

Concept and Management of Humaiqa (*Chickenpox / varicella*) in the light of Unani system of Medicine: A Review Article

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Abstract:

The Unani system of medicine is one of the traditional systems of medicine practiced since centuries in many parts of the world including India. Epidemic of infectious diseases have been acknowledged throughout the history. The classical literatures of ancient Greece and Egypt revealed the prevalence of some diseases such as meningitis, tuberculosis, Hansen's disease and smallpox in those days. Chickenpox (Humaiqa), also known as varicella, is a highly contagious infection caused by the varicella zoster virus. In Unani system of medicine various Herbs and ready formulation used to control the Amraz-e-Wabaiya (Infectious diseases) which is presently termed as influenza, chickenpox, small pox, diphtheria, tuberculosis, mumps and malaria. In this article we explain prevention, Treatment and Various Unani drugs used to control the Chickenpox. Now a day various household remedies also used to control of chickenpox.

Keywords. Chickenpox (Humaiqa), Herbal drugs, Prevention of Chickenpox, Household remedies.

1. Introduction and Early history of Amraz-e-Wabaiya (Infectious diseases)

Epidemic of infectious diseases have been acknowledged throughout the history. The classical literatures of ancient Greece and Egypt revealed the prevalence of some diseases such as meningitis, tuberculosis, Hansen's disease and smallpox in those days. The Greeks were also aware of pulmonary tuberculosis, seems to have raged during Hippocrates lifetime. Rabies was the most prevalent disease documented in Babylonian manuscripts many centuries ago before the Christ period. Hippocrates (460-377 B.C.) the excellent scientist brain in Greek medicine was probably the first physician to records the different clinical signs of several contagious diseases which are presently termed as influenza, chickenpox (Humaiqa), small pox, diphtheria, tuberculosis, mumps and malaria. It also asserts that Hippocrates coined the terms epidemic and endemic. He is an author of three most popular treatises on epidemiology named as Epidemic I, Epidemic III and on Airs, Waters and Places. These manuscripts of Hippocrates describe diseases from a rationale and hypothetical



Fig. 1 Chickenpox (Humaiqa) infection in kids



Fig. 2 Chickenpox (Humaiqa) Infectious Disease

perspective rather than supernatural theory. The eminent Greco- Roman physician Galen projected miasma theory of disease transmission such as cholera, chlamydia or plague were caused by a miasma (pollution), a noxious form of bad air. Miasma was pollution of the air by noxious vapors containing poisonous elements caused by rotting putrid matter. It was spread by wind and therefore could spread speedily; enter humans by breathing and through the pores of the skin. The very ancient country India has records to origin one of the most highly infectious diseases smallpox and chickenpox. It is noted that the smallpox and chickenpox (Humaiqa) was existed amongst the Indian populations especially in Brahmins in olden days. While some accounts cited chickenpox and smallpox had been emerged in the earliest Egyptian and Chinese writings. However, the first clear and scientific description and distinction between smallpox and measles was put forth by Razi. It is alleged that in 160 A.D. the Han Empire and six years later the Roman Empire were died of plague.

Chickenpox, also known as varicella, is a highly contagious infection caused by the varicella zoster virus. In the Unani system of medicine Chickenpox is known as Humaiqa. Although the symptoms are uncomfortable, most people recover within 1-2 weeks. Chickenpox (Humaiqa) is a viral illness that causes a blister-like rash. The rash first appears on the face and trunk and then spreads throughout the body. Among people who are not vaccinated, it is extremely contagious. Although chickenpox is not a life-threatening illness, it can sometimes cause complications.

Children can get chickenpox at any age. After being exposed to chickenpox, your child may appear to be fine for one to three weeks before feeling sick. Children can spread the virus from one day before they show signs of illness to about five days after a skin rash appears.

The virus is spread by:

- A. Coming in contact with someone who has chickenpox.
- B. Breathing air from an infected person who sneezes or coughs.
- C. Coming in contact with fluids from an infected child's eyes, nose or mouth.

