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Review Article

### *Asbabe Sitta zarooriya (Six Essentials of life): A Review*

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#### Abstract

*Anticipation and endorsement of wellbeing is the solution for humanity to achieve the pleasing life. Some factors which are directly related to the health i.e Fresh Air (Hawae Muheet), Food and Drink (Makool Mashroob), Body Movement and Repose (Harkat wa Sukoone Badania), Mental Movement and Repose (Harkat wa Sukoone Nafsania), Sleep and Wakefulness (Naum wa Yaqzah), Retention and Evacuation (Ehtibas wa Istafraagh). They are called as "Asbabe Sitta zarooriya" (Six Essentials of life) are the main factors to retain the health. Any alteration of above said six essentials interfere in the health and a disease occurs. Elegant Unani philosophers corroborated the knowledge regarding how one can save the health, using six essentials of life.*

Key Words: *Asbabe Sitta zarooriya; Health; Unani Medicine; Six Essentials of life*

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## INTRODUCTION

According to definition of unani medicine “*Asbab*” are the factors which are precursors and by its own have an influence on human body, to generate a new state or maintain an old state (Hamdani, 1998). *Asbabe Sitta zarooriya* are basically that six essentials of life without which life of humans is unimaginable (Ameen, 2006) (Qarshi, 2010).

The six essentials are:

1. Fresh Air (*Hawae Muheet*)
2. Food and Drink (*Makool Mashroob*)
3. Body Movement and Repose (*Harkat wa Sukoone Badania*)
4. Mental Movement and Repose (*Harkat wa Sukoone Nafsania*)
5. Sleep and Wakefulness (*Naum wa Yaqzah*)
6. Retention and Evacuation (*Ehtibas wa Istafraagh*) (Hamdani, 1998) (Ameen, 2006) (Qarshi, 2010) (IbnSina, 2010) (IbnSina, YNM).

### Fresh Air (*Hawae Muheet*)

Unani scholars had advocated that Fresh and clean air is necessary for health and many diseases occur due to change in quality of air. Ancient scholars punctuated the need of open, ventilated houses with proper ventilating system. They had also mentioned different types of seasons related to change in air and diseases associated with particular seasons and, had also suggested good ideas concerning appropriate aeration for them. (Jameel, 2006) (IbnSina, 2010) (Majoosi,1889).

### Types of Seasons

#### *Fasl-e- Rabi* (Spring season)

Assistance of this season is in perspective of health to save and improve it as *Mizaj* (Temperament) of *Khilt Dam* is like that of this season i.e. *Har Ratab* (hot wet) and disfavors of spring season is in many

diseases because some diseases like *Falij* (Paralysis), Melancholia, Arthritis, Pharyngitis, Haemoptysis etc. Unani physicians had also given elegant views regarding the cause of above said diseases; Stressful life, Anger, Fearfulness and over intake of spicy foods are amongst them. . (Jameel, 2006) (IbnSina, 2010) (Majoosi,1889) (Kirmani, 1934).

#### *Fasl-e-Shita* (Winter season)

It is having cold and moist temperament which becomes contributing cause of phlegmatic diseases viz. joint pain, Pneumonia, Rhynorrhoea, Cough, Lypoma, and Rhinitis etc. (Jameel, 2006) (IbnSina, 2010) (Majoosi,1889) (Kirmani, 1934).

#### *Fasl-e-Saif* (Summer season)

Because of hot and dry temperament of this season, production of *Safra* (yellow bile) increases and

induces *Safrawi* (Bilious) diseases like Measles, Vomiting, Nettle rash, Chicken pox, Ascites, Conjunctivitis etc. Therefore one should consume cold temperament beverages, bath with cold water, avoidance from sun light and also increase intake of water. (Jameel, 2006) (IbnSina, 2010) (Majoosi,1889) (Kirmani, 1934).

#### *Fasl-e-Khareef* (Autumn season)

*Safrawi* diseases like Ring worm, Pruritis, Sciatica, Tonsillitis, Intestinal worms etc are because of its coldness which increases the chances of retention of *Safrawi Khilt* (yellow bile) occurs in the body; these problems occur due to indigestion. So one have to get better the digestion and take plenty of water. (Jameel, 2006) (IbnSina, 2010) (Majoosi,1889) (Kirmani, 1934).

### Special Effects of Atmospheric Air

#### *Hawa-e- Ratab* (Moist air)

Moist air is necessary as it is responsible for healthy skin but the chances of infection increases. (IbnRushd, YNM) (Kirmani, 1934).

