

# An Approach of *Shara* (Urticaria) and its Management in Unani Medicine

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**ABSTRACT** - Urticaria is a major health problem that causes patient distress and impairment in quality of life (QoL). In the worldwide 10-20% of people have experienced with urticaria or angioedema at least one episode in their life.

Urticaria name come from Latin word *urtica* and *urere*, which means nettle and to burn. It is commonly called hives and a type of skin rash notable for pale red, raised, itchy bumps. The cause of Urticaria is the *Fasad e Dam* (blood impairment) - caused by the vapors of *Dam e Merari* (bilious blood) or *Balgham e Boraqi* (acidic phlegm) coming towards the skin or periphery of the body.

Signs and symptoms of *Shara* (Urticaria) are recurrent evanescent skin eruptions, Feeling of heat and pricking sensation just before the appearance of lesions, Edematous wheals surrounded by a red flare, Intense itching which is usually very intense with burning sensation and increase in the evening time, Mild to severe pruritus, Physical urticaria (cold, heat, sun exposure, vibration, pressure, sweating and exercise) and Dermatographism.

**Keywords:** Unani Medicine, *Fasad e Dam*, *Shara* (Urticaria).

## INTRODUCTION

Hippocrates (460-377 BC) was first described about the Urticaria, it's elevated itching lesion caused by nettles and mosquitoes. He also described that weals can occurs less itching in the gastrointestinal disorder's patients.

Plinius (32-79 AD) give the name *uredo* which meaning burning. In the 10<sup>th</sup> centaury *essera* name was given by Hali Ben, which means Mountain or elevation in weal's skin elevation. During the period of 1734-1740, Zedler changed the name *uredo* to *urticaria* and in 1769 William Cullen first introduced the name of *urticaria* word.

Urticaria is a major health problem that causes patient distress and impairment in quality of life (QoL). In the worldwide 10-20% of people have experienced with urticaria or angioedema at least one episode in their life.<sup>1,2</sup>

The name of Urticaria is kwon as *Shara* in Unani system of medicine. According to this System *Shara* (Urticaria) is the maculopapular lesion of the skin with reddishness sometimes these lesion are small and sometimes they are big, most of the times colour of the lesion is red but it may be white sometimes itching is associated with these lesion. Itching is abrupt. Duration of *Shara* (Urticaria) varies few hours too few days.<sup>3,4,8,9,19</sup> The actual cause of *Shara* (Urticaria) is believed to be the *Fasad e Dam* (blood impairment) caused by the vapors of *Dam e Merari* (bilious blood) or *Balgham e Boraqi* (acidic phlegm) coming towards the skin or periphery of the body.<sup>3,4,7,8</sup>

Urticaria is a vascular reaction of the skin characterized by the appearance of wheals, generally surrounded by a red hals or flare and associated with severe itching, stinging or pricking sensation. These wheals are caused by localized edema. Clearing of the central region may occur and lesion may combine, producing an annular or polycyclic pattern.<sup>12</sup>

There are several different types of Urticaria:

- **Acute urticaria and/or angioedema:** Urticaria or swelling lasting less than six weeks. The most common causes are foods, medicines, latex, or infections. Insect bites and internal disease may also be responsible. The most common foods that cause hives are nuts, chocolate, fish, tomatoes, eggs, fresh berries, soy, wheat, and milk. Fresh foods cause hives more often than cooked foods. Certain food additives and preservatives may also be to blame. Medicines that can cause Urticaria include aspirin and other NSAIDs, high blood pressure medications (ACE inhibitors), or painkillers such as codine.
- **Chronic urticaria and/or angioedema:** Urticaria or swelling lasting more than six weeks. The cause of this type of urticaria is usually more difficult to identify than those causing acute urticaria and/or angioedema. The causes can be similar to those of acute urticaria but can also include autoimmunity, chronic infections, hormonal disorders, and malignancy.

