

# THE UNANIAN

THE UNSEEN WORLD OF HEALTH SCIENCE

AN INITIATE FROM HERMAS ACADEMIA

Now The Future Is  
Vibrational  
(Kaifiyat) Medicine

*Hakim K.T Ajmal*

The Moon: A Celestial  
Body with Mystical  
Power in Unani  
System of Medicine

*Dr Ghazala Mulla*

Unani Medicines and  
Pharmacovigilance  
system in India

*Dr.Musarrat Nafees*

# Dear Readers,



It is an absolute pleasure to welcome you to 'THE UNANIAN' Magazine and as we begin our first edition, We are delighted that you are joining us as readers.

My team and I have long desired to create an authentic international magazine dedicated to the Unani system of medicine and introducing you to 'The Unanian' is a joyful moment for me.

Inspired by the voices of our readers, The UNANIAN aims to become a prominent medical magazine in the realm of complementary and alternative medicine

I am confident that this magazine will be beneficial to researchers, practitioners, and enthusiasts with its emphasis on promoting evidence-based practices, exploring emerging trends, and fostering interdisciplinary collab-

oration. I have been fortunate to be supported by a stellar team - our editorial board, both from India and abroad, and our authors. I am thankful for the hard work and dedication of everyone, and without your help, this launch of 'The Unanian' wouldn't have been possible.

Unanians, as we embark on this reading journey with our first edition, I hope that you will find reading 'The Unanian' enjoyable. I invite you all to be future participants in the creative process that we are undertaking together.

**Hakim K.T Ajmal**

Founder

# From the Chief Editor's Desk: A New Dawn for Unani Medicine

Dear Readers,

With immense pride and a thrill of excitement, I am happy to welcome you to the first edition of the online Unani Magazine 'THE UNANIAN', founded by Hakim Ajmal K.T. He has shown his trust in me and put the huge responsibility of being the chief editor on my shoulders. The world has never seen such a comprehensive digital platform dedicated to showcasing the rich tapestry of Unani medicine before. At this moment, our ancient yet vibrant healing tradition is at a turning point in its history, promising to illuminate its vast potential for a global audience.

As the Chief Editor of 'THE UNANIAN', I am fortunate to be in charge of this pioneering venture, which is powered by the dedication of our esteemed Editorial Board members, both national and international. I express my sincere gratitude to each of you for accepting this vital role. Your expertise, wisdom, and unwavering commitment to Unani medicine form the bedrock upon which this magazine will be built.

For centuries, Unani medicine has graced humanity with its holistic approach to health and well-being. Rooted in the principles of Hippocrates and further refined by the genius of Islamic and Indian scholars, it offers a unique blend of herbal remedies, dietary guidelines, and lifestyle modifications that address the individual as a whole. Yet, despite its long and illustrious history, Unani medicine has not got its due place in the world of complementary systems of medicine and its treasures remain hidden from the eyes of the wider world.

This is where "THE UNANIAN" steps in. Our vision is for it to be a bridge that connects



As we embark on this digital odyssey, I hold close to the belief that "THE UNANIAN" will not only serve as a platform for knowledge dissemination but also as a catalyst for change.

practitioners, scholars, manufacturers, and enthusiasts across geographical boundaries. Through informative articles, interviews with leading experts, vibrant case studies, and insightful discussions on contemporary health challenges, we aim to demystify Unani medicine and unveil its immense potential for the 21st century.

From the bustling streets of Delhi to the sun-drenched shores of Morocco, from the ancient city of Bukhara to the vibrant laboratories of modern research institutions, we will weave a tapestry of voices and perspectives. We will explore the latest advancements in Unani research, celebrate the wisdom of traditional practitioners, and discuss the integration of Unani principles into modern healthcare systems.

This journey, however, cannot be undertaken alone. We invite you, the readers, to join us in this momentous endeavor. Give us your stories, questions, and insights. Let us engage in open dialogue, challenge assumptions, and collectively imagine the future of Unani medicine.

As we embark on this digital odyssey, I hold close to the belief that "THE UNANIAN" will not only serve as a platform for knowledge dissemination but also as a catalyst for change. Let us, together, shine a light on this precious heritage, ensuring that its wisdom continues to illuminate the path towards a healthier and more harmonious world.

With warm regards,

**Dr. Ghazala Mulla**

Chief Editor

# Message from Dr.N Zaheer

Director General  
Central Council For Research In Unani Medicine  
Ministry Of Ayush, Govt Of India



केन्द्रीय यूनानी चिकित्सा अनुसंधान परिषद्  
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डॉ. एन. ज़हीर अहमद, एम.डी. (यूनानी), डी.एच.एम.  
महानिदेशक  
Dr. N. Zaheer Ahmed, MD (UNANI), DHM  
Director General

## MESSAGE

I extend my heartfelt appreciations and best wishes on the launch of 'THE UNANIAN,' the online magazine exclusively devoted to Unani Medicine. This is a significant step forward towards promoting and disseminating knowledge about this rich traditional medical system in the digital era.

In recent times, there has been a notable resurgence in recognizing the significant potential of Unani Medicine as well as other traditional medical systems to address modern health challenges and promote overall well-being. This renewed interest is a positive development for the system, underscoring the urgent need for further enhancement through contemporary research efforts. While the Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine plays a pivotal role in this endeavour, independent researchers, academics, and professionals also share a collective responsibility to enrich the system with their knowledge and expertise, ensuring its acceptance in the scientific community. Additionally, there is a pressing need to disseminate accurate information, provide education, and enhance communication about the beneficial aspects of the system.

I am confident that 'THE UNANIAN' will not only cover research and scholarly topics but also delve into diverse areas like clinical practices, herbal remedies, and the historical significance of Unani Medicine. This comprehensive approach will educate readers while sparking a renewed interest in this ancient healing system.

I wish all the very best to Dr. Ajmal K.T. and the entire team of 'THE UNANIAN' for continued success in this endeavour.

  
(Dr. N. Zaheer Ahmed)

# Message from Dr. Mukhtar Qasmi

Unani Advisor, Ministry Of Ayush, Govt Of India



सत्यमेव जयते

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## MESSAGE

Warmest congratulations on the launch of the first-ever Unani E-magazine! This is a monumental step forward for the Unani system, bringing its wisdom and knowledge to a wider audience in the digital age.

The dedication and vision of Dr. Ajmal K.T. behind this initiative are truly commendable. In a world increasingly reliant on digital platforms, this E-magazine "THE UNANIAN" will bridge the gap between practitioners and learners, fostering knowledge sharing and accessibility like never before.

The magazine can reach a global audience, connecting Unani practitioners and enthusiasts across the world. The digital format allows for the inclusion of multimedia elements, making learning more engaging and interactive. Regular online publication ensures readers stay updated on the latest advancements and research within the Unani system. The digital archive of the magazine will serve as a valuable resource for future generations to learn about and appreciate this rich medical heritage.

I am confident that "THE UNANIAN" will become a valuable tool for promoting and furthering the Unani system. My sincere congratulations to everyone involved in this remarkable initiative.

I wish you and your team all the very best for continued success and a bright future!

  
(Dr. M. A. Qasmi)

# Message from Dr. Wasim Ahmad

Principal, State Unani Medical College & Hahrdm  
Hospital, Prayagraj (U.p.)



STATE UNANI MEDICAL COLLEGE & HAHRDM  
HOSPITAL, PRAYAGRAJ (U.P.)



**Dr. Wasim Ahmad**  
Principal

Date-08.02.2024

## MESSAGE

The launch of the inaugural Unani magazine online, 'THE UNANIAN', brings me great joy and I am proud to commemorate it. My heartfelt congratulations to Dr. Ajmal K.T. for taking this commendable initiative. You have reached another milestone worth celebrating. Embrace this moment, for it is the culmination of your hard work and determination by becoming an online magazine, 'THE UNANIAN' has the potential to reach a vast audience who can access it easily at any time. This e-magazine has the potential to go a long way and achieve remarkable success. I am certain that "THE UNANIAN" will publish a diverse range of topics, encompassing not only research but also covering the latest discoveries in medicine and science in general. I am confident that Dr. Ajmal and his dedicated team will uphold the magazine's high standards and consistently deliver engaging and informative content that keeps readers eagerly anticipating each new issue.

I wish the 'THE UNANIAN' team all the best for their exciting launch and wish them all the best for a bright and successful future.

Sincerely,

**Dr. Wasim Ahmad**  
Principal

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# Now The Future Is Vibrational (Kaifiyat) Medicine

 **Hakim K.T Ajmal**

Founder and Chief Philosopher, Hermas Unani



As time progresses, everything in the world changes and gets better. It improves and evolves. Over the last decade, the functioning of the world has experienced significant changes as a result of the advancement of science and technology. The lifestyles have developed so much that the common man is now able to enjoy facilities that the era before us of Shahin Sha Akbar or Emperor Asoka couldn't even imagine.

Offices that were once cluttered with files have become more spacious and sophisticated with the arrival of computers.

A small device that can be carried in your pockets now performs the same tasks as computers, televisions, clocks, telephones, scanners, and other devices. The creation of banking cards has made money more convenient to transport or transfer.

This was all attained gradually when research began to focus more on the human vibration energy levels, and when it happened all these marvelous revolutions that were once unimaginable became a reality.

The next field that will be experiencing incredible changes is the field of Health and Medicine. Today, the field of Health and

medicine has made significant progress that has made life easier for the common person.

But despite everything, the pandemic situation was the time when our faith in the field of medicine was shattered as a whole. The situation couldn't be handled in a satisfactory manner, which indicates that we have a lot more work to do in this field. This is where the need to explore the scopes of vibrational levels becomes important.

The Newtonian Model of Medical Thinking views the psychology and psychological behavior of humans as being determined by the structural features of the body and brain. The human body is seen as a machine with many parts, and the performance of each part determines its complete purpose. In fact, beyond the physical structure, there is a force that animates the force that gives life! When this force exits the body, it deteriorates.

This particular force is considered from another perspective that views the human body as a complex system of energy fields interfaced with physical and cellular systems. Vibrational medicine is viewed from this perspective.

According to this theory, diseases and disorders lead to changes in the electromagnetic properties of cells and tissues. Specialized forms of energy are used to make a positive impact on energy fields within the body that become out of balance due to illness.

The AYUSH medicine system has gained widespread acceptance during the post-COVID-19 period because it has been instrumental in addressing the challenges that were created during the pandemic. It has made significant progress in addressing the turmoil caused by the pandemic. This has contributed to the increase in attention, trust, and popularity of regenerative medicines.

The popularity of alternative medicine worldwide is being seen Globally by the sudden rise in the number of spas and therapy centers, widespread acceptance of acupuncture systems, and Yoga. Electromagnetic healing is already being used by mainstream medicine in certain subspecialties to replace conventional therapies. This marks the start of a revolution that has yet to occur in the

medical field.

This is the start of a revolution and change that is happening in the field of medicine Technology, medicine, and the wellness industry have begun investing in discovering the crucial connection between material and field aspects of the body. Innovations are being developed to optimize the 'energy body' in humans.

Science has started to acknowledge some crucial principles of ancient medicine. Over time certain theories will be validated and few will be invalidated as well. But the fact there is a general acceptance and reckoning now that, There is a great deal to learn from ancient ideas in the conventional medical system is paving the way for AYUSH to make a Global Impact.

The development of a common healthy platform enables the exchange of ideas between the conventional system and the vibrational

**“In the years to come, we will witness a rush by medical experts and technology to understand how the energy network has been organized in the human body.”**

system of medicine. Healthy conversations can play a significant role in achieving a more refined, well-developed medical system that addresses both the body and soul as a whole. By combining Physics with biochemistry, it can be achieved.

In the years to come, we will witness a rush by medical experts and technology to understand how the energy network has been organized in the human body.

These findings will establish a foundation for designing arbitrations in electromagnetic fields to prevent disease and support both physical and mental health. More than ever before, now is the time for the Hakim in you to expand your knowledge and make a significant contribution to the upcoming era of vibrational medicine.

# The Moon: A Celestial Body with Mystical Power in Unani System of Medicine

 **Dr Ghazala Mulla**

HOD-Physiology, Z.V.M.Unani Medical College and Hospital, Azam Campus, Camp, Pune



## *Stages of the diseases in the Unani System of Medicine:*

The Unani System of Medicine is built on Hippocrates' theory of Humors, which are bodily fluids. According to Hippocrates' theory of humor, the human body has four humors: blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile. Each person has a specific proportion of these humors. This proportion is unique to each individual and determines their Mizaj (Temperament). It also plays a crucial role in their health and illness. When the humors are in harmony, it signifies good health, while an imbalance indicates disease. Marze Maddi has been identified by Ancient Unani Physicians as being divided into four stages or phases. This is a general classification.

***Zamana-e-Ibteda' (incubation period):*** This is the time when the person starts to show symptoms of the disease. These symptoms will be as per the involvement of the Khilt.

***Zamana-e-Tazayud (Prodromal period):*** This is the time when a person starts to show mild symptoms of the disease, such as fever, headache, and fatigue. These symptoms are

caused by the body's immune response to the morbid humor.

***Zamana-e-Inteha (Acute phase):*** This is the time when the disease is at its most severe. The person experiences the full range of symptoms.

***Zamana-e-Inhetat (Convalescent phase):*** This is the time when the person is recovering from the disease. The symptoms start to improve and the person's immune system is helping the person to recover from the disease.

These four stages are observed throughout the complete duration of certain diseases. This is called "Auqat-e-Kulliyya" or sometimes each stage is observed separately as a single entity, which is called "Auqat-e-Juziyya".

