

Therapeutic Effect of Safoof-e-Musakkin (Piper nigrum, Coriandrum, Rauwolfia serpentina) in the Management of Generalised anxiety disorder (GAD).

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Introduction : Anxiety is a state of low mood & aversion to activity that can affect a person's thoughts, behavior, feelings & a sense of well being. It is a brain disorder characterized by depressed mood or loss of interest in activities causing significant effect in daily life. People with anxiety can feel sad, empty, hopeless, helpless, worthless, guilty, irritable, angry, ashamed or restless. World mental health surveys indicate that anxiety is experienced by 10-15% people in their lifetime that means one in every five individuals has lifetime prevalence of all anxiety disorders. Such a global pandemic need to be addressed. The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of safoof-e-musakkin for treating anxiety & to collect the data to warrant further clinical trials.

Methods: A case series was conducted with 10 patients of Anxiety diagnosed with accurate history, proper physical examination & by Generalised Anxiety Disorder 7 (GAD 7) scale, subsequently the patients were advised to take safoof-e-Mussakin (3gm) twice daily for a period of 12 weeks

Results: Patients were significantly relieved of Anxiety within an average of 12 weeks treatment.

Conclusion: The preliminary findings indicate that safoof-e-muskkin is effective in patients of Anxiety disorder.

KEYWORDS: Safoof-e-Musakkin, Aversion, pandemic, patient Health Questionnaire

Introduction:

Anxiety is a subjective feeling of apprehension or dread about the present or future accompanied by a number of autonomic signs and somatic symptoms. Anxiety is a normal emotional state concerned with optimal functioning and with threatening situation. It is an emotion which is likely to be an evolutionary development concerned with survival in the widest sense of word. Normal anxiety becomes pathological when it causes significant subjective distress and impairment in functioning of an individual. In this state due to disturbance in ANS sympathetic over activity patient feels akin to fear or apprehension.^{1,2,3}

Anxiety disorder is a most prevalent psychiatric disorder in the general community and present in 15-20% of medical clinic patients at any time. Approximately one in four adults in the U.S. population has an anxiety disorders suggest the importance of brain development in the phenotypic expression of anxiety proneness.

Although anxiety disorders have reported in 20% of the parents and 10% of the siblings of patients with anxiety, evidence for a genetic or constitutional predisposition to anxiety is unsubstantial. Lifetime prevalence rates for GAD are 30% in women and 19% in men.

The essential feature of this disorder is frequent, persistent and unrealistic worry lasting at least six months. Patients with GAD may not acknowledge the excessive nature of their worries, but they must be bothered by degree of worry. These patients worry excessively over minor matters, with life disrupting effects.⁴

All the symptoms of anxiety can occur in GAD, but there is a characteristic pattern comprised of these features. The main symptoms of GAD are worry and apprehension, not focused on anything in particular and widespread, which includes even minor day to day affairs.^{1,2,3} The symptoms are pervasive and uncontrollable and known as free floating anxiety. Other symptoms are motor tension such as restlessness, inability to relax, feeling of shakiness, trembling, being easily fatigued, headache, backache, shoulder pain and stiffness of muscles. Autonomic hyperactivity is characterized by sweating, palpitations, dry mouth, epigastric discomfort, giddiness, and light headedness.

Unani Perspective

In Unani system of medicine Anxiety disorders are known by the synonyms like *Tashweesh*, *Iztirab-e-Nafsani*. It means restlessness, worry and agitation. Eminent Unni physicians have described anxiety in the context of melancholia, as a disease which develops due to humoral derangement such as excess of black bile (*sauda*) or bile (*Safra*) which in due course of time or in chronic course, any of four humours is lastly transformed into abnormal black bile by burning due to excessive body heat or its own heat.^{5,6}

Different Unani physicians have also described other causes than humoral derangement, like disturbance of Quwwat-e-Nafsaniya. Besides these different mental disorders and aeraz like epilepsy, hepatic and splenic diseases, weakness of quwwat-e-jaziba, quwwat-e-dafiya, excess fear and sadness like causes are also included as general cause of this disorder. Black bile producing diets or foods like meat of sheep, ass, fox, rabbit, pig or other animals, dried spicy meat are also responsible for this disorder.

