



## A WAY TO UNDERSTAND THE URDHWAJATRUGATA MARMA RELATED WITH SHALAKYA TANTRA

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### ABSTRACT

*Marma Sharira* is a special feature of *Ayurvedic Sharira*. *Sushruta* has described *Marma Sharira* at certain depth. The word *Marma* (vital area) is found for the first time described in the *Hindu Scripture Atharva Veda*. During the *Vedic* period, knowledge of the vital areas of the human body was important part of military science. The knowledge was applied in war, medicine and surgery. The science of *Marma* was developed by the physician and surgeons of *Vedic* period to prevent death, treat people suffering from trauma and to attack the enemy<sup>1</sup>. The therapeutic knowledge and manipulations of the *Prana* and its channels which is situated at *Marma* are not given the importance in *Ayurvedic* classics as otherwise seen in Chinese medicine. However, there are some narrations in *Ayurvedic* books which indicate the fact of above said nations as follow: The effect of massage and medicines applied to the foot sole are carried or nourished to the eye by special *Siras*, therefore one willing to get good eyesight and health should protect the sole<sup>2</sup>. *Urdhwajarugata bhaga* of the body having so many *Marma* which is very important anatomical sites because injury to this part may be lethal for the body and sensory organs.

Key words: *Marma*, *Shalakyta*, *Urdhwajatrugata* etc

### INTRODUCTION:

The health of the people reflects the social welfare parameters of any civilized state. This was the valuable achievement of the ancient Indian society. It was the key component of social values and indication of concern shown for the welfare of the common man by the Indian society. In the thousands of years of the history of India from *Vedas* to the present times, Indian society has proved that only the *Vedic* system can develop and provide a truly humane and efficient health service to our nation.

A *Marma* as defined as “*maryante iti marmani*” there is likelihood of death or serious damage to health after infliction to these vital places. *Marma* is also defined as an anatomical are where arteries, tendons, flesh, veins, bones, joints meet to form the location of life. It has secrete and significant valves at these junctions. The anatomical areas where structures pulsate and where pain exists can be named *Marma*.

### ETYMOLOGY OF MARMA

The word *Marma* is derived on adding *Manin pratyaya* to *Mri Dhatu*. It means *Jivasthana* - a life site. It means that the site or the spot or place that is vital or mortal is *Marma*. It is the vulnerable spot or exposed or weak or open or sensitive part of the body. (Monier-Williams Sanskrit Dic.).

The word *Marma* is used at various places in different context, for e.g.

(i) Joint of Limb or a Joint or Articulation. (*Vachaspatyam*)

(ii) Anything that requires to be kept secret or concealed or protected.

(iii) Any vital member or organ. (cf. antar)

(iv) Hidden meaning: secret quality; mystery. (MBh; Kav. & c.)

(v) Deep meaning; Extract (Nagesh)

### DERIVATION OF MARMA

*Acharya Dalhana* was apparent about the concept of *Marma*, so he was able to give the simply best definition to the subject. Literally he conveys whose injury proves fatal is *Marma*. Here a question arises that according to this derivation injury to all *Marma* proves fatal, but it does not seem so? Further *Acharya*

*Vagabhatta* comes to help (A.H.sha.4) i.e. Here *Marma* –death not only stand for being fatal but it also denotes the sorrow or pain resembling to death. Acharya *Arundatta* adds that the fatalness of *Marma* tend to vary with the type of injury i.e. if the injury is simple then it proves only dysfunctional (*Vaikalyakara*) or painful (*Rujakara*).

## DEFINITION OF MARMA

From the above derivation, an uncertainty remains about the anatomical as well as the functional characteristic of *Marma*. The following definitions try to clarify these features of *Marma*

(i) Acharya *Vagbhata*, giving vivid anatomical features of *Marma* quotes that *Marma* may be the union of any two or more- the *Mansa*, the *Sira*, the *Asthi*, the *Dhamni*, the *Sandhi* with being the continuous seat of *Prana* or Life.

(ii) Similarly in *Ashtanga Samgraha*, Acharya *Vagbhata* specifies the clinical attribute that the site that pains on being hurt and/ or palpitate irregularly (*visham spandana*).

Acharya *Susruta* designates similar anatomical features as Acharya *Vagabhatta* but adds to it a unique quality that *Marmas* are with the grace of nature or by *Swabhav* the seat of spirit – the soul. Here it is necessary to be clear that in *Ayurveda Prana* – the Soul and life does not simile each other. Though *Prana* - the Soul is the utmost necessity of life but in *Ayurveda* life is said at the communion of Body, Mind, Sense and *Prana* - the Soul. It is interesting that though giving a vivid description of *Marmas* in *Charaka Samhita* Acharya *Charaka* didn't find it necessary to define it. This might be due to the use and fame of the knowledge of *Marmas* in ancient days.