The role of the mystical moon in the Unani System of Medicine:

The moon has always fascinated people. Poets and artists have immortalized its different phases in their works. Many poems have been written by poets that compare their loved ones to the moon. In the past, sailors

“It has also been used as a calendar and by astrologers for calculations and predictions. It holds significance in various religions too. The moon’s enigmatic influence resonated with ancient Unani scholars and philosophers.”

and travellers relied on the moon to find their way. It has also been used as a calendar and by astrologers for calculations and predictions. It holds significance in various religions too. The moon’s enigmatic influence resonated with ancient Unani scholars and philosophers.

#### *Hippocrates, Avicenna, and the Moon:*

Hippocrates’ perspective on the moon is both complex and nuanced. He stated that “the moon has a great influence on the body, but it is important to note that it is only one of many factors that can affect our health. We should not rely on astrologers to predict our future or to tell us how to treat our illnesses. Instead, we should focus on using our knowledge and experience to make informed decisions about our health.”

It is important to note that Hippocrates lived in a time when astrology and medicine were

closely intertwined. Many physicians believed that the planets and stars could influence human health and disease. However, Hippocrates was one of the first physicians to question these beliefs and to develop a more scientific approach to medicine.

Avicenna (980-1037 AD), also known as Ibn Sina, was a Persian polymath who is widely regarded as one of the greatest physicians, astronomers, and philosophers of all time. His views on the moon and its relation to the course of disease were complex and multifaceted.

On one hand, Avicenna had a strong conviction that the planets and stars had an impact on human health. He wrote in his famous medical encyclopedia, “The Canon of Medicine”, that “the moon has a great influence on the body, and it is necessary to take this into account when treating patients.”

Avicenna believed that the moon’s gravitational pull could affect the movement of fluids in the body and that this could lead to a variety of diseases, such as edema, fever, and epilepsy. He also believed that the moon’s phases could affect the potency of certain medicines.

On the other hand, Avicenna was also a keen observer of nature, and he was aware that the moon’s influence on human health



was not always straightforward. He wrote that “the moon’s influence is not constant, but varies depending on its position in the sky, its relationship to other planets, and the individual’s constitution.”

Avicenna also believed that the moon’s influence could be counteracted by other factors, such as diet, lifestyle, and the use of medicines. He wrote that “it is important to consider all of these factors when treating patients, and not to rely solely on the moon’s influence.”

Here are some specific examples of Avicenna’s views on the moon and its relation to the course of disease:

- He believed that the new moon was a time when the body was particularly vulnerable to disease.
- He believed that the full moon was a time when the body was particularly strong and able to resist disease.
- He believed that eclipses of the moon could cause a variety of diseases, such as epilepsy and mental illness.
- He believed that the moon’s position in the sky could affect the potency of certain medicines. For example, he believed that medicines that were taken during the waxing moon would be more effective.

**“Then the moon passes from Leo, Cancer and Gemini, the disease will be in Zamana-e-Inhetat. The patient will recover as the moon reaches in zodiac sign Taurus. This course of the disease with moon circle is for acute diseases.”**

It is important to note that Avicenna’s views on the moon and its relation to the course of disease were based on the prevailing scientific knowledge of his time. While some of his views may seem outdated today, it is important to remember that he was a brilliant and pioneering physician who made significant contributions to the field of medicine.

Ibn Sina stated that the moon’s gravity has

an effect on the ripening of fruits and seawater. The effects are seen in the form of high and low tides in the sea.

Ibn-e-Sina in his book “Al-Qanoon Fit Tib” has correlated the above four stages of diseases to the moon’s journey in different zodiac signs. He has mentioned that if the symptoms of disease start appearing (Zamana-e-Ibteda) when the moon is at 1800 angle of the zodiac circle i.e. in Aries zodiac sign and when the moon reaches Capricorn, this will be Zamana-e-Tazayud, as the moon reaches in Virgo, the disease will be at its peak i.e. Zamana-e-Inteha. Then the moon passes from Leo, Cancer and Gemini, the disease will be in Zamana-e-Inhetat. The patient will recover as the moon reaches in zodiac sign Taurus. This course of the disease with moon circle is for acute diseases.

The Unani Hakims have calculated the days of Bohran as per lunar month. The word Bohran can be defined as a “wall around the city” or in medical language it can be defined as a sudden change in the disease, the change can be towards health i.e. the patient may become alright or the disease become severe leading to death of the patient. By knowing Bohran the physician can predict the course of disease.

To calculate the days of Bohran, assume that the lunar month is 29.5 days. Then subtracting 3.0 days of Amawas, we get 26.5 days. During Amawas (when there is no moon day), the moon does not influence humors or diseases.

Hence, 26.5 days will be considered as the total days of the lunar month. Now when 26.5 is divided by 2, which will be 13.25, so the 14th day will be the day of Bohran.

Again divide 13.25 by 2, which will come to 6.625, so the 7th day will be of a day of Bohran. Divide 6.625 by 2, and it will come to 3.31. Therefore, Unani physicians will consider the fourth day as Bohran.

Hence, the days of Bohran will be the 13th or 14th, the 7th and the 3rd day of the lunar month.

Adding three days of Amawas on the 14th day will result in it being on the 17th. Add 3 days to 17 and it will be the 20th day of the lunar month. The duration and timings of the lunar month may vary, and these are called



Adwar-e-Asghara or Adwar-e-Sabi. Hence, The days of Bohran will be 4, 7, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, and 23 as per Tareeqa-e-Rabo.

Hakeem Arkagnees and Hippocrates stated that the 17th day of the lunar month is the best day of Bohran. The Unani physician pays close attention to the stages of the disease and the days of Bohran, and intervenes with the best-suited modalities at each stage if required.

Hijamah Bis-Shurt (Wet cupping) is one of the modalities of the Unani System. Therefore, performing Hijamah on the days of Bohran will be beneficial as the morbid matter (Rad-di Akhlat) will be on the surface of the skin and be easily removed from the body.

**“This means that the Islamic calendar is approximately 11 days shorter than the Gregorian calendar each year.**

**Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) advocated Hijamah on the 17th, 19th, and 21st of every lunar month. Thereby, the teaching of the Prophet (PBUH) for Hijamah therapy is in accordance with the Unani System of Medicine.”**

#### *Lunar month in Islam:*

The Islamic calendar is a lunar calendar, meaning that it is based on the lunar cycles. From the very beginning, the moon has played a significant role in Islamic culture and history.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) himself used the lunar calendar to track the passage of time and to determine the dates of important religious events. In fact, The moon has been mentioned in the Quran more than 30 times.

The Islamic calendar begins with the Hijrah, which is the emigration of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) from Mecca to Medina in 622 CE. The Hijrah is a significant event in Islamic history, and it marks the beginning of the Islamic era.

The Islamic calendar consists of 12 lunar months, each of which lasts approximately 29.5 days. This means that the Islamic calendar is approximately 11 days shorter than the Gregorian calendar each year.

Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) advocated Hijamah on the 17th, 19th, and 21st of every lunar month. Thereby, the teaching of the Prophet (PBUH) for Hijamah therapy is in accordance with the Unani System of Medicine.

#### *Personal Observations:*

As a Hijamah practitioner, I have personally observed the mystical effects of the moon on the body’s humor and the wonderful results of Hijamah. The effectiveness of Hijamah may be enhanced if it is performed on days of Bohran.

I request the readers to pay close attention to patients’ complaints, and the response of their humor to different phases of the moon. Start doing Hijamah on the days of Bohran and see the magical effect of Hijamah and the moon.

# Nourish, Not Overfill:

A Journey Towards  
Mindful Eating Inspired by  
Prophet Muhammad (pbuh)



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## *Introduction:*

This article aims to shed light on the severe consequences of habitual overeating, focusing on diseases related to insulin resistance and metabolic disorders. Chronic overeating is not just about weight gain, it could lead to a range of metabolic disorders that disrupt the body's normal metabolic functions. One of the most prevalent among these is insulin resistance, a condition that can develop from prolonged overeating, particularly from

foods laden with sugar and fat.

The journey ahead will elucidate the damaging health consequences of such metabolic disorders, encouraging readers to adopt healthier eating habits and reaffirming the timeless wisdom of the Prophet Muhammad's (Peace Be Upon Him) words. As we delve deeper into this topic, we will explore how moderation in eating can be a powerful tool in preventing these disorders, ultimately leading to a healthier and more balanced

life.

### *Metabolic Disorders and Insulin Resistance:*

Metabolic disorders are a group of conditions that disrupt the normal metabolic processes in the body. They can be caused by a variety of factors, but one of the most common is overeating. When we consume more food than our bodies can handle, it puts a strain on our metabolic system, leading to a range of disorders.

One of the most common metabolic dis-

**“The stomach expands beyond its typical size to accommodate the extra food, which can cause discomfort, bloating, and even nausea.”**

orders linked to overeating is insulin resistance. Insulin is a hormone that aids your cells in taking in glucose for energy. When you consistently consume too much food, especially foods high in sugar and fat, your body requires more insulin to maintain its levels. Over time, this can result in your cells becoming resistant to insulin, causing them to not respond as well to the hormone and not able to take in glucose as effectively.

The Science Behind Overeating: Unraveling the Impacts on Our Body

When we overeat, our bodies go into overdrive to process the excess nutrients. This process includes a series of complex physiological reactions that can have serious implications on our overall health.

### *Digestive System Overload:*

Upon overeating, the digestive system is burdened with the task of processing more food than it usually does. The stomach expands beyond its typical size to accommodate the extra food, which can cause discomfort, bloating, and even nausea.

### *Blood Sugar Spikes:*

Overeating, especially foods high in sugar and simple carbohydrates, causes a rapid spike in blood sugar levels. In response, the

pancreas produces more insulin to transport the sugar from the bloodstream to the cells. However, when this pattern of overeating and subsequent insulin production continues, the cells can become resistant to insulin, leading to higher blood sugar levels and potentially type 2 diabetes.

### *Fat Storage and Weight Gain:*

When we consume more calories than we burn, our bodies store the excess as fat. Over time, frequent overeating can lead to weight gain and obesity, which are risk factors for a host of health problems, such as heart disease, stroke, and certain types of cancer.

### *Impact on Metabolism:*

Overeating can disrupt our metabolism - the process of breaking down food and turning it into energy. If we consistently consume more than our bodies can process, it can lead to metabolic dysfunction. This can increase metabolic rate initially (as the body works harder to process the extra food), but over time, prolonged overeating can cause the metabolism to slow down, making it harder to lose weight.

### *Hormonal Imbalance:*

Overeating can also affect the hormones that regulate hunger and satiety. Chronic overeating can cause imbalances in the hormones Leptin and ghrelin, which signal fullness and stimulate appetite, resulting in disrupted eating patterns and more weight gain.

In conclusion, the physiological effects of overeating are far-reaching. From the immediate discomfort of a distended stomach to long-term metabolic and hormonal changes, overeating can have significant impacts on our health. Understanding these effects can assist us in making more informed choices about our eating habits and motivate us to pursue a balanced and moderate approach to food consumption.

### *The Severe Health Consequences of Overeating:*

The health consequences of metabolic disorders and insulin resistance can be severe. These conditions often result in other health problems, including:

“In the quest to foster a healthier relationship with food and avoid overeating, we find timeless wisdom in the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).”

**Type 2 Diabetes:** When cells become resistant to insulin, glucose builds up in the blood instead of being absorbed by cells. This leads to high blood sugar levels, a hallmark of type 2 diabetes.

**Heart disease:**

High levels of glucose in the blood can damage blood vessels and nerves that control the heart. This can lead to an increased risk of heart disease, the leading cause of death worldwide. Non-Alcoholic Fatty Liver Disease (NAFLD): Overeating, specifically a diet high in fats, can lead to an accumulation of fat in the liver, resulting in NAFLD.

This condition increases the risk of liver inflammation, cirrhosis, and liver cancer.

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS): Insulin resistance is a key factor in the development of PCOS in women. This condition leads to hormonal imbalances, and irregular menstrual cycles, and can also increase the risk of infertility. Sleep Apnea: Overeating can lead to weight gain, which in turn increases the risk of developing sleep apnea, a condition where breathing repeatedly stops and starts during sleep. Inspiring Change: The Power of Healthy Habits

While the health consequences of overeating can be daunting, the good news is that these conditions are largely preventable. By making changes to our eating habits, we can reduce our risk of developing metabolic disorders and insulin resistance.

Here are some strategies that can help: Embracing Mindful Eating:

Our relationship with food carries immense significance, influencing not just our physical health, but our emotional and spiritual well-being too. In the quest to foster a

healthier relationship with food and avoid overeating, we find timeless wisdom in the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). His guidelines offer a holistic approach to eating that intertwines mindfulness, gratitude, and moderation.

**Eating in Moderation:**

Echoing the essence of balance, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) once said, “The son of Adam does not fill any vessel worse than his stomach. It is enough for the son of Adam to eat a few mouthfuls to keep him going, but if he must (fill his stomach), then one-third for his food, one-third for his drink, and one-third for his breath.” (Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah). This profound statement serves as a gentle reminder that our stomachs aren’t meant to be filled to the brim with every meal. By embracing moderation, we allow our bodies the space to digest and absorb nutrients efficiently.

**Waiting for Hunger:**

In a world where food is ever-present, it’s easy to eat out of habit, even when we’re not truly hungry. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) advised against this, guiding us to eat only when we feel hungry. This practice encourages us to tune into our body’s natural hunger cues, helping us distinguish between physical hunger and emotional cravings.

**Eating Slowly:**

Enjoying each bite and savoring the flavors of our food is a practice Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) endorsed. Eating slowly not only enhances our appreciation for the meal but also gives our body time to register fullness, preventing overeating.