#### *Hawa-e- Harra* (Hot air)

Excess contact with hot air leads to fatigability, over sweating, decreased urination, indigestion, if it is normal; improves the blood circulation for betterment of digestion. (IbnRushd, YNM) (Kirmani, 1934).

#### *Hawa-e- Barida* (Cold air)

It is responsible for proper digestion, helpful for good metabolism and absorption of nutritions in gastro intestinal tract. (IbnRushd, YNM) (Kirmani, 1934).

#### *Hawa-e- Yabis* (Dry air)

It affects the skin and makes it dry and hard in texture. (IbnRushd, YNM) (Kirmani, 1934).

### How to Prevent the Diseases

#### *Rabi* (Spring season)

For avoidance of diseases; *Fasd* (Venesection), vomiting willingly, avoidance from bath with hot water, and also avoidance from excess eating and drinking is advised. Use of cotton cloths is also advised. (IbnRushd, YNM) (Kirmani, 1934) (IbnSina, 2010).

#### *Saif* (Summer season)

Intake of *Ghizae Barid* (cold temperament foods), citrus fruits like Orange, Pomegranate, and lemon etc is recommended. To prevent the problems of digestion; should take easy digestible *Ghiza* (food), away from taken of hot and dry fruits for proper digestion. One should wear the *Katan* (type of cloth) to cool the body and should take more rest in this season with an avoidance from sun light. Application of *Javitri* (Mace) paste on the forehead is also recommended. (IbnRushd, YNM) (Kirmani, 1934) (IbnSina, 2010).

**Khareef (autumn season)**

Intake of dry fruits in autumn season is forbidden by Unani physicians, along with abstinence from excess coitus in this season. Use of cold water for drinking purpose as well as in bath is prohibited by them to reduce the chances of common cold and respiratory diseases. They had also advised regarding the prevention of respiratory problems; in this context Avicenna said cover the head properly especially in early morning hours and late night to prevent. (IbnRushd, YNM) (Kirmani, 1934) (IbnSina, 2010).

**Sarma (winter season)**

One should be proper dressed up in winter. Intake of *Haleem* (pulses with meat) and meat is advocated for the production of more blood. Do heavy exercise to excrete out the dissipate material through skin pores. Application of clove paste locally as a *Zamad* on forehead areas is also advised. (IbnRushd, YNM) (Kirmani, 1934) (IbnSina, 2010).

**Ghiza (Diet)**

Greek physicians advocated that life relies on diet, *Quwat-e-Tabiyia* (nutritive faculty) and *Hararat-e-Gharizia* (innate energy). They said that diet is essential for health in every step of ages and also said; due to insufficiency of nutrition probability of disease increases. For Infants diet, renowned physician *Jalinoos* (Galen) suggested that milk of mother is the best *Ghiza* which should be given to the baby before the teething process after that give the light and liquid diet. In children nutritious diet is advised for betterment of health and maintenance of growth because this age has efficiency of infections. Due to protein energy malnutrition (PEM) the chances of disastrous diseases becomes more which are Marasmus and Kwashiorkor. (Park, 2011) (Roy and Saha, 2013) (Razi, 2010) (Azmi, 2009) (Arzani, 2002)

**Recommendations of Diet for adults and elders**

Unani physicians projected their ideas on adults and elders also and their diet regimen. They said in context of beverages and simple water that don't use after meal as indigestion and other gastric problems take place. Regarding this Galen said "We should take first soft food and then hard foods". *Razi* said "Anyone who wants to be healthy, so he/she should take same type of diet in small quantity". *Ali Bin Rabban Tabri* suggested that "One should take choice of foods at the time of full hunger and should take rest after taking meal". The old persons are also prone to illnesses as innate energy, immune system and faculty of nutrition may go to weak. They should take nutritive diets but in little amount frequently; which is having vitamin C and E as antioxidants to keep away the atherosclerosis. It is also advised; don't take heavy fatty diets like red meats and *Ghiza-*

*e-Barid* (cold diets) like curd and cold beverages etc. (Park, 2011) (Roy and Saha, 2013) (Razi, 1991)

*Jalinoos* (Galen) affirmed that elderly person should take food three times a day which should be in line with their *Mizaj* (temperament). Refrain from meal on full stomach. Regarding obesity he said that excessive use of vegetables and fruits which are therapeutically taken; is the cause of obesity. (Razi, 1997) (AbiOsaibah, 1997) (Jurjani, 2010)

