

SCOPING REVIEW OF THE APPLICATION OF UNANI ESSENTIALS OF DIETETICS IN THE PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF DISEASES

Lovely Singh-¹, Prof.S.M.Safdar Ashraf-², Dr.Ammar Ibne Anwar-³

¹PG Scholar, ²Chairman (D/O TST), ³Assistant Professor(D/O TST)Ajmal Khan Tibbiya College, Faculty of Unani Medicine, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India

ABSTRACT

According to the Unani medical philosophy, a doctor is only an assistance to the body's natural healing abilities, or Tabiyat (physique), hence diet should be based on it. The word diet is taken from a Latin word 'dieta' which means a way of living in Greek. The food therapy is an important part of Traditional Medicine, it not only nourishes and strengthens the body, but it can also prevent diseases and prolongs life. In Unani System of Medicine, Dieto therapy (Ilaj bil Ghiza) is a unique non medicinal therapy by which the patients are treated and health is attained through modulation in dietary habits i.e. fasting and by regulating the quantity and quality of food. To keep the digestive system functioning at its best, different diets have been suggested for different life phases. The manner in which foods affect the body is viewed in Unani from a simple yet highly interesting viewpoint. The concept of Dietary Therapy (Ilaj bil Ghiza) in the Unani system of medicine, as well as its significance, classifications, terminologies, and advantages, have all been elaborated upon in this study. Dietotherapy is the practise of using food to help patients recover from sickness. Both individuals having a normal diet and those who have been prescribed a modified diet are concerned. Modified diets are the main therapeutic agents in various chronic and metabolic disorders; which meant for both preventive and therapeutic measures.

Keywords: Dietotherapy, Unani Medicine, Ghiza, Nutrition, Dawa

Introduction

We live in a world where the environment, food supply, population, and scientific understanding are all undergoing fast change. To generate healthy living, these ongoing changes in lives must be in some sort of constructive balance. Our study of food, nutrition, and health care must therefore concentrate on health promotion in order to be realistic within these life principles of change and balance. Dietotherapy is a form of treatment where patients receive non-medicinal care with the goal of improving their health through food modification. Dietotherapy aims to correct the imbalance in the body brought on by unhealthy lifestyle choices. The Unani system of medicine establishes guidelines for a balanced lifestyle that are based on six crucial elements. Failure to follow these rules results in an unhealthy lifestyle, which in turn causes disease. A crucial element of these crucial aspects is diet. According to the Unani medical philosophy, a doctor is only an assistance to the body's natural healing abilities, or Tabiyat (physique), hence diet should be based on it. To keep the digestive system functioning at its best, many diets have been suggested [1]. Diet can be defined as any substances which are used for the purpose of providing nutrition to the body by metabolism [1, 3, 4].

General principles of GHIZA

Unani doctors firmly think that food gives power to the body as well as to the morbid matter . There are certain abnormal conditions in which complete abstinence from diet or partiallyreduction is advised. [2]

1. Tark-e-Ghiza (To stop intake of Diet): When the patient is able to tolerate and has sufficient stamina, such patients are advised to fully abstain from diets that helps the body to expel the morbid stuff out from the body.[3,4,2]
2. Taqleel-ul-Ghiza (Reduced intake of Diet): is to minimise the quantity as well as the quality of food in order to preserve the tabiyat and participate in the eradication of disease from the body. [5,6,7]

The following information can be used to lower the diet:

- Reduction in kammiyat (quantity) of the diet: Although the diet volume is decreased, the nutritional value is unaffected. When a patient's digestion is poor but their body's faculties need to be given power, this type of diet is indicated. For e.g. egg.[2]
- Reduction in kaifiyat (quality) of the diet: This type of diet is suggested when the patient wants to eat but the body's circulatory system is congested with morbid issues. Since fewer humours are produced in this circumstance, it creates an ideal environment for the concoction of morbid materials. e.g. vegetables and fruits.[2]

Constitution of food material

The influence of eating on a healthy body is referred to as its constitution (Mizaj/Temperament) (Pharmacodynamics). Every food /drug produces certain perceptible and non perceptible symptoms when the same is administered in various concentrations. One's feelings are used to define this effect in terms of varying degrees of intensity. It is regarded as motadil or moderate if food is ingested in a specific quantity and after assimilation a person notices no effect or alteration in his body [1]. It is regarded as food with a hot, cold, dry, or wet constitution in the first degree if it causes a little effect of heat, cold, or dryness and that effect disappears after 4 hours without leaving any aftertaste. Second degree effects are those that have a somewhat stronger intensity, last longer than eight hours, and do not injure the body. Third-degree effects are those that a given substance causes that are notable but bearable, last in the system for longer than 18 hours, but do not jeopardise life.

