

A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF MARMA CHIKITSA IN KATIGRAHA

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Article Received on 05/06/2024

Article Revised on 26/06/2024

Article Accepted on 16/07/2024

ABSTRACT

Katigraha was first described as an independent disease entity in the *Gada Nigraha*, within the *Vatavyadhi* chapter. This same description is also Found in *Bhavaprakash*. *Katigraha* occurs when *Vata Dosha*, with or without *Ama Dosha*, Settles in the *Kati*, leading to pain and stiffness in the *Katipradesh* (lumbar region). *Acharya sharangdhar* also mentioned *Katigraha* in *Vataja Nanatmaja Vyadhi*. With its increasing prevalence in today's world, efficient management with swift and lasting effects is essential. In such cases, *Marma Chikitsa*, an alternative *Ayurvedic* therapy, is recommended. Multiple sessions are necessary for optimal results. *Katigraha* can be effectively treated, irrespective of its severity or duration. This study emphasizes 5 specific *Marma Sthana* (energy points) for managing *Katigraha*, based on relevant literature. This conceptual study could be valuable from both clinical and surgical perspectives.

KEYWORDS: *Katigraha, Marma Sthana, Marma Chikitsa, Ayurveda.*

INTRODUCTION

In the sixth chapter of *Sharir Sthan*, *Acharya Sushrut* describes *Marma* as the junction of *Mansa, Sira, Snayu, Asthi*, and *Sandhi*, with *Prana* (vital life force) residing at these points. Consequently, an injury to any *Marma* can result in severe consequences.^[1] In *Ashtang Hridaya Sharir Sthana* chapter fourth *Acharya Vagbhatta* gave rather distinct description concerning *Marma*. *Acharya* defined, as *Mamsa, Sira, Snayu, Asthi, Sandhi, Dhamni*, are collectively present are known as *Marma*. *Katigraha* as a separate disease entity has been mentioned for the first time in *Gada Nigraha*. The chief complaint of *Katigraha* is *Kati Shula* (backache). *Vata (saama Or niraama)* movement in to *Kati* and residing there produces the pain.^[2]

Acharya Shodhala, in his description of *Katigraha*, emphasizes pain as a key symptom. In a specific scenario, pain is localized to the *Katipradesh* or Lumbo sacral and sacroiliac region. This pain may result from vitiated *Vyaana Vata*, leading to dryness of *Shleshmaka Kapha* in the joints and subsequent friction. Alternatively, if the vitiation is caused by *Abhighaata*, pain can occur due to damage to the *Sandhi* and surrounding structures. Typically, there is no radiation of pain to the lower limb, but in certain cases of lower back

disorders involving intervertebral disc defects, pain may extend due to nerve root compression. The Sanskrit word *Katigraha* is made out of 2 words, i.e. *Kati* and *Graha*.

Kati: *Kati* is a synonym of *Shroni*(pelvis).**Graha:** *Graha* means seizing, holding, catching or obstruction.

वायुः कक्ष्याश्रितः शुद्धः सामो वा जनयेत् रूजम् कटी ग्रहः स विजेयः पङ्गु सक्थिदश्रितः
(ga. Ni. 19/160)

According to *Gada Nigraha*, pain arises due to stiffness caused by the movement of *Saama* or *Niraama Vayu* into the lumbar region (*Kati*). This indicates the presence of a *Samprapti* involving *Dhatu Kshaya* (tissue depletion) and *Marga Avarodha* (obstruction). *Acharya Shodhala* describes *Katigraha* as a condition where *Vata Dosha*, with or without *Ama Dosha*, settles in the lumbar region (*Katipradesh*), leading to pain and stiffness. *Katigraha* can be categorized as a local disease rather than a systemic disease and its cardinal features are as Follows:

- *Kati shoola* -Pain in lower back with or without radiation.

- *Kati stambha*- Stiffness of the lumbar region.
- *Kati graha*- Restriction of movement of lumbar region.

Katigraha is an age related and work related painful condition. Sometimes many patients are unable to do their normal routine work. Keeping in mind the high prevalence, rate of disability in productive span of life, intensity of symptoms of disease, and lack of current effective treatment, there is a need to find immediate relief from *Katigraha* and to avoid repeated surgeries, a

conceptual study of *Marma Chikitsa* has been analysed. *Marma Chikitsa* is thought to provide significant relief by its specific mode of action in *Katigraha*. Hence the present study is being undertaken to find out the most effective method to treat the disease. *Acharya Sushruta* has described one hundred-seven *Marma*. The detail of *Marma Sthana* used in the Management of *Katigraha* are *Bruhati Marma*, *Parshvasandhi Marma*, *katiktaran Marma*, *Nitamba Marma*, and *Kukundar Marma*.

