

REVIEW ARTICLE

Conceptual Study of *Trimarma* W. S. R. to *Sirah Marma*

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ABSTRACT

The science of *Marma* (vital point), i.e., *Marma Vijyaniam* is an extraordinary and dynamic part mentioned in classical texts of *Ayurveda* that has tremendous value while performing surgery. *Marma* is such an imperative and unique principle of *Ayurveda*. *Trimarma* is the basic organs of the body representing the three different systems – nervous, cardiovascular, and urinary system. *Trimarma* is gaining importance as “tripod of life” because they are more *Sadyopranahara Marma* than other *Marma*. *Sirah Marma* is considered first because trauma to the head causes disturbance in respiratory, circulatory, and temperature-regulating center in the brain area and may lead to unconsciousness and death. *Charak* stated that *Prana* is situated in *Siras* which is also called *Uttamangam* due to its control over all the *Indriya* (Sense). In this article, an effort is made to compile and analyze the fundamental concept of *Trimarma*.

1. INTRODUCTION

Marmas are certain vital points spread all over the surface of the human body. The *Marma* is said to be the sites where there is the conglomeration of *Mamsa*, *Sira*, *Snayu*, *Asthi*, and *Sandhi* and at these places, *Prana* resides, especially by nature.^[1] *Marma* is constituted by six vital elements, i.e., *Soma*, *Maruta*, *Tejas*, *Satva*, *Raja*, and *Tama* and where *Jivatma* resides. Hence, any injury to *Marma* proves to be fatal.^[2] All the classics analogously opine for 107 *Marma*^[3] in the body but on point of narration, only three of them – *Trimarma* – *Sirah*, *Hridaya*, and *Vasti* are mentioned. *Marma* of the trunk is more vital than the *Marma* of extremities, as the extremities are connected to and depend on the trunk. Even among the *Marma* of trunk, *Trimarma* is more important.

Etymology of *Marma*: The word of *Marma* has its origin from the Sanskrit root “Mring Marma” which means causing by death. In brief, *Marma* indicates the vital points which can give rise to death. Structure and composition of *Marma*: *Marma* contains *Soma* (*Kapha*), *Marut* (*Vata*), *Teja* (*Pitta*), *Sattva*, *Rajas*, *Tamas*, and *Bhuta Atma*. Hence, a person on injury to the *Marma* may not be alive. *Charaka* explained that *Marma* is such points where the sense of pain is felt more intensively compared to other parts of the body because *Marma* is closely related

to Chetna Dhatu. Acharya Charaka has given importance to *Vasti*, *Hridaya*, and *Murdha* among all the *Marmas*. *Marma* of the trunk is more vital than the *Marma* of the extremities, as the extremities are connected to and depend on the trunk. Even among the *Marma* of the trunk, *Hridaya*, *Vasti*, and *Shiras* are more important. Hence, Acharya Charaka has given importance to these three *Marmas* among 107 *Marma* because *Prana* is situated in these three *Marmas*. Hence, the *Dosha* affecting these places also affects the *Prana*. Thus, a person should always protect these three parts carefully *Dasha Pranayatana* (*Jivita Dhama*): *Prana-ayatana* means the residing place for the *Prana*. There are ten such places in the body where *Prana* resides. They are *Shanka*, *Marma Traya* (*Hridaya*, *Vasti*, and *Shiras*), *Kantha*, *Rakta*, *Shukra*, *Ojas*, and *Guda*. This shows the importance of *Trimarma* as explained by Acharya Charaka.

1.1. *Trimarma* (Three Vital Organ)

Trimarma are included in *Pranayatana*, i.e., site of *Prana*.^[4] As the base is destroyed, the dependent is also destructed. Likewise, the destruction of any of the three *Marmas* may destroy the *Prana*. One should protect these *Tri Marma* from external as well as internal injuries.^[4] *Trimarma* included in *Sadyah Pranahara Marma*.

