

Ilaj bil Ghiza (Dietotherapy): A Core Mode of Unani Treatment

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Abstract

The physical and mental health of a human being is largely dependent upon good nutrition. The carbohydrates, lipids, proteins, vitamins and minerals are considered as nutrients that are consumed from vegetable, animal and mineral sources. A well-balanced diet with adequate intake of proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, is necessary for good nutrition and for maintaining health and preventing diseases. Many Unani physicians such as Hippocrates, Galen, Rhazes, Ibn Zohar, Ibn Sina etc have compiled several books on dietetics. The *makool va mashroob* (food and drink) is one of the vital factors among the six essential prerequisites for preservation of life as described in Unani medicine. All the forms of diet have been classified according to the nutritional value and chyme viz. light and soft diet, attenuated highly nutritious, attenuated less nutritious, attenuated highly nutritious and good chyme forming diets etc. Some modified diets viz. barley water, mutton soup, whey, honey water, *nabeez*, vinegar, *aabkama*, *murabba*, *halwa*, *gulqand* etc are recommended alone or as adjuvant for the treatment of several body ailments. Selective diets are also advised according to the diseases viz. *massor dal* (red lentil) along with vinegar in headache, mutton of young sheep in melancholia, goat's milk in tuberculosis etc. The dietotherapy is widely acceptable, accessible and above all affordable to the patients with near nil adverse reactions. In present scenario, several life style disorders viz. hypertension, diabetes, dyslipidaemia and other diseases viz. anaemia, malnutrition, vitamin deficiency etc can be managed by selectisng appropriate diet either alone or as adjuvant with pharmacotherapy. Therefore, the study of clinical nutrition and dietetics is in vogue since centuries and the same is now scientifically validated with precision. This mode of treatment is widely prescribed by Unani physicians in various disorders successfully provided the basic fundamental principles of Unani medicine is judiciously followed, i.e. *Ilaj biz Zid* (antagonistic treatment). Hence the dietotherapy an integral mode of Unani treatment if adopted prudently will go a long way in alleviating the suffering of humanity.

Keywords: *Ilaj bil Ghiza*, Dietotherapy, Unani medicine

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Introduction

The overall growth of the body, physical, and mental well-being of an individual is entirely dependent on good nutrition. Good nutrition also provide smart and beautiful looking which are expressed by shiny hair, glowing skin, clear eyes, erect posture, attentive expressions and firm flesh on well-developed bone structures. The carbohydrates, lipids, proteins, vitamins and minerals are considered as nutrients which are mainly consumed from vegetable, animal and mineral sources.¹ A well-balanced diet with adequate intake of all the nutrients, is necessary for good nutrition as well as for maintaining health and preventing diseases.² Since olden times, people have been aware that a poor or imbalanced diet can cause various diseases.³ In present scenario, poor and erratic dietary habits cause many life style disorders such as hypertension, dyslipidaemia, coronary artery diseases, obesity, diabetes, indigestion, liver diseases, cancer etc. The change in environment, customs, behaviour, food supply, and life style have dramatically influence the health outcomes. Hence, to be pragmatic within these life theories of alteration and steadiness, the knowledge of food, nutrition and health care must emphasize on health promotion.⁴ The Unani system of medicine is based on the concept of *asbab-e-sitta zaruria* (six essential prerequisites) which includes *hawa-e-muheet* (atmospheric air), *makoolat va mashroobat* (foods and drinks), *harkat va sukoon-e-badni* (physical activity and repose), *harkat va sukoon-e-nafsani* (mental activity and repose), *naum va yaqza* (sleep and wakefulness) and *ehtibas va istifragh* (retention and elimination).⁵⁻⁷ These six factors are essentials for living human beings. Nobody could escape these prerequisites of life.⁷ *Makoolat va Mashroobat* is one of the essential prerequisites among them for restoration of health and prevention from diseases.⁵ The management of the diseases in Unani system of medicine is largely based on the holistic approach with an aim to treat body, mind and soul. Four core modes of treatment are usually employed such as *Ilaj bit tadbeer* (regimenal therapy), *Ilaj bil ghiza* (dietotherapy), *Ilaj bid dawa* (pharmacotherapy) and *Ilaj bil yad* (surgery).^{7,8} The *ilaj bil ghiza* is a distinctive non-medicinal therapy in which the treatment is done by modulation in dietary habits, i.e. fasting, use of food stuff in more quantity having less nutritional value or less quantity having more nutrients or vice versa.⁴ The principle aim of *ilaj bil ghiza* (dietotherapy) is to maintain nutritional needs according to demand of the body and avoid pharmacotherapy as drug is not considered to be part of the body and can produce adverse reactions.

