

Unani System of Medicine Introduction and challenges

M S M Nasmeeer

University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Unani system of medicine refers to Greco-Arabic medicine spreading around the globe which is based on the teaching of Greek physician Hippocrates. After Hippocrates, Gallen, Rashes and Avicenna enriched, constructed and imposing edifice the system. Unani medicine may have disappeared from the country of its origin, but it has found in south Asian countries including India and Sri Lanka. The modern day bible of the so called English or modern medicine “The cannon of medicine” is a complete translation of “Qanoon e Tibb” which should have rightly been called as “principle of Medicine” even to this date it is being referred to in this modern era and a lot of research is being done on the formulae, concepts, procedures and treaties mentioned in this book. According to the concept of the Unani medicine the health is maintained by the homeostasis of the seven principles known as elements, temperament, humors, organs, vital spirit, faculties or powers and functions. Equilibrium between these principles maintains natural constituents of the body. There are basic tenets to maintain health of an individual categorized as six essential factors such as food and water, air, sleep and wakefulness, evacuation and excretion, physical movement and rest, mental movement and rest. Unani system of medicine is based on the principle of four humors (blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile) known as humoral theory on their respective temperaments, their quantity and quality, viscosity, colour and smell. Any slight change in any of these parameters of these humors leads to a disease. Various type of treatments are employed, such as regimental therapy, dietotherapy, pharmacotherapy and surgery. However, lack of awareness, improper dissemination, inadequate knowledge about Unani Medicine and their principles are major lacuna for the proper exploitation of benefits of this system of medicine. Therefore, evaluation of the rich heritage of the Unani Medicine on the basis of literatures with special reference to phytochemical, pharmacological, and analytical studies such as microscopy, chromatography of some precious classical remedies are essential. The objective of this study is to identify scientifically proven, safe and effective alternative remedies and to promote their use among general public with sound scientific basis. Further, this study is to suggest technical guidelines for the preparation of these medicines that would satisfy the established international standards in the field of herbal medicines. Therefore, this study will not only pave the way for the protection and preservation of treasure of Unani Medical system but also effectively integrate our herbal practice with other system of medicine, in order to provide primary health care services to the nations.

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mnmnasmeeer19@gmail.com