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HIJAMAH (CUPPING THERAPY): A NOBLE METHOD OF TREATMENT IN UNANI MEDICINE

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ABSTRACT

Hijamah (Cupping therapy) refers to a Unani regimenal mode of treatment. Hijamah is an ancient method which was practically used among the Chinese, Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs and Indians. The literal meaning of Hijamah is to suck and can be broadly classified into Hijamat-bish-Shart (Wet cupping/cupping with scarification) and Hijamat-bila-Shart (Dry cupping/cupping without scarification). This method of treatment which is carried out by creating vacuum on suction dates back to Hippocrates (460-377B.C). While pondering through Unani classical literature, one can see the enormous number of indications of Hijamah encompassing inflammatory conditions and painful conditions like arthritis and sciatica. This therapy entered the Europe through Spain when the Muslim physicians and their scientific literature were the primary sources of medical sciences. This mode of treatment was not in practice for a long period of time. With the advancement in the field of science and technology, this mode of treatment was also proved to be beneficial scientifically in a large number of diseased conditions. With its resurgence after scientific validation, it has been adopted as mode of therapy in various countries. In India, several clinical trials have been performed in the supervision of various Unani Institutions all over the country.

Keywords: Hijamah (Cupping therapy), Hijamat-bish-Shart, Hijamat-bila-Shart, Unani

INTRODUCTION

Unani System of Medicine (Unani is an Arabic spelling of Ionian, meaning Greek) or Greco-Arabian medicine is a traditional alternative system of health and health maintenance observed in Asia. Unani medicine is based on the Hippocratic doctrine of four humours (Akhlat) i.e., Dam (blood), Bulgham (phlegm), Safra (bile) and Sauda (black bile). A proper balance of Akhlat within body ensures efficient metabolism, prevents the buildup of toxins, and maintains optimum health. One of the most important functions of Akhlat (humors) is to maintain the ideal qualitative states associated with Mizaj (Temperament) of an individual. Humoural imbalance is often root cause in the origin and development of a particular illness.¹ The main principles of treatment in Unani system of medicine are Ilaj-bit-Tadbeer wa Taghziya (Regimenal and Diet therapy), Ilaj-bid-Dawa (Pharmacotherapy) and Ilaj-bil-Yad (Surgery).²⁻⁶ Hijamah is an important part of Ilaj-bit-Tadbeer (Regimenal therapy). Before elaborating the Hijamah, it seems better to give a brief and comprehensive definition of Ilaj-bit-Tadbeer (Regimenal therapy). Ilaj-bit-Tadbeer is defined as, "The intervention in Asbab-e-Sittah Zaruriyah for therapeutic purpose is known as Ilaj-bit-Tadbeer."^{2,4-6} Asbab-e-Sittah Zaruriyah are six essential factors operating in life in a customary way. Any subtle alteration in their normal limit may cause the health disorders. These factors are: (1) Hawa-e-Muheet (Atmospheric air); (2) Makul wa Mashrub (Food and Beverages); (3) Harkat wa Sukun-e-Badani (Physical activity and relaxation); (4) Harkat wa Sukun-e-Nafsani (Mental activity and

relaxation); (5) Naum wa Yaqzah (Sleep and Awakening); (6) Ihtibas wa Istifragh (Retention and Evacuation)

Definition of Hijamah

The word Hijamah comes from the root Al-Hajm. Out of various meanings mentioned in different Arabic lexicons and dictionaries, most relevant is that al-hajm means "to suck". Hajjam (Copper) or Massas (Sucker) is one who performs the operation termed Hijamah or one who scarifies and draws blood with the Mihjamah. On the other hand, Mihjam/Mihjamah (Plural Mahajim) or the Qarurah (glass vessel or the like) is the instrument of the Hajjam. And the mishrat is the instrument, which is used for scarification or prickling the skin (Blade, Lancet or Scalpel).³⁸ As such there is no definition of Hijamah in Unani classical literature. Keeping in view its all aspects, Hijamah can be defined as, "Hijamah is a Unani regimenal mode of treatment which is carried out by application of cup shaped glass or plastic vessels on the body surface, creating vacuum by heat or by special suction apparatus, in order to evacuate the morbid materials, to divert the material from the diseased part, to return a displaced organ to its natural position or to encourage the blood flow to the site of Hijamah."³⁸

