Overview of Covid 19 and Unani formulation Tiryaq-e-Wabai

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ABSTRACT

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is arguably the biggest health crisis the world has faced in 21st century. It is an infectious disease and declared pandemic by the World Health Organization. It is a pandemic disease of modern time with unique and rapid transmission rate and affected almost all the nations without respecting any border. It’s a novel infection which is caused by SARS-CoV-2 with Serious Clinical manifestation i.e. Fever, Cough, Cold, Respiratory distress further may result into Death. There is no definite therapeutic drug or vaccine available for COVID-19 so far despite numerous series of experimental and clinical research. Research is in progress on therapeutic efficacy of various agents including antimalarials (Chloroquine and Hydroxychloroquine), antiviral drugs, and convalescent serum of recovered patients. Unani system of medicine is one of the traditional systems of medicine which is being explored for providing preventive, supportive and rehabilitative care to patients. Unani system of medicine has a detailed description of drugs that are utilized in many infectious diseases, including respiratory infections. Immune response is essential to eliminate virus and to preclude disease progression to severe stages. Therefore, strategies to boost immune response are certainly important. Therefore, it is important to summarize the evidence regarding the preventive measures, control options such as immunostimulator and prophylactic treatment in Unani medicine against Covid-19. This review summarizes various pharmacological actions of Unani formulation Tiryaq e wabai in unani literature and various reported pharmacological activities which can possibly provide prevention, control and reduction of complications of this deadly disease.

Keywords: Unani medicine, Covid 19, immune response, Tiryaq e Wabai

Introduction

Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2) is a newly identified virus that differs from severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV) and Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) but can cause similar symptoms associated with pneumonia.3,4 This viral disease was named "COVID-19" by the World Health Organization (WHO) and was first recognized in Wuhan, Hubei Province, in China in December 2019 and may originate from eating wildlife, an established tradition in the oldest of human cultures. The disease is thought to be mainly transmitted through droplet infection, touching and shaking hand with infected individual may also transmit the infection. Researcher has also believed that virus may be transmitted via fluids, i.e. mucus. Symptoms appear after an incubation period of two weeks. During this week virus replicates in the upper and lower respiratory tracts. Common symptoms in infected individual include fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, breathlessness and the lesion in the lungs.5-9

Unani concept

As per Unani medicine exact term or disease is not mentioned in Unani literature but it can be explained under the heading of Humma-e-Wabaiya- Symptoms of Humma-e-Wabaiya and covid-19 looks very much similar10,11. Humma-e-Wabaiya is the type of catastrophic fever which occurs due to unavoidable changes in the air (qualitatively or quantitively). As a result air become impure and finally it give rise to abnormal temperament of Rooh which subsequently results into morbidity and mortality. As fresh and pure air is essential for health, any contamination in the air may affect the health of any person and it depends on the intensity of contamination. Mostly people with weak immune system are susceptible i.e. older and children, accumulation of waste humours and widening of skin pores. Rabban tabri stated that people who have excess waste material in their body are usually affected with Humma wabaiya12,13. Unani medicine is rich with formulations useful in the prophylactic and therapeutic management of Nazla-e-Wabaiya (epidemic influenza) and other flu like symptoms.
Clinical diagnosis of Covid-19 is mainly based on epidemiology, history, clinical features and some diagnostic tests. Commonly used techniques for SARS-COV-19 nucleic acid are RT-PCR. Apart from this we can predict it by Nabz (Pulse) and Baraz (Stool). Usually Nabz becomes Sagheer wa Mutawatir, and the Baraz (stool) of infected person has foul smell\textsuperscript{16,15}.

**Prevention:** Unani physicians recommended for open and airy house with proper ventilation. It is advised to keep patient in cold place, sprinkle garlic and onion at the walls of the house. Elimination of fuzaat (waste material) is necessary in order to maintain health and for this purpose venesection is advised. It is advised to take less amount of meal. Unani physicians recommended use of laxatives and diuretics which beneficizes during the initial phase of epidemic. Isolation of infected person from healthy person is mandatory. Patient as well as health care workers should be asked to wear a surgical mask. Unnecessary traveling should be avoided at this time\textsuperscript{16,17}.

In Unani classical literature several single drugs as well compound formulations have been used for several decades which possess immunostimulatory, antipyretic, expectorant as well as antiviral properties. Tiryaq e Wabai is one of the unani formulation which has immunostimulatory activity and its ingredients have expectorant and antipyretic, antiviral activities.

Tiryaq wabai is a well-documented and well-known drug in Unani system of medicine and widely used for prophylaxis during epidemics of cholera, plague and other epidemic diseases. Tiryaq wabai was used by Avicenna and Galen in healthy persons as well as in patients during epidemics\textsuperscript{18,19}.