Plato (427-347) argued that there were two types of mental illness divinely inspired mental illness that gave the person prophetic powers, and a second type that was caused by a physical disease.

Aristotle (384-322) abandoned the divinely caused mental illness theory and proposed instead that all mental illness was caused by physical problems.

Galen (130-205) stated that physical and emotional health was the result of balance among circulating Humors. He suggested that lack of discharge of human semen or uterine secretions would lead to anxiety.

Intervention:

In this case series patients were advised to take Safoof-e-Mussakin 3gm two times daily in morning and evening for a period of 4 months.

Case Presentation:

Case 1: A 23 year old female presented in Moalejat OPD of AKTCH, A.M.U with chief complaints of Generalised bodyache and palpitations. On taking her proper history, complete clinical and laboratory workup, patient was assessed on GAD-7 Scale and was diagnosed to be suffering from severe anxiety disorder. Subsequently she was advised to take the test formulation for a period of 4 months, she was significantly relieved of her symptoms after four months of treatment.

Case II : A 63 year male presented in Moalejat OPD of AKTCH, A.M.U with complaints of recurrent urination, excessive sweating, feeling of uneasiness. After complete history, clinical and laboratory workup, he was diagnosed of suffering from moderate GAD. Subsequently he was advised to take the test formulation. Patient was effectively relieved of the symptoms within 4 months of treatment.

Case III :

A 32year old female presented in Moalejat OPD, AKTCH, A.M.U with complaints of Fatigue, headache and palpitations, she had taken several treatment for months but not relieved by any treatment. On complete history, clinical and laboratory workup she was diagnosed for anxiety using GAD-7 Scale. Subsequently, with 4 months of treatment with test formulation she was relieved of her symptoms

Case IV:

A 36 year old female presented in Moalejat OPD of AKTCH, A.M.U, with chief complaints of polyuria, Sweating and headache .Her complete evaluation was done by history, clinical and laboratory workup Patient was advised to fill the GAD-7 Scale and was diagnosed to be suffering from GAD. Subsequently patient got relieved by test formulation after 4 months.

Case V :

A 29 year female presented Moalejat OPD of AKTCH, A.M.U with complaints of fatigue, generalized bodyache and excessive perspiration..Patient was diagnosed for GAD after ruling out other diseases by proper history, clinical and laboratory workup. She was subsequently advised to take the test formulation. Patient was effectively relieved of the symptoms within 4 months of treatment.

Outcome Measures:

Patients were evaluated for improvement in their symptoms which were recorded every fortnightly.

Results:

These patients were significantly relieved of their symptoms on an average of 4 months of treatment as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Effect of test formulation on GAD-7Scale Score:

S.N	Pre-treatment	Post-treatment
1	18	8
2	10	4
3	12	6
4	7	1
5	11	3
6	13	4
7	7	2
8	12	2
9	15	4
10	11	3

Discussion :

Generalised anxiety disorder is concerned with optimal functioning and with threatening situations., so this disease was designed to find out the effect of this drug in GAD. In the present study almost all patients showed a good response during & after study as depicted by their GAD-7 Score in table 1.

In our patients , we prescribed the test formulation for 4 months to evaluate its effect in GAD-7 Scale score. The ideal aim of any therapy is to relieve patients of their symptoms, with minimal adverse effects. Be cost effective & at the same time prevent relapses which was achieved by this drug.

These drugs have been used since the time immemorial for its properties. it has been used extensively for gastrointestinal disorders like dyspepsia, flatulent colic, inflammation of piles, cleaning of teeth because of specific properties that help to combat these disorders.

Asrol (Rauwolfia serpentine) possesses properties like *Mussakin*, *Mukhadir*, *Mussakin aasab*, *Munnawim*⁷ because of which it is effective in GAD. Research indicates that *Asrol* contains a high proportion of indole alkaloids, such as reserpine, serpentine and ajmalicine found effective to have calming action on brain.

Kishneez (Corandrum) possesses properties like *Mussakin*, *Muqqawi dimag*, *Muqqawi Qalb*⁷, because of which it is effective in GAD.

Conclusion:

This case series provides a novel direction in which the test formulation can be used in the treatment of GAD. Therefore further studies may be performed to warrant the effectiveness & mechanism of action of these drugs in Generalised Anxiety disorder.

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