

**MANAGEMENT OF IZTERAB-I-NAFSANI (ANXIETY) DURING  
COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN UNANI MEDICINE: A REVIEW****Uzma Siddiqui<sup>1\*</sup>, Md. Akhter Hussain Jamali<sup>2</sup> and Mohd. Amir<sup>3</sup>**

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**ABSTRACT**

World Health Organization (WHO) declared a public health emergency of International concern on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic. As of 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2020, more than 10 million cases of COVID-19 and 508 055 deaths have been reported to WHO. It may be asymptomatic or symptomatic. It's devastating consequences are stress, anxiety, and fear throughout the globe. Fear is the breeding ground for hatred and stigma in which Dimagh (brain), Qalb (heart) and Jigar (liver) become functionally impaired which proceeds towards abnormal situations one by one. Unani physicians have mentioned the essentiality of these organs for survival of life. Izterab-i-Nafsani (Anxiety) is the most common psychological disorder. Keeping the point in mind, WHO has alarmed about the consequences of the

anxiety which is self-evident in the present scenario. The paper has given a detailed discussion of its management by preventive measures through balance moderation of Asbab Sitta Zaruriyya (Six essential factors) and therapeutically by using Muqawwiyat and Mufarrihat in Unani medicine.

**KEYWORDS:** Vital organs, COVID-19, Izterab-i-Nafsani (Anxiety), Muqawwiyat, Mufarrihat, Unani Medicine.

**INTRODUCTION**

COVID-19 has emerged as the most dangerous pandemic threat throughout the globe since its outbreak during December 2019.<sup>[1]</sup> Rapidly spreading outbreak of COVID-19 when

involved 26 countries then WHO declared a public health emergency of International concern on 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2020.<sup>[2]</sup> As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) has reported 10 357 662 cases and 508 055 deaths worldwide<sup>[3]</sup> and 568 082 cases and 17400 deaths in India.<sup>[4]</sup> Many parts of India have been going for lockdown again due to increases in cases each day.

World Health Organization and public health authorities around the world are acting to contain COVID-19 outbreak, however, this time crisis is generating stress throughout the population.<sup>[5]</sup> The most common emotion faced by all is fear. It makes us anxious, panicky and can even possibly make us think, say or do things that we might not consider appropriate under normal circumstances.<sup>[6]</sup> As humans have evolved to be social creatures and are wired to live in interactive groups. Being isolated from family, friends and colleagues can be unbalancing and traumatic for most people and can result in short or even long term psychological and physical health problem.

Unani System of Medicine diagnoses and treats the patient as a whole looking into their overall physical, mental and spiritual aspects. The therapeutics in Unani System of Medicine is described under the major headings of *Ilaj bil Tadbir wa bil Taghziya* (regimenal therapy and dietotherapy), *Ilaj bil Dawa* (pharmacotherapy) and *Ilaj bil Yad* (surgery). Regimenal therapy along with dietotherapy is considered the best approach for promotion of health and treatment of disease. Unani system of medicine has also emphasized the importance of *Ilaj-i-Nafsani* (psychiatric treatment) in the management of various diseases.<sup>[7]</sup>

## METHODOLOGY

A throughout available literature review of Unani classical texts, relevant scientific journals, databases such as Springer, Pub Med, and Google scholar was performed together for collection of data on *Izterab-i-Nafsani* (anxiety) and COVID-19 pandemic.

## Consequences of COVID-19 in the perspective of mental health

As COVID-19 is a new disease and having the most devastating effects globally, its emergence and spread, cause confusion, anxiety and fear among the general public. Fear is the breeding ground for hatred and social stigma.<sup>[5,6]</sup> The only way to control and defeat this mammoth pandemic was to make people follow social distancing and also to restrain them from out to avoid social contact. Social stress caused by lockdown has many faces and reasons resulting from traveling restrictions and disruption of cultural celebrations limited,

social distancing with friends and family, closure of work places and places of entertainments and leisure, closure of school and colleges affecting both students and parents regarding the loss of academic year and the quality of education. As research into COVID-19 continues, a lot of the facts keep on changing and many myths are also prevalent in the general population regarding the prevention and management of the infection. In the time of widespread use of social media, these myths along with fake news around corona are also spreading rapidly. These are sometimes very disturbing for certain individuals.<sup>[5,6]</sup> COVID-19 affects brain function in some people. Specific neurological symptoms seen in people with COVID-19 include loss of smell, inability to taste, muscle weakness, tingling or numbness in the hands and feet, dizziness, confusion, delirium, seizures, and stroke.<sup>[8]</sup>