Historical background

The earliest record on dietotherapy is observed in Chinese medicine, where Zhang Ji, a renowned physician 1000 years BC realized the role of food items for the management of various diseases. The *Charaka Samhita* and *Sushruta*

Samhita, two most authentic compendiums of Ayurvedic medicine have also described dietotherapy as a discrete and separate branch.⁴ In Unani system of medicine, the role of diets and drinks for health issues has been considered very much significant since the days of Hippocrates (460-370 BC) when the sweet smell of urine led to the diagnosis of diabetes and modification in dietary habits which played major role to control the clinical manifestations of diabetes.⁹ He has compiled two treatises on dietotherapy as '*Kitab al-Ghiza*' (book on dietetics) and '*Kitab Ma-us-Shaeer*' (book on barley water).¹⁰ Other ancient Unani physicians like Aristotle (384-322BC), Celus (53BC-7AD) and Galen (130-200 AD) had also emphasized on the use of various food items for the treatment of common and specific ailments of the human body.⁴ The '*Kitab fi Tadbeer al-Aghzia*' (book on selection of diets) is written by Aristotle. The '*Kitab Qawi al-Aghzia*' (book on the strength of diets) is compiled by Galen. Masar Joya Basri (d. 730 AD) compiled '*Kitab al-Aghzia*' (book on diets). Jibreel ibn Bakhteeshu (d. 828 AD) wrote '*Risala fi al-Taam va al-Sharab*' (short communication on food and drink). The '*Kitab fi al-Ashrab*' (book on drinks), '*Kitab fi al-Aghzia*' (book on diets), '*Kitab Khawas al-Aghzia va al-Buqul*' (book on the properties of diets and vegetables), *Kitab fi Sharab al-Fakeh*' (book on drink and fruits) have been compiled by Ibn Masoya (d. 857 AD). Hunyen Ibn Ishaq (d. 873 AD) has compiled three books on dietetics i.e. '*Kitab fi-l-Labn*' (book on milk), '*Kitab Qawi al-Aghzia*' (book on potency of diets) and '*Kitab fi Tabae al-Aghzia va Tadbeer al-Insan*'. The '*Kitab Jalinus fi al-Aghzia*' (book of Galen on diets) is written by Sabit ibn Qartah (d. 901 AD). The '*Kitab al-Aghzia ala Tareeq Qawaneen al-Qulliya*' is written by Qusta bin Luqa (d. 912 AD). Razi (d. 925AD) has written two manuscripts on dietetics i.e. '*Kafiyat al-Aghtiza*' and '*Kitab Munafe al-Aghzia va Dafe Mazariha*'. Ibn Butlan (d. 1064 AD) has compiled '*Taqveem al-Sahet fi Quwa al-Aghzia va Dafe Mazariha*'. Najeebuddin Samarqandi (d. 1220 AD) wrote '*Risale Aghzia va-l-Ashraha lil Marza*'.¹⁰

Most of the ancient Unani pharmacopoeias have discussed on diets and drugs simultaneously. Ibn Baitar (1197-1248 AD), a renowned botanist, philosopher and physician of Unani medicine has described 2300 drugs including several diets in his pharmacopoeia i.e. '*Al-Jame al-Mufradat al-Advia va al-Aghzia*' (complete book on single drugs and diets).¹¹ Ibn Hubal Baghdadi (1121-1213 AD), another botanist and physician has depicted several dietary substances in '*Kitab al-Mukhtarat fi al-Tib*' which can be used for the treatment of various diseases.¹² Ibn Zohar (1091-1162 AD) compiled a commentary on dietetics i.e. '*Kitab al-Aghzia*' (book on diets) which has mentioned many dietary substances such as *Ficus carica*, grapes, *Vitis vinifera*, apple, *Cydonia oblonga*, *Prunus cerasus*, walnut, almond, banana, dates, *Chenopodium album*, cucumber, water melon, musk melon, olive, carrot, reddish, deer, egg, sheep, fish, milk etc.¹⁰ The Urdu translation of this book is

made by the Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine (CCRUM) in 2009 AD. Razi (d. 925AD) has written a chapter on dietotherapy and pharmacotherapy entitled 'potency and efficacy of diets and drugs' in his manuscript '*Kitab al-Mansuri*'.¹³ Indian Hakims such as Hakim Sharif Khan, Hakim Azam Khan and Hakim Akbar Arzani have also laid emphasis on the use of good nutrients for healthy living and prefer dietotherapy in cases of diseases. Hakim Najmul Ghani Khan has written approximately 2500 drugs along with several diets in his compendium '*Khazain al-Advia*'.¹⁴