**Cultivating Gratitude:**

Being thankful for the nourishment we receive promotes a healthier relationship with food. This practice, as emphasized by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), invites mindfulness into our meals and helps us recognize the role of food as sustenance, not just a source of temporary gratification.

**Hydrating Wisely:**

Water plays a crucial role in our overall health. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) suggested drinking water for maintaining good health but advised against consuming it im-



mediately after meals as it can interfere with the digestion process.

#### Embracing Fasting:

Among the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), fasting holds a special place. He advocated fasting as a way of enhancing physical health and spiritual growth. The Prophet (saw) used to fast on Mondays and Thursdays, three days in the middle of every lunar month, and during various other occasions throughout the year. The most significant of these fasting periods is the holy month of Ramadan, during which Muslims worldwide fast from dawn to sunset for 30 consecutive days.

Fasting offers a multitude of benefits. It is a time for the body to rest, detoxify, and rejuvenate. It encourages discipline, self-control and fosters a deep appreciation for food. Moreover, fasting can help regulate our digestion and metabolism, and numerous studies have shown that it can improve insulin sensitivity, making it a beneficial practice for those at risk of metabolic disorders.

#### *Balancing Fasting with Mindful Eating:*

While fasting carries numerous benefits, it's equally important to maintain a balanced and nutritious diet during non-fasting hours. This harmonious blend of fasting and mindful eating can help us avoid overeating, nourish our bodies effectively, and foster a healthier relationship with food.

#### *Conclusion:*

In conclusion, overeating can lead to a variety of severe health consequences, including metabolic disorders and insulin resistance. The cascade of effects from these conditions can touch every facet of life, from the physical to the emotional. Yet, the power to change the course of these outcomes lies within our grasp. By adopting healthier eating habits, exercising regularly, and prioritizing sufficient sleep, we can significantly reduce the risk of such health issues.

The lifestyle of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as a model resonates profoundly in this context. His timeless advice serves as a gentle reminder that moderation is key to our physical well-being.

Life is a beautiful journey, and every meal is an opportunity to nourish our bodies. As we embrace the wisdom of moderation and mindfulness in our eating habits, we can enjoy this journey to the fullest. Let us remember, it is not just about the quantity of the food we consume, but the quality as well. In the end, the choices we make while eating have a profound impact on our overall health and well-being. So, let's make every bite count.

These practices, deeply rooted in the wisdom given to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), hold relevance for everyone, regardless of their religious beliefs, and indeed provide a path towards a balanced and mindful relationship with food.

# Unani Medicines

## and Pharmacovigilance system in India



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Pharmacovigilance (PV) is a crucial aspect of healthcare that focuses on the detection, understanding, assessment, and prevention of adverse drug reactions and other untoward effects. Usually, pharmacovigilance is associated with chemical drugs but during the last decade, it has expanded its concerns to herbal, traditional, and complementary medicines, as well as biological products.

Unani medicine is an ancient system of healing with origins dating back to the Greek civilization. It has persisted through the ages as a traditional system of medicine having a holistic approach towards healthcare. In modern times, a surge in global interest driv-

en by natural remedies and personalized treatment methods of the Unani system of medicine has been observed. However, with the increasing popularity and growing use of Unani medicines, it becomes essential to establish a robust pharmacovigilance system to monitor these herbal formulations and traditional remedies and ensure the safety of mankind.

As per WHO Pharmacovigilance is defined as 'The science and activities relating to the detection, assessment, understanding and prevention of adverse effects or any other medicine-related problem'.

In practicality, Pharmacovigilance is the science and practice of monitoring, detecting, assessing, understanding, and preventing adverse effects or any other drug-related problems associated with the use of pharmaceutical products such as allopathic or herbal medications, vaccines and other biological products.

The first and foremost aim of pharmacovigilance is to ensure the safety and rational use of medications, promoting public health and consumer safety. However aims of pharmacovigilance programmes can be enlisted as:

Improvement of patient care and safety about the use of medicines and all other medical and paramedical interventions

Contribution to the assessment of the benefit, harm, efficacy and risk of medicines and encouraging their safe, rational and more effective use

Promotion of understanding, education and clinical training in pharmacovigilance and its effective communication to health professionals and the public.

### *Description of Pharmacovigilance*

**Monitoring:** Pharmacovigilance involves collecting information on reported adverse events, medication errors and any unexpected or serious side effects from healthcare professionals and other sources and continuously monitoring the safety profile of medications throughout their lifecycle.

**Detecting:** Pharmacovigilance teams carefully analyze the collected data to identify potential signals or patterns that may indicate a safety concern.

**Assessing:** If any potential safety signals have been detected, the next step is to assess their significance and causal relationship with the medication. This involves a thorough evaluation of available evidence to determine whether the reported adverse event is genuinely linked to the use of that specific drug or drug combination.

**Understanding:** Pharmacovigilance experts make efforts to understand the underlying mechanisms of adverse effects and all the factors that contribute to patient susceptibility. This understanding helps in developing appropriate risk management strategies and

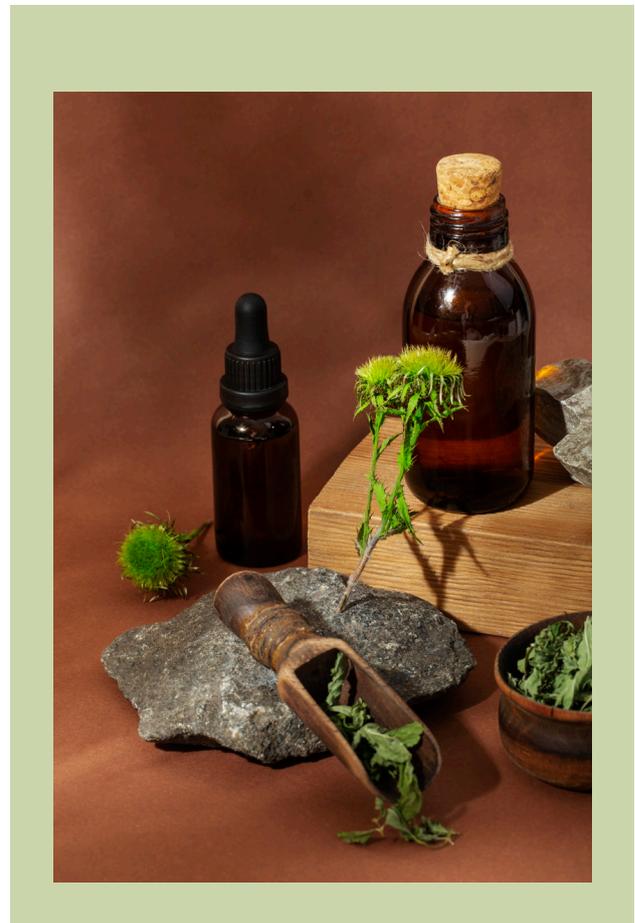
promoting safer medication practices.

**Preventing:** Pharmacovigilance plays a crucial role in preventing harm to patients by identifying and communicating safety concerns to healthcare professionals, regulatory authorities, and the public. This may lead to label updates, changes in prescribing guidelines, or, in extreme cases, withdrawal of medications from the market.

**Reporting and Communication:** Pharmacovigilance involves timely reporting of safety information to regulatory agencies, such as the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the United States or the European Medicines Agency (EMA) in Europe. Communication with healthcare providers and the public is essential to raise awareness about potential risks and promote safe medication use.

### *Pharmacovigilance for Traditional Medicine*

On the news page of WHO, it is mentioned that the widespread acceptance of traditional medicine has covered around 80% population throughout the world as this huge percentage of the population throughout the globe claimed to use traditional medicine as a first resort. But as a consequence of the



increased use of herbal medicine, cases of suspected toxicity and adverse reactions have also been increased proportionately. As per 'Guidelines on Safety Monitoring of Herbal Medicines in Pharmacovigilance Systems' by WHO, there were reports of some herbal capsule preparations found to contain betamethasone and some patients developed corticosteroid like side effects after consuming them. There was another case of misidentification of the medicinal plant material as severe kidney failure was reported in patients who used a herbal product manufactured by plant material containing a high quantity of aristolochic acid.

In 2015, the empowerment of pharmacovigilance (PV) for traditional medicine products was identified as a regional priority area in a WHO Regional TRM Programme and it is well-oriented with the WHO Global Traditional Medicine Strategy 2014–2023. In 2018, It was found that although eight out of the 11 Member States of WHO had established

**“There was another case of misidentification of the medicinal plant material as severe kidney failure was reported in patients who used a herbal product manufactured by plant material containing a high quantity of aristolochic acid.”**

pharmacovigilance systems for allopathic medicine, but only four countries had included TRM (Traditional Medicine) products in their pharmacovigilance. Fortunately, India was one of those four countries. The government of India, New Delhi took monitoring of the safety aspect of herbal medicines very seriously and initiated Pharmacovigilance for various traditional systems of medicine like ASU (Ayurvedic, Siddha and Unani) under the Department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

The Ministry of AYUSH, India has established a three-tier network comprising the National Pharmacovigilance Centre (NPvC), Intermediary Pharmacovigilance Centres (IPvCs), and Peripheral Pharmacovigilance Centres (PPvCs). The flow of complaints or reports takes place from the bottom to the top. All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA),

New Delhi, has been chosen as the National Pharmacovigilance Centre. Five National Institutes of AYUSH have been designated as the Intermediary Pharmacovigilance Centres as the middle layer and an impressive nine-



ty-nine (99) AYUSH institutions with clinical facilities are designated as Peripheral Pharmacovigilance Centres as per the All India Institute of Ayurveda website last updated on 17 March 2023. Central Drug Standards Control Organisation serving as the national drug regulatory authority and the Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission, recognized as the WHO Collaborating Centre for Pharmacovigilance in the country, are also actively engaged in establishing a robust Pharmacovigilance system.

Fig. 1: Three-tier network of Pharmacovigilance system for traditional medicine in India. Flow of Information

National Pharmacovigilance Co-ordination Centre (NPVC), All India Institute of Ayurveda, New Delhi, Intermediary Pharmacovigilance Centres (IPVCs), National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur, Institute for Post-Graduate Teaching & Research in Ayurveda, Jamnagar, National Institute of Unani Medicine, Bengaluru, National Institute of Siddha, Chennai, National Institute of Homoeopathy, Kolkata, Peripheral Pharmacovigilance Centres (PPVCs), Includes many nationwide centres for AYUSH systems of medicines

### *Flow of complaint/report*

Discourse of Reporting: Exclusively healthcare professionals can report adverse effects suspected to occur by the use of any specific medicine, any combination of drugs or any biological product. The general public or non-healthcare persons can not report directly, however, they do have the option to complain through the physician overseeing their treatment.

Submission Locations: Reports should be submitted in a designated format to a local Pharmacovigilance centre. An electronic reporting system for Adverse Drug Reactions (ADRs) has also been introduced, enabling submissions through the website [www.ayushsuraksha.com](http://www.ayushsuraksha.com).

Processing of Provided Information: Peripheral Pharmacovigilance centres send confidential forms to their respective regional centres, where a thorough casualty analysis of all the forms is done. Subsequently, this information is forwarded to the National Pharmacovigilance Centre for consolidation, statistical analysis, and ensuing conveyance to the Department of AYUSH.

### *Pharmacovigilance System for Unani Medicine in India*

Unani medicines have been in use for many centuries and are supposed to be safe at a general notation still there are certain reasons to take care of Unani medicinal products even after making them commercially available. Variations in the preparation, quality and source of raw drugs along with

**“Substandard GMP and quality control measures may also contribute to the concern of patient safety. The conqueror to all these evils is a well-established resilient Pharmacovigilance system.”**

pharmacopeial references can impact their safety and efficacy. New as well as modified dosage forms are being introduced in Unani pharmaceuticals to keep up with the advancing world, and new safety concerns for example Interactions, contraindications and adverse effects may arise. Substandard GMP and quality control measures may also contribute to the concern of patient safety. The conqueror to all these evils is a well-established resilient Pharmacovigilance system.

Fig.2: Three-tier pharmacovigilance system In India for Unani Medicine

### *Challenges for Pharmacovigilance of Unani Medicine*

Pharmacovigilance of Unani Medicine is confronted with some tough challenges. There is a substantial belief that Unani medicines have been in use for centuries, they are already proven to be safe. In addition, herbal medicines are usually considered harmless. Therefore, even if any problem is being noticed by patients, it is hard to believe that it occurs due to the use of Unani medicine. Lack of awareness about pharmacovigilance itself and pharmacovigilance monitoring networks for Unani medicine among health professionals and the public is also an important reason. There is another significant facet of a tangible fear of exposing potential shortcomings within their therapeutic approach among proponents of Unani medicine.



# Uses of Spices

in Unani Medicine  
for Skin Care

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## Introduction

Skin ailments are a common issue in many developing countries because there is a lack of awareness about proper hygiene and cosmetic care. The majority of middle or low-income individuals in India rely on natural sources to take care of their skin. In villages for common ailments, most villagers use home remedies that are based on medicinal herbs from spices.

“By having the right amount of spices in your daily diet, you can enhance your appearance in multiple ways. The present study outlines various significant spices that are utilized in the Unani medical system for skin care.”

Humans have been utilizing spices (medicinal herbs) since the beginning of time. It is evident from the age-old classical literature of traditional medicines in Ayurvedic and Unani systems, that treatment for numerous diseases in the ancient civilizations of Indians, Chinese, Egyptians, Romans, and Greeks was done with medicinal plants and spices. While skin products and treatments are often used in everyday life, some genuine spices can be extremely economical and readily available to play a vital role in the skin. By having the right amount of spices in your daily diet, you can enhance your appearance in multiple ways. The present study outlines various significant spices that are utilized in the Unani medical system for skin care.

