



Principles of in Persian Medicine

Treatment in Persian medicine is based on three parts:

1. Essential recommendations (Tadabir setteye zaroorieh)

They include: 1) Healthy air, 2) nutrition, 3) physical activity and repose, 4) control of stress, 5) control of retention and repose, and 6) managing awakening and sleep). Among these recommendations, nutrition plays a more important role in treatment, and, in this chapter, nutrition will be discussed more completely.

II. Medicinal plants

III. Manual intervention

■ Nutrition

It was believed in Persian Medicine that nutritional recommendations are the first step of treatment and, they begin with nutritional recommendations on foods and drinks. The second step is medicinal plants, and the third is manual intervention like massage, cupping, phlebotomy, etc. According to the «Theory of Humors» in Persian medicine, each kind of food or drink is composed of specific temperament. For example, beef has a hot and dry temperament and lettuce has a cold and moist temperament. Therefore, the quantity and quality of food and drink intake should be observed clearly in disease treatments.

Diseases are divided into 2 types, namely «acute» and «chronic»



f Treatment



according to their duration. «Acute» diseases refer to extreme and severe problems, which last for a short time. «Chronic» diseases refer to long-lasting and conditional situations. According to Persian medicine treatment rules, in acute diseases, physical strength (patient's energy) is quite enough for the patient, and the physician is allowed to reduce

the quantity and quality of food intake in order to help the natural power combat directly against the disease. However, in chronic diseases, physical strength is lacking because of the long duration of the disease. Hence, the physician is not allowed to reduce food quality and quantity same as in acute conditions. In chronic situations, the physician should observe both the patient's physical strength and the disease's severity. For example, in acute diseases like common cold or acute asthma, the quantity and quality of food is reduced, and the patient is prescribed to consume a small volume of light meals in the acute phase in order to let the natural power focus on combating against the disease and remove waste materials and pathogenic agents from the body. These light meals, such as soup or pottages, consist of vegetables, beans, legumes, without animal protein, but in chronic diseases such as osteoporosis or chronic asthma, which may last for decades and there is damage to the internal function, physical strength reduces considerably, and the natural power is not strong enough to focus on combating the disease. In this condition, the physician should prescribe food with high quality and low quantity such as egg yolk, baked lamb and well-cooked bread. According to Persian medicine treatment rules, when the human body is full of waste materials and undigested substances, food intake should be reduced completely in order to provide the natural power enough time to focus on the process of Nozj in body.



Nozj is a rheological change in matter for better consumption or excretion. In disease condition, the natural power causes the waste materials to be excreted and removed from body through the phenomenon of Nozj.

The other important fact in chronic diseases is appetite and the digestion process. It means that in chronic situation, appetite and the digestion process are weakening considerably, and patients cannot tolerate high amounts of food. Therefore, recommended diets should consist of food with low quantity and high quality features.

Medicinal plants

There are 3 rules for medicinal plants prescription (Quality, Quantity and Timing)

Quality:

According to the «Theory of Humors» in Persian medicine, any kind of medicinal plant is composed of temperaments. For example, *Piper nigrum* has hot and dry temperament, *Solanum nigrum* has cold and dry temperament, etc. Diseases are divided to 3 groups, and dystemperament is one of them. The basic rule of dystemperament treatment is based on «Treatment against» or «alaj bezed» that means in cold temperaments, physicians should prescribe medicinal plants with hot temperaments, and vice versa.

Quantity (Dosage)

Organ and disease severity are 2 factors that determine the dose of medicine. (Importance of an organ and disease severity) Importance of an organ: There are 4 factors that determine the importance of an organ:

1. Temperament
2. Nature (histology)
3. Location (anatomical situation)
4. Strength

Timing:

The time to take medications is the last rule for medicinal plants prescription. Many people, who are taking tablets or other medicines, are not sure about the best time to use them.



According to Persian medicine treatment rules, the best times for prescribed medications of liver disorders are in the morning before breakfast, and, for brain disorders, at night before sleep. Also, at the beginning of an abscess formation, topical medications like balms that inhibit inflammation, are recommended in order to avoid abscess formation.

Common recommendations in all disease treatments

Reinforcing the moral courage and heart function is essential to improve disease condition. Traveling, changing living environment and climate, and participating in parties that make the patient happy are very useful in the patient's recovery.

Dystemperament treatment

According to the viewpoint of Persian medicine, there are two types of dystemperament:

- a. Single dystemperament
- b. Compound dystemperament



In single dystemperament, treatment is based on changing the quality of humors. In compound dystemperament, removing waste substances (evacuation or Tangheeyeh) from body is the first step of treatment, and, afterward, changing the quality of humors should be considered as the second step. There are ten rules that should be considered by physicians before evacuation in patients:

1. When the body is full of waste products such as undigested material, evacuation should be done very slowly in order to avoid harmful complications.
2. Physical strength
3. Extreme warm or cold or anemia
4. Extreme obesity or thinness
5. Susceptibility to diarrhea or intestinal ulcers
6. Senility or childhood
7. Extremely cold climate (purgation is forbidden)
8. Geographical location (cities with very hot or cold weather) (evacuation is forbidden)
9. Occupation

10. A person who is not used to evacuation habitually

According to Persian medicine treatment rules, five rules are necessary for evacuation:

- 1) The aim of evacuation is reducing the quantity or quality of substances
- 2) The level of evacuation should match the patient's physical strength.
- 3) Evacuation should be in line with the natural route of waste material excretion. For example, the physician should help a patient to vomit when he has nausea, and, when a patient feels bloated, the physician should prescribe laxative in order to remove waste products via defecation.
- 4) Waste products should be removed from the body through its natural route. For example, in treatment of liver disease, phlebotomy of the basilic vein is recommended.
- 5) In acute diseases, there is no need for the process of Nozj. However, in chronic diseases, the process of Nozj is necessary.