Some quotes of Unani physicians regarding diets and dietotherapy

The significance role of food and drink for healthy living of an individual and selection of good diets for the prevention and treatment of diseases are quoted by many ancient Unani physicians. Hippocrates stated that "*let your food be your medicine, and medicine be your food*", and "*leave your drugs in the chemist's pot, if you can heal the patient with food*".³ Other statements of Hippocrates are "*the cause of sickness is over eating and the cause of health is eating like a bird*", "*take diet only when you have desire*", "*good wines in small quantity is the friend of body and apple is the friend of soul*".¹⁵ Avicenna says "*stomach is the house of disease and diet is the head of healing*".⁵ Pythagoras stated that "*people should take care of their health; the diet, coitus and exercise should be in a balanced way*". Aristotle stated that "*those persons who are taking grape juice, bread and mutton, doing physical exercise and repose, taking sleep and wakefulness in a balanced way they don't sick frequently*". Haris bin Kalda quoted that "*pomegranate is the best fruit among all the fruits, rose is the best essence among all the essences, and kasni (Cichorium intybus) is the best vegetable among all the vegetables*".¹⁵ Razi stated that "*good nutrition, adequate rest, happiness and best line of treatment are the pillars for curing of diseases*". He also stated that "*the amount of desired food items should be less for a patient*", and "*whenever possible, treatment of the diseases should be done by diets only not by drugs*".¹⁶

Substances used for treatment purposes

In Unani medicine, five substances are commonly used for the treatment of diseases.

Dawa (drug): Various definitions of drug have been given by Unani physicians such as Galen define "the substance which alters the functions of the body is called a drug". He further says "the substance which is dominated on the body is known as a drug".¹⁷ Qarshi define the drug as "the substance which changes the temperament of the body".¹⁸ Another definition is "any substance which is administered by any route followed by interaction with internal homeostasis and producing desired or undesired effect is called a drug".¹⁹ From the above definitions, it is concluded that the drug doesn't become the part of

the body and can produce wanted or unwanted effects. The actions of drug in Unani medicine is fully based on temperament which can be correlated on physiological level not on molecular basis.

Ghiza (Diet): The substances which can become the part of the cells, tissue or organ of the human body and provide *badal ma tahallul* (replacement of cellular organelles).¹⁸ They contain carbohydrates, proteins, lipids, vitamins, minerals etc.²⁰

Ghiza-i-Dawai (Diet cum drug): The substances, which are primarily used as diet but have some therapeutic properties. The dietary constituents are more in such type of substances as compared to drug constituents.^{7,17,20} e.g. bottle guard, pumpkin, cucumber, musk melon, water melon etc.

Dawa-i-Ghizai (Drug cum diet): The substances, which are primarily used as drugs but have some nutritional values.^{7,20} e.g. mint, pepper, cardamom, ginger etc.

Zulkhassa (Specific drugs): The substances whose mechanism of action is obscure.¹⁸

Classification of diet^{7,20}

All the forms of diet have been classified according to the nutritional value and chyme.

Ghiza-i-Lateef (Light & soft diet): They are easily digestible food items and reduce the viscosity of *khilt* (humour) inside body and are recommended in those cases where the pores of the body are impeded with *ghaleez madda* (viscous matter) that is unable to eliminate from the body by excretory system. E.g. *aab-e-anar* (pomegranate juice), *aab-e-mosambi* (orange-navel juice), *aab-e-naranji* (orange juice), *ma-us-shaer* (barley water), tea, coffee, wine etc (Table 01).

According to nutritional value, the *ghiza-i-lateef* is subdivided into two types:

- **Ghiza-i-Lateef Kasser-ut-Taghzia (Attenuated highly nutritious diet):** Easily digestible and high caloric food items such as *ma-ul-lahem* (meat distillate) and *zardi baiz-e-murg neem birasht* (yolk of half boiled egg) are given as immunomodulators.
- **Ghiza-i-Lateef Qaleel-ut-Taghzia (Attenuated less nutritious diet):** Easily digestible and low caloric food items such as fruits recommended to those cases where the *tabiyat* (physic) is somewhat strong and require least association to boost internal homeostasis of the body for treatment purposes.

