



Review Article

EVALUATION OF *STHAPANI MARMA*: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Marma points represent crucial areas within the human body, as described in various Ayurvedic texts. These points are more than just surface landmarks; they are deeply rooted physio-anatomical structures. Defined as the intersection of *Mamsa*, *Sira*, *Snayu*, *Asthi*, and *Sandhi* in a specific location, *Marma* serves as the focal point of *Prana*. Ayurveda identifies 107 such *Marma* points in the body. Prominent scholars like *Acharya Sushruta* and *Vagbhatta* have classified them into different categories based on location, structure, prognosis, number, and measurement. When injuries occur to certain *Vishlyaghna Marma* points, an individual can survive as long as the foreign object remains lodged there; however, death is imminent once it is removed. Life can be sustained if the object naturally falls out post-suppurative. *Vishlyaghna Marma* points are closely related to *Vayu* dominance. Among these vital points is the *Sthapani Marma*, situated between the two eyebrows or superciliary arches. In Tamil, both "*Varmam*" and "*Marmam*" refer to these vital points. *Varmalogy* therapy manipulates *Varmam* locations where Pranic energy is concentrated or blocked. Stimulating specific *Varmam* points releases trapped energy that restores balance in affected regions due to trauma. *Siddha* science recognizes *Tilartha Kalam* at the same position as *Sthapani Marma* in Ayurveda – the glabella region.

This article will delve deeper into the structures underlying the *Sthapani Marma* and attempt to draw correlations with *Siddha* science while exploring ways to stimulate this particular *Varmam* point effectively.

INTRODUCTION

Marma refers to essential points in the human body, as described in various Ayurvedic writings. These points go beyond simple surface markers and include deep physiological and anatomical structures. *Marma* is the meeting point of muscles, veins, ligaments, bones, joints, and life energy (*Prana*), with its origins in ancient Vedic wisdom.

Numerous ancient Indian manuscripts, such as the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Puranas*, and *Samhitas*, illustrate the deep understanding of *Marma*.

The *Rigveda* mentions warriors and kings wearing protective gear called "*Varma*" to cover their *Marma* points during battles. The most effective *Varma* comes from prayers and mantras due to their spiritual power. In the epic *Ramayana*, *Meghnada*- the son of *Raavana*- uses his knowledge of *Marma* points in an attempt to defeat *Lord Rama* and *Lakshmana*.

Etymology of *Marma*

Amarkosha indicates that '*Marma*' originates from the Sanskrit word '*Mri - Manin*,' or '*Mri - Praanatyage*,' meaning points causing death or extreme suffering.

Acharya Sushruta explains that *Marma* consists of a combination of muscles, veins, ligaments, bones, and joints where *Prana* is present^[1]. There are five categorizations of *Marma* based on area, structure, outcome, quantity, and size.

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Classification of Marma

In Ayurveda, 107 recognized *Marma* points exist in the body. These points are arranged according to different aspects and were primarily documented by *Acharya Sushruta* and *Vagbhata*:

1. Area Classification (*Shadang Bhedena*)
2. Structural Classification (*Rachana Bhedena*)
3. Outcome Classification (*Parinaama Bhedena*)
4. Quantity Classification (*Sankhya Bhedena*)
5. Numerical Classification (*Parimaana Bhedana*)

Regional classification, also known as *Shadang Bhedena*, where the human body is divided into six distinct areas:

1. Head (*Shiras*)
2. Trunk (*Madhyam Sharir*)
3. Two upper limbs (*Urdhwa Shakha*)
4. Two lower limbs (*Adho Shakha*)
 - *Shakhagata Marma* - 44 total *Marmas*, with 11 in each *Shakha*
 - *Prishtagata Marma* - 14
 - *Urah* and *Udaragata Marma* - 12
 - *Urdhwajatrugata Marma* - 37

This intriguing system was developed by *Acharya Charaka* and *Acharya Vagbhata*^[2,3].

Structural Classification (*Rachna Bhedana*)

Name of Marma	As per Sushruta	As per Vagbhata
<i>Mamsa Marma</i>	11	10
<i>Sira Marma</i>	41	37
<i>Snayu Marma</i>	27	23
<i>Asthi Marma</i>	08	08
<i>Sandhi Marma</i>	20	09
<i>Dhamani Marma</i>	-	09
Total	107	107

According to *Parinama* (prognosis of wound), *Marmas* are divided into 5 types namely^[4].

1. *Sadya Pranhara* (19)
2. *Kaalanatara Pranhara* (33)
3. *Vishalyghna* (3)
4. *Vaikalyakara* (44)
5. *Rujakara Marma* (8)

The concept of *Vishalyaghna Marma* now comes into play. These are *Vayu*-dominant *Marma* points that may naturally dissipate after suppuration (*Paaka*). There are three *Vishalyaghna Marmas* consisting of two *Utkshepa* and one *Sthapani*.