Chickenpox is caused by primary infection with varicella zoster virus. In healthy people, it is usually a mild, self-limiting illness, characterized by low-grade fever, malaise, and a generalized, itchy, vesicular rash. However, severe disease can develop leading to pneumonitis, hepatitis, thrombocytopenia, or encephalitis. Risk of severe disease is higher in pregnancy, in neonates (<28 days of life), and in people who are immune compromised due to medication or disease. In most people, infection is uncomplicated. The most common complication in immune competent people is secondary bacterial skin infection, often seen in children younger than 5 years of age. Less commonly, acute cerebellar ataxia can occur in older children. At all ages, infection can be complicated by soft tissue or deeper invasive group A streptococcal infection. Following primary infection, the varicella zoster virus remains latent in the body. Subsequently, it can re-activate to cause herpes zoster (shingles)

2. Brief introduction of Unani medicine

The theories of Unani system of medicine are mainly based on teachings of Hippocrates (460–370 BC) who is also considered as father of medicine. The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized this system and is practicing in various countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka etc. In India, the Unani medicine is practicing under the patronage of Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy), Govt. of India. According to Unani theory, the human body is poised with seven basic components viz. arkān (elements), mizāj (temperament), akhlāt (humour), a'dā' (organs), arwāh (pneuma), quwā (faculties) and af'āl (functions). Moreover, the humoral theory is also put forwarded with four humours viz. dam(sanguine), balgham (phlegm), safrā (yellow bile) and sawdā (black bile) with their temperamental nature such as hot-moist, cold-moist, hot-dry and cold-dry, respectively. An imbalance in any one of the above mentioned seven components and humours are responsible for the development of diseases. This traditional system of medicine is also discussed about prevention of diseases through asbāb-i-sittā zarūriā (six essential factors) that includes hawā-imuheet (atmospheric air), makoolāt va mashroobāt (food and drink), harakat-o-sukūn badnī (physical activity and repose), harakat-o-sukūn nafsānī (mental activity and repose), nawm-o-yaqza (sleep and wakefulness) and ehtibās-o-istifrāgh (retention and elimination). These factors are essential for life of anybody, and also for prevention of diseases. Certain other factors such as changes in the environment and geography can also influence the health of people and these are considered as secondary essential factors (asbab-i-ghair-zarūriā). In Unani system, tabī'at (physis) is referred as an individual power of people and becomes part of the body in fighting with diseases. Thus, the essential aspect of Unani treatment is to return the balance of the body mainly through assisting bodily faculties i.e. tabī'at mudabbir-i-badan (medicatrix, naturae). It is an inborn power of the body which gives self-defence or modification and refurbishing any disturbance in the anatomical and physiological state of the body.

3. Difference between smallpox and chickenpox.

Chickenpox and smallpox are both diseases that produce rashes on the skin, but they are different. For one thing, smallpox is a much more serious disease, causing severe illness and death. They are caused by different viruses. While the two diseases both produce rashes, the rashes themselves develop at different times and the rashes look different. Smallpox pustules look the same as each other, while the chickenpox rash develops

in waves. The individual spots don't look the same and some form scabs while others are still blistering. There's another important difference. A massive global vaccination program has eradicated (wiped out) smallpox.

4. Symptoms of chickenpox

Chickenpox (Humaiqa) is most commonly a childhood illness. Before the chickenpox vaccine was introduced in 1995, most people in the United States caught chickenpox as children. Today, some vaccinated people can still get chickenpox, as well as some people who are unvaccinated or immune compromised. Those vaccinated people who still get infected may develop milder symptoms. This is called breakthrough chickenpox.

Chickenpox develops in stages. Before the rash appears, there may be:

- A. Fatigue or a general feeling of being unwell (malaise)
- B. Fever that lasts 3-5 days and is usually less than 102 °f (39 °c).
- C. Loss of appetite
- D. Muscle or joint aches
- E. Cold-like symptoms such as a cough or runny nose
- F. Headache

After these symptoms, the following will happen:

- A. An itchy rash will present on the face, body, or inside the mouth. The rash will develop in spots and sometimes can also appear on the eyelids or the genitals. The severity of the rash can vary.
- B. The rash will develop into fluid-filled blisters that will turn cloudy. These blisters make take 3-5 days to heal. As there may be many blisters, some may heal sooner than others.
- C. The blisters will become scabs. The scabs will fall off after about a week.