These two types are further subdivided into four types according to chyme:

- i) **Ghiza-i-Lateef Kasser-ut-Taghzia jayyad al-Kaimus (Attenuated, highly nutritious and good chyme forming diet):** This is considered as best diet among all. They are easily digestible, high caloric and good forming chyme such as meat distillate, yolk of half boiled egg etc.
- ii) **Ghiza-i-Lateef Kasser-ut-Taghzia raddi al-Kaimus (Attenuated, highly nutritious and bad chyme forming diet):** Easily digestible, high caloric and bad forming chyme diets such as liver and lung. This type of diet is usually not preferred for treatment purposes.
- iii) **Ghiza-i-Lateef Qaleel-ut-Taghzia jayyad al-Kaimus (Attenuated, less nutritious and good chyme forming diet):** Easily digestible, low caloric and good forming chyme foods such as fruit juices and fruits. They are given for treatment purposes when natural healer is strong.
- iv) **Ghiza-i-Lateef Qaleel-ut-Taghzia raddi al-Kaimus (Attenuated, less nutritious and bad chyme forming diet):** These food items are easily digestible, provide less energy and bad forming chyme viz. radish, mustard, lettuce etc.

Table 1. Types of light and soft diets

Attenuated highly nutritious diets	Meat distillate, Half boiled yolk of egg
Attenuated less nutritious diets	Fruit and Vegetable juices, tea, coffee
Attenuated, highly nutritious and good chyme forming diets	Meat distillate, Mutton soup, Chicken soup, Half boiled yolk of egg
Attenuated, highly nutritious and bad chyme forming diets	Organs of Animals such as Liver, Lung, Kidney
Attenuated, less nutritious and good chyme forming diets	Apple, Pomegranate, Orange, Grapes, Beet Root, Carrot, Litchi, Mango, Pumpkin, Sweet bottle gourd juices
Attenuated, less nutritious and bad chyme forming diets	Radish, Mustard, Lettuce

Ghiza-i-Kaseef (Heavy diet): This type of diet cannot be easily digested and forming *ghaleez khilt* (viscous humour) which may produce *sudda* (obstruction) in organs. (Table 02)

According to nutritional value, the *ghiza-i-kaseef* is subdivided into two types:

- **Ghiza-i-Kaseef Kasser-ut-Taghzia (Heavy & highly nutritious diet):** Difficult digestible and high caloric food such as beef meat.
- **Ghiza-i-Kaseef Qalil-ul-Taghzia (Heavy & less nutritious diet):** They are not easily digested and low caloric foods such as dry beef meat.

These two types are further subdivided into four types according to chyme:

- i) **Ghiza-i-Kaseef Kasser-ut-Taghzia jayyad al-Kaimus (Heavy, highly nutritious and good chyme forming diet):** The heavy, high nutritious and good forming chyme diets such as fully boiled egg, meat of young sheep etc. They may be useful in tuberculosis, chronic fever, chronic infections, cachexia etc.
- ii) **Ghiza-i-Kaseef Kasser-ut-Taghzia raddi al-Kaimus (Heavy, highly nutritious and bad chyme forming diet):** This type of diet should be avoided because they are very difficult to digest and always form bad chyme viz. duck meat and horse meat.
- iii) **Ghiza-i-Kaseef Qaleel-ul-Taghzia jayyad al-Kaimus (Heavy, less nutritious and good chyme forming diet):** The heavy, less nutritious and good forming chyme diets such as meat of young beef. It may also be useful in cachexia.
- iv) **Ghiza-i-Kaseef Qaleel-ul-Taghzia raddi al-Kaimus (Heavy, less nutritious and bad chyme forming diet):** The heavy, not easily digested, less nutritious and bad forming chyme diets such as dry beef meat.

Table 2. Types of heavy diet

Heavy & Highly Nutritious diet	Beef meat, Mutton, Chicken
Heavy & Less Nutritious diet	Dry beef meet, dry mutton and chicken
Heavy, Highly Nutritious and Good Chyme forming diet	Fully boiled egg, Meat of young goat and sheep
Heavy, Highly nutritious and bad chyme forming diet	Duck meat, Horse meat, Veal meat
Heavy, less nutritious and good chyme forming diet	Meat of young beef
Heavy, less nutritious and bad chyme forming diet	Salted meat, dry beef meat

Ghiza-i-Motadil (Moderate diet): This type of diet produces moderate viscosity of *khilt* (humour) which are usually not harmful to the body. E.g. *Khichdi*, cow's milk etc

Some diseases may be cured by using an appropriate food items but they should be selected based on *ghiza-e-lateef* (light diet), *sari-ul-hazm* (easily digestible) and *jayyad al-kaimus* (good forming chyme).

