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Habb-e-Suranjaan. A classical analgesic Unani formulation

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REVIEW ARTICLE

ABSTRACT

Habb/ Pill (Plural: *Huboob*) is a solid medicinal preparation, made by mixing powdered drugs in a suitable binder (Water/Oil/Resin of plant) and made into round and uniformly shaped balls of the required size. *Habb-e-Suranjaan* is one of the common *Huboob* or pills used in Unani system of medicine from ancient time. This polyherbal formulation is being used as an analgesic for treatment of various types of joint disorders and nerve pains like *Waja'-al-Mafaasil* (Arthralgia), *Waja'-al-A'saab* (Neuralgia) *Irq-al-Nasa* (Sciatica), *Niqris* (Gout) etc. It is also used in *Qabz* (Constipation). Its different *Nuskhajaat* (formulations) are mentioned in Unani books. The purpose of this review is to discuss different formulations of *Habb-e-Suranjaan*, their doses and therapeutic uses.

Keywords: *Habb*, Pill, *Habb-e-Suranjaan*, *Waja -al-Mafaasil*, Unani medicine.

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INTRODUCTION

Herbs are being used therapeutically all around the world to treat various types of ailments. Polyherbal formulations dominate as the largest segment, capturing a significant share of the overall herbal supplements and remedies market worldwide. Unani compound formulations are made with the drugs of herbal, mineral and animal origins although herbal origin has a larger share than animal and mineral ones. In Unani system of medicine there are four basic dosage forms of compound formulations: solid, semisolid, liquid and gaseous forms. These dosage forms are prepared with herbal, animal and mineral origins. The three origins are commonly known as *Mawaleed-e-Salasa* (Three sources or origins of drugs). *Habb* or pill is one of the types of solid dosage forms and it has many advantages. (Hamdani, 2011; Ahmad, 2015)

Habb (pill) is an ancient dosage form of Unani system of medicine invented by *Hakeem Seelon* (Husain, 2015). *Habb* is an Arabic word which means pill but it is spoken in other meanings also. This word is also used in term of seed, but in relation to form of drug, it is such solid form, which is made in round. The constituents of pill may be either one or more than one. It may be prepared either with drugs of the all three origins

or two of them or even only one of them. Volume or size of pill varies. Some are very small like size of *Sarson* (*Bressica nigra seed*), *Masoor* (*Lens culinaris seed*) *Baaibra* (*Pennissetum glaucum*), *Matar* (*Pisum satvum Linn.*) or about to one cm or more. Pills of one cm diameter are called *Bunduqa* (Plural: *Banadiq*). It is generally similar to size of *Reetha* fruit (*Sapindus trifoliatius*). (Kabeer, 2003; Hamdani, 2011)

Habb-e-Suranjaan is an important compound preparation which is used for a long time in Unani system of medicine as a good analgesic. There are more than ten types of *Nuskhajat* (formulations) of *Habb-e-Suranjaan* with a little or more difference in their weight, ingredients and binders. The therapeutic uses and indications of different formulations are also different although the common indication of the all types of formulations is same i.e. *Waj-al-Mafasil*. Although there are different types of *Nuskhajat* of *Habb-e-Suranjaan* which consist of different crude drugs but the main ingredient of this compound formulation in all types of formulations is *Suranjaan sheerin* except two versions which will be discussed later. Commonly all the crude ingredients of this preparation, including *Suranjaan sheerin*, have

analgesic and anti-inflammatory effects as well as purgative effect.

Suranjaan sheerin is used in arthralgia (Baitar, 1999; Razi, 2000), gout (Razi, 2000; Ghani, YNM), sciatica (Kabeeruddin, 2000; Sargodhwi, 2012), intestinal worm, jaundice, Bone Pain, scleritis all types of Arthralgia (Khan, 2014) haemorrhoids. (Baitar, 1999; Khan, 2014).

Apart from the pharmacological actions of its ingredients, *Habb-e-Suranjaan* as a compound formulation is used in arthralgia, sciatica, (Kabeeruddin, 2010; Jilani, 2005; Majusi, 2010; Kabeeruddin. 1938), gout, paraplegia, bell's palsy (Arzani, 2009), anti-inflammatory, analgesic and restoring normal sensation (Anonymous, 2006).

