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## MARMA THERAPY

### Healing by gentle touch

Marma therapy is a lesser-known Ayurvedic modality with several thousand years of tradition and application. It is applied at very specific vital points on the body, which are similar to acupressure points, but are touched much more gently.

Marma treatments can strengthen and vitalize, rejuvenate, relax, and release energy blockages. In addition, the functioning of internal organs is positively influenced and the self-healing powers are activated through the stimulation of these energy nodes.

This form of therapy has a wide range of applications, from self-treatment at home to complex clinical applications by specially trained doctors and therapists.

### Prana, the life energy within us

In Ayurveda, the delicate, subtle energy that gives us life and flows through our bodies is called Prana. With each inhalation, we receive new life energy. Prana flows in all the body's Nadis, the fine energy channels, and it comes together in the points called Marmas.

Particularly sensitive areas, such as the hands and feet, have many of these points, which gives us the sensitivity to perceive and feel.

In Vedic medicine, man, nature and the cosmos are considered as one, and these vital points are like energy portals between the inner and outer worlds.

### How many Marmas are there in the human body?

One of the most important textbooks of Ayurveda, the Sushruta Samhita, describes 107 energy nodes. They are considered the basic framework for creating balance through regulative treatments such as massages or oil applications. If we add our Self, called Atma in the Vedas, as the primordial Marma, the total number of these energy nodes is 108.

The Kalari tradition, an ancient Vedic martial art from southern India, lists 365 points. Similarly, traditional Chinese medicine has derived important acupuncture points from this tradition and has established itself strongly in the West over the past decades, so that e.g. acupuncture treatments are now included in health insurance policies.



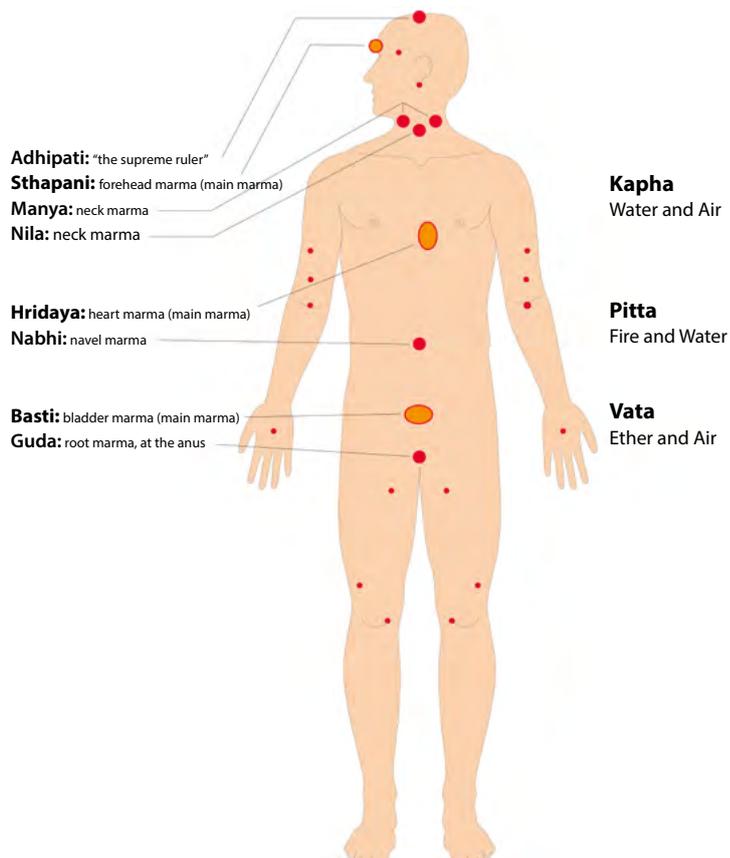
## Marma Therapy – Healing by gentle touch

### The three Doshas and the three main Marmas

The three main Marmas are closely related to the three Doshas, which regulate our body and, when in harmony, ensure our well-being. All Ayurvedic therapies aim to strengthen and restore this delicate interplay.

#### The Vata, Pitta and Kapha Doshas each have their main areas in the physiology, as follows:

- Kapha Dosha is based in the head area. E.g., an excess of Kapha may be noticed from an accumulation of mucus in the nose and throat area.
- Pitta Dosha is located at the level of the solar plexus and the digestive organs, such as the liver, small intestine and pancreas. Too much Pitta may be expressed by heartburn, for example.
- Vata Dosha has its main site in the lower abdomen. Excess Vata is often manifested by constipation or lower back pain.



The three main Marmas, called Sthapani, Hridaya and Basti, can be associated with these three areas. The forehead Marma (Sthapani) is located slightly above the center between the eyebrows (the so-called third eye), the heart Marma (Hridaya) is located in the chest area and the lower abdomen Marma (Basti) is found at the level of the urinary bladder.

Four other important Marmas are also located in the body's medial plane, for a total of seven main Marmas, which are closely related to the Chakras you may have heard of in yoga teachings. The other Marmas are grouped around these main nodes.

### The Marmas and the Moon

The moon has a central influence on Prana and the energy of the Marmas. When the moon is waxing, the energy in the vital points increases; when the moon is waning, it decreases.

During the 29–30 days that the moon passes from one new moon to the next, the Marmas also pass through different phases. Beginning at the feet, one Marma after another is charged until, at full moon, the Marma points at the head are reached.

As the moon travels, it passes through 27 lunar houses, as they are called in Vedic astrology (Jyotish). Each lunar house is further divided into four, each period having its own astrological characteristics. Each of these sections can be assigned to exactly one Marma, which results in a total number of four times 27, i.e. 108 Marmas, just as it is described in the classical texts.

This example alone shows the superior interplay of man and nature, as well as the depth of the Vedic texts.



