



ABZAN (SITZ BATH): AN EFFECTIVE TREATMENT IN UNANI MEDICINE. A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT In unani system of medicine there are four types of treatment. Ilaj-bil-Dawa (pharmacotherapy), Ilaj-bil-Ghiza (Diet therapy), Ilaj-bil-Tadbeer (Regimental therapy) and Ilaj-bil-Yad (Surgery). Ilaj-bil-tadbeer is the physical method of treatment by which general constitution of the body is maintained by removing the waste products of the body. It is also called as "detoxification" method of treatment. Ilaj -bil-tadbeer includes a no of Therapeutic interventions such as Hijamah (Cupping), Fasd (Venesection), Irsal-i-Alaq (Leeching), Dalak (Massage) Nutool (Irrigation), Abzan (Sitz bath) etc., Among these Abzan (Sitz bath) is a safe, effective, economy and effective external mode of treatment for various disorders. It is basically a type of bath in which buttocks and hips are immersed in the simple water, or medicated (Joshanda or khaisanda) for therapeutic purposes. This regimen is used to relieve discomfort and pain in the lower part of the body. For eg., piles, uterine cramps, inflammatory bowel diseases, an episiotomy, infection of bladder, prostate and vagina etc., Abzan also provides relief from itching in genital area like pruritis valvae etc.,

KEYWORDS : Ilaj - bil-tadbeer, Abzan, Joshanda, Khaisanda, Sitz bath.

INTRODUCTION

Abzan (sitz bath) is a safe, simple, effective external regimen for various disorders. It is basically a type of bath in which only buttocks and hips are immersed into the plain water or medicated water (Joshanda and Khaisanda) may be used for the therapeutic purpose. sometimes, a whole body upto shoulder is immersed into the water.(1,2) This regimen is used to relief discomfort and pain in the lower as well as upper parts of the body, for eg., uterine cramps, piles, inflammatory bowel diseases, an episiotomy, infection of bladder, prostate, vagina etc., Abzan also provides relief from itching in genital area.(2)

HISTORY OF SITZ BATH (Abzan)

The Therapeutic use of water, Joshinda, Khaisanda has long history dating back to ancient cultures. Abzan has been included in the most popular and effective therapies. Ali -Ibn-I-Abbas-Majoosi describes in his book Kamil-us-Sana that when the time of delivery is near or the female is in labour pain and advise her to take Abzan-Har (Hot sitz bath).(3) Ibn-i-sina has mentioned in his book Alqanoon-fil-tib that if the female is suffering from usr-e-Wiladat, suggest her to take Abzan Har (Hot sitz bath).(4)

DEFINITION

Abzan is a type of bath in which hips and buttocks are immersed in water, either plain or medicated (Joshinda, Khaisanda), for therapeutic effects.

TYPES

- 1) Abzan har (Hot Sitz bath).
- 2) Abzan barid (Cold sitz bath).
- 3) Abzan motadil (Neutral sitz bath).
- 4) Abzan murakkab (Alternate Hot and Cold sitz bath).

1) ABZAN HAR (HOT SITZ BATH):

Abzan har is one of the easiest and effective ways to ease the Pain and discomfort caused by various diseases. Hot water, Joshinda/Khaisanda of specific drugs is used for the purpose of Abzan har resulting in increased tissue temperature. The temperature of the warm water should be between 95F- 105F /35-41c. The level of water in the bath tub should not be above the navel. This type of Abzan is mostly used worldwide with promising therapeutic effects in various diseases.

PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF HARARAT ON THE BODY.

1) SYSTEMIC

- a) Vasoconstriction.
- b) Piloerection.
- c) Shivering.

2) Local

- a) Temperature sensitive nerve endings send impulses to hypothalamus and make the centre aware about the local temperature changes.
- b) Increased capillary permeability.

- c) Increased blood flow.
- d) Increased metabolism.

THERAPEUTIC USE OF HARARAT

1. Increased blood flow.
2. Softens exudates.
3. Decreases pain.
4. Relaxes muscle.
5. Psychological relaxation
6. Decreases muscle contracture.
7. Improves joint range of motion.
8. Decreases joint stiffness.

Physiological effects of hararat include pain relief increases in blood flow and metabolism, and increased elasticity of connective tissues. increasing tissue temperature stimulates vasodilatation and increases tissue blood flow, which is thought to promote healing by increasing the supply of nutrients and oxygen to the site of injury. The rate of Istehala (Metabolism) in local tissue is also increased by hararat, which may further promote healing as Tabiat Mudabbira-e-Badan works on healing instead of istehala. Hararat also induces changes in the viscoelastic properties of collagen tissues which can be demonstrated in the mechanism of improvement of range of movement.(5)

2) ABZAN BARID (cold sitz bath)

When Abzan is done with cold water, either medicated or plain, it is called Abzan barid. The temperature of this water should not be too low to bear except few conditions where ice-cold water is recommended for the procedure. In such conditions where ice-cold water is indicated, the length of immersion into water should be decreased. Buroodat is basically useful in the management of acute injury/trauma, chronic pain, muscle spasm, inflammation and oedema.

PHYSIOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF BUROODAT ON THE BODY.

