Changes Habits:

- Using of cellphone, headphones.
- Usage of TV, computers.
- Children having heavy schoolbag loads on their back.
- Having emotional distress (over thinking, angry, worried).

All the above are few examples of lifestyle habits will in turn increase *Vata* prior and cause to many diseases both of mind and physic. Due to the quality of *Vata* such as *Ruksa* (dry and coarse), *Laghu* (light), *Sita* (cool), *Khara* (rough), *Suksma* (subtle) and *Cala* (mobile) gets aggravated in the body and leads to *Sramsas* (prolapse), *Vyasa* (dilatation, spasticity in extension), *Vyadha* (piercing pain), *Svapa* (numbness), *Sada* (fatigue), *Ruk* (continuous pain), *Toda* (intermittent/piercing/colicky pain), *Bheda* (stripping pain), *Sanga* (stagnation-of urine and faeces), *Angabhanga* (muscle splitting pain), *Sankoca* (spasticity, contractions), *Varta* (localized ache), *Harsa* (goose-skin), *Tarsana* (thirst), *Kampa* (tremor), *Parusya* (roughness), *Sauksriya* (porosity), *Sosa* (atrophy, wasting), *Spandana* (pulsatile pain), *Vestana* (binding/compressing pain), *Stambha* (stiffness), *Ka Saya*

rasta (feel of astringent taste) and *Syava varnatva* (smoky black-reddish brown colour) these are the symptoms caused by *Vata* in aggravated state by which different types of pain is been exhibited⁵. First of all signs, “PAIN” will be exhibited despite of the intensity of injury.

Pain is an unpleasant sensory or emotional experience which is associated with actual or potential tissue damage, in which routine day activities are affected and here comes few immediate remedies related with pain will be explained in further.

Techniques Use For Marma Point Stimulation:

- *Marma* points for relieving pain, instant pain relief can be seen by *Marma Chikitsa* within no time. It can be manipulated with several techniques such as,
- Rubbing
- Pressure
- Massage
- Application
- Fomentation

A gentle pressure is been given to the *Marma Sthana* (*Marma* points) for certain signs. 1-2 minutes is ideal for stimulating. Massages should be done by following instruction.

Clockwise Direction⁶

1. For toning, strengthening and stimulation of the internal organs.
2. Pacifies *Vata* and *Kapha* but stimulate *Pitta*.

Counterclockwise Direction:

1. For calming and pacifying the internal organs.
2. Pacifies *Pitta* but stimulate *Vata* and *Kapha*.

One can use heavy Oils or aromatic oils for Massage⁷: It has been observed that with this massage one can control internal channels and organs and can treat *Doshas* also.

Massage with pressure can be done with medium or without medium. Medium such as oil can be used as application over the point. Oil such as olive oil, vegetable oil, gingerly oil, castor oil, coconut oil, wheat germ oil, peppermint oil, eucalyptus oil or any aromatic oils can be used⁸.

• **For Vata Prakruthi:**

Sesame, Olive, Almond, Cedar wood, Cinnamon, Clove, Geranium, Jasmine, Lavender, Myrrh, Musk, Orange, Sage, etc. can be used.

• **For Pitta Prakruthi:**

Coconut, Ghee, Sandalwood, Sunflower, Chamomile, Cinnamon, Gardenia, Honeysuckle, Lotus, Mint, Rose, Saffron, etc. can be used.

• **For Kapha Prakruthi:**

Mustard, Safflower, Sesame, Corn, Jojoba, Basil, Camphor, Clove, Eucalyptus, Frankincense, Juniper, Lemon, Marjoram, Musk, Myrrh, Peppermint, Rosemary, Sage etc can be used.

Pain Killers Techniques of Marma Chitiksa ^{9,10,11,}

Apply gentle pressure to the flowing condition in specific pressure.

1. Headache:

- *Adhipathi* (Obelion point) : $\frac{1}{2}$ angula
- *Simanta* (Cranial sutures) : *sva panitala*
- *Sthapani* (Anterior extremity sinus of veins of nose, scalp, diploic veins joining it) : $\frac{1}{2}$ angula

2. Cervical Pain:

- *Kshipra* (1st intermetacarpel ligament): $\frac{1}{2}$ angula
- *Kurpara* (elbow joint): 3 angula
- *Ani* (tendons of biceps brachii muscle): $\frac{1}{2}$ angula

3. Shoulder Pain:

- *Kshipra* : $\frac{1}{2}$ angula
- SITE: Situated in between the thumb and index finger.
- TISSUE INVOLVED ANATOMICAL STRUCTURES: Flexor pollicis brevis. Oblique and transverse head of adductor pollicis, branches of median nerve, dorsal metacarpal artery and superficial palmer arch supplying blood to the fingers.
- SIGNS IF INJURED: Injured may cause quick of function of adduction and flexion of thumb and severe bleeding from the palmer arch. It is *Kalantara Pranahara* type of *Marma*.
- POSITION/ PLACEMENT OF FINGERS: Place the pulp part of the middle three fingers in the web space aligned with the thumb bone. The thumbs of the therapies and the patient should be together.

- APPLICATION: Using the pulp part of the middle three fingers press and release three times. To treat the right hand of the patient, the therapist should use their right hand and vice versa for treating the left.

