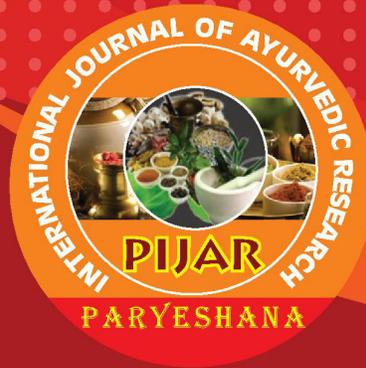


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UNDERSTANDING OF AGNI IN THE CONTEXT OF SADYAPRANAHARA MARMA

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ABSTRACT

Sadyapranahara *marmas* are unique amongst the classification because of their fatal effect after injury i.e. causes death within a week or earliest. Our classics very clearly tell us that factor responsible for producing this *vidha lakshnas* is *Agni* which is considered as major composition of *Sadyapranahara marmas*. *Sadyapranahara marmas* are having outmost importance in *marma shareera* as all the structures involved in forming these *marmas* are having much more importance when viewed from structural and functional point of view. The loss of *Agni* is considered as major cause of death when *sadyapranaha marma* becomes very important to know the pathophysiology leading to death (loss of *prana*) due to injury to these *marmas*.

KEY WORDS

Marmas, Sadyapranahara marmas, Agni.

INTRODUCTION

The word *marma* is derived from the Sanskrit root word –*Mri* indicative of *jeevasthana*¹ (place of life). That is vital spots which hold the *jeeva* or *prana* (life) of an individual. These are the vital areas which can produce death or results in various diseases which are difficult to cure if injured². *Acharya Sushruta* has devoted a separate chapter in *Shareera*

Sthana for *marma shareera*. Here the types, locations, structures and pathophysiological changes of *marmas* are explained in detail. One amongst these classifications is the prognostic type, in this classification *marmas* are divided into 5 types i.e. *Sadyapranahara, Kalantarapranahara, Vaikalyakara, Vishalghna* and *Rujakara marmas*³. Among this classification, *Sadyapranahara marmas* are of great

importance because of their fatal effects produced after injury. An injury may lead to death immediately or within 7 days. Other symptoms caused by injury are imperfection of sense organs, loss of consciousness, bewilderment of *mana* and *budhi*, and various types of severe pains and death. These *marmas* are predominated by *Agni Mahabhuta* and loss of Agni cause immediate death of an individual.

AGNI AS A FACTOR FOR SURVIVAL

Agni is causative factor for healthy and long life span, loss or decreased *Agni* in human body, will lead to abrupt stopping of growth and development of tissues of body leading to irreversible damage followed by death. *Ahara drayas* are not in adaptable form so that process of digestion and assimilation take place for formation of body tissue, hence the *Agni* is employed to convert (cook) the food and render it fit for the digestion, so that each and every cell of the body is nourished. *Agni* lives in every living being of universe thus it is called as *Vaishvanara*. Any derangement in *Agni* may lead to disturbance in all above said factors. So it is understood that *Agni* is the substratum of life i.e. life resides in *Agni*.

AGNI AS A FACTOR FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Agni is the causative factor for

nourishment of body, growth and development of an individual. *Agni mahabhuta* is in the form of sun who does *dahana, pachana*, in the universe, similarly it is understood that *pitta* performs the same function like *Dahana, Pachana* and nourishment of the body⁶. In healthy body, formation, mental performance and maintenance of temperature-all these are attributes of *Agni (pitta)* which is present inside the body and death is for sure if *Agni* is lost or imbalanced due to factors like infliction of injury at *marmas* or various fatal diseases.

AGNI AND PRANA

Prana is the universal principle of energy. *Prana* is the Sanskrit word used for the "life force" *Prana* is a energy that drives life, the power that animates the body, enlivens the mind and spurs the soul. *Prana* is the base or *adhara* of life or *jeevana*⁷. *Acharya Sushruta* has explained *Agni* as *Prana* in *Shareera Sthana* i.e. it's presence is life and absence is death⁸.

In *Charaka Samhita*, *Acharya Charaka* while explaining the *dasha pranayatanas*, includes *Trimarmas* i.e. *Shira, Hridaya and Basti* in *pranayatanas* in *sutra sthana*⁹ and *shad marmas* i.e. *murdha, kantha, hrudaya, nabhi, guda and basti* as *pranayatanas* in *Shareera Sthana*¹⁰. These *marmas* are also included by *Acharya Sushruta* in *Sadyaparanaha marmas* that means *Prana* resides in these places. *Agni* can be directly accepted as *prana* because

while explaining the *Dwashapranas Acharya Sushruta* also include *Agni* as one among the *Pranas*. In *Vedas*, *Agni* is named as *Tanoonpata* which means the body does not get destroyed in presence of *Agni*. Infliction of injury at some vital part of body which are predominated by *Agni* leads to loss of *Ushma* followed by destruction and death of body. *Acharya Vagbhata*, in *Nidana Sthana* mentioned that *Bala, Arogya, Ayu* are under the influence of *Agni*.¹¹ He also explained that suppression of *Agni* is the main causative factor for dreadful diseases. Decreased *Agni* will lead to loss of *prana* making us understand that person is dead.

Sdyapranahara marmas are *agneya* in nature and it is mentioned that injury to these *marmas* causes immediate death due to loss of *Agneya guna*.¹²

It is understood that repair and nourishment is hampered due to absence of *ushma*, leading to irreversible loss followed by death. These *sadyapranahara marmas* are such vital points on body which on injury causes loss of *Agni* resulting in death of an individual.

DISCUSSION

Agni is the important integral part of body. The word *Agni* in general language gives the meaning of fire. In the living organism, it maintains the structural and functional integrity by performing the vital activities like *Pakadi*

karmas (Biophysical and biochemical changes). All such activities concerned to digestion and metabolism is under the control of *Agni*. In *Sadyapranahara Marmas*, various synonyms of *Agni* are mentioned like *Vaishvanara, Vahni, Tanoonata, Anala, Pitta*⁵ etc.

CONCLUSION

Agni can be considered as *Prana* as it is the requirement of all the cells of body for their survival and function. Importance of *Agni* can be very well understood by its comparison with *ushma* of *surya* which is responsible for the growth and development of all the living beings of the universe. By above discussion, we can conclude that *Agni* is the main composition of *Sadyapranahara marmas*. Hence any injury inflicted on these vital points will hamper the process of biophysical and biochemical changes essential for formation, growth, development and repair of tissues which ultimately lead to death instantly or after some time.

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