1. SYSTEMIC

- a) Vasoconstriction.
- b) Piloerection.
- c) Shivering.

2. LOCAL

- a) Temperature sensitive nerve endings send signals to hypothalamus.
- b) Local vasoconstriction.
- c) Decreased capillary refill.
- d) Decreased cellular metabolism.

THERAPEUTIC USES OF BUROODAT

- a) Relaxes muscles.
- b) Decreased inflammation.
- c) Local Anaesthetic effect.

- d) Decreases the pain by numbing the area.
- e) Decreased bleeding.
- f) Shows bacterial growth.

Buroodat has multiply physiological effects on injured tissues. Decreasing temperature of the skin and muscles reduces blood flow to the barid tissues by activating a sympathetic, vasoconstrictive Reflex. The decreased in blood flow, induced by buroodat, reduces oedema and slows the delivery of inflammatory mediators, reducing inflammation of the affected area. Buroodat also induces a local anaesthetic effect by decreasing the activation threshold of the tissue no receptors and the conduction velocity of nerve signals. Buroodat also reduces the muscle spasm via., inhibition of a spinal cord reflex loop.(5)

3) ABZAN MOTADIL (Neutral sitz bath)

Normal water in terms of temperature (either plain or medicated, is used sometimes fortreatment of various diseases. Patients with diabetic neuropathy can use this type of Abzan safely.

4) ABZAN MURAKKAB (Alternate Hot and cold sitz bath)

Several variations of the procedure can be used with different therapeutic effects depending upon the temperature of water and the length of time spent immersed. Abzan Murakkab is a combination of Abzan har and Abzan barid, taken into use alternatively.

In this procedure, a patient stays in Abzan har for 5 minutes followed by Abzan barid for less than 1 minute only. The cycle is repeated for atleast five times and finished in Abzan barid. This type of Abzan is considered having a soothing effect. A towel soaked in ice-cold water may be used in place of cold water.

EFFECTS OF ABZAN MURAKKAB

It has been suggested that Abzan Murakkab causes a 'pumping effect due to the cycle of vasoconstriction and vasodilatation, therefore facilitating imala-e-mavad resulting in removal of the oedematous conditions. Abzan Murakkab increases the venous and lymphatic flow. It is very important to achieve the adequate deep constriction in order to get the results because any madda which has been stagnant in the tissues, after adsorption, needs vasoconstriction to be diverted. constriction increases the intramural pressure in the blood vessels, causing fluid to move with the valves in the vein, thereby preventing the backflow of the fluid. This will produce a beneficial effect of minimising the influence of accumulated morbid materials at the injured site while the healing process.

A Sitz bath (Abzan) doesn't require a doctor's prescription. Some people use sitz bath regularly as a way to cleanse the perineum. In addition to its use in cleansing, the sitz bath's warm water increases blood flow to the perineal area. This can promote faster healing also.(6)

MANUAL OPERATING PROCEDURE OF ABZAN (SITZ BATH).

There are following procedures of Abzan (Sitz bath)

1. Take an appropriate sized bath tub and clean it with luke warm water mixed with bleaching powder followed by rinsing thoroughly.
2. Fill the tub with liquid upto 2-3 inches.
3. In case of Abzan Har, the water should be warm and not too hot to cause burns or discomfort.
4. In case of Abzan barid, the water should be cold, but not too cold to cause discomfort to the patients.
5. Immerse the perineum into water, bend his legs or dangle them over the side of the tub to keep them out of the water and ensure the perineum is sub merged.
6. Tell the patient to stay in water for at least 15-20 minutes, in case of Abzan har.
7. In case of Abzan murakkab, tell the patient to stay in hot water for 5 minutes followed by a stay in cold water for less then 1 minute alternatively and cycle is repeated upto 5 times finishing an Abzan barid.
8. Tell the patient to stay in water for at least 5-10 minutes in case of Abzan barid.
9. Tell the patient to dry himself with a clean cotton towel.
10. Tell the patient not to rub or scrub the perineum, as this may cause pain and irritation.
11. The procedure is completed by rinsing the bath tub thoroughly.

CONTRAINDICATIONS (7,8,9)

1. Acute profuse bleeding.
2. Open wounds.
3. Pressure sores.
4. Acute fever.
5. Acute skin infections.
6. Contagious skin rashes.
7. Diabetic patients with diabetic neuropathy.
8. Hypotensive patients.
9. Sciezure.
10. Thermal nerve deficiency.
11. Raynaud's disease.

INDICATIONS OF ABZAN (SITZ BATH).(10)

1. Haemorrhoids.
2. Rectal prolapsed.
3. uterine prolapsed.
4. Oligomenorrhoea.
5. Hysteria.
6. Dysentery.
7. cystitis.
8. uterine cramps.
9. vaginitis.
10. IBS and prostatitis.

COMPLICATIONS. (7,8,9)

Numbness sensation on after Abzan barid when skin temperature decreases below 59F, frost bite (white, waxy, molted blue skin) Burn, palpitation, Bleeding).

CONCLUSION

In my opinion Abzan (Sitz bath) is very effective as well as safe, economic mode of treatment. it is an easy procedure, Furthermore, the gentleness of this therapy and the immediate relaxing effects add to the benefits.

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