Types of Hijamah

Various classifications of Hijamah given in Unani classical literature are as under:

A. Depending upon whether scarification/ incision (Shart) is given or not, Hijamah is of two types:

1. Hijamat-bish-Shart (Wet Cupping/ Cupping with Scarification)
2. Hijamat-bila-Shart (Dry Cupping/ Cupping without Scarification)⁶⁻²⁷

Hijamat-bish-Shart, depending on its need can be of two types as:

- a) Hijamat-e-Iztirariyah (Mandatory)
- b) Hijamat-e-Ikhtiyariyah (Optional)^{8,28}

Hijamat-bila-Shart (Dry Cupping) can further be of two sub types on the basis of method of cupping:

- a) Hijamat-e-Nariyah (Cupping with Fire/ Fire cupping)
- b) Hijamat-e-Ghair-Nariyah (Cupping without Fire)^{7,10,17-18,24-25,27,28}

Apart from these two types, Abul Qasim al-Zehravi has mentioned a third type of Hijamah in his treatise, Kitabut-Tasreef as:

3. Hijamat-e-Mai (Hijamah with hot decoction of drugs)⁹

In earlier days when vacuum pumps were not available, a candle or some burning substance was used inside the cups to create vacuum. The vacuum thus created, adheres the cup to the skin. This was called Hijamat-e-Nariyah. Today the vacuum cup is used instead of flame (Hijamat-e-Ghair-Nariyah). In ancient times, cupping was done in a very special manner which is still in use in rural and tribal areas. In this method, horns of animals are used as a cup (Mihjamah). With the advent of technology, cups have been highly sophisticated. Such modified cups are provided with a valve at the top and a hand operated pump. To fix the cup on an area, its edges are kept over the skin and the air inside the cup is sucked out with the help of suction pump so as to create the vacuum. Similarly when the cup is needed to be removed, the valve is simply pulled up with the help of thumb and forefinger. This pulling of valve will allow the passage of air inside the cup and it will be detached by itself.³⁸

Hijamat-bish-Shart

In this type of Hijamah, besides the application of cups, a few incisions/scarification are also made at the site of cupping, which is usually superficial.

Principal Advantages of Hijamat-bish-Shart

Ibn Sena writes in his treatise Al-Qanun-fit-Tib, "Hijamat-bish-Shart has three advantages:

1. Hijamah results in Istafragh (evacuation of morbid material/humors) from the particular organ where Hijamah is done.
2. Conservation of the Jawhar-e-Rooh (essence of the pneuma) as the latter is not evacuated with the Akhlat (humors) which are being evacuated. In other types of

Istafragat (evacuations), Jawhar-e-Rooh is evacuated with the Akhlat (humors) from the whole body.

3. Hijamah does not interfere with the Aa'zay-e-Ra'esa (vital organs), as there is no Istafrag (evacuation) from these organs which may cause weakness.^{6,11-14,23,25,28}

Certain recommendations are to be followed in Hijamat-e-Ikhtiyariyah (Optional cupping):

- It should be carried out in the mid of lunar month because the humors are fully agitated this at this time.^{6,8,10-14,17,20,23-25,28}
- It should be done in the afternoon as it is the most moderate time of the day.^{6-7,11-14,23-24,28}
- Ibn-ul-Quf Masihi and Hakim Ali Geelani suggests, "Hijamah should be done preferably in summer season because the consistency of the humors remain in diluted state so it easily enters the microvasculature and can easily be eliminated through Hijamah".^{6,8} Ali Ibn Majusi suggests, "Hijamah should be preferably performed in the spring season of the year should be performed to a lesser extent in the extreme cold and heat conditions (i.e., summer and winter)".⁷
- It should be performed in persons with thin blood.⁶⁻⁸ According to Hakim Ali Geelani, it should be avoided in those persons having viscid blood.⁶
- Hakim Ali Geelani suggests that the person to be cupped should not be empty stomach. To this Ibn-ul-Quf Masihi adds, "The person should be given stomachic tonic and divergent beverages prior to Hijamah".^{6,8} Hakim Ali Geelani further says, "Use of eggs before and after Hijamah should be avoided because it has been found experimentally harmful and such activity results in Laqva (facial paralysis)".⁶
- It should be avoided in obese persons for the fear of Kastrat-e-Tahallul (excessive resolution).^{8,17,27}
- It should be avoided below two years and above sixty years of age since the humors are viscid in these age groups.^{8,10-13,17,20} But according to Mansur Ibn Ilyas, Hijamah should be performed between twelve and sixty years age group.²⁴ Regarding the Hijamah in the children Allama Kabir-ud-Din and Khuaja Ahmed Rizwan quotes that a kid in two years age can be cupped but after sixty years it should be avoided.^{6,14} Akbar Arzani in Meezan-ut-Tibb states that the Hijamah (cupping) and Irsal-e-Alq (leeching) can be used as substitute of Fasd (venesection) in the children.³⁰
- It should be avoided soon after Hamam (Turkish bath), because it needs deeper incision to take out the blood, which causes severe pain and leads to weakness. But the persons having viscid blood are exempted from this condition as they already need a deeper incision.^{6,8-18,23-24,31}
- It should be avoided before and after coitus.^{6,8,17}
- The person who has got cupped himself should not sleep immediately after Hijamah.^{9,31}
- It should be avoided after vigorous exercises for the fear of dehydration and general weakness with the exception of viscid blood (increased haematocrit).⁸

