

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF UNANI AND INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE



E-ISSN: 2616-4558  
P-ISSN: 2616-454X  
IJUIM 2017; 1(2): 21-23  
Received: 18-08-2017  
Accepted: 16-09-2017

**Dr. Khursheed Ahmad Ansari**  
Assistant Professor,  
Department of Anatomy,  
Sumer Jamia Hamdard,  
Hamdard Nagar, Delhi, India

## Dalk (Massage therapy): A Review

**Dr. Khursheed Ahmad Ansari**

### Abstract

Dalk (Massage) is a scientific way of treating some forms of disease by external manipulations, employed in a variety of ways to the soft tissues of the body. It is also a type of manual kneading or manipulating the soft tissues to relieve pain, discomfort, stress to preserve or promote health and wellness.

**Keywords:** Dalk, Unani medicine, Ilaj-bil-Dawa

### Introduction

Unani medicine is also called as Greco-Arabic medicine, it is based on the wisdom and tradition of great Greek physician and father of medicine Buqrat (460-377BC), Roman physician Jalinoos (129-200AD) and it is further elaborated by Arab and Persian physician such as Ibn-Sina, Al-Razi, Ibn-Nafis, Al-Zahrawi. Unani medicine is popular form of traditional medicine, widely practiced and established in many countries. In Unani system of medicine treatment strategy is based on 4 Approaches. Ilaj-bil-Ghiza (Dietotherapy), Ilaj-bil-Dawa (Pharmacotherapy), Ilaj-bit-Tadbeer (Regimenal Therapy) and Ilaj-bil-Yad (Surgery) <sup>[1]</sup>.

### Dalk (massage)

Massage is one of those terms, which are easily understood and expressed. Throughout the history massage has been used not only by sick but also by the healthy people for therapeutic, restorative as well as preventive purposes; but people still find it difficult to define massage although they are confident of its meaning. Dalk (Massage) is a scientific way of treating some forms of disease by external manipulations, employed in a variety of ways to the soft tissues of the body. It is also a type of manual kneading or manipulating the soft tissues to relieve pain, discomfort, stress to preserve or promote health and wellness. In Unani medicine, Dalk known as massage, is a form of Riyādat (exercise) as a manipulative technique by means of hands on muscles. It produces Hararat (heat), causes Tahallul (dissolution) and Riqqat (liquidity) in accumulated Fuzlat (morbid matter) of the body. It strengthens the Autar (ligaments) and Azlat (muscles) and evacuates the Fuzlah of Hadm Akheer (waste metabolites) accumulated in the body <sup>[2]</sup>.

### Classification of Dalk

There are four major types of Dalk i.e. Dalk Sulb, Dalk Layyin, Dalk Kaseer and Dalk Mutadil.

### Dalk Sulb (Firm Massage).

This is a type of massage in which firm pressure is applied while stroking with hands. This renders the body firm and strong by the virtue of eliminating those Rutubat (moistness), which are responsible for the flaccidity of the muscles <sup>[3]</sup>.

### Dalk Layyin (Gentle Massage)

This type of massage is performed with soft and slow strokes of the hand without exerting much pressure. It mainly produces muscle relaxation.

### Dalk Kaseer (Prolonged Massage)

This type of massage is done for longer duration to reduce body fat mass and renders the body lean and thin, helps in elimination of Rutubat (moisture) from the body leading to weight loss <sup>[4]</sup>.

### Correspondence

**Dr. Khursheed Ahmad Ansari**  
Assistant Professor,  
Department of Anatomy,  
Sumer Jamia Hamdard,  
Hamdard Nagar, Delhi, India

### **Dalk Mutadil (Moderate Massage)**

This type of massage is moderate in every aspect, such as stroke and duration. Thus induces better perfusion in muscles, helps in the growth and development of the body and causes moderate rise in muscle mass. Dalk Mutadil is Mun'ish-e-Hararat-e-Ghareezi (innate heat enhancer), causes Talteef (refining) in Akhlat (humours) and enhances freshness of the body.

