

BASTI MARMA: ANATOMICAL PERSPECTIVE AND CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE – A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW**Dr. Puja Darunte*, Dr. Shrikant Darokar, Dr. Shivtej Darunte**

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ABSTRACT

Marma concept is one of the unique contributions of Ayurveda in the field of anatomy and clinical medicine. Marma are described as vital points of the body where different anatomical structures such as Mamsa (muscle), Sira (vascular structures), Snayu (ligaments/tendons), Asthi (bone), and Sandhi (joints) meet. Among the 107 Marma described in Ayurveda, Basti Marma holds special importance as it is included under Trimarma along with Shira and Hridaya. It is classified as a Sadyapranahara Marma, indicating that severe injury to this region can result in life-threatening consequences. According to classical Ayurvedic literature, Basti Marma is associated with the urinary bladder region and is considered the primary site of Apana Vata, which governs functions related to urination,

defecation, reproduction, and elimination. Modern anatomical correlation suggests that Basti Marma corresponds to the urinary bladder and its surrounding pelvic structures, including pelvic fascia, ligaments, blood vessels, nerves, and adjacent organs. This review aims to analyze the classical description, anatomical significance, clinical importance, and modern interpretation of Basti Marma through available Ayurvedic and contemporary literature.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda describes the human body through a comprehensive understanding of structural, functional, and physiological components. The concept of Marma is an important aspect of Ayurvedic anatomy (*Sharira Rachana*) and surgery (*Shalya Tantra*). Marma are considered vital areas of the body where injury may result in severe pain, deformity, loss of function, or death.

The classical description of Marma is mainly found in *Sushruta Samhita Sharira Sthana*, where Acharya Sushruta has explained 107 Marma points based on their anatomical composition, location, and consequences of injury. These Marma points represent areas of functional importance where Prana (life energy) resides.

Among all Marma, three are considered extremely significant and are collectively known as **Trimarma**

1. Shira Marma (Head region)
2. Hridaya Marma (Heart region)
3. Basti Marma (Urinary bladder region)

Any disturbance or injury to these three vital locations can seriously affect life functions.

Basti Marma is unique because it represents both anatomical and physiological importance. It is not only related to the urinary bladder but also influences elimination, reproductive functions, and regulation of Apana Vata. Therefore, understanding Basti Marma is essential for Ayurvedic physicians, surgeons, and clinicians involved in Panchakarma and trauma management.

Historical Background of Marma Concept

The knowledge of Marma has its origin in ancient Ayurvedic surgical practices. Acharya Sushruta, known as the father of surgery, described Marma as important anatomical locations that should be protected during surgical procedures.

According to Ayurveda, Marma are the sites where five anatomical structures meet

- Mamsa (Muscular tissue)
- Sira (Blood vessels)
- Snayu (Ligaments and tendons)
- Asthi (Bones)
- Sandhi (Joints)

Damage to these structures affects the flow of Prana and results in clinical manifestations depending on the location and severity of injury.

The knowledge of Marma was particularly important in ancient warfare, where injuries to vital points determined survival or death. This understanding later became important in

surgical anatomy and therapeutic procedures.

Classification of Marma in Ayurveda

Ayurveda classifies Marma according to various parameters:

1. According to Anatomical Structure

Mamsa Marma

Predominantly related to muscular structures.

Sira Marma

Associated with blood vessels.

Snayu Marma

Related to ligaments, tendons, and connective tissues.

Asthi Marma

Related to bony structures.

Sandhi Marma

Related to joints.

Basti Marma is classified as **Snayu Marma**, indicating the importance of supporting structures, ligaments, and connective tissue around the pelvic region.

2. According to Effect of Injury

Marma are classified into five categories:

Sadyapranahara Marma

Injury causes immediate death.

Kalantara Pranahara Marma

Injury results in death after some time.

Vishalyaghna Marma

Life continues only while the foreign object remains inside.

Vaikalyakara Marma

Injury causes permanent disability.