Last but not least, a substance is said to have fourth-degree constitution if it has a severe effect within half an hour to an hour after consumption and puts one's life in jeopardy. All poisons and toxins are in the fourth degree, which has a heated and dry effect. Food impacts vary depending on an individual's constitution and disposition. According to the Unani system, a person's normal health depends on the right physiologic interactions and effects of the four humours—blood,bile, phlegm, and black bile. [1,8,9,10]

Dietotherapy aims to maintain excellent nutritional status, rectify any deficiencies that may have developed, provide rest for the entire body or for any damaged organs, modify food consumption to the body's capacity to process nutrients, and change body weight as needed. Unani system has special dietary management by advising certain Modified Diets [1,8,11,12] in specific diseases like the following:

- **Mau Sha'eer (Barley Water)**, which is cool and moist in nature, mild, cleans the system, and makes excellent chyme, is helpful in acute circumstances. According to Buqrat (Hippocrates), barley water is the best diet for people with hot-tempered disorders since it cleanses the body, eliminates morbid materials, is tasty, mild, quenches thirst, and is easilydigestible.
- **Jubn (Milk)** is moderate in temperament with little influence of cold and moist, it possesses three major qualities viz it is light, excess water content helps eliminate morbid matter, maintains body heat, nourishes and energizes body, increases body weight. In situations where the body becomes dry, milk is helpful.

- **Maul jubn (Milk water)** it is considered as very good purgative, used in bilious condition like jaundice. Because of its oil content, which maintains the organs supple and prevents irritation, it is diluted, light, readily absorbed, and digestible.
- **Mau'llahm** Meat distillate this is prepared by process of distillation, this is rich in calories and easy digestible, improves liver and intestinal functions and advised in malnourishment and weak patients.
- **Maurraib (butter milk)**: cold and moist in temperament, easy absorbable, quenches thirst.
- **Maul asl (Honey water)** honey is boiled with water or sometimes with herbal decoction. It is useful in fever, irritation, thirst and in dry cough. Oral administration of honey water (maa ul asl) is usually recommended in zaatul janb (pleurisy).
- **Maul usool** certain roots like beekh badyan, kasni, karafs etc are crushed and boiled.
- **Maul fawakh** fruit juices.
- **Maul buqool** fresh vegetables and greens are crushed, pounded and juice is extracted.
- **Paneer maya** milk collected after the birth of young one is boiled and when cooled it solidifies mostly prepared from milk of camel, cow, sheep, it is nutritious, it strengthens heart, brain and useful in diarrhea.
- **Sikanjabeen (Oxymel)** prepared by boiling 1 part vinegar and 2 parts honey. It is useful in purging out thick chyme, it is a soothing medicine, it removes yellow bile, it act as emetic in hot water and anti emetic in cold water and quenches thirst.
- **Aabkama (Mari / sirka hindi/ Kaanji)** this is prepared by fermentation of mustard, salt, zeera, ajwain or wheat roti, vinegar, salt, pudina, zinger, pepper.etc
- **Asfeedaj** plain mutton is considered an amazing remedy to cure fever, cough and hands and limb pain as well. During the rainy season, this dish is very hydrating and nourishing. The postpartum diet contains spice-flavored mutton soup to help women restore their strength.
- **Sikbaj** prepared with meat and vinegar, cool in temperament, antibilious used in inflammation of liver.
- **Khamar (Sharab)** is obtained by fermenting starchy substances, in less quantity it is cardiac and brain stimulant and tonic, in large quantity it induces intoxication.
- **Fuqqa** it is a type of wine prepared with dates or Jau (Barley).
- **Nabeez Arisht** prepared with grapes, dates wheat this is also a type of wine it contains very less percentage of alcohol, it contains enzymes which are essential for maintaining health.
- **Murabba** Seasonal fruits are preserved by boiling in sugar syrup or honey so that they can be used later, murabba amla, halela, bihi, adrak, Aam, Seb etc, strengthens stomach, removes Safra mirra (anti bilious).
- **Gulkhand**, similarly rose petals are preserved in sugar syrup or honey to form a jam, useful in fever, good laxative, liver and heart tonic and in large quantity is a purgative.
- **Halwa** This is prepared with maida, soji, honey, ghee and dry fruits, herbs like aloe vera, carrot, onion, are prepared as halwa which are rich in calories, nutritious and energetic.
- **Hareesa** A diet prepared by boiling meat and wheat, then pounded into paste, and spices are added for flavor.
- **Hasarmiya** A diet prepared with grapes juice, lauki, palak, cucumber, useful in hot climate and hot temperament diseases, it is antibilious.

