



## Original Research Article

# REGIONAL ANATOMICAL STUDY OF THODU VARMA POINTS OVER THE UPPER PART OF THE LOWER EXTREMITY

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Varmam is an ancient healing and martial art system from south India within the siddha medicine tradition, centered on manipulating varma points- vital life energy points on the body. Varma points located on junctions of nerves, joints, bones, muscles and organs are considered reservoirs of vital energy (praana). When they disturbed by stress or injury, lead to disease. Varmam therapy involves non-invasive, drugless techniques. By stimulate varma points within the therapeutic dose one can treat musculoskeletal disorders, neurological disorders and other chronic illness. The thodu varma points refer to 96 minor energy points in the body within the siddha system of medicine that can be stimulated by touch. **Aim:** To anatomically locate thodu varma points in the upper part of the lower extremity and identify underlying structures. **Materials and Methods:** During dissection session of 1<sup>st</sup> year MBBS students in the department of anatomy, Tirunelveli medical college, Tirunelveli, the various thodu varma points over the upper part of the lower extremity stated in various siddha varma books were located and the underlying anatomical structures were studied. **Results:** All varma points over the upper part of the lower limb are related to various nerves and muscles of thigh and knee joint. So pressure over the points will relieve pain symptoms of thigh, knee joint, medical aspect of leg, medical aspect of foot and sciatica. **Conclusion:** Thodu varma points though rooted in ancient siddha and martial tradition exhibit a remarkable alignment with modern anatomical structures. This research continued and integration with anatomy and neurology can further validate and pressure this ancient knowledge.

**Keywords:** Varmam, thodu varma points, vital energy, siddha, anatomy, lower extremity.

## INTRODUCTION

Varmam or Varma kalai is the ancient South Indian System of healing and self-defence that originated in south India. It combines elements of medicine, martial art and is deeply rooted in siddha medicine. Varma points are vital energy points in the human body where praana (life energy) is concentrated. There are traditionally 108 major varma points. Varmam therapy was developed by siddhars, ancient tamil sages like Agathiyar, Bohar who are integrated spiritual knowledge with medicine and martial techniques. It was traditionally passed down through

oral transmission and family lineages. Varmam was based on the energy channels (naadi) and disturbing these flows can affect health or consciousness. In siddha medicine varma therapy treats various ailments by regulating energy flow through manipulations and internal pharmacological interventions, thereby supporting both preventive and curative healthcare. Varma integrates the knowledge of anatomy, physiology and spiritual awareness. Among 108 varma points, padu varma points are 12 that are considered the most dangerous, when they traumatically triggered can be fatal. Another 96 are thodu varma points activated by touch or light

pressure. The body is conceptualized as having 12 primary channels or naadis. Each naadi associated with one padu varma and eight thodu varma points. These thodu varma points are located at intersections of muscles, nerves, arteries, veins, bones, and other tissues are sensitively responsive to touch or pressure. The book “varma cuttiram” contains details on vital points in the body and which are nerve related or associated with nerve plexus, blood vessels and joints. The thodu varma points of lower extremity are twenty four in number.

#### Aim of the study

To systematically locate the thodu varmam points over the upper segment of the lower extremity anatomically and delineate related anatomical structures.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

During dissection sessions of first year MBBS students in the department of Anatomy, Tirunelveli Medical College, the thodu varma points described in Siddha varma texts over the upper part of the lower extremity were identified and their anatomical relations studied.