1.1.1. *Sirah*

All the sense organs and the channels carrying the sensory and vital impulses from the *Sirah* are like the rays from the sun. This verse

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truly signifies *Sirah* as a *Trimarma* as it correlates it completely to the brain.^[5]

1.1.2. Hridaya

It is a structure which resembles a *Pundarika*, *Kamalamukulakaram* (lotus) in inverted position. When body is in active phase, it expands and contracts in inactive phase.^[6]

1.1.3. Vasti

Acharya Charaka also quotes the importance of *Vasti* as a *Trimarma* saying that it means that the region named *Vasti* is in the middle of *Sthula Guda*, *Mushka*, *Sevani*, and the *Nadi* (channels) transporting *Mutra* and *Shukra*. It acts as the reservoir of *Mutra*. As different rivers fill the ocean in a similar fashion, all the *Ambu Vaha Srotas* (channels) transporting water fill the *Vasti*.^[4]

1.1.4. Sirah Marma

Introduction derived from the root *Sru* with *Asun Dhatu* which is meant in the following subjects:^[7] That which is full of *Guna* – best qualities are *Sirah*, that which remains on top, above, other like a mountain or horn is *Sirah*, that which is most important or of supreme significance is *Sirah*. On which the other body organs dependent for their function is *Sirah*.

1.2. Definition and Site

Acharya Charaka in *Sutra Sthana* was the first to frame the definition of *Sirah* where he quotes that *Sirah* is a structure or place situated at top in the body and there in resides the *Prana* with all the senses. Hence, it is the best of all the organs. This definition of *Sirah* promotes us to believe *Siras* as brain.^[8] It is the top or foremost region of body, head, or skull (location of brain and senses). If *Sirah* Marma is injured or diseased can create an emergency or prove fatal.

1.3. Synonyms

Uttamanga, i.e., the best organ of the body,^[8] *Shirsha*, i.e., the upper part, top, tip, forepart - skull or head,^[9] *Mastaka*, i.e., *Shiraso Urdhva Bhaga*,^[10] and *Mastishka*, i.e., *Shirastho Majja*^[11] denote brain, widely accepted as vital spot of body *Marma*.

1.4. Anatomical Consideration

Our classics have not designated any separate anatomical position to *Sirah* as *Marma* or *Trimarma*. Collectively group of *Marma* forms *Sirah Marma*. *Urdhvajatrugata Marma* excluding neck *Marma* includes in *Sirah Marma*. As clarified in the definition of *Sirah* by *Acharya Charaka* physiologically, *Sirah Marma* is the location of *Mastishka* (brain). It is the residence of *Prana* and all *Indriya* (senses).

1.5. Importance

Importance of *Shiras*: *Shiras* upholds the *Indriya*, *Indriyavaha*, and *Pranavaha Srotas*, as the sun rays are the parts of the sun. The *Shiras* is known as the *Uttamanga*, as all the *Indriya* and *Prana* are seated in it.^[12] Hence, *Shiras* should be protected always with all efforts *Shaunakya* and *Kumarshira Bharadwaja* emphasized that head of the fetus develops first because it is the site of all the important *Indriya*. 107 *Marmas* (vital parts) in the human body and *Pradhana Marma* is *Sirah*, *Sadyopranahara* in nature.^[13] Injury to *Sirah* may lead to death of the patient.^[14] *Vagbhata* has described ten “*Jivita Dhatu*” in which *Sirah* is present.^[15] *Vagbhata* has compared human being with a tree, with roots at the top and branches at the bottom and defined head as a site where all sense organs along with the *Prana* resides.^[4] It is supreme of all organs as consciousness is present in it. As the base is

destroyed, the dependent is also destructed. Likewise, the destruction of any of the three *Marmas* may destroy the *Prana*. Hence, one should protect these three *Marmas* from external as well as internal injuries.^[16]

1.6. Marma within Sirah Marma

Vidhura, *Phana Apanga Avarta Utkshepa Shankha Sthapani Simanta Sringataka Adhipati*.

