



SHORT COMMUNICATION

RECENT ADVANCES IN MARMA THERAPY

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Abstract

Marmas are vital points that, when afflicted, will cause severe pain and debility. The 107 *marmas* mentioned in Ayurveda have been detailed as a separate chapter in both *Ashtanga Hrudaya*¹ and *Susruta Samhita*.² *Acharya Charaka* has abridged them to three.³ In the current scenario, RSI and poor ergonomics are the main reasons that lead to the injury of *marma*. In this short communication the therapies carried out at several *marma* sites in accordance with published literature are highlighted.

Introduction

Our *samhitas* explain the concept of *marma* (vital points) and their devastating effects. A serious injury in certain *marma* sites can result in death, whereas an injury in other sites can result in physical deformity and long-term pain. In today's world, a person must use a variety of gadgets and spend hours in front of a computer. Furthermore, the ergonomics are inadequate. All of this results in repetitive strain injuries to the various *marma*. Various treatment modalities are being used to manage such *marma* diseases. Aside from that, procedures performed at *marma* sites have been found to cure a variety of systemic diseases. A review on such therapies used in the management of diseases affecting the *marma* is being done.

Methodology

A review of selected journals indexed in Pubmed & Google Scholar

Results

In a case report titled "Blood pressure normalizing effect of *Talahridaya marma* therapy: A Case Report", a 23 year old male hypertensive patient was subjected to the therapy. The *Talahridaya marma* in his left upper limb was subjected to controlled physical stimulation for a period of ten days. The patient was also taught to perform the therapy on himself. The blood pressure was recorded before and after administering the therapy. The patient showed significant improvement in his recordings of blood pressure.⁴

In a publication titled "Complementary and alternative interventions for stroke recovery - a narrative overview of the published evidence," it has

been mentioned that *Marma* massage improved the Motricity Index and trunk control.⁵

In a work titled “A conceptual analysis of *Marma Chikitsa* in *Gridhrasi*”, five *marma* points were emphasized by considering the relevant literature. The five *marma* points were *Kshipra*, *Gulpha* and *Indrabasti* from the lower limb whereas *Kukundara* & *Kateekataruna* from *Prushta*. The stimulus was given with the pulp part of the thumb or finger’s lateral border of the knuckle on corresponding *Marma* points in each sitting. A total of three sittings were advised in a day morning, daytime and evening with periodic rhythm. Rhythm may be compared with that of respiration. The stimulation was done in both prone and supine positions and was followed by self-stimulation by the patient. The study concluded with the inference that identifying *marma* points and subjecting them to pressure therapy for stimulation will yield good curative results.⁶

In another study title “The Study Protocol of Comparative Study on Efficacy of *Marma Chikitsa*, *Agnikarma*, and Physiotherapy in *Avabahuka*” (Frozen Shoulder) by Deshpande et al., the diagnosed patients of *Avabahuka* were equally distributed among the three groups. Group A (the study group) was subjected to *Marma Chikitsa* and placebo, Group B (the control group) was subjected to *Agnikarma* and placebo; and Group C (the control group) was subjected to physiotherapy and placebo. The study concluded with the finding that *Marma Chikitsa* is a new, easy, and cost-effective procedure for patients of *Avabahuka* as compared to *Agnikarma* and physiotherapy.⁷

In a case report titled “Ulnar Nerve Neuropathy: An Ayurvedic Approach through *Marma Chikitsa*”, it has been stated that in a case of neuropathy of the right upper limb caused by the entrapment of the Ulnar nerve in the Cubital Tunnel and Guyon’s Canal, the stimulation of the eight *marma* points was done 20 times per minute for 3 minutes, once daily for 14 days. The patient was free of symptoms that were manifested through the neuropathy after the treatment.⁸

Conclusion

Several studies are happening globally to study the effect of *Marma chikitsa* on various ailments. These studies need to be analyzed and meticulously worked out. The possibility of *Marma Chikitsa* being developed as a novel speciality of Ayurveda should be seriously considered by the Ayurveda academies.

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