



SKIN DISORDERS IN THE LIGHT OF UNANI SYSTEM OF MEDICINE

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ABSTRACT

Skin disorders have been prevalent since the Greco-Arabic period. Unani physicians have described the structure and functions of skin interpreting the etiology, clinical features, and management of various skin disorders. These scholars have stated a comprehensive description of various skin ailments such as Hikka (Pruritis), Urticaria (Shara), Quba (Ring worm), Jarb (Scabies), Acne (Basoor-e-Labniya), Bars (Vitiligo), Namla (Herpes), Nar farsi (Eczema), Daus sadaf (Psoriasis) and Saleel (Wart) etc.

Ancient Unani scholars have been treating these ailments successfully for ages. They have compiled a single as well as composite herbal formulations and various methods of Ila-j bit- tadbeer such as Cupping-Hijamah, Leeching-Irsal-e-Alaq for the treatment of skin disorders. These herbal medicine and therapies have greater significance in the treatment and management of various skin disorders.

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INTRODUCTION

Skin disorders have been prevalent since the Greco-Arabic period. Unani physicians have described the structure and functions of skin interpreting the etiology, clinical features, and management of various skin disorders.¹

According to Unani classical literatures, all dermatological diseases are discussed under the heading of Ilaj-e-Zahir-e-Badan having three components-²

- Amraz-e-Jild (Skin diseases),
- Amraz-e-Sha'ar (Hair diseases)
- Amraz-e-Azfaar (Nails diseases).

Unani physicians like Buqrat, Jalinoos, Zakariya Razi, Maseehi, IbneSina etc. were treating skin diseases successfully and effectively since long time and had elaborately discussed it in Unani classical literature.

These scholars have stated a comprehensive description of various skin ailments such as

- Hikka (Pruritis),
- Urticaria (Shara),
- Qooba (Ring worm),
- Basoor e Labniy (Acne),
- Bars (Vitiligo, Leukoderma),
- Nar farsi (Eczema),

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- Daus sadaf (Psoriasis)
- Namla (Herpez)
- Saleel (Wart) etc.

Skin complaints affect all ages from neonate to the elderly and cause harm in a number of ways. Skin is the organ that extends itself superficially and penetrates itself into the deeper levels of the body.

According to Unani, any skin disorder occurs when there is an imbalance of humour (Akhlat) in our body.³

Following an incompatible diet (food items of opposite nature) or an incompatible lifestyle that is against the season or (nature) of a person, causes the generation of toxins or poisons in our body. When these toxins accumulate in the body tissues, skin etc and contaminate them, skin diseases erupt.

All treatments aimed at curing skin disorders emphasise on the complete penetrative and detoxifying abilities of the treatments rendered. The approach of unani to treating skin problems is by eliminating the root causes of the same.

The principles of treatment in Unani Medicine for skin diseases involves

- Tadeel-e-Mizaj,
- Istifragh/Tanqiyah-e-Badan
- Herbal medicine having pharmacological actions like Mussafie-dam (Blood purifier), Muhallil-e-Waram (Anti-inflammatory).

This paper mainly focuses on etiology, clinical presentation and management of skin diseases in unani system of medicine.

Hikka (Pruritis), khujli, Kharish⁴

Kaifiyat Marz: It is of two types dry and wet. Khushk dry hikka is due to khilt e saudavihabis and wet is associated with rutubat e balghamiya. Mostly it occurs due to ehtraq e khoon and saudaviyat.

Asbab (Causes)

- Uncleaned body
- Unsuitable diet
- Indigestion most commonly associated with disturb liver function
- Disturbances of menstrual cycle
- Sometime During pregnancy

Alamat (Clinical features)

Wet hikka

Small boils over body which may filled with and associated with pain and burning sensation

If Dry

Small boils appear all over the body with so much intense itching that the patient become restless.

The skin becomes dry and rough.

Itching starts from hand fingers or bones of back and wet from calf

Usool e ilaj

- Treat the cause
- Improve digestion
- Improvement in liver function
- In female if menstrual disturbances is the cause treat it

Ila⁵

- Fasadwa Ishal
- Safoof e kishnizi 6gm bd
- Safoof e musakkin 6gm bd
- Sharbat e Unnab 10ml bd
- Hab e Musaffikhoon 2bd
- Masaffie 10ml bd
- Majoon e Ushba 5gm bd
- Mix Rogan e sandal 1 tola in Arq e Gulab 5tola and apply locally or massage it to relieve itching

Shara (Urticaria), Pitti uchhalna^{4,5,6}

Kaifiyat: Red round spots appear over the skin

Asbab

- Indigestion
- Overeating
- Intake of heavy and delayed digestive food or hot and spicy food such as brinjal, mango and meat.

Alamat:

- Red round Patches or spot appear all over the skin causing burning sensation and intense itching and disappear soon.
- May be associated with mild fever.
- Acute illness disappear in few weeks and chronic persists for years.

