

**CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF LOHITAKSHA MARMA AND ITS APPLIED ASPECT**Pradeep Kumar Pal\*<sup>1</sup>, Neera Saini<sup>2</sup>, V. N. Mishra<sup>3</sup> and H. H. Awasthi<sup>4</sup><sup>1</sup>Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Rachana Sharir, Faculty of Ayurveda, IMS, BHU, Varanasi.<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor, Department of Roga Nidana and Vikriti Vigyana, Faculty of Ayurveda, Dr. Vijay Ayurvedic College, Kaithi, Varanasi.<sup>3</sup>Professor and Former Head, Deptt. of Neuromedicine, Faculty of Medicine, IMS, BHU.<sup>4</sup>Professor and Former Head, Department of Rachana Sharir, Faculty of Ayurveda, BHU.**\*Corresponding Author: Pradeep Kumar Pal**

Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Rachana Sharir, Faculty of Ayurveda, IMS, BHU, Varanasi.

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**ABSTRACT**

Marma therapy is an ancient Indian practice whose focus is the manipulation of subtle energy (Prana) in the body for the purpose to support the healing process. Marma therapy is based on the utilization of 107 points in the body which are considered as access points to body, mind, and consciousness. Knowledge of Marma allows the practitioner to influence the flow of Prana through both the gross and subtle bodies for the purposes of restoring health and peace of mind. According to Acharya Sushruta Lohitaksha Marma is the vital point in the upper part of the front of thigh at the region of femoral triangle. It is also known as Uru Moola (root of thigh). Injury at the site of Lohitaksha Marma (vital point of femoral triangle) leads to heavy blood loss, Pakshaghata (paralysis) and ultimately death occurs. Now a day's our life pattern is very fast and competitive and road side accidents are very common. So it is very essential to understand the concept of Marma and its anatomy with physiology. Through this paper, an effort has been done to put various applied aspects of Lohitaksha Marma. Marma therapy is an important part of Ayurveda that helps to maintain health by cleansing blocked energy.

**KEY WORDS:** Lohitaksha Marma, Marma therapy, Prana, Vital points, Femoral triangle.**INTRODUCTION**

The concept of Marma persists from Vedic period. Although it is very much old by time frame but its principles are applicable even today like earlier era.<sup>[1]</sup> Concept of Marma also given by Acharya Charak but has focused mainly on Tri Marmas<sup>[2]</sup> (Sira, Hridaya and Basti). Acharya Sushrut & Acharya Vagbhata have described in detail about each Marma in their respective Sharir Sthan.<sup>[3,4]</sup> Knowledge of Marma is not separate from Ayurveda. Discussion of the Marma points is found in most of the great texts of Ayurveda but the most famous text to explore the subject is the Sushruta Samhita. Acharya Sushruta has described the locations of these Marma points, as well as how these influence Prana. He stated that it is important for the surgeon to have knowledge of these vital points for the purposes of avoiding them, as to cut into them could result in a catastrophic (harmful, ruinous) outcome.<sup>[5]</sup> An important principle of Marma therapy is quite simple, where a strong blow can cause injury, a mild touch can cause healing and this is the most important principle of Marma massage.<sup>[6]</sup> When the knowledge of Marma is combined with an ability to both perceive and direct the flow of Prana, Marma Chikitsa becomes a powerful tool for influencing the healing of every known condition.<sup>[7]</sup>

Till date Marma therapy is not well known or practiced except by a few practitioners in India.

During Marma therapy, an extremely light stimulation of points on the body is applied. This gets rid of obstructions from that vital point and provides physical and psychological recreation and potency. Marma therapy is a dominant process and a therapy that works with these subtle and responsive liveliness points to unlock the energy outlets in the body are called Srotas. Marma points, when gently pressed on the skin can stimulate a chain of positive events.<sup>[8]</sup>

The word Marma is of Sanskrit origin 'Mrin Maranae'. The Sanskrit phrase, "Mriyatae asmin iti Marma" means 'there is possibility of death or serious damage to health when these points are got injured.'<sup>[9]</sup> Marma in Sanskrit also means hidden or secret. Marma (vital point) is actually the seat of Prana (life). As Acharya Susruta has stated that Marma points are the juncture on the body where two or more types of tissue meet, such as Mamsa (muscles), Sira (veins, arteries, Dhamani), Snayu (ligaments), Asthi (bones) and Sandhi (joints).<sup>[10]</sup> These are mostly accepted as 107 points that are present in anterior and posterior aspects of body. In other sense

Marma means mortal points, sensitive points, and weak vulnerable points.