In addition to above recommendations, there are certain other recommendations which are to be taken into consideration in both types of Hijamat-bish-shart. These are:

- The number and depth of the incision should be according to the quantity and consistency of the material to be sucked out i.e., if the quantity of the material is large and the consistency is thick then the incision should be deep and multiple and vice-versa. And it also varies from person to person depending on the power and weakness, need, time and the Fasad-e-Dam (Turbidity of blood).⁶⁻⁸ According to Ibn Sena, "Scarification should be deep so that it might attract (blood) from the deeper parts".¹² It is preferable that the scarifications which are given on the Kahil (interscapular region) should be broader than the scarifications given on the Akhda'ain (Lateral sides of neck). And the scarifications on Saqain (Shanks) should be moderate in comparison to the scarification given on Kahil and Akhda'ain.⁷
- In order to achieve maximum benefit of Hijamah, it is advisable that the affected area should be rubbed first (to increase the blood circulation) then Mihjamah should be applied repeatedly (to drive the morbid materials towards the skin) and thereafter scarifications should be made along with application of Mihjamah.⁸
- Heavy meal (over dieting) is to be avoided after Hijamah because Tab'e'at (physique) will get distracted by the pain of cuts so proper digestion cannot take place leading to indigestion. The use of eggs have been reported to have caused the facial paralysis but the scientific justification to this fact is still under cover.

Sites and Indications of Hijamat-bish-Shart

- *Hamah/Yafukh (mid of the head)*
- *Qamhadwah (occiput)*: This is the posterior aspect of the head in between the hamah (mid of the head) and nuqra (nape).

About Hijamah at the above two sites Ibn Sena writes, "Some claim Hijamah of qamhadwah and hama is beneficial in Ikhtilat-e-Aql (delirium) and Dawar (verigo) and according to some, it delays the onset of Shaib (senility), but it should be reevaluated because in most of the cases it accelerates the process of Shaib. But this opinion is debatable. For this effect is found only in some persons, not in all the persons. In majority of the persons, it quickens the onset of senility. Moreover Hijamah over these sites is useful in diseases of eye and (indeed) this is its greatest benefit because it is beneficial for Jarab-ul-Ain (itching of the eye), Busur-ul-Ain (eruptions of eye) and Mursarj (iridoptosis). But it is harmful for the mind and may cause Balahat (idiocy), Nisyan (Amnesia), Reda'at-e-fikr (inability to ponder) and other chronic diseases. Moreover, it is injurious for persons suffering from cataract."^{6,11-14} It can also act as a preventive measure in Leprosy, Renal colic and Orchitis.¹⁰ According to Ibn-ul-Quf, "The Hijamah at the site of Hamah is beneficial for

Kumudat-ul-Wajh (facial pigmentation), Kudurat-ul-Hawas (obtundation) and the diseases of eye. Hijamah at the occiput is beneficial in Ikhtilat-e-Aql (confusion), Dawar-e-Damvi (vertigo), but this effect is delayed in sanguine temperament persons as it eliminates those materials which suppress Hararat-e-Ghariziyah (essential body heat).⁸