Principles of treatment by dietetics

Unani physicians strongly believe that food provide strength to the body and to the morbid matters both. The wrong selection and mismanagement of diet may hamper the *tabiyat* (physic) which is known to increase the severity of diseases. Complete abstinence from diet or partially

reduction is generally advised in acute illnesses whereas only partial reduction is advised in chronic diseases with an aim to restore the faculties of the body.²²

1. **Tark-e-Ghiza (Abstinence from diet):** When the *tabiyat* (physic) is strong, such patients are advised to abstain completely from diet which facilitate in evacuation of morbid matter from the body.^{7,21,22}
2. **Taqleel-ul-Ghiza (Reduction in intake of diet):** The second principle is to reduce the amount of food quantitatively as well as qualitatively with an aim to restore *quwa* (faculty) which facilitate *tabiyat* (physic) to work solely in one direction and participate in eradication of disease from the body. Half boiled egg is a highly nutritious and good forming chyme diet which can be given if *quwa* (faculty) of the body is weak. Likewise, watermelon and muskmelon can be given if *quwa* (faculty) of the body is strong.^{7,20,22} The diet can be reduced through either of three modes.
 - i) **Reduction in kammiyat (quantity) of the diet:** The diet is decreased in terms of quantity which means the nutritional value of such diet is more but the bulk is low. This type is advised when digestion of the patient is weak but needs to provide strength to the body's faculties. e.g. egg.²²
 - ii) **Reduction in kafiyyat (quality) of the diet:** In this type, the quantity in terms of nutritional value is decreased. This type is advised when the patient has desire of food but simultaneously the vascular system of the body is impeded with morbid matters. In this case, the production of humours are decreased which will provide favourable medium for concoctive action of morbid matters. e.g. vegetables and fruits.²²
 - iii) **Reduction in kammiyat (quantity) and kafiyyat (quality) of the diet:** In this type, the diet in the terms of quantity and quality both, is reduced particularly when the faculties of the body is neither so weak nor strong.²²

Specific dietetics

In Unani system of medicine, many modified diets, separately or as an adjuvant with pharmacotherapy, are also used for the treatment of various diseases. These diets have been mentioned in several Unani pharmacopoeias (Table 3).

1. **Ma-us-Sha'eer (Barley water):** It is considered as the most beneficial 'diet cum drug'. Hippocrates has mentioned 10 properties of barley water. One part of barley and 10 or 14 parts of water are boiled till the colour changes to reddish. This is useful in case of fever, acute infections, tuberculosis, diabetes mellitus and other debilitating diseases.^{23,24} The '*ma-us-sha'eer mulham*' is a specific form of barley water which is prepared with mixing of meat distillate and is considered more potent than plain barley water.²⁵
2. **Ma-ul-Asl (Honey water):** One part of honey and 2 parts of water are boiled for few minutes. Few herbs such as darchini (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*), zinger (*Zingiber officinale*), mastagi (*Pistacia lentiscus*), safron (*Crocus sativus*), cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum*), jaifal (*Myristica fragrans*) and javitri (*Myristica fragrans*) are mixed in the *ma-ul-asl* to increase its potency. It is very much useful in cerebro-vascular disorders, paralysis, facial palsy, fever, gastric diseases and in dry cough.^{22,24,25}
3. **Ma-ul-Laham (Meat distillate):** A form of meat / chicken soup prepared by method of distillation. Few drugs viz. *Cinnamomum tamala*, *Foeniculum vulgare*, *Coriandrum sativum*, *Mentha arvensis*, *Cinnamomum zylenicum*, *Lavandula stoechas*, *Pistacia lentiscus*, *Alpinia galanga*, *Curcuma zedoria*, *Valeriana jatamansi* etc are mixed in *ma-ul-laham* to increase its potency and for other purposes^[25]. It is used in protein energy malnutrition, tuberculosis, cachexia, anaemia, cerebral and cardiac diseases.^{23,24,25}
4. **Ma-ul-Jubn (Whey):** This special diet is prepared by boiling sheep/ goat's milk with added lemon juice, *sikanjabeen* or grape's vinegar and separated the watery part. Some drugs such as maghz-e-amaltas (*Cassia fistula*), turanjbeen (*Alhagi pseudalhagi*) and sheerkhist (*Fraxinus ornus*) may also be mixed to increase its potency. It may be used in melancholic diseases, depression, mental disorders, migraine, burning micturition, renal failure, ascitis and jaundice.^{23,24}
5. **Ma-ul-Fawakah (Fruit juices) & Ma-ul-Buqool (Fresh vegetable juices):** These are useful in vitamin and mineral deficiencies, constipation, anaemia, general body weakness, and cardio-vascular diseases. Apple, pomegranate, orange, watermelon, *Solanum nigrum*, *Cichorium intybus*, pumpkin juices etc are usually prescribed to the patients.⁷
6. **Sikanjabeen (Oxymel):** It is generally prepared by boiling 1 part vinegar and 3 parts honey or sugar.²⁶ Some specific *sikanjabeen* such as *sikanjabeen-e-buzuri* is used as diuretic; *sikanjabeen-e-lemuni* and *sikanjabeen-e-nanaee* are used in vomiting, acute hepatitis and jaundice.²⁷
7. **Aabkama:** It is prepared by fermentation of mustard (*Brassica nigrum*), salt, zeera (*Carum carvi*), ajwain (*Cuminum cyminum*), wheat bread, vinegar, mint (*mentha arvensis*), zinger and pepper and is useful in gastric disease.⁴
8. **Asfeedaj:** This special food is prepared by plain mutton soup without mixing spices and is useful in winter season.⁴
9. **Sikbaj:** This food item is prepared with goat/ sheep's mutton, vinegar, spices and vegetables. It can be used in vomiting, jaundice, mild inflammatory condition of liver and ascitis.²⁸
10. **Nabeez:** It is a type of non-distilled wine which contains

