Concept of Waja-uz-Zahr (Low back pain) and its Unani management

Abuzar Lari, Mohammed Tausif and Javed Ah Lari

Abstract

Waja-uz-Zahr (Low back Pain) is common problem in worldwide now, many people suffering now a days. Its mostly seen in middle age group population. In Unani system of medicine Bugrat who was the first who gave his description about Waja-uz-Zahr. According to Unani medicine accumulation of Kham Madda (morbid matter) which gets sticks in joint structures, so there is locally abnormal change in temperament (Sue Mizaj) and its leads to back pain (Dard-e-Pusht). So in this review paper author tried to discuss concept of Waja-uz-Zahr and safe or alternative method of treatment which given by traditional philosophers in classical text which was less harmful in comparisons to modern medicine.

Keywords: Waja-uz-Zahr, Unani Medicine, Sue Mizaj, Low back pain, Dard-e-Pusht

Introduction

Historical Back ground of Waja-uz-Zahr: There has always been back pain, In Unani System of medicine Bugrat (460 BC) was first who quoted that if a person feels numbness & coldness in his back & calf muscles and his Mizaj is Balghami, indicates the chronic condition of disease [1], Zakaria Razi (865- 925 A.D) described low back pain as Waja-uz-Zahr, Dard-e-Pusht with its etiology as trauma, disc prolapse and spinal abscess [2]. Ibn Sina (980- 1037 A.D) gives his views on low back pain as Dard-e-Pusht, which may occur in the muscle and ligament of the back internally or externally. That can be differentiated by palpating the external surface of the back, it evidences of tenderness is present, indicate the cause is external [3]. Ismail Jurjani (d. 1140 A.D) explained low back pain as Dard-e-Pusht and described its etiology and clinical features. He also explained its classification according to causative factors [4]. Ibn Hubal Baghdadi (1163-1231 A.D) in his book Al-Mukhtarat-fit-Tibb, gives description of low back pain and illustrated its variety of clinical features [5], Najeebuddin Samaqandgi (13th Century A.D) quoted that if Waja-uz-Zahr is caused due to Sue-Mizaj-Sada and Kham Bhalgham then it will be chronic in nature and initiate gradually, and pain will disappear by walking and exercise [6]. Akbar Arzani (1721 A.D) described Waja-uz-Zahr as Dard-e-Pusht and classified it into seven types, which was based on etiology of the disease. He further quoted in Meezanat-tibb that Waja-uz-Zahr is caused by Sue-Mijaz-Sada, subsequently Burudat is felt and pain starts without heaviness. This pain is relieved by Hararat [7], Hakim Ghulam Jeelani (20th century) described different causative factors of Waja-uz-Zahr such as Takan, Laghri, excessive labour etc. He stated that the main causes of Waja-uz-Zahr and Waja-ul-Mafasil is the Kham Madda which gets accumulated of in joint spaces [8].

In Unani System of Medicine, Waja (pain) is defined as a perception of incongruity in the body due to abrupt changes of temperament or Sue-Mizaj-Mukhtalif (variable impaired temperament) and Tafarruq-i-Ittisal (loss of continuity).The newly developed abnormal temperament becomes Har (hot) or Barid (cold) contrary to the original temperament. The perception of such a contrary temperament is pain. According to Jalinus (Galen), loss of continuity is the actual cause of pain and thus, if cold produces pain, it is through a breach of continuity, by shrinking and retracting the tissue particles and thus dislocating these from their original positions [9]. About Waja-uz-Zahr (low back pain) many Unani scholars give there descriptions are as follows. In Al-Qanoon, Ibn Sina, quoted Low Back Pain as Dard-e-Pusht. He defined Dard-e-Pusht as “A pain which occurs in external or internal structures of the joints of Back” and can be differentiated by palpating the external surface of the back with evidences of presence of tenderness [3]. In Taj-ul-Hikmat, LBP is defined as a pain which locates and perceives centrally or in whole lower back area, which affects daily routine life [10].

Asbab (Aetiology): In Unani system of medicine most of the renowned Unani physicians described the causes and treatment of Waja-uz-Zahr under the caption of Waja-ul-Mafasil. According to Ibn Sina, Waja-uz-Zahr arises from internal or external muscles, ligaments surrounding the lumbar and lumbosacral region due to Fasad in Mizaj (Sue Mizaj). This Fasad in Mizaj is due to surplus Burudat and accumulation of Kham Balgham (raw phlegm). He further stated that Dard-e-Pushth also caused by excessive physical work, Kasrat-e-Jama, Zoaf-wa-laghari Gurda. Intela-e-Rag, Musharkat-e-Rehama [3]. Zakaria Razi described the disease in the eleventh volume of his book Al-Hawi. Though, his description is not systematically arranged but covers all possible causes related to disease. According to him, the first and foremost cause of Waja-ul-Mafasil is formation of abnormal chyme (Ritubat-e-Mukhatia) due to Niaq (defect) in Hazm-e-Kabidi and Hazm-e-Urooqi, resulting in the production of abnormal humours, particularly abnormal phlegm (Ghaart-tabyee-Balgham), which then gets accumulated in the joints and surrounding structures, causing swelling, tenderness and pain. Thus, we can say that the root cause of Waja-uz-Zahr is the Niaq in Hazm-e-Kabidi and Urooqi, in which abnormal Balgham gets accumulated in the joint structures of lumbosacral region. He stated that sometimes weakness or extensiveness of joint structures either congenitally or due to some other disease, gives the seat for the accumulation of the abnormal humours in general, or vitiated phlegm in particular site [4].