Usool e Ilaj

- If over eating or heavy food is the reason advice qai
- If related to any specific food or medicine, stop it

Ilaj

- Safoof e kishnizi 6gm bd or
- Safoof e Ushba 6gm bd
- Sharbat e Unnab 10ml bd or
- Sharbat e Tamrulhindi 10ml bd
- Hab e Marwareed 1bd
- Jawarish Anarain 5gm bd
- Jawarish Safra shikam 5gm bd
- Mix Rogan e sandal 1 tola in rogan e Gulab 10 tola and apply locally or massage

Daad (Quba), Ring worm^{4,5,7,8}**Kaifiyat**

- It is a contagious disease usually occur over neck, back, coccyx and lower back

Asbab

- Indigestion
- Intake of heavy food
- Unhygienic body
- No bath for longer duration
- Increase intake of sweets
- Wearing wet cloth

Alamat

- Daad appears especially in inguinal region (Foto and jaggaso)
- The affected skin becomes hard and rough causing severe itching
- The more the patient scratches the more the itching
- The skin becomes safed siyahimael
- sometime small boils appear over the affected skin which unites and dew drop like discharge appear from them

- sometime scaling (bhoosi) occur due to dryness
- Patches appear over affected area
- Sometime it becomes red and swollen
- Small boils appear causing burning sensation and pain

Usool e Ilaj

- Advice Irsal e Alaq (Leech therapy), or Fasad and steam bath (Hamam)

Ilaj

- Masaffie 10ml bd
- Hab e Marwareed 1bd
- Cap Momiyai 1od
- Marham e Qooba for L A

Bars(Leukoderma), Safed dag^{5,6,8,9}

Kaifiyat: It occurs due to fasad e khoon and baroodat .weakness of quwat-e-hazima produces fasidkhoon circulating all over the body and if balgham is the cause of fasad-e-khoon than bars develop.

Asbab

- Moroosi (Hereditary)
- Associated with Ingestion of with fish and milk together
- Common in seaside area

Alamat

- White patches appear on skin. At initial stage they are small in size but size gradually increases.
- Whole body is affected but most commonly seen over face and hands.

Usool e Ilaj

- Use Munzijwamushile Balgham for tanqiya
- Afterward use Har medicine

Ilaj

- Majoon e Bars 5gm bd
- Dawa e Bars 3gm bd
- Cap Momiyai 1od
- Cap Atherilal 1bd
- Hab e Azraqi 1bd
- Zimad e Bars for L A for 5 min

Basoor e Labniya (Acne), Muhase^{4,7}

Kaifiyat: Most common during adulthood (Puberty). Red or white small boils appear over cheeks and nose.

Asbab

- Improper digestion or metabolism
- Impure blood.
- Use of hot and spicy food eg kabab, sharab,
- Constipation
- Sometime associated with Sudden stoppage of Haemorrhoid bleeding
- In young females associated with menstrual disturbances and
- also seen during pregnancy

Alamat

- Small red or white boils appear over face, neck and cheeks
- Pus discharge is also seen

Usool e Ilaj

- Treat the underlying cause
- Advice Fasadsararu in galbakhooon

Ilaj

- Hab e Musaffikhoon 2bd
- Masaffie or Arq e Murakkab Musaffi or
- Sharbat e unnab 10ml bd
- Safoof e musakkin 6gm bd
- Hab e Rasoth bd
- Majoon e ushba or Itrifalshahetra 7gm bed time
- Zimad e Husn for L A

Nar farsi (Eczema), chhajan, Akoota^{2,5,6}

Kaifiyat; In this condition painful boils appear over affected area associated with sever itching and and burn followed by scale formation'

Asbab

- General weakness of body
- Weakness of nerves
- Gout
- Arthritis
- Fever and Chills
- During Dentition in children or intestinal worms

Alamat

- Affected skin is red in color with appearance of small transparent boils
- Intense itching, burn and pain
- On day 3rd and 4th the fluid in boil becomes thick with rupture of boils forming scales
- It may be acute and chronic. pain and burn is less in chronic condition

Usool e Ilaj

- Mussaffiyat e khoon
- Mushilat
- Mulayyinat
- Musakkinatjild
- Maneat e ufoonat
- Fasadwaishal

Ilaj

- Marham sufedakafoor for LA
- Hab e Musaffikhoon 2bd
- Masaffie or Arq e Murakkab Musaffi or
- Sharbat e unnab 10ml bd
- Safoof e musakkin 6gm bd
- Hab e Rasoth bd
- Majoon e ushba or Itrifalshahetra 7gm bed time

Namla (Herpez)^{4,5,7,9}

Namla-ant Saaiya-Dodnewali

One or few boils with intense burn and itching.