little amount of alcohol. It is prepared with grapes, dates, anjeer, coconut, sugar, barley, wheat etc by the method of fermentation. It contains enzymes which are essential for maintaining health.²⁹

11. **Murabba:** Seasonal fruits such as apple, orange, carrot, pear, *Emblica officinalis*, *Terminalia chebula*, *Cydonia oblonga* etc are preserved by boiling them into sugar or honey and they are used as cardi tonic, brain tonic and stomachic.²⁶ Several Unani pharmacopoeial preparations viz. *murabba-e-amlā*, *murabba-e-badam*, *murabba-e-zangbeel*, *murabba-e-seb*, *murabba-e-kaddu* etc are prepared for various purposes.²³
12. **Gulqand:** Rose petals or petals of some other flowers are preserved into sugar or honey which can be used as laxative and purgative, cardi tonic, brain tonic, hepatoprotective and antipyretic.²⁸
13. **Halwa:** It is made by *Aloe vera*, almond, bottle gourd, coriander, egg or carrot with added sugar. It is rich in calories, nutritious and energetic.⁴ *Halwa-e-Khashkhash* is used to increase appetite in tuberculosis patients. *Halwa-e-Seb va Bihi* is given to increase the strength of stomach, liver and heart. *Halwa-e-Badam*, *halwa-e-salab* and *halwa-e-baiza-e-murg* are used for the treatment of sexual dysfunctions. *Halwa-e-Suparipak* is recommended especially in gynaecological disorders.²⁴
14. **Falooda:** This is a special highly nutritious food item which is made with starch, cow's milk and sugar. It is very much useful in general body weakness and cardiac weakness.²⁴
15. **Hareesa:** This special diet is prepared by mutton and wheat which can be used in chronic fever, tuberculosis and anaemia.⁴
16. **Mazurat:** This is prepared with mutton soup, *Vitis vinifera*, sugar and honey. It may be useful in chronic disease.⁴
17. **Kavameekh:** A diet is prepared with vegetables, milk, spices and mint to increase appetite.²⁸
18. **Zeerbaaj:** A type of soup prepared with vinegar, dry fruits, saffron and spices which is useful in stomach and liver diseases.²⁸
19. **Mazeera:** It is prepared with curdled milk which is useful in hot season.⁴
20. **Maibah:** This specific diet is made with quince fruit juice, grape wine, dried ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, saffron and honey. It is used in indigestion, nausea and vomiting, diarrhoea and as stomachic.⁴
21. **Hareera:** *Hareera* is made with wheat or pieces of *roti* (bread), dry fruits, saffron, sugar and cow's ghee. This diet is highly nutritious and increases body's innate heat.²⁶ Some recipes of *hareera* have been mentioned in Unani pharmacopoeias²⁴ for the treatment of certain ailments such as cough, tuberculosis, haemoptysis, pleurisy, sexual dysfunctions, headache etc.²³
22. **Satto:** Barley or corn flour is soaked into water, pounded with dry fruits and made *satto*. It should be given along with plenty of cold water to make it easily ingestible.⁴
23. **Rub (Extract):** Rub is prepared with juices of different fruits by method of evaporation. *Rub-e-Bihi* (extract of quince), *rub-e-anar* (extract of pomegranate), *rub-e-seb* (extract of apple) and *rub-e-jamun* (extract of black plum) are used as stomachic, brain and cardiac tonic.²⁴
24. **Sharbat (Syrup):** Certain *sharbat* such as *sharbat-e-anannas*, *sharbat-e-balango*, *sharbat-e-bihi*, *sharbat-e-tamar Hindi*²³, *sharbat-e-ward sada*, *sharbat-e-na'na*²⁴ etc are prescribed for the treatment of several common and specific ailments, nausea and vomiting, gastritis, hepatitis, jaundice and fever.
25. **Khageena:** It is prepared by yolk of egg, aqueous extract of onion, ginger powder, *Orchis latifolia*, *Cinnamomum zeylanicum*, *Syzygium aromaticum* and *Elettaria cardamomum*. It is very much useful in sexual dysfunction.²⁴
26. **Sirka (Vinegar):** *Sirka-e-Unsal* is used in facial palsy, paralysis, epilepsy, headache and sciatica. *Sirka-e-Angoori* is used as cardiac, brain tonic and stomachic. *Sirka-e-Jamun* is used in diabetes mellitus.²⁴
27. **Qahwa:** It is made with tea leaves and other herbs such as *Foeniculum vulgare*, *Cinnamomum zeylanicum*, *Elettaria cardamomum*, *Syzygium aromaticum*, *Zingiber officinale*, *Glycyrrhiza glabra* etc which is useful in common cold, cough, bronchial asthma, headache and fever.²⁴