Chickenpox symptoms in infected adults who did not get the disease as children may be similar to symptoms in children but they could be more severe. Those who are unvaccinated or immune compromised are especially at risk. Some adults may not develop a rash. If they do develop a rash, the rash may not spread in the same way. However, if they do get a rash, it may leave deeper marks and scars. Adults are also more at risk for complications such as pneumonia.

5. Causes of chickenpox

The varicella-zoster virus (VZV) causes chickenpox. This is an extremely contagious virus that belongs to the family of herpes viruses that also include herpes simplex virus types 1 and 2, Epstein-Barr virus, and others. There are more than 100 viruses in the herpes virus family. They mostly affect the skin, mucus membranes, nerves, and tissues.

Chickenpox (Humaiqa) is one of the most infectious diseases. People who have never had chickenpox, have never been vaccinated, or have a compromised immune system are at the highest risk of infection. Transmission happens through direct contact between people through coughing or sneezing, or by air. VZV can also cause another condition known as shingles or herpes zoster. A person can also get chickenpox if they come in contact with fluid either from someone's chickenpox or shingles blister.

6. Chickenpox weakened immune system

The risks of contracting chickenpox and the development of complications are higher in a person with a weakened immune system.

A weakened immune system can result if a person:

- A. Is taking certain medications
- B. Has cancer
- C. Is undergoing treatment such as radio- or chemotherapy
- D. Has certain chronic conditions, such as lupus or rheumatoid arthritis
- E. Has other chronic illnesses such as uncontrolled diabetes, or heart, liver, or kidney failure

7. Treatment of chickenpox

There is no cure for chickenpox, but it generally resolves within a week or two without treatment. A doctor may prescribe medication or give advice on how to reduce symptoms of itchiness and discomfort, and also on how to prevent transmission of the infection. The following are some treatments that may alleviate symptoms:

- A. **Pain-relieving drugs:** Tylenol (acetaminophen) may help reduce high fever and pain when a person has chickenpox. But it is important to follow the instructions provided by the manufacturer and the person's doctor. People should not use aspirin-containing products to treat chickenpox, as this can lead to complications. People should also avoid ibuprofen, as it could increase the risk of strep throat.
- B. **Avoiding dehydration:** It is important to drink plenty of fluids, preferably water, to prevent dehydration, which can be a complication of chickenpox.
- C. **Sugar-free popsicles:** These can help ease symptoms of mouth soreness if there are spots in the mouth. Avoid salty or spicy foods. If chewing is painful, soup might be a good option, as long as it is not too hot.
- D. **Reduce itching:** Itching can become severe, but it is important to minimize scratching to reduce the risk of scarring. Things that can help include topical ointments, cool baths, or oral Benadryl tablets.

The following may also help prevent scratching:

- A. Keeping fingernails clean and as short as possible
- B. Placing mittens or even socks over a child's hands when they go to sleep, so that any attempt at scratching during the night does not cut the skin
- C. Wearing loose clothing

A doctor may prescribe antiviral medication during pregnancy, for adults who get an early diagnosis, for newborns, and for those with a weakened immune system.

Acyclovir is one example of an antiviral medication that treats chickenpox. This works best if it is given within 24 hours of developing symptoms. It reduces the severity of symptoms but does not cure the disease.

8. Prevention of chickenpox

There is no cure for chickenpox, but a vaccine is available for VZV. Today, the chickenpox vaccine is about effective at preventing the disease for most people. People should avoid close contact with people known

to have chickenpox, avoid sharing objects with them, isolate any household members with chickenpox from others, and disinfect surfaces an infected person may have touched.

A. Hygiene measures

The spread of chickenpox can be prevented by isolating affected individuals. Contagion is by exposure to respiratory droplets, or direct contact with lesions, within a period lasting from three days before the onset of the rash, to four days after the onset of the rash. The chickenpox virus is susceptible to disinfectants, notably chlorine bleach (i.e., sodium hypochlorite). Like all enveloped viruses, it is sensitive to drying, heat and detergents.



