

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CLINICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF MARMA (VITAL POINTS IN AYURVEDA) IN HANDS, ACUPUNCTURE AND ACUPRESSURE- A REVIEW

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Abstract

Marma science is one of the special aspects deeply elaborated by Ayurveda. Marma are several vital points on the body having importance regarding traumatic effect. These points when exposed to trauma generate the symptoms from pain to fatal effect. These points should be protected from injury. On the other hand these marma are considered as healing points. Marma chikitsa provide tridosha- trigunasamnya (equilibrium) as these points are seat of prana. Another form of therapy related to body surface points is acupressure & acupuncture. These therapies use various meridian points to cure & prevent several diseases in palmar aspects of the hand. About 31 points are used as line of energy having effect of pressure on various organs when get pressurized and punctured. Ayurveda mention only five marma on palmar region. The present study reveals correlation with various marma point and meridian points specially located in palmer aspect of hand.

Keywords: Marma,
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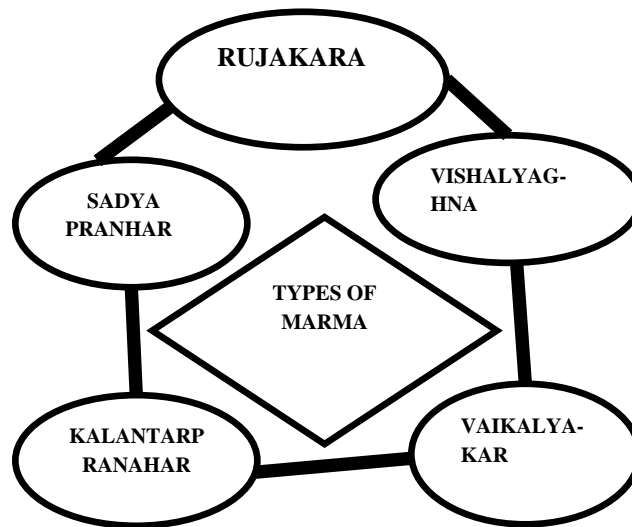
Introduction

Ayurveda literally means traditional science of life.¹ Ayurveda believes complete normal state of health. Marma (vital points) is one of the important aspects described in various ancient texts of Ayurveda. Knowledge of marma has been used since long time in surgery. Aacharya Sushruta defined marma as the vital points of the body which shows various fatal signs and symptoms on traumatic injury.² Depending upon traumatic effects and prognosis, various types of marmas i.e *sadhyapranahar* (sudden death), *kalantarpranahar* (death within short period), *vaikalyakar* (deformity due to trauma), *vishalyaghna* (person lives until removal of foreign body), *rujakar* (continuous pain due to trauma) mentioned in Ayurveda.³ These are superficial and deeply seated points on body that involves *dhamani* (artery) – *sira* (vein) – *asthi* (bone) – *mamsa* (muscle) – *snayu* (ligament) – *sandhi* (joint) where vital energy resides or flows through⁴. In spite of great importance, there is no direct mention of therapeutic use in ayurvedic literature. Now a day special therapy that is marma therapy evolved. Marma therapy involves utilization of these points for the purpose of *abhyanga* (gentle massage with oil) and *mardana* (massage). Marma points can be used to balance the *tridoshas* (basic components) at physical level and *trigunas* at mental level.

Related to points on body surface, acupressure and acupuncture are traditional therapies originated from china or else. Both the therapies uses pressure point and meridian point to regulate balance and hormone in body of patients⁵. Aacharya Sushruta mentioned 107 vital points which on injury generate various symptoms⁶. Aacharya classified them on the basis of location prognosis etc. The hand region contain five vital points such as 1) *kshipra marma* 2) *talahridaya marma* 3) *kurcha marma* 4) *kurchashira marma* 5) *manibandha marma*⁷. Whereas about 31 points are used for acupressure and acupuncture purpose⁸. These points are supposed to be related with the function of various organs. Aim of this article is to find out the correlation between these points located on palmer aspect of hand according to Ayurveda and Chinese therapy.

Discussion

Human body when exposed to trauma shows various sign and symptoms depending on severity and types of trauma. *Acharya Sushruta* mention 107 deep or superficial points on body surface when get traumatized produce various sign & symptoms not only on the basis of type of injury but on the basis of its constituents. Our physic comprises vessels, muscles, bones, joints, nerves, ligaments etc. everywhere in more or less proportion. According to *Acharya Sushruta*, the point where all the above structures meet and is the site of *prana* (vitality) is nothing but marma. *Acharya Vagbhata* considered *marma* as the points where special and unusual pulsation felt⁹. *Agni-Soma-Vayu* are also basic components of marma¹⁰. Depending on this composition, traumatic effects develop. To study the *marma sharir* accurately, marma classified as *sadhya-pranahar*, *kalantar-pranahar*, *vaikalyakar*, *vishalyaghna* and *rujakar*¹¹.