### *Piyaz : Allium cepa Linn. (Liliaceae)*

Chemical constituents: The essential oil glucosinolates are present in piyaz.

Pharmacological properties: Stimulant, mild anti-irritant, diuretic, anti-phlegmatic, anti-bacterial, and antifungal properties.

Uses: The juice is mild, doesn't irritate the skin, and encourages blood circulation in the mucosal membrane. To treat dandruff, it is applied to the scalp with its juice. It is beneficial for hair. Cut onions can occasionally be utilized to eliminate tiny warts.

### *Garlic: Allium sativum Linn. (Liliaceae)*

Description: Garlic consists of the fresh or dried compound bulbs of *A. sativum* Linn. The garlic bulb 'Seer' or 'Lahsun' is *Allium sativum* L. It is a sub-globular compound bulb with dry white membranous scales around it with an unpleasant odour and has 'Herbal Cosmeto Dermatology' a scorching flavour. It contains not less than 0.5 per cent of allicin and not less than 0.2 per cent of -glutamyl-(S)-allyl-L-cysteine, calculated on the dried basis.

Chemical constituent: Aside from the sulfur-containing chemicals allicin and allistatin, its essential oil contains allyl propyl disulfide and diallyl disulphide. Allicin has a strong, somewhat acrid, and unpleasant flavor, and has anticancer and hypoglycemic properties.

Pharmacological constituent: Oil is a stimulant, antihelmintic, diaphoretic, and diuretic, as well as a calming agent, hypoglycemic, and anticholesterol. It is an excellent blood purifier.

Uses: It is used as a blood purifier against ringworm by rubbing it on the affected area: the oil is germicidal and effective in the treatment of scabies. Also beneficial in the treatment of maggot-infested ulcers and wounds.

### *Soya: Anethum graveolens L. (Umbelliferae)*

Description: A perennial or biennial herb, 'Shibth' (Arabic name) or 'Soya' (dill). Dill is commonly grown in India, also commonly known as dill weed. It grows to a height of 75 cm and spreads to a width of 30 cm. The green stem is smooth and hollow. The top has several branches and bears an enormous flat umbel of bright yellow tiny flowers; the leaves are ultra-fine, feathery, and dark green. The flat oral seeds are parchment in colour and have a bitter taste.

Chemical constituents: Anetheole, apiol, carvone, and anethine are all essential oils.

Pharmacological properties: Aromatic, stimulant, febrifuge, resolvent, and diuretic properties.

Uses: External application of bruised and cooked seeds on inflammations. An abscess is treated with a fresh dill poultice. It is often

used to season soups.

**Heel Kalan: *Amomum subulatum* Roxb. (Zingiberaceae)**

Description: The dried ripe fruits and seeds of *A. subulatum* Roxb. are known as 'Heel kalan' (Qaqlahkibr), Cardamom major. It is extensively found throughout the eastern Himalayas, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. Cardamom major is sometimes used in place of cardamom (minor). *Subulatum* capsules are significantly larger than *Elettaria cardamomum* capsules. It has three valves and is dark brown in hue. Each valve has three ragged, membranous wings that stretch towards the upper part of the fruit and disintegrate at the tip. The seeds are grouped similarly to cardamom. It has a fragrant and camphoraceous flavour.

Chemical constituents: Essential oil, borneol, cineole, limonene, terpineol.

Pharmacological properties: Anthelmintic, skin tonic, antipyretic, and astringent.

Uses: As it is less expensive than cardamom, it is frequently used in place of cardamom (minor). It is also utilized as a flavouring agent in toothpowder. It can help with gonorrhoea and skin problems like dermatophytosis and scabies.

**Ajwain Desi: *Carum copticum* Benth. (Umbelliferae)**

Description: The 'Nankhwaah' (Ajwain desi) is the dried ripe fruit or seeds of *Carum copticum* Benth. The fruits are of the size and form of parsley, greyish brown in colour. Each mericarp contains five ridges. The aroma is akin to thyme.

Chemical Constituents: Aromatic, volatile oil, thymol (sat-e-ajwan), and minerals.

Pharmacological properties: Ajwain is an antimicrobial, antifungal, aphrodisiac, antioxidant, and flavouring agent.

Uses: It is used to treat skin infections and is also effective in cases of fungal infections of the skin. 'Ajwas kathol' or 'Sat-e-ajwas' is an



“Lemon juice is antibacterial, antiscorbutic, and refrigerant when combined with camphor and rosewater and used to treat itching and other skin diseases. Lemon juice is also used to treat acne when combined with glycerine.”

antifungal agent.

*Darchini: Cinnamomum zeylanicum Blume. (Lauraceae)*

Description: The dried inner bark of the stem of zeylanicum Blume is used to make ‘darchini’ (cinnamon). It is found throughout Kerala and Tamil Nadu, as well as in the Western Ghats. It is a medium-sized evergreen tree. As a spice and seasoning, the leaves and dried inner bark (‘dalchini’) are utilized. The inner surface of the bark is black in colour, fragrant in fragrance, and has a sweet and aromatic taste with a warming sensation. The bark is 0.5 mm thick, brittle, and has single or double, closely packed compound quills. The outer surface is drab and yellowish brown, with faint wavy longitudinal lines and a few minor scars or holes.

Chemical constituents: Carbohydrates, protein, fat, fibre, calcium, phosphorus, iron, salt, potassium, vitamin, thiamine, vitamin C, and vitamin A. Cinnamon essential oil, which contains eugenol, is particularly useful.

Pharmacological properties: Demulcent, antiplegmatic, astringent, stimulant, and diuretic properties.

Uses: Cinnamon bark is used to treat acne and fungal skin infections. Its oil has antibacterial properties and is used as a flavouring agent in food and medicine.

*Lemon Fruit: Citrus medica (Rutaceae)*

Description: The ‘Turunjlimu’ is a ripened citrus lemon fruit. It is a 1.5 m to 3.6 m tall evergreen shrub with a 10 cm diameter stem. Fruit is 5-7 cm long, oblong, and green when young, turning yellow when ripe.

Chemical constituents: Citric acid, vitamin C, and essential oil.

Pharmacological properties and uses: Lemon juice is rubefacient, antileprotic, and anti-

bacterial, and it suppresses the synthesis of melanin pigment. It is used to achieve a fair complexion. Lemon juice is antibacterial, antiscorbutic, and refrigerant when combined with camphor and rosewater and used to treat itching and other skin diseases. Lemon juice is also used to treat acne when combined with glycerine. Scabies can be effectively treated with lemon juice. It improves the function of the skin. It is utilized for skin rejuvenation due to its high vitamin C content.

*Dhania: Coriandrum sativum L. (Umbelliferae)*



Description: The ‘Kishneez’ (‘Dhania’) is a dried ripe fruit of the annual perennial herb *C. sativum* L. The plant is upright, thin, glabrous, branching, and fragrant. ‘Kothmir’ is another name for the plant. When ripe, the fruits are round with longitudinal ridges, globular, green, and fragile, and turn brownish yellow; aromatic scent, and spicy flavour.

Chemical constituents: Essential oil, volatile oil, and fixed oil make up 13% of the total.

It also contains vitamins and minerals such as calcium, phosphorus, iron, thiamine, and riboflavin.

Pharmacological properties: It has sedative, anti-inflammatory, astringent, cooling, and calming properties.

Uses: Acne and blackheads are treated using a decoction of coriander seed powder and turmeric powder. It is applied topically on ulcers and carbuncles. In Unani medicine, it is employed as an ingredient in pharmaceutical formulations used as a blood purifier (Arad musaffi-e-khoon).



### **Zafran: *Crocus sativus* L. (Iridaceae)**

Description: The dried stigma and styles of *Crocus sativus* L. flowers are used to make 'Zafaran,' Saffron, and Kesar. Saffron is a perennial herb. Kashmir produces high-quality saffron.

Chemical constituents: Natural colouring matter, glucosidecrocin, picrocrocin, colchicine, starch, carbohydrates, proteins, and

essential oil are all included.

Pharmacological properties: It stimulates the endocrine system and improves blood circulation. Aromatic, euphoric, antispasmodic and flavouring agent.

Uses: It is used to colour clothes as well as hair and skin. Saffron can help with a variety of skin conditions, including vitiligo and acne. It is also used as a sunscreen and in beauty products.

### **Zeera Safed: *Cuminum cyminum* L. (Umbelliferae)**

Description: The dried ripe fruits of Cumin are known as 'Kamun' (Zerasafed'/cumin). In India, cumin is used as a condiment. It is an annual herb that grows up to 50 cm tall and is heavily branched. Seeds are oval, 6 mm long, and light yellowish in hue, with a strong, pungent scent.

Chemical constituents: Essential oil, thymol fixed oil, resin, gum, protein, minerals, and vitamins are all present.

Pharmacological properties: Anthelmintic, antifungal, antiseptic, stimulant, diuretic, sedative, and antispasmodic.

Uses: The combination of cumin seed powder and turmeric powder is used as a skin colour. The oil is used to treat eczema and other skin problems, as well as to treat boils, burns, and scalds. Washing the face with a seed powder water infusion helps to improve the skin complexion.

### **Haldi: *Curcuma longa* L. (Zingiberaceae)**

Description: The dried rhizome of *C. longa* L. is known as 'Uruk-es-sufr' (Arabic name) 'haldi' or turmeric. The rhizomes of this annual herb are branching and golden to deep orange in hue.

Chemical constituents: Curcumin essential

**“The oil is used to treat eczema and other skin problems, as well as to treat boils, burns, and scalds. Washing the face with a seed powder water infusion helps to improve the skin complexion.”**

oil, minerals, proteins, and carbohydrates.

Pharmacological properties: Hepatoprotective, immunostimulant, antibacterial, and antiviral properties.

Uses: It is used to treat boils, skin lesions, trauma, and injuries. It is effective against psoriasis, skin cancer, and skin virus infections. It is used both topically and orally to treat various skin conditions. It is extensively used to enhance the appearance of the face and body.

**Heel Khurd: *Elettaria cardamomum* Maton. (Zingiberaceae)**

Description: The 'Heel khurd' (lesser cardamom) is a dried, ripe capsule of the perennial herb *Elettaria cardamomum* Maton. which is used as a spice. The fruits are three-sided capsules that are oblong or roundish in shape and are yellowish brown or dirty white

**“Persia and Western Afghanistan are home to this perennial herb. The resin hardens and becomes brittle over time, turning a rich red-brown tint. The aroma is garlic and caraway oil. The flavour is caustic and unpleasant.”**

in colour. Capsules have partitions, each with a tightly packed angular small seed surrounded by a thin translucent membrane (aril). The seeds are dark blackish brown in colour and have gleaming depressed helium. The capsule has no taste. The seeds have a pleasant flavour that is slightly spicy and camphoraceous. It provides a cooling feeling on the tongue.

Chemical constituents: Coineol, terpinene, limonene, borneol, sabinine, and terpineol are all constituents of essential oil.

Pharmacological properties: Aromatic, flavourful, stimulating, and astringent properties.

Uses: Cardamom is used to treat foul breath because of its fragrant flavour. The essential oil is used as a stimulant, in the pharmaceutical business, perfumes, and tinctures. It is also used to treat some chronic skin illnesses, such as vitiligo and psoriasis, as well as

cases of nervous depression.

**Heeng: *Ferula asafoetida* Regd. (Umbellifereae)**

Description: The 'Hilteet' (Asafaetida) or 'Heeng' is a resin derived from the rhizomes and roots of *Ferula asafoetida*. Persia and Western Afghanistan are home to this perennial herb. The resin hardens and becomes brittle over time, turning a rich red-brown tint. The aroma is garlic and caraway oil. The flavour is caustic and unpleasant.

Chemical constituents: It is made up of resin, gums, and essential oil.

Pharmacological properties: Antispasmodic, stimulant, sedative, nervine, digestive, anti-septic, and diuretic. It is also reported to be an opium antagonist.

Uses: 'Hilteet' is combined with honey and used to treat acne. It is also excellent for toning the skin when applied externally, and when combined with mustard oil, it is used as a skin cleanser. It is utilized in the manufacture of medications, such as "zimad-e-khanazeer," a lymphadenitis lotion.

**Saunf: *Foeniculum vulgare* Mill. (Umbellifereae)**

Description: The dried ripe fruits of *Foeniculum vulgare* Mill. are known as 'Badiyan' ('saunf' or 'fennel'). It is a biennial or perennial aromatic herb that grows to a height of 1-2 m and is widely farmed throughout India. The fruits are rectangular, pedicel-attached, five-sided, with a broader surface that tapers towards the apex and base, and greenish or yellowish green in colour. The flavour is sweet and pleasant. Indian sweet fennel is shorter and more straight than European fennel.

Chemical constituents: Minerals (calcium, phosphorus, iron, potassium, sodium), riboflavin, and vitamin C are present in trace amounts.

Pharmacological properties: Tonic for the eyes and skin, laxative, and anti-catarthal qualities.

Uses: Constipation, phlegmatic disease, skin disease, and poor vision are all symptoms of a weakened immune system. A distilled fennel water called "Arq-e-Badiyan" is used to bathe weaker or inflamed eyes. Arq-e-Ba-

diyan and honey are used to treat irritated pimples.

**Jaiphal: *Myristica fragrans* Houtt. (Myristicaceae)**

Description: The dried seed (kernels) of *Myristica fragrans* is known as 'Jauzbu-

“Its tree is roughly 20 m. tall. *Myristica fragrans* fruit is pendulous and globose, with seeds that are ellipsoid, 20-30 mm long, greenish-brown, and sometimes furrowed with irregular dark brown spots.”

wa' (jaiphal) or nutmeg. It is predominantly found in Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Assam in India. Its tree is roughly 20 m. tall. *Myristica fragrans* fruit is pendulous and globose, with seeds that are ellipsoid, 20-30 mm long, greenish-brown, and sometimes furrowed with irregular dark brown spots. It has a greyish brown endosperm, a strong fragrance, is aromatic, and has a pungent aromatic flavour.

