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# Role of *Marma Chikitsa* in the management of *Anidra* (Insomnia) - A Single Case Study

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## ABSTRACT

*Marma* is the vital area of the body. The word *Marma* comes from the Sanskrit origin word 'Mri' meaning death. The Sanskrit phrase 'Marayanti Iti Marmani', also means death or serious damage to the body or health after infliction to the point of their situation. Hence these areas are called *Marma*. *Marma Chikitsa* focuses on energizing the body to relieve occupational illness and stress-related diseases. Hence the complete knowledge of the basic principles of *Marma* and its clinical application can play an important role in treatment modalities. *Ahara*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya* are the three factors that play an important role in the maintenance of a living organism. This study focuses on the effectiveness of *Marma Chikitsa* on *Anidra*. A 40-year-old female came to the OPD of Pt. Khushilal Sharma Government Ayurvedic College and Hospital, Bhopal (MP) with a complaint of disturbances in the sleep-wake cycle. In this case study effect of *Marma Chikitsa* in the management of *Anidra* (insomnia) is evaluated. The patient was treated with *Marma Chikitsa* for 10 days. The study suggested that *Marma Chikitsa* may be used for relieving symptoms of *Anidra*; however, a study on a large population was suggested.

**Key words:** *Anidra*, *Marma*, *Nidra*, *Insomnia*

## INTRODUCTION

*Ahara*, *Nidra*, and *Brahmacharya* are the three factors that play an important role in the maintenance of a living organism. In *Ayurvedic* literature, these factors i.e. *Ahara* (diet), *Nidra* (sleep), and *Brahmacharya* (celibacy) have been compared with the three legs of sub-support and have been termed as the three *Upastambhas*.<sup>[1]</sup> According to *Acharya Kashyapa*,

getting good sleep at the proper time is one of the characteristics of a healthy man.<sup>[2]</sup> Thus, *Nidra* is a harmonious feature gifted by nature. The man of this techno-world is trying to get overcome such harmonious features by elaborating on his mental dimensions. But the biological clock which is mandatory for the well-being of human life's rhythm, is not ready to recognize these upsetting created by him. If once this harmony is violated, of course, health as well as sleep of a person will be hampered, because sleep exactly runs according to the biological clock. That's why *Ayurveda* stresses sleep and describes it as one of the primary tripods of life.<sup>[3]</sup> *Charaka* has described *Anidra* as one of the *Vataja Nanatmaja Vikara*.<sup>[4]</sup> Various psychic traits like anger, fear, worry, anxiety, etc. are responsible for the vitiation of *Doshas* and cause *Anidra* (Insomnia). Insomnia has a great impact on the social, occupational, and other functioning areas of the individual. Sleep is the periodic state of rest in which there is a diminution of consciousness and activity is termed as sleep.<sup>[5]</sup>

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## CASE STUDY

A 40-year-old female Patient School teacher by profession consulted in the outpatient department of Pt. Khushilal Sharma Government Ayurvedic College and Hospital, Bhopal (MP) with a complaint of inability to sleep well for more than 2 years. She regularly goes to bed at 11 pm but is unable to sleep the whole night. She experiences about 4-5 awakenings every night and with each awakening, unable to sleep again.

**History of Past Illness** - No previous sleep problem

### Physical Examination

Mental, neurologic, and physical examination was within normal limits, except for a body mass index of 31 and a blood pressure of 135/92 mm Hg.

### Treatment Protocol<sup>[6]</sup>

The treatment involved the administration of *Marma Chikitsa*. The present study includes stimulation of 4 *Marma* points that is *Talhridaya Marma Sthapani Marma, Apanga Marma, Seemant Marma* these will be stimulated 15 -18 times on average in a single sitting.<sup>[3]</sup> The details of the administration are as follows.

**Duration of study** - 10 days

**Follow up** - 7<sup>th</sup> day

**Table 1: Treatment Protocol**

SN	Marma Name	Stimulation Time	Frequency	Duration
1.	<i>Talhridaya Marma</i>	0.8 sec	15-18 Times	Twice a day
2.	<i>Sthapani Marma</i>	0.8 sec	15-18 Times	Twice a day
3.	<i>Apanga Marma</i>	0.8 sec	15-18 Times	Twice a day
4.	<i>Seemant Marma</i>	0.8 sec	15-18 Times	Twice a day

### Technique of stimulation of *Marma*<sup>[7]</sup>

*Talhridaya Marma* - *Tal* means palmar aspect of hand and *Hridya* means centre so essentially the *Marma*

present at the centre of the palm is termed as *Tala Hridaya Marma*. Now start touching the palmar aspect of your hand by folding all the fingers, except middle one unfold all other. The point where pulp of finger touches the hand is called as *Tal Hridaya Marma*. Stimulate this *Marma* 15-18 times by applying pressure on it, this will surely help you to get rid of insomnia.

*Sthapani Marma* - The *Marma* present at *Sthapani* i.e., the space between the eyebrows where *Agya Chakra* or third eye exists is designated as *Sthapani Marma*. Now join your palms and fix fingers of right hand in the web of left hand by keeping both the thumbs straight to make a fist and apply pressure on *Sthapani Marma* with the base of first metacarpal bone (root of thumbs) which relaxes you.