### **Prevalence of *Izterab-i-Nafsani* (Anxiety)**

A study by Hannah et al., in 2017 estimates that 792 million people lived with a mental health disorder, this is slightly more than one in ten people globally (10.7%).<sup>[9]</sup> In 2017, there were 197.3 million people with mental disorders in India, comprising 14.3% of the total population of the country.<sup>[10]</sup> An online survey done by Roy et al., about anxiety experience in Indian population concluded that 72% of participants were worried for themselves and their close one during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>[11]</sup>

### **Unani concept of *Izterab-i-Nafsani* (Anxiety)**

In Unani system of medicine, *Mizaj* (temperament) of an individual acts as an imperative risk factor for various disorders including the psychiatric disorders such as depression or *Malankhuliya*. There are four types of temperaments viz. *Mizaj-i-Damvi* (sanguinous temperament), *Mizaj-i-Safrawi*, (bilious temperament), *Mizaj-i-Balghami* (phlegmatic temperament) and *Mizaj-i-Sawdawi* (melancholic temperament), although depression is seen in the all four varieties of *Mizaj*. But according to Unani scholars among the four temperaments the people with *Mizaj-i-Sawdawi* (melancholic temperament) predispose an individual to develop the depressive symptomatology most.<sup>[12,13,14]</sup>

Ibn-i-Sina has stated that *Su-i-Mizaj-i-Qalb* (alteration of heart temperament) affects *Ruh-i-Nafsani* leading to *Fasad* (vitiation) of *Ruh-i-Haywani* resulting in vitiation in the temperament of brain and changes it into melancholic temperament.<sup>[14]</sup>

According to Unani System of Medicine, *Infailat-i-Nafsaniya* (psychic movement) are the movements of *Ruh* (pneuma) and blood with the help of *Quwa Haywaniyyah* (vital

powers) in which sudden movement of *Ruh* (pneuma) from outward to inward in *khauf* (fear) and gradually movement of *Ruh* (pneuma) from outward to inward in *Fikr* (worry) and *Gham* (grief) resulting in *Burudat* (coldness).<sup>[15,16]</sup> Razi has mentioned that when both the hemisphere of brain developed coldness and dryness then it produces *Sakta* (apoplexy) and when there is an excess of *Burudat* and *Rutubat* (moist) then produces *Subat* (coma) and *Ghunudgi* (unconsciousness).<sup>[12]</sup> Unani medicine considers the Heart and the Brain to be relevant to each other, as Heart is the seat of the *Ruh* (pneuma) and *Nafs* (soul), while brain is the seat of *Quwa Nafsaniyya* (mental faculties).<sup>[15,16]</sup> So mental states described by Unani medicine in terms of psychic movement and repose specially affect the heart and the brain function.<sup>[17,17]</sup>

Literally *Izterab-i-Nafsani* stands for worry, excessive thinking and fear. It is also used in the sense of hindrance in routine work. In the literature of Unani system of Medicine, there is no description of *Izterab-i-Nafsani* but there is description of *Fikr* (worry) which is used as synonym of anxiety.<sup>[18]</sup> In the similar fashion, depression is not mentioned in Unani classical texts as an individual disease entity rather it is mentioned as a symptom or group of symptoms of *Melancholic* (*malankhuliya*) in which the mental functions of the individual are deranged leading to constant grief, fear and dubious aggression. The patient finds himself/herself deserted and occupied by loneliness.<sup>[19]</sup> According to Unani scholar Allaama Najeebuddin Samarqandi and Razi, *Malankhuliya* is a disease in which there is change in feeling, behavior and mood of patient. At times patient becomes overanxious and his thoughts and thinking process gets disturbed. Person suffering from *Malankhuliya* becomes easily irritable, prefers loneliness and become fearful on usual things.<sup>[12,13]</sup> Allama Najeebuddin Samarqandi in his book stated that when *Malankhuliya* advances, its signs and symptoms become severe. Patient become suspicious, doubtful and always thinks about mis happening or misfortune.<sup>[13]</sup> Initial symptoms of *Malankhuliya* are wrong thoughts, fear for no reason, quick arousal of anger, preference for loneliness, palpitation, giddiness, tinnitus etc.<sup>[14]</sup>