Chemical constituents: Nutmeg has a volatile oil content of 2-8%, a protein content of 25-30%, a fixed oil, and myristicene.

Pharmacological properties: Narcotic, astringent, endocrine system tonic, and exhilarating.

Uses: The oil is used in a variety of pharmacological formulations; in perfumes, hair lotions, treating skin problems such as ringworm, and as an anti-wrinkle agent.

**Kalounji: *Nigella sativa* L. (Ranunculaceae)**

Description: *Nigella sativa* seed is known as 'Kalounji' (black cumin). It's grown in wild regions of Punjab, Bihar, and other regions of India. It is a tiny herb that grows 30-60 cm tall. Trigonous, flattened oblong, angular, small, funnel-shaped seeds, 0.2 cm long and 0.1 cm diameter, black in colour, mildly aromatic scent, and bitter taste.

Chemical constituents: Bitter compounds and a crystalline active principle nigellone, essential oil, fixed oil, resin, and tannin are all glucosides.



Pharmacological properties: Detergent, sedative, anti-inflammatory, and expectorant properties. Nigellende and non-carboxyl fractions have been shown to protect guinea pigs from histamine-induced bronchospasms, while phenolic fractions derived from seeds have been shown to be antimicrobial.

“The oil is also reported to serve as a local anaesthetic. Externally used in the treatment of pityriasis, ringworm, eczema, alopecia, freckles, and pimples.”

Uses: In the treatment of vitiligo, its powder is mixed with vinegar and applied to affected areas before being exposed to sunlight. Externally, a decoction of seeds combined with sesame oil is used to treat various skin lesions. The oil is also reported to serve as a local anaesthetic. Externally used in the treatment of pityriasis, ringworm, eczema, alopecia, freckles, and pimples.

**Velayti Saunf: *Pimpinella anisum* L. (*Umbelliferae*)**

Description: The seed of *Pimpinella anisum* is known as ‘Razianah’ (Persian). 75-centimetre plant (aniseed), ‘Velayti Saunf’ is another name for aniseed. North India is the home of aniseed cultivation. The size of the fruit varies. Each fruit is coated in tiny hairs and has ten ridges. It has a sweet and fragrant flavour. The seeds range in length from 3.0 mm to 4.5 mm.

Chemical constituents: The seed produces an oil that is colourless. It also has carbohydrates, protein, fatty acids, and crude fibres. Aniseed oil is primarily composed of anethol.

Pharmacological properties: Perspirant, diuretic, and anti-acne. Externally, it functions as an insecticide against small insects such as lice and mites. They are antifungal. It can also help with ulcers.

**Filfil Daraz: *Piper longum* L. (*Piperaceae*)**

Description: ‘Pipli’ is a creeper, and ‘Filfil Daraz’ is the dried fruit of *Piper longum*. Flow-

ers are unisexual and have spikes that are 3.8 cm long and 0.75 cm thick. The spikes are ovoid, approximately 2.5 mm in diameter, and greyish-green or blackish in hue.

Chemical constituents: The chemical contents are nearly identical to those of *Piper nigrum*.

Pharmacological characteristics include diuretic, stimulant, and digestive effects.

Uses: Rheumatism, asthma, leprosy, and gonorrhoea are all examples of chronic diseases. ‘Tawarish bisbasa’ is a crucial formulation.

**Filfil Siyah: *Piper nigrum* Linn. (*Piperaceae*)**

Description: The dried berries of *P. nigrum*, a perennial climber cultivated in south India, Assam, and Tripura, are used to make ‘Filfil siyah’ (‘Kalimirch’).

Chemical constituents: Carbohydrates, protein, minerals, calcium, iron, phosphorus, and vitamins, such as riboflavin, thiamine, and niacin, as well as resin. Pipernine, piperidine, chavicine, and balsamic volatile oil lipids are alkaloids.

Pharmacological properties: Externally rubefacient and skin stimulating. Pungent, aromatic, nervine, poison antidote, deobstruent, and resolvent. It dilates superficial blood vessels and serves as an anti-irritant, anti-wrinkle, and astringent on the skin.

Uses: Aside from skin toning, it is utilized as a nervine tonic.

**Laung: *Syzygium aromaticum* Linn. (*Myrtaceae*)**

Description: The dried flower bud of *S. aromaticum* is known as ‘Qaranfal’ (‘Laung’). It is a 10-12 m tall evergreen tree that is planted in various places. It is cultivated in southern India. The clove of trade is a dried flower bud. It has a dark brown colour and a powerful scent. The flavour is spicy and aromatic, with a tingling sensation on the tongue.

Chemical constituents: Eugenolaceate and caryophyllene are essential oils.

Pharmacological properties: Resolvent, antibacterial, sedative, and antifungal properties.

Uses: Oil has antifungal and antibacterial



It is claimed that diabetes can be prevented by using fenugreek powder. It is also used to treat dandruff and is a component of herbal shampoo.

effects, and chewing cloves removes bad breath odour. It is also used to treat toothaches and has anti-wrinkle characteristics.

**Methi: *Trigonella foenum-graecum* L. (Fabaceae)**

**Description:** The seeds of *Trigonella foenum-graecum*, a 60 cm tall seasonal herb, are used to make 'Hulba' (fenugreek). It is abundantly grown in India. The sickle-shaped pod is somewhat flattened and ends in a long tip. It has 10 to 20 rhomboidal seeds that are compact and pale brown in colour, bitter, oily, and fragrant in flavour.

**Chemical constituents:** Alkaloid, essential oil and saponin, fixed oil, mucilage, protein, and minerals are all found in the seed.

**Pharmacological properties:** Hypoglycaemic, antibacterial, relaxing agent, diuretic, aphrodisiac, and skin cleanser.

**Uses:** Fenugreek and henna fine powder paste in water is useful in treating cracked feet, heels, and lips. It is also effective against hair loss when used as a poultice in external and internal swelling. It is claimed that diabetes can be prevented by using fenugreek powder. It is also used to treat dandruff and is a component of herbal shampoo.

**Ilmli: *Tamarindus indica* L. (Fabaceae)**

**Description:** *Tamarindus indica* L. pulp mesocarp is used to make 'Tamar' ('Ilmli'). Tamarind trees are grown in South India. The fruit used is oblong or linear-oblong, slightly compressed, curved or straight. It has an exterior epicarp that is thin but stiff and brittle. The seeds are surrounded by pulp (me-

socarp) and are enclosed in endocarp. The cotyledons on the seeds are tough.

**Chemical constituents:** Tartaric, acetic, and citric acids are added to sugar. Mineral oil and proteins.

**Pharmacological properties:** Aperient, refrigerant, astringent, cardinal.

**Uses:** Its poultice is used to treat inflammation. It is beneficial in bipolar disorders of the body and skin, as well as scurvy and fever. Its oil, combined with sesame oil, is beneficial for burns.

**Ginger: *Zingiber officinale* Rosc. (Zingiberaceae)**

**Description:** The dried rhizome of *Z. officinale*, a perennial herb, is used to make 'Zanjabil' (ginger). It has been cultivated since the dawn of time. Fresh ginger is commonly referred to as 'adrak,' whereas dry ginger is referred to as 'sunth' or 'zanjabil' in Unani medicine. Ginger has a branched subterranean rhizome with swelling nodes. It has a distinct aroma and a bitter flavour.

**Chemical constituents:** Essential oil, volatile oil, fat, wax, resin, mucilage, alkaloid, and wax.

**Pharmacological properties:** Stimulant, rubefacient, anti-inflammatory, and aphrodisiac.

**Uses:** Its essential oil is used as a flavouring ingredient as well as a medicine. Fresh ginger decoction might help with swelling feet caused by the cold. Externally used. Ginger can help with asthma and skin illness.

# Integration of Biotechnology

## in the Unani System of Medicine



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Lifestyle, food habits, and pace of living have undergone a rapid change in the present era. Chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, cardiomyopathies, and cancer have been observed to increase and are on the rise. Despite the availability of new medicines and technologies for their treatment, patients are expressing a strong desire to choose safe and gentle therapies for prolonged treatment. Furthermore, a significant portion of the population is seeking safe, accessible, and affordable treatment options. The Unani system of medicine based on the philosophy and wisdom of Hippocrates (460 BC) as well as Galen (September 15, 129 AD) is one comprehensive medical system recognized by the World Health Organization for meeting these healthcare requirements. It is practised in over 20 countries, including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, China, Turkey, Korea, Japan, Canada, and the USA.

The Unani Medicinal System is both highly

systematic and holistic in its nature. The essential tenets of this approach were created by Hippocrates. Scholars from the Arab and Persian cultures further improved the system. The fundamental philosophical understanding of the Empedoclean conception of the four elements (Air, Water, Fire, and Earth) is what gives this system its essential foundation along with Pythagoras' descriptions of hot, cold, wet, and dry as the four proximal qualities (Kayfiyät) and the Hippocratic notion of four Humours (Akhläö) that are Blood (Dam), Phlegm (Balgham), Yellow Bile (Safrä), and Black Humours (Akhläö) (Hakim Syed Z R, 2001). The system emphasizes temperament (Mizäj) as a distinct concept, which considers that each person has an individual temperament based on their humoral constitution, way of life, and surroundings. This method is based on the fact that any disturbance in the balance of humor can lead to illness. The patient's temperament (Mizäj) is highly valued in the diag-

nosis and treatment depends on reversing the altered temperament with a variety of medications and regimens. Unani medicine emphasizes the individual's temperament in diagnosis and treatment, using natural remedies mainly derived from natural plant and animal sources.

**“The standardization parameters like gross morphology, physical features, phytochemical profile, and DNA marker fingerprinting may give worldwide acceptance and improve the therapeutic efficacy and safety of the drugs.”**

Biotechnology is a field that spans multiple disciplines and uses biological processes, organisms, and systems to create innovative solutions in various industries, including healthcare. In the context of healthcare advancements, biotechnology plays a pivotal role in revolutionizing diagnosis, treatment, and disease prevention. Through genetic engineering, biotechnologists can manipulate and modify DNA to create novel therapeutic agents, such as gene therapies and personalized medicines. Biotechnology also enables the production of biopharmaceuticals, vaccines, and advanced diagnostic tools, leading to more targeted and effective treatments for a wide range of medical conditions. With its potential to transform healthcare, biotechnology continues to drive research and development efforts, paving the way for a promising future in medicine.

Looking ahead, the application of biotechnology in the Unani system of medicine has opened new avenues for healthcare advancements and mutual benefits for both fields. By integrating modern biotechnological techniques with the ancient wisdom of Unani medicine, one can create a synergistic approach that enriches patient care and treatment outcomes. It is an indispensable tool to validate traditional medicines and integrate them into the modern healthcare system.

#### **Standardization of Drugs and Formulations:**

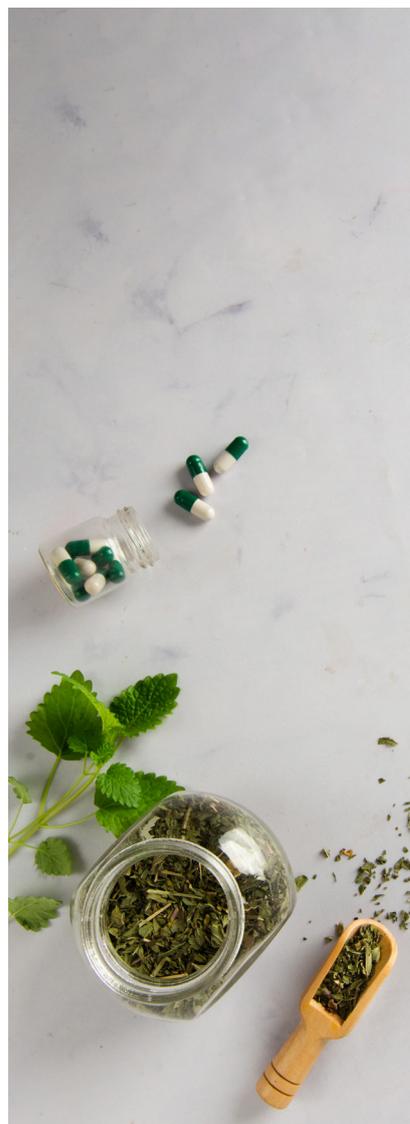
The main sources of Unani drugs are plants, animals, and minerals. The geographic lo-

cation, climate, and habitat have an impact on the phytochemical profile, which is ultimately reflected in their efficacy. Standardization and development of quality control protocols for high and uniform efficacy is a priority area of study. The World Health Organization guidelines recommend fingerprinting methods to meet the global standards of quality control for herbal formulations. The s t a n d a r d -

ization parameters like gross morphology, physical features, phytochemical profile, and DNA marker fingerprinting may give worldwide acceptance and improve the therapeutic efficacy and safety of the drugs. Biotechnological methods, such as high-throughput screening and bioinformatics, can speed up identifying potential therapeutic molecules from a vast array of herbal remedies used in the Unani medicine system (Shamsi et al 2022, Wijaya et al 2023). This collaboration can lead to the discovery of new and effective remedies for various health conditions.