Table 3. Modified diet for specific indications

Modified diet	Indications
<i>Ma-us-Sha'eer</i>	Fever, Acute infections, Tuberculosis, Diabetes mellitus
<i>Ma-ul-Asl</i>	Cerebro-vascular disorders, Paralysis, Facial palsy, Fever, Gastric diseases, Dry cough
<i>Ma-ul-Laham</i>	Protein energy malnutrition, tuberculosis, cachexia, anaemia, cerebral disorders, cardiac diseases
<i>Ma-ul-Jubn</i>	Melancholia, depression, anxiety, migraine, burning micturition, renal failure, ascitis, jaundice
<i>Ma-ul-Fawakah</i> & <i>Ma-ul-Buqool</i>	Vitamin deficiency, constipation, anaemia, general body weakness, cardiovascular diseases
<i>Sikanjabeen</i>	Vomiting, hepatitis, jaundice, gastric disturbances, burning micturition, UTI

<i>Aabkama</i>	Gastric disorders
<i>Sikbaj</i>	Vomiting, jaundice, hepatitis, ascitis
<i>Murabba</i>	Cerebral, cardiac and gastric disorders
<i>Gulqand</i>	Constipation, gastric diseases, liver diseases, cerebral disorders, cardiac diseases
<i>Halwa</i>	General body weakness, cachexia
<i>Falooda</i>	General body weakness
<i>Hareesa</i>	Chronic fever, anaemia, tuberculosis
<i>Kavameekh</i>	Loss of appetite
<i>Zeerbaaj</i>	Stomach and liver diseases
<i>Maibah</i>	Indigestion, nausea and vomiting, diarrhoea
<i>Hareera</i>	Cough, tuberculosis, haemoptysis, pleurisy, sexual dysfunctions, headache
<i>Rub</i>	Gastric, liver, brain and cardiac disorders
<i>Khageena</i>	Sexual dysfunctions

Dietotherapy according to diseases

The Unani physicians are advised to take diets according to diseases which are helpful to reduce the clinical features of the diseases and also assisted the pharmacotherapy in curing of diseases (Table 4).

Table 4. Recommended diets according to diseases

Headache	<i>Masoor dal</i> (Red lentil) along with vinegar, green leafy vegetables, fresh fruits. ¹³
Meningitis	Barley water. ¹³
Cerebro-vascular accident	Fresh fruits having cold temperament ¹³ , <i>ma-ul-asl</i>
Paralysis	Bengal gram, olive oil, <i>ma-ul-asl</i> ¹³
Febrile convulsion	Barley water, chicken soup ¹³
Epilepsy	Fried mutton, Onion, garlic, <i>Brassica nigra</i> , <i>Vicia faba</i> , Cabbage ¹³
Melancholia	Mutton of young sheep, Chicken, Bread of fine wheat, Fresh milk, Live fish, Sweat made with Sugar and <i>Roghan-e-Badam</i> . ¹³ <i>Ma-ul-Jubn</i> Avoid taking dry mutton, <i>Masoor dal</i> , Cabbage, Salty and acrid taste food ²³
Common cold	Barley water, <i>Murabba-e-banafsha</i> ¹³
Conjunctivitis	Fruit juices ¹³
Cough	Barley water, Made vegetable of <i>Vicia faba</i> or spinach made along with almond oil ¹³
Pleurisy	Barley water ¹³
Tuberculosis	Goat's milk, Barley water, Fried fish, Vegetables made with leaves of <i>Portulaca oleracea</i> , <i>Tribulus terrestris</i> , <i>Lagenaria siceraria</i> and cucumber, <i>Ma-ul-lahem</i> (mutton soup), Water melon, Pomegranate, Grape, <i>Prunus domestica</i> , Apple, Turmeric, Turnip, <i>Ma-ul-asl</i> ¹³
Palpitation	Chicken soup made with mixture of hot spices and unripe grapes, <i>Sikanjabeen-e-shakri</i> ¹³ , <i>murabba-e-amla</i> , <i>Arq-e-kewda</i> , <i>Arq-e-gaozaban</i> , <i>Murabba-e-anannas</i> , <i>Murabba-e-tamar hindi</i> ³⁰
Cholera	Pomegranate juice alone or mixed with wheat bread ¹³
Gastritis	Pomegranate juice, <i>Sikanjabeen</i> , <i>Cydonia oblonga</i> mixed with wheat bread, Fruits having cold temperament ¹³
Jaundice	Vegetable made with pumpkin, Spinach, <i>Malva sylvestris</i> , Cucumber, <i>Prunus domestica</i> , <i>Solanum nigrum</i> , <i>Cichorium intybus</i> , Pomegranate juice ¹³