### Concept of Preventive Medicine in Unani Philosophy

In Unani literature it has been mentioned that *Tabi 'at* (medicatrix naturae) is solely responsible for the capacity of the body to resist the disease and pathogen.<sup>[15,16,20]</sup> A well known Unani scholar, Rabban Tabri in his treatise *Firdosul Hikmat*, has mentioned that practically *Tabi 'at* is regarded as an administrative power of the body. The function of

administration of the body is accomplished by *Tabi 'at* by many powers called *Quwa* of the body like *Quwa Tabiyya* (Natural Faculties), *Quwa Haywaniyya* (Vital Power) and *Quwa Nafsaniyya* (Mental faculty), Thus the main role of the *Tabi 'at* is to provide defense and immunity (*Quwwat-i-Mana'at*) to the body.<sup>[21]</sup> Each organ of the body works in coordination with each other to achieve the specific function of the body. This coordination between the organs is maintained by *Tabi 'at* with the help of *Ala-i-Tabi 'at* (tools of medicatrix naturae). Here, the tool of *Tabi 'at* implies the relation to channels without which the function and process of *Tabi 'at* cannot occur. In relation to this statement Abu Sahal Maseehi in Kitabul Miah says that *Tabi 'at* depends on support for the performing their function and process of the body.<sup>[22]</sup>

Unani Medicine specially places emphasis on the Asbab Sitta Zaruriyya (six essential factors) i.e., *Hawa* (air), *Makul-o-Mashrub* (food and drink), *Harakat-o-Sukun Badani* (bodily movement and repose), *Harakat-o-Sukun Nafsani* (psychic movement and repose), *Nawm-o-Yaqza* (sleep and wakefulness) and *Istifragh-o-Ihtibas* (evacuation and retention). The lifestyle disorders like Depression, Coronary Heart Disease, Obesity etc., which are the major health burden of present time, can be successfully, economically and safely prevented by following the instructions with regard to these essential factors.<sup>[7, 23]</sup>

The concept of using organ and system specific tonics is a unique feature of Unani system of medicine. Unani physicians have described a number of drugs to strengthen and tone up the vital organs of the body and protect them to save against the possible harmful substances.<sup>[7]</sup> Unani physicians have recommended improving the body immunity and strengthening the *Tabi 'at* by restoration of health and management of disease. For this purpose Unani scholars have mentioned various drugs under the headings of *Muqawwiyyat* and *Mufarrihat* such as *Muqawwi-i-Ada-i Raisa* (tonics for vital organs), *Muqawwi-i-Mida wa Ama* (gastroahic and tonic for biliary tract), *Muqawwi-i-Ada Nafsaniyya* (tonics for organs of the nervous system), *Muqawwi-i-Qalb* (cardio tonics), *Muqawwi-i-Jigar* (liver tonics) etc.<sup>[16,24]</sup>

In Unani Classical literatures they have strongly recommend use of *Muqawwiyyat* and *Mufarrihat* during illness and for prevention of disease.<sup>[13,16,20]</sup> These drugs play paramount role in containing the epidemics.<sup>[25]</sup> *Muqawwiyyat* is non-toxic substances that have the ability to improve and maintain the health of the human body when used regularly over a long period of time. They tone up the internal organs and improve the body functions.<sup>[13,16,26]</sup>

***Tonics for Vital organ***

These drugs tone up the vital organs of the body, heart, brain and liver. Generally these drugs act on a particular organ but in general all vital organs are improved. Such as Asgand (*Withania somnifera*), Jadwar (*Delphinium denudatum*), Zafran (*Crocus sativus*), Marwareed (Pearl) etc.<sup>[13,16]</sup>

