



Review Article

Concept of *Siman-E- Mufrit* (Obesity) According to Eminent *Unani* Physicians: A Review

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A B S T R A C T

Obesity is a public health problem that has become an epidemic worldwide. The WHO now describes global obesity, or “globesity” as risks to human health. In *Unani* medicine obesity is termed as *Siman-e-Mufrit* means excessive fat and *farbahi* (Persian word) means *Motapa* (obese). Most of the *Unani* Physicians *Buqrat*, *Rufas*, *Jalinoos*, *Rabban Tabari*, *Ibn Sina*, *Ibn Nafis*, *Zakariya Razi* described *Siman-e- Mufrit* in classical *Unani* treatise with detailed description of its aetiology, sign and symptoms, complications and treatments. *Siman-e-Mufrit* is considered as *balghami* disease. Obesity is an important risk factor for hypertension, dyslipidaemia, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, obstructive sleep apnoea, fatty liver, osteoarthritis, and different types of carcinoma. This study was undertaken to provide a comprehensive view of *Siman-e-Mufrit* to halt its progression and complications thereby reducing the diseases burden. Extensive literature survey was carried out to suffice the objective which included scientific papers from reputed journals. *Unani* medicine has great potential in the management of obesity and its complications as well.

Keywords: *Siman-e-Mufrit*, Globesity, *Balghami*, *Farbahi*, *Unani Physicians*

Introduction

Obesity is the most common nutritional disorder.¹ It is described as an excess of body fat in the body.² In *Unani* system of medicine, the obesity term is known as *Siman-e-Mufrit*. It is a chronic and life style disease.³ *Buqrat* (420 BC) described complication, prevention, and management of obesity in his book “*Fasool-e- Buqratia*”.⁴ According to *Rofas*, Obese people are more affected to indigestion. If obese women is pregnant then after some time she suffer from abortion and these women face many problems during delivery time.⁵ Obesity is divided into:

- Simple Obesity (It is also known as primary obesity)
- Secondary Obesity
- Drug Induced Obesity⁶

Assessment of Obesity: the most widely used method to estimate obesity is the Body Mass Index (BMI), which is equal to weight/ height² (in kg/ m²).

Other methods are:

- Anthropometry (skin fold thickness),
- Densitometry (underwater weighing),
- Computed Tomography (CT) or
- Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and
- Electrical impedance.⁷

Definition of Obesity: According to WHO, obesity is defined as, If BMI is >30 or equal to 30, then a person is called obese.⁸

Many factors to develop obesity are endocrinal factors,



socio economic factors, cultural factors, genetic factors, environmental factors, situational factors, drug induced factors, metabolic factors and physiological factors etc.⁹

Causes

- All *Martoob* things
- *Farhat*
- *Rahat*
- *Naghma o Suroor*
- *Iqtedar-e huqoomat*¹⁰
- Alcohol
- Oily and fatty diets
- Excessive eating habit
- Sedentary life style
- Lack of exercise
- Excess sleep
- Excess rest¹¹

Complication

- *Ghashi* (Nausea)
- *Sara* (Epilepsy)
- *Falij* (Paralysis)
- *Waja-ul-Fuwad* (Stomach Pain)
- Neurological: Pseudotumour cerebri
- Cardiovascular: Hypertension, Dyslipidaemia, Coagulopathy etc
- Endocrine: Insulin resistance, Type 2 diabetes, precocious puberty
- Renal: Renal cancer, Glomerulosclerosis
- Musculoskeletal: Osteoarthritis, Back pain etc
- Gastrointestinal: Gallstone, Colon cancer etc
- Pulmonary: Asthma, Obstructive sleep apnoea
- Psychosocial: Eating disorders, Depression etc¹²

Obesity in View of Unani Physicians

In ancient Arabic literature, the word obesity is called as *farbahi* that is a Persian word. According to *Ibn-e-Sina*, due to obesity side effects abnormal enlargement of body and bad external appearance had been seen. This description is present in *Al-Qanoon Fil Tibb*.¹³ *Hakim Azam Khan* (1813-1902 AD) delineated treatment of *Siman-e-Mufrit* in his famous book *Rumuz-e-Azam* (Azam, 2006). *Daud Antaki* (1541-1599 AD) described complication and treatment of obesity of obesity in his famous book *Tazkiratu Uolil Albab*. One of the famous *Unani* physicians *Zakariya Razi* (865-925 AD) described treatment of obesity, mentioned therapy like: such as dietotherapy, hydrotherapy, drugs, massage, exercises etc.¹⁴

Management of Obesity in Unani System

In *Unani* system there are following methods of Management of Obesity:

- *Ilaj bil Ghiza*
- *Ilaj bil Dawa*

- *Ilaj bit Tadbeer*

Ilaj bil Ghiza

Ghiza which should be used in obesity are:

- *Ghiza* should be used less in amount more in nutrients.
- Do not use oily and fatty diet
- *Ghiza* is *Kaseef* and *Qalilul Taghzia*

Ilaj bil Dawa (Pharmacotherapy)

Single *Unani* drug is used in the treatment of obesity. All the following drugs have temperament *Haar Yabis*.