## RESULTS

Observations of Thodu varma points over upper part of lower extremity

#### Thigh Region

##### 1. Pathaykal Varmam (Pathakkalai Varmam)

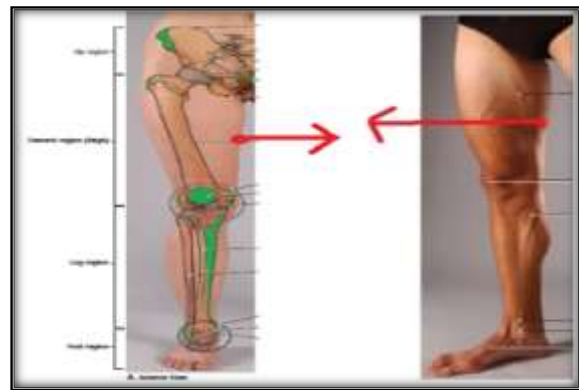
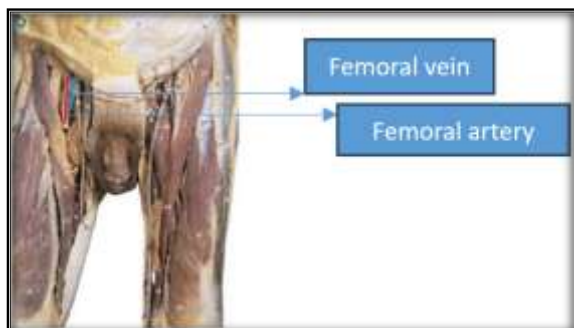
**Synonyms:** Pathakal Varmam (Varma Soothiram-101), Pathaykal Varmam (Varma Odivumurivu Sarasoothiram-1200), Ulogithai (Varma Vithi), Pathakala Varmam (Varma vilakkam) and Am.L4.L1g-7 (Anatomical Name)

**Location:** Upper medial aspect of the thigh

**Underlying muscles:** Pectineus, Adductor longus and Adductor brevis

**Underlying vessels:** Femoral artery and femoral vein.

**Underlying bones:** superior pubic ramus



##### 2. Kal Sulukku Varmam

**Synonyms:** Thodai Varmam (Varma Aani -108), Sulukku Varmam (Varma Nithanam-500), Nodi Varmam (Varma Soothiram -101) and M.C.L1t-12 (Anatomical Name)

**Location:** Middle of the medial aspect of the thigh

**Underlying bone:** Mid shaft of femur

**Underlying muscle:** Flexor retinaculum, tendon of tibialis posterior, Flexor digitorum longus and Flexor hallucis longus

**Underlying innervation and Vessels:** Posterior tibial nerve and artery

##### 3. Kal Kotchu Varmam

**Synonyms:** Thodai Varmam (Varma Aani-108), Kotchu Varmam (Varma nithanam-300), Urumi kalam (Varma beerangi-100), Urumi endra Thudai thatti kaalam (Adi varma Sootcham-500), Andhai Varmam (Varma saari-205), Patchi varmam (Varma kannadi-500) and Am.L3.L1t-12 (Anatomical Name)

**Location:** Three fingers breadth medial to the centre of the front of thigh

**Underlying bone:** Mid-shaft of femur

**Underlying muscles:** Vastus medialis, Sartorius, Adductor longus and Adductor magnus

**Underlying innervation:** Saphenous nerve



##### 4. Aamai Varmam

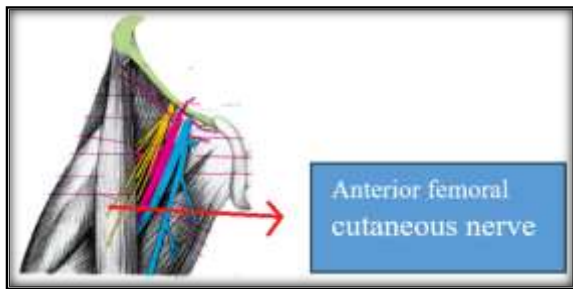
**Synonyms:** Amai kaalam (Varma soothiram-101), Aama kaalam (Varma nithanam-300), Thodai varmam (Varma aani-108), Thodai nadu varmam (Varma vilakkam), Kari Varmam (Varma saari-205), Kaari varmam (Varma lada soothiram-300), Oori Varmam (Varma vithi), urvee (Attanga irudhayam) and A.L.L1t-12 (Anatomical Name).

**Location:** Middle of the front of thigh

**Underlying muscles:** Rectus femoris

**Underlying innervation:** Anterior femoral cutaneous nerve

**Underlying bones:** Mid shaft of femur



## Gluteal Region

### 5. Thundu Varmam

**Synonyms:** Thundu Varmam (Varma Soothiram-101), Thodai varmam (Varma aani -108) and P.L.L1t-12 (Anatomical Name)

**Location:** Middle of the back of the thigh

**Underlying bone:** Posterior surface of femur

**Underlying vessels:** Profunda femoris vein and perforating arteries of profunda femoris artery

**Underlying muscles:** Semimembranosus, Semitendinosus and Long head of biceps femoris

**Underlying innervation:** Posterior femoral cutaneous nerve of thigh and Muscular branches too

## Leg Region

### 6. Chirattai Varmam

**Synonyms:** Chilli Varmam (Varma saari-205), Muttu chirattai varmam (Varma noolalavu nool), Chirattai varmam (Varma odivu murivu sara soothiram-1200) and A.L.L1t-22 (Anatomical Name)