***Tonics for Organs of Nervous system***

These drugs strengthen the organs of nervous system (brain, spinal cord, cranial nerves, spinal nerves etc.) and maintain its functions e.g. Maghaz Badam sheerin (*Prunus amygdalus*), Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri*), Gaozaban (*Onosma bracteatum*) etc.<sup>[13,16,26]</sup>

***Muqawwi-i-Qalb (Cardio tonics/cardio protective)***

These drugs tone up the heart and improve the heart function in various ways.<sup>[16,26]</sup> Most of Unani Scholars have enumerated the full description of cardiac diseases in their treatises. *Kitab al Adwiya Qalbiya* is one of the important treatises written by Ibn-i-Sina which encompasses all the aspects of cardiac disease.<sup>[27]</sup> It deals with 63 medicines for heart, the treatise is not confined to medicine only.<sup>[28,29]</sup> Nine of its chapters deal with psychology which give details about *Ruh* (Pneuma), its kinds, seat, and its extroverted and introverted states. The remaining ten chapters are related to medicine. The book is of great value from the standpoints of therapeutics as it throws light on such drugs that are used to tone up the heart and thereby treat maladies of mood and personality.<sup>[28,29]</sup> He had mentioned a lot of drugs in his book which has different types of pharmacological actions on cardiovascular system for example Abresham (*Bombyx mori*), Sandal Safed (*Santalum album*) are used as *Muqawwi-i-Qalb*, (cardio tonics), Gul-i-Surkh (*Rosa damascena*), Elaichi (*Elettaria cardamomum*) are used as *Mufarrih-i-Qalb* (cardiac exhilarants), Zahar Mohra (Serpentine), Sumbul-ut-teeb (*Nardostachys jatamansi*) are used as *Muharrik-i-Qalb* (cardiac stimulant), Ambar (*Ficus glomerata*), Zafraan (*Crocus sativus*) are used as *Musakkin-i-Qalb* (cardiac sedative), Ustukhuddus (*Lavandula stoechas*) is used as *Mufattih-i-Uruq* (vasodilators) etc.<sup>[16,28,29,30]</sup>

***Muqawwi-i-Jigar (Liver tonics/ Hepatoprotective)***

These drugs tone up and improve the liver function in various ways.<sup>[16,26]</sup> Some *Muqawwi-i-Jigar* drugs mentioned in Al-Qanoon have proven their Hepatoprotective effects<sup>[31,32]</sup> e.g. Kasni (*Cichorium intybus*), Makoh (*Solanum nigrum*), Mastagi (*Pistacia Lentiscus*), Gul-i-Surkh (*Rosa damascene*), Naushadar (*Ammonium chloride*) etc.<sup>[16,25,26,32]</sup>

***Mufarrihat (Exhilarants)***

This is a special group of drugs which create feelings of happiness by relaxing the mind and heart from various stresses.<sup>[18,16,26]</sup> This group of drugs are used in the management of neuropsychiatric and cardiac disorders e.g. Anxiety, Depression, palpitation etc. These drugs also create an overall feeling of well being which is a uniqueness of Unani Medicine<sup>[7]</sup> such as Zafran (*Crocus sativus*), Sumbul-ut-Teeb (*Nordostachys jatamansi*), Arq Gulab (*Rosa damascene*), Arq Bed Mushk (*Salix caprea*) etc.<sup>[7,18,16,26]</sup>

***Mechanism of action of Muqawwiyat and Mufarrihat***

Some possible mechanisms by which action of some *Muqawwiyat* and *Mufarrihat* can be interpreted with modern aspects are as follows:

