

Concept and management of *Warm e Meda* (Gastritis) in Unani perspective: A review

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Abstract

Warm e Meda (Gastritis) is a common Gastro Intestinal disorder affecting the world's population. According to the Unani concept *Warm e Meda* occurs mainly due to *Soo e Mizaj* of *Meda* (imbalanced temperament of the stomach) and accumulation of *Ghair Tabayee Akhlath* (bad humours) in the stomach. According to Unani concept, there were many preventive and treatment modalities found to treat and manage *Warm e Meda*. In the preventive method, *Asbab e sitta e zarooriya* (six essential factors) should be maintained viz *Hawae e Muheet* (fresh air), *Makhool wa Mashroob* (food and drink), *Harkath wa Sukoone badani* (body movement and response), *Harkath wa Sukoone Nafsaniya* (mental movement and response), *Naum vo Yakzah* (sleep and wakefulness) and *Ethibaas wa Istifaraagh* (retention and evacuation). *Ilaj bil Ghiza* (dietotherapy) and *Ilaj bil Dawa* (pharmacotherapy) are the treatment modalities used to treat *Warm e Meda*.

Keywords: *Warm e meda, Soo e mizaj, Ghair Tabayee Akhlath, Asbab e sitta e zarooriya, Mufrad vo Murakkab Dawa, Gastritis*

Introduction

Warm e Meda (gastritis) is a commonly found disease condition in now a day. It affects all age groups; specially adolescents and both sexes. In modern, the word "gastritis" refers to the inflammation, irritation or erosion of the lining of the gastric mucosa and it may occur suddenly (acute) or gradually (chronic)¹. Epigastric and retrosternal burning, abdominal discomfort, nausea, and vomiting are some peculiar symptoms of *Warm e Meda*. According to Unani Classical texts, the

terminology "*Warm*" means inflammation and "*Meda*" means stomach. Hence *Warm e Meda* refers to inflammation in the stomach. As per Unani scholars, *Sozish e Meda, Hurqat e Meda* and *Iltehab e Meda* are commonly used names for *Warm e Meda* in the Unani medical system². *Warm e Meda* (gastritis) occurs mainly due to *Soo e Mizaj* of *Meda* (imbalanced temperament of the stomach) and accumulation of *Ghair Tabayee Akhlath* (morbid humours) in the stomach. Apart from the above some other causes are also noticed in the development of *Warm e Meda* viz alcohol consumption, excessive drinking of certain beverages like carbonated drinks and coffee, taking some medication, inadequate sleep at night, stress, excessive worries, some occupation etc.

In the book "Canon of Medicine" Ibn Sina describes the diseases of internal organs, in particular to the detailed description of symptoms of gastritis and gastric ulcer close to modern description^{3,4}. He also provides data on diseases of the stomach and intestines as a reaction of the organism to changing environmental conditions and violation of specific forms of adaptability of the organism⁴. In the Unani system of medicine, many effective *Mufrad dawas* (single drugs) and *Murakkab dawa* (compound drugs) that are derived from plants, animals and minerals sources are being used for the treatment of *Warm e Meda*. These drugs act both locally and systemically. Further Unani physicians have recommended different medicines in different seasons according to the different *Mizaj* (temperaments) of the patients.

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Classification

Unani physicians have described *Warm e Meda* under four headings according to various factors. They are clinical features, causative factors and humours, duration of the disease and gross pathological changes.

Based on the clinical features *Warm e Meda* is classified into *Warm e Meda Harr* (hot type of gastritis) *Warm e Meda Baarid* (cold type of gastritis). Based on the *Warm e Meda Harr* (hot type of gastritis) further, it is divided into *Damavi* (sanguineous) type of *Warm e Meda* and *Safravi* (billious) type of *Warm e Meda*. Moreover, *Warm e Meda Baarid* (cold type of gastritis) is further divided into *Balghami* (phlegmatic) type of *Warm e Meda* and *Saudavi* (melancholic) type of *Warm e Meda*^{3,4}.

According to the type of humours accumulated in the stomach, *Warm e Meda* is further divided as *Warm e Meda Damavi* (sanguine type of gastritis), *Warm e Meda Balghami* (phlegmatic type of gastritis), *Warm e Meda Safravi* (billious type of gastritis) and *Warm e Meda Saudavi* (melancholic type of gastritis)³.

Based on the duration of the disease, Unani Scholars have described *Warm e Meda* into *Warm e Meda Falghamuni*, *Warm e Meda Hamrath e meda*, *Warm e Meda Rakhw* and *Warm e Meda Sulb*⁴. Further Unani scholars have classified *Warm e Meda* into *Warm e Meda Haad* (acute gastritis) and *Warm e Meda Muzmin* (chronic gastritis) on the basis of gross pathological changes^{3,4}. If *Warm e Meda Haad* (acute gastritis) is left untreated, this will lead to *Warm e Meda Muzmin* (chronic gastritis)³.

