

Role of *Asbāb Sitta Ḍarūriyya* and *Asbāb Ghair Ḍarūriyya*: A Review

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Abstract: *Jild is the largest and most visible organ of the body. The word Jild meant for the external covering or integument of a human or the outer protective layer of the body of any human. It covers and protects the body from outer environment. Also, in Unani system of medicine the effects of environmental variations and surroundings are described by the name of Asbāb Sitta Ḍarūriyya (six essential factors). These are Hawā' Muhīt (Ambient Air), Makūlat-o-Mashrūbāt (Food and Beverages) Ḥarakat-o-Sukūn Badanī (Bodily Movement and Repose), Ḥarakat-o-Sukūn Nafsānī (Psychic Movement and Repose), Nawm-o-Yaqza (Sleep and wakefulness), Istifrāgh wa Ihtibās (Evacuation and Retention). An equilibrium and balance in Asbab-e-sitta zaroriyah is necessary for healthy life. Asbāb Sitta Ḍarūriyya (six essential factors of life) essentially influence every human body and some other factors which do not influence essentially to each person's health. But those factors are important because the skin's health depends upon them known as Asbab Ghair Ḍarūriyya. Hence, skin must be influenced by these essential factors and non-essential factors. In this study, we will discuss how these six essential factors and non-essential factors are important for the skin health.*

Keywords: Jild, Asbāb Sitta Ḍarūriyya, Tibb Unani, six essential factors, Asbāb Ghair Ḍarūriyya

1. Introduction

A healthy skin is a source of *Lazzat* (pleasure), not only to its owner but also to the one who looks at it. The normal healthy skin is clear, smooth and compliant, uniformly pigmented without wrinkles, and does not sag, and there must be no evidence of active bacterial or fungal growth. The pores of the skin are hardly visible, secreting an imperceptible amount of sebum and sweat except when exertion takes place and in summer or hot environments. There are so many external environmental factors which causes the great stress and strain to the integument of human body. Hairs and nails grow constantly. Sebum or grease of the skin is daily washed off. These agents must be controlled for the maintenance of healthy skin. According to Unani System of Medicine, *Asbāb Sitta Ḍarūriyya* (six essential factors of life) essentially influence every human body. Nobody can escape from these factors so long he is living.¹ Hence, the integument must be influenced by these essential factors which are as follows.

1) **Hawā' Muhīt (Ambient air):** Fresh cool air is potent natural skin restorers. A moderately cold air is the most potent natural stimulus to the integument,² while extreme cold air is injurious. Several tropical conditions can be directly affected to the scorching heat of the tropical climate causing hyperhidrosis and maceration. So, a person should have the clothing to protect himself according to surrounding air or climate. *Ibn Sīnā* described that the hot air causes dissolution of fluids from the body and the skin becomes loose and moist. While extreme hot air account for excess perspiration, decreases the formation of urine and the digestion also influenced.³ The WHO defines air pollution as contamination of the indoor or outdoor environments by any chemical, physical, or biological agent that modifies the natural characteristics of the atmosphere.⁴ Air pollutants like

volatile organic compounds, oxides, UV rays etc damage the skin by increasing oxidative stress which suppresses the antioxidant defences of skin.⁵ According to *Ibn Sīnā*, the change of environment relieves the patients of many diseases. He also described the need for open airy houses with proper ventilation.⁶

- 2) **Makūlat-o-Mashrūbāt (Foods and drinks):** It should be balanced and digestible. The animal proteins and vitamins are essential in fair amount. The foods produce a sense of heat, hence predisposition to allergic conditions and dermatoses.¹ In Unani System of Medicine, so many guidelines are available regarding diets of different kinds of individual. These diets related guidelines are made not only for the management of diseases but for the prevention also. *Ibn Sīnā* mentioned that the foods and drinks are affected to the body by three ways; first one is due to its *Kayfiyat* (quality) that is the heat, cold, moisture and dryness. Second one is due to its *Kammiyat* (quantity of matter or substance). Third one is because of its both *kayfiyat* and *kammiyat*.³
- 3) **Ḥarakat-o-Sukūn Badanī (Bodily Movement and Repose):** The physical activities like exercises play a very crucial role for the maintenance of healthy skin. Physical activity promotes healthy blood circulation which further helps to keep your skin healthy and vibrant. So regular physical activity is one of the keys to maintain the beauty and health of the skin. While also the physical repose having the importance to make the skin healthy. There should not be reached the physical activity at extreme level. So according to Unani System of Medicine, the normal physical activity and repose is essential for the maintenance of good health.¹
- 4) **Ḥarakat-o-Sukūn Nafsānī (Psychic Movement and Repose):** The normal mental movements as well as repose are also considered necessary for the maintaining