Aqsam

- Namlashafooya
- Namlakhataliya
- Namla Muntaqiya
- Namlaqazhiya

Asbab

- Lateef or tezsafra
- Indigestion
- Fever (Qabz qism ke hummiyat)
- Nerve disturbances (Futoor)
- Liver dysfunction

Usool e ilaj

- Talyyanwaishal
- Tskeenwatabreed
- Tasfiyakhoon

Ilaj

- Sharbat eUnnab or Sharbat e Sandal 10ml bd
- Hab e musaffikhoon 2bd
- Cap momiyai 1od
- Khameera Marwareed 3gm od
- Safoof e musakkin 6gm bd
- Dietotherapy for all

Daus sadaf (Psoriasis), Taqashshure jild^{2,5,}

Kaifiyat: Psoriasis is the word of unani language. It means itching. Psoriasis is a non infectious, inflammatory disease of the skin, characterized by well defined erythromatous plaques with large, adherent, silvery scales.

Asbab

Cause unknown

Psoriasis can be caused due to many reasons. Some of the most common reasons are genetic predispositions, and khiltesauda consumption of opposite foods (such as fish and milk/curd together, consumption of equal quantities of ghee and honey etc.), exposure of the skin due to cuts, bruises or burns and application or consumption of medicines/skin irritants. Additional causes could include excessive smoking, alcohol consumption and mental stress.

More prevalent in cold and dry climate

Alamat

- Itching and silvery scaling of skin

Ilaj

- Sharbat e unnab 10ml bd
- Majoon e Dabidulward 5gm bd
- Majoon Najah 10gm od
- Hab e Musaffikhoon 2 bd
- Cap Momiyai 1od
- Marham e Qoobq mix with Rogan e kameela for L A

Saleel (Warts)^{6,7}

Kaifiyat; Small hard round boil or tumour which appear on different parts of the body esp face, neck, hand and vulva.

Usually they are not painful except in patients of syphilis(ateshak)

Asbab

- Thick and extreme dried matter either balghami or saudavi or mixture of both

Ilaj

- Sharbat e unnab 10ml bd
- Majoon e Dabidulward 5gm bd
- QurskushtaGaudanti 1bd
- Cap Momiyai 1od
- Hab e Tinkar 2bd
- Wondertouch for L A

Various methods of Ilaj bit tadbeer are effective for skin diseases such as cupping (Hijamah) therapy, Irsal e Alaq (Leech therapy) ad Fasad (Venesection)^{10,11,12}

Cupping (Hijamah) Therapy**Effective for**

- **Cupping therapy** is an ancient form of alternative medicine in which special cups are applied on the skin for few minutes to create suction.

Cupping/Hijamah : It is of two types Dry and Wet .

- **Dry cupping :** This is the process of using a vacuum on different areas of the body in order to gather the blood in that area without incisions.
- **Wet Cupping :** This is the process of using a vacuum at different points on the body but with incision in order to remove 'harmful' blood which lies just beneath the surface of the skin.
- It is effective for Dermatitis, Psoriasis, Vitiligo, Acne, Herpes Pruritis

The systematic review of few randomized control trials examined evidence regarding the use of cupping in the treatment of dermatologic conditions, as highlighted here.^{1,13,14,15,16,17}

- Wet cupping was found to be superior to standard care in improving cure rate, symptoms, and incidence of post-herpetic neuralgia in 651 patients with herpes zoster, with no serious adverse effects.
- A cure rate of 55% was found in 20 patients treated with cupping for urticaria compared with 30% in 20 control patients treated with an antihistamine and a traditional Chinese remedy.
- Patients with acne vulgaris who were treated with wet cupping and a Chinese herbal mask for 2 weeks demonstrated greater clinical improvement than control group participants treated with the herbal mask alone (94.7% vs 61.1%, respectively).
- Wet cupping was found to be effective in treating acute eczema (n=46) compared with oral loratadine and topical ointment (n=42), with a “cured and markedly effective rate” of 89.1% vs 42.9%, respectively.⁵
- In a case report of a 30-year-old man with psoriasis who had been unsuccessfully treated with steroid creams, cupping led to a 90% remission, with no new lesions noted at the 6-month follow-up.

Although these results show promise for the use of cupping in dermatology, most “studies and reports were carried out using a small sample size and qualitatively assessed the efficacy of treatments,” concluded Soliman and colleagues.¹ “More studies, and preferably randomized controlled trials, are needed to truly demonstrate the role of cupping in treating dermatological conditions.”

Irsal e Alaq (Leech Therapy)

It Removes impurities

- Leeches suck impure blood from ulcerated area
- Prevent progression
- Improve micro circulation and thereby facilitate healing
- Hirudin and other enzymes present in Leech saliva help in – preventing clots in blood vessels.

It is effective for Dermatitis, Psoriasis, Eczema, Acne Herpes, Pruritis

Fasad (Venesection)

It is advised in following conditions. Qooba, Eczema, urticaria, Herpes, Pruritis, Warts

CONCLUSION

Unani physicians have enumerated a comprehensive description of etiology, clinical features, and management of various skin disorders. They have compiled a single as well as composite herbal formulations and have also described several methods of Ilaj bit-tadbeer such as Cupping-Hijamah, Leeching- Irsal e Alaq for the treatment of skin disorders. In the treatment and management of various skin disorders these herbal medicine and therapies have had a greater impact.

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