Fig. 3 Prevention of Chickenpox

B. Vaccine

Chickenpox (Humaiqa) can be prevented by vaccination. The side effects are usually mild, such as some pain or swelling at the injection site. A live attenuated varicella vaccine, the Oka strain, was developed by Michiaki Takahashi and his colleagues in Japan in the early 1970s. In 1981, Merck & Co. licensed the “Oka” strain of the varicella virus in the United States, and Maurice Hilleman's team at Merck invented a varicella vaccine in the same year.

The varicella vaccine is recommended in many countries. Some countries require the varicella vaccination or an exemption before entering elementary school. A second dose is recommended five years after the initial immunization. A vaccinated person is likely to have a milder case of chickenpox if they become infected. Immunization within three days following household contact reduces infection rates and severity in children. Being exposed to chickenpox as an adult (for example, through contact with infected children) may

boost immunity to shingles. So it was thought, that when the majority of children are vaccinated against chickenpox, adults might lose this natural boosting, so immunity would drop and more shingles cases would occur. On the other hand, current observations suggest that exposure to children with varicella is not a critical factor in the maintenance of immunity. Multiple subclinical reactivations of varicella zoster virus may occur spontaneously and, despite not causing clinical disease, may still provide an endogenous boost to immunity against zoster.

9. Types of chickenpox vaccines

There are two types of the VZV vaccine:

- A. Varivax:** This is only the chickenpox vaccine. Children get two shots, with the first dose between 12-15 months and a second time between 4-6 years. Anyone 12 months and older can get this vaccine. This includes adolescents and adults.
- B. ProQuad:** This is a combination vaccine that also contains vaccines for measles, mumps, and rubella. Healthcare professions call it MMRV. Children get this vaccine on the same schedule as Varivax, but it can only be given to children between 12 months and age 12.

10. Complications of chickenpox

Among unvaccinated people who develop chickenpox, a few people may have more severe symptoms. Adults are more susceptible to complications than children, but even in adults, they are rare. Pregnant women, newborns, and infants up to 4 weeks old, as well as those with weakened immune systems, are more likely to experience complications.

If the following occurs, a person should contact a doctor:

- A. Infection:** If the skin around the spots and blisters becomes red and tender or sore, there may be a bacterial infection in the skin.
- B. Breathing problems:** If a person experiences breathing difficulties, they may be developing pneumonia.
- C. Encephalitis:** A person can develop an inflammation of the brain. Symptoms include confusion, sleepiness, behavior or personality changes, or seizures.
- D. Reye's syndrome:** In rare cases, recovering children and teenagers will experience swelling of the liver and brain.
- E. Bleeding:** A person can experience a hemorrhage, which is a loss of blood from a ruptured blood vessel.
- F. Sepsis:** A person can get an infection in the blood, which is a life-threatening condition.

11. Chickenpox and pregnancy

People who are pregnant have a slightly higher risk of developing pneumonia from chickenpox. There is also a danger of passing the infection to the fetus. If infection occurs during the first 20 weeks of pregnancy, there is a higher risk of congenital varicella syndrome. This can cause scarring in the fetus, as well as eye problems, brain drainage, and shortened arms or legs. If the infection happens later in pregnancy, the virus can transmit directly to the fetus and the baby can be born infected. If a person becomes exposed to varicella during pregnancy, it is important to talk to a doctor right away. A doctor or nurse will know whether a child or adult has chickenpox by recognizing a person's tell-tale rash and asking a few questions about their symptoms.

In cases when a person is not vaccinated and is not sure whether they have had chickenpox as a child, they can get a laboratory test to determine whether they did have the virus in the past. People who have had chickenpox as children will not get the disease again. This is because they develop immunity to the virus. If a person who has been exposed to someone with chickenpox is not sure if they had the illness as a child, getting tested can help them know if they are at risk for getting the disease. Another reason to get tested is to help a doctor distinguish the symptoms of chickenpox from other conditions with similar symptoms. One of those conditions may be shingles.

