CONCEPT AND MANAGEMENT OF SCABIES (JARB) IN UNANI SYSTEM OF MEDICINE

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ABSTRACT
Scabies (Jarb) is a common problem in undeveloped and developing countries due to poor hygiene condition. Scabies is a most contagious skin disease caused by a mite (Sarcoptes scabiei). It produces burrow into the skin to lay eggs and cause intense itching. Scabies is commonly found in web of fingers, flexures of wrist, axillary folds, abdomen, back, groins, testicles and sometime over the whole body. According to Unani concept, conversion of Khilt-e Dam (Blood) into Khilt-e-Sauda, or increased ratio of Khilt-e-Safra in blood or when blood combined with Balgham-e-Shore called Fasad-e Dam and this Fasad-e-Dam (Abnormal blood) acts as a culture media for Ajsam-e-Khabeesa (Pathogenic organisms). Fasad-e-Dam along with bacterial invasion, is collectively called Maddah-al–Jarb by Unani philosophers, later which was identified as Sarcoptes scabiei and its infection is termed as Scabies. There are a lot of Unani drugs (single as well as compound drugs) which is categorized as Musaffiat-e-Dam (Blood purifiers) and Munzijat Wa Mukhrijat-e-Khilt (Coctive and expulsive of abnormal humour) drugs systemically and Maan-e-Ufoomat (Antiseptics) and Daaf-e-Jaraseem (Antimicrobials) drugs locally used in the management of Scabies (Jarb). The present paper describes the detailed concept and management of scabies (Jarb) with special reference to the Unani system of medicine.
KEYWORDS: Scabies, Jarb, Sarcoptes scabiei.

INTRODUCTION
Alternative Names: Jarb, seven year itch,
Scabies is a most contagious skin disease caused by a mite (Sarcoptes scabiei).[1] It produce burrow into the skin to lay eggs and cause intense itching. Scabies is commonly found in web of fingers, flexures of wrist, axillary folds, abdomen, back, groins, testicles and some time over the whole body.[2,3] Among unani physicians Mohd bin Tabri has described first about the causative organism of Jarb in his book “Moalijat-e-Buqratio” and also said it is produced by Akhlat-e- Faseda which remain in the skin for a long time and not expelled out.[4]

Unani Physicians not only described the normal structure and functions of skin but also mentioned the etiology, pathophysiology, clinical pictures, line of treatment (Usool-e-Ilaaj and management of various skin disease likewise Unani scholars have also described the Jarb (Scabies) in detail along with meaning, etiology (Asbaab), pathophysiology (Maahiyat), Types (Aqsaam), clinical pictures (Alamat) and management (Ilaaj).

PATHOPHYSIOLOGY (MAAHIYAT)
According to Unani concept, conversion of Khilt-e Dam (Blood) into Khilt-e Sauda, or increased ratio of Khilt-e-Safra in blood or when blood combined with Balgham-e–Shore called Fasad-e Dam and this Fasad-e-Dam (Abnormal blood) acts as a culture media for Ajsam-e-Khabeesa (Pathogenic organisms) and such Ajsam-e-Khabeesa (Pathogenic organisms) produced by Ahlat-e- Faseda which remain in the skin for a long time and not expelled out and caused the disease Jarb.[5,6]

According to modern physicians the causative organism of scabies is Sarcoptes scabiei or Acarus scabiei. The long contact with infected person causes the spread of 10-15 mites, which burrow through the stratum in the skin to lay eggs. Eggs hatch within 3-10 days. These turn into sexually mature mites in 2-3 weeks. Symptoms start to appear after 2-6 weeks of infection with mites.[1,7]

ETIOLOGY (ASBAB)
Causative organism
It is caused by female itch mite; Sarcoptes scabiei var hominis.
Age: It can occur at any age but more in children and it is decreased prevalence with increasing age.\[^7\]

Sex: In either sex.

**Predisposing factors:** Poverty, crowding and poor hygiene.

**Transmission\[^7,9\]**
- Skin contact for a longer period of time within the family.
- Sexual contacts in sexually active individuals
- Hugging for a few moments can spread the disease from a patient to other.
- Sharing of clothing and bedding.

**Causes mentioned in Unani system of medicine\[^5,6,10\]**
- Blood mixed with morbid matter
- Salty phlegm mixed in blood
- Mixing of blious matter in blood
- Mixing of black bile in blood
- Unhygienic condition
- Digestive disorder
- Menstrual disorder
- Pregnancy

**TYPES OF SCABIES (JARB)**

**Types of Scabies (Jarb) in Unani system of medicine**

Unani physicians have divided the *Jarb* (Scabies) in the following types according to humour and morphology of scabies rashes\[^6,11\]

- Jarb-e-Ratab
- Jarb-e-Yabis
- Jarb-e-Balghami
- Jarb-e-Saudawi
- Jarb-e-Doodi
- Jarb-e-Nari
- Jarb-ul-Kalb
There may be exudation in this type of Jarb and severe itching.

There is no exudation in this type of Jarb. There may be small rashes with pain and burning.

