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HISTORICAL REVIEW ABOUT IMPORTANCE OF *MARMASTHANA*

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ABSTRACT
In Ayurveda, Marma has been considered as important region in sharira, because as Rajanigantu states that marma is the site where prana resides. Even though it is generally told that injury to marma sthana will lead to death, injury to all the marma may not lead to death but sadhyapranahara marma is a classification of marma which on injury will lead to death with in a period of seven days. Hence the awareness about the locations of sadyapranahara marma is more important compared to other marma. Understanding the anatomical structures located at the Marmasthana is important to know why they cause deformity or death on injury to the particular marmasthana. So because of this reason these marma sthanas are given more importance and these have to be protected against the injuries.

KEY WORDS – *Marmasthana , Veda , Purana , Upanishad , Epics , Modern Science*

INTRODUCTION

According to *Brihatrayees* 107 *Marmas* are accepted and explained in *shareera sthana*[1]. *Acharya Sushruta* explained that marma is the vital point of body which shows various signs & symptoms (*viddha lakshana's*) on *Parinamanusara*/traumatic injury.[2] Based on Parinamanusara/ tramatic injury the *Marma* has been classified into - *Sadyopranahara marma* (death within 7days), *Kaalantara pranahara marma* (death within 15-30day's), *Vaikalyakara marma* (deformity due to severe trauma), *Vishalyaghna marma* (person lives until removal of foreign body) and *Rujukara marma* (continuous pain due to trauma).[3]

As *Acharya Sushruta* defines *marma* as the anatomical sites where *Mamsa*, *Sira*,*Snayu*, *Sandhi* and *Asthi* meet together and where by nature itself *prana* is located.[4] Here *prana* indicates all the basic factors sustaining the life of the person. That is why if any injury occurs to *marma*, the person will not survive. The 7 factors, *soma*, *maruta*, *teja*, *satva*, *raja*, *tama* and *bhutatma* are considered as *prana* in *marma pradesha*.[5] That's why these are given more importance because of this in ancient days they were using protective coverings to protect These *marma's* against any injury in the battle field.

OBJECTIVES

1)To review importance of *marmasthana* and importance of wearing *kavacha* (body armour) during wars as per *Ayurvedic* Texts and modern perspective.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The literary resources for the existing subject is done from *Bruhatrayees*, *Laghutrayees* and other classical books, journals, presented papers and relevant research works. it will likely be correlated with the contemporary available books, literature, journals, web sites, and studies papers.

Importance of Marmasthana in Vedic Literature

Marma has been known from the period of the *Vedas*, which goes back to 4000 BC.

***Rigveda*-**There is reference about *Marma* in *Rigveda* In the sixth *khanda* of *Rigveda.Varman* and *Drapi* are some of the armours mentioned in *Rigveda.* that is some kind of the body Armor or corselet to protect the body from assault of enemy weapons on *Marma Sthana* during the course of war in the battle field.[6] It is mentioned that Lord *Vishwakarma* designed a weapon by the order of lord Indra to kill a demon *Vritra* and *Indra* targeted over demons *Marma Sthana* (between shoulders), later this *shastra* named as *Vajrayudha*.[7] In *Rigveda*, it is described that prayer or *Mantras* are the best protection of these *Marma*, prayer or *Mantras* showing a divine view.

***Atharvaveda*-** It is given about protecting the *Marma* points by a protective shield or body armour The Agni was greatest weapon to destroy the Marma sthana during the wars.[8]

***Yajurveda* -** the soldiers and warriors in the battle field were dressed with helmet, arm proof metallic guards etc. so as to shield the vital parts which are referred as *marma*.[9]

Upanishad

***Garbhopanishad* -** states about 18 *marma sthanas* here and the names of the eighteen *marma* locations are as follow - *padangushta*, *gulpha*, *jangha*, *janu*, *uru*, *guda*, *linga*, *nabhi*, *hridaya*, *kanthakupa*, *talu*, *nasika*, *akshi*, *bhroomadhya*, *lalaata*,

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murdhni - on all these locations *dharana* (establishing deep linkage of the inner consciousness with the divine currents present at the 18 *marma* location) should be done one by one that is called *pratyahara*.[10]

So here also they have given importance to *marma sthana* by locating them and by explaining how to get control over them.

Kshurikopanishad **-** It explained about the name and form of the marma locations of the legs, the area named "*Indravajra"* which is located next to the thighs. There, in between the *Urus* (thighs), establish the *Prana* (that specifies the location of the *Marmas*).[11]so as it is said that *prana* resides here so it has to be protected

Purana **-** *Kurma purana* states that touching of *marma sthana* is prohebitated.[12]

In Epics

Ramayana - Meghnad, who had knowledge of *marma* points, hit arrows in all the tender body parts of Shri Ramchandra and Lakshmana and started making deafening noises again and again. In order to kill Ravana, *Shri Ramchandra* held up the bow and with great strength, shot the arrow that would pierce *nabhi* (*Marma* points) and destroyed him.[13]

Mahabharata **-** It mentions the use of protective coverings for the *Marma's* of both the soldiers, and the animals used in warfare such as the elephants and horses. There were several great warriors who could only be defeated if their *Marma* points were destroyed.[14]