### **Classification of therapeutic massage therapy**

#### **On the basis of character**

**Stroking Manipulation:** Superficial, Deep (effleurage)

**Pressure Manipulation Kneading:** it includes palmar kneading, digital kneading and ironing reinforced kneading. **Petrissage:** it includes, lifting away skin, wringing, Skin rolling. **Friction:** it includes circular friction and transverse friction [5].

**Percussion/Tapotent Manipulation:** It includes clapping, hacking, tapping, beating, pounding, tenting, and contact heel percussion. **Vibratory Manipulation:** It is done by vibrations and shaking.

**On the basis of depth of tissue approached:** Light, Deep

**On the basis of part of body massaged:** General, Local

**On the basis of application of pressure:** Manual, Mechanical massage.

### **Therapeutic Indications and uses of Dalk**

Also indicated in removal of Riyah. In Waja-uz-Zahr. It is useful to soften the muscle if it is hard and if muscle is hard then it makes it soft also Some times dalk is used for diversion of morbid matter (Khilt) It is used to increased circulation locally Dalk is also indicated in Aayae-Quroohi Dalk is also indicated in Aayae-Tamaddudi Dalk is also indicated in Aayae-Warmi [6].

### **Contraindication of Dalk (Massage therapy)**

In accumulation of pus.

In acute inflammatory and swelling condition.

In case of Hummiyat.

In case of open wound, unhealed scars.

Recent fracture sites.

In diseases which loses the vessels.

### **Physiological effect of Massage**

#### **Effects on blood circulation**

A moderate, consistent and definite increase in the arterial flow is observed. Massage have direct as well as indirect effect on circulatory system. It influences blood circulation [7].

#### **Effects on the organs of digestion**

Some authors claim that massage on abdomen has very little impact in digestive system and other viscera. Others stated that it has significant effects, mechanically as well as reflex action also. A common consensus is that massage improve the circulation of viscera and via a reflex pathway causes contraction of smooth muscles.

#### **Effects on lymph circulation**

The human body contains 1200-1500 ml of lymph moving at the speed of 4 mm/sec and massage increases these to eight folds. Lymph flows from the interstitial spaces to the collecting vessels. Massage has an indirect effect in lymph

circulation. Congestion in capillary network raises the Blood hydrostatic pressure [8].

### **Removal of metabolites**

By increasing the circulation through muscles, massage has the effect of draining the metabolites, including lactic acid and water. Similarly, carbon dioxide is eliminated by the improved venous return.

### **Effects on the muscles**

Petrissage and Tapotement increase significant venous blood flow in muscles when there is venous stasis of skeletal muscles, by Petrissage the vascular bed is mechanically emptied and it refills with fresh blood supply and the stasis is reduced. Department was found to cause 5% increase in muscular blood flow, an increase in the blood flow caused additional temperature changes in the muscle [9].

### **Timing of Dalk (massage)**

Unani physicians emphasized more on the timings of massage. It is very important to know when massage has to be done for the more benefits and good results and to avoid adverse events. Timing of massage exclusively depends on the type and nature of massage. Timing of massage differs according to changes in weather; in Mausam-e-Rabi (spring season) and Mausam-e-Kharif (autumn) massage should be done at Noon; in Mausam-e-Saif (summer season) massage should be done in the morning; in Mausam-e-Shita (winter season), it should be done in afternoon. In Unani literature, duration of massage is not exactly mentioned in terms of minute or hours, but it has been extensively discussed depending upon the various conditions which are as follows: [10].

- a) Strength of organ
- b) Mizaj of body part to be massaged
- c) Type of oil used
- d) Mizaj of disease and person
- e) Condition of disease (acute, sub-acute, chronic)
- f) Condition of patients (obese, lean and thin, healthy)
- g) Seasons
- h) Desired outcome.