Literary Review of Varma

Let's explore the captivating world of *Varma*, which refers to vital points found throughout the body harboring *Pranic* (life) energy. When pressure is exerted on these points, it can cause significant harm or bodily changes. Yet, controlled pressure applied for specific durations can treat numerous ailments.

Interestingly, the terms *Varmam* and *Marmam* represent the same concept - "secret" - derived from Tamil and Malayalam/Sanskrit languages respectively. Delve deeper into the therapeutic world of *Varmam* Therapy, where manipulation of *Varmam* points liberates blocked *Pranic* energy, providing relief to affected areas by restoring the energy flow.

Methods of Stimulation^[5]

Each *Varmam* point in our body holds unique dimensions such as length, breadth, and depth. To stimulate these *Varmam* points, two promising techniques are employed - *Kaibaagam* and *Seibaagam*.

Kaibaagam is a specialized method where specific fingers are used to stimulate points, while *Seibaagam* refers to the application process itself. There are 12 diverse and effective methods of application based on the dimensions of *Varmam* points, delivering stimulation with precision.

Measuring and Determining the Right Amount of Pressure for Treatments

Understanding finger measurements and the appropriate amount of pressure required for stimulating *Varmam* points is crucial in successfully treating diseases.

Maathirai comes into play here - a unit of force designed explicitly for *Varmam* stimulation. *Maathirai* represents the force needed for touching *Varmam* points using our fingers.

Various levels of *Maathirai* pressure are exerted depending on how the *Varmam* point is touched: 1/4th *Maathirai* from lateral and medial sides of thumb's nail bed or interphalangeal joint; 1 *Maathirai* from tip to first bone of middle finger; 3/4 measure when using 3/4 portion of this region, and 1/2 *Maathirai* when using 1/2 portion. However, beginners should cautiously use only 1/4 or 1/2 *Maathirai* pressure to avoid causing potential harm due to improper application.

DISCUSSION

Anatomical Site: Located between the two eyebrows or superciliary arches.

Type: Classified as a *Sira Marma* based on structural classification.

Number and Measurement: Singular in number, and *Ardha Angula* in *Praman*.

Anatomical Exploration of Sthapani Marma

Sthapani Marma: A critical point in the Glabella region.

The *Sthapani Marma* is an important anatomical location found in the glabella region, situated between the two eyebrows. Classified as a *Sira Marma*, this area primarily consists of vascular structures.

Located anterior to this point are the supratrochlear artery, nerve, and vein. The supratrochlear artery branches from the ophthalmic artery and anastomoses superiorly with the supraorbital arter. Injuries to this region can lead to profuse bleeding in the brain or subdural hemorrhages, potentially causing death. However, if a foreign object such as an arrow remains in place, it may prevent excessive bleeding and minimize the risk of death.

The frontal air sinuses, which are found behind the glabella within the frontal bone, open into the middle meatus. These sinuses are susceptible to injury, leading to bleeding due to damage to their mucous membranes even if the forehead skin remains unharmed. Infection of clots in these sinuses may result in sinusitis or more severe complications such as extradural abscesses.

Fractures of the sinus's posterior wall can have fatal consequences; they permit infections and air to reach meningeal spaces. This danger highlights how injuries to frontal air sinuses positioned behind the glabella can escalate rapidly, involving duramater or even causing cerebrospinal fluid leakage through the nose.

In cases where scalp tears occur, they are perceived as compound injuries to frontal sinuses. Here, air-filled brain ventricles due to exterior *Vayu* illustrate how outside forces penetrating the injury site can lead to fatal outcomes

CONCLUSION

Sthapani Marma reveals that it can be considered as the region of glabella and having vascular structure present at the site. *Sthapani Marma* is present in between the two eyebrows.

Foreign bodies that become lodged in a person's skin or other bodily tissue can lead to significant damage to blood vessels, tissues, and overall health. If removed incorrectly, these foreign objects may cause blood vessel rupture, bleeding, and inadequate oxygen supply to surrounding tissues, resulting in anoxic conditions.

In such situations, *Prana* (the life force) can be said to be leaving the body. However, if a foreign body remains embedded at its location, a natural process called tissue granulation initiates repair by creating new layers of cells that eventually seal off damaged blood vessels. This response helps prevent profuse bleeding and may ultimately save a person's life.

It's crucial that health professionals are well-versed in handling these situations to balance damage prevention with potentially life-saving intervention. Proper medical training and techniques are necessary for safely removing foreign bodies without causing further harm to patients.

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