Chickenpox can be harmful in pregnancy both to mother and baby. Around 10% of pregnant women with chickenpox will develop varicella pneumonia, slightly more at later gestation. Mortality of this condition was up to 45% prior to antiviral agents being available, although it is now less than 1 % due to the development of antivirals and improved intensive care. Pregnant women who develop a rash which may be chickenpox should be seen at once: if they are more than 20 weeks pregnant AND present within 24 hours of rash onset they should be given oral aciclovir. Aciclovir can be used earlier in pregnancy as there is no evidence of the drug causing fetal harm.

The baby of a pregnant woman with chickenpox is at risk of fetal varicella syndrome, in which the vesicles scar the developing fetus causing limb hypoplasia, microcephaly, cataracts and growth retardation. However, the incidence is only around 2% of affected pregnancies, primarily in women between 12 and 20 weeks pregnant. From 20-28 weeks there is still some risk of scarring but the risk is much lower. Women who have chickenpox in pregnancy need detailed ultrasound scanning 5 weeks post infection to look for fetal varicella syndrome.

12. Herbal and Vegetable food used in Treatment of Chickenpox.

A. Fruit

Any fruits that contain vitamin C are perfect for chickenpox patients. Fruits are packed with nutrients and can help boost the immune system, aiding and speeding up recovery. Just avoid acidic fruits such as lemons and oranges as its acidity can irritate oral sores.



Fig. 4 Fruits used in Chickenpox

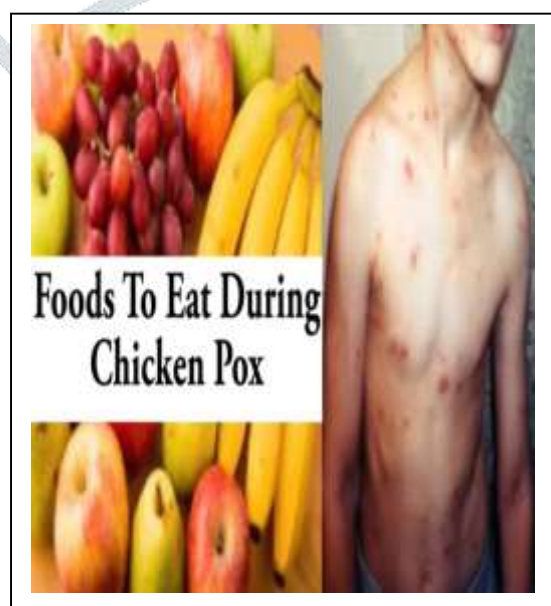


Fig. 5 Fruits used in Chickenpox

These help in preventing acidity during chickenpox. Here are some non-acidic fruits and veggies to eat:

- ❖ Berries
- ❖ Peach
- ❖ Banana
- ❖ melon
- ❖ Cucumber
- ❖ Spinach
- ❖ Kale
- ❖ Broccoli

Chickenpox causes oral lesions which can get irritated if you eat harsh or spicy foods. Eating soft foods is easy for your mouth as well as digestion. Here is a list of soft foods that you may consume:

- ❖ Sweet potatoes
- ❖ Boiled and mashed potatoes
- ❖ Boiled chicken
- ❖ Avocado
- ❖ Tofu
- ❖ Scrambled or boiled eggs
- ❖ Lentils and beans(without spices)

Chickenpox generates a lot of heat in the body. This is why a person gets a fever during that time. To control that, cool foods can help. However, you cannot eat anything and everything cool. Pick things from this list:



Fig. 6 Ice Cream & Yogurt used in Chickenpox



Fig 7 Rice & Pasta used in Chickenpox

- ❖ Ice cream
- ❖ Yogurt(plain or flavored)
- ❖ Kefir
- ❖ Shakes and smoothies
- ❖ Cottage cheese

B. Bland foods

As said above, oral lesions are very common during chickenpox. Spices may aggravate them. On the other hand, chickenpox makes your body dehydrated. Consuming spicy foods also has a dehydrating effect which may affect the recovery process. Eating bland foods for some time can help you get well sooner. Also, these are easy-to-digest to not put extra load on your stomach. You can eat:

- ❖ Rice
- ❖ Pasta
- ❖ Oatmeal
- ❖ Toast

C. Liquids

We cannot emphasize much on the importance of hydration for recovery from chickenpox. This helps in preventing dehydration and easing digestion to help digest the foods. The best hydrating liquids you can opt for are:

- ❖ Water
- ❖ Coconut water
- ❖ Electrolyte drink or ORS
- ❖ Herbal teas
- ❖ Low-sugary drinks

D. Proteins

Chicken, beef, fish, and eggs are great for helping the body stay strong, keeping you feeling full, as well as speeding up recovery thanks to a compound called lysine. Try to avoid meats that are highly seasoned and processed with lots of additives.

