

View Point

# Invigorating Immunity through Unani Medicine: A Viewpoint

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## I N F O

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## A B S T R A C T

Immunity can be defined as the ability of the body to neutralize and eliminate the pathogenic micro-organism and their toxic products; thus providing protection to the individual. Immunosuppressive power improves the immune sensibility in opposition to microorganisms. Therapeutic herbs have been used practically in all cultures for boost up of the immune system. Unani Medicine (Tibb) is a medical system that deals with the management of health and disease. It provides preventive, protective, remedial, and rehabilitative healthcare with all-inclusive approach. Unani Medicine believes that Medicatrix Naturae (Tabiyat Mudabbira'-i-Badan) is the absolute strength, which manages all the physiological tasks of the body, provides resistance in opposition to many disorders and assists in healing in a natural manner. It is said that the real physician is the Tabi'at and the task of the physician is only to help it. The use of immunomodulatory drugs, besides others, is the unique feature of Unani Medicine which plays an important role in modulating the body immunity and improving overall quality of life. In the present review paper, we describe the concepts of immunity both in Unani system of medicine and modern and all the measures, particularly immunomodulatory herbs which provide strength to the immune system and, thus, revitalize the resistance power to fight off infections.

**Keywords:** Immunity, Unani System, Quwwat-e-Mudafiat, Unani Drugs

## Introduction

According to Unani physicians: Tabiat is main creator of the body. It creates healthy conditions in our body and take part in resistance to many diseases and pathological conditions. If Tabiat is much strong then a person does not suffer from any disease. If Tabiat is demolished, any person can suffer from any disease easily. Tabiat provides common

management, protection and immunity. Hippocrates says that in every person there is a protective mechanism or Quwwat-e- Muddabbira Badan also.1

As per contemporary concept, there are the following types of immunity:<sup>2</sup>

1. Active immunity

- Humoral immunity
- Cellular immunity
- Combination of above

## 2. Passive immunity

- Normal human Ig
- Specific human Ig
- Animal antitoxins or antisera

## Active Immunity

It is the immunity that occurs in a person as a result of infection or by particular immunization and is generally related with existence of antibodies or cells having a certain action on the microorganism concerned with a specified contagious disease or its toxins.

### Humoral Immunity

Humoral immunity comes from the B-cells (bone marrow derived lymphocytes) that multiply and make up specific antibodies after antigen presentation by phagocyte.

### Cellular Immunity

Cellular immunity plays a key role in opposition to infection. It is facilitated by the T-cells liable for the recognition of antigen.

### Combination of the above

In inclusion to the B and T lymphoid cells that are accountable for acknowledging self and non-self, regularly, cellular and humoral immunity collaborate with each another and with some accessory cells, i.e., macrophages and human K (killer) cells, and their joint functions compose the complex events of immunity, for example, one subset of T-Cells (helper T-cells) are needed for the best production of antibody to most antigens. Another set of T-cells (suppressor T-cells) inhibits immunoglobulin synthesis.

### Passive Immunity

Once antibodies are made in one body (human or animal), they can be transmitted to another for protection against a disorder; it is called as passive immunity.

Passive immunity may be persuaded:

- By administration of an antibody-containing preparation (immune globulin or antiserum)
- By transfer of maternal antibodies across the placenta. Human milk also contains protective antibodies, (IgA).
- By transfer of lymphocytes, to induce passive cellular immunity

### According to Razi

Razi was first person who put forward the concept of Uofoonat (infection). Thus, Razi was the propounder of the Germ Theory.<sup>3</sup>

## Immunomodulator Herbs

### Single Drugs<sup>4</sup>

Certain immunomodulator herbs are as follows:

Asgand (*withania somnifera*), Elwa (*Aloe vera*), Fowah (*Rubia cordifolia*), Kalonji (*Nigella sativa*), Gudhal (*Hibiscus, Rosa sinensis L.*), Haldi (*Curcuma longa*), Neem (*Azadirachta indica*), Bargad (*Ficus benghalensis L.*), Musli safed (*Chlorophytum borivilianum*), Satavar (*Asparagus recemosus*), Neelofar (*Nelumbo nucifera*), Aslussus (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), Filfil daraz (*Piper longum*), Halela (*Terminalia chebula*), Papita (*Carica papaya*), Amla (*Emblica officinalis*), Gilo (*Tinospora cordifolia*), Bartang (*Plantago major*), Baboona (*Matricaria chamomilla*), Rehan (*Ocimum sanctum*), Zanjabeel (*Zingiber officinale*), Kath (*Acacia catechu*), Darchini (*Cinnamomum zeylanicum*), Balela (*Terminalia belerica*).<sup>4</sup>

### Compound Drugs

Certain Unani drugs used in compound form are listed here:

- .Ma-ur-Rayeb (water of curd)
- .Arq-e-Gulab
- .Aqueous of Paneer
- .Vinegar mixed with water
- .Aab-e-Angur Kham
- .Aab-e-Limu
- .Aab-e-Anar

### Immune Booster Drugs<sup>5</sup>

These are the following Unani drugs used to enhance the immunity power, also recommended to be used during waba.

- Qurs-e-Zaharmohra
- Habb-e-Jadwar
- Tiryaq-e-wabai
- Tiryaq-e-farooq
- Tiryaq-e-Arba
- Tiryaq-e-Nazli
- Tiryaq-e-Mashridutes
- Gil-e-Aramni<sup>5</sup>

### Preventive Measures during Epidemic Period<sup>6,7</sup>

Certain preventive measures to protect our body during epidemic period:

- To boost immunity
- To improve hygiene conditions
- To take antiseptic measures also
- According to Zakariya Razi: Ordinary people who do physical exercise regularly, have less chance of epidemic diseases
- Basic measures: To keep away from the places where

an epidemic is spread or where there are more chances to spread epidemic diseases

- General measures: Isolation, quarantine and social distancing are important specific measures during epidemic period
- Other measures: During epidemic period, some other measures should be taken as:
  - i. To take a balanced diet
  - ii. To keep away from starvation
  - iii. To avoiding meat and fish
  - iv. To use more water for drinking and stay hydrated
- Gargling: Gargle should be done, for example, Arq-e-Gulab<sup>6</sup>
- Fumigation: Some medicinal herbs are beneficial:
  - i. Sandrus (*Trachylobium hornemannianum*)
  - ii. Kafur (*Cinnamomum camphora*)
  - iii. Qust (*Saussurea lappa*)
  - iv. Kundur (*Boswellia serrata*)
  - v. Murr (*Commiphora myrrh*)
  - vi. Loban (*Styraxbenzoin*)
  - vii. Abhal (*Juniperus communis*)
  - viii. Waj (*Acorus calamus*)<sup>7</sup>

### Dietary Modifications during Epidemics

- To avoid red meat
- To avoid sweets
- During epidemic period, use vitamin C. e.g. citrus fruits grapes, apple, lemon, oranges, amla etc
- To use Oxymel with Arq-e-Gulab during epidemic period
- Overeating and under eating both are dangerous for the body in epidemic period<sup>8</sup>

### Conclusion

In Unani system of medicine, various drugs are considered effective and safe in modulating immune system. Unani drugs including both single drugs and compound formulations are very helpful and useful for immune system. There are several other imperative methods and non-drug therapies described in the Unani system for strengthening the immune power including the dietary modifications and some other special measures that can also be adopted during epidemics.

**Conflict of Interest:** None

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