Acharya *Sushruta* has classified these *Marma* on the basis of their location in the body, dimension and effects of injury (prognosis). Physician and surgeon in ancient time used the knowledge to heal. In all they have classified 107 *Marma*, where as in *tamil* tradition 108 and in *kalari* tradition number of *Marma* are 324<sup>3</sup>.

## ETIOPATHOGENESIS OF MARMAGHATA:<sup>4</sup>

There are four *Sira* which carry *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*, and *Rakta* situated in *Marma* and nourishes the whole body. If there is any damage to these *Siras* resulting into excessive loss of *Rakta Dhatu* (blood) consequently aggravation of *Vayu* takes place, which can further increased *pitta* cause intense pain. Due to increase of *pitta Dosha* there are symptoms like thirst, dryness, lack of concentration, giddiness, sweating and weakness in the body, which further lead in to death.

There are 37 *Marma* found in *Urdhvajatrugata* region that is domine of *Shalakyta Tantra* of *Astanga Ayurveda*. On this paper main emphasis given on these *Marmas* and are detailed as under

**Table number1:** Urdhvajatrugata marmas number origin effect of injury and size<sup>5</sup>

Name	Number	Anatomical origin	Effect of injury	Pramana/ Size
Kantha nadi	4	Sira Marma	Vaikalyakara	2 finger
Matrikanadi	8	Sira Marma	Sadyapranahara	4 finger
Shringataka	4	Sira Marma	Sadyapranahara	4 finger
Apanaga	2	Sira Marma	Vaikalyakara	½ finger
Sthapni	1	Sira Marma	Visalyaghana	½ finger
Phana	2	Sira Marma	Vaikalyakara	½ finger
Vidhura	2	Snayu Marma	Vaikalyakara	½ finger
Utkshepa	2	Snayu Marma	Visalyaghana	½ finger
Sankha	2	Asthi Marma	Sadyapranahara	½ finger
Seemanta	5	Sandhi Marma	Kalantarapranahara	4 finger
Adhipati	1	Sandhi Marma	Sadyapranahara	½ finger
Avarta	2	Sandhi Marma	Vaikalyakara	½ finger
Krikatika	2	Sandhi Marma	Vaikalyakara	½ finger

**1.KANTHANADI MARMA:**These are 2 types of *Neela* and *Manya* each, located in the neck on the either side of kanthanadi<sup>1</sup> (wind pipe) adjacent to each other. The both *Marmas* refer to a length of 2 finger in width. sometimes these *Neela* and *Manya* are together addressed as *Dhamni* also. Injury to these *Marmas* lead to dumbness, dysphasia and loss of taste.

The *Neela* may correspond to the glossopharyngeal branch of carotid artery supplying to tongue and *Manya* to thyroid artery and cricoid artery which supply to larynx. Any external injury at this site damage the above vessels cause haematoma of vocal cord consequently dumbness, dysphasia<sup>2</sup> and damage to glossopharyngeal nerve will lead into loss of taste.

**2. MATRIKA MARMA:** These are *Sira Marma*, totally eight in number located four on each side of the neck. they extend to a length of four finger width. In *Astanga Hridaya Samhita* the location of this *Marma* is seated to be in *Jivha* (tongue) and *Nasa*. Injury to this *Marma* immediately leads to death.

As sufficient description regarding these *Marmas* is not available hence there are different opinion regarding location of these *Marma*. One of the opinion, on the anterior surface carotid artery and jugular vein can be correspond to sirs *Matrika* and on the lateral side the subclavian artery and on the posterior side of the neck the vertebral artery<sup>3</sup>. These four of each side of neck amounting to total eight points corresponding to the vasculature which on injury lead to severe bleeding, syncope and death.

**3. VIDHURA MARMA:** this is *Snayu Marma* situated behind and below the ear retroauricular on either side of the head. Injury to this point lead to deafness. This is corresponding to ligament of sternocleidomastoid muscle tendon, beneath this there is a groove through postauricular branch of facial nerve supplying ear muscle and tympanum. Trauma at this site damage the above said nerve, rupture the tympanum and dislocation of ear ossicle resulting in to deafness.

**4. PHANA MARMA:** *Phana* is literally meaning the hood of the serpent. This is measuring half finger of the width, located on either side of the *Ghranamarga* (nose) interiorly and attached to nasal passage Those corresponds to olfactory fibers reaching the olfactory bulb just behind cribriform plate and the bulb resembling the shape of hood. So there is injury to this place will damage the olfactory bulb resulting into loss of perception of smell (anosmia).

**5. APANGA MARMA:** The *Apanga Marma* are the *Sira Marma* measuring half finger in width. It is located behind and below the tail of eyebrow on either side of Head near outer cantus. Injury to this *Marma* leads to blindness and dimness of vision.

This may correspond to anastomosis of inferior orbital arteries and 6<sup>th</sup> cranial nerve. Injury to this point cause hemorrhage, damage of 6<sup>th</sup> nerve and oedema of lid consequently loss of vision and dimness of vision takes place.

