



Short Communication

Medicinal Properties of Black Pepper (*Piper Nigrum* Linn): A Common Unani MedicineMD TANWIR ALAM¹, IZHARUL HASAN^{2*}, MD ZEYAUDDIN¹, AISHA PERVEEN³¹ Dept. of Preventive and Social Medicine, Govt. Tibbi College and Hospital (GTCH), Patna, Bihar, India² Dept. of Preventive and Social Medicine, A & U Tibbi College, Karolbagh, New Delhi, India³ Dept. of Pharmacology (Ilmul Advia), National Institute of Unani Medicine (NIUM), Kottigepalya, Bangalore, Karnataka, India**ARTICLE DETAILS***Article history:*

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*Keywords:**Filfile Siyah,**Unani System of Medicine,**Kali Mirch,**Piper nigrum,**Herbal Medicine.***ABSTRACT**

Unani (Greco-Arabian-Indian) System of Medicine (USM) is one of the classic and prestigious therapies among Indian system of medicine. It offers full range of medication through natural products. Various plants and their parts & products are the main source of drugs in USM. Black pepper is the commonest drug being used for range of diseases. Although it is considered as one of the well known spice as well as medicinal plant throughout the Globe but it is the most famous spice used in Indian and Indian sub-continent kitchens. Black Pepper in various forms is good home remedies for lot of common ailments. In USM it is best drug for common cold and cough. In this paper authors try to explain the medicinal aspects of Black pepper in USM.

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INTRODUCTION

In *Unani* system of medicine Black Pepper is known as *Filfile Siyah* which is a Persian word. Black pepper is indigenous to India, and is one of the oldest and best known spices in the world. Pepper had a profound influence on the European economy of middle Ages and many western countries owed their prosperity to this prized spice which fetched them a very high prize. Pepper is now mainly cultivated in India, Brazil, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Srilanka. About 25% of the world production comes from India, which is the largest producer in the world. In India, Kerala is the major production centre [1].

Description

It is a perennial climbing plant and requires support to climb. Leaves are large, broad, ovate and round. Flowers appear in long spikes. Fruit, a berry gathered from ripe and dried, forms a black pepper corn, which are 6 mm across. Fruits are turned red when ripe. The dried mature but unripe berries are known as black pepper [2]. The fruit has a sharp, pungent, slightly bitter taste [3, 4] and are hard and wrinkled [5].

Botanical name: *Piper nigrum* Linn. [1-3, 5, 6]

Family: Piperaceae [5, 7]

Vernacular Names

Hindi: Kalimirch [7]

Urdu: Kalimirch [3, 5], Golmirch [8]

Arabic: Filfil Aswad [5]

Persian: Filfil Siyah [3, 5], Filfil Gird [3]

Greek: Famary, Faqurti [9]

Sanskrit: Maricham [4]

Kannada: Menasinakalu, Menasu [3]

English: Black Pepper [6, 7]

Ethano- Botanical Description**Actions**

Anthelmintic, Carminative, Aphrodisiac, Purgative, Emmenagogue, Rubefacient, Energetic, Stimulant, Diaphoretic, Abortifacient [3], Anti-blennorrhagic, Stomachic, Appetizer [2], Febrifuge, Digestive [6].

Uses

Asthma, Haemorrhoids, Epileptic fits, Toothache, Inflammation, Eructations, Leucoderma, Paralysis, Cholera, Flatulence, Malarial fevers, Arthritis, Sore throat, Skin diseases, Snake and Scorpion bites [3], Dyspepsia, Tremors, Delirium, Migraine [2], Cholera, Alopecia [7], Rectal prolapse, Gonorrhoea and Paralysis of tongue [6].

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Chemical Constituents

The principal constituents of black pepper are resin, volatile oil and piperine. It also contains a little fatty oil, starch [6], mineral salts, malic acid and albumin [2].

Medicinal Characteristics Described in Unani Literature

Part(s) Used

The part of the Black Pepper we are using as drug is the fruit of the plant [5, 10-11].

Temperament (Mizaj)

Black pepper is temperamentally considered as *Haar-Yabis* (Hot & Dry) drugs in third degree (3^o) [8, 12]

Actions (Afaal):

Although Black Pepper is full of medicinal properties only important are being given here.

