BARSHA’SHA: A REVIEW ON FAST ACTING UNANI COMPOUND FORMULATION

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**ABSTRACT**

Various compound formulations of Unani System of Medicine are used for the treatment of several ailments by boosting immune system and improving functioning of vital organs. Barsha’sha is a classical Unani formulation which is composed of *Papaver somniferum*, *Hyoscyamus niger*, *Crocus sativus*, *Euphorbia resinifera*, *Piper nigrum*, *Valeriana officinalis*, *Anacyclus pyrethrum* and honey. It is famous for its quick action and used for the treatment of CNS, hepatic, cardiac, sexual and digestive disorders. Due to its quick action to resolve the Ailments, it is named as Barsha’sha which means instant relief.

The present review is not only focused on the classical uses of the compound but also presents a detailed account of its method of preparation, nature of ingredients present in it, with their medicinal importance and pharmacological studies.

**INTRODUCTION**

*Barsha’sha* is one of the oldest efficacious preparations in Unani System of Medicine, and due to enormous benefits, it has created its own niche in Unani pharmacotherapy. It is also known as “Majun Barsh” and “Dawa al-Sha’ir”. It is one of the emergency drugs of Unani Medicine which is known for its quick action. *Barsha’sha* is an Aramaic word which is known as *Bara al-Sa’ain* Arabic which is a compound word comprising of two words Viz. “Bara” and “Sa’a” means “Quick relief”. There are various formulations known by this name with some modifications, done by Ibn Sina, Dawood Antaki, Ibn Jazla, Amaduddin Mahmood Shirazi, Mahmood bin Iliyas Shirazi and Habbatulla Abu Barkati.

Most of the physicians accept that it was first prepared by ancient Greeks and with some modification it was again prepared by Jalinus. Ibn Sina has prepared Barshasha by doing some modification in the formulation of Aftuniya Rumi. It has survived a long history due to its spectra of medical benefits. It gives extraordinary results at even very low doses. There is no doubt that due to its choicest ingredients, it has potency to act as a good antidote, therefore it is necessary that we explore its ingredients in detail.

**METHODOLOGY**

Relevant literature regarding Barshasha was retrieved from Classical Unani Books, like Al-Qarabadeen, Bayaz-i-Kabir,
Ghina Muna and databases like Web of Science, Google Scholar, Baidu Scholar, Springer, PubMed, SciFinder, and Science Direct was also searched for the various ingredients present in the compound.

**INDICATIONS OF BARSHA’SHA**

Since ancient times, Barsha’sha has been used effectively to treat cold, catarrh, coryza, chronic and acute cough. Due to its Mumsik effect, it has been used to treat Du’f-i-bah (loss of libido) and Sur’t-i-Inzal (premature ejaculation). It is very effective to treat Amraz-i-Sawdawiyya and Balghamiyya such as Hiziyan (delirium), Malikhuliya (melancholia), Falij (paralysis), Du’f-i-Asab (nerve weakness), Laqwa (Bell’s palsy), Ra’sha (tremors), Sara’ (epilepsy), Sahr (Insomnia), Nasiyan (dementias), Dawar (vertigo), Tinin (tinnitus) etc. It is also indicated for restoring integrity of gums, cures Ganda Dahani (halitosis), Sailan-i-lu’ab-i-Dahan (excessive salivation), Jarayan-i-Khoon (hemorrhage), Waja’ al-mi’da (abdominal pain), Su’ta-ji-jigar (obstructive diseases of liver), Du’f-i-jigar (hepatargia) and chronic fevers. It is indeed one of the wonderful multipotent drugs in Unani System of Medicine. Even, it works as an antidote for many poisons. If Zusantariya Mi’wi (erosive enteritis) become severe due to spasmodic pain, Barsha’sha can be given per orally to induce Mukhaddir (local anesthetic effect) on intestine.

**INGREDIENTS OF COMPOUND**: The ingredients of this compound areas follows:

- **a. Afiyun Khalis** (Papaver somniferum) 2 ½ Tola (30gm)
- **b. Bazrulbanj** (Hyoscyamus niger) each 5 Tola (60gm)
- **c. Filfil Seyah** (Piper nigrum) 1 1/4 Tola (15gm)
- **d. Filfil Safed** (Pipernigrum) each 3 gm
- **e. Zafran** (Crocus sativus) 1/4 Tola (15gm)
- **f. Sumbuluttib** (Valeriana officinalis) each 3 gm
- **g. Aqer Qerha** (Anacyclus pyrethrum) 3 times more than the weight of all the drugs combined.
- **h. Farfiyun** (Euphorbia resinifera)
- **i. Honey**

**Fig.:** Showing a. Afiyun (exudate on fruit), b,c. Ajwain Khurasani (plant with flower and seeds), d. Filfil Seyah (fruit), e. Farfiyun (plant), f. Sumbuluttib (root and rhizome), g. Zafran (stigma), h. Aqer Qerha (root) and i. honey.
METHOD OF PREPARATION
Grind these single drugs individually, powder them and sieve them together. Dissolve Zafran separately in Arq-i-Gulab and mix all drugs with honey three time the weight of all the drugs combined. After mixing, bury this preparation in barley (Sha’ir) for three months that is why it is also called “Dawa al-Sha’ir”. Then after three months when its temperament reaches a permanent disposition, it can be used for medicinal purposes.5,6,7

Shelf life: Its strength and potency lasts five years.3

DOSAGE AND MODE OF ADMINISTRATION
Its dosage ranges from 4 Rati to 2 Masha (Ratti=125mg; Masha=gm) and it gives best results when taken with Arq Gaozaban 12 Tolas (120 ml) or water. As per new recommendations dosage of 1 Rati (125mg) is safe and effective.

