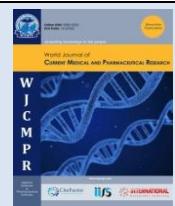




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UNANI APPROACH IN ACNE MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY ON THE EFFICACY OF DAWA-E-MUSAFFI

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Article History	Abstract
Received on: 11-02-2025	Acne vulgaris is a prevalent dermatological disorder affecting adolescents and young adults, with significant psychosocial and emotional consequences. Conventional treatments often have adverse effects, leading to an increasing interest in alternative medicine. This case study explores the therapeutic efficacy of Dawa-e-Musaffi, a polyherbal Unani formulation, in the management of moderate acne vulgaris. A 20-year-old female patient presented with papulo-pustular acne lesions and was treated with Dawa-e-Musaffi in Joshanda form for 40 days. Clinical outcomes were assessed using the Global Acne Grading System (GAGS) and Patient Satisfaction Score (PSS). The results showed a 63.6% reduction in acne severity, a 73.3% reduction in papulo-pustular lesions and a 70% reduction in comedones, and high patient satisfaction, highlighting the potential of Unani medicine as a complementary approach to acne management. Further controlled studies are recommended to validate these findings.
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Introduction

The skin, as the largest organ of the human body, plays a vital role in protecting against physical trauma, ultraviolet (UV) radiation, temperature extremes, toxins, and microbial pathogens. Beyond its physiological function, skin health significantly influences self-esteem and psychosocial well-being, especially in dermatological conditions affecting facial aesthetics. Among these, Acne vulgaris (AV) is one of the most prevalent chronic inflammatory skin disorders, primarily affecting adolescents and young adults [1]. Globally, acne is estimated to affect approximately 9.4% of the population, making it the eighth most common disease worldwide. The highest prevalence is observed in adolescents, with rates ranging from 35% to 100% in individuals aged 12–24 years, while adult acne persists in 8% of individuals aged 25–34 years and 3% of those aged 35–44 years [2,3].

Pathophysiologically, AV is a disorder of the pilo-sebaceous unit, characterized by sebaceous gland hyperactivity, follicular keratinization, microbial colonization (*Cutibacterium* acnes, formerly *Propionibacterium* acnes), and an exaggerated

inflammatory response. The condition presents clinically as comedones (blackheads and whiteheads), papules, pustules, and, in severe cases, nodular or cystic lesions, often leading to persistent scarring and psychosocial distress. While AV is not life-threatening, its impact on mental health, self-esteem, and quality of life necessitates effective and safe therapeutic interventions [4].

Current treatment modalities include topical retinoids, antibiotics, hormonal therapy, and oral isotretinoin, but their long-term use is associated with adverse effects such as antimicrobial resistance, irritation, hepatotoxicity, and teratogenicity. Consequently, there is an increasing demand for alternative and traditional medicine approaches, including Unani medicine, which offers holistic and natural treatments with minimal side effects. In Unani classical texts, acne vulgaris is described as Basoore Labniya, Mohasa, or Keel, and its etiology is linked to Madda Sadeediya (suppurative material) and Bukharat (vapors) that accumulate within the skin, forming lesions due to their thick and viscous nature [5,6].

This case study evaluates the therapeutic efficacy of Dawa-e-Musaffi, a traditional polyherbal Unani formulation, in the management of acne vulgaris. The formulation, prepared in Joshanda (herbal decoction) form, is known for its detoxifying and blood-purifying effects, aimed at eliminating pathogenic humors and restoring skin homeostasis. This study contributes to the growing body of evidence supporting Unani

pharmacotherapy for dermatological conditions, providing insights into its potential as a complementary approach to acne management.

Case Presentation

Patient Details

- Age: 20 years
- Gender: Female
- Occupation: Student
- Dietary Habits: Mixed (Vegetarian and Non-Vegetarian)
- Religion: Muslim

Chief Complaints and Duration

A 20-year-old female visited the Outpatient Department (OPD) of Hakim Syed Ziaul Hasan Government (Autonomous) Unani Medical College & Hospital, Bhopal, on January 28, 2024, with complaints of painful acne eruptions primarily affecting her cheeks, chin, and forehead for the past six months.

Clinical Findings

- Menstrual History: Regular cycles, no abnormalities.
- Family History: No significant history of acne vulgaris.
- Dermatological Examination:
- Multiple papulo-pustular lesions on the face.
- Presence of blackhead and whitehead comedones, confirming moderate acne vulgaris (as per GAGS criteria)

Figure1.

Therapeutic Intervention

The patient was treated with Dawa-e-Musaffi, a Unani polyherbal formulation known for its detoxifying, blood-purifying, and anti-inflammatory properties. The formulation was prepared in Joshanda (herbal decoction) form, ensuring optimal bio-availability and therapeutic efficacy (Table 1).