There may be mixture of Balgham-e-Shorin the blood, rashes are whitish in colour filled with ratubat but no pus formation.

This type of rashes are produced when black bile exceed in blood. It may be blackish type in colour. Pain and itching are less with longer duration.

Unani physian has described that is due to micro-organism, in which rashes are comparatively larger with severe itching and exudation.

In this type of Jarb, rashes becomes redish in colour with itching.

In this type of Jarb, rashes are similar to those rashes which are mostly found in dog.

It is due to morbid black bile humour.

In this type of Jarb, rashes are different shape and size but their roots are established in deep.
Jarb-e-Mutadaffaq
In this type of Jarb, rashes surface are rough with itching and pain.

Jarb-e-Mabsoot
In this type of Jarb, lesions are more larger established in deeper tissue with itching and exudation.

Jarb-e-Sada
In this type of Jarb, small rashes are found with pain, itching and burning.

Types of Scabies (Jarb) in modern medicine
1. Papulovesicular Scabies
It is more common. It appears as small erythematous papules or papulovesicle which may be excoriated due to hypersensitivity to the mite or itching.\(^7\)

2. Nodular Scabies
It is a type of scabies in which persistent nodular lesions are seen on the anterior axillary folds, groins and scrotal skin.\(^7\)

3. Norwegian or Crusted Scabies
It is a more severe and contagious type of scabies. This is characterized by presence of crusted and hyperkerotic lesions which contain thousands of mites and eggs. Crusted scabies can also appear as thick, gray, easy to crumble when touched. Norwegian or Crusted Scabies is mostly seen in immunocompromised patients (HIV infection, malignancies, rheumatoid arthritis etc.) and mentally challenged.\(^9,12\)

4. Animal Scabies
Other varieties of Sarcoptes scabiei are found in animals like dog, horse, cat, camel, goat, sheep etc. is called animal scabies. It’s mites may cause a rash or itching in humans, but these animal mites are not thought to infest humans.\(^12\)

Clinical Features (Alamat)\(^2,7-8\)
- It may be asymptomatic up to the 4 weeks
- Itching ‘worse at night’ with family history
- Lesions (primary or secondary)
Primary lesions: 1. Burrows: It is a pathognomic lesions of scabies and appears as threadlike, grayish or darker line from few mm to cm. 2. Papules and papulovesicles

Secondary lesions: are pustules, eczematised lesions and nodular lesions.

- Sites of Predilection (adults or infants)

In adults: Web of fingers, flexures of wrist, axillary folds, abdomen, back, groins, testicles and some time over the whole body.

In infants: Scalp, face, palms and soles are typically involved may be along with adult sites.

Investigations (Tafteeshat)\(^7\text{-}^8\)

- Skin Scrapping: Mites can be picked up from the end of a burrow or a papule and mounted in potassium hydroxide and the mite may be visualized.
- Needle Extraction of Mites
- Burrow ink test (BIT)
- Epidermal shave biopsy

Differential Diagnosis\(^7\text{-}^8\)

It can be differentiated from

(a) Pediculosis
(b) Infantile eczema or Atopic dermatitis
(c) Papular Urticaria
(d) Animal Scabies

Diagnosis (Tashkhees)\(^1\text{-}^7\text{,}13\)

- Presence of burrow (thread like serpentine lesion) specially in web spaces and genitalia is classical sign of scabies made by a mite within the skin. To detect the burrow, the suspected area is rubbed with ink from a fountain pen or a topical tetracyclines solution, which glows under a special light. The skin is then wiped with an alcohol pad. If the person is infected with scabies, the characteristic zigzag or S pattern of the burrow will appear across the skin.
- Intense itchy eruption which is worse at night.
- History of similar itchy eruption in close contacts in the family.
- Specific distribution of lesions.
• Other investigations like Skin Scrapping, Needle Extraction of Mites, Epidermal shave biopsy can also help in the diagnosis of scabies.

Complications (Awarizat)\cite{8,14}
• Secondary infections with Staphylococcus aureus and streptococcus pyogenes.
• Acute glomerulonephritis following streptococcal pyoderma in scabies (rare).
• Eczematization in infants.

MANAGEMENT OF SCABIES (JARB)

Management of Scabies in modern medicine\cite{2,7,12}
1. Wash and clean all the clothes and bedding.
2. Treat all members of the family whether symptomatic or not.
3. Scabicides should be applied effectively to the whole body below the jawline in adults, including soles of the feet and skin around the free edge of the nails, should be reapplied on hands, if washed. Scabicides used in the treatment of scabies are:
   a. Permethrin 5% 1 local application.
   b. Benzyl benzoate 25% 3 applications at 12 hourly intervals.
   c. Gamma benzene hexachloride 1% 1 local application.
   d. Crotamiton 10% 2 local application daily × 14 days.
   e. Ivermectin single oral dose 200µg/kg body weight.