good health.⁷ The psychological factors such as happiness, sorrow, fear and anger etc are essentially influenced the health of the human body including the skin. According to Unani System of Medicine, the cutaneous blood supply increases gradually during the psychic movement like happiness, while in case of anger, the blood supply increased suddenly towards the skin. In case of fear and sadness, the blood flow towards the outer parts of body (skin) decreased slightly. So, during the psychic movements of happiness, the skin gets more nourishment from the blood. Skin blood flow plays a crucial role in maintaining nutrition, temperature of the body and in healing of damaged skin.⁸ So any change in psychological movement and repose, it causes the changes in skin blood flow. Through which the physical response to increased or decreased the temperature are regulated through sympathetic vasodilation and vasoconstriction mechanisms.⁹

- 5) **Nawm-o-Yaqza (Sleep and wakefulness):** Adequate sleep and wakefulness have great importance to maintain the skin's health. According to *Sharaf al-Din Isma'il al-Jurjani*, sleep and awakens are resembles to rest and movement of the body respectively. The adequate sleep is most beneficial to the senile or old age persons. It increases the moisture in the body. The brain is an organ which regulates the sleep and awakens. During sleep, both the physical and mental faculty become relaxed and get energised.¹⁰ The purpose of sleep is one of the biggest unsolved mysteries of biological science. Sleep disruption resulting in disruptions of breathing, changes in emotions, memory and decision making.¹¹ The more awakens or lack of sleep causes the ruining of skin. Our skin needs to repair from daily damages. So, the human body produces the growth hormone during the first three hours of sleep. This hormone is responsible for the repair and growth of the skin. After three hours of sleep, the melatonin increases which acts as antioxidants and protects the skin from damaging free radicals. During the last three hours of sleep the level of cortisol decreases. The skin's temperature also decreases during sleep which allows the muscles to relax and gives the deepest recovery to skin. Better sleep is a good natural moisturizer that can help to smooth out the wrinkles on skin. Poor sleep can cause in poor water balance that creates the dark circles with puffy eyes.¹² So the sleep and awakens must be adequate to maintain the skin's health. Better sleep may essentially cause the beauty of skin.
- 6) **Istifragh wa Ihtibas (Evacuation and Retention):** In *Tibb Unani*, Evacuation refers to the act of emptying or clearing of waste materials from the body which are formed during various metabolic activities.¹³ Retention means the condition of retaining something,¹⁴ but in *Tibb Unani*, it refers to the act of retaining of essential substances in the body. Both evacuation and retention must be balanced for the maintenance of health of the body including the skin's health. Abnormal retention of matters can often trigger the various skin disorders. In case of uraemia, the blood concentration of urea, creatinine, and other nitrogenous end products of amino acids are elevated due abnormal retention or faulty evacuation by kidneys.¹⁵ So, the excess retained urea blood concentration leads to the uremic pruritus also

called as chronic kidney disease associated pruritus (CKDaP). That CKDaP strongly reducing the patient's quality of life.¹⁶ abnormal retention and evacuation also trigger hyperpigmentation and xerosis. The urochrome being retained in the skin is one of the causes of skin discoloration or hyperpigmentation. Normally these are evacuated or excreted by healthy kidneys. Patients with urochrome retained skin tend to have almost metallic colour or greyish skin. Uremic frost is another discoloration which is a white powdery substance left on the skin surface after sweat dries.¹⁷ Xerosis or dry skin is caused by a deficiency of moisture in the skin. Xerosis may be result of excess evacuation of fluids from the body which may be seen with underlying diseases such as Diabetes.¹⁸

