



E-ISSN: 2321-2187
P-ISSN: 2394-0514
IJHM 2016; 4(6): 92-94
Received: 13-09-2016
Accepted: 14-10-2016

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Role of Ilaj-Bit-Tadbeer in Pain Management: a Non - Pharmacological Approach

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Abstract

Pain is the most common cause for which the sufferer pays the maximum. According to International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP), "pain is an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage". Avicenna suggested that "the treatment of pain should be directed to the cause of pain". Unani System of Medicine (USM) has an impressive record in treating musculoskeletal and Nervous disorders through *Ilaj- Bit -Tadbeer* (IBT). Nowadays Regimenal Therapies hold an important place in the mainstream treatment of USM. The Regimenal Therapy is the backbone of USM, which works on the principle of modifying or modulating six essential factors of life (Asbaab-e-sitta zarooriya) for maintaining health and preventing from diseases. The focus of this paper is to highlight the role and expand the understanding of IBT in pain management. This article will discuss and summarizes the importance of IBT in pain management.

Keywords: Ilaj-bit tadbeer; Unani medicine; Waja.

Introduction

Pain (*Waja*) is an adverse feeling and one of the unnatural states of a living body. Sudden change in temperament and loss of continuity are the main reasons for pain [1]. Pain management through allopathic system of medicine has certain limitations in terms of cost and safety as it is full of side effects. So, the Regimenal therapies play a vital role in eradication of pain, as they are easy available, efficacious and safe. Regimenal therapies like massage can eradicate pain by removing unwanted materials from the tissues through the venous and lymphatic systems of the body or bringing the fresh blood and plasma to the affected area [2]. Regimenal therapies are actually the special techniques which improve the defense mechanism and remove the waste materials (*Istifragh-e-akhlat-e radiya*) from the body. The old name of *Ilaj-bit-tadbeer* is "*Molijat-e-Khasusi*" which was suggested by Central Council of Indian Medicine (CCIM) New Delhi [3].

2. Material and Methods

2.1 Causes of Pain as per USM

Unani Philosophers postulated the causes of pain according to their experience. According to Galen injury is the only cause of pain. *Ibn- Sina* (Avicenna) totally challenged the Galen's concept of pain and suggested that the change in the temperament of an organ is the true cause of pain whether injury lies or not [4]. According to Unani Philosophy "Derangement or predominance of yellow bile (*saфра*) and blood (*dam*) are the Main causes of Acute pain (*Wajae haad*) while as the *Phelagm* (*balgham*) and Black bile humour (*sauda*) are the main causes of chronic pain (*wajae muzmin*) [5].

2.2 Regimenal therapies for pain eradication

Regimenal therapies have been used for centuries in eradicating the pain.

2.2.1 Massage (Dalk)

Massage interferes with the viscous cycle of pain and thus reduces the pain. The various pain conditions in which massage is used are [6,7].

- Fibrositis
- Tendinitis
- Muscular injury
- Ligament sprain
- Tenosynovitis
- All types of arthritis like Rheumatic Arthritis, Osteoarthritis, and Gout etc.
- Nervous system disorders like Sciatica (*Irqun nisa*), Neuralgia, *Falij* (Hemiplegia),

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Paraplegia, and quadriplegia), Facial or Bells paralysis (*Luqwa*) etc.

- Musculoskeletal disorders like cervical spondylosis, low back pain, frozen shoulder, rheumatism, carpal tunnel syndrome (wrist joint pain) etc. For the therapeutic purpose the affected part of the body should be massaged softly for longer time. If pain occurs due to Excessive cold (*Galba-e-baroodat*) massage of the affected part should be done with *Roghan-e-Nargis/Rogan-e-Sosan* mixed with *Dhatoora oil* and if pain occurs due to Excessive heat (*Galba-e-haraarat*) message should be done with *Rogan-e-Hina* [8].

2.2.2 Cupping

Cupping is the unique method of Regimenal therapy by which the diversion or evacuation of morbid matter is done with the help of local suction. Cupping reduces or stops pain by drawing blood from the affected area to the surface of skin. Cupping permits 80% elimination of substances that causes pain. It reduces or eradicates the muscular pain by relaxing the Spastic muscle fibres [9]. Both the types of cupping (*Hijamah bil shurt* and *Hijamah bila shurt*) are used in the following conditions of pain [10].

- Low Back pain
- Ankylosing spondylitis
- Migraine
- Headache
- Sciatica
- Gout
- Pain of the knees
- Renal and ureteric colic
- Trigeminal neuralgia
- Hemorrhoids.