Rujakara Marma

Injury causes severe pain.

Basti Marma is categorized as **Sadyapranahara Marma**, highlighting its life-threatening nature.

Concept of Trimarma and Importance of Basti Marma

Trimarma represents three essential regions responsible for sustaining life. Charaka Samhita emphasizes that these structures should be protected because impairment of their functions can disturb the entire body system.

Basti Marma is considered important because it governs

- Urinary elimination
- Regulation of Apana Vata
- Reproductive functions
- Removal of metabolic waste

The term "Basti" in Ayurveda refers not only to the urinary bladder but also represents the anatomical and functional region associated with urine storage and elimination.

The importance of Basti Marma is also reflected in Panchakarma therapy, where Basti Karma is considered one of the major therapeutic procedures for disorders related to Vata Dosha.

Classical References of Basti Marma

The description of Basti Marma is available in various classical Ayurvedic texts, particularly in *Sushruta Samhita*, *Charaka Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya*. These texts provide information regarding its location, structural composition, physiological significance, and consequences of injury.

1. Basti Marma in Sushruta Samhita

Acharya Sushruta has described Basti Marma among the Trimarma and classified it as a **Snayu Marma**. According to *Sushruta Samhita*, injury to Basti Marma leads to severe complications due to its association with vital structures responsible for urinary functions.

The term Basti refers to the urinary bladder, which acts as a reservoir for urine. The region includes important anatomical structures related to urine storage and elimination. Due to the presence of major vessels, nerves, and supporting tissues, trauma to this region can produce serious consequences.

Sushruta has emphasized that knowledge of Marma is essential for surgeons because

improper surgical intervention in these areas may result in severe complications.

2. Basti Marma in Charaka Samhita

Acharya Charaka has emphasized the importance of Trimarma, including Basti, as vital areas responsible for maintaining life. According to Charaka, Basti is an important site of **Apana Vata**.

Apana Vata governs

- Urination (Mutra Visarga)
- Defecation (Purisha Visarga)
- Ejaculation (Shukra Visarga)
- Menstruation (Artava Pravritti)
- Childbirth (*Prasava*)

Therefore, disturbance in the function of Basti affects multiple physiological processes.

3. Basti Marma in Ashtanga Hridaya

Acharya Vagbhata has also mentioned the importance of Marma and explained their clinical significance. Basti is considered an important location related to Vata Dosha and urinary function.

The description in Ashtanga Hridaya supports the concept that Basti is not merely a hollow organ but a functional unit associated with elimination and maintenance of physiological balance.

Anatomical Description of Basti Marma

Ayurvedic Anatomical Perspective

Basti Marma is located in the pelvic region. Classical descriptions indicate its relation with:

- Urinary bladder
- Pelvic cavity
- Rectum
- Genital organs
- Urinary passages

It is categorized as a **Snayu Marma**, indicating the importance of connective tissue structures, ligaments, and supporting tissues.

The pelvic region contains several important structures closely associated with each other.

Therefore, injury to this area may affect multiple systems simultaneously.

Modern Anatomical Correlation of Basti Marma

Modern anatomy provides a basis for understanding the possible correlation of Basti Marma with pelvic structures.

1. Urinary Bladder

The urinary bladder is considered the primary anatomical correlation of Basti Marma.

The bladder performs important functions

- Storage of urine
- Controlled elimination of urine
- Maintenance of urinary continence

It is located in the lesser pelvis and is surrounded by important anatomical structures.

Injury to the urinary bladder can result in

- Hematuria
- Urinary leakage
- Infection
- Peritonitis
- Severe pelvic complications

These clinical outcomes correlate with the Ayurvedic description of Basti Marma injury.

2. Pelvic Fascia and Ligaments

The urinary bladder is supported by:

- Pelvic fascia
- Pubovesical ligaments
- Pelvic floor muscles

These structures maintain the position and function of the bladder.

Damage to these supporting structures may lead to urinary dysfunction and pelvic instability.