- Having the property of Nourishment e.g. Anjeer (*Ficus carica*).<sup>[33]</sup>
- Having the property of Immunomodulation e.g. Sibr (*Aloe vera*).<sup>[34]</sup>
- Having the property of Immunoprotection e.g. Asgandh (*Withania somnifera*).<sup>[35]</sup>
- Having the property of Anxiolytic e.g. Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri*).<sup>[36]</sup>
- Having the property of Antioxidant e.g. Zafraan (*Crocus sativus*) & Amla (*Emblica officinalis*).<sup>[37,38]</sup>
- Having the property to Anti aging e.g. Amla (*Emblica officinalis*).<sup>[39]</sup>
- Having the property of Neuroprotection e.g. Kalonji (*Nigella sativa*).<sup>[40,41]</sup>
- Having the property of Cardioprotection e.g. Abresham (*Bombyx mori* cocoon).<sup>[42]</sup>
- Having the property of Immunopotentiating e.g. Marwareed (Pearl).<sup>[43]</sup>
- Having the property of Hepatoprotection e.g. Makoh (*Solanum nigrum*).<sup>[44]</sup>

***Management of Izterab-i-Nafsani***

The variability in guidance by National Governments on potential value related to COVID-19 through traditional, complementary, and integrative products, practices, and practitioners is nothing short of astounding. The Indian Government issued a memorandum that was a composite of practices viewed as potentially useful by the various branches of its AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy) Ministry.<sup>[45]</sup> Unani System of Medicine treats psychiatric diseases by preventive measures through balance moderation in Asbab Sitta Zaruriyya and therapeutically by using *Muqawwiyat* and *Mufarrihat* in Unani medicine as follows:



**Fig. 1:** Flow chart of consequences of COVID-19 on psychiatry and its management in Unani Medicine.

### ***Ilaj bil Tadbir (Regimenal therapy)***

The room should be airy, open and fragrant. Arq-i-Gulab (*Rosa damascene*) may be sprinkled in corners of the room to refresh the ambient air. Avoid prolonged stay in hot Climate.<sup>[12,13]</sup>

- **Bakhur (Fumigation):** Bakhur of Oud (*Aquilaria agallocha*), Kafoor (*Cinnamomum camphora*), Sandal (*Santalum album*) etc. should be done at frequent interval to make atmosphere pleasant and aromatic.<sup>[12,13,46]</sup> In a study by Paula et al., also found that aromatherapy is an effective treatment in the reduction of stress and anxiety levels.<sup>[47]</sup>
- **Hammam (Turkish bath):** Hammam with aromatic medicines like Oud (*Aquilaria agallocha*), Jawitry & Jaiphal (*Myristica fragrans*), Kundur (*Boswellia serrata*) etc.<sup>[12,13]</sup> help to relives stress, relax muscles, ease respiratory problem and stimulate circulation.<sup>[48]</sup>
- **Dalak (Massage):** Dalak of body by Roghan Jaitoon, Roghan Kaddu, Roghan Kahu, Roghan Laboob Saba etc.<sup>[12,13]</sup> are also beneficial for improving general mood, decreasing anxiety, stress and depression.<sup>[49]</sup>
- **Riyazat (Exercise):** Unani scholars have strongly advocated the use of *Riyazat* in *Malankhuliya*. It is known that regular exercise has positive effects on both physical and mental health. Regular practice helps to promote or maintain positive self esteem and improves mental health.<sup>[6,16,50]</sup>

**Nafsiyati Tadbir (Psychotherapy):** Distracting methods are the basic principle of treatment to make the patients comfortable and happy, Avoidance of predisposing factors, limit worry

and agitation<sup>[12,13]</sup> by lessening the time spent on watching or listening to media coverage that perceives us upsetting. Search the myth busters and authentic information providing sites.<sup>[5,6]</sup>

- A source of recreation should be provided like poetry, music etc. for keeping patients happy.<sup>[12,13,5,6]</sup>
- **Sleep:** The sleep is important and integral part of the treatment because it produces Rutubat (moisture) in the brain and help to keep patient calm.<sup>[12,13]</sup> Following regimens may be applied for sound sleep:
  1. **Saut (Nasal drop)** with Roghan Banafsha (*Viola odorata*), Roghan Nilofar (*Nelumbo nucifera*), Roghan Kaddu (*Cucurbita maxima*) and the same oils may also used for massage over the scalp.<sup>[12,13]</sup> Saut with Roghan Badam (*Prunus amygdalus*) is also helpful in sound sleep.<sup>[17]</sup>
  2. **Natul (Irrigation):** Natul with decoction of semi grounded Jau (*Hordeum vulgare*), Khas (*Chrysopongon zizanioides*), Khashkhash (*Papaver somniferum*), Gul-i-Nilofar (*Nelumbo nucifera*), Kaddu (*Cucurbita maxima*), Bartang (*Plantago major*) and Khurfa (*Portulaca oleracea*) is also recommended.<sup>[12,13]</sup>
  3. **Shamum (Smelling):** Shamum of Khas (*Chrysopongon zizanioides*) and Sandal (*Santalum album*) are also beneficial.<sup>[13]</sup>