E. Honey

Manuka honey is one of the best foods you should have when you're sick. From common colds to chickenpox, honey will help you feel better instantly, and help you recover

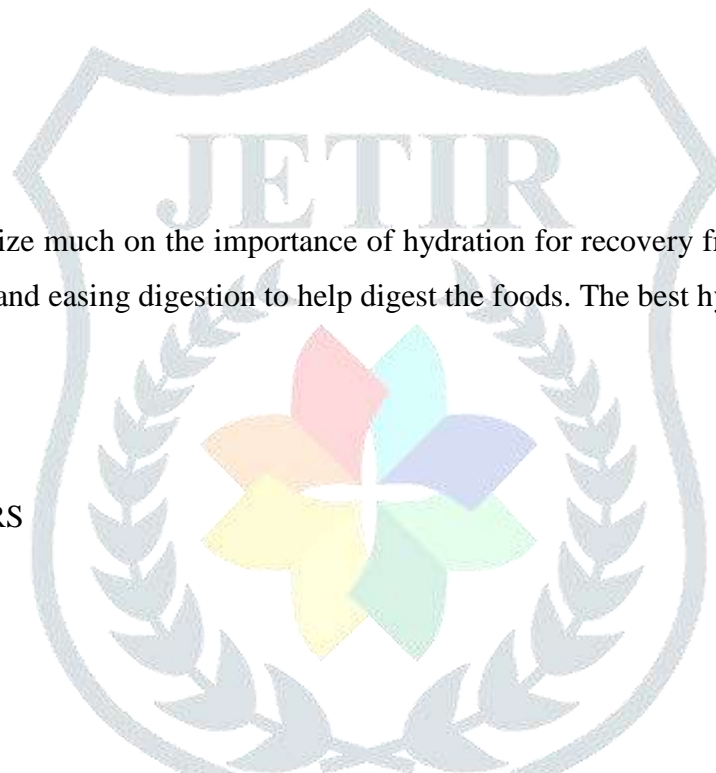




Fig. 8 Echinacea used in Chickenpox



Fig. 9 Honey used in Chickenpox

faster. Honey is a natural antibacterial and antiviral food source and can lessen the severity of symptoms. Honey can be added to your warm drink or with porridge.

F. Coconut oil

Also another natural food source with antibacterial and antiviral properties, coconut oil is perfect for combating inflammation and helping you recover faster.

G. Tea

As loss of appetite is common in people suffering from chickenpox, dehydration is very likely. Drinking tea such as green tea, chamomile, and herbal teas are perfect. They are packed with antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals to boost your immune system, battle inflammation, and help you recover faster.

The chamomile tea in your kitchen cabinet may also soothe itchy chickenpox areas. Chamomile has antiseptic and anti-inflammatory effects when applied to your skin. Brew two to three chamomile tea bags and allow to cool, place in a warm bath. Then, dip soft cotton pads or washcloths in the tea and apply to itchy areas of skin. When you are done applying compresses, pat skin gently to dry.

H. Echinacea

Echinacea purpurea is a popular herb. Its function is to improve the efficiency of the immune system. Most of us associate echinacea with stimulating the immune system and we refer to it as the herb that kills viruses and bacteria. But it does not stimulate the immune system or kill anything. What it does do is improve how effective your immune system is at spotting the bad guys, and improves how efficient the immune system responds to the invaders that cause viral, bacterial, or fungal infections. The end result is the same, you are protected from germs, and you can reduce the amount of time you spend missing quality time at home or at work.