3. Blood Vessels

The pelvic region contains important vascular structures including:

- Internal iliac artery branches
- Vesical arteries
- Pelvic venous plexus

Trauma in this region can cause severe hemorrhage, which explains the life-threatening nature attributed to Basti Marma injury.

4. Nerve Supply

The urinary bladder receives autonomic nerve supply through:

- Sympathetic nerves
- Parasympathetic nerves
- Pelvic splanchnic nerves

Damage to these nerves may result in

- Neurogenic bladder
- Urinary retention
- Loss of bladder control

This functional relationship supports the Ayurvedic association of Basti with Apana Vata.

Physiological Importance of Basti Marma

Relation with Apana Vata

According to Ayurveda, Apana Vata is responsible for downward movement and elimination functions.

The main functions controlled by Apana Vata include

- Urination
- Defecation
- Reproduction
- Menstruation
- Childbirth

Basti is considered the main functional seat of Apana Vata. Any disturbance in this region may affect these physiological processes.

Relation with Mutravaha Srotas

Basti is an important component of the urinary system (*Mutravaha Srotas*).

Normal functioning of Basti maintains:

- Proper urine formation
- Urine storage
- Elimination of metabolic waste

Diseases involving urinary function are therefore closely related to Basti.

Clinical Significance of Basti Marma

1. Trauma and Injury

Pelvic trauma involving Basti Marma may result in:

- Bladder rupture
- Severe bleeding
- Urinary obstruction
- Infection
- Neurological complications

The Ayurvedic classification of Basti Marma as Sadyapranahara indicates the seriousness of such injuries.

2. Importance in Panchakarma

Basti Karma is considered the main treatment modality for Vata disorders.

Before performing Basti therapy, proper assessment of the patient is essential because the procedure directly involves the Basti region.

Assessment includes

- Patient strength (*Bala*)
- Digestive status (*Agni*)
- Disease condition
- Age and constitution (*Prakriti*)

3. Importance in Shalya Tantra

Knowledge of Basti Marma is essential during surgical procedures involving:

- Pelvic region
- Urinary bladder
- Rectum
- Reproductive organs

Surgeons must understand vital anatomical structures to prevent complications.

Modern Research Perspective

Recent studies have attempted to correlate classical Marma descriptions with modern anatomical structures. Researchers suggest that Basti Marma represents a complex

anatomical region rather than a single structure.

The correlation includes

- Urinary bladder
- Pelvic connective tissue
- Neurovascular structures
- Supporting ligaments
- Adjacent pelvic organs

Modern radiological and anatomical studies may provide further understanding of these correlations.

DISCUSSION

Basti Marma represents an important example of the integration between Ayurvedic anatomy and modern medical science. Classical texts described the importance of this region thousands of years ago, and modern anatomy confirms that the pelvic region contains several vital structures.

The classification of Basti Marma as Sadyapranahara can be understood through modern concepts of pelvic trauma, where injury may lead to severe hemorrhage, organ damage, and life-threatening complications.

Although the exact anatomical boundaries of Basti Marma require further scientific exploration, existing literature supports its correlation with the urinary bladder and surrounding pelvic structures.

Further studies involving

- Cadaveric anatomy
- Imaging techniques
- Clinical observations
- Surgical correlation

May help establish a more precise understanding of Basti Marma.

CONCLUSION

Basti Marma is one of the most significant Marma described in Ayurveda and forms an essential component of Trimarma. It represents a vital pelvic region associated with urinary, reproductive, and elimination functions.

Classical Ayurvedic literature identifies Basti Marma as a Sadyapranahara Marma and emphasizes its protection due to its association with Prana and Apana Vata. Modern anatomical correlation suggests that Basti Marma corresponds mainly to the urinary bladder and surrounding pelvic neurovascular structures.

Understanding Basti Marma provides valuable knowledge for Ayurvedic clinicians, surgeons, Panchakarma practitioners, and researchers. Integration of classical concepts with modern anatomical science can contribute to improved clinical applications and future research.

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