2.2.3 Fasd (Venesection)

Nowadays in Modern system of medicine phlebotomy is accepted for three diseases like Haemochromatosis, Polycythemia Vera and Porphyria Cutanea Tarda [11]. *Fasd* (venesection) is that type of treatment by which temperament and bodily humours are restored by the elimination of morbid matter from the body (*Tanquiyah-e-Mavad*). Renoved Unani physicians like *Ibn-e sina*, *Razi*, *Jalinose*, *Arzami* recommended the use of *Fasd* (Venesection) as an adjuvant in the management of *Tahajjur-e- Mufasal-e-Rakbah* (Knee Osteoarthritis) [12]. *Fasd* is commonly used for purification of humours in various pain disorders like *Waja-ul Mufasil* (Rheumatic arthritis), *Waja'a-e Qalb* (Angina pectoris), *Irqun Nissa* (Sciatica), *Niqras* (Gout), *Zaat-ur-Riya* (pneumonia) [9].

2.2.4 Leeching (Hirudotherapy)

Leech therapy is the best non pharmacological method for pain management. Leech eradicates pain through its saliva that contains anti-inflammatory substances, anesthetic agents, antiplatelet aggregation factor, antibiotic and gelatinous substances. Leeches reduces the swelling in the affected tissues by sucking out the excess blood and thus fresh oxygenated blood reaches the affected area until normal circulation can be restored [13]. Leeching or Hirudotherapy is commonly used for various painful conditions [13-16].

- Hemorrhoids
- *Amraz mufassil* (Joint Diseases) like Gout, Osteo Arthritis etc.
- *Qarooth Muzaminah* (Chronic Ulcers)
- Abscesses and boils
- Skin disorders like Dermatitis, Ulcers etc

- Tenosynovitis.

2.2.5 Natool (Irrigation)

Natool is an important method of *Ilaj-bit-tadbeer* in which medicated oil or decoction or simple water is poured slowly from a height over the affected area. This process of pouring the decoction or oil from a distance is known as "*Tanteel*" or irrigation. *Natool* are of two types: *Natool haar* and *Natool Barid*. *Natool* is done to provide the desired action of medicine locally which may occur by the following three processes [17].

Evacuation of Morbid matter (*Ikhraj-e-mawad*)

1. Normalization of temperament of affected organ (*Ta'dil-e-Mizaj-e-Aza*)
2. Improvement of *Quwat -e- Mudafiat*.

Natool therapy is very effective in relieving pain and stiffness at the affected site and it is therapeutically used in various disease like [17, 18].

- *Waji-e-Mufasil*.
- *Suddah* (Headache).
- *Sarsam* (Meningitis).
- *Shaqiqah* (Migraine).
- *Sakta* (Stroke).
- *Ahtibase bol* (Retention of Urine).
- *Warm-e- Suddi* (Mastitis).
- *Warne Reham* (Endrometritis).
- *Niqras* (Gout).

2.2.6 Enema (Huqna)

In Unani System of Medicine Enema is called as "*Amlie Taa'eer*". *Ibn Sena* called it as "*Moolije Faazila*" [19]. It is often used to relieve constipation and intern to get rid of intestinal pain. Enema is therapeutically used for the following conditions [9, 20].

- Constipation
- Distention of Stomach
- Backache
- Sexual Disorders
- Coma patient
- Any pathology in the throat (Throat Disorders)
- Kidney or Bladder pain.
- Inflammatory conditions of the adjacent organs of rectum.
- Colicky pain of intestines, Viscera's and stomach

2.2.7 Exercise

Exercise is a type of physical activity that is planned, organized and repetitive for the purpose of maintaining physical fitness and overall health. *Buqrat* (Hippocrates) recommended that the hungry person should not do any exercise or heavy work as it produces fatigueness. Horse riding is considered as a complete exercise (*Riyazat Haqeeqi* or *Kulli*) while as stone lifting is considered as a partial exercise (*Riyazat Juziya*). Weeping is an exercise of children while angriness is said to be the good exercise of cold temperament persons. Exercise increases the body's resistance to pain by increasing the production of endorphins and in turn creates a sense of well-being [21]. Exercise relieves pain by increasing the blood flow to the affected part and in turn increases the movement and provides continuity and thus prevents spasm and contractures of the muscles [22].

3. Conclusion

There is no doubt that Regimenal therapies are proving better

where the medical treatment is of less important. But, in order to obtain the fruitful results “*Ilaj-bit-Tadbeer*” procedures or techniques should be done by a skilled doctor or by an experienced therapist. Clinically most of the Regimenal techniques or procedures have been found very effective in pain management. In nut shell it can be said that Regimenal therapies has a potential to save the patients from adverse effects of NSAIDS on long term as well as on short term basis. The safety and efficacy of “IBT” procedures has been proved by many scientific studies, however, more studies are still needed to validate the mechanism of action of all procedures by modern parameters.

4. Conflict of interest: Nil

5. Funding: Nil

6. Acknowledgement

The authors are highly thankful to Dr Arshid Iqbal (Ph.D. Scholar NIUM Bangalore) and Dr Shafi Malik (P.G scholar Dept. of Gynea and OBG) for their precious advice and helpful discussion. Authors acknowledge all the scholars, writers and Scientists whose reference has been cited in this paper

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