**6. AVARTA MARMA:** It is *Sandhi Marma* measuring half finger in width. The term *Avarta* literally indicates the twisting to the curve of eyebrow so called *Avarta Marma*. Injury at those site will leading blindness and disabled vision.

Injury at site transfer the force to optic nerve and also directly to eye ball which cause concussion and injury to the optic nerve and eye ball which lead into loss of vision and diminished vision.

**7. UTKSHEPA MARMA:** This is situated above the *Sankha* (temple) near the ending of hairs on the scalp (*Keshantah*). It is *Snayu Marma* measuring half finger width. The name of the *Marma* is probably derived from its surgical importance as it belongs to *Vishalyaghana* categories generally means to come out or extract. Immediate extraction of the *Shalya* (foreign body) lead to death. This is corresponding to tendon of temporalis muscle underneath this skull bone having intracranial cavity and the venous sinuses the wall of which are made of covering layers of the brain.

**8. STHAPANI MARMA:** This is located in between the eyebrow measuring half finger width. The effect of injury is just like *Utkshepa Marma*. Just beneath this area under skull bone there is venous reservoir of

brain, the superior sagittal and cavernous venous sinuses, so immediately removal of foreign body will cause excessive bleeding.

**9. KRIKATIKA MARMA:** This is sandhi *Marma* measuring half finger width located at meeting point of head and neck. Injury to this *Marma* lead into shaking head. It is corresponding to suborbital region where skull is attached with atlas and supported by ligamentum nuchae and captis muscle which keep the head in extension<sup>5</sup>.

**10. SHANKHA MARMA:** it is situated above the end of eyebrow *Bhruvo Pucchantaupari* and between ear and forehead (*Karna Lalataormadhye*), measuring to a length of half finger width. Injury to this *Marma* results into death. Anatomically it is corresponding to temple which superficially assumes triangular shape and it is constitute of parietal, frontal, maximal portion of skull and the ears.

**11. ADHIPATI MARMA:** It is a *Sandhi Marma* half finger in width, located at the top most portion of the body as a chieftain. This is corresponding to *Brama Rendhara* through when the soul leave the body will be considered. Inside the forehead and superiorly is located the conjoinment of *Sira sandhi*, which is representing outwardly by spiral of hairs on the top of the skull where injury leads to death.

This is region of anterior fontenele on the vertical groove of frontal bone. Underneath this saggital sinus of brain and sulcus between two hemisphere of the cortex are found. This falls interiorly on the line passing through mid-brain, brain stem and spinal cord.

**12. SHRINGATAKA MARMA:** It is located at the Union of *Sira* supplying to the nose, eyes, ears and tongue and measuring a length of four finger width. This is also found in context of *Nasya karma* and disease *Pinasa*. The invariably correspond to anterior fossa of skull i.e. cavernous sinus where many vessels supply to the nose, ear, eye and tongue are found. Some has correlated it with paranasal sinuses particularly ethmoidal, sphenoidal and frontal sinus which lies in vicinity. Here the course of cranial nerve 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> are also found. Injury to this place may cause cavernous sinus thrombosis or thrombophlabetis<sup>6</sup>.

**13. SIMANT MARMA:** The word *Simant* means the place of union or suturing. They are located on all the four side of head and five in number measuring four finger in width. This is the weakest point of skull, injury at this point cause concussion, hemorrhage or damage to the cortex or inside the brain. This disturb the normal pattern of neurons, also after injury there is inadvertently generate abnormal nerve connection consequently lead to giddiness, lack of concentration and epilepsy attach<sup>7</sup>.

## CONCLUSION:

Out of 107 *Marmas* about 34.5 percent 37 *Marma* are found above the clavicle *Urdhvajatrugata*. These are mainly *Vaikalyakara*, *Sadyapranahara* and *Kalantarapranahara* in nature and constituted by *Sira* and *Sandhi*. So, head is assigned as *Uttamanga*. *Marmas* are the structures or locations with multisystemic involvements and where various organizations like *Mansa*, *Shira* etc with subtle *Prana* - the Soul in the form of *Agni*, *Soma* or *Vayu* congregate to vitalize that precise spot. Hence injury to which leads to hazardous consequences varying from pain (*Rujakar Marma*), palpitation (*Vishalagnya Marma*), Dysfunction (*Vaikalyakar Marma*), to lethality (*Pranahara Marma*).

The concept of *marma* in *Ayurveda*, *chakras* in *Yoga* and meridian system in Acupressure/Acupuncture resemble each other closely. *Marma* can be viewed as the meridian point system of *Ayurveda*, corresponding to organs, nerves, and bodily systems. Through stimulation of *marma* by means of *Abhyanga* (massage), *Mardana* (Acupressure), Aroma therapy, *Pranic* healing, Herbs (*lepa*), *Raktamokshan* (blood letting) and *Agni karma*, the *Prana* (life energy) can be directed to remove blockages and stimulate energy flow, thus resulting in a healthy state of body, mind and spirit.

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