

MARMA THERAPY: A BOON OF AYURVEDA**Vivek Khetwal^{1*}, Devesh Shukla², Sunil Kumar Gupta³ and Pankaj Kumar Sharma⁴**

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ABSTRACT

Marma therapy is a vital aspect of *Ayurvedic* medicine, offering a holistic approach to healing and well-being. Rooted in ancient Indian tradition, *marma* therapy focuses on specific points on the body where flesh, veins, arteries, tendons, bones, and joints meet. These vital energy points are believed to be the intersections of the body's subtle energy channels, known as *nadis*, and are crucial for maintaining physical and mental balance. *Marma* therapy is believed to offer a wide range of benefits, including pain relief, improved circulation, enhanced energy flow, stress reduction, detoxification, and overall rejuvenation. It is also used to address specific health conditions and promote longevity. *Marma* science and *Marma* therapy is an untouched chapter of Indian surgery. With the exploration of *Marma* science, the whole scenario of treatment may change in multidimensional approaches.

KEYWORD: *Marma*, *Marma* therapy.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the science of life dealing with treating the mind, body, and soul to ensure an overall state of health, the topic of *Marma* consists of ancient and scientific knowledge, and

health can also be maintained by the knowledge of *Marma*. *Marma* is very important and unique concept of *Ayurvedic Sharir*. First & foremost literature of *Marma* is seen in *Brihatrayee* which is described in the sixth Adhyaya of *Sharirsthana Sushruta Samhita*. *Marma* is the vital areas of the body. The word *Marma* comes from *Sanskrit* origin word *Mri* meaning death. The *Sanskrit* phrase, '*Marayanti Iti Marmani*', also means death or serious damage to body or health after infliction to the point of their situation.^[1] By definition, a *Marma* point is a junction on body where two or more types of tissue meet, such as muscles, veins, ligaments, bones or joints. During ancient times, knowledge of *Marma* was known to kings and warriors. It was applied in battle fields to hit and achieve maximum lethal effect on enemies. Through stimulation of *marma* by various means and methods, the *Prana* (Vital energy) existing in it may be directed to remove blockages (Even in remotely connected areas) and stimulate energy flow thus resulting in a state of healthy body, mind and spirit. A judicious application of pressure on appropriate *marma* can restore the normal functioning of *prana* (In diseased body parts) where as their improper manipulation may cause severe pain, disability, deformity and even death. *Marma Chikitsa* is a significant aspect of the *Ayurvedic* treatments where specific points are present on the body where the application of pressure induces the flow of vital energy (*Prana*) along a complex system of subtle channels called (*Nadis*). There are one hundred and seven (107) *marmas* (vital spots) out of which eleven are present in each limbs, twenty six in trunk (three in abdomen, nine in thorax, fourteen in the back) and thirty seven in head neck region.^[2] *Acharya Susrutha* has mentioned that "*Hastamevam Pradhanatamam yantram*"^[3] (the human hand is the most powerful and important instrument). For *Marma* therapy mainly fingertips, knuckles, thumbs, the elbow is used, which provide an extremely light stimulation to the *Marma* points on the body, and this helps to get rid of the obstructions from the vital point and provides physical-psychological recreation and potency.^[4]

How *marma* therapy works

Marma therapy provides stimulation of vital points and thus removes blockages from the *shrotas* & offer physical and psychological benefits. *Marma* therapy applied around the *Asthi*, *Snayu*, *Sira* & *Sandhi* etc. since this therapy mainly covers diseases related to neuromuscular system, nervous system, loco motor system and blood circulation systems. *Marmas* are not superficial landmarks on the body surface but these are deep seated important physio-anatomical structures. When stimulated appropriately, they can preserve health and cure disease. *Marma Chikitsa* help to flow positive *prana* through the various channels using

pressure on *Marma* points and this *prana* manage to treat diseases such as; headache, joints pain, paralysis *hridaya Roga*, mental stress and muscular sprain, etc. These *marma* points, or junctures of the body, function on the vital energy force of *prana*, joined by energy channels throughout the body, called *nadis*.

Here, we outline the principles of how *marma* points work^[5]

1. *Pranic* flow

In *Ayurveda*, *pranic* flow proposes that fundamental energy, known as *prana*, courses through the body, feeding and supporting all parts of life.

2. Energy centers

Marma points serve as gateways, facilitating the entry or exit of *prana* within the body. These *marma* points are regarded as energetic centers, acting as intersections that link the physical body with the mind and spirit, where both the physical and subtle energy bodies converge.

3. Influence on doshas

Each *Marma* point is associated with specific doshas (*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*), and its stimulation can influence the balance of these doshas in the body.

4. Healing and Stimulation

Through the application of pressure, massage, or other therapeutic techniques to these *marma* points, it is believed that the flow of *prana* can be stimulated or harmonized, leading to various health benefits.

5. Release of blockages

Marma point massage is thought to be effective in releasing blockages and imbalances in the *pranic* flow, thereby alleviating physical and emotional discomfort.

Benefits of *marma* therapy^[6]

1. Removes blocks in energy channels (*Srotas*).
2. Pacifies doshas bringing it to normal path (Especially *vyana vayu* which controls autonomic nervous system).
3. Creates physical, mental and emotional flexibility.
4. Improves physical, mental and emotional health.
5. Helps in balancing of Doshas.
6. It clears the *Srotas* thus improving circulation.

7. Removes *Ama* from the body.
8. Helps in releasing neurochemicals and hormones etc.
9. Helps in detoxification of body by improving process of transportation.
10. Provides relief from chronic or acute pain.

According to Dr Sunil kumar joshi a pioneer in marma therapy, through Marma therapy some of the diseases can be handled are as follows^[7]

- All kinds of vata disorders
- Arthritis
- Cerebral palsy
- Congenital brain / nerve lesions
- Diabetes
- Epilepsy
- Eye and ear nerve problems
- Migraine
- Orthopaedic diseases
- Pains in various parts of the body
- Paralysis
- Polio
- Sciatica, backache, painful knee diseases
- Spinal / vertebral diseases, prolapses inter-vertebral disc / slipped disc
- Spondylosis
- Traumatic nerve lesions, Vascular, Skeletal lesions

CONCLUSIONS

Ayurveda believes in complete normal state of health hence Marma is given an important place in the Ayurvedic texts due to its healing approaches for the management of different pathological conditions. These points are called Marma points where the Prana exits Nadis and enters the physical body. Each Marma is related to a specific Dhātu, Srota, Dosha and Vāyu. Marma Chikitsa helps in maintaining equilibrium between Tridosha at physical level and Trigunas at mental level. Marma therapy is a subject of research, there is a lot of potential in it. It can benefit the whole human race a lot. Its cost is negligible. In many cases it works like an emergency. Therefore, it should be encouraged.

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