- **Physical urticaria:** Urticaria caused by direct physical stimulation of the skin, e.g. cold, heat, sun exposure, vibration, pressure, sweating, and exercises. The hives usually occur right where the skin was stimulated and rarely appear anywhere else. Most of the urticaria appears within one hour after exposure.
- **Dermatographism:** Urticaria that form after firmly stroking or scratching the skin. These hives can also occur along with other forms of urticaria.

#### Type of Urticaria according to involvement of Akhlat (humour)<sup>3, 4, 7, 18, 19</sup>

##### 1. *Shara Damvi* (Sanguine Urticaria)

According to Shaikh, this is due to domination of *Khilt-e-Dam* (blood). It is mostly occur in night and it is more intense sometimes grief makes it more intense.

According *Allama Najeebuddin Samarqandi*, this sanguine type of *Shara* (Urticaria) is red, hot and more frequent in the day time.

##### 2. *Shara Safravi* (Bilious Urticaria)

In this type of *Shara* (Urticaria) is sudden and associated with fever, sometimes due to *Balgham Boraqi* (salty phlegmatic). It has more red in colour and warm. According *Shaikh Abu Ali Sina* this type of *Shara* (Urticaria) *Safravi Shara* (Bilious Urticaria) mostly occurs at night.

##### 3. *Shara Balghami* (Phlegmatic Urticaria)

According *Allama Najeebuddin Samarqandi*, this type of *Shara* (Urticaria) is white in colour and occurs mostly in night.

##### 4. *Shara Saudawi*

*Shara Saudawi's* wheals are blackish in colour with other symptoms of *Ghalba e Sauda*. There may be history of fainting attacks. It is usually chronic in nature and sometimes persists for the whole life.

According to *Ali Ibn Abbas Majoosi* he saw a patient having chronic *Shara* (Urticaria), he was having the dominancy of *Saudawi Humour* in his body and his blood got affected. In his treatment whenever the principle of treatment of the *Juzaam* (leprosy) was used he got relief.

Etiology of the Urticaria is indigestion, constipation, heavy and low nutritional diet, female and young age people are more prone to *Shara* (Urticaria) in comparison to male and elderly, menstrual disorder, excessive use of alcohol, These may be agent either in over diet e.g. colour, smells, preservative etc, Insect bite e.g. mosquito bite, Excessive cold or hot season and Psychological factors like mental tension and depression etc<sup>3, 5, 6, 8, 7, 9, 10</sup>

The clinical picture of *Shara* (Urticaria) varies with etiology and type; however few symptoms are commonly seen in all types of *Shara* (Urticaria). In some acute cases of the urticaria there may be fever, headache, nausea, pain in the epigastric region and the tongue may coated before the onset of *Shara* (Urticaria). Feeling of heat and prickling sensation just before the appearance of lesions, Lesions are edematous wheals surrounded by a red flare; Lesions are usually irregular and asymmetrical. Itching is usually very intense with burning sensation and increases in the evening time, after the involution of the wheals there is no sign left behind. In some cases mild fever may also be there<sup>3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9</sup>

#### Usoule Illaj (Principles of Treatment)

Unani system has adopted a line of treatment in the management of *Shara* (Urticaria). The line of treatment is as follows:

- Remove the *Asbabe Maddi* (causative material)
- Blood purifies
- Anti allergic drugs

**Ilaj (Methods of Treatment):** Following modes of therapies used in Unani medicine and it's depends upon the nature of the ailment and its causes.<sup>16, 17, 18, 19</sup>

- *Ilaj bil Tadabeer* (Regimental therapy)
- *Ilaj bil Ghiza* (Dietotherapy)
- *Ilaj bil Dawa* (Pharmacotherapy)
- *Ilaj bil Yad* (Surgery)

Remove the causative agents -*Dam* (Blood), *Safra* (yellow bile), *Balgham* (Phlegm) or *Sauda* (Black bile) by *Istifragh Mawaad-e-Fasaaida* (elimination of morbid matter), *taadeel dam* (Moderation of blood), *Tanqiya e balgham* (Evacuation of Phlegm), and *saudawi advia*.