Methodology

This review was done from 2000 to 2021 using search engines like pub med and Google scholar databases, Unani classical textbooks and Scientific Journals.

Results and Discussion

Asbab

Warm e Meda is caused mainly due to *Soo e Mizaj* (derangement of temperament) of the stomach and accumulation of *Fasid Akhlath* (morbid humours) in the stomach⁸. Besides some other causes also impact in the development of *Warm e Meda*. They are *Ghiza e Ghaleez Kham* (diet that is partially cooked and hard to digest), pouring of irritants, sour black bile and bilious fluid in the stomach, taking foods that don't match body constitution, consuming extremely spicy and sour foods and beverages, wheat flour products, products made from white sugar and fatty acids, smoking, prolonged exposure to alcohol, eating large meals or lying down specially on your back after a meal, being overweight or obese, taking snacks at bedtime, excessive intake of chocolates, etc.^{3,4}

Clinical features

Clinical features may vary according to the type of *Akhlath* (humors) involved in the causation of the disease. These clinical features are very important in diagnosing the causative factor of the disease conditions. In the case of *Warm e Meda Harr* (hot type of gastritis) there will be abdominal heaviness and distention, *Humma* (fever), *Qai* (vomiting), *Shiddat -e-piyas* (excessive thirst), restlessness and decreased appetite. In case of *Warm e Meda Baarid* (cold type of gastritis) which is caused by *Balghami Khilth*, there will be *Humma-e- layyinah* (mild fever), excessive appetite, decreased appetite, distended stomach, whitish tongue and puffiness of face. While in case of hard consistency caused by *Saudavi Khilth* (black bile), there will be hardness on palpation, but no history of fever. Apart from the above there are some clinical features are noticed such as heart and chest burn, sometimes chest pain, nausea, throat burn, sour and bitter belching, regurgitation of food, or vomiting of sour substances, heaviness and pain in the abdomen, Indigestion, Aversion of food, Headache, foul-smelling loose motion, bad breath, thirst, mouth ulcer, fatigue (specially in legs), tiredness, severe burning sensation over the hands and feet, itching all over the body, fainting, giddiness etc.^{3,4}

Management

According to the Unani Medical system, some basic principles of treatments are practiced in treating the *Warm e Meda*. They are

- Maintaining the equilibrium of *Asbab e Sith e Zarooriya* (six essential factors)
- *Ilaj bil Ghiza* (dietotherapy)
- *Ilaj bil Dawa* (pharmacotherapy)

Asbab e sith e zarooriya

According to the Unani system of medicine, *Asbab -e -Sith- e- Zarooriya* is known to be six essential factors which is needed for the healthy state of humans. Prevention of diseases could be gained through maintaining the balance in *Asbab-e-Sitta-e-Zarooriya* which have a direct influence on health. Imbalance in these factors will cause the alteration in *Mizaj* which in turns leads to disease conditions. Therefore, *Warm e Meda* could be prevented by maintaining the equilibrium of the following six essential factors⁵.

Asbab-e-Sitta -e-Zarooriyah includes six essential factors which are as follows:

- *Hawa-e-Muheet* (atmospheric air)
- *Makool wa Mashroob* (food and drinks)
- *Harkat wa Sukoon-e-Badani* (physical activity and response)
- *Harkat wa Sukoon-e-Nafsani* (mental activity and response)
- *Naum wa Yaqza* (sleep and wakefulness)
- *Ehtibas wa Istifragh* (retention and elimination).

Hawa-e-Muheet

Air is one of the main essential factors for living. According to Unani scholars it is mentioned to be a vital element of *rooh* in one's human body. According to that inhaling pure clean air will help to reduce many diseases. Air could be subjected to abnormal variations like pollution. Inhalation of polluted air will lead to mal temperament of *rooh* which causes number of diseases. Further it will lead to *soo e mizaj* of the stomach which in turns cause gastritis. So, it could be prevented by staying at well ventilated place by inhaling fresh pure air^{4,5}.

Makool wa Mashroob

Food and drink are placed to be a second factor next to air. Improper diet will lead to many diseases. The quality and quantity of the food and drink will impact in one's health. Imbalance in the quality and quantity of the food will cause some health problems. So, the diet we intake should be clean and fresh as well as the quantity should be taken according to our body's need. Consumption of bad quality foods will produce putrefaction of humors in the stomach. As regards of quantity, an excess produces indigestion, obstruction and then putrefaction of *Akhlath*^{5,6}. Consequently, the quality and quantity of one's food and drink is believed to ensure physical fitness by strengthening "*Tabiat*". According to Jalinoos; time of the food, type of the food, the quantity of the food and the temperament of the food should be taken into consideration while consuming the diet⁶. Thus, maintaining the equilibrium by practicing good dietary habits will improve and get rid of many diseases including *Warm e Meda*.