Preparation of *Habb-e-Suranjaan*

In the preparation of *Habb-e-Suranjaan*, single drugs are used in the powder form. The process of powdering, by pounding or grinding, is called *Daq-wa-Sahaq* (Kootnaur-Peesna). Drugs are generally powdered in a mortar and pestle, made of iron, stone, wood, porcelain or glass. Sometimes, they are powdered only in an iron or stone mortar. In large scale manufacture of drugs, pulverizing machines are generally used for this purpose.

Powdering of hard drugs

Herbs like Tukhm soya (*Anethum sowa*), Turbud (*Ipomea turpethum*), Habb-ul-Neel (*Ipomea hederacea*), *Suranjaan sheerin* (*Colchicum autumnale*) etc. are first dried in shade, sun or through low heat to evaporate their moisture contents and pounded in an iron mortar. Firstly, gentle pounding is done to avoid drug pieces being scattered outside the mortar. Initially, the drugs are broken into small pieces by gentle pounding and then vigorous pounding is employed till they are finally powdered. The powder is sieved through the appropriate mesh sieves. The coarse powder left in the sieve are again pounded and re-sieved. The remaining pieces of drugs, which can no longer be pounded, are ground on a *sil-batta* with a little water to prepare a fine paste which is then dried and ground to powdered form in a porcelain or glass mortar. (Anonymous, 2006)

Powdering of Muqil (*Commiphora mukul*) & Sibr (*Aloe barbadensis*)

Drugs like *Muqil* & *Sibr* etc. are first dried over a low fire or in a hot air oven to evaporate the moisture content and then powdered. Care should be taken to ensure that they are not burnt (Anonymous, 2006).

Powdering of Mastagi (*Pistacia lintiscus*)

Mastagi is powdered in a porcelain mortar by slow and light motion. It is also dissolved in any oil over a low fire

and added to the other drugs in the formula (Anonymous, 2006).

Methods of preparation of *Habb-e-Suranjaan*

There are two methods of preparation of *Habb-e-Suranjaan*

- Manual Process
- Mechanical Process

Manual Procces

Tukhm soya (*Anethum sowa*), Turbud (*Ipomea turpethum*), Habb-ul-Neel (*Ipomea hederacea*), *Suranjaan sheerin* (*Colchicum autumnale*) etc. drugs are ground into fine powder and passed through No. 100 mesh sieve. The powder is mixed with any rabeta (adhesive) like water, honey, *aab-e inab-us-salab*, *aab-e tukhm karafs* etc. Thus, by prolonged mixing of the two, a *lubdi* (mass) is made. This *lubdi* is rolled into sticks of required size and thickness and cut into pieces with a knife. These cut pieces are rounded between the fingers to shape the *huboob* of required size and weight. The *huboob* are dried in the shade.

(ii) Mechanical Process

Tukhm soya (*Anethum sowa*), Turbud (*Ipomea turpethum*), Habb-ul-Neel (*Ipomea hederacea*), *Suranjaan sheerin* (*Colchicum autumnale*) are first ground into fine powder and passed through No. 100 mesh sieve. The powder is then mixed with water or a specified adhesive to make a semi-solid mass and granulated by passing through No. 20 mesh sieve. The granules thus obtained are dried and kept in cooling pans and revolved. To make the pills, little water is sprinkled over the granules to keep them moist. Later on, these granules in the pan are coated with fine powder of crude drugs by rotating the pan with an interval of one minute to ensure the uniform and smooth coating of the granules and lastly passed through different size of sieves. This process is repeated till the pills of required size are obtained. For preparing tablets the granules are lastly subjected to tableting machines (Anonymous, 2006).

Different formulations (*Nuskhajaat*) of *Habb-e-Suranjaan*

There are more than ten different formulations of *Habb-e-Suranjaan*, mentioned in different Unani pharmacopoeias and classical books. The differences in the various formulations of this preparation are due to difference in their number of ingredients, weights of the ingredients, therapeutic uses, doses and binders used to make the pill. Some *Nuskhajaat* are mentioned below:

1. **Nuskha No. 1.** (Kabeeruddin, 2010; Jilani, 2005; Majusi, 2010; Kabeeruddin, 1938).

S.N.	Unani Name	Botanical Name	Quantity
1.	Suranjan sheerin	<i>Colchicum autumnale</i>	12gm.
2.	Sibr	<i>Aloe barbadensis</i>	12gm.
3.	Post halelazard	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	12gm.