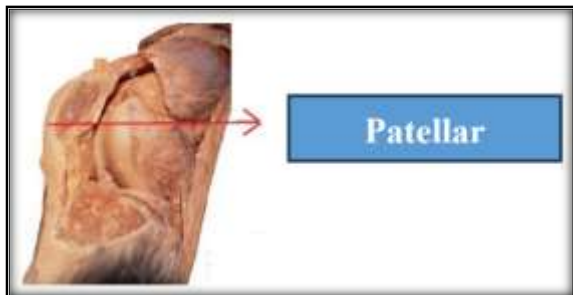
**Location:** Infront of the middle of the patella

**Underlying bone:** Patella

**Underlying muscle:** Patellar tendon (Ligamentum patellae)

**Underlying innervation:** Patellar plexus

**Underlying Vessels:** Genicular arteries (Medial and lateral)



### 7. Kal Muttu Varmam/ Asaivu-Thiri Kannu Varmam

**Synonyms:** Muttu varmam (Varma soothiram-101), Mootu varmam (varma kannadi-500), Kalmootu varmam (Varma viralalavu nool), saanu (Varma vithi), Asaivu thiri kannu varmam (Varma nithanam-300), Asaguthiri kannu varmam (Varma soothiram-101), Muttukannu varmam (Varma noolalavu nool), Vellaikannu varmam (Varma noolalavu nool)

**Anatomical Names:** A.L.L1t-20 (Kal muttu varmam), i) Am.L2.L1t-24 (Medial side) ii) Al.L2.L1t-24 (Lateral side) (Asaivu thiri kannu varmam)

**Location:** A pair of points below the patella on the medial and lateral side and a point above the patella

**Underlying bone:** patella and lower end of femur

**Underlying vessels:** Genicular anastomosis around the knee joint

**Underlying muscles:** Medial varma point – Medial patellar retinaculum, Lateral varma point – Lateral patellar retinaculum Superior varma point – Rectus femoris and Vastus intermedius

### 8. Channi Varmam

**Synonyms:** Pathaippu varmam (Varma noolalavu nool), Channi varmam (Varma nithanam-300)

**Anatomical Names:** (i) Pm.L3.L1t-24 (Medial side) (ii) Pl.L3.L1t-24 (lateral side)

**Location:** On the medial and lateral side of the patella. Three fingers breadth medial and lateral from Chirattai Varmam

**Underlying bone:** Lower end of femur

**Underlying innervation:** Dorsal digital nerve from superficial peroneal nerve

**Underlying Muscles:** Medial patellar retinaculum and Lateral patellar retinaculum.

### 9. Kaal Muttu Sulukku Varmam

**Synonyms:** Thiri narambu kochu varmam (Varma Aani-108), Kali narambu varmam (Varma vilakkam), Sulukku varmam (Varma nithanam-300), Mozhiporuthu varmam (Varma noolalavu nool) and P.L.L1t-22 (Anatomical Name)

**Location:** Point over the middle and medial and lateral side of back of Knee

**Underlying bone:** Medial lateral femoral condyles of femur

**Underlying Muscles:** Tendon of long head of biceps femoris and Gastrocnemius

**Underlying Innervation:** Posterior femoral cutaneous nerve, Tibial nerve and Lateral sural cutaneous nerve

**Underlying Vessels:** Popliteal artery and vein

### 10. Naai Thalai Varmam

**Synonyms:** Nathalai varmam (Varma aani-108), Naithalai varmam (Varma soothiram-101) and A.L.L1t-2 (Anatomical Name)

**Location:** Point below the knee joint in the midline 2 fingers breadth below the Asaivu thirikannu varmam

**Underlying bone:** Tibial tuberosity

**Underlying innervation:** Infrapatellar branch from saphenous nerve

**Underlying muscle:** Patellar ligament

### 11. Visha Varmam

**Synonyms:** Vishabandha varmam (Varama aani-108), Indhira vathi (Varma vithi), kuthirai varmam (Varma saari-205), Kuthirai mugavarmam (Varma kannadi-500), Vishamanibandha varmam (Varma vilakkam), Visha varmam (Varma nithanam-300), Ellu Varmam (Varma odivumurivu Sarasoothiram - 1200) and A.L.L1t-10 (Anatomical Name)