Muhallile riyah ghaleez (Anti flatulence) [6, 9-14], *Mukhrije balgham ghaleez* (Expectorant) [4, 5, 8-10, 12, 14], *Muqawwie bah* (Aphrodisiac) [5,9,10,12,14], *Muqawwie meda* (Stomachic) [5, 10, 12], *Mudire baul wa haiz* (Diuretics and Emmenagogues) [5, 9, 10, 12], *Musqite janeen* (Abortifacient) [9, 12], *Muhallile Auram* (Anti-inflammatory) [8], *Muqawwie kabid* (Liver tonic) [5, 8, 10, 12], *Muharrike qalb wa urooq* (cardiostimulant) [10], *Muqawwie aasab* (Nervine tonic) [5, 10, 12], *Jaali* (Cleanser) [4, 5, 9, 10,], *Mudire luabe dahan* (saliva producer) [10], *Muqawwie hazima* (Digestive) [4, 8-11], *Muqawwie hafiza* (Memory enhancer) [8, 12], *Musakhkhin* (Sedative)[9] and *Musakkine Alam* (Pain Reliever) [10].

Uses and Indication (Istematat):

Due to above all properties the black pepper in single or/and compound form indicated to use successfully in the following diseases.

Darde dandan (Toothache) [14], *Qaulanj* (Colitis) [9, 12,14], *Haiza* (Cholera) [10,12], *Bars wa bahaq* (Vitilico and Hyperpigmentation) [5,9,10,12], *Sual* (Cough), *Zeequnnafas* (Asthma) [8-10, 12], *Amraze balghami aasabia* (Nervine phlegmatic disorders) [9,10], *Quroohe miqad* (Anal Ulcer) [10], *Laqwa*(Facial Palsy) [12], *Shaqiqa* (Migraine) [12], *Khunaq Balghami* (Diphtheria),[8,9,12] *Nafakhe shikam* (Flatulence) [5, 12], *Bawaseer* (Piles) [12], *Suzak* (Gonorrhoea) [12], *Khanazeer* (Cervical Lymphodenopathy) [9, 12], *Falij* (Palsy) [9, 15], *Khadr* (Numbness) [9, 15] and *Ra'sha* (Funny Turn) [9, 15]

Dose: 1-2 gm [5, 12, 14]

Side Effect (Muzarrat):

The uncontrolled use of this drug is toxic for Kidney and people with *Haar temperament* [8, 10].

Correctives (Musleh):

To counter the side effects and toxicity of uncontrolled use of Black Pepper, *Sard roghan* (Cold Oils) and *Shahad khalis* (Pure Honey) is used [10, 14].

Compound Formulations (Murakkabat):

Various compound drugs are in different doses forms are made from the Black Pepper; few important among them are *Dawausshifa*, *Jawarish kamooni kabir* and *Jawarish falafali* [5].

Scientific Reports

Few experimental studies claim its medicinal properties are as follows.

- The extract of black pepper is reported to exhibit strong insecticidal activity against several insects. An amide, N-isobutyl-1 1(3, 4-methylene dioxyphenyl)-(2E,4E,10E)-2,4,10- undecatrienamamide (pipericide) and two structurally related amides have been isolated from the extract of black pepper as the insecticidal principles [1].
- Black pepper contains safrol and tannic acid which are reported to show weak carcinogenic activity in mice as compared to the control carcinogen, Methyl- Chloranthene which induces tumours in different organs of mice [1].
- Black pepper contains a number of amides showing larvicidal activity against second stage larva of dog round worm, *Toxocara canis*. The strongest activity was exhibited by piperamide-(C9:1(8E) and pyrrolidine-amides [1].
- The alkaloid piperine isolated from the black pepper is reported to show antibacterial activity against *Pseudomonas* and *Acaligenes*. The aqueous extract of roasted black pepper is reported to show cholinomimetic effects on rat blood pressure, rat jejunum, and frog abdominis muscle [1].

METHODOLOGY

For the search of *Unani* literature author visited Library of National Institute of Unani Medicine (NIUM), Bangalore, India. The databases utilized for obtaining information from indexed journals available through Google Search, Google Scholar, Scopus, PubMed and Science Direct.

CONCLUSION

Plants are one of the most important sources of medicines [16]. It is well known fact that the various medicinal plants describe in *Unani* medicine play a vital role against range of diseases [17]. An extensive review of literature of *Unani* medicine revealed that this drug having numerous therapeutic actions. Only few of which have been established scientifically which may help the researchers to set their minds and use it as ladder for approaching the utility, efficacy and potency of *Piper nigrum* Linn in more scientific, filtered and rational way.

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