Therapeutic use

Waja'-al-Mafaasil (Arthralgia), *Irq-al-Nasa* (Sciatica)

Dose: 3g twice a day

Hakim Kabeeruddin has mentioned the dose of this formulation for *Irq-al-Nasa* as 9g.

Majoosi has mentioned the dose of this formulation for *Irq-al-Nasa* as 10.5g.

2. Nuskha No. 2.

There is one another version of *Habb-e-Suranjaan*, containing the same ingredients, but a binder '*Aab-e-Inab-us-Salab*' is also mentioned. In this version the weight of *Suranjan* is two times more than other ingredients i.e. the ratio of *Suranjan* with other ingredients is 2:1. The dose of this *nuskha* is 8.75g and some more diseases are mentioned to be treated with it like *Niqris* (Gout), *Falij* (Paraplegia), *Laqwa* (Bell's palsy). (Arzani, 2009).

3. Nuskha No. 3.

Rahman has mentioned this *nuskha*, containing the binder as Honey (*Apis mellifera*) rather than *Aab-e-Inab-us-Salab*, but the dose is mentioned as 11g. (Rahman, 1353 AH).

4. Nuskha No. 4.

There is one another *nuskha* same as above but in spite of 'post halaila zard' (*Terminalia chebula*), 'sonth' (*Zingiber officinale*) is mentioned. It is used in *Waja'-al-Mafaasil* (Arthralgia), *Niqris* (Gout), *Irq al-Nasa* (Sciatica) and its dose is 5g. (Kabeeruddin, 2006; Khan, 2005).

5. Nuskha No. 5.

Another formulation of the *habb* is also mentioned with a little variation. In this version, one ingredient 'Turbud' (*Ipomea turpethum*) and one binder 'Aab-e-Gandana' (*Asphodelus tenuifolius*) are included. The ratio of Sibr

(*Aloe barbadensis*) and other ingredients is around 2:1, and it is used in *Niqris* (Gout) only (Rahman, 2007).

6. Nuskha No. 6.

There is one another version of *Habb-e-Suranjaan*, which is called as *Habb-e-Suranjaan Sagheer* (Arzani, 2009) containing two other ingredients along with *Suranjaan* and *Sibr* as following:

S.N.	Unani Name	Botanical Name	Quantity
1.	Suranjan sheereen	<i>Colchicum autumnale</i>	3.5 gm.
2.	Sibr	<i>Aloe barbadensis</i>	3.5 gm.
3.	Saqmonia	<i>Convolvulus scammonia</i> Linn	1 gm.
4.	Tukhmkarafs	<i>Apiumgraveolens</i> Linn.	0.5 gm.

Therapeutic Use

Niqris Baarid (Gout caused by cold temperament).

Dose: 8.5gm.

7. Nuskha No. 7.

There is one another version of *Habb-e-Suranjaan*, (Anonymous, 2006; Khan, 2005) containing some more ingredients along with *Suranjaan* and *Sibr*, which are as under:

S. N.	Unani Name	Botanical Name	Quantity
1.	Suranjansheerin	<i>Colchicum autumnale</i>	1 part
2.	Post halelazard	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	1 part
3.	Turbud	<i>Ipomea turpethum</i>	1 part
4.	Muqil	<i>Commiphora mukul</i>	1 part
5.	Shahm-e-Hanzal	<i>Citrullus colocynthis</i>	1 part

Medicinal Actions

Mus'hil (Purgative), *Mohallil-e-Waram* (Anti-inflammatory), *Musakkin-e-Alam/ Dafi'-e-Alam* (Analgesic, restoring normal sensation).

Therapeutic Use

Irq al-Nasa (Sciatica), *Waja'-al-Mafaasil* (Arthralgia), *Niqris* (Gout), *Warm-e-Maafasil*.

Dose: 5-7gm.

8. *Nuskha* No. 8

There is one another version of *Habb-e-Suranjaan*, (Anonymous, 1986; Anonymous, 2006) containing some more ingredients along with the above mentioned ingredients, which are as under:

S. N.	Unani Name	Botanical Name	Quantity
1.	Suranjansheerin	<i>Colchicum automnale</i>	80 gm.
2.	Sibr	<i>Aloe barbadensis</i>	35 gm.
3.	Turbud	<i>Ipomea turpethum</i>	95 gm.
4.	Muqil	<i>Commiphora mukul</i>	15 gm.
5.	Mastagi	<i>Pistacia lentiscus</i>	15 gm.
6.	Habb-ul-Neel	<i>Ipomea hederacea</i>	35 gm.
7.	Tukhm soya	<i>Anethum sowa</i>	35 gm.