In Earlier era, this science of Marma was more developed for the safety purpose of Kings. It was also developed one of the most important techniques for fighting in battle fields. For the treatment purpose it is very essential for physician to know anatomy and physiology related to all vital points. In wars warriors used these points as target to easily destroying enemies. To explore the knowledge of Marmas in clinical fields, it is necessary to know the actual structures present at those sites. The direct understanding of these Marma in ancient science was evident, but there were no sufficient techniques to make out their original structural aspect involved. Acharya Dalhan have defined the Marma as "Maryanti iti Marmani"<sup>[11]</sup> i. e., it is spot on the body surface where if any injury or trauma occurs, causes sudden death. So, these points should be protected from any type of injury. Vagbhata says that, these are the points which are painful on application of pressure & shows abnormal pulsation. Marma therapy utilizes 107 points or "doorways" into the body and consciousness. The mind is considered as the 108<sup>th</sup> Marma. Major Marma points are also corresponding to the seven Chakras, or energy centres of the body, while minor points radiate out along the torso and limbs. These points range in size from half to four Angula in diameter. The points were described well in detail, centuries ago in the "Sushruta Samhita", a classic Ayurvedic text. Any serious injuries at these points lead to various effects from death to permanent deformity.

Description of 107 Marmas given in Samhita is being classified into 5 types on the basis of structural involvement in it, as 1) Mamsa Marma (muscular vital point), 2) Sira Marma (vascular vital point), (3) Snayu Marma (ligament vital point), 4) Asthi Marma (vital point of bone) and 5) Sandhi Marma (vital energy points of joint).

Another classification of Marma is on the basis of after-effect of injury to Marma these are as follows, 1) Sadhya Pranhara Marma (causing sudden death), 2) Kalantar Pranhara Marma (death after some time), 3) Vishlyaghna Marma (type of Parinam), 4) Vaikalyakara Marma (causing deformity), 5) Rujakar Marma (causing pain).<sup>[12]</sup> As per classical description Lohitaksha Marma is such vital region in the upper anterior aspect of thigh which falls under Sira Marma according to structural consideration & Vaikalyakara Marma on the basis of Viddha Lakshana (injury effect) by both Acharya Sushrut & Vagbhata.<sup>[13]</sup>

#### Lohitaksha Marma

Etymology- the term Lohitaksha suggests that the Marma sites may look like bloody appearance of eyes (applied for blood vessels), Lohita (red) Akhsa (axis) all blood vessels in axis.

Region- Lies on both upper and lower limb near the point of origin of root of limbs.

Numbers- Total four, 2 in upper limbs and 2 in lower limbs.

Anatomical site or surface anatomy-

At upper limb- Lies below the Ansha Sandhi (shoulder joints).

At lower limb- Lies below the Vankshana Sandhi (hip joints) below Vitap Marma.

Measurement- Its diameter is about half an Angula.

Structural Anatomy – It is Sira Marma.

Prognostic view- It is Vaikalyakara Marma.

Injury results- Excessive blood loss, Pakshaghat (paralysis), atrophy of limbs and ultimately Mrityu (death) occurs.

#### DISCUSSION

In Ayurveda the concept of Marma has a vital role. Diseases affecting these vital parts have bad prognosis. Certainly we can say that the diseases or lesions away from the Marmas can be treated easily. Marmas are the seat of Soma, Vayu, Teja, Sattva, Rajas, Tama and Jivatma. When these places, the Marma points, got injured there can be a fatal response. Keeping this concept in mind one should try to apply Marma Chikitsa to provide the cure for different body ailments. According to Ayurveda all the harmful factors (either internal or external) are responsible for the vitiation of Tridoshas as Vata, Pitta and Kapha.<sup>[14]</sup> This vitiation emerges as pathological states in the organs and tissues. In Ayurveda emphasis has been given to attempt to prevent this process in different stages of the vitiation of these Doshas.

These stages can be categorized as follows-  
Samcaya (stage of accumulation) Prakopa (stage of proliferation) Prasara (stage of spread).

Sthana Samsraya (stage of localization) Vyakta (stage of manifestation) and Bheda (stage of differentiation).

In every Marma existing structural contents may be different. If there is predominance of muscle tissue, it is known as 'Mamsa Marma'. Although other structural tissues are also present in that particular spot but with predominance of muscle tissue. This concept is behind the classification or categorization of all the Marmas. The above description states some of the fundamental principles on which Marma science and therapy is based. With the help of Marma therapy we can fulfil the aims of Charaka Samhita as well as the motives of Maharsi Susruta. As a curative treatment it can be used widely in many diseases and as a supportive treatment it can also be used along with any medical science, without impediment, along with its drugs and procedures.<sup>[15]</sup>

Marma therapy contributes to increase or recharge physical, mental and spiritual energies. On the physical

level it also helps to revitalize or reenergize the body tissues; at cellular level, it improves the vital functions like digestion, respiration, blood circulation and excretion and on the psychological level it improves the mental faculty by directing it in the positive direction. It also offers a way to treat many psychosomatic ailments without any drugs. It harmonizes the functioning of nervous and endocrine systems to control psychological disorders. On the spiritual level, reasoning of mind, regulation and transformation of thoughts in positive direction helps to concentrate towards the ultimate goal of life. As a preventive measure it helps to cope with the unfavourable situations arising from different diseases. Marma therapy is also responsible for the perception of psychic centres. These methods are supposed to attain the ultimate transformation in inner consciousness. When an individual starts practising self- Marma therapy he experiences gaining of physical, mental and spiritual energy.