Arshid, *et al.* [11] reported the efficacy of Dalk Layyin with Roghan Zaitun in Waja'al-Zahr (Backache). Cherkin, *et al.* [12] in a RCT found that both relaxation and structural massages are treatment of choice in chronic low back pain. Furlan, *et al.* [13] in a systemic review detected the efficacy of massage in subacute and chronic nonspecific Low Back Ache. Majchrzycki, *et al.* [14] in a Prospective Randomized clinical Trial found that Deep tissue massage in chronic Low Back Ache patients had been effective due to pain alleviation. Baig, *et al.* [15] reported efficacy of Dalk Layyin (soft massage) with Roghane Gule Aakh in alleviating pain, difficulty and tenderness associated with Cervical Spondylosis.

### **Conclusion**

Massage has been a method of treatment for centuries and gaining popularity. It holds an important place as a therapeutic modality in Unani Medicine. Preventive and therapeutic massage is the mainstream treatment of Unani medicine since centuries and it is being indicated for range of musculoskeletal diseases since then.

## References

1. Sina I, Al Qanoon Fil Tib. (Urdu translation by Kantoori GH), Idara Kitab Al Shifa, Delhi. 2007;2:1119-25.
2. Ali SJ, Imtiyaz S, Musatafa S, Haq A. Massage therapy in the context of Unani medicine, Indian Journal of Unani Medicine. 2013;4(2):129-137.
3. Taher AM, Nyeem MA, Ahammed Mm, Chowdhury MSI. Ilaj-bil-Tadbeer (Regimental Therapy): A review. International Journal of Medical and Health Research. 2017;3(10):54-56.
4. Ahmad B, Akhtar J. Review article Unani system of Medicine, Pharmacognosy reviews. 2002;1(2):210-212.
5. Holey E, Cook Eileen. Therapeutic Massage. 1st ed. India: WB Saunders. 1998;1-5:212-215.
6. Sinha AG, Dhandapani AG. Principles and Practices of Therapeutic Massage. Jaypee Brothers. New Delhi, Cassar MP, Hudson CM. Handbook of Clinical Massage. 2nd Edition, Churchill Livingstone; Elsevier. 2006;6(107):8.
7. Qadeer A. Tareekh Tib Wa Akhlaqiyat. 1st Ed. New Delhi: Aaima Publications, 2001, 19-260.
8. Shahbul Haq S. Tareekhe Tib Wa Akhlaqiyat 2nd ed. Bangalore: Mehri Publications, 1989, 1-388.
9. Azmi AA. History of Unani Medicine in India 1st Ed. New Delhi: Jamia Hamdard, 2004, 1-261.
10. Magner LN. A History of Medicine. USA: Mercel Dekker, 1992, 63-151.
11. Iqbal A, Khazir M, Tabassum H. Effect of Dalk Layyain (Soft Massage) with Roughtan Zaitun (Olive Oil) in Low Back Pain, International Research Journal of Biological Sciences. 2014;3(2):76-77. 3
12. Cherkin DC, Sherman KJ, Kahn J, Wellman R, Cook AJ, Johnson E, *et al.* A Comparison of the Effects of 2 Types of Massage and Usual Care on Chronic Low Back Pain, Annals of Internal Medicine. 2011;155:1-9.
13. Furlan AD, Brosseau L, Imamura M, Irvin E. Massage for Low-back Pain: A Systematic Review within the Framework of the Cochrane Collaboration Back Review Group Spine. 2002;27(17):1896-1910.
14. Majchrzycki M, Kocur P, Kotwicki T. Deep tissue massage and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs for low back pain: A Prospective Randomized Trial. The Scientific World Journal, 2014.
15. Baig MG, Quamri MA. Effect of Dalk Layyen with Roghane Gule Aakh in Cervical Spondylosis – A Pre and Post analysis Clinical study, International Research Journal of Medical Sciences. 2015;3:1.