9. *Nuskha* No. 9.

There is a same version of this formulation as *Nuskha* No. 8 but in place of Tukhm soya (*Anethum sowa*) Anisoon (*Pimpinella anisum*) is mentioned and one ingredient Ghariqoon (*Agaricus alba*) is also added. Aab-e-Karafs (*Apium graveolens*) as a binder is also included in this version (Kabeeruddin, 2006).

Action: *Munaqqi* (Cleanser)

Therapeutic Use: *Waja'-al-Mafaasil* (Arthralgia)

Dose: 17.25g once a day

10. *Nuskha* No. 10.

One another version of *Habb-e-Suranjaan*, (Kabeeruddin, 1938) containing some more ingredients along with above mentioned some ingredients, is as under:

S. N.	Unani Name	Botanical Name	Quantity
1.	Suranjan sheerin	<i>Colchicum automnale</i>	45.5 gm.
2.	Peepal	<i>Ficus religiosa</i> Linn.	3.5 gm.
3.	Sonth	<i>Zingiber officinale</i> Roscoe	3.5 gm.
4.	Zeerah	<i>Cuminum cyminum</i> Linn.	3.5 gm.
5.	Barge kabar	<i>Capparis spinosa</i> Linn.	3.5 gm.
6.	Barge menhdi	<i>Lawsonia alba</i>	3.5 gm.
7.	Namak-e-Nifti	<i>Mineral black salt</i>	7 gm.
8.	Naushadar	<i>Ammonium chloride</i>	7 gm.
9.	Samandarjhag	<i>Sea salt</i>	7 gm.
10.	Salarus	<i>Liquidambar orientalis</i> Mill.	7 gm.

Dose: 10.5gm with warm water at Bed time.

11. *Nuskha* No. 11.

Hakim Kabeeruddin has mentioned one another *Nuskha* of *Habb-e-Suranjaan* (Kabeeruddin, 1938) as following:

S. N.	Unani Name	Botanical Name	Quantity
1.	Suranjansheerin	<i>Colchicum automnale</i>	4.5 gm.
2.	Sibr	<i>Aloe barbadensis</i>	4.5 gm.
3.	Shahm-e-Hanzal	<i>Citrullus colocynthis</i>	3.5 gm.
4.	Maahizahraj	<i>Verbascum thapsus</i> Linn.	3.5 gm.
5.	Kateera	<i>Astragalus gummifer</i>	1.75 gm.
6.	Hab-un-Neel	<i>Ipomea hederacea</i>	1.75 gm.
7.	Namak-e-Hindi	Indian Rock Salt	7.5 gm.
8.	Nisootsiyah	<i>Convolvulus turpethum</i>	4.5 gm.
9.	Karafs	<i>Apium graveolens</i> Linn.	

Therapeutic Use

Waja'-al-Mafasil (Arthralgia), *Niqris* (Gout), *Irq al-Nasa* (Sciatica)

12. *Nuskha* No. 12.

A *Nuskha* (formulation) of *Habb-e-Suranjaan* is mentioned with the name of *Habb-e-Suranjaan Kabeer*, which is also called as *Habb-e-Muqeemuzzaman* (Kabeeruddin, 1938; Qamari 2008). Its ingredients are as under:

S. N.	Unani Name	Botanical Name	Quantity
1.	Suranjan sheerin	<i>Colchicum automnale</i>	17.5 gm.
2.	Sibr	<i>Aloe barbadensis</i>	35 gm.
3.	Nisaut	<i>Convolvulus turpethum</i>	35 gm.
4.	Shahm-e-Hanzal	<i>Citrullus colocynthis</i>	17.5 gm.
5.	Qunturiyun	<i>Erythaea centaurium</i> L.	17.5 gm.
6.	Maahizahraj	<i>Verbascum thapsus</i> L.	17.5 gm.
7.	Buzidan	<i>Orchis laxiflora</i> Lam.	17.5 gm.
8.	Farfiyun	<i>Euphorbia resinifera</i> A. Berger	35 gm.
9.	Sonth	<i>Zingiber officinale</i>	3.5 gm.
10.	Chita hindi	<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i> L.	3.5 gm.
11.	Filfisiyah	<i>Piper nigrum</i> Linn.	3.5 gm.
12.	Rai	<i>Brassica nigra</i> (Linn.)	3.5 gm.
13.	Jundbedastar	<i>Castorium / Beaver</i>	3.5 gm.