#### **Targeted Drug Delivery:**

Biotechnology methods, particularly nano-biotechnology, are valuable in enhancing the targeted drug delivery of Unani herbal formulations. By encapsulating the herbal compounds in nanoparticles, they can be delivered precisely to the affected areas, reducing systemic side effects and improving therapeutic efficacy. Unani drug encap-



sulation can result in improving bioavailability, and related studies can be extended for different formulations to check their efficacy and stability (Sapra MS, 2021). This advancement has the potential to transform the way herbal medicines are administered and increase their acceptance in modern medicine

#### *Validation and Novel Drug Development:*

Evidence-based validation of Unani drugs and formulations is an essential component of their globalization and integration. Testing drugs using modern in vitro, in vivo and clinical trial approaches and determining the mode of action at the molecular level is important not only to map their efficacy but

“The integration of biotechnology in the Unani system of medicine holds immense promise for the advancement of healthcare. By leveraging the strengths of both fields, it is possible to create a more comprehensive and effective healthcare approach that benefits patients and preserves the cultural heritage of traditional healing practices. By combining the wisdom of the past and the advancements of the present, such collaboration has the potential to influence the future of medicine.”

also to gain insights into the ancient wisdom involved in the development of precise formulations. The research may drive the development of novel drug molecules. The chemical/ metabolite profiling of drugs, scientific validation using modern technologies, validation of the manufacturing process, documentation, and regulatory aspects are the key features necessary for acceptance and integration into mainstream healthcare. Traditional medicines are also of great value when used as adjuvant therapy in the management of chronic diseases. They not only enhance the efficacy of conventional treatments but also help in managing side

effects, thereby improving patients' overall health and well-being. Unani medicine's holistic approach, along with biotechnological advances, presents a promising and comprehensive path to better patient care and healthcare outcomes.

#### *Personalized Unani Treatments:*

The Unani system emphasizes the importance of taking into account an individual's temperament (Mizāj) during diagnosis and treatment. By integrating biotechnological approaches such as genomics and personalized medicine, Unani treatments may be tailored based on an individual's genetic profile and specific healthcare needs. This personalized approach can optimize treatment outcomes and patient satisfaction.

#### *Preserving Cultural Heritage:*

Decoding the efficacy and chemical profile of Unani medicine is viewed as an important means to preserve the rich cultural heritage and traditional knowledge associated with Unani practices. Scientific evidence for the historical efficacy of specific remedies can be provided by biotechnological research, which can lead to their recognition on a global scale

#### *Ethical and Regulatory Considerations:*

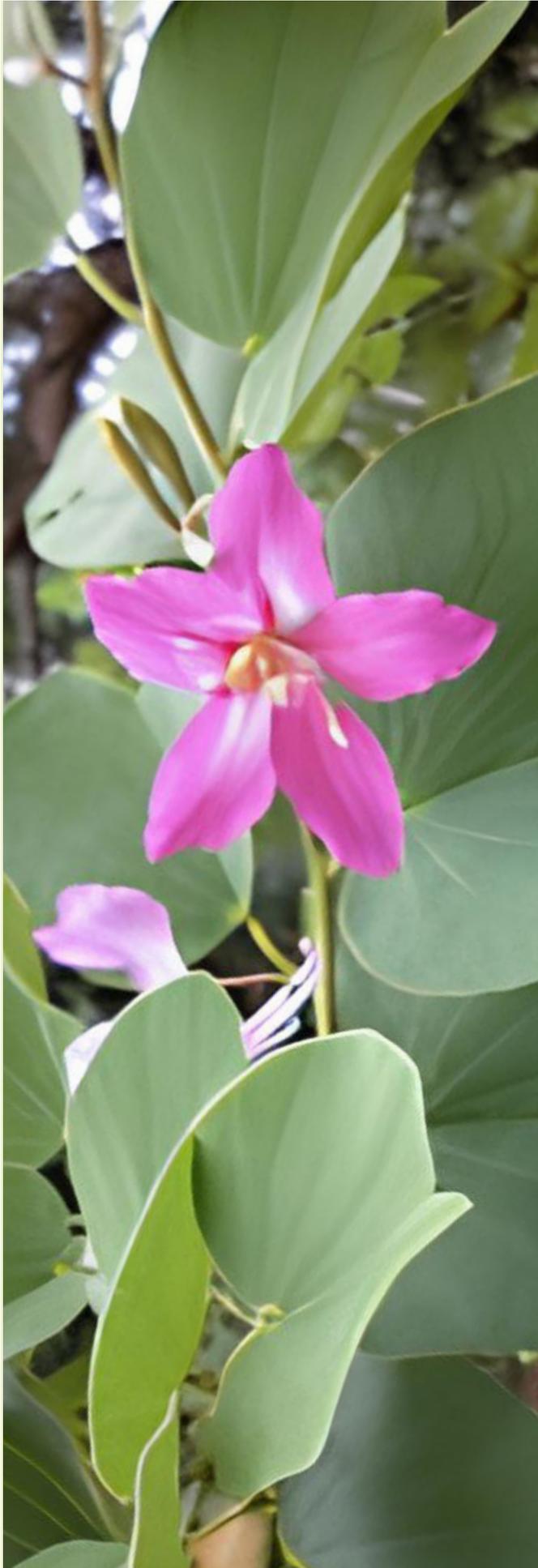
As biotechnological interventions are integrated into the Unani system, ethical and regulatory considerations become essential. Collaborative efforts can ensure that traditional knowledge is respected, and the integrity of Unani practices is maintained while adhering to modern scientific standards and ethical guidelines.

In conclusion, the integration of biotechnology in the Unani system of medicine holds immense promise for the advancement of healthcare. By leveraging the strengths of both fields, it is possible to create a more comprehensive and effective healthcare approach that benefits patients and preserves the cultural heritage of traditional healing practices. By combining the wisdom of the past and the advancements of the present, such collaboration has the potential to influence the future of medicine.

Fig: Scope of Biotechnology in Unani Medicine



## SCOPE OF BIOTECHNOLOGY IN UNANI MEDICINE



# Traditional Unani Herbal Medicines:

An insight into the  
Therapeutic Potential  
of Bauhinia variegata  
and Commiphora  
mukul



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### *Unani herbal medicines*

Unani medicine is one of the oldest and traditional system of medicine that originated from Greece and is based on the teachings of Greek physician Hippocrates and Roman physician Galen. It deals with various principles and philosophies of medicine that aid in the treatment of diseases and mainly involves the use of 90% herbal, 5% animal, and 6% mineral-origin drugs (1). Herbal products have long been an important source of potential therapeutic compounds in the Unani medicinal system, contributing several bioactives for drug development. *Bauhinia variegata* and *Commiphora mukul* are two such herbal plants that have been extensively studied for their therapeutic potential in Unani and other traditional systems. This short note highlights their active constituents and potential therapeutic significance in various health conditions.

### *Kanchnal or Kanchnar*

Kanchnal or Kanchnar (Botanical name: *Bauhinia variegata*) belongs to Leguminosae (Caesalpinioideae) family, also known as Butterfly or Orchid tree, Mountain Ebony, Rakta kanchan (Marathi name), Kachnar (Hindi name). *B. variegata* is a small to medium-sized tree that mostly grows in the tropical region at an altitude of about 1300-1800 m in the Himalayas (2, 3). *B. variegata* is an important plant in Unani medicine (4) that spread further to the Indian subcontinent, which has around 15 species of *Bauhinia* mainly grown as ornamental plants (2).

In Unani medicine, various parts of the *B. variegata* plant, including its leaves, flowers, and bark, have been utilized for their potential medicinal properties. It possesses several biological and pharmacological activities including astringent, coagulant, antidiarrheal, anti-inflammatory, antiulcer, antidiabetic, antimicrobial, antitumor and immunomodulatory. The therapeutic significance of the Kanchnal is due to the presence of numerous phytochemicals such as cardiac glycosides, flavonoids, kaempferol, quercetin, tannins, terpenoids, and saponins that play vital roles in nurturing human health. The bioactive compounds reported from *B. variegata* are lupeol, kaempferol glucoside, -isosterol, flavanone-4-o-L, hentriacontane, glycopyranoside, octacosanol, stigmaterol,

nitrogenous substances and sugars (3). In the Unani medicine system, the bark part of the plant is astringent in nature helps in bowel ailments, and also acts as a tonic for liver health. The medicinal use of flower buds (3, 5) is mentioned for the treatment of asthma, bronchitis, cough, diarrhea, eye infection, haematuria (6), leprosy, liver disorders, menorrhagia (7), piles, and skin disease.

### *Muqil*

Muqil (Botanical name: *Commiphora mukul*) is a resin obtained by making incisions to the basal part of the stem bark of the *C. mukul* tree belonging to the Burceraceae family. It is also known as Indian bedellium (English) or Guggulu (Sanskrit) (8). In Arab countries, guggul is named as Muqil (9, 10). It is mainly found in South Africa and Mid Asia whereas in India, it is found in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka and in the forests of Maharashtra. Muqil has been extensively used in Ayurveda, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa and Unani system of medicines due to its immense pharmacological applications. Numerous steroids, including guggulsterones Z and E, guggulsterols I-V, diterpenoides and essential oils, myrecene, dimyrecene, and polymyrecene, have been isolated from the extracts of muqil resin (10, 11).

Several studies report that muqil possesses

“*Bauhinia variegata* and *Commiphora mukul* are two such herbal plants that have been extensively studied for their therapeutic potential in Unani and other traditional systems. This short note highlights their active constituents and potential therapeutic significance in various health conditions.”



“Reactive oxygen species-dependent apoptosis by gugulipid extract of Ayurvedic medicine plant Commiphora mukul in human prostate cancer cells is regulated by c-Jun N-terminal kinase.”

“To investigate the therapeutic potential of Kanchanal and Muqil in Unani Medicine, more scientific data needs to be generated in terms of molecular, pre-clinical, and pharmacological activities.”

important pharmacological activities including anti-inflammatory, anti-hyperlipidemic, anti-cancer, anti-diabetic, anti-helminthic, anti-hemorrhoid, anti-lithic, hemostatic, caloric, coctive, purgative and diuretic (10-13). Moreover, it has been proven to help treat diseases related to respiratory, cardiovascular, gastro intestinal, urinary discharges, urinary concretions, kidney stones, skin, paralysis, mental illnesses, flatulence, tubercular glands in the neck, hard swellings of the testicles and ovaries, detoxifying uterus, haemorrhoids, proctitis, diabetes, cancer and obesity (10). Muqil can also be applied topically

“It is reported that Kanchnar guggul is traditionally used in Ayurveda to support the thyroid gland, balance the Kapha dosha, and address various conditions related to swelling, inflammation, and lymphatic congestion. The anti-mitotic and anti-proliferative activity of Kanchnar guggul are also reported (15).”

to treat swellings, inflammatory conditions, wounds, non-healing ulcers, alopecia, hernias, hydrocele, ringworm, piles and warts (10). Along with single drug dosages, muqil is also used in some popular compound formulations of Unani medicine such as Hab-e-Muqil, Itrifal Muqil, Majoon Muqil and Majoon

Yograj Guggul (9).

In Ayurveda, both *B. variegata* and *C. mukul* are used as chief ingredients for the preparation of a popular Ayurvedic polyherbal formulation, Kanchnar guggul (14, 15). The primary ingredients of Kanchnar guggul include Kanchnar (*Bauhinia variegata*) bark, Guggul (*Commiphora wightii*) resin, Triphala, Trikatu, Varuna (*Crataeva nurvala*) bark, and other herbs. It is reported that Kanchnar guggul is traditionally used in Ayurveda to support the thyroid gland, balance the Kapha dosha, and address various conditions related to swelling, inflammation, and lymphatic congestion. The anti-mitotic and anti-proliferative activity of Kanchnar guggul are also reported (15).

In conclusion, Kanchnal and Muqil have been traditionally used in Unani for various health benefits, however, the scientific research validating their efficacy and safety is limited. To investigate the therapeutic potential of Kanchnal and Muqil in Unani Medicine, more scientific data needs to be generated in terms of molecular, pre-clinical, and pharmacological activities. Kanchnal and Muqil are used as a single herbal remedy in the Unani system to treat various inflammatory conditions, however, the two can be combined to develop a novel formulation with increased therapeutic potential.



# Health Benefits of Isapghol

(*Plantago ovata*)



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## Abstract

Isapgol (*Plantago ovata*) is a Unani medicinal herb found in temperate regions, particularly in Iran, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. In the Persian language, it is known as asapgol, which is a combination of asp (horse) and gul (flower). The shape of the seed resembles the horse's ear. It is an important drug used in the management of various disorders like dysentery, diarrhea, irritable bowel syndrome, and in the treatment of certain types of arthralgia. Research studies have identified several beneficial bioactive compounds in *Plantago ovata* seeds, e.g. mucilaginous polysaccharides, flavonoids, zinc, potassium, silicic acid, and saponins. Seeds contain glutinous material, plant enolic acid, succinic acid, phenolic acid, flavonoids and terpenoids, and Vitamin C, among other things. Other studies have also discovered its anti-ulcer, anti-cancer, anti-hyperlipidemic, and hypoglycemic properties

Keywords: Psyllium, *Plantago*, asapgol, mucilaginous

## Introduction

Isapgol is a famous Unani drug commonly known as psyllium. Psyllium has been extensively investigated for its potential health benefits and its applications in food industries for pharmaceutical purposes (Singh, 2007; Yu et al., 2008). Psyllium has desirable nutritional effects and, possesses pharmaceutical properties with a high content of water-soluble fiber, which exerts several

positive effects on health (Alabaster et al., 1993). Isabgol is a common name, which means “horse flower” to describe the shape of the seed, commonly used in India (Dhar et al., 2005; Franco et al., 2020). Isapgol (*Plantago ovata*) is commonly cultivated in India, Pakistan, and Iran.