Marmas are classified again on the basis regions of body. Upper extremities contain 22 marmas. In each hand region, there is presence of five vital points of different prognostic value on trauma. Marma in hand :

- 1) **Kshipra** These are two in number having area of $\frac{1}{2}$ anguli. This marma lies between base of great toe and base of index fingure. According to structural classification it is included in *snayu* (tendons as chief constituent) marma and according to prognostic classification it is *kalantar-pranahar* (death may occur within 15 day to one month on severe injury). Even being *kalantar-pranahar*, on very severe injury it may cause immediate death.
- 2) **Talahridaya** These are also two in number. In palmar region of hand these are located in the straight line of middle fingure. Area is of $\frac{1}{2}$ anguli. According to structural classification, it is *mamsa* (muscle) marma according prognostic classification it is *kalantarpranahar*. Traumatic effect is severe pain and may lead to death.
- 3) **Kurcha**¹²- These are two in number in the area of four anguli. Located two anguli above *kshipra marma*. It is included in *snayu* (tendons) marma as per structural classification and in *vaikalyakar* (trauma causes debility) as per prognostic. Traumatic effect is tremors and hand deviation.
- 4) **Kurchashira**¹²- Two in number located in the area of one *anguli* and is distle to *manibandh sandhi* (wrist joint). According to both types, it is *snayu marma* and *rujakar marma* (traumatic effect is severe or chronic pain). On trauma it causes unbearable pain and swelling.

- 5) **Manibandha marma**¹²- Two in number and located in the area of two *anguli* at *manibandh sandhi*(wrist joint).

It is *sandhi* marma and *rujakar marma*. Traumatic effect is joint weakness and loss of function.

Every marma when compared with modern science, it definitely coincides with the structure mention at that area causing fatal effect described by *Acharyas*. As these are vital points, knowledge is of great importance during surgical procedures. *Marma dnyana* is considered to be half knowledge of surgery¹³.

With the reference of *Ayurveda* now a day these *marma* points are been used for the purpose of special *chikitsa* i.e *marma chikitsa*. *Abhyanga* (massage) ,*mardana* (pressure) etc. procedure done at the marma point with avoidance of trauma.*Hrudbasti* is one of the best examples applied in cardiac disorder. These procedures proved to be effective due to their action on component like muscle, nerve, vessels, at the site of marma.by improving tone, circulation etc. Body surface point are also been integrated part of Chinese traditional therapy like acupressure and acupuncture. Acupressure is system of complementary medicine. The points where line of energy is located termed as meridian points which are used for therapeutic purpose. Acupressure is non-invasive form whereas acupuncture deals with treatment of insertion of needle in body.These point are said to be healing points as therapy is effective for relief from pain¹⁴.

When we consider points on palm with respect to view of different therapies, *Ayurveda* described five *marma* on palmar aspect of the hand occupying total area of 8 *anguli*. Acupressure mention about 31 points related to various organ. The comparison depending only on the basis of location on palmar aspect point are as follows:-

	<i>Marma</i> according to ayurveda	Related points as per acupressure
1	<i>Kurcha</i>	Spinal(column), Uterus/Prostate,Bladder, Lumbar, Thyroid and Parathyroid
2	<i>Kurchashira</i>	Ovary& Testis, Uterus, Prostate and Stomach
3	<i>Manibandha</i>	Lymph, Sciatic nerve, Ovary/testis, Intestine
4	<i>Kshipra</i>	Head and Brain, Pituitary, Pineal and Hypothalamus, Neck, Throat, Thyroid and Parathyroid
5	<i>Talahridaya</i>	Adrenal, Intestine, Spleen, Kidney, Hip and Thigh and Solar plexus

If acupressure therapy is applied at the area of *marma* points on hand it may affect the systems or organs in following manner

	<i>Marma</i> according to Ayurveda	Related points as per acupressure
1	<i>Kurcha</i>	Digestive process by improving agni Improves flow of prana particularly to hand Helpful for overall sensory acuity
2	<i>Kurchashira</i>	Helpful for digestion and agni in general Helpful for reproductive function Promotes visual acuity
3	<i>Manibandha</i>	Energises the reproductive system Helps reduce excess fat deposits Helps maintain functional hand movement
4	<i>Kshipra</i>	Supports heart function Supports lung function Provides lubrication for the heart
5	<i>Talahridaya</i>	Supports heart and lung function Helps strengthen the immune system

Acupuncture therapy when done in the marma area may develops effects according to meridian point relations as follows

	Marma according to Ayurveda	Related points as per acupuncture
1	<i>Kurcha</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promotes visual acuity ➤ Helps relieve mental stress
2	<i>Kurchashira</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Calms the nervous system and vata dosa ➤ Promotes a healthy muscular system ➤ Has considerable influence on hand muscle
3	<i>Manibandha</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Energises the reproductive system ➤ Promotes healthy joint's and bone growth ➤ Helps relieve skeletal pain
4	<i>Kshipra</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Stimulates the lymphatic system ➤ Improves flow of prana to whole body ➤ Provides lubrication for the lungs
5	<i>Talahridaya</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Controls the motor function of the hands ➤ Good for giving and receiving healing energy ➤ Helps strengthen the immune system

Conclusion

Specific points on the body surface used for treatmental purpose in acupressure and acupuncture. Likewise *marmachikitsa* is one of the emerging applied aspect of *marma*. On comparison between these 3 therapies, area of marma in hand coincides with about 14 meridian points of acupressure and acupuncture each. In each area of *marma*, 2-3 meridian points are located. While doing *marma chikitsa* with massage, along with improvement in tone and circulation in that particular area may cause better digestive, endocrine, cardiac and immunological effects. While applying acupuncture, one should avoid trauma to these *marma* points for prevention of traumatic effect mentioned in *Ayurveda*.

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