



IMPORTANCE OF TRIMARMAS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO VASTI MARMA

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ABSTRACT

In the deep and vast sea of the knowledge of Ayurved, *Marma* is one of the exclusive and unique concept. *Acharya Sushruta* who belongs to the school of surgeons, had paid special attention on one hundred and seven (107) vulnerable points in the body called as “*Marma*”. *Acharya Charak* has dealt its clinical significance in “*Trimarmeya Chikitsa Adhyaya*” & “*Trimarmeya siddhi Adhyaya*” under three headings ‘*Vasti, Hridaya and Shir*’. Even today we do not go beyond the excretory, cardiovascular and neurological status of the patient while assessing the prognostic status. A patient is regularly checked periodically for his urinary, heart and respiratory conditions. *Charak* has also stressed on these factors and identified *Vasti, Hridaya & Shir* as *Trimarma* which means the vital organs of the body, on mercy of which living body depends. In spite of mentioning the total number of *marmas* as 107, he focussed on explaining *Trimarmas*, and has given utmost importance to “*Vasti*” as *marma* by placing it among the three *marmas* of the body. Present paper is an effort made to compile and analyze references available in Ayurvedic texts and emphasizes on proper understanding of basic concept of *Trimarma*.

KEYWORDS: *Marma, Vasti, Trimarma.*

INTRODUCTION

Marma is defined as the confluence of *Mamsa* (muscle), *Sira* (vessels), *Snayu* (ligaments), *Asthi* (bone) and *Sandhi* (joints), naturally and specifically forms the seat of life.^[1] The *Marma* are composed of all the five structural elements but has been classified into five categories on the basis of predominant structural entity i.e. *mamsa, sira, snayu, asthi* and *sandhi*;^[2] and five on the basis of *parinaam* (effect of injury) i.e. *Sadya pranahara, Kalantarpranahara, Vaikalyakara, Vishalyaghana and Rujakar*.^[3] *Marma* are constituted by six vital elements i.e., *Soma, Maruta, Tej, Satva, Raja and Tamas* and where *jivatma* resides.^[4] Hence any trauma on *Marma* region may cause loss of function of that organ or site and even death may occur depending upon the site and strength of the trauma.^[5] Among all 107 *marmas*, the *Trimarma* are said to be *pradhan marmas* because vitiation of *tri-doshas* effects more on these three *marmas* than the other *marmas*.^[6]

Trimarma: *Vasti, Hridaya* and *Shir* are said to be *Trimarma*. *Marma* of the trunk are more vital than the *Marma* of extremities, as the extremities are connected to and depend on trunk. Even among the *Marma* of trunk *Trimarma* are more important. All these three lies under *Sadya pranhar* type of *Marma*. *Acharya Charak* said these *Trimarma* as root of life- “*Tanmulatvata*

sharirasya”.^[7] *Acharya Chakrapani* says that these *Trimarmas* have the capability of hosting the body- “*Tanmulatvata tadashritvata iti*”. *Marma traya* are included in *Dashvidh Pranayatanas*.^[8]

Vasti: It is a thin walled guard shaped organ, composed of muscles and membranous structures situated in lower abdominal or pelvic cavity.^[9] *Acharya Charak* also quotes the importance of *vasti* as a *trimarma* by saying that the region named *vasti* lies in the middle of *sthul guda, mushka, sevani, nadis* transporting *mutra* and *shukra*. It is the reservoir of *mutra*, as all the rivers fills the ocean similarly all the *ambuvaha srotas* fills *vasti*.^[10]

Hridaya: *Hridaya* is place of chetna.^[11] It resembles like a lotus bud and is directed downwards. These lotus buds are open during day time and night time they close slightly.^[12] By this one can understand the contraction and relaxation of the Heart. *Hridaya* is present in between *stana, uras and koshta*, seat of *satva* and injury leads to quick death.^[13]

Shir: *Shir* is a structure or place situated at the top in the body and therein resides the *prana* with all the senses. So it is best of all the organs i.e., *uttamanga*.^[14] All the sense organs and the channels carrying the sensory and vital impulses from the *Shir* are like the rays from the

sun.^[15] This verse truly signifies *Shir* as a *Trimarma* it correlates it completely to the brain.

VASTI MARMA

Introduction

Vasti is derived from the root 'Vas' after adding suffix 'Tich'. According to Shabdakosha the root 'Vas' is used as- 'Vas Nivase'; 'Vas acchadane

According to Shabdastome Mahanidhi

'*Vaste avrunoti mutram, Nabheradhobhage mutraadhare sthanam*'.

Synonyms of *Vasti*: *Mutrashaya*^[16], *Mutrasthanam*^[17], *Mutravasti*^[18]

Akriti: *Vasti* is mentioned as '*Alabu sadrisha*^[19] i.e. like that of a bottle guard and *Dhanurvakra*^[20] i.e. curved like a bow.