The interest in plants and natural or organic components is increasing due to their association with health benefits with fewer adverse effects (Ribeiro-Santos et al., 2015; Singh, 2007). Due to the same reason its popularity and consumption in Europe and the USA has increased in the recent past few years. This plant is highly popular in the traditional Indian medicine system (Unani and Ayurveda) for the prevention/ treatment of constipation, diarrhea, hemorrhoids, etc. Isapgol (*Plantago ovata*) is also well known for the treatment of irritable bowel syndrome symptoms, inflammatory bowel disease-ulcerative colitis, obesity, hypercholesterolemia, cancer prevention, and diabetes.

## Botanical Description

Isapgol (*Plantago ovata*) is a short-stemmed or stemless annual herb that grows 30-45 cm tall (Dhar et al., 2005; Gupta, 1991). Leaves may reach up to 7.5 to 25 cm in length and up to 5 to 12.5 mm in breadth, linear, linear-lanceolate or filiform, three-nerved, and coated with fine and soft hairs (Gupta, 1991). The plant has well-developed taproots and secondary roots. White-colored flowers arise from the base of the plant, 12.5 to 37.5 mm in length and with bracts 4 mm long

and broad. The spikes have 45 to 69 flowers, on ripening the greyish brown flower's spikes turn into reddish brown. Plants have small ellipsoidal capsule-shaped (about 8 mm long) fruits that open at maturity. Seeds are boat-shaped, 8 mm x 1 mm in dimension, glossy, shiny, and rosy white. The convex surface of the



seed has oval spots, and the concave surface has a deep furrow with a hilum which seems like a red spot in the center (Gupta, 1991; Panda, 2002). The seed husk is separated from the seed during milling and it is an odorless, tasteless, translucent, rosy-white mucilaginous membrane, corresponding to about 30% of seed weight (Dhar et al., 2005).

### *Unani Description*

The seeds are oval and boat-shaped about 1.5-3 mm. long and 1-1.5 mm. wide, and smooth. and yellowish brown usually with a pinkish tinge and the convex side has a faint brown streak. The husk lies on the concave surface which is covered by a thin whitish membrane. The seeds are highly mucilaginous and the epidermis swells greatly when seeds are soaked in water.

Mizaj (Temperament): Cold (3) and Moist (2) (Baitar, 2006). Nafa-e-khas (Import-

**“Moreover, as the presence of the gel-like mass increases the stool bulk it also increases the tension and/or the stretch stimulus in the bowel wall which serves to trigger bowel movements.”**

ant function): Mohalill-e-warm (Anti-inflammatory), Mulaiyan (Laxative). Therapeutic use: Zaheer (Dysentery), Qabz (Constipation), Sual-e-Yabis (Cough), Waja-ul-Mafasil (Joint Pain). Muzir (Toxic): Muzaaf-e-Aasaab (weaker of nerves). Musleh (Correctives): Sikanjbeen usli. Badal (Alternative): Behdana (*Cydonia oblonga*), Kanocha (*Phyllanthus maderaspatensis*) (Ghulam Nabi, 2007). Miqdar-e-Khurak (Dose): Dose 4.5-7 gm. Af'aal (Pharmacological activities): Muakkin e Hararat (Anti-Pyretic), Daafe Zheer (Dysentery)

### *Mechanism of action:*

Isapghol (*Plantago ovata*) seeds contain dietary fiber which when mixed with water forms a gel-like mass that swells in the in-

testinal and works as a laxative and thus relieves constipation. Local application of the mucilage mixed with roghan-e-gul (Rose-oil) and sirka (vinegar) is useful for the relief of joint pain, ear auricle inflammation, and nodular swelling of nerves. The application of Isapghol mixed with Roghan-e-Banafsha on the scalp produces a tranquilizing effect, benefits headaches, improves hair growth, and prevents hair fall. (Baitar, 2006).

A Gargle of Isapghol is beneficial in qu-la-e-dahan (apthous ulcer) (Nabi, 2007)

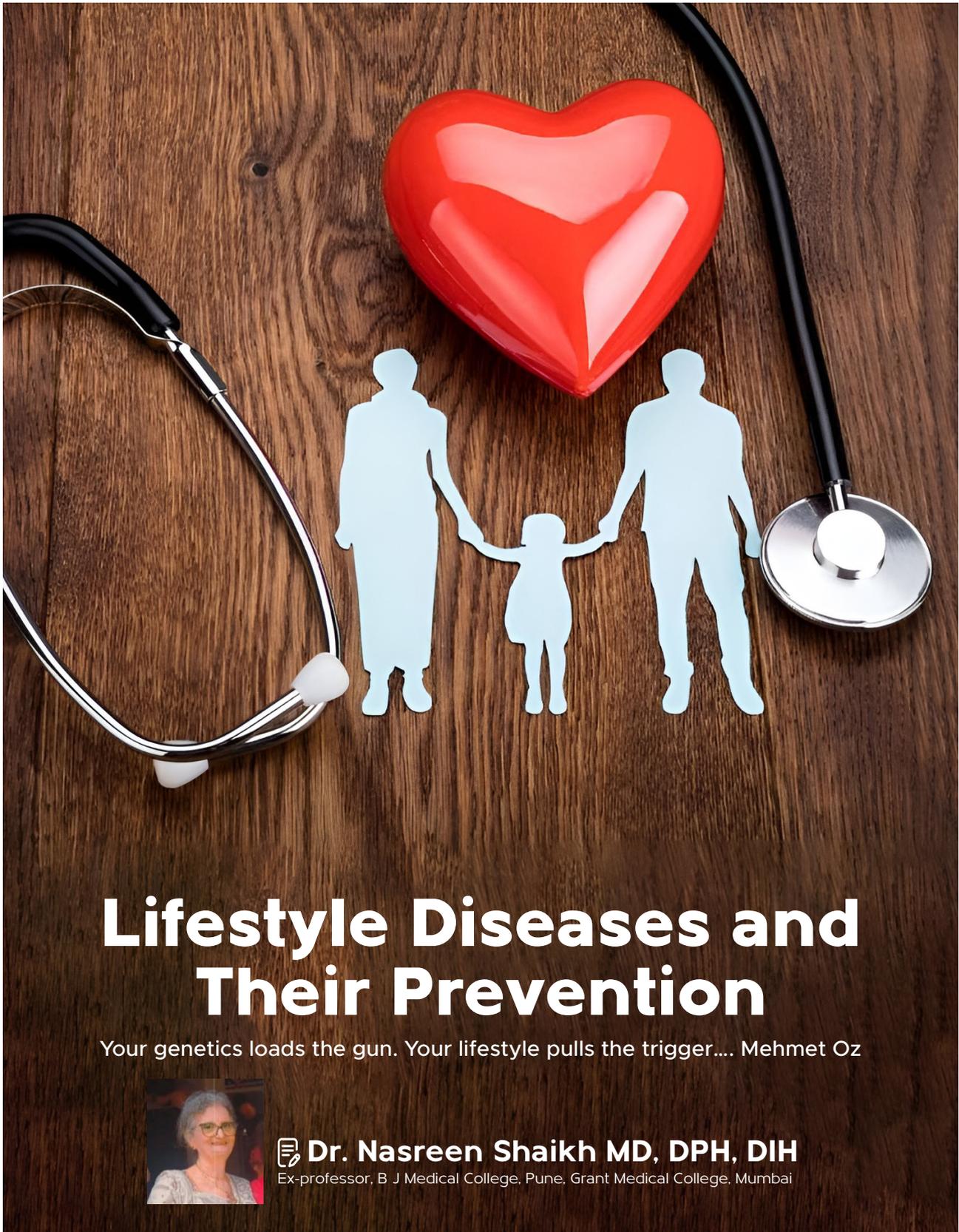
Isapghol when mixed with water form a gel-like mass. This gel-like mass subsequently moves down a patient's digestive system and makes stools softer by increasing their water contents. Due to its local soothing, coating, and slippery effect, it is beneficial in the management of Dysentery whether amoebic or bacillary, sore throat, dry cough, etc. Also used in the diseases of Urogenital system like Nephritis, Cystitis, Urethritis, and Nocturnal emission (Safiuddin, 2010)

### *Pharmacological Properties of Plantago ovata*

Psyllium seeds are comprised of dietary fiber which, when mixed with water forms a gel-like mass that works as a mild laxative. This gel-like mass subsequently moves down a patient's digestive system and makes stools softer by increasing their water contents. At the same time, psyllium seed lubricates the intestine, which improves the transit of stools. Moreover, as the presence of the gel-like mass increases the stool bulk it also increases the tension and/or the stretch stimulus in the bowel wall which serves to trigger bowel movements.

### *Conclusion*

In light of this review, it is concluded that the increasing side effects of Allopathic medicines are a matter of concern, so there is an important and immense need of doing extensive research work towards herbal drugs. The scientific analysis of Isapghol proves activities mentioned in Unani literature. Since the preliminary investigations show promising results against certain diseases of the gastrointestinal tract, further, investigations are needed to find out the mechanism of action active principle (s), and utility of Isapghol in Clinical Practice.



# Lifestyle Diseases and Their Prevention

Your genetics loads the gun. Your lifestyle pulls the trigger.... Mehmet Oz



**Dr. Nasreen Shaikh MD, DPH, DIH**  
Ex-professor. B J Medical College. Pune. Grant Medical College. Mumbai

Lifestyle diseases are diseases that are associated with lifestyles. They are based on the day-to-day habits of people, which are based on social and cultural attitudes. The diseases here are non-communicable and chronic, and they pose an economic burden

on the health services of a country. They used to be considered as diseases of industrialized countries or diseases of affluence, but now they are defined as degenerative, non-communicable, and chronic diseases and are also targeting developing countries.

These diseases are showing a general upward trend due to changing patterns of disease, which result from the control of infectious diseases and lifestyle changes. Lifestyle changes are a major factor in many health problems today. The effect of modernization results in stress. Currently, machines are used to automate work. People use mechanized transportation, and their leisure activities are sedentary (TV and mo-

**“Hypertension prevalence is 60-70 per 10,000 in urban areas, followed by obesity, lipid disturbance, arthritis, stress, cancer, and coronary artery diseases which account for 25% of total deaths in urban areas.”**

bile phones). They are isolated and lack social support from relatives and friends. This ultimately results in mental stress and strain, which ultimately leads to lifestyle diseases.

Modernization is necessary, but negative consequences must be addressed and preventative measures must be taken in advance, particularly if there is a genetic predisposition.

#### **MULTIFACTORIAL WEB OF CAUSATION**

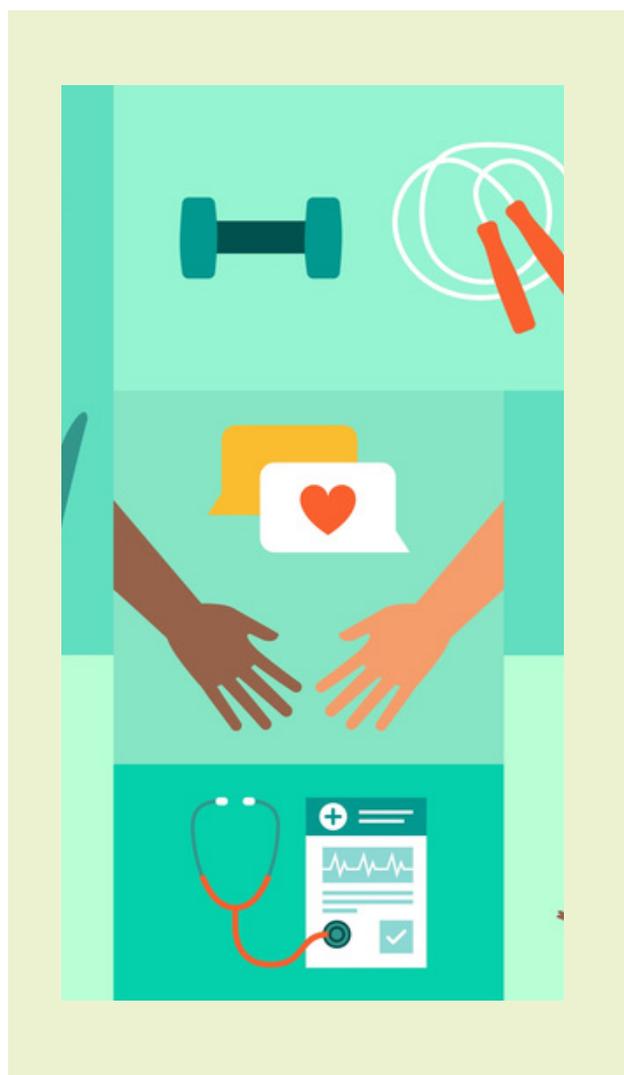
These diseases are becoming more prevalent due to unhealthy lifestyles, as depicted in the diagram. Lack of regular exercise, an unhealthy diet, stress, and habits like smoking, alcohol, and drug abuse are all examples of these. These results are attributed to ethnocultural changes, changing ecosystems, behavioural changes, ageing population, and other lifestyle changes.

Diabetes is one of the most common degenerative diseases in India, and sadly, it is the most prevalent. Hypertension prevalence is 60-70 per 10,000 in urban areas, followed by obesity, lipid disturbance, arthritis, stress, cancer, and coronary artery diseases which account for 25% of total deaths in urban areas.

There is a rapid increase in the magnitude of the diseases worldwide. It is estimated that by 2030, the total global deaths due to chronic diseases will increase to 70%, and the global burden of disease will rise to 56%.

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle is a key factor in preventing this bundle of deadly diseases. Unani physicians have laid down the basic foundation of a healthy lifestyle in a format of a well-defined “ASBABA SITTA ZAROORIYA” - The Unani physicians have stressed these factors for ages. It was found that the combination of at least four healthy lifestyle factors like maintaining a healthy weight, exercising regularly, following a healthy diet, and not smoking seems to be associated with as much as an 80% reduction in the risk of developing and managing these chronic diseases.