In addition to the above mentioned causes, Jurjani in Zakheera Khawarzam Shahi and Akbar Arzani in Tibb-e-Akbar have added that accumulation and piercing of Galeez-Riyah in surrounding structure also produces Waja-uz-Zahr [4, 11].

Alamaat (Clinical features)

In Unani medicine clinical features of Waja-uz-Zahr are explained on the basis of causative factors such as.

In case of Sue Mizaj Barid Sada, the clinical features of Waja-uz-Zahr are

- Feeling of coldness
- Pain without heaviness
- Pain relieved by temperamentally hot regimens

In case of Madda Balgham Kham

- Feeling of Pain with heaviness in progressive manner
- History of eating cold temperamental diets

In case of Riyah

- Waja Tamaddudi (pain with tension)
- Migratory pain
- Feeling of slight heaviness
- Pain aggravates by taking those foods which produce flatulence
- Pain relieves by hot temperamentally diets and oils

In case of Hararat Sada

- Presence of inflammation and local irritation
- Pigmented urine
- Hyperthermia
- Pain relieves by cold temperamentally diets

In case of Intela-e-Rag

- Waja-e-Zarban felt along the course of Rag (vertically)
- Pain increases during movement
- Feeling of heat sensation locally

In case of Zoaf-e-Gurda-wa-Laghari

- Zoaf-e-Bah
- Dard-e-Qutn
- Bladder symptoms [4, 5, 7, 11, 12]

Mahiyat-ul-Marz (Pathogenesis): According to eminent Unani physicians, Waja-uz-Zahr is a Balghami Marz and the main causative factors for Waja-uz-Zahr is Sue Mizaj barid, accumulation of Kham Balgham and piercing of Riyah in joint structures. The temperament of joint structures are Barid-Yabis, and the Mizaj of Balgham is also Barid, So when Kham Balgham starts to accumulate in these structures results in addition of Burudat which leads a change in the temperament of local joint structures in lumbar region. This change in temperament results in pain because Waja(pain) is caused due to sudden and irregular deviation of temperament. Riyah, the second most causative matter, causes pain only if there is loss of continuity in the sensitive organs by penetrating between muscle fibres and diffusing under the membranes such as periosteum. So we can say that root cause of Waja-uz-Zahr is production of abnormal Humour, particularly Kham Balgham and behind the formation of this Ghair tabaee khilt basic pathology is defect in Hazm-e-Kabidi and Hazm-e-Urooqi [4, 11, 12].

Classification of Waja-uz-Zahr on the basis of causative factors

Akbar Arzani in Tibb-e-Akbar has described seven types of Waja-uz-Zahr, which are:

1. Waja-uz-Zahr due to Sue Mizaj Barid Sada: It is characterized by gradual onset; pain without heaviness or tension, feeling of coldness and lasts for long time.
2. Waja-uz-Zahr due to Kham Balgham: It is characterized by pain with heaviness, which increases day by day.
3. Waja-uz-Zahr due to Riyah: It is characterized by fleeting type of pain with tension.
4. Waja-uz-Zahr due to Intela-e-Rag: In this type, throbbing pain is felt vertically, from first cervical vertebrae up to last lumbar vertebrae and gets aggravated with movements.
5. Waja-uz-Zahr due to Zoaf-e-Gurda: It is associated with kidney affection and pain is felt diagonally.
6. Waja-uz-Zahr due to Kasrat-e-Jama: In this type, history of excessive involvement sexual activities is found.
7. Waja-uz-Zahr due to Awariat-e-Reham: This type of Waja-uz-Zahr occurs in females during pre-menstrual period [11].
Usool-e-Ilaaj
Usool-e-Ilaaj is mainly based on the causative factors which produce the disease and resulting pathology in the organ. Unani physicians in the case of Waja-uz-Zahr described Usool-e-Ilaaj in the same manner according to causative factors those produce pain in lumbar region.

1) Izala-e-Sabab (removal of cause)
2) Tadeel-e-Mizaj (correction in temperament)
3) Aaram (Rest)
4) Mussakin alamanalgesic drugs and local Zimaad etc
5) Murrakhiyat use of anti spasm Roghans for reduction in local muscular spasm
6) Ghiza (Diet) hot temperamental diet
7) Taqleel Ghiza prevent of diet which produces flatulence and abnormal Humour
8) Munjizat for Tahleel Madda
9) Muliiyinat and Mushilat for evacuation of morbid matter
10) Mudir-e-Baad and Mudir-e-Haiz drugs
11) Ma-ul-usole: for Nuzj of Kham Humour
12) Use of Tiryaqiyat
13) Ilaaj-bit-Tadbeer
   • Dalk
   • Fasad
   • Hijamah
   • Hammam
   • Qai
   • Ishaal
   • Zimad
   • Nutool
   • Takmeed

Ilaaj
Unani physicians stated that the treatment of Waja-uz-Zahr is much similar with Waja-ul-Mafasil, Waja-ul-Waraq, Hudba and Riyah-ul-Farsa. Ilaaj is mainly based on pharmacological treatment, non pharmacological, and Ilaaj-bit-Tadbeer.