Definition and Site: *Vasti* is name given to *Mutrashaya* and it is present in *abhyantara kati* (within pelvic cavity), and it is made up of small quantity of *mansa and shonita*. It is a *sadya pranahara marma* i.e. any trauma excluding injury due to the calculus to *Marma* as a whole is dangerous to life immediately.^[21] Acharya Charak says that *Vasti* is placed in between the *sthul guda, mushka, sevani, shukravaha nadis*.^[22]

As per Regional Anatomy and relations of *Vasti* are concerned it is said that it is surrounded with different structures viz. *Nabhi, Prishtha, Kati Mushka, Guda, Vakshana, and Shepha*. The other structures having interrelation with *Vasti* and situated in pelvic cavity are *Vasti shir, Paurusha, Vrishana, and Guda*. This structure is mentioned as extremely thin and membranous, covered with *sira* and *snayu* all around it. It is provided with one aperture, which is directed downwards, thus giving the organ a shape like that of a gourd.^[23]

Embryological Consideration: Embryologically, *Vasti* is originated from *Matrija Bhava*.²⁴ It is formed by *uttam sara bhaga* (essence) of *Rakta* and *Kapha* by pachaka action of *Pitta* and *Vayu* along with organs like *Antra* and *Guda*.^[25]

Importance: *Vasti* is included under *Dash Pranayatanas* which are the ten places of *prana* and we get the same in concept of *Marma*, where the *prana* or life resides.^[26] *Mutrashaya* is also a mala adhara (site of mala or excreta because *mutra* is also a mala) and it is *Uttam Pranayatana*.^[27] Ashtanga Samgrahakara also explained *Dash Vidha Pranayatanas* as *Murdha, Jihva bandhana, Kantha, Hridaya, Nabhi, Vasti, Guda, Shukra, Ojas, and Rakta*, out of these first seven are known as *Maha Marma*.^[28] Vagbhatt Dwitiya used the term '*Jeevita Dhama*' for *Pranayatanas*.^[29]

Vasti is portrayed as one of the '*Ashaya*' called *Mutrashaya*.^[30] Acharya Vagbhatt says that *Adhara* (*Ashaya*) are seven in number and *Mutradhara* is one

among them.^[31] *Vasti* is also included as one of the *Panchdash* (15) *Koshthangas*^[32] and *Shatpanchashat* (56) *Pratyangas*.^[33] *Vasti* is accepted as mula of *Mutravaha Srotas* by all the classics.^[34]

Regarding classification of *Marma*, *Vasti* is *Madhya sharir gata* or *Udargata Marma* (*Shadanga bheden*),^[35] *Snayu Marma* (structurally),^[36] with *Pramaan* equal to '*Swapani tal*',^[37] i.e. a person's *Vasti* is equal to his '*pani-tal*' in measurement which is considered as 4 finger. It is *Sadya Pranahara Marma*^[38] i.e. emergently fatal and lead to death within a week (7 days)^[39] *Sadya Pranahara Marmas* are '*Agneya*' (igneous) and as qualities of agni are extinguished quickly the patient dies immediately.^[40]

INJURY TO VASTI MARMA

Acharya Charak described the symptoms produced by direct injury on *Vasti* as "*Vasti Marma Abhighat Lakshanas*" that there is retention of *Apana vayu, mutra* and *mala*, pain in *Vankshana* (groin region), *mutrendriya*, and *Vasti*, stiffness in *Vasti, Nabhi, Kukshi, Guda, and Shroni Pradesh* along with production of diseases like *Vastikundal rog, udavarta, gulma, vatashthila* etc. when there is injury on *Vasti Marma* in *Siddhi sthan adhyaya 9*.^[41]

Acharya Sushruta while explaining the surgical procedure of *Ashmari* says that in women, uterus is very close to the *Vasti* (bladder) on its back, the incision in them should be made superficially otherwise it may cause wound discharging urine. Even on single tearing of bladder, except in case of the wound made for calculus, one does not survive; in case of calculus, however, bladder torn at two points, can't be managed successfully; one whose bladder is torn on one point as incision for (extracting) calculus survives because of the post operative management, incision made as prescribed by the scripture and increment of calculus due to urinary flow.^[42]

He further states that if urinary channels are cut, death takes place due to filling of bladder with urine.^[43]

DISCUSSION

The origin of *marma* is mainly related to war. People observed some of the points or areas in our body having vital role in body mechanisms. These observations were done mainly during war time and handling patients with emergency such as injuries. The scholars of the ancient time recognised 107 such vital points. They called them as *Marmas*.