Injury of *Sirah Marma*^[17] *Manyastambha* (rigidity of neck), *Ardita* (facial paralysis), *Chakshu-Vibhrama* (giddiness), *Tamas* (darkness before eyes), *Udveshtana* (squeezing pain), *Chestanasa* (loss of motor functions), *Kasa* (cough), *Svasa* (respiratory difficulty), *Hanugraha* (rigidity of jaw), *Muka* (dumb), *Gadagada* (stammering), *Akshi-Nimilana* (ptosis), *Ganda-Spandana* (vibration of cheeks), *Jrimbhana* (yawning), *Lalasarava* (salivation), *Svarahani* (loss of voice), and diseases of face and tongue.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A literary review regarding *Rachnatmak* (anatomical) constitution and clinical aspect of *Trimarma* was done through various Ayurvedic classical texts, journals, and research papers. The collected references are critically assumed to frame the conceptual aspect. Since this is not a clinical trial, no clinical data are collected.

3. DISCUSSION

Although classics have explained 107 *Marmas* in detail, *Charaka* has emphasized and given importance to only *Trimarma Hridaya*, *Shiras*, and *Vasti*. The direct understanding of word *Marma* in ancient science was evident, but there were no adequate techniques to make out their original structural aspects involvement in particular *Marma Sthana*. Although classics have explained 107 *Marma* in detail, *Charaka* has emphasized and given importance to only *Trimarma* in decreasing order *Sirah*, *Hridaya*, and *Vasti* as tripod of life. *Marma* is the superficial parts as well as systemic organs with respect to *Trimarma*. *Trimarma* is the center points of life, *Sadyah pranahara Marma* and so if injured leads to death within 7 days. In the present era, knowledge of *Marma* is seen in the sports field, TCM, martial arts, *Kalaripayattu* as applied anatomy of *Marma Vijnana* to protect vital points.^[18]

External trauma that directly injures the *Marma* in turn creates disturbance in the homeostasis of body. If any *Marma* is affected rigorously, after a certain period of time, *Trimarma* is always affected, being seat of *Dosha* leading to interruption of function of *Trimarma*. Any disease afflicting to *Pranayatana*, complexity of disease, and prognosis in *Trimarma* is more severe than others. *Charaka* was less concerned about the external trauma that directly injures the *Marma* but being a physician, he was well concerned to the internal trauma caused by the vitiated *Tridosha* that generally affects these *Trimarma*. *Cakrapani* explains that nothing other than these *Trimarmas* has capability of hosting body. Hence, *Trimarma* highlighted the other *Marma* of the body.

4. CONCLUSION

Ayurveda Classic Text has explained 107 *Marmas* in detail, and *Charaka* has emphasized and given importance to only *Trimarma Hridaya*, *Shiras*, and *Vasti*. They are *Sadyopranahara* in nature as trauma results in immediate death of person. Just as *Soma*, *Surya*, and *Anila* do *Visarga Kriyas*, respectively, for sustaining the external world, similarly *Kapha*, *Pitta*, and *Vayu* do the same activity, respectively, for maintaining the

body. Similarly, *Hridaya*, *Vasti*, and *Shiras* do the above activities, respectively, for sustaining life. *Siras* is an organ or structure located at the top or foremost region of the body. *Siras* is a very important structure or part of the body as it is location of the brain and senses, etc. The synonyms like *Uttamanga*, *Aditya* directly clarify its important as *Marma* while the synonyms like *Murdha* glorify its action as a *Marma*. It is said as an organ, injury to which leads to fatal. When *Mastishka* is used as its synonym, it denotes brain and it is widely accepted as a vital spot of the body – *Marma*. Hence, it may be considered as skull with brain.

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9. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

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10. DATA AVAILABILITY

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