

Need of revitalizing unani system of medicine

Sumbul Rehman

Aligarh Muslim University, India

The increasing incidences of Western Medicine's failures and exhaustive costs and parallel realization of traditional medicines, unique strengths moderately powerful effects but safety, radical cure and low costs, have set the stage for incorporating the latter in healthcare in a big way. World Health Organization which earlier co-opted Traditional Medicines (TMs) just to allow some level of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), is now looking to them for filling up Western Medicine's serious lacunas. However, understanding the novel character and uniqueness of basics of TM's is very important to rule out the curbing disadvantages too of TMs; otherwise they will also be taken up as that type of medicine which is useful only for handful population without any logic behind their activity. Therefore it is very important to know about the reason behind the utility of TM. In Unani System of medicine, there is proper reasoning in the method of preparation of drugs, including underlying rationality in combination of various medicinal plants, minerals, animals products etc.; method of drug administration; various preservatives used; indications and contraindications of drugs in different situations; restriction, avoidance and abstinence of certain foods and diet (*Parhez*); known adverse drug effect; complete drug profile beforehand; knowledge about the adverse drug-drug or food-drug interaction; guidelines for prescribing in extremes of age or in presence of altered organ function or in presence of pregnancy or lactation, etc. The above information is usually given in various Unani Formularies and classical Unani Literatures. Moreover, correctives (*Muslehat*) to drugs are used since a long time to minimize some undesirable effects, which the basic and the adjuvant constituents may produce in a normally prescribed combination with both single and compound drugs. Drugs that

are toxic in crude form are processed and purified in many ways before its clinical use (*Tadbir*). In spite of the fact that, every drug used in traditional systems of medicine may have some side effect (*Muzarrât*), the aim of the above precautions and reasoning, taken by well-informed and experienced physician, was obviously to avoid any ADRs. Concept of temperament (*Mizaj*) in Pharmacotherapy (*Ilajbildawa*) is an important part in Unani System of Medicine (USM). So, in USM the drugs are classified into Four 4 degrees (*Darjaat-e-advia*) viz 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th. Higher degrees according to their potency (4th) are more potent and likewise have more side effects/ toxic effects. Correctives (*tadbir-e-advia*) are used to minimize toxicity on the basis of temperament of drugs and its impact in minimizing side effects by prescribing or selecting the degree of drugs as per disease. Similarly, substitutes (*abdaal-e-advia*) of the drugs are used for better efficacy as less toxic drugs are prescribed as substitute to higher toxic drug in drug management based on the condition, *Mizaj* of patient. Cost effectiveness is also considered for better Health Economy and rational use of Unani Medicine.

Likewise Unani drugs of any origin (plant, animal or mineral) are categorized in four degrees on the basis of temperament, potentiality (potency) and power of effectiveness (efficacy) which in its entirety curb adverse drug reactions. Higher the degree, higher the adverse effects Degree \propto Efficacy and Adverse effect Dose \propto 1/Efficacy & Potency. Higher the degree higher is the effect but higher is the toxicity of the drug also. So, in Unani system if we use the drug of higher degree, we reduce the toxicity by various means as e.g: Reduce the quantity, Use it along with some corrective agent and detoxify the drug.

e: xuan-hung.nguyen@inserm.fr



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