Tiryaq wabai consists of three ingredients Sibr (Aloe barbadensis), Zaafraan (Crocus sativus) and Mur (Commiphora myrrha) in the ratio of 2:1:1. Antioxidant and immune-stimulating effect of A. barbadensis, C. Myrrha and C. Sativus has already been established in animal models\textsuperscript{20-24}. A recent study outlined immune-stimulating activity of Tiryaq wabai and supports its use in conditions where immunostimulation is required\textsuperscript{25}.

**Description of ingredients of Tiryaq e Wabai:**

**ZAFRAN / Crocus sativus Linn.**

The drug Zafran consists of dried style and stigma of Crocus sativus Linn. (Fam. Iridaceae). A small, bulbous, perennial, 15 to 25 cm high. It is cultivated by corms in the Kashmir valley, especially in the Pampor plateau, at about 1600 m.

**Description:**

**Macroscopic:** Yellowish style, broken or intact along with trifid stigma; stigma is dark red or reddish-brown, cornucopia shaped, with fimbriate margin, and about 25 mm long; broken style are very thin, up to about 10 mm long; odour, strongly aromatic; taste, slightly bitter.

**Microscopic:** Stigma composed mostly of elongated, thin-walled, parenchyma cells containing colouring matter; at the upper end numerous cylindrical papillae or trichomes up to 150 microns long present; pollen grains, a few, spherical, nearly smooth, from 40 to 120 microns in diameter, occasionally germinated and exhibiting pollen tubes. Powder - Pale reddish-brown; aromatic, shows elongated, thin-walled, parenchymatous cells, unicellular trichomes, a few spherical, smooth, pollen grains measuring 40 to 120 long dia. and xylem vessels with annular and spiral thickenings\textsuperscript{26}.

**Chemical Constituents:** Essential Oil, Bitter Glycoside, (Picrocrocin and Crocin)

**Temperament:** Hot and Dry

**Dose:** 25-50 mg

**Important Formulations:** Dawa-ul-Kurkum

Dawa-ul-Misk Motadi Sada\textsuperscript{26}.

**SIBR / Aloe Barbadensis Mill.**

Drug Sibr consists of dried juice of leaves of Aloe Barbadensis Mill. Sym. Aloe vera Tourn. ex Linn; Aloe indica Royle of Liliaceae family. Drug yielding plant is a shrub planted in many Indian gardens and found growing throughout India.

**Description:**

**Macroscopic:** Dark chocolate brown, to black, compact, irregular masses; surface dull, opaque with slightly vitreous appearance; odour, characteristic; taste, nauseous and bitter.

**Microscopic:** Powder when mounted in glycerin or lactophenol and examined under the microscope show innumerable crystalline, yellowish-brown to chocolate coloured particles of varying size and shape\textsuperscript{27}.

**Chemical Constituents:** Anthraquinone, Glycoside

**Dose:** 1 to 4 g.

**Important Formulations:** Zimad-e-jalinoos


**MURMAKI / Commiphora myrrha**

The drug Murrakki consists of gum-resin of Commiphora myrrha. A small tree found in Arabia and African coast of the Red sea. It is often cultivated in western India. The plant occurs throughout the year.

**Description:**

**Macroscopic:** The gum resin is brittle and on breaking shows a rough and waxy fracture.

**Microscopic:** The gum resin secreted in the phloem cells of bark is in the form of irregular masses. When pressed they show a moist and uncuteous appearance and a rich brown hue. Some whitish mark of veins are seen in the translucent fractured surface.

The powdered drug is brownish in color and possess agreeable aromatic odour and a bitter, acrid but not unpleasant taste. When soaked in water a yellowish emulsion is formed\textsuperscript{28}

**Chemical Constituents:** Carbohydrates, protein, steroids, resin, gum, aluminium, iron, magnesium, calcium and zinc. Isolynalyl acetate, 3-epilupenyl acetate, lupenone, 3-epi-α-amyrin, α-amyrin, new sesquiterpen alcohol soluble extractives- commiferin.

**Temperament:** Hot 2\textsuperscript{o} Dry 2\textsuperscript{o}

**Actions:** Moharrak, Daf-e-Tafunj, Munafis-e-Balgham, Mudr-e-Tams

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**Drug Dawa consists of dried juice of leaves of Aloe Barbadensis Mill.**

**Chemical Constituents:** Essential Oil, Bitter Glycoside, (Picrocrocin and Crocin)

**Temperament:** Hot and Dry

**Dose:** 25-50 mg

**Important Formulations:** Dawa-ul-Kurkum

Dawa-ul-Misk Motadi Sada\textsuperscript{26}.
**Therapeutic Uses:** Sue Hazm, Qurooh, Ehtebas e Tams, Deedan e Ama  
**Dose:** 1-2g  
**Important Formulations:** Qurs-e-Musallas, Dawa-ul-Kurkum, Majoon Antali, Majoon-e-Talith Deedani, Tiryaq-e-Afayee.

