

Editorial

AIDS: End Inequalities, Add Unani Interventions and End AIDS

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AIDS (Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome), referred to as slims disease is still a primary worldwide community health issue caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). It weakens the defence mechanism making a person susceptible to many infections and cancers. In 2020, 680000 (480000-1.0 million) human beings died from HIV-associated reasons and 1.5 million (1.0-2.0 million) human beings received HIV.

The present COVID-19 pandemic leaves all the AIDS sufferers pretty vulnerable. COVID-19 has made the lives of people suffering from HIV even more difficult. "End inequalities End AIDS" was the theme of World AIDS Day 2021 with a special focus on reaching people left behind.

The peak of HIV infection is acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), which, depending on the individual, can take a few years to develop, if not treated properly.

After a few weeks of preliminary infection, humans might also additionally reveal signs of influenza-like infection along with fever, rash, headache, or sore throat. As the infection gradually weakens the immune system, the symptoms and signs could further increase to weight loss, swollen lymph nodes, diarrhoea, fever, and cough. The absence of treatment may lead to severe problems like tuberculosis (TB), cryptococcal meningitis, excessive bacterial infections, and cancers consisting of lymphomas and Kaposi's sarcoma.

Before HIV was properly understood among Unani Physicians, it was considered an Amraz-e-Zohraviya, a venereal disease, since it was originally a disease of homosexual men. AIDS is termed as Ilat Qilat Mana'at-e-Maksooba in Unani terminology. The term Qilat-e-Manaat (immunity power) was in use long before the discovery of the immune system.

The concept of Tabiyat (Medicatrix nature or Immunity) has been explained by the Unani physicians as the power to create a healthy environment inside the body and to fight against the disease.

Hippocrates postulated that there is a special ability or the defensive mechanism of the body hidden in every individual called Quawat-e-Mudabarrae badan (Innate Immunity). The ability of self-preservation helps to restore the normal physiological functioning of the body including its defence mechanism.

So Quawat-e-Mudabarrae badan and Tabiyat are the determining factors in the Unani system for the prognosis of AIDS. In order to attain good health and be disease-free, Unani physicians advise improving immunity and strengthening the Tabiyat. Numerous drugs like Kalonji (*Nigella sativa*), Lehsun (*Allium sativum*), Asalassoos (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), Shahed (honey), Karela (*Momordica charantia*), Haldi (*Curcuma longa*), Neem (*Azadirachta indica*), etc are available that help in improving immunity and have immunomodulating effects.

Some of the compound immunostimulant Unani drugs are Khamira Marwareed, Khamira Abresham Hakim Arshad Wala, Khamira Gaozaban, Laboob Kabeer, Jawarish Shahi, Majoon Aarad Khurma, Majoon Muqawwi etc.

The above mentioned single and compound Unani formulations can play an important role in the prognosis of AIDS. The need of the hour is to do collaborative research so that it can be a milestone in successful Unani management of AIDS.