Asbab Ghair Daruriyya

Ibn Sina [980-1037AD] further states about some other factors which do not influence essentially to each person's health, But those factors are important because the skin's health also depends upon that. Some of them are as follows:

- **Taghassul (Bathing):** It is very essential to keep skin clear and healthy. According to *Ibn Sina*, the normal bathing is beneficial to produce heat and moisture in the body.³ Various kinds of bathing may be used for various purposes whether for prevention or curing of diseases. In cold countries or during winter season one should bathe in warm water as often as possible. In tropical countries or during summer, daily bathing with clean and cool water is beneficial. A hot bath followed by a cold one has stimulating effect to the skin and vital organs.² Physiological changes happen when a person takes bathe with cold water. Due to cold water or lower temperature, the sympathetic nervous system activated and releases some hormones and brain chemicals that help to fight stress ultimately resulting in healthy glow of hairs and skin. So, it prevents the stress related skin conditions that include acne, psoriasis, contact dermatitis and others. It also has been found to be effective in relief from pruritus. The cold-water bathe also prevents the skin aging by increasing moisture to the skin.¹⁹ *Hakim Muhammad Hasan Qarshi* says that bathing with cold water is more beneficial for health, but it may be harmful for those persons having tendency of nervous disorders like paralysis. Bathing with lukewarm water is beneficial to children and old peoples. It is recommended to all age groups and in any season. According to *Ibn Sina*, the body gets energised by taking bathe with cold water and it is recommended in the summer to healthy peoples. So, the appropriate bathing cleans the waste materials, dust particle, and various kind of pathogenic organism.²⁰
- **Tadahha (Sunshine/Sunbathing):** The exposure to sunlight is very crucial to our well-being. It is beneficial as harm as to skin depends upon the degree of ultraviolet radiation and sunrays exposure time. According to *Ibn Sina*, the sunshine is crucial for overall health. It has anti-inflammatory action. It is also helpful in decreasing the obesity and ascites. It eliminates the waste matter by perspiration through skin. The mild sunshine is also beneficial in hysteria, arthritis, asthma and other respiratory disorders. But the excess and severe sunshine without proper clothing causes hyperpigmentation and sunburn on the skin.³ The sunshine triggers the skin's

production of vitamin D which is also called as sunshine vitamin.²¹ The skin cancer hazards of excessive sun exposure. The skin cancer melanoma and non-melanoma are largely attributed to the excess UVR exposure.²² According to WHO one in every three cancers diagnosed is a skin cancer.²³

- **Talabbus (Clothing):** Wearing of cloths is a kind of social norms. It is mostly restricted to human beings which mean the feature of all human societies. *Hasan Qarshī* says that the clothing should be appropriate regarding to each season. During summer, one should wear a loose and light colour cloth such as cotton cloth. Avoid very tight fitting and nylon cloth because it interferes with absorption and evaporation of sweat,^{2,20} which can cause the contact dermatitis.² Clothing serve as a hygienic barrier between the skin and environment. It can protect the skin from rough surfaces, rash causing plants and insects. It also gives protection to the skin from hazards of ultraviolet radiation.
- **Tammul (Sand bath):** A bath in which the body is immersed in hot sand is known as sand bath. It is also known as “Psammo Therapy” which is a kind of thermal treatment.²⁴ *Ibn Sīnā* described that among all kinds of sand the costal or close to river sand is known to be best. It dries the moisture around the skin. Sand bath is useful and beneficial in pain related conditions.³ It can be used for relief from neuralgia, back pain, joint pathologies. The pains will just drift away by streaming in hot sand. Sand bath said to be good for some of the skin diseases.²⁵

2. Conclusion

From the study we can conclude that all factors mentioned above are having great importance to healthy skin. Therefore, basic knowledge of *Asbāb Sitta Darūriyya* is very necessary to maintain the skin healthy, also *Asbab Ghair Darūriyya* provide aid to healthy skin. So, everyone should have to take proper techniques or interventions amongst both essential and non-essential factors of life for skin's health.

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