Now is the time to consider protecting your immune system. A healthy diet and lifestyle is crucial. A diet that is heavy in junk food, lots of caffeine, sugar, with not enough vegetables and fruit will slow down the

immune response. Alcohol, smoking, not getting enough sleep, and stress also impact the immune system and how efficient it will react when exposed to germs.

Echinacea purpurea is a popular herb associated with supporting immunity. It can protect you against bacterial and viral infections associated with cold, flu, and coughs. It's also effective for cold sores, cystitis, chicken pox, and shingles. Fungal infections like ringworm, candida, and thrush are other infections that it can help you deal with. But remember if you're not eating well, sleeping right, or if you're stressed Echinacea won't be able to do everything all on its own. Aim to make changes where you can to improve diet and lifestyle. Echinacea purpurea is an ideal remedy to help prevent infectious disease by ensuring that your body is ready to respond to pathogens.



Fig. 10 Neem used in Chickenpox



Fig. 11 Sandalwood use in Chickenpox

I. Neem

In a tub of lukewarm water, add some Neem leaves. Allow the leaves to soak in the water for at least 10-15 minutes before taking the bath. For best results, you must take a bath with this home remedy for chicken pox at least once a day. Prepare a paste of Neem leaves and apply it on your skin. Leave it on the skin for as long as you can. If your skin begins to itch, you can apply the Neem paste again and leave it to dry. But it is recommended that you apply this paste only after taking a bath with Neem leaves water. You can also apply Neem face pack for skincare benefits. Another way to use Neem for chickenpox treatment is to extract the juice of Neem leaves and applying it on the skin. Application of Neem leaves the juice on the skin is effective in reducing the scars and decreasing the chances of infection from spreading.

J. Sandalwood oil

Sandalwood oil does help cure the scars, and can be applied from the time the scars begin to appear till the dry skin falls off. Apply honey liberally onto the affected areas, as honey not only lightens the scars but also revitalizes the skin healing tissues, and also acts as a natural moisturizer. Cut a lemon into half and gently rub it onto all the scars once a day. Lemon works as a natural bleach removing the dead cells; it will also help

lighten the scars. A mixture of lemon juice, powdered turmeric, and honey and sandalwood powder along with a pinch of table salt can be applied regularly on the chicken pox marks, this works as an exfoliating scrub that cleanses the face off dead skin cells, allowing new skin to grow faster. Raw garlic rubbed onto the affected areas will also help in doing away with the marks. However, make sure you wash your face immediately after rubbing garlic onto it, as garlic is very strong and can burn the skin, thus worsening your condition. Sometimes the scars get more pronounced as the skin produces excess melanin when over exposed to the sun. It would be advisable to use a sunscreen lotion with a sun protection factor of above 30 on all exposed areas of your body.

Foods to Avoid When You Have Chickenpox



A. Salty foods: During chickenpox, your appetite will certainly decrease as you will feel fever-like symptoms as well as sore throats and mouth. Nothing will aggravate this worse than salty foods. Salty foods such as chips, snacks, chicken broth, instant noodles, and vegetable blend juices, will not only make symptoms worse but may make your recovery time even longer. Stick to foods that keep you hydrated and help you battle inflammation.

B. Saturated fats: Fatty foods and saturated fats can increase inflammation and make symptoms worse. Not only are they generally bad for your health, but they also won't benefit your skin health whatsoever. Saturated fats can be found in lots of processed, oily, and refined foods. Be sure to also stay away from meat that still has significant attachments of fat. Try sticking to lean protein sources and whole foods that don't have added ingredients.

C. Spicy food: Spicy food that contains chili or peppers that pack a lot of heat may irritate your mouth, throat, and disrupt your digestive system. Especially when your skin is feeling very sensitive as well as having blisters and splits, accidentally getting chili in contact with your skin can cause you a world of pain and increase inflammation. Chickenpox also entails lots of oral sores and ulcers in the mouth. Avoid chili and spicy foods at all costs as it will worsen the condition.

13.Home Remedies for Chickenpox

Chickenpox is a viral infection that causes itching and flu-like symptoms. While the varicella vaccine is 90 percent effective in preventing chickenpox, the varicella-zoster virus that causes chickenpox doesn't have a cure. If you do get chickenpox, treatment involves managing symptoms until your body fights off the infection.