Table 1 Composition of Dawa-e-Musaffi

Unani Name	Botanical Name	Temperament	Therapeutic Actions (Af'aal)
Barg-e-Shahatr a	<i>Fumaria indica</i>	Cold & Dry (2nd)	Blood purifier, diuretic, antipyretic
Chirayta	<i>Swertia chirayta</i>	Cold & Dry (2nd)	Detoxifier, antipyretic, liver tonic
Gul Mundi	<i>Sphaeranthus indicus</i>	Hot & Dry (2nd)	Blood purifier, diaphoretic, anti-inflammatory
Unnab	<i>Ziziphus jujuba</i>	Cold & Wet (1st)	Demulcent, expectorant, blood purifier
Sarfoka	<i>Tephrosia purpurea</i>	Hot & Dry (2nd)	Hepatoprotective, blood purifier, tonic
Sandal Surkh	<i>Pterocarpus santalinus</i>	Cold & Dry (2nd)	Cooling agent, blood purifier, diuretic

Dosage and Administration

- Dosage: 20 grams of decoction, twice daily (morning on an empty stomach and evening before dinner).
- Duration: 40 days.

Treatment Outcomes

To evaluate the therapeutic efficacy, acne severity and patient satisfaction were measured using Global Acne Grading System (GAGS) and Patient Satisfaction Score (PSS) Table 2.

1. Global Acne Grading System (GAGS) Score – Measures acne severity by lesion count.
2. Patient Satisfaction Score (PSS) – Evaluates subjective improvement using a 5-point Likert scale.

Table 2 Treatment Outcomes

Parameter	Baseline (Day 0)	Post-Treatment (Day 40)	% Improvement
GAGS Score	22 (Moderate)	8 (Mild)	63.6% Reduction
Papulo-Pustular Lesions	15	4	73.3% Reduction
Comedones	20	6	70% Reduction
PSS (Likert Scale)	2 (Dissatisfied)	4 (Satisfied)	+2 Point Increase



Figure 1 - Before Treatment (Baseline)



Figure 2 - After Treatment (after 40 days)

Discussion

Acne vulgaris is a chronic skin condition that significantly impacts the psychosocial well-being of affected individuals, particularly adolescents and young adults. The conventional

treatment options, while effective, often have undesirable side effects such as antimicrobial resistance, skin irritation, and systemic toxicity. As a result, there has been a rising interest in alternative medicine systems such as Unani medicine, which offers natural and holistic therapeutic approaches with fewer side effects. Dawa-e-Musaffi, a polyherbal formulation from Unani medicine, has been traditionally used for its detoxifying, blood-purifying, and anti-inflammatory properties. In this case study, the formulation was administered to a 20-year-old female patient suffering from moderate acne vulgaris, presenting with papulo-pustular lesions and comedones on her face. The patient was treated with Dawa-e-Musaffi in Joshanda (herbal decoction) form for 40 days. The treatment resulted in a significant reduction in acne severity, papulo-pustular lesions, and comedones, with a 63.6% improvement in the Global Acne Grading System (GAGS) score and a 73.3% reduction in papulo-pustular lesions (Figure 2). Moreover, the patient reported high satisfaction with the treatment, with an increase in the Patient Satisfaction Score (PSS) from 2 to 4 on the Likert scale, indicating subjective improvement.

The therapeutic efficacy of Dawa-e-Musaffi can be attributed to the synergistic effects of its ingredients. The formulation includes:

- Barg-e-Shahatra (*Fumaria indica*): Known for its blood-purifying, diuretic, and anti-inflammatory properties, which help reduce skin inflammation and facilitate the elimination of toxins.
- Chirayta (*Swertia chirayta*): A detoxifier and liver tonic that aids in eliminating excess humors from the body, contributing to overall skin health.
- Gul Mundi (*Sphaeranthus indicus*): A powerful anti-inflammatory agent, which helps in reducing the redness and swelling associated with acne lesions.
- Unnab (*Ziziphus jujuba*): A demulcent and expectorant that soothes the skin and supports its healing process.
- Sarfoka (*Tephrosia purpurea*): A hepatoprotective herb that supports liver function, which is crucial for the detoxification process.
- Sandal Surkh (*Pterocarpus santalinus*): A cooling agent that helps calm the skin and reduce inflammation.

The combination of these ingredients acts on multiple physiological pathways, helping to address the underlying causes of acne, such as inflammation, excess sebum production, and toxin buildup. By purifying the blood and improving skin health from within, Dawa-e-Musaffi offers a holistic approach to acne management, which is aligned with the principles of Unani medicine. The results of this case study are promising, indicating that Dawa-e-Musaffi may be an effective and safe alternative to conventional acne treatments. However, there are some limitations to the study, including the lack of a control group and a small sample size, which makes it difficult to generalize the findings. Additionally, the patient's dietary habits and other lifestyle factors may have influenced the outcomes.

Conclusion

This case study highlights the potential of Unani medicine, specifically Dawa-e-Musaffi, as a complementary therapeutic option for the management of moderate acne vulgaris. The

treatment demonstrated a significant reduction in acne severity, improvement in lesion count, and high patient satisfaction, suggesting that Unani formulations can be an effective and safe alternative for patients seeking natural treatments with minimal side effects. Given the promising results, further controlled clinical trials with larger sample sizes are recommended to confirm the findings and establish the efficacy of Dawa-e-Musaffi in acne management. Additionally, future studies should explore the long-term effects of the treatment and its potential role in preventing recurrence.

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Conflict of Interest

The Authors declare to have no conflict of interest.

Informed Consent

Not required

Ethical Statement

Not required

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