Description of the *Marma Sthana* being used for *Marma Chikitsa* of *Katigraha* has been given below:

Bruhati Marma

- स्तनमूलाद्भ्रयतः पृष्ठवंशस्य बृहत्यौ नाम, तत्र शोणितातिप्रवृत्तिनिमित्तरूपद्रवैर्मियते।
(सु.शा. 6/26)

Location	<i>Acharya Sushruta, acharya Vriddha Vagbhatta, Acharya Laghu Vagbhatta and Acharya Bhavprakash</i> stated that the location of <i>Bruhati Marma</i> is <i>Stanamuladubhayata Prushtavansha</i> in back region. ^[3]
Number	Two (in back region)
Measurement/Size	Width of half a finger. (About 1cm)
Structural Anatomy	It is <i>Sira Marma</i> in nature.
Prognostic Status	<i>Kalantar Pranahara Marma</i> .
Injury Results	An Injury to these <i>Marmas</i> causes excessive bleeding which ultimately results into death. There is a risk of blood vessel rupture from a penetrating injury, which can lead to death from bleeding and subsequent complications.
Anatomical Site / Surface Anatomy	It is situated on a back, both sides the <i>Pristhavamsa</i> (vertebral column) at the level of <i>Stanamula</i> (base of the breast).
Underlying important Anatomical structures & their applied anatomy	1. Vascular content - Subscapular and Transverse cervical artery. 2. On the etymological basis of the term <i>Bruhati</i> , - The base of lungs, diaphragm and bare area at inferior angle of scapula along with the subscapular artery or intercostal vessels behind the plura in the intercostal space.

Parshvasandhi Marma

- अधःपार्श्वान्तरप्रतिबद्धौ जघनपार्श्वमध्ययोस्तिर्यगूर्ध्वं च जघनात् पार्श्वसन्धी, तत्र लोहितपूर्णकोष्ठतया म्रियते (सु.शा. 6/26)

Location	<i>Acharya Sushruta, Acharya Vriddha Vagbhatta, Acharya Laghu Vagbhatta and Acharya Bhavprakash</i> stated that the location of <i>Parshvasandhi Marma</i> in back region is <i>Adharparsvantarpratibaddhau Jaghanparshvamadhyoastiryagurdhvanch Jaghanat</i> . ^[4]
Number	Two (in back region)
Measurement/Size	Width of half a finger. (About 1cm)
Structural Anatomy	It is <i>Sira Marma</i> in nature.
Prognostic Status	<i>Kalantar Pranahara Marma</i> .
Injury Results	An Injury to it leads to death due to severe haemorrhage and accumulation of blood in the abdomen.
Anatomical Site / Surface Anatomy	According to <i>Acharya sushrut</i> it is situated near the lower end of flanks, to the side and above the buttocks and flanks, to the side and above the buttocks. Location of this <i>Marma</i> right and left of the lowest lumbar vertebra from the sacrum up to the top of the 12 th rib. This is a point between two <i>Paarshva Urah</i> and <i>Koshth Parshva</i> , and also this point falls above the pelvic girdle. <i>Parshva sandhi</i> denotes the space immediately after 12 th rib on both side.
Underlying important anatomical structures & their applied anatomy	According to Dr. Ghanekar- 1. Common iliac arteries According to Dr. A K Pathak- 1. Renal arteries arising from the abdominal aorta and renal veins According to Dr. Patil 1. He is considered the site of <i>Marma</i> being located between the highest point of iliac crest and sub costal region (floating ribs). 2. Probable structures – lower part of liver (right) and spleen (left) or inferior vena cava, abdominal aorta, hilum of kidney.

Katiktaran Marma

- तत्र पृष्ठवंशमुभयतः प्रीतिश्रोणिकाण्डमस्थिनी कटीकतरुणे नाम मर्मणी, तत्र शोणितक्षयात् पाण्डुर्विवर्णो हीनरूपश्च म्रियते ।
(सु.शा. 6/26)