**Location:** At the anterior mid-point of the leg

**Underlying bone:** shin of the tibia

**Underlying innervation:** Anterior tibial nerve

**Underlying muscles:** Tibialis anterior, Extensor digitorum longus and Extensor hallucis longus

## 12. Uppukutti Kalam

**Synonyms:** Uppu kuttri Kalam (Varma kannadi-500), kutthi kalam (Adi varma sootcham-500) and P.L.L1f-6 (Anatomical Name)

**Location:** Point over the middle of the medial border of the heel Underlying muscles

**Underlying bone:** Calcaneal tuberosity.

**Underlying vessels:** Medial plantar artery

**Underlying innervation:** Medial calcaneal nerve



## 13. Kuthi Kal Varmam

**Synonyms:** Kudhi varmam (Varma beerangi-100), karikal varmam (Varma soodamani pancheegara pinnal-1500), Narambu nadukku varmam (Varma noolalavu nool), Kuzhi narambu varmam (Varma vilakkam), kuthikal varmam (Varma kannadi-500) and P.L.L1f-2 (Anatomical Name)

**Location:** Point 4 fingers breadth above the middle of the medial border of the heel over the tendo Achilles above Uppukutti kalam

**Underlying bones:** Tibia

**Underlying muscle:** Tendo Achillis

**Underlying innervation and vessels:** Posterior tibial nerve and artery

**Results:** Total number of 13 upper part of lower extremity thodu varma points based on the varma texts with modern anatomical correlation. These points were found to be distributed in thigh region, gluteal region and leg region. These varma points identified associated with neuro muscular structures, muscle insertions and joint lines. Each upper part of the lower extremity of thodu varma points strong correlation with musculoskeletal junction, nerves, tendons with traditional varma healing.

## DISCUSSION

The upper part of the lower extremity is divided in to three compartments for descript to and anatomical purposes. There are based on thigh, gluteal muscle and legs, the varma manipulation techniques methods to stimulate, activate or heal the varma points. Varma therapy becomes significantly more effective and precise when the regional anatomical location of varma points are well understood. Anatomical clarity ensures safe application of the force and depth of the pressure .The exact location allows to stimulate or manipulate them accurately for the above 13 various lower extremity thodu varma points, and we can reduce the symptoms of many diseases.

Underlying the pathaykal varmam points femoral vein and deep inguinal lymph node present. So, if you give gentle stimulation to reduce lymph node swelling by compressing the venous return. Since saphenous nerve is underlying the kal kochu varma points and obturator nerve is underneath kalsulukku varma points. So if giving varma massage methods over the above points will reduce pain symptom along medial aspect of leg, foot up to ball of great toe and also reduce pain symptom of the medial aspect of the thigh. Below the aamai kalam varma point, anterior femoral cutaneous nerve of thigh is present and if you give varma massage method over this point will reduce the nerve related problem over the front of the thigh. Posterior femoral cutaneous nerve of the thigh and sciatic nerve are present underlying thundu varma points. So if you give massage over this point will relieve low backache and sciatica.<sup>[11,12]</sup>

Underneath the chirattai varmam points patellar tendon is present. So, massage method over this point will relieve Musculo- skeletal problems of thigh. All the innervation of knee joint (genicular nerve) are come under kal muttu varmam and channi varma points. So the knee joint related problems are cured by massage method over this point. Tibial tuberosity, patellar ligament and infra patellar branch from saphenous nerve are present below the nai thalai varma points often used in varma massage techniques to correct fracture of the leg bone. Anterior tibial nerve and extensor muscle present underneath the visha varma points help to relieve symptoms related to the leg. Below the uppukutti varma points, attachment of plantar fascia to the calcaneum tuberosity is present. So if you give the pressure over this point will relieve the symptoms of plantar fasciitis. The tendo achillis is present below the kuthikal varma points, varma massage techniques over this point will cure tendo achillis related problem.

## CONCLUSION

Thodu Varma points, though deeply rooted in Siddha and martial traditions, demonstrate a striking correspondence with modern anatomical structures. This convergence bridges ancient wisdom with contemporary science and opening avenues for therapeutic applications and martial practices. Sustained research and integration with anatomy and physiology can further substantiate and preserve this invaluable knowledge.

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