- *Anisoon* (*Pimpinella anisum*) Dose: 2-5 gm
- *Afsanteen* (*Artemisia absinthium*) Dose: 3-5 gm
- *Asarun* (*Asarum europium*) Dose: 3-5 gm
- *Filfil Siyah* (*Piper nigrum*) Dose: 4-6 gm
- *Lehsun* (*Allium sativum*) Dose: 3 gm
- *Zanjabeel* (*Zingiber officinale*) Dose: 1 gm
- *Ajwain* (*Ptychotis ajowan*) Dose: 1.5-1 gm
- *Elva* (*Aloe barbadensis*) Dose: 6 gm
- *Badiyan* (*Foeniculum vulgare*) Dose: 5-7 gm
- *Zeera* (*Carum carvi*) Dose: 3-5 gm
- *Tukhme Sudaab* (*Ruta graveolens*) Dose: 3-5 gm
- *Luk* (*Coccus lacca*) Dose: 0.5-2 gm¹⁵

Compound Drugs (Murakkab Advia)

- *Jawarish Kamooni Kabir* Dose: 4-6 gm BD
- *Majoon-e-Muhazzil* Dose: 10 gm HS
- *Majoon-e-Muqil* Dose: 10 gm HS
- *Safoof-e-Muhazzil* Dose: 5 gm with *Arq zeera* 20ml BD¹⁴
- *Jawarish Bisbasa* Dose: 5 gm BD
- *Arq Zeera* Dose: 20 ml BD
- *Jawarish Falafili* Dose: 5gm BD
- *Qurs-e- Muqil* Dose: 2 BD
- *Hab Sandroos* Dose: 2 BD
- *Qurs-e-Luk* Dose: 2 BD

Unani Prescriptions

- *Sandroos, Luk Maghsool, Marzanjosh* in equal quantity then make a fine Powder and to take 4 gm BD with *Arq Zeera* 20 ml.
- *Luk Maghsool* 28 gm, *Ajwain* 14 gm, *Badiyan* 14 gm, *Zeera Siyah* 14 gm *Suddab* 14 gm, *Marzanjosh* 3 gm, *Boora Armani* 3 gm to formulate a fine Powder and to take 4 gm BD + *Arq Zeera* 20 ml.¹⁶

Ilaj bit Tadbeer (Regimenal Therapy)

Ilaj bit tadbeer is the most effective treatment in *Unani* system that means, moderation in *Asbabe Sitta Zarooriyah*.

For obesity treatment the following therapies are used:

- Riyazat* (Exercise)
- Tareeq* (Diaphoresis)
- Hammam* (Bath/Bathing)

- i. **Riyazat (Exercise):** *Riyazat* helps to burn extra calories from the body and *Riyazat* also helps to remove *Maada-e-Balghamia*. Both function of *riyazat* are beneficial for the treatment of *Sue Mizaj Balghami*.
- ii. **Tareeq (Diaphoresis):** It is beneficial in obesity treatment. It expel out most of the waste product from the body.
- iii. **Hammam:** This regimen is suggested by *Zakariya Razi* in his book *Al-Hawi Fit Tib* for the treatment of obesity. *Hammam* remove the morbid matter especially *Balghami Maada* from the body by sweating. It open pores of skin. It perform *Nuzj* in *Mawad* and to expel also.¹⁷

Basically, three types of *Hammam* are used for obesity in *Tibb-e-Unani*:

- *Hammam Bukhari* or Vapour bath or Steam bath
- *Hammam Turki* or Turkish bath
- *Hammam Har* or Hot bath¹⁸

Conclusion

The *Unani*, originated in *Greece* and developed by *Arab* physicians, so called *Graeco-Arab* medicine. *Unani* medicine has great potential in the management of obesity and its complications also.

This *Unani* system can be better proved to control obesity in the future time.

More research of *Unani* physicians to prevent obesity that is mentioned in classical literature needs to be re-evaluate. Obesity is a major problem in India it is economic burden but there is no satisfactory treatment available in conventional medicine. Hence this system of medicine can be a better option to control the progress of obesity.

Conflict of Interest: None

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