Pharmacological treatment

Joshanda Munjiz-e-Balgham:
Post beikh-e-kasni, Post beikh-e-badiyan, Suranjan, Mako, Badranjboya, Bisfaij, Izkhar, Anjeer, Maweez munaaga with Gulqand.

Mushilat
Mufrad:Halaila, Balaila, Aamlu, Suranjan, Bozidan.


Joshanda Mudir Haiz: Tukhm Karafs, Tukhm Methi, Tukhm Khizarain, Badiyuan, Anisoon, Tukhm Shibt.


Non-pharmacological treatment
Ilaaj-bit-Ghiza (Dieto-therapy)
1) Ibn-e-Sina advised to take an easily digestable diet (Ghiza-e-Jaiyyud) in Waja-uz-Zahr. According to him, Hilyoon is the best diet in Waja-uz-Zahr.
2) Narjeel and Methi ka Saag (jenogreek leaves).
3) According to Razi, use of Padina is useful in Waja-uz-Zahr which is caused due to Galeiez Riyah.
4) In Tibb-e-Akkar, Arzoni quoted Parindo ka Ghosht and Garm Masaleh is should be used in case of Sue Mijaz Barid Sada. He further advised that Taqleel-e-Ghiza is the best in cases of Waja-uz-Zahr due to Khan Balgham In Intema-e-Rag, Aab-e-anar tursh-wa-Shereen, Sharbat lemon, Sheera takhm khayaren and Khurfa with Sikanjabeen to be given.
5) Jurjani stated that Aab-e-Nakhud (black gram) is the best with Waj and Shahed.

Ilaaj-bit-Tadbeer
1) Dalk: Ibn-e-Sina and Jurjani advised, before application of Roghaniyat, back should be rubbed with rough clothes.

2) Fasad: In condition of Intema-e-Rag, for acute relief in pain Fasad of Basaleeq, Mabiz and Safin veins should be done.
3) Nutool (irrigation):Nutool should be done with Joshanda Munjiz Balgham.
4) Hammam: for Tahleel Madda, Hammam should be done.
6) Hijamat: Razi indicates Hijamat-e-Nariya and Hijamat-bila-Shart should be very effective in Waja-uz-Zahr. Ibn-e-Sina advice Hijamat-bish-Shart as well as Hijamat-e-Nariya in LBP.

Discussion
The main purpose of this review paper is to explore the Unani concept of Waja-uz-Zahr and its management, which was discussed in classical text. Pain and tenderness in Waja-uz-Zahr originate due to the accumulation of Akhlal-e-Fasida (mainly Ghair-tabyee-Balgham) in the joint structures of lumbar sacral region that leads to Sue Mizaj Barid (Sue Mizaj Mukhtalif) [3], producing a condition of congestion, stagnation and blockage in surrounding structures. Pain fibers are present in the structures of the lumbar sacral joints like tendons, ligaments, blood vessels etc. When pressure is exerted on these structures due to accumulation of morbid matter, gives rise to pressure symptoms i.e. low back pain and tenderness. Difficulty in movement (walking) may be directly related to pain and...
stiffness in the lower back. Stiffness may be due to spasm in the joint structures like tendons, capsules etc. due to Burudat or blockage of Ghair-tabaee-Balgham. traditional healers stated that there have long recognized association between pain and conditions of congestion, stagnation and blockage. An old Chinese medical maxim states: “Where there's stagnation, there will be pain. Remove the stagnation, and you remove the pain.” Not only pain, but the vast majority of all illness and disease comes from stagnation, congestion and blockage of vital fluids or humours like blood, phlegm or lymph. So the Usool-e-ilaj which given by eminent unani physicians was mainly based on Imala (Diversion) or evacuation (excretion) of morbid matter which accumulates on joint structures. Unani Scholars advised that proper or timely elimination of wastes from the body forms an important aspect of hygiene. Whether it be constipation, urinary retention, or even suppressed menses, the undue retention of anything that should be expelled is a major cause of morbidity and disease [19].

Conclusion
So by this all explanation we conclude that Eminent Unani scholars have explained safe and alternative treatment for Waja-uz-Zahr (Low Back pain). It can be used in combination of modern drug, may be produces more effectiveness or increases the potential of modern medicine.

Acknowledgement
We authors acknowledged to the librarian staffs of NIUM.

References
3. Sina IAA. Al Qanoon (Urdu translation by Ghulam Hasnain Kantoori). New Delhi: Idara Kitabush Shifa; YNM.