**Drinks or Water**

It is helpful in the carrying of nutrients to the unit of the body. Intake of water which is salty causes dryness and weakness in the body; Pruritis develops due to changing of chemistry of blood and loose motions also. They recommended Alum water for the patient of Bleeding Piles, Leucorrhoea, and Haemoptysis etc. Excess iron containing water makes the way easy to splenomegally and having Aphrodisiac (improves sexual health) property. Likewise copper containing water beneficial in *Istisqa* (Ascites) and can use it for the betterment of functions of liver in case of *Sue Kabid* (Liver disorders). Nervous disorders are developed by using of rain water but can rectify and make it payable as a boiling of water properly. Moribund water develops pyrexia and mars the *Mizaj* (Temperament) of particular. (Ilahi, 2010) (Razi, 1991)

**Testimonials and Confinements of Greek-Arab physicians regarding intake of water or drinks**

Hippocrates forbidden water intake in the midnight hours, because it causes failing of innate energy which leads to indigestion. Excessive cold water intake creates the problems of nervous and respiratory systems particularly in childhood period and older age. Avicenna advocated that intake of warm water also causes improper digestion, vomiting and occasionally becomes leading cause of Ascites and as well as weakness. But he advised for intake of luke warm water because it is beneficial to take away constipation and relaxes the rectal muscles to release bowel easily but don't take in excess amount because it hampers digestion. (Tabri, 2002) (Maseehi, 2008) (Kirmani, 1934)

*Ibn-e-Nafis* corroborated that on empty stomach one should refrain from intake of water as it causes indigestion, he also suggested same suggestion i.e. away from consumption of water after *Riazat* (exercise especially heavy exercise), *Jima* (sexual intercourse), *Hammam* (hot bath), after taking *Qavi Mushil* (heavy purgatives), eating of dry fruits and after taking of *Tarbuз* (water melon), cucumber and *Karbuз* (sweat melon) etc. *Har Mizaj* (hot temperament) having peoples should consume *Barid Mashrubat* like orange, apple, pomegranate, pineapple and lemon juices etc. (Kirmani, 1934) (Razi, 2000) (IbnRushd, YNM)

**Harkat wa Sukoone Badania (Physical movement and repose)**

Greek-Arab Physicians projected an ideas regarding physical activity which is essential for the activation of innate energy and to excrete the waste products of the body. Rest is necessary to save the body temperature and body fluids. Excess of both causes coldness of the body because motion leads to decrease the innate fluids as well as excess of rest increases the body fluid which decreases the innate energy (Majoosi,1889). Rest helps in digestion and motion disturbs the digestion. So it can be said that to sustain health and goodwill, regular exercise as well as proper rest is needed. In the same manner, certain diseases can be cured by giving the body rest, while some are cured by movement of affected organs. *Warm* (Inflammation) and *Kasr* (fractures) demand complete rest to get properly healed. On the other hand, unhealthiness such as paralysis require particular amount of movement. Exercises help growth of muscles and ensure nutrition, increased blood supply and proper functioning of excretory system. Exercise also keeps the heart and liver in good condition. As stated by Avicenna; “by doing proper exercise at suitable time; one can uphold health and harmony of the body”. (IbnSina, 2010) (Majoosi,1889) (Qaf, YNM)

**Harkat wa Sukoone Nafsania (Movement and Repose)**

*Nafsiwati Awamil* (Psychological factors) such as happiness, sorrow, fear, anger, etc. have significant affecting to the health of a human being. Greek- Arab physicians have a view that certain diseases like tuberculosis, hysteria and mental disorder are caused, in most cases, by emotional strain and maladjustment, and are therefore, while dealing with such cases, a physician should do his best to take all these factors into account. There is a branch of Unani medicine known as “*Illaj Nafsania*” (Psychological treatment) which deals with the above mentioned factors, and lots of diseases are treated with psychological means. Sometimes this type of treatment cures the disease without using medicines and sometimes by administration of drugs along with psychological methods. The curative effect of music, pleasant company and beautiful scenery has also been recognized by Unani physicians. Other measures mentioned by ancient physicians are as don't be stressful because it causes constipation, gastric ulcer, cardiac problems, general weakness and other mental problems. Keep a bay from anxiety and depression because they lead to other social problems. Cardio vascular problems may develop due to anger and sadness. By being Happy a person can prevents social problems, cardiac problems and gastric problems etc.