Management of Scabies (Jarb) in Unani medicine

Usool-e-Ilaj (Principles of treatment)\cite{6,11}
• Izala-e-Sabab (Treat the cause)
• Tanqiya-e-Khilt-e-Fasida (for evacuation of morbid humours)
• Musaffiyat wa Moadelat-e-Dam (Blood purifier and modulator)
• Mana-e-Ufoonat-e-Jild (Antiinfective)
• Musakkinat-e-Jild (Sedative to the skin)
• Bathing and cleaning of lesions
• Washing of clothing and cleaning of bedding
• Prevention of hot, salty, viscid and sweet things
• Local application of sulphur compound
Ilaaj-e-Jarb (Treatment of scabies)\textsuperscript{[4,5,6,11]}

Izala-e-Sabab

Treat and remove the cause which is responsible for scabies (Jarb).

Tanqiya-e-Khilt-e-Fasida (for evacuation of morbid humours)

- For the purpose of evacuation of morbid blood humours Venesection is advised. After that decoction of Chiraita (\textit{Swertia chirayita} Roxb.) Sarphoka (\textit{Tephrosia purpurea} Linn.), Gul-e-mundi (\textit{Sphaeranthus indicus} Linn.), Shahtra (\textit{Fumaria indica} Pugsley) and Unnab (\textit{Ziziphus jujuba} Mill.) along with Sharbat Unnab 25 ml BD may be given.
- For the purpose of evacuation of morbid bilious humour is advised in the form of decoction of Halela Zard 6gm, Sana Maki 6gm, Shahatra 6gm, and Afsanteen 6gm BD can be used.
- For the purpose of evacuation of morbid phlegm humour by capsule of (Sibr, Turbud, Gariqoon, Shahm-e-Hanzal) is advised.
- For the purpose of evacuation of morbid black bile humour by Joshanda Aftimoon is advised.

Musaffiyat-e-Dam (Blood purifier) and Mana-e-Ufoonat-e-Jild (Anti-infective)

- Single drugs (Mufradat)
  A lot of Unani single drugs like Shahtra (\textit{Fumaria indica} Pugsley), Chiraita (\textit{Swertia chirayita} Roxb.) Sarphoka (\textit{Tephrosia purpurea} Linn.), Gul-e-mundi (\textit{Sphaeranthus indicus} Linn.), and Unnab (\textit{Ziziphus jujuba} Mill.) etc.

- Compound drugs (Murakkabat)
  There are some compound drugs like \textit{Qurs Musaffi Khoon}, \textit{Majoon Ushba}, \textit{Sharbat Musaffi Murakkab}, \textit{Sharbat Unnab}, \textit{Sharbat Nilofer}, \textit{Arq-e-Shahatra}, \textit{Arq-e-Mundi} etc. are mostly used in the treatment of Jarb (scabies).

Musakkinat-e-Jild (Sedative to the skin) and Mana-e-Ufoonat-e-Jild (Antiinfective) as local application

- Apply Roghan-e-Gul, Vineagar and Arq-e-Gulab each in equal quantity locally on effected sites.
- Apply Marham Safeda Kafoori for sedation
• Apply Sandal, Murdarsang, Kafoor, leaves of henna, Shaham-e-Hanzal after mixing in Vinegar or Roghan locally.
• Apply Roghan-e-Gandum locally
  Local application of sulphur compound
• Apply after mixing the powder of sulphur, Murdarsang, Tootia Sabz in the Roghan-e-Zard locally.
• It is advised to take bath from Neem water mixed with sulphur.

SCIENTIFIC REPORT
• A study was carried out by S. M. Ali et.al, ‘Clinical evaluation of the efficacy of polyherbal Unani formulations in scabies’ they reported that the efficacy of polyherbal formulations used in scabies were found to be very effective without any side effect(s) during and after study.\textsuperscript{[15]}
• Shah et. al, conducted a study entitled ‘Effect of Karela (Momordica charantia) powder in Jarb (scabies)’ found that Karela (Momordica charantia) in 53% while in control group the mustard oil showed no effect on Jarb.\textsuperscript{[16]}
• Rahman et.al, repoted the Clinical efficacy of a herbomineral Unani formulation in scabies: an open label randomized controlled study’. The trial herbomineral Unani formulation was as effective as benzylbenzoate.\textsuperscript{[17]}
• A study was conducted by Ziaul Haque et. al, entitled ‘Therapeutic evaluation of Zimad-e-Jarb in Jarb (Scabies): A single blind randomized controlled study’ The study inferred that test and standard drugs are safe; test drug may be comparatively proclaimed as safe and effective in the treatment of scabies (Jarb). No adverse effect was observed during and after the study in either group.\textsuperscript{[18]}

CONCLUSION
Scabies is a contagious skin infestation by \textit{Sarcoptes scabiei} with characteristic features of burrow presentation. Ancient Unani physicians have described the scabies in the name of \textit{Jarb} and were well aware about scabies and have described the etiological factor, types, pathology, clinical features in detail. They have also used a lot of single drugs, compound drugs and locally applicable drugs in the management of scabies. Many studies are conducted on clinical basis to explore the effectiveness of Unani drugs. But there is need of specific type of Unani herbal drugs in the treatment of scabies along with scientific validation.
REFERENCES


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