*Apanga Marma* - Place your index fingers on the root of eyebrows so that you can easily discover the midpoint of bridge of nose and start massaging the pathway of brows till you reach their outer corners or depressed part of the temples which are just of the size of pulp of index fingers, this specific point is *Apanga Marma*. Press it 15-18 times to obtain its positive effects.

*Seemant Marma* - *Seemant Marma* is present on the skull and is mainly correlated with different sutures such as coronal suture, sagittal suture and lambdoid suture.

- Place horizontally four fingers of your hand above the bridge of the nose so that it should meet the base of the hairline apply moderate pressure on it. This particular point is *Seemant Marma* on coronal suture.
- Place hypothenar area of right hand at the root of nose and stretch your fingers upwards in the partition of hairline, the point where middle finger reach is *Seemant Marma* on sagittal suture.
- Situate the base of your both hands at the nape of your neck and the place where your fingers reached is lambdoid suture. Now press this point gently to abolish your headache.

### Criteria for assessment

Based on improvement in sign & symptoms reported by the patients, was assessed on the basis of score

developed for grading these clinical factors followed by statistical analysis.

Scoring adopted for insomnia

### 1. Sleeplessness

SN	Sleeplessness	Grade
1.	No complaint	0
2.	Patient gets sleep at night or awakens early in the morning	1
3.	Sleep is full of dreams or sleep disturbs due to any other reason during night.	2
4.	Sleep disturbs at midnight due to any reason and does not get sleep afterwards	3
5.	Patient doesn't get sleep after resting in day time/gets sleep late at night and awakens early in the morning	4
6.	Gets sleep after taking sedatives	5
7.	Doesn't get sleep at all	

### 2. Disorders of Sleep-Wake (S-W) Schedule

SN	Disorders of Sleep-Wake (S-W) Schedule	Grade
1.	Normal (s-w) schedule	0
2.	Transient change	1
3.	Frequently changing	2
4.	Delayed sleep phase	3
5.	Irregular (s-w) pattern	4
6.	Non-24 hours (s-w) syndrome	5

### 3. Sleep Quality

SN	Sleep Quality	Grade
1	Enjoyable sleep	0
2	Anxious or agitated before and during sleep	1
3	Feeling un-freshed and unrest after sleep	2
4.	Sleep experience negative and not enjoyable	3

### 4. Sleep Time

SN	Sleep Time	Grade
1.	Adequate sleep (6 – 8 hours)	0

2.	Inadequate night sleep (4 – 5 hours) with ½ to 1 hour day nap	1
3.	Inadequate night sleep (4 – 5 hours) without day nap	2
4.	Inadequate night sleep (2 – 3 hours)	3
5.	Gets 1 – 2 hours night sleep with or without day nap	4
6.	No sleep at night but gets 1 – 2 hours day nap	5
7.	No sleep at all	6

### 5. After Awakening

SN	After Awakening	Grade
1.	Fresh (Sukhavabodhana)	0
2.	Sleepy or fatigued	1
3.	Poor concentration	2
4.	Poor problem solving	3

6. Associated complaints like *Akshigaurav*, *Shirogaurav*, *Alasya*, *Jimbha*, *Angamarda*, *Glani*, *Bhrama*, *Ajirna*, *Kshudamanda* etc.

SN	Associated complaints	Grade
1.	Mild degree (Occasional complaints)	1
2.	Moderate degree (once or twice in 2 – 3 days)	2
3.	Severe degree (daily complaints) - 3	3

### OBSERVATION

Diagnostic criteria	Before treatment	After treatment
Sleeplessness	Grade 5	Grade 2
Sleep-Wake (S-W) Schedule	Grade 4	Grade 0
Sleep Quality	Grade 3	Grade 0
Sleep Time	Grade 4	Grade 0
After Awakening	Grade 3	Grade 1
Associated complaints like <i>Akshigaurav</i> , <i>Shirogaurav</i> , <i>Alasya</i> , <i>Jimbha</i> , <i>Angamarda</i> , <i>Glani</i> , <i>Bhrama</i> , <i>Ajirna</i> , <i>Kshudamanda</i> etc.	Grade 3	Grade 1

## DISCUSSION

The demanding workload and fast-paced lifestyle, combined with improper dietary habits, can lead to numerous health issues, especially disorders caused by vitiation of *Vata* known as *Vatavyadhi*. The practice of *Marma Chikitsa* can help improve sleep-wake cycle. In a study, participant underwent ten days of *Marma Chikitsa* treatment which resulted in significant improvements in their symptoms. After the first sitting of *Marma Chikitsa*, improvement begins and by the tenth day, participants are completely free of their symptoms.

## CONCLUSION

The case report shows significant relief in signs and symptoms within 10 days. This indicates that *Marma Chikitsa* is a prompt and non-pharmaceutical method of treatment that provides immediate pain relief to the patient. These methods are absolutely applicable in our present century and prove to be very beneficial for everyone. Especially *Marma Chikitsa* i.e., stimulating *Marma* points pop out your hidden power to give promising results to cure insomnia. *Marma Chikitsa* is an easy, effortless, effective therapy.

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