Location	Acharya Sushruta, Acharya Vriddha Vagbhata, 148 Acharya Laghu Vagbhatta and Acharya Bhavprakash stated that the location of Katiktaran Marma in back region is Prushtavanshamubhayata Pritishronikandamasthini. ^[5]
Number	Two (in back region)
Measurement/Size	Width of half a finger. (About 1cm)
Structural Anatomy	It is <i>Asthi Marma</i> in nature.
Prognostic Status	<i>Kalantar Pranahara Marma</i> .
Injury Results	An Injury results loss of blood, anemia, and the distortion of the hip, which gives the person an unsightly appearance, there is a possibility of rupture or dislocation of the bones. This can lead to crush injuries to the blood vessels and nerves, causing severe anemia and further distortion of the hip area, ultimately resulting in death.
Anatomical Site /Surface Anatomy	Anatomically situated on the back adjacent to both the sides of the lower spine where both the hip bone joints with the sacrum.
Underlying important anatomical structures & their applied anatomy	1. According to Dr. R.R Pathak and Dr. V.S. Patil The posterior aspect of the ilium, bifurcation of the common iliac artery opposite the lumbosacral articulation, into the external iliac and the hypogastric arteries, the corresponding iliac veins and the sacro-iliac ligaments should be taken as the anatomical contents of the <i>Katikataruna Marma</i> . 2. According to Dr. Ghanekar They prefer to consider the sciatic notch as a <i>Katikataruna Marma</i> .

Nitamba Marma

- श्रोणिकाण्डयोरुपर्याशयाच्छादनौ पार्श्वान्तरप्रतिबद्धौ नितम्बौ, तत्राधःकायशोषो दौर्बल्याच्च मरणं; (सु.शा. 6/26)

Location	According to Acharya sushrut it is situated above the <i>shronikanda</i> (ala of ilium) which covers the <i>ashaya</i> (<i>mootrashaya</i> and <i>malashaya</i>) and connect the lateral part of the vertebral column. ^[6]
Number	Two (in back region)
Measurement/Size	Width of half a finger. (About 1cm)
Structural Anatomy	It is <i>Asthi Marma</i> in nature.
Prognostic Status	<i>Kalantar Pranahara Marma</i> .
Injury Results	Injury of <i>Nitamba Marma</i> leads to <i>Adhah Kaaya Shosha</i> i.e. emaciation of the lower parts of the body, including the pelvic region, butts and lower limbs which leads to <i>Dourbalya</i> (extreme weakness) eventually resulting in gradual death.
Anatomical Site /Surface Anatomy	According to Acharyas, it is situated at the <i>shronikanda</i> (ala of ilium). The <i>Marma</i> looks to be located at the upper part of the iliac bone, which covers the pelvic organs and unites on both the sides laterally.
Underlying important anatomical structures & their applied anatomy	1. Skin 2. Gluteus Maximus 3. Gluteus Medius 4. Superior Clunial Nerve 5. Superior gluteal artery and vein 6. Ilium bone (Ala of ilium), Crest According to Dr. Ghanekar 1. <i>Nitamba Marma</i> to be ala of ilium According to Dr. A K Pathak and Dr. Patil 1. Floating ribs, 2. Lumber plexus and other important structures near by.

Kukundar Marma

- पार्श्वजघनवहिर्भागे पृष्ठवंशमुभयतो (नातिनिम्ने) कुकुन्दरे नाम मर्मणी, तत्र स्पर्शाज्ञानमधः काये चेष्टोपघातश्च।
(सु.शा.6/26)

Location	Acharya Sushruta, Acharya Charaka, Acharya Vriddha Vagbhatta, Acharya Laghu Vagbhatta and Acharya Bhavprakash stated that the location of <i>Kukundar Marma</i> in back region is <i>Sphichoupari Unnat bhagau</i> . ^[7]
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Number	Two (in back region)
Measurement/Size	Width of half a finger. (About 1cm)
Structural Anatomy	It is <i>Sandhi Marma</i> in nature.
Prognostic Status	<i>Vaikalyakar Marma</i> .
Injury Results	Fracture or dislocation of this joint (Lumbo sacral joint) may cause damage to the spinal cord in terms of concussion or contusion or bruising depending upon the force of trauma and may produce spinal shock which ultimately may lead the underlying organic rupture and precipitate fascial paralysis involving the sensory or motar loss in the lower part of the body.
Anatomical Site /Surface Anatomy	According to 1. Dr. Gananath sen – Ischial Tuberosity. 2. Jay Deo Vidyalkankara – on either side of the vertebral column 3. Dr. R.R. Pathak – Sacro-iliac articulation 4. Dr. V. S. Patil and Dr. Ghanekar- Ischial Tuberosity. ^[9]
Underlying important anatomical structures & their applied anatomy	1. Fascia- Superficial and deep lamina of thoracolumbar fascia. 2. Ligaments -Joint capsule, long dorsal ligament, iliolumbar ligaments. 3. Muscle-Gluteus maximus(lateral), piriformis(lateral) muscle, Coccygeus (lateral margin of sacrum). 4. Blood vessels-Superior gluteal artery (below and lateral to inferior margin) 5. Nerves -Superior and inferior gluteal nerve.