**Tanqiya-i-Mawad and Tarteeb (evacuation and excretion):** Evacuation and excretion of Ghayr Tabi Sawda (abnormal melancholic humor) through Munzijat (concoctive) and Mushilat (purgatives) followed by Tarteeb (moisturizing) is the second line of treatment for psychological disorders. Tarteeb is always essential after Tanqiya, to check and reduce the dryness, produced by Tanqiya. Ibn-e-Sina has stated that due attention must be paid towards Tarteeb-i-Mizaj (moisturizing the temperament) in cases of Malankhulia.<sup>[12,13,16,19]</sup>

- Constipation should be avoided.<sup>[12,13,16]</sup>

### **Ilaj bil Ghiza (Dietotherapy)**

- **Dietary recommendations**

Halki zood hazam (light easily digestible), and good Akhlat (humours) producing diets have been recommended. Cold and moist vegetables like Palak (*Spinacia oleracea*), Khurfa (*Portulaca oleracea*), Kaddu (*Cucurbita maxima*), Taroī (*Luffa acutangula*), Tinda (*Praecitrullus fistulosus*), Bathua (*Chenopodium album*), Kasni (*Cichorium intybus*), Khas (*Chrysopongon zizanioides*) and fruits like Anar (*Punica granatum*), Grapes (*Vitis vinifera*), Santra (*Citrus x sinensis*) and dry fruit like Badam (*Prunus amygdalus*) etc. is

recommended.<sup>[12,13]</sup> Buqrat has advocated that *Ma us Shaeer* (Barley Water) is the best food in pandemic.<sup>[13,25]</sup>

- **Dietary restrictions**

*Saqeel* (heavy), *Naffaq* (flatus producing), *Garam Ashiya* (hot eateries), and *Sawda* (melancholic) producing diet should be avoided like Masoor daal (*Lens culinary*), Brinjal (*Solanum mellingin*), Cabbage (*Brassica oleracea*) etc.<sup>[12,13]</sup>

### ***Ilaj bil Dawa* (Pharmacotherapy)**

- *Taqwiyat-i-Qalb wa Dimagh* (strengthening the heart and mind) through *Muqawwiyat-i-Qalb wa Dimagh* (cardio and brain tonics) and *Mufarrih-i- Qalb wa Dimagh* (cardio and brain exhilarants) is necessary and essential line of treatment after evacuation of vitiated humors from the body as stated by Unani scholars.<sup>[12,13]</sup> For proper care of heart and brain Unani scholars also included many compound formulations of *Muqawwiyat-i-Qalb wa Dimagh* (cardio and brain tonics) and *Mufarrih-i-Qalb wa Dimagh* (cardio and brain exhilarants) to restore the normal function of brain and heart such as Majoon Mufarrih, Dawa Misk Muataddil, Khamira Gaozaban Ambari, Khamira Abresham Sada, Khamira Abresham Hakeem Arshad Wala, Yaqooti, Majoon Najah, Mufarrih Ambari, Nausadari, Sharbat Oud, Sharbat Ahmad Shahi, Ayarij Feeqra etc.<sup>[12,13]</sup>
- *Taqwiyat-i-Jigar wa Tihal* (strengthening the liver and spleen) through *Muqawwiyat-i-Jigar wa Tihal* (tonics for liver and spleen) for Correction of liver and spleen disorders by Jawarish Oud, Jawarish Safar Jali, Jawarish Jalinoous, Majoon Dabidul Ward, Sharbat Deenar, Majoon Khabsul Hadeed etc.<sup>[12,13]</sup>