Therapeutic Use

Waja'-al-Mafasil (Arthralgia), *Niqris* (Gout), *'Irq al-Nasa* (Sciatica)

Dose: 3.5-7g

13. *Nuskha* No. 13.

There is one more version of *Habb-e-Suranjaan Kabeer* or *Habb-e-Muqemuzzamn* in which four more ingredients (to increase the action) are also added (Kabeeruddin, 1938) as following:

Saqmonia (*Convolvulus scammonia*), Heeng (*Ferula foetida*), Behroza (*Pinus roxburghii*), Jaosheer (*Ferula galbaniflua*).

14. *Nuskha* No. 14.

There are two more versions of *Habb-e-Suranjaan Kabeer* or *Habb-e-Muqemuzzaman*, (Arzani, 2009) in which fewer ingredients from above *nuskha* are mentioned. An ingredient Turbud (*Operculina turpethum*) is added in this version which is not included in above *Nuskha*. The *Nuskha* is as following:

S. N.	Unani Name	Botanical Name	Quantity
1.	Ayarijfeqra	<i>Aloe vera</i>	35 gm.
2.	Shahm-e-Hanzal	<i>Citrullus colocynthis</i>	35 gm.
3.	Qunturiyun	<i>Erythaea centaurium L.</i>	3.5 gm.
4.	Filfilsiyah	<i>Piper nigrum L.</i>	3.5 gm.
5.	Rai	<i>Brassica nigra</i> (Linn.)	3.5 gm.
6.	Jundbedastar	<i>Castoreum / Beaver</i>	3.5 gm.
7.	Turbud	<i>Operculina turpethum</i>	35 gm.

Therapeutic Use

Waja'-al-Mafaasil (Arthralgia), *Falij* (Paraplegia), *Laqwa* (Bell's palsy), *'Irq al-Nasa*(Sciatica), specially *Niqris* (Gout).

Dose: 3.5-7gm.

15. *Nuskha* No. 15.

The above version of *Habb-e-Suranjaan Kabeer* is also mentioned including some more ingredients (to increase the action), which are Saqmonia (*Convolvulus scammon*), Heeng (*Ferula foetida*), Jaosheer (*Ferula galbaniflua*) and *Qand* (Granular sugar) (Arzani, 2009).

In the last two versions of *Habb-e-Suranjaan Kabeer* though the main ingredient of *Habb-e-Suranjaan* i.e. *Suranjaan* (Rahman, 1991) is not mentioned or included

but they are named as *Habb-e-Suranjaan Kabeer* or *Habb-e-Muqemuzzaman* (Arzani, 2009). Thus it is the point of research that how any formulation can be named with the name of its main ingredient and the main ingredient is not included in the *Nuskha*. Further research should be done regarding this.

Some important points regarding pills/ Huboob

1. The *huboob* (pills) should neither be very hard nor very soft.
2. The *huboob*, *aqras* and *banadiq* are preserved in well dried, clean glass jars, stoppered bottles, phials, etc.
3. The *huboob* stored in a cool and dry place to avoid contamination. Chalk or starch powder is sprinkled inside the containers before use (Anonymous, 2006).

CONCLUSION

Despite of the rising popularity of herbal drugs, in many parts of the world, health professionals, policymakers for health and the mankind suffering with ailments are wrestling with issues like quality, efficacy, safety, availability and regulation of herbal and traditional drugs. Still no more studies, on this herbal product, have been done to overcome the issues mentioned above.

In this study, different *Nuskhajaat* (formulations) of *Habb-e-Suranjaan* were mentioned with their different ingredients, doses and therapeutic uses.

However, further preclinical and clinical studies are required, by using different protocols, to gather extensive knowledge of the formulation, specially to assure its use and effectiveness for *Waja'-al-Mafasil* (Arthralgia) and *'Irq al-Nasa* (Sciatica), as mentioned in classical Unani books.

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