Probable mode of action of Marma Chikitsa

Marma Chikitsa is the precise technique of touching specific points on the body at crucial moments.^[8] This practice is a significant aspect of *Pranic* healing, which is closely linked with *Vata Dosha*, associated with deep-seated, chronic, and degenerative diseases such as *Katigraha*. *Marma Chikitsa* is one of the safest, most non-invasive, and cost-effective therapies available, with no side effects and no prior preparation needed. It aligns with *Sushruta's* principle of *Hastamaeva Pradhantamam Yantram*. In the ninth chapter of *Siddhithana – Trimarmiya Siddhi*, *Acharya Charak* has explained that *Marma* is the points of the body where an association of *Chetna Dhatu* is found. Due to the association of *Chetna Dhatu* when these points get injured, the sensation of pain is felt most as compared to other parts of the body.^[10] By applying the right amount of pressure on these *Marma Sthana*, the therapy can stimulate these vital spots, causing biochemical changes in the brain and body. This process can alleviate symptoms such as pain, stiffness, and numbness, with effects that are immediate and long-lasting.

Technique of Marma Chikitsa^[11]

Dr. Sunil Kumar Joshi has been working on *Marma Stimulation* with a very simple method of giving Pressure on these points; the rate of applying pressure is in accordance with the heart beat and respiratory Rate. This technique depends upon three basic things

1. Identification of *Marma Sthana*.
2. Stimulating *Marma Sthana* in specific manner with The help of thumb and fingers.
3. Relaxation of *Marma Sthana*.

Five *Marma Sthana* can be used *Bruhati Marma*, *Parshvasandhi Marma*, *katiktaran Marma*, *Nitamba Marma*, and *Kukundar Marma*.

Treatment Protocol

The treatment involved the administration of *Marma Chikitsa*. The present study includes stimulation of 5 *Marma Sthana* that is *Bruhati Marma*, *Parshvasandhi Marma*, *katiktaran Marma*, *Nitamba Marma*, and *Kukundar Marma* & these will be stimulated 15-18 times on average in a single sitting.^[12] The details of the administration are as follows.

Duration of study: 21 days

Follow-up: 7th day

Table 1: Treatment Protocol.

SN	Marma Name	Stimulation Time	Frequency	Duration
1.	<i>Bruhati Marma</i>	0.8 sec	15-18 Times	Twice a day
2.	<i>Parshvasandhi Marma</i>	0.8 sec	15-18 Times	Twice a day
3.	<i>Katiktaran Marma</i>	0.8 sec	15-18 Times	Twice a day
4.	<i>Nitamba Marma</i>	0.8 sec	15-18 Times	Twice a day
5.	<i>Kukundar Marma</i>	0.8 sec	15-18 Times	Twice a day

- Steady and moderate pressure will be applied Slowly and gently.
- Pressure will be increased gradually depending Upon pressure strength.

DISCUSSION

Marma Chikitsa is a key element of *Ayurvedic* medicine that involves applying pressure or stimulation to specific *Marma Sthana* to promote the flow of *Prana* (life force energy). This technique is used to treat various illnesses

and is particularly effective for relieving discomfort in the joints, bones, muscles, and nerves. *Vata*, which governs all bodily sensations, can cause disruptions when it becomes imbalanced, leading to pain. By activating specific *Marmas*, pain can be alleviated due to

their analgesic effects. *Marma Chikitsa* works on the neuroendocrine system by sending nerve impulses to the brain through pressure or stimulation. Pressure should be applied to the *Bruhati Marma*, *Parshvasandhi Marma*, *katiktaran Marma*, *Nitamba Marma*, and *Kukundar Marma*, which helps reduce pain in *Katigraha*, and relax the body. Research indicates that *Marma Chikitsa*, is a safe and effective complementary therapy for managing pain, numbness and stiffness in *Katigraha*.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the present study provides valuable insights into the mode of action of *Bruhati Marma*, *Parshvasandhi Marma*, *katiktaran Marma*, *Nitamba Marma*, and *Kukundar Marma*, in Pain management for *Katigraha* through *Marma Chikitsa*. The study has established the importance of a holistic approach to pain management, which takes into account the physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of the individual. By stimulating these *Marma Sthana*, *Marma Chikitsa* restores the flow of vital energy and promotes healing at the cellular level, leading to significant pain relief. The findings of this study have significant implications for the use of *Marma Chikitsa* as a safe and effective alternative and Complementary therapy for pain management in *Katigraha*. However, further research is needed to establish the scientific validity of *Marma Chikitsa* and to explore its full potential in pain management.

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