Samhita - The knowledge of *marma* is very important to do *shastra karma*. *Acharya Sushruta* explains that the surgeon should apply the *shastra* following the direction of hairs avoiding *mamsa, sira, snayu, asthi*, sandhi and *dhamani* till the pus is extracted.[15] *Acharya Sushruta* also explains that *kshara* should not be applied to *marma sthana, sira, snayu, sandhi, tarunasthi, sevani, dhamani, greeva, nabhi, nakhant, shishn, srotas*, area having *alpa mamsa, netra* disorders except *vartm*a roga.[16]

Experts say that in ancient days surgical operations are performed after considering the measurement of the *marma's*. Injury on neighbouring site of *marma* may leads to severe hazards, so it should be avoided altogether.[17]
An incision is made one *anguli* distance from the *urvi, kurchashira, vitapa, kaksha, parshva marma* and a clear space of two anguli is avoided from its location in making any incision at *stanamula, manibandha* and *gulpha marma*. similarly, a space of four *anguli* should be avoided in respect of the four *sringataka*, five *seemanta* and ten *marmas* in neck like *nila* etc.; a space of half *anguli* has to be avoided in the remaining (fiftysix). Men versed in the science of surgery, have laid down the rule that, in a case of surgical operation, the location and dimension of each *marma* should be first taken into account and then the incision should be made in a way that it prevents the site of *marma*.[18]

Acharya Charaka has given great importance to *Trimarmas*, i.e. *Basti, Hridaya* and *Shirah*; on surgical point of view he has also accepted the total number of *marmas* to be 107[19].

In *Sharira Sthana*, Chapter 7 (7/9), *Acharya Charaka* told about ten seats of *Prana*; out of these, he considered the first six as *marmas*

Also in *Sutra Sthana*, Chapter 29 (29/3) (*Dashapranayataniya addhyaya*), he said that there are
only ten seats where prana (vital life force) is located, i.e. two shankha, three *marmas* (*hrudaya,*
basthi and *shirah), kantha, rakta, shukra, oja, guda*[20].

In *Sutra Sthana*, Chapter 11 (11/48), *Acharya Charaka* has explained three passages of diseases - *shakha* (periphery), *marmasthisandhi* (vital spots along with bones and joints) and *koshtha*
(stomach and intestine).

Further he clarifies that *marmas* include *basti* (urinary bladder), *hridaya*
(heart) and *murdha* (head), i.e. *Trimarmas*, and this is the madhyama roga marga (middle passage of diseases)[20].

Acharya Charaka has given the importance of *Trimarmas* in *Siddhi Sthana* 9 (9/5). He stated
that if any of the three *marmas* is broken, it leads to the rapid breaking of the entire body; this is
because if the substratum is destroyed, then its dependent is also destroyed; their affliction leads to the appearance of severe disorders[21].

All the above description shows the importance and vitality of the *marma* points. Any injury, trauma or disease affecting *marma* will cause death or miseries equal to death. The person, even with torn and mutilated trunk and skull, body parts injured with weapons or leg, arm, foot and hand affected completely, survives if *marma's* are not inflicted by various injuries.that's why in ancient days only they wore protective coverings to protect their *marmasthana* against any type of injuries.

Importance of Marmasthana in Modern science

It also gives more importance to the *Marmasthana*(vital point).

During surgery, protecting vital parts of the body is a critical aspect of the procedure to ensure that the patient remains safe and that the surgery is successful. Surgeons and medical teams use a variety of techniques, tools, and approaches to safeguard vital organs and tissues, both directly and indirectly.

Protective measures such as helmet, knee pad, glove, elbow pad and other safety gear were invented to safeguard vulnerable parts of the body from injury and damage during activities that involve high physical risks. These inventions have become essential in sports, industries, and everyday life, helping individuals engage

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in a wide range of activities with a reduced risk of serious injury. These inventions are rooted in the understanding of human anatomy and biomechanics,

DISCUSSION

In traditional systems like *Ayurveda* the concept of *Marmasthana* plays a crucial role. These are specific anatomical sites on the human body where vital organs, blood vessels, nerves, and muscles intersect, and they are considered especially sensitive and vulnerable. The term "*Marma*" is derived from the *Sanskrit* word "*Mar*" (meaning to injure or destroy), and "*Sthana"* (meaning place or location). *Marma sthanas* are believed to be the critical points where energy channels (known as *"Prana"*) converge, and disturbances or injuries to these points can lead to significant physical or mental harm and it may also leads to death. The understanding of the facts of *marma* is considered as half the knowledge of surgery. So, it is essential for surgeon or medical man to have complete understanding about marma and its traumatic effects.

CONCLUSION

In this study an effort has been made to extract out the facts of subject of *Marmasthana's* or vital points in traditional Indian medicine (*Ayurveda* and martial arts like *kalarippayattu*), are considered highly significant due to their role in maintaining health, vitality, and overall well being. these points are thought to be concentrated areas of energy and vital functions within the body. It is observed that the knowledge of *Marmas* existed ever since the Vedic age, and this knowledge was being extensively used for various purposes like warfare, self-defense, surgery, etc. And it is given much importance in modern days also as a proof we can see different types of protective coverings like helmet, kneepad, elbow pad etc…are made to protect vital points or structures during the sports like cricket, in vehicles while driving, etc…. From the present study it was concluded that the valuable concepts given by our *Acharyas* are eternal, factual and undeniable since time immemorial for the time being.

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