Harkat wa Sukoon-e-Badani

The body needs exercise as well as rest for a good physique. Ibn Sina said that "exercise is the cause of good health if it is done at the right time and in moderate quantity"⁵. Moreover, he has stated that physical activity is needed for the activation of *Hararath e Ghareezi* (innate energy) and to excrete the waste products produced from the body while rest is needed to help in digestion, to relieve the fatigue and to decrease the body temperature. Imbalance of the above factor may cause disturbances in *Hararath e Ghareezi* (innate energy) and the indigestion will lead to cause immature *Akhlath* in the stomach that will be accumulated and cause erosion in the stomach. Accordingly, maintaining the regular exercise as well as proper rest in equilibrium will help in good health^{4,5,6}.

Harkat wa Sukoon-e-Nafsani

Psychological factors play a significant role in the wellbeing of an individual. Emotional disturbances like stress, excessive worries, anger, grief etc. will cause many diseases. Many research articles described that, there is a close relationship between

gastritis and mental disturbances among both sexes. Especially it has been reported that the relationship of emotional stress to abnormalities of the gastric mucosa was considered in a review of 788 consecutive upper gastrointestinal endoscopies⁷. Therefore, maintaining the equilibrium of psychological factors will help to preserve or restore health.

Naum wa Yaqza

Normal sleep and wakefulness are much important for a person's health. Inadequate sleep will cause many digestive problems like indigestion, mental weakness and loss of energies⁵. Excessive sleep causes more coldness in the body while excessive wakefulness produces indigestion. So sufficient amount of sleep and wakefulness should be needed for the healthy life. The Unani scholar Ibn Nafees described that all functions of the body happen in wakeful state, but excess of awakening will produce impaired digestion, dissolution of *rooh* and weakness in the brain⁶. Majoosi said that "*Tabiat*" is maintained by the proper and adequate sleep which gives mental and physical rest and the digestion and concoction of *Akhlath*. Subsequently, any indigestion and accumulation of *Ghair Tabayee Akhlath* will lead to develop gastritis. Moreover, in one of the research articles it has been reviewed that the sleep disturbances will cause gastritis and peptic ulcer diseases⁵. Therefore, it is essential to maintain the equilibrium on sleep and wakefulness.

Ehtibas wa Istifragh

The waste products produced from the body should be evacuated at regular interval to maintain the "*Tabiat*". Any retention of harmful products or excessive elimination will cause some health problems in the human body. Retention of waste products will produce putrefaction while excessive elimination will cause coldness in the body which in turns leads to impaired digestion. Immature *Akhlath* will be produced due to indigestion⁶. Accumulation of putrefied humors and immature *Akhlath* in the stomach will cause some erosion and inflammatory conditions in the gastric mucosa. Therefore, it is very important to evacuate morbid humors at the correct time in proper way⁵.

Ilaj bil Ghiza (Dietotherapy)

A specialized form of treatment, *Ilaj bil Ghiza* (dietotherapy) has been practiced from the period of Unani scholars like Avicenna, Galen to treat several diseases. They were completely aware about the importance of *Ilaj bil Ghiza*. It plays a key role in the treatment and prevention of many diseases. A well-balanced diet with adequate intake of all nutrients, is necessary for good nutrition as well as for maintaining health and preventing diseases⁸. Unani physicians recommend a suitable diet for a diseased person before the initiation of drug therapy. They believed to be that some disease could be cured by dietotherapy alone or adjuvant with pharmacotherapy. In addition to nutritional property, the food we consume have pharmacological actions too. More over in Unani medical system a person is recommended to consume foods which is opposite *Mizaj* to the *Mizaj* of the disease condition to restore the health. Therefore, correct suitable *Mizaj* diet should be selected according to the temperament of the stomach of each individual in treating *Warm e Meda*. Moreover, it is recommended to take easily digestible diets like *Talbina*, soup, *Ma us shaeer*, *Ma ul jubun* that will help to relieve strain on a person digestive system and reduce symptoms of *Warm e Meda*. Pomegranate juice, *sikanjabeen*, *Aabkama*, *Murabba*, *Gulqand*, *Hasarmiya*, *Zeerba*, *Mazeera*, *Masleeya*, *Faluda*, *Maibah*, *Cydonia oblonga* mixed with wheat bread, fruits having cold temperament will help to relieve symptoms of *Warm e Meda*⁸. Oily diets, spicy foods, chilled water should be avoided⁴.