Though the other Acharyas have explained 107 *Marmas* in detail, Acharya Charak in *Charak Samhita* continued describing only the Tri-marmas – *Shir, Hridaya* and *Vasti*. Acharya Charak contemplated himself as a Physician. He had a clear demarcation in the field and limitation of *Aushadha Chikitsa* and *Shastra Chikitsa*. e.g

In Arsha Chikitsa Adhyaya he advises surgical treatment in chronic Arsha referring it as the field of Dhanvantari Vaidyas.

Moreover as a physician *Acharya Charak* was less concerned to the complaints of surgical involvement like Trauma etc on the contrary he frequently dealt the diseases evolving by *Tri-doshas*.

The vitiation of the *Tri-doshas* affects more on the *Tri-marmas* than the other *Marmas*. Thus he limited himself to the narration of the *Tri-Marmas*. He explains the general treatment of *Trimarmas* in *Tri-marmiya Chikitsa Adhyaya*. In the *Siddhi Sthana (adhyaya 9)* he explains the logic behind the evolution of the diseases of *Trimarmas* denoting the vitiated *Vata dosha* to be the main factor responsible for the vitiation of other *doshas*. He adds '*basti*' is the ideal treatment for *Vata Dosha*.

The importance of *Trimarmas* can be studied in the view of clinical importance as well as surgical importance.

Clinical Importance

Acharya Charak being a physician was less concerned to the external trauma that directly injures the *Marmas* which inturn creates disturbance in the homeostasis of the body. He was well concerned to the internal trauma caused by the vitiated *Tri-doshas*, and the vitiated *Tri-doshas* generally affects these *Trimarmas*. Thus *Acharya Charak* limited himself to the description of the three.

If any *Marma* affected rigoursly, after a certain period the *Tri-marmas* are always affected, being the seat of *doshas*, and it becomes responsible of its ultimate effect. *Acharya Charak* said these *Trimarmas* as the root of life – '*Tanmulatavata sarirasya*'. *Acharya Chakrapani* explains nothing other than these *Trimarmas* have the capability of hosting the body- '*Tanmulatavata tadashritvata iti*'.

The serious injury leads to vitiation of *Vata* which further vitiates *Pitta* and *Kapha*. This vitiated *Tri-doshas* then travel through out the body leading to interruption of the functions of *Tri-marmas*. Thus the ultimate target is *Trimarmas* so *Acharya Charak* purposefully elaborated them than the others.

One more reason behind that might be, the patients coming to a physician will be more complaining about the diseases of *Trimarmas* as comparable to the other *Marmas*, why because, often they get involved in the internal pathogenesis by the vitiated *doshas*.

When these *Trimarmas* get disturbed as a complication of other diseases then the prognosis of that disease will be poor. Thus *Acharya Charak* might have observed this and decided to describe only the three.

Surgical Importance

The importance of *Marma* in surgery can be known from the fact that *Acharya Sushruta* says, *Marmas* as *Shalya Vishyardha*. Also the other *Marmas* generally produce their disturbance, only when injured by some external trauma like a cut during the surgery. So it becomes the subject matter of a surgeon.

Vasti Marma, its *Viddha Lakshanas* are explained in *Trimarmeeya Siddhi Adhyaya* by *Charakacharya* which includes many diseases like *Udavarta, Gulma, Anaha, vata-mutra-varcho nigraha vankshana- mehan –vasti shool, vastikundal rog , nabhi- kukshi- guda –shroni graham* etc. Similarly, in *Trimarmiya Chikitsa Adhyaya*, *Acharya* described the *chikitsa* of *Udavarta, anaha*, along with *Mutrakriccha* under *Vasti Prakarana*. Both these diseases are related to GIT but he mentioned it under heading *Vasti Marma Chikitsa*. So he must have taken *Vasti* as a broad area extending all over the abdominal area, which is not confined to just a bladder area only.

CONCLUSION

Marmas are the vital parts of the body, injury to which may produce disability of that organ or even death. *Vasti, Hridaya* and *Shir* are called as *Trimarma* because these three are more important than all other *Marmas*. So, one should protect these three *marma* from external as well as internal injuries. *Acharya Charak* took a broad area while explaining *Trimarma*. Trunk region is divided into two parts – thorax (above diaphragm) and Abdomen (below diaphragm). The *Marma* present above diaphragm were considered as *Hridaya Marma* and below diaphragm as *Vasti Marma*. So *Vasti marma* covers a large area of abdomen. So urinary system as a whole should be considered as *Vasti Marma*, which is *Uttam Pranayatana*.

This is just a preliminary attempt to interpret the hidden meanings in our texts. The reference quoted are authentic and the commentary of these are direct form of the text itself. It is just an effort to reorganize the scattered references in a proper order with logical reasoning for better understanding of the subject to aid in the planning of management of disease.

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