Urolithiasis	Bengal gram, milk, cheese ¹³
Burning micturition	<i>Hasramiya</i> ¹³
Worm infestation	Wheat bread with Kanji ¹³
Fever	Vegetables having cold & moist temperament, Mutton of young goat, Chicken and live fish, Diet made with Vinegar, Olive oil and sugar, Vinegar and almond oil ¹³
Anorexia	Fried chick with pomegranate juice and mint, Live fish, Vinegar, and Onion with vinegar, Fried chick with <i>Ruta graveolens</i> , <i>Anethum graveolens</i> , Garlic and onion ³¹
Hepatic pain	Watermelon with sugar, Pumpkin and grape juice, Cucumber juice along with <i>Solanum nigrum</i> , <i>Cichorium intybus</i> juices, <i>Portulaca oleracea</i> , <i>Sikanjabeen</i> and amaltas (<i>cassia fistula</i>). Vegetables such as spinach, <i>Chenopodium album</i> , leaves of beet root, <i>Portulaca oleracea</i> leaves with almond oil ³¹
Haematuria	<i>Faluda</i> with almond oil, Rice soup ³¹
Gout	<i>Prunus domestica</i> , Sugarcane juice ³¹
Oligozoospermia & spermatorrhoea	Onion, Carrot ^{21,31} , Gram, Mint, Fenugreek, Almond, Walnut, Pistachio nut, Grape, <i>Ficus carica</i> , Banana, Dates, Milk, Egg, Mutton, Chicken ³¹ , Sweet made with chest nut ³⁰ , Coconut ²¹
Urticaria	Pomegranate juice, Curd and vinegar ³¹
Eczema	Barley water, Cucumber juice, Pumpkin juice, Mucilage of isabgol ³¹
Diabetes	Pomegranate juice, Mucilage of isabgol, <i>Prunus domestica</i> juice, Barley water, Spinach, Pumpkin ³⁰
Psoriasis	Black gram, Pumpkin, Spinach, Fresh milk, <i>Ma-ul-jubn</i> , Fresh milk along with black gram, Pumpkin and almond. Cold dry, Hard and melancholic producing diets like red meat, Salty fish and cheese should be avoided ³²
Obesity	Onion, Garlic, Mint, <i>Carum carvi</i> , <i>Piper longum</i> , Green leafy vegetables ³³

Conclusion

Dietotherapy as a specialized form of treatment has long been propounded and practised since the period of Hippocrates, Galen, Razi, Avicenna etc. The extensive literature review of Unani medicine has pointed out that the ancient Unani physicians were completely aware about the concept and importance of food and drink. This important tool has been described in detail under six essential prerequisites for life. The dietotherapy play a vital role for prevention and treatment of several body ailments. It also minimizes the duration of treatment and improves the tolerance of drug by modification in diets. This form of treatment is widely acceptable, accessible and above all affordable to the patients with near nil adverse reactions. In present scenario, several life style disorders such as hypertension, diabetes, dyslipidaemia etc can be managed by selecting appropriate diet either alone or as adjuvant with pharmacotherapy. Several other diseases such as anaemia, malnutrition, vitamin deficiency etc can also be treated by using appropriate diet. Therefore, the study of clinical nutrition and dietetics is in vogue since centuries and the same is now scientifically validated with precision. The aforesaid diet are widely prescribed by Unani physicians in various disorders successfully provided the basic fundamental principles of Unani medicine is kept in mind, i.e *Ilaj biz zid* (antagonistic treatment). Hence

the dietotherapy an integral mode of Unani treatment if adopted judiciously will go a long way in alleviating the suffering and pain of humanity.

Conflict of Interest: None

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