The ingredients of Tiryaq e Wabai has various pharmacological uses and activities related to COVID 19 infection. The detailed description is as follows:

### Table: Important Formulations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Ingredient Name</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Therapeutic Uses</th>
<th>Pharmacological studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td><em>Aloe barbadensis</em> / Sibr</td>
<td>Mushil (Purgative), Mudirre Haiz (Emmenagogue), Mohallile Waram (Anti-inflammatory), Moharrake Kabid (Hepatotimulant), Munajqie Qurooh, Mufathith-i-Sudad Saudawi, Mugawwi Meda (Stomachic-tonic), Qatile Deedan (Anthemimtic), Mujaffif (Desiccant), Qabiz (Astringent), Munawwim (Hypnotic), Mushile Sauda (Purgative of melancholic humour), Musqite Janeen (Abortifacent)</td>
<td>Bawaseer (Haemorrhoids), Inteshare Sha’ar (Hair fall), Kharihe Ain (Catarrhal/purulent ophthalmia), Deedane Ama (Antihelminthic), Dared-e-Ser (Headache), Ehtebase Tams (Amenorrhoea), Izama Tihal (Spleenomalgy), Indemale Qurooh (Wound Healing), Iltehabe Meda (Gastrytis), Yarjan (Jaundice), Malanhalhia (Malancholia), Nawaseer (Nasal polyps), Nafsuddam (Haemoptysis), Qabz (constipation), Shiqaqe Miqad (Fissure in Ano), Waja-ul-Mafasil (Arthritis), Warne Kabid (Hepatitis), Zofal-e-Meda (Gastric weakness)</td>
<td>Anti viral37, Anti-inflammatory38, Antioxidant39, Asthma40, Immunomodulatory activity41,42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td><em>Crocus sativa</em> / Zafran</td>
<td>Jali (Detergent), Dafe-Taffun (Antiseptic), Mohallile-Waram (Anti-inflammatory), Mugawwii-e-Qalb (Cardiac Tonic)</td>
<td>Amraz-e-Qalb (Cardiac Diseases), Nazla (Catarrh), Zukam (Coryza), Zof-e-Basarat (Asthenoepia)</td>
<td>Antiinfective activity44, cytotoxic effects45, anti-inflammatory activity46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td><em>Commiphora myrrha</em> / Murmuki</td>
<td>Antifungal, antibacterial, cytopotic47,49, expectorant, stimulant47,48, aphrodisiac, diuretic, antispasmodic49, carminative, antitussive, expectorant50,51</td>
<td>Amenorreeha, menorrhagia52,53, chronic cough, asthma45,47, bronchitis, common cold54</td>
<td>Anti oxidant55, Anti microbial56, Anti-inflammatory activity57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Conclusion

Unani medicine has given ample emphasis on preservation of health and prevention of disease. Although non-drug prophylaxis is one of the principal assets of Unani medicine, the system does not undermine the utility of prophylactic drugs for accomplishing objective of Taqaddum bil Hifz. Stimulation of innate heat and augmentation of vital force of important organs form fundamental basis for prevention of diseases in the system. Unani system of medicine prescribes a large number of single and compound drugs for this purpose like *Chobchini* (*Smilax chinesis*), *Zafran* (*Crocus sativus*), Tiryaq e wabai, etc. Tiryaqiyaat are reputed compound formulations which can be used prophylactically as well as therapeutically under different circumstances. Tiryaqiyaat refers to that class of drugs that strengthen the ruh (pneumma), stimulate Hararte-Gharizá (innate heat) and thus help Tabiyat (physiks) to protect the body from harmful effects of morbid materials. Tiryaq wabai is one of the formulations under this category. It is composed of three ingredients, viz., *Sibr zard* (*Aloe barbadensis*), *Mur-makki* (*Commiphora myrrha*) and *Zafran* (*Crocus sativus*). The compound is documented to be effective in infectious diseases like plague, chicken pox, cholera and during any epidemic outbreak. All the three ingredients of Tiryaq wabai have various pharmacological activities like immunomodulatory, antitussive, expectorant, antiviral activity which provide a strong basis for its prophylactic use for covid 19 infection. A recent study outlined immune-stimulating activity of Tiryagwabai and supports its use in conditions where immunostimulation is required58. Further, research on this important prophylactic Unani formulation tiryag wabai in Covid 19 is the need of hour. Greater impetus on research in the Unani system of medicine will not only boost trade and practice of the herbal products but will also help in spreading the traditional Indian knowledge to other parts of the world.

### References

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