- **Zeerbaaj** Soup prepared with vinegar, dryfruits, saffron, and spices useful in stomach and liver diseases.
- **Mazeera** A diet prepared with curdled milk, it is cool, viscous and useful in hot temperaments.
- **Masleeya** This is curds rice, aids digestion and provides relief from stomach and digestive problems. It is a meal that can help you relax and unwind. It's high in probiotics, antioxidants.
- **Falooda** A nutritious diet which is prepared with starch, milk or water, which sets when cooled and can be cut into pieces. Because they are high in fibre, they help you stay full for a long time, curb cravings, and lose weight. Your body's metabolism is slowed down, and it regulates how quickly carbohydrates are converted into glucose.
- **Alqabees** A halwa prepared with milk cream, maida and dates similar to falooda.
- **Firni** A nutritious diet prepared with broken rice and milk. Calcium and vitamin A are also abundant in firni. This delicious sweet dish is beneficial for maintaining a robust physique and strong bones because it is loaded with calcium and proteins.
- **Maibah** It is prepared with quince fruit juice, grape wine and honey, powder of dried ginger, cardomum, cinnamon, and saffron is added. It strengthens the stomach, and useful in diarrhea, indigestion nausea and vomiting. Wheat and various diets prepared from it are considered as most appropriate staple foods.
- **Fateer Rotis** prepared with fermented or unfermented dough and it helps to strengthen the body.
- **Qashkar Roti** prepared without removing husk and it is nutritious.
- **Roti prepared with jau (barley flour)** is cool and easily digestible useful in acute diseases. Nutrients including fibre, copper, phosphorus, selenium, and vitamin B1 are abundantly present. Barley is a great option for weight loss and gallstone prevention due to its high fibre content. It also helps reduce cholesterol levels.
- **Hareera** prepared with pieces of roti soaked in water is easily digestible and useful in acute conditions. Hareera prepared with fermented wheat flour is very cool and easily digestible. Pieces of roti mixed with honey is nutritious and increases body's innate heat.
- **Satto** wheat is soaked, pounded with dry fruits and made into sattsos, satto should be given along with plenty of cold water to make it easily digestible. It controls blood pressure and maintains blood sugar levels. It is excellent for people with high cholesterol because of its high fibre content. Consumption of satto on an empty stomach helps in weight reduction. It helps reduce bloating and also enhances metabolism and burns calories effectively.

Conclusion

Dietotherapy has a lengthy history of use dating back to the time of Hippocrates, Galen, Razi, Avicenna, and other medical luminaries. An exhaustive analysis of the literature on unani medicine has revealed that the ancestors of unani medicine were well cognizant of the concept and significance of food and drink. Dietotherapy is essential for both preventing and treating a number of physical disorders. Additionally, by making minor dietary changes, it reduces the length of the course of treatment and increases drug tolerance. This type of treatment is generally well-liked, available, and most importantly economical for the patients with very few negative side effects. In present scenario, several lifestyle disorders such as hypertension, diabetes, dyslipidaemia etc can be managed by selecting appropriate diet either alone or as adjuvant with pharmacotherapy. A proper diet can also be used to cure a number of different conditions, including anaemia, malnutrition, vitamin deficiencies, and more. Despite its significance, there aren't any universal standards for its use in therapeutic settings. Therefore, it is now time for this traditional therapy to undergo additional clinical tests for scientific validation and broader acceptance so that humanity may benefit from its great effects.

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