Ilajbil Dawa (Pharmacotherapy)

Ilajbil Dawa is the most used mode of treatment modality in the treatment of all diseases with less side effects. The drugs used for the treatment are crude drugs prepared from plant, animal and mineral sources. They might be *Mufrad Dawa* (single drugs) or *Murakkab Dawa* (compound formulation of crude drugs). Unani medicine pre supposes that drug also have their own temperament. Appropriate drugs should be selected when treating the all diseases including *Warm e Meda* by considering the *Mizaj* of

the stomach of an individual and *Mizaj* of the drug. helpful in the effective treatment of *Warm e Meda*
The following *Mufrad* and *Murakkab Dawa* are (Table 01).

Table 01: Mufrad and Murakkab Dawa, which are helpful in the effective treatment of Warm e Meda

Single drug	Pharmacological actions
<i>Althaea officinalis</i> Linn (<i>Khatmi</i>).	Anti-inflammatory, Demulcent, Emollient, Mucilaginous ^{9,10,11}
<i>Alpinia galanga</i> (Linn.) Willd (<i>Khulanjan</i>)	Anti-Ulcer, Stomachic ^{4,14}
<i>Aloe barbadensis</i> Mill. (<i>Elva</i>)	Anti-inflammatory, Anti-oxidant, Anti-microbial ^{4,14,15}
<i>Onosmabracteatum</i> (<i>Gaozaban</i>)	Anti-inflammatory, Anti-microbial, Anti-Ulcer ^{4,15,16}
<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i> Linn. (<i>Asl-us-soos</i>)	Anti-inflammatory, Astringent, Anti-Ulcer, Demulcent ¹⁷
<i>Withania somnifera</i> (Linn.) Dun. (<i>Asgand</i>)	Anti-bacterial, Astringent, Anti-oxidant ¹⁸
<i>Zingiber officinale</i> Roscoe (<i>Adrak</i>)	Anti-inflammatory, Anti-oxidant ^{4,19}
<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> Linn. / <i>Emblica officinalis</i> Gaertn. (<i>Amla</i>)	Anti-inflammatory, Anti-oxidant ²⁰
<i>Curcuma longa</i> (<i>Haldi</i>)	Anti-inflammatory, Anti-oxidant ^{21,22}
<i>Asparagus racemosus</i> Willd (<i>Satawar</i>)	Anti-ulcer ^{4,26}
<i>Acacia arabica/nilotica</i> Willd (<i>Samagh-e-arabi</i>)	Anti-oxidant, Astringent, Demulcent ²⁷
<i>Myristica fragrans</i> Houtt (<i>Jaiphal</i>)	Anti-oxidant, Anti-microbial, Anti-stress ²⁸
<i>Bambusa arundinacea</i> (Retz.) Roxb. Syn.: <i>B. bambos</i> Voss (<i>Tabasheer</i>)	Cooling, Anti-ulcer, Anti-inflammatory, Anti-oxidant ²⁹
<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i> Linn. (<i>Mastagi</i>)	Anti-inflammatory, Stomachic ⁴
<i>Coriander sativum</i> (<i>Kashneez</i>)	Anti-inflammatory, Analgesic, Astringent ³⁰
<i>Santalum album</i> (<i>Sandal e Sufaid</i>)	Cooling, Analgesic ^{4,23}
<i>Rosa damascene</i> (<i>Gul e Surkh</i>)	Cooling, Anti-inflammatory, Analgesic ²³
<i>Nigella sativa</i> Linn. (<i>Kalonji</i>)	Anti-inflammatory, Anti-oxidant, Anti-bacterial, Analgesic ²⁴
<i>Androgrphis paniculata</i> Wall (<i>Bhui neem</i>)	Anti-inflammatory, Anti-microbial ^{4,25}

Further there are several *Murakkab Dawa* (compound drugs) are used in the treatment of *Warm e Meda*. They are; *Murabba Zanjabeel*, *Jawarish Kamooni*, *Jawarish Mastagi*, *Jawarish Ood-e- Shirin*, *Jawarish Ood-e- Tursh*, *Habb-e-Tursh*, *Safoof Hazim*, *Jawarish Anarain*, *Sharbat Anar*, *Majoon Dabidul Ward*, *Habb-e- Hilteet*, *Majoon Zanjbil*, *Qurs Satawari*, *Itrifal Aftimoon*, *Sharbat Unnab*, *Khammeera Sandal*, and *Mufarreh Ahmadhi*^{3,4}.

Conclusion

Warm-e-Meda is one of the commonest problem among the community. In Unani system of Medicine, the diseases related to *Meda* are well described and well understood. Unani scholars have contributed towards the information of strength and ailment of *Meda*. There are several treatment modalities are mentioned by Unani scholars to treat *Warm e Meda*. It could be prevented by maintaining the equilibrium of *Asbab-e-Sith-e-Zarooriya* with effective *Ilaj bil Ghiza* and *Ilaj bil Dawa*. This study validated the concept, aetiopathogenesis and management of *Warm e Meda* (gastritis) clearly.

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