Marma Chikitsa can be used in the following ways—

- a) To treat the diseases of nerves and brain.
- b) In traumatic neurological or neuro-surgical lesions, traumatic paraplegia, hemiplegia and monoplegia.
- c) In orthopaedic lesions, especially prolapsed inter vertebral disc etc.
- d) To reduce the pain of nerves, muscles, ligaments, bones and joints.
- e) To produce anaesthesia during any surgical interference.
- f) To improve the function of body organs by achieving homeostasis.
- g) To activate the mal-developed or deformed body parts or musculature etc.

Self-Marma therapy converts the total negative energy of the body into positive energy. Due to injury this process becomes obliterated and acts against the body physiology. All the stimulations from the body to brain carry negative energy and with the effect of this negative energy the sense organs cannot engage in their subjects properly. So this feeling becomes painful. In this condition Marma therapy can convert the feeling of illness into a feeling of joy and happiness. With self-Marma therapy regularization and control of all the body energies is possible. Regular self-Marma practice prevents all those ailments which are generated by the daily household tasks. Pain in extremities, backache, joint pain, muscular spasm and compression of nerve root due to slip disc and vertebrae can be easily treated by Marma therapy. Regular self-Marma therapy can provide all the benefits of Yoga, Pranayama, aerobics and other physical exercises. The biochemical changes which are produced by Yoga, Pranayama, aerobics, weight lifting and other exercises in the body are available within minutes with self-Marma therapy. Self-Marma therapy is the easiest and the shortest way of exercise. Apart from energizing the body a number of diseases can be treated by Marma therapy. To popularize Marma therapy it is important to observe the effect of

Marma therapy in different orthopaedic and neuro-muscular diseases in a large scale. In the present times, the development of Marma therapy as harmless, the cheapest and the easiest therapy is the need of the day. For this purpose we have to take responsibility to spread the self-healing technique for benefits of society in terms of Marma therapy.

The Siras (artery, vein) which nourish the entire body, are seated in Marma, so when these are injured there will be Kshaya of Dhatus (depletion of tissues chiefly Jiva Dhatu or Rakta) by that Vata getting increased producing severe pain. “Uru” means thigh, Lohitaksha Marma can be understood in the above 1/3 of anterior compartment of thigh. On the basis of classical description, the location of Marma can be exactly denoted at the site of apex of femoral triangle.<sup>[16]</sup> Femoral triangle is a pyramidal space formed by muscles of upper part of thigh and lies at, from the junction between anterior abdominal wall and lower limb above 1/3 of anterior aspects of thigh up to middle of thigh at the beginning of adductor canal.<sup>[17]</sup> Femoral triangle is bounded by laterally with medial border of sartorius muscle and medially by medial border of adductor longus muscle (muscle of medial compartment). Floor is formed by from lateral to medial iliopsoas muscle, pectinious and adductor longus muscle. On the basis of dissection and correlation of ancient literature it is found that the exact position of Lohitaksha Marma is the site of apex of femoral triangle. The major content of apex of femoral triangle is femoral vessels (artery and its branches, vein and its tributaries), cutaneous branch of femoral nerve (it is the longest sensory branch of femoral nerve and can be blocked in the case of severe pain) and branches of obturator nerves.<sup>[18]</sup> These points have a crucial role in the formation of anastomosis in the adductor canal, if any injury / pathology occur at these points it implicates the blood supply of area around it. The injury effect of Lohitaksha Marma is Sakthi Shosha (atrophy of limbs/muscles) due to implication of blood supply. Muscles undergo atrophy due to Raktakshaya (blood loss). This Viddha Lakashana (injured symptoms) of Lohitaksha Marma is compared with the Sakthi Shosha Lakashan (atrophy of muscles) mentioned by Acharyas. So we can trace the exact site of Lohitaksha Marma.<sup>[19]</sup> One of the great services we can render is to concentrate our efforts and mind on healing, this being a noble cause. It is true that without our heartfelt involvement, assistance and participation, this science cannot flourish or carry on. It is advisable to judge this science, learn this science, research this science, work hard for this noble cause everywhere we live and spread it with the spirit of offering to suffering humanity.<sup>[20]</sup>

## CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it can be concluded that the Lohitaksha Marma is situated in the above part of thigh (at apex of femoral triangle) where the important vessels of lower limb are present. The anatomical structure to be considered under Lohitaksha Marma - chief part of

femoral and profunda femoris artery and its branches as descending genicular artery & its branches are seen accompanying along with femoral vein and its tributaries, saphenous nerve, nerve to vastus medialis & two divisions of obturator nerve. Lohitaksha Marma is considered as Sira Marma (due to dominance of vessels in its anatomical structure) and Vaiakalyakara Marma according to effect of injury.

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