If *fasid madda* (morbid materiel) is *khilte balgham*: internally give halela and turbud in the form of *Joshanda* (Decoction) with gulkand of honey.

Externally apply the flour of barley (sattu of jao), aabe karafs and vinegar (sirka) after hamam.

If *fasid madda* (morbid matter) due to *khilte dam*: internally give the *khisanda* (Infusion) of *aab anar*, *allobukhara* and *zard aloo turs*.

Externally apply Arq gulab with Roghan gul

Treatment in *fasid madda safra*: orally give the *aabe zulal tamer hindi* and *aabe zulal aloo bukhara* with *Gulgand*. Locally apply the *sirka* (vinegar), Roghan gul and Arq gulab

**Murakkab advia (Compound drugs):** Unani compound drugs have the properties of musaffi khoon, anti allergies and cooling effects. i.e. Habbe Musaffi Khoon, Qurs Asfar, Majoon Chobchini, Majoon Ushba, Jawarish Tamarhindi, Jawarish Jalinoos, Jawarish Bisbasa, Sharabat Nilofer etc.

**Musaffi khoon crude advia (Blood purifier single drugs):** Shahtra (Fumaria officinalis herb), Sandal surkh (Pterocarpus santalinus wood), Sandal Safed (Santalum album wood), Ushba maghribi (Sarsaparilla europaea herb), Unnab (Zizyphus sativa fruit), Chirata (Swertia chiratta herb), Chob Chini (Smilax china root), Darhald (Berberis aristata bark), Sarphoka (Galiga purpurea herb), Senna (Cassia senna leaf), Gule Ghafis (Agrimonia eupatoria flower), Barge Kasni (Cichorium intybus leaf), Karanjwa (Caesalpinia bonducella fruit), Gilo (Tinospora cordifolia extract), Gandhak (Sulphur), Gheekwar (Aloe vera dried leaf secretion), Gule Mundi (Sphaeranthus indica flower), Nim (Melia Azadirachta all parts), Haleela Siyah (Terminelia chebula unripe fruit), Aabnoos (Diospyros ebenum wood), Anjir dashti (Ficus carica fruit), Bakain (Melia azadrach all parts)

**Ilaj Bil Ghiza (Dieto-Therapy):** Prevent the disease of *Shara* (Urticaria) with some restricted diet as like Pungent & Spicy diet, Sweat dishes, Meats, salt, heavy fruits (oranges, bananas, pineapples, figs, dates, avocados), allergy causes substances (milk and milk products, fish and other sea foods).

**Illaj Bil Tadbeer (Regimental Therapy):** Do the *Fasad* (Venesection) if cause is *galba dam* (Excessive Heat of Blood), *Hamam* (Medicated Bath).

### CONCLUSION

It is concluded that *Shara* (Urticaria) is a major health problem, which causes patient distress and impairment in quality of life. The health of human body is maintained by the homeostasis, which depends on balance of the four humors and temperaments. It balanced with *asbabe site zarooriya* (six essential factors) i.e. *Hawa-e-Muhit* (Atmospheric Air), *Makool-wa-Mashroob* (Foods and Drinks), *Harkat-wa-Sakoon-e-Jismani* (Rest and Physical activity), *Harkat-wa-Sakoon-e-Nafsani* (Psychological activity and Repose), *Naum-wa-Yaqzah* (Sleep and Wakefulness), *Istifragh-wa-Ihtibas* (Elimination and Retention) condition will become a cause of the disease. Unani system has the vast range of ancient literature. It has complete record of etiology, mechanism, *usoole illaj* (Principles of Treatment) and *ilaj* (Treatment) of *Shara* (Urticaria).

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