The disease most often affects children. Here are some kid-friendly remedies that can help you or your little one feel better until your immune system fends off the virus.

A. Apply calamine lotion

Calamine lotion can help reduce itching. This lotion contains skin-soothing properties, including zinc oxide. Using a clean finger or cotton swab, dab or spread calamine lotion on itchy skin areas. Note that you shouldn't use calamine lotion on or around chickenpox on your eyes.

B. Serve sugar-free popsicles

Chickenpox can also appear inside your mouth. This can be especially painful. Encouraging a child to suck on sugar-free popsicles can be a good way to soothe mouth sores. As a bonus, this allows your child to get more fluids and avoid dehydration.



Fig. 12 Home remedies in Chickenpox

C. Bathe in oatmeal

Oatmeal baths can be soothing and itch-relieving for chickenpox. Taking a bath won't spread the chickenpox from one area of your skin to another. While you can purchase oatmeal bath products at most drugstores, you can also make your own oatmeal bath using the following steps:

- ❖ Use one cup of oatmeal for an older child or 1/3 cup for a baby or small child. The oatmeal can be unflavored instant, slow-cooked oats, or quick oats. You can use a food processor or coffee grinder to make the oatmeal flakes very small. Placing oatmeal in a muslin bag or pantyhose can also work.
- ❖ Draw a bath of warm (not hot) water. Place one tablespoon of ground oatmeal into a glass of warm water. If the oats appear to be absorbing water and turning the water a milky shade, the oatmeal is finely ground enough.
- ❖ Place the oatmeal or bag of oats into the bath. Soak for no more than 20 minutes.

You may also apply oatmeal lotions to skin. This can have a soothing and moisturizing effect on itchy chickenpox blisters.

D. Wear mittens to prevent scratching

Scratching your blisters may be tempting, but it can worsen your discomfort and expose your skin to infection. To prevent the temptation to scratch at night or during naptime, put mittens or soft socks over your child's hands. Trimming your child's fingernails so they won't damage affected areas can also help.

E. Take baking soda baths

Another itch-relieving option to add to a bath is baking soda. Add one cup of baking soda to a shallow, lukewarm bath. Soak for 15 to 20 minutes. Your child can take up to three baths a day if they find this approach soothing.

F. Use chamomile compresses

The chamomile tea in your kitchen cabinet may also soothe itchy chickenpox areas. Chamomile has antiseptic and anti-inflammatory effects when applied to your skin. Brew two to three chamomile tea bags and allow to cool place in a warm bath. Then, dip soft cotton pads or washcloths in the tea and apply to itchy areas of skin. When you are done applying compresses, pat skin gently to dry.

G. Give approved pain relievers

If your child's chickenpox blisters are especially painful or if your child has a fever, you may wish to give them medication. It's important not to give a child or teenager aspirin, as they are at increased risk for a condition called Reye's syndrome if they take aspirin during or when they're recovering from an infection like chickenpox. Instead, medication like acetaminophen can help to relieve painful symptoms. Avoid ibuprofen if possible, because using it during a chickenpox infection may be associated with a higher risk of a severe skin infection.

SUMMARY

Chickenpox can be lethal and is certainly an unpleasant disease to acquire beyond early childhood. It is easy to recognize and simple to treat, although in view of the benign nature of its course in most young children aciclovir is not routinely used in under 14s but Unani or Herbal drugs used safely to control chickenpox in kids and pregnant female. Chickenpox is a dangerous condition in pregnancy and in the immunosuppressed and the over 50s. In such condition consult proper Gynecologist and if possible than Hospitalized. It poses a risk of harm to the developing fetus. Vaccination is not routinely offered in the European countries due to some scientific reason but it is in many countries it is implemented. To start a vaccination programme which does more good than harm we would need to know that we could achieve high sustained vaccine coverage in a fairly short time, and to feel sure that the protection offered by the vaccine did not simple wear off in later life. Unani Herbal drugs viz Neem, Honey, Sandalwood oil and many more are commonly used to control the epidemic of Chickenpox.

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