(Kirmani, 1934) (Rushd, YNM) (Ahmad, 1983) (Chandpuri, 1998)

**Naum wa Yaqza (Sleep and wakefulness)**

Normal slumber and wakefulness are essential for health. Sleep is an ideal form of rest, physical as well as mental. Lack of sleep causes dissipation of energies, mental weakness and digestive disturbances. Proper sleep and wakefulness are necessary because it is main instrument to maintain the digestion and activeness of the body. Excess of sleeping causes coldness, weakness, laziness in the body and headache etc and may develop the *Balghami* diseases like Arthralgia, likewise excess of wakefulness causes dryness in the body and indigestion. The lack of sleep is said to cause dissipation of energy, mental weakness, digestive disturbances and leads to acute diseases. Sleep is a necessity related to activity of the heart and beneficial in Melancholic patients. Precautionary we should cover the body during sleep. Normal sleep maintains normal blood, physiology and strengthens the body. It provides rest to the mental faculty. Over sleeping weakens the body, disturbs the humor concentration and headache. Sleep helps indigestion. The lack of sleep disturbs the food metabolism. Don't sleep on empty stomach and in the afternoon because it develops the laziness, paleness of the body, diseases of spleen, nervous sluggishness and disturb hunger. The person having common cold should not sleep in day hours. Wakefulness is also necessary to improve the hunger. Excess of wakefulness produces dryness in the body, indigestion, improper function of brain, alteration of brain temperament. Normal wakefulness improves the innate energy, sensory and motor functions. Excess sleep on empty stomach makes the innate energy weak. (Rushd, YNM) (IbnSina, 2010) (Kirmani, 1934).

**Istifragh wa Ehtibas (Elimination and retention)**

Waste products of body, if not completely and properly excreted, produce disease. The natural means of excretion are the diuresis, diaphoresis, vomiting and feces, and excretion through uterus (in the form of menses), eyes, ears and nose (or respiration). Proper and normal functioning of the excretory processes must be ensured in order to maintain perfect health. Any disturbance in the normal excretory balances, whether it be excess, diminution or blockage, leads to disease. Practitioners of Unani medicine have, from time immemorial, cured numerous diseases by regulating the excretory processes (Rushd, YNM) (IbnSina, 2010) (Kirmani, 1934).

**Istifragh (elimination)**

It is a medical terminology used in Unani system of medicine which means the elimination of waste

products from the body naturally like urination, defecation, sweating and menstrual bleeding etc and abnormally due to disease through sneezing, coughing, loose motions and vomiting. *Istifragh* is necessary to promote the health. (IbnSina, 2010) (Ameen, 2006) (Qarshi, 2010).

#### Types of *Istifragh*

Sweating, urination, vomiting, loose motion, normal defecation, Venesection, cupping, leeching, sneezing, coughing, enema, Epistaxis, breast feeding, coitus, eye secretions etc. (Jurjani, 2010) (IbnSina, 2010) (Ameen, 2006) (Qarshi, 2010).

#### Effects of excess *Istifragh* (elimination)

- Excess of *Istifragh* makes the body weak, litharge (Majoosi, 1889).
- It leads to coldness & dryness in the body.
- Sometime it produces obstruction.
- Sometime occurrence of tetanic condition observes.
- Innate energy becomes weak. (Jurjani, 2010) (IbnSina, 2010) (Ameen, 2006) (Qarshi, 2010).

#### *Ehtibas* (Retention)

Production of waste and useful products in the body after taking meal, so useful products should retain in the body and waste should eliminate. Abnormal retention of fecal matter leads to infection and other problems like colic pain, peritonitis, gangrene, flatulence, piles, anal fissure, intestinal obstruction and rectal prolaps, so we should use the laxative like spinach, *Anjeer* (Figs), olive oil and enema etc. (Jurjani, 2010) (IbnSina, 2010) (Ameen, 2006) (Qarshi, 2010).

- Retention of nasal fluid in common cold leads to pneumonia, coughing and bronchitis, so we should try to excrete out the nasal discharge.
- Retention of urine is leading cause of renal and urinary bladder stones, nephritis and urinary tract infections etc.
- Retention of menstrual blood leads to genital tract infections, so we should take plenty of water to avoid this.
- Due to abnormal *Istifragh* through skin some diseases occur like Psoriasis, seborrhea dermatitis and acne etc, it should minimize with *Hammam* (Hot bath), proper exercise and massage etc. (Jurjani, 2010) (IbnSina, 2010) (Ameen, 2006) (Qarshi, 2010).

#### CONCLUSION

With above discussions the inference may be drawn that all the six essentials of life as described by

elegant Unani philosophers are vital and pivot for life to exist, life of human on earth is impossible without them; an equilibrium and balance in *Asbabe Sitta Zarooriya* is necessary for health to preserve.

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