- *Kurpara* (elbow joint) : $\frac{1}{2}$ angula
- SITE: lateral elbow joint. *Marma* on right controls liver, *Marma* on left controls spleen.
- TISSUE INVOLVED ANATOMICAL STRUCTURES: Elbow joint- ligament capsule, ulnar, radial and annular radical collateral ligament, median nerve and its branches. Brachial artery, tributaries of cephalic and median cubital vein. Supinator, extensor carpi radialis, biceps, triceps and pronator teres muscles.
- SIGNS IF INJURED: Injury will cause severe hemorrhage and impairment of function of forearm. It is *Vaikalyakara* type of *Marma*.
- *Amsa* : $\frac{1}{2}$ angula
- SITE: between the neck and arms, on the trapezius muscles, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch lateral to 5th cervical vertebra. Controls 5th *chakra*, *vishudha*, *bhrajaka pitta*, *udana vata* and brain.
- TISSUE INVOLVED ANATOMICAL STRUCTURES: trapezeus and levator scapuli muscles. Sub scapular artery and vein. Drainage to the sub scapular group of axillary glands. Scapula bone and coraco- acromial and sura scapular ligaments. Phrenic and 3, 4th cervical nerve.
- SIGNS IF INJURED: injury to the muscles and the ligaments will produce deformity. It is
- SITE: on the scapular bone above *bruhati*. It is *vaikalyakara* type of *marma*.
- *Amsaphalaka* : $\frac{1}{2}$ angula
- $\frac{1}{2}$ inch lateral to the 5th, 6th, 7th cervical and 1st thoracic vertebra)
- TISSUE INVOLVED ANATOMICAL STRUCTURE: 5th 6, 7th thoracic and 1st thoracic vertebra. Sub clavian artery and vein. 5,6,7th thoracic nerve. Trapezeus and rhombidus major muscles.
- SIGNS IF INJURED: Injury to the nerve may cause disfunction of the muscles and wasting lead-

ing to deformity. It is *Vaikalyakara* type of *Marma*.

- *Lohitasha*: 1/2 *angula*
 - SITE: 2 inches lateral to the symphysis pubis where femoral artery passes, on femoral triangle.
 - TISSUE INVOLVED ANATOMICAL STRUCTURES: Femoral artery a tributories of femoral vein. Femoral nerve. Drainage to the superficial inguinal glands. Psoas major and pectineus muscles.
 - SIGNS IF INJURED: Injury can cause paralysis of the limb and the edema of the leg along with deformity and severe pain. It is *Vaikalyakara* type of *Marma*.
- 4. Backpain:**
- *Kukundura* (ischial tuberosity) :1 *angula*
 - SITE: on both post. Superior iliac spine notches.
 - TISSUE INVOLVED ANATOMICAL STRUCTURES: Inferior gluteal artery and vein. Inferior pudendal artery and vein. Sciatic nerve. Gluteus maximus muscles and levator ani muscles.
 - SIGNS IF INJURED: Injury to sciatic nerve will lead to loss of sensation and paralysis of the lower limb. It is *Vaikalyakara* type of *Marma*.
 - POSITION/ PLACEMENT OF FINGERS: Place the first inter phalangeal joint of the left thumb on the *Marma* point.
 - APPLICATION: using ½ *maathirai* pressure, apply three outward rotations and three inward rotations.
 - *Nitamba* (ala of sacrum) :1/2 *angula*
 - SITE: one inch above *Kukundara Marma*.
 - TISSUE INVOLVED ANATOMICAL STRUCTURE: Illium and sacrum bone, sacro- iliac joint. Anterior and posterior. Sacro-iliac ligaments. Sacral plexus of the nerves. Psoas major and ilioc muscles.
 - SIGNS IF INJURED: Injury to the iliac bone and sacral plexus will causes functional loss and wasting of the muscles. It is *Kalantarapranahara* type of *Marma*. Position and application same.

5. Chest Pain:

- *Kurpara* (elbow joint) :3 *angula*

- *Urvi* (femoral vessel) :1 *angula*
- *Ani* (tendon of bicep brachii) :1/2 *angula*
- *Apalap* (lateral thoracic and subscapular vessels) : ½ *angula*
- *Apastambha* (spine of scapula) :1/2 *angula*

6. Abdomen Pain:

- *Kurpara* (elbow joint) :3 *angula*
- *Urvi* (femoral vessel) :1 *angula*

7. Knee, Leg And Sciatic Pain:

- *Kshipra* (1st intermetacarpel ligament):1/2 *angula*
- *Gulpha* (ankle joint):2 *angula*

8. Healthy Joints/ Promotes Bone Growth/Unproper Hand Movement:

- *Manibandha* (wrist joint):2 *angula*

9. To Enhance The Flow Of Prana:

- *Kurcha* (carpometacarpal and intercarpal ligament): *sva panitala*
- *Kshipra* (1st intertarsal ligament) :1/2 *angula*

10. Strengthenng the Immune System:

- *Talahridayam* (palmar aponeurosis) :1/2 *angula*

11. Relaxation Purpose:

- *Phana* (olfactory region of nose):1/2 *angula*
- *Apanga* (zygometico temporal vessel):1/2 *angula*
- *Krkatika* (atlanto occipital articulation):1/2 *angula*
- *Vidhura* (posterior auricular vessels and structures emerging out of stylomastoid foramen):1/2 *angula*
- *Shankha* (temporal bones):1/2 *angula* ^{12,13.}

CONCLUSION

In ancient days instead of analgesics there is equitant treatment for pain, is through *Marma chikista*, it is easy and cost effective method to get relief from the pain, though it need a skillful physician to perform this treatment, because it may mislead the points and can lead to some other complication too. So, here an attempt is made to establish the importance of *Marma Chikista* in the management of pain.

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