Hence, adopting a healthy lifestyle, customized to the genetic profile with a holistic approach and focusing on antioxidants, anti-inflammatory, antiatherogenic, and including antihypertensive facets in the diet and exercising to maintain ideal weight can reduce the risk of developing common and deadly chronic lifestyle diseases.



# Harnessing the Power of Herbal Nutrition:

Exploring the Benefits and Science Behind Natural Remedies



**Dr. Khan Qaiser M.D. (PSM)**

Professor Dept of PSM, Dr. Mohammed Ishaq Jamkhanawala Tibbia Unani Medical College, Mumbai, India



## Introduction:

In a world where convenience often takes precedence, it's important not to overlook the tremendous value and potential of herbal nutrition. Nature has blessed us with a wide range of plants and herbs, many of which have exceptional health benefits. In this feature article, we delve into the realm of herbal nutrition, exploring the science behind natural remedies and their role in promoting overall well-being.

## The Essence of Herbal Nutrition:

Herbal nutrition revolves around the use of plants and their extracts to support health and address various ailments. We examine the historical significance of herbal remedies across cultures, highlighting their longstanding use in traditional medicine systems like Unani, Ayurveda, and Traditional Chinese Medicine. The holistic approach of herbal nutrition takes into account the synergy between nutrients, phytochemicals, and other bioactive compounds present in plants.

## Understanding Phytochemicals:

Phytochemicals are bioactive compounds found in plants that contribute to their therapeutic properties. We explore the diverse range of phytochemicals, including flavonoids, polyphenols, terpenes, and alkaloids, and their potential health benefits. From an-

tioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects to immune modulation and anticancer properties, these phytochemicals play a crucial role in promoting wellness.

Herbal Nutrition for Specific Health Concerns:

Herbal nutrition offers a vast array of options for addressing specific health concerns naturally. We examine how certain herbs and plants have shown promise in supporting various conditions, such as:

- Immune Support:** Exploring herbs Zanja-beel, saunf, neem, Tulsi, amla, and asgandh, etc known for their immune-stimulating properties and potential to bolster the body's defence mechanisms.
- Digestive Health:** Examining the benefits of herbs such as ginger, peppermint, and aloe vera in soothing digestive discomfort, aiding digestion, and promoting gut health.
- Stress Management:** Highlighting adaptogenic herbs like ashwagandha, holy basil (Tulsi), known for their ability to help the body adapt to stress and support overall well-being.
- Cognitive Function:** Investigating herbs like turmeric and Brahmi which have shown potential in supporting brain health, memory, and cognitive function.

### *Safety, Efficacy, and Quality Control:*

Discussing the importance of responsible usage of herbal nutrition, including considerations such as quality sourcing, standardization, and dosage guidelines. We explore the significance of conducting rigorous scientific studies to validate the safety and efficacy of herbal remedies and how regulatory bodies ensure consumer protection in this domain.

**“As we strive to strike a balance between modern medicine and traditional wisdom, herbal nutrition offers a promising avenue for promoting a holistic approach to health that harmonizes with the power of nature’s gifts.”**

### *Integrating Herbal Nutrition into Daily Life:*

Providing practical tips on incorporating herbal nutrition into a balanced diet and lifestyle. We explore approaches like herbal teas, culinary herbs, herbal supplements, and topical applications, highlighting their potential benefits and suggesting creative ways to integrate them into daily routines.

### *Seeking Professional Guidance:*

Encouraging readers to consult qualified healthcare professionals, such as herbalists, naturopaths, or integrative medicine practitioners, for personalized advice on herbal nutrition. Emphasizing the importance of collaboration between conventional medicine and herbal approaches for optimal health outcomes.

### *Conclusion:*

Herbal nutrition presents a wealth of possibilities for supporting health and well-being. By understanding the science behind natural remedies, exploring the benefits of phytochemicals, and approaching herbal nutrition responsibly, individuals can tap into nature’s pharmacy to enhance their overall wellness. As we strive to strike a balance between modern medicine and traditional wisdom, herbal nutrition offers a promising avenue for promoting a holistic approach to health that harmonizes with the power of nature’s gifts.





# One-On-One With Hakim KT Ajmal

A conversation with  
Hakim KT Ajmal



Dr Ghazala Mulla

*Being one of the most sought-after Unani Physicians in Asia, I would like to begin this conversation by knowing how you chose the field of Unani system of Medicine. Was it a decision that happened by choice or by chance*

I am deeply humbled, It was not by choice, It was purely by coincidence that I got into Unani. No one in my family was a Doctor, Let alone Unani and there was never a legacy within the family as a base for me to choose Unani. It was a blessing from God that in those times there were great Unani Philosophers and Elders I had the privilege to interact with and Guide and thereby my passion increased. It happened by the grace of God, I would say this recognition would not exist even if I had practised for over 100 years on any other system of medicine. Today what little I have achieved gives me the utmost satisfaction inside as this is what I had set out to do and It's the

blessing of ALMIGHTY that I became a part of the Unani system of medicine.

*Where and when did you begin with Learning Unani?*

My journey started in January 1986 when I had taken admission in ZVM Medical College Pune. I joined for my BUMS after completing BSC Zoology and also did my PG at the same University. It was in 1992 I passed out with my BUMS Degree and in 2010 was when I completed my MD

*What were the initial challenges you faced, while Studying Unani?*

The first initial challenge for me was the language barrier. Being born and brought up in Kerala throughout my schooling and college, I was not Fluent in Hindi. We were taught in Malayalam. The curriculum for Unani is in Urdu and the mode of language used to be Hindi while being taught. Initially,

it was tough to follow, but I was determined to Learn Hindi fluently so that I could learn Unani more precisely and I enjoyed the challenge of taking the effort to Study it. Those were really enjoyable days.

### *What was the Driving force in you to take up BUMS?*

As while preparing for medicine, as I said I had the destiny to understand the principles of Unani with great teachers at that time showing me the True essence of being a Unani Hakim. I was also curious as I saw the potential to explore as many aspects were unexplored in Unani at this time. When you want to explore believing there is much more beyond in possibilities, the passion increases to venture out to the unseen waiting to be explored. It was compelling for me to go further, to test try and explore.

### *What are your thoughts about the Past, Present, and Future of Unani?*

As I mentioned in the past as we had many great philosophers, Elderly scholars to guide and it was a Golden time in Unani. Then there was this period of not having a system in Place. Now after a long time that acceptance of Unani is coming back, but then it is a sad reality that many doctors after their Degrees now, in fact, 70% of Unani doctors are practising modern medicine. Unanians are in the stage of attaining Global recognition. Skilled Unani Physicians is the need now, There is a great future for Unanians Globally, Due to the increased public awareness about health and well being

### *Are there any shortcuts to becoming a good Unani Hakim*

No there are no shortcuts. You have to thoroughly understand the fundamental philosophy of Kafiyat and the vibration of energy. Once you know the fundamentals or principles precisely then slowly, you see things unfold before you.

### *What are a few good books that can be referred to in Unani*

Some books which I would recommend to our Doctors are :

Firdousul Hikamth by Ibn Rabban Tabri - Kulliyat Nafeesi - Kulliyat Advia -Kamil U Sana - Kitabu Taiseer - Kitabul Mansoori - Mukhtasar-UI-Kulliyat - Moalijath e Bhukhraathia

### *What are the main issues faced by Unani Hakim during treatment?*

Nowadays patients are smarter than Doctors. In today's age of Social Media, patients also self-diagnose their treatments online and with other doctors before coming to you. They are well-versed with their ailment at least with the name.

But our method of treating is different. We look at all the ailments based on Vibration and Kafiyat.

These days a person's ailments have been changed to a piece of paper or a Lab report. We need to explain to the patients the primary issues first and what leads to these and we as doctors need to thoroughly understand the fundamentals of Unani that would enable us to give a far more effective treatment than what had been possible.

### *What are your suggestions for new Gen Doctors?*

Improve your knowledge through Pure Unani Principles and Understand the fundamentals. Understanding and Learning is different. Understand the Principle, rather than learning, and stick to the Principle. Also, don't run behind fame and money, Run behind your Passion and eventually success will come running behind You.

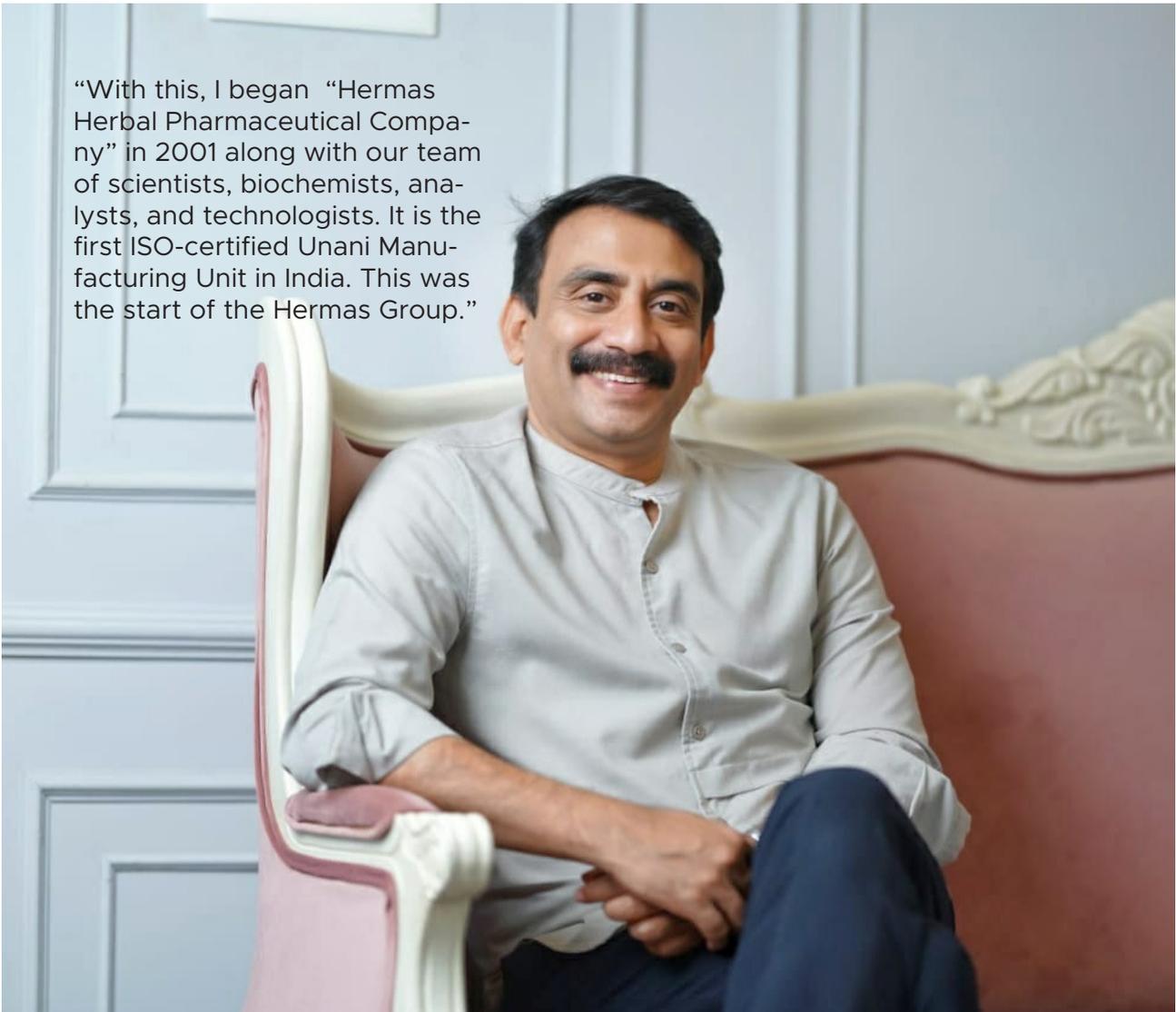
### *What is the scope of Unani from a Global Perspective?*

Today in many countries outside of India, acceptance has increased even more after COVID, Especially in the Middle East and Far Eastern European countries.

### *Can you tell me a little more about Hermas and when it began?*

Yes, In 1997, I founded the Calicut Unani

“With this, I began “Hermas Herbal Pharmaceutical Company” in 2001 along with our team of scientists, biochemists, analysts, and technologists. It is the first ISO-certified Unani Manufacturing Unit in India. This was the start of the Hermas Group.”



Hospital and Research Centre - The first ISO 9001-2008 certified Asian Unani Hospital with IP.

Hermas began with a mission for everyone to have accessibility to high-quality cost-effective Unani Herbal Medicines. With this, I began “Hermas Herbal Pharmaceutical Company” in 2001 along with our team of scientists, biochemists, analysts, and technologists. It is the first ISO-certified Unani Manufacturing Unit in India. This was the start of the Hermas Group.

With our vision being the propagation of the Unani system of medicine, Gradually we introduced Matab for practitioners, Now we are proud to introduce Hermas Pediatrics products & Hermas Products range in Gynecology. We also brought about the change in enabling prescription and Unani in GP products. In addition, through this period, we also started with Hermas Aca-

demia, Hermas Life, and also Hermas Herbal Valley

Today after starting all this, When I look back, I am extremely pleased to see better access to Unani health care is available. It is satisfying to me that now our doctors have an established platform set in all aspects of Unani.

*30 years is a lot of time. Having achieved most of the Goals and Objectives you set for yourself, what's next?*

Empowering my Unanians is what I look forward to doing through teaching. It is gratifying to mentor and share my expertise with everyone. I want to do more for Our Community. I love to keep myself engaged with training, orientation and guiding our current and future doctors, as they are the Pillars who are going to lead the Unani System Of Medicine.



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