DETAIL OF INGREDIENTS
Afifyun (Papaver somniferum L.): Afifyun consists of the resinous exudate from the capsule of Papaver somniferum of Papaveraceae family. Its temperament is cold and dry in 4th degree. Due to its anesthetic, analgesic and desiccant properties, it is beneficial in inflammatory conditions of nasal mucosa. It has been effectively used as an analgesic to relieve headaches, trigeminal neuralgia, pleural pain, backache, sciatica, arthritis, toothache, earache, ocular pains and it has been used for other kinds of pains as well, locally and as a liniment. Due to its hypnotic property, it is used in insomnias, bilious, melancholic, sanguine meningitis etc. it is also used in visceral pain. It also has aphrodisiac property. Its correctives are Filfil Seyah and saffron.8-7. The extract of seeds showed highly significant anti-secretory (anti-diarrhealactivity) against E. coli enterotoxin-induced secretory responses in experimental animals.4

Bazrulbanj (Hyoscyamus niger L.): Its name is Ajwain Khurasani, it is obtained from the seeds of its Hyoscyamus niger of Solanaceae family. Its temperament is cold and dry in 3rd degree. It is beneficial in cough (Su’al) due to its anesthetic and relieving action. Along with Opium it induces sleep and gives relief in toothache. It is a toxic drug and is used after detoxification. Its side effects are though countered by Filfilain and honey is also used as corrective.5,6,7

Filfil Seyah and Safed (Piper nigrum L.): Filfil Seyah is a fruit obtained from Piper nigrum L. of Piperaceae family. The temperament of Filfil Saya is hot and dry in 3rd degree, it smells good, tastes bitter and causes lot of salivation on chewing. It is useful in dementia, paralysis, nerve pain. When taken orally it strengthens stomach, acts as liver tonic and maintains good eyesight. It acts as carminative, and expels phlegm from the lungs. It has aphrodisiac effect and as antidote it counters the harmful effects of cold poisons like opium and Hyoscyamus niger. It is harmful for people of hot temperament. Honey is added as corrective.5,6,7

Filfil Safed is less potent as compared to Filfil Seyah but it increases the antidote potency of Filfil Seyah when taken together.

Zafran (Crocus sativus L.): It is also known Kesar obtained from the stigma of the saffron flowers (Crocus sativus L.) of Iridaceae family. It is fragrant and acrid, yet good in taste. Its temperament is hot in 2nd dry in 1st degree. Due to its Mufarrih (exhilarant), Qabid (astringent), Muhalliil (resolvent) and Jali (detergent) actions, it is useful in heart, brain and liver diseases. It is general body tonic and aphrodisiac. It helps respiratory organs and helps in difficulty in breathing, painful labor; where 4gm saffron orally is used to make delivery quick and easy. It also has tranquilizing properties on heart and brain. It causes diuresis by stimulating kidneys and ureters. In excessive use it causes headache and harmful for lung and stomach which is countered by Usara Zarishk with Jawarish Safarjali.5,6,10

Different pharmacological studies done for various activities related to nerve and cardiac disorders such as aphrodisiac,3 anticonvulsant,2 antioxidant,1 anti diabetic,17,18 antidepressant,17,18 dyslipidemic,15 anti-inflammatory, analgesic,16

Sumbulutib (Valeriana officinalis L.): Sumbulutib is the roots obtained from Valeriana officinalis of Valerianaceae family. Its temperament is hot in 1st and dry in 2nd degree. It is very beneficial for the vital organs in cold diseases and one of the important drug for liver and nerve diseases. It has carminative property and is useful in obesity, jaundice and inflammatory conditions of stomach, liver, ureters, uterus etc. Various pharmacological studies proved its efficacy in neurological disorders. Veith et al., (1986) has investigated the effect of its whole herb extract, valaricanic acid and valerenal given i.p. in mice and found to produce significant sedation, ataxia and anticonvulsant effects.30,35 Petrkov (1979) reported that valepotriates an important component of Valerian, prevents the appearance of acute coronary insufficiency as well as vasopressin-induced arrhythmia, provoked a short-lived increase of coronary blood flow, and had moderate positive inotropic and negative chronotropic effects.22 A significant increase in coronary blood flow, a transient fall in blood pressure and a decrease in heart rate was noticed when cats were intravenously injected with valerian extracts 21. Circosta et al. (2007) has reported significant anti-coronaryspastic, anti-bronchospastic, and anti-hypertensive activities from ethanolic and aqueous extracts of V. officinalis L. roots in anaesthetized guinea-pigs and were found similar to those exhibited by nifedipine.6
**DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

**Barsha’sha** is a classical formulation of Unani Medicine which is known for its fast acting properties, and used for the treatment of various neurological and other disorders which have challenged human being for long like, epilepsy, paralysis, melancholia, trigeminal neuralgia, amnesia, dementia, vertigo etc. When this multipotent preparation (Barsha’sha) is prepared, due to temperamental antagonism in its constituents, it should be, therefore as its inventor has discussed and used herein.

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**REFERENCES**