## Marma Therapy – Healing by gentle touch

### Marma self-treatment

Marma treatment is a wonderful method for everyday ailments, which you can perform on yourself even without much training.

Most likely, you have already used it unconsciously, by rubbing your temples when you have a headache or touching the inner corners of your eyes with your thumb and index finger.

**Important:** Generally, individual Marmas should only be treated with feather-light pressure and slow circular movements. This is because Marmas, as already described in the classical texts, are vulnerable points – rough handling and forceful massaging can lead to disturbances in the fabric of the body-mind.

Therefore, in cooperation with Vaidyas embedded in family traditions that had preserved some of the knowledge over centuries, Ernst Schrott, M.D., himself an experienced Ayurvedic physician, dedicated many years to develop the particularly gentle and effective system of Marma treatment which is now known as Maharishi Ayurveda Marma Therapy.

In contrast with the often rather crude applications common in India today, which can be more disruptive than healing, a Maharishi Ayurveda Marma treatment has a profoundly relaxing and soothing effect on all the senses and brings harmony to the functioning of the inner organs.

When treating yourself, it's best to trust your intuition as to which gentle stimulus is right for you at the given moment.

#### Tips for a successful treatment:

- Set aside some time and prepare the following: a stool, a towel, and a little warm oil. You can use basic oils (such as sesame oil, almond oil, coconut oil), Ghee, or massage oils specific for your Dosha type, such as Maharishi Vata, Pitta or Kapha oil.

- Sit or lie down in a room with a comfortable temperature, where you can remain undisturbed for a few minutes.
- Enjoy the silence, without any music.
- Make sure your hands are warm.
- Take a few deep breaths and relax.
- Perform the treatment with your eyes closed for heightened awareness and to be more sensitive to your body's reactions.
- Rest for a few minutes after the treatment, feeling the effect.

### Two practical examples for common ailments

#### Self-treatment for sleeping problems



Many people suffer – temporarily or permanently – from disturbed sleep, often triggered by overstimulated senses, heavy food, coffee, or working at a computer screen late at night.

In addition to meditation, drinking Vata tea, and **milk with spices in the evening**, you can stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system with the following Marmas to help you settle down:

- **The crown Marma** pacifies the nervous system. This point is located at your crown, i.e. the point at the top of the head. Massage this point gently



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with the right hand moving in a clockwise circular motion, placing the hand flat on the crown of the head. The left hand is placed on the heart region or the navel.

- **The “third eye”** point brings the mind to rest. This Marma is located slightly above and between the eyebrows. Massage this point moving in a clockwise circle with the right hand, while the left hand is placed on the heart region or the navel.
- **The foot sole Marma** provides fatigue and calmness. It is located near the middle of the sole of the foot, slightly towards the toes. Place your thumb on this point and the other hand on the opposite point on the top of the foot. Massage with light pressure in a clockwise direction.
- **The wrist Marma** relaxes and produces fatigue. This Marma is located at the wrist, at the junction of the hand and forearm. Simply surround your wrist with the other hand in such a way that the thumb rests on the inside. By rotating the wrist in your hand, you touch all the important Marma points there with your thumb.

Massage each Marma gently for two, three minutes, then pause while continuing feeling it. Vata massage oil, and also base oils enriched with lavender, valerian, St. John’s wort or vetiver, are especially suitable oils for this treatment.



## Self-treatment of headaches



There are numerous types of headaches, which can have the most diverse triggers. Common tension headaches or even mild migraines in the initial stages can be quickly relieved with Marma massages.

In addition, foot baths with magnesium, acupuncture mats or even peppermint oil on the temple can be a real boon.

### Important Marma points for headaches:

- **The crown Marma** pacifies the nervous system and calms the thinking. This Marma is located at the top of the head. Massage it as described above.
- **Massaging the “third eye”** is helpful when there is very strong concentration or fixation on a subject. It is located slightly above and between the eyebrows. Massage it with the right hand moving in a clockwise circle, while the left hand is placed on the heart region or the navel.
- The temporal Marma is helpful for temporal headaches. Place the palms on the temples and massage both sides in parallel, with gentle circular movements.



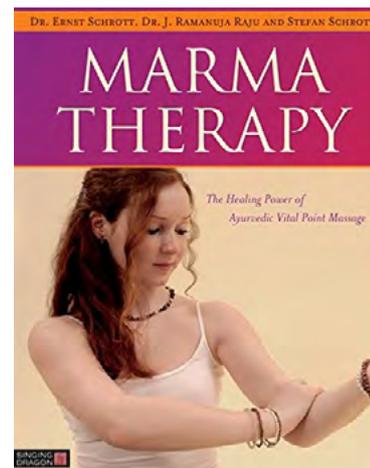
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- Treat the **neck Marma** in case of headache caused by tension in the neck. Massage vigorously up and down the back of the neck with the right hand laid flat (about twenty times or more). Then place both palms on the right and left sides of the neck and stroke back and forth from the ears to the shoulders. Finally, place a warm, moist cloth on the back of the neck.



Massage each Marma gently for two, three minutes, then pause while continuing feeling it. Suitable oils for this treatment are Vata massage oil and Vata aroma oil.

Above, we have presented a few examples of Marma therapy you can do yourself, taken from **Dr Schrott's book *Marmatherapie – Die heilende Kraft der Vitalpunktmassage aus dem Ayurveda.***



## Professional Marma Therapy in Bad Ems

If you would like to experience professional Marma therapy, then you are welcome to visit us and enjoy authentic Ayurveda under medical supervision in Europe's leading private Ayurveda health center in Bad Ems, and let yourself be pampered by our specially trained, empathetic therapists. For further information, you can consult the [list of available treatments](#).