## **DISCUSSION**

Izterab-i-Nafsani (Anxiety) and its concerns in society are affecting every individual globally to variable extents. Recent evidence suggests that individuals who are kept in isolation and quarantine experience significant distress in the form of anxiety, anger, confusion and post-traumatic stress symptoms.<sup>[11]</sup> Stress, fear and anxiety all tend to be interactive. The principal components of anxiety are psychological (tension, fears, difficulty in concentration, apprehension) and somatic (tachycardia, hyperventilation, palpitations, tremor, sweating). Other organ system (eg. gastrointestinal) may be involved. Fatigue and sleep disturbance are common.<sup>[52]</sup> The prevailing attitude between the association of stress and immune system response is that people under stress are more likely to have an impaired immune system and, as a result, suffer from more frequent illness.<sup>[53]</sup> The medical community needs to have a

greater appreciation for the significant role that stress may play in various diseases and then treat the patient accordingly using both pharmacological (medications and/or pharmaceuticals) and non-pharmacological (change in lifestyle, daily exercise, healthy nutrition, and stress reduction programs) therapeutic interventions.<sup>[53]</sup> Hence it is important to deal with the mental difficulties in the situation of pandemic.<sup>[11]</sup>

The traditional medicine mainly derived from plant sources have been prescribed for the various types of disease and disorder including psychosis due to their cost effective option and less side effects.<sup>[54]</sup> Where long term therapy is required, Unani drugs used as adjuvant play an important role in reducing the toxicity of the synthetic drugs, and in modulating or enhancing the body immunity and overall quality of life.<sup>[7]</sup>

*Mufarrihat* is one of the most critical requirements in the essential medicament of psychological disorders. Unani scholars have strongly advocated the use of *Mufarrihat* in psychiatric diseases after evacuation of vitiated humors from the body. *Mufarrihat* are the drugs that clean, furbish, lengthen and improve the quality of *Ruh-i-Qalbi* and restore the normal temperament of heart, resulting in restoration of normal brain temperament with a feeling of ecstasy.<sup>[19]</sup>

Moreover Ibn-i-Sina has described the relation of some psychological diseases like depression, stress, and anxiety with cardiovascular function. In the words of Avicenna, the heart is the origin of vital spirit (Pneuma) which itself is the source of emotional states such as happiness, grief, fear and anger. He also adds because the heart is the chief and noble organ, it is necessary that the physician should treat it with *Muqawwiyat-i-Qalb* after careful consideration and with a firm will.<sup>[28,29]</sup> Zakariya Razi (865-925A.D) in his treatise *Kitab al Fakhir*, has also mentioned that in order to remove sorrow and fear physicians must pay attention to use of *Muqawwiyat-i-Qalb* (Cardio tonics).<sup>[12]</sup>

According to Hippocrates (460-372 BC) and Galen (129-217 AD), *Muqawwi-i-Jigar* drugs should be used along with other medicine, because liver is the principal organ of *Quwa Tabaiyya* (natural faculty) which serve the function of nutrition, growth and reproduction in the body and expel out the waste products from the body for the preservation of individual.<sup>[31]</sup> The derangement in liver function produces pathological changes via derangement in temperament of *Humours*.<sup>[31]</sup> Vere et al in their review stated that psychosocial stress has been identified in recent years as an important factor in the

progression and outcome of several important liver pathologies.<sup>[55]</sup> So the treatment also includes measures for correction of the deranged temperament, evacuation of the morbid *Humours* and empowerment of the liver and spleen.

## CONCLUSION

Prevailing situation of pandemic has aggravated anxiety in the population globally. Bombardments of unnecessary information have wreaked havoc. Unani physicians have given focus on the management of this situation by balance moderation of *Asbab Sitta Zaruriya* (six essential factors) and by prescribing *Muqawwiyat* and *Mufarrihat* keeping in mind the maintenance of cardiac output, fresh supply of oxygen to the brain and assisting the digestion by releasing the digestive enzymes properly besides other hygienic methods. The concept of tonicity of *Ada Raisa* (vital organs) may pave the way to be out of stress during the present pandemic. Management of *Izterab-i-Nafsani* (anxiety) by Unani Medicine in difficult times may help us to win the battle more easily.

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