Nuqra (nape)

Hijamah at this site is a substitute of Fasd-e-Ak'hal (venesection of median vein)^{6,9,11-14,17, 23-25, 31} It should be performed after Tanqiya-e-Umumi (evacuation of whole body). The indications are Ramad (conjunctivitis), Waja-ul-uznain (otalgia), Siql-ul-Ras-wal-Ajfan-il-Damawiya (sanguinous heaviness of head and eye lids), Kalaf (melasma), Barsh (freckle lentigo), Namash, Reh-ul-Subul (vascular keratitis), Sulaq (tarsitis), Siql-ul-Hajibain (heaviness of eyelids), Siql-ul-Ras (heavy headedness), Jarb-ul-Ain (ocular scabies), Bakhrol-ul-Fam (halitosis) and Tahara-ul-Ain. It is also beneficial in Qula (aphthous stomatitis), Sarsmam (meningitis), Khunaq (diphtheria) and headache. It is contraindicated in persons having cold temperament or suffering from Nazlah (cold). Similarly it is also to be avoided in aged patients and those who are suffering from cold disorders of head. Frequent Hijamah at this site may cause Nisyan (Amnesia)^{9,28,31} so the site of Hijamah should be changed slightly downwards.^{9,31} The Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) has stated about the Hijamah of this site, "The posterior part of brain is the seat of memory, so Hijamah at this site weakens it".^{11,12,28} This precious statement also supports the possibility of Nisyan (Amnesia) by Hijamah at this site.

Akhda'ain (Lateral sides of neck)

Hijamah at this site is a substitute of Fasd-e-Qifal (Venesection of Cephalic vein).¹⁵ According to Abul Qasim Zehrawi, Hijamah at Akhda'ain is a substitute of Fasd-e-Basaleq (Venesection of Basilic vein).^{9,31} It is indicated in Irti'ash-e-Ras (head tremor) and in the diseases of face, teeth, ears, eyes, throat and nose, e.g., Waja-ul-Azras (toothache), Waja-ul-Lisan (lingual pain), Waram-e-Lissah (gingivitis), Ramad (conjunctivitis), Waram-ul-Uznain (otitis), Waja-ul-Ras (headache), Shaiqah (migraine), Warm-e-Lauztain (tonsillitis) and Khunaq (diphtheria). Its frequent use causes Irti'ash-e-Ras (head tremor) and whitening of the site of Hijamah. The deep scarification should be avoided; otherwise the underlying vasculature may get punctured causing hemorrhage, subsequent syncope and sometimes may lead to death.

Zaqan/Ziqan (chin)

Hijamah at this site is a substitute of Venesection of basilica, cephalic, median cubital and axillary veins.⁹⁻¹⁰ It is beneficial in the diseases of the teeth, face, throat, head, mandible and maxilla. So it is advisable in the Bakhr-ul-Fam (halitosis), Waram-e-Lisan (glossitis), Busur-ul-Fam (stomatitis), Qula (aphthous stomatitis), and Waram-e-

Lauzaitain (tonsillitis). Besides it is beneficial in Sara' (epilepsy) and headache.¹⁵⁻¹⁶

Al-Uznain (Ears)

Hijamah at this site is known as Tashreef.⁸ According to Allama Kabiruddin, "It may not be termed as Hijamah."⁶ The method is that the ear lobe is rubbed well to increase blood circulation then it is pricked to let few drops of the blood ooze out without applying the cups. It is advised in the Waja-ul-Ajfan (blepharitis) and Siql-ul-Ajfan (pain and heaviness of eyelids), Suda-e-Har (headache) and Siql-ul-Ras Damavi (sanguine heaviness of head).

Kahil (Interscapular region)

Hijamah at this site is substitute of Fasd-e-Akhal (Venesection of median cubital vein)^{10,22} and Fasd-e-Basleq (basilic vein)^{6,8-9,23-25,27} and according to Abul Qasim Zehravi, it is substitute of both, i.e., Fasd-e-Akhal and Fasd-e-Basleq. Hijamah at Kahil is beneficial in Rabu (asthma), Zeq-un-Nafs (dyspnoea), su'al (cough), Imtila (congestion), Rabu-e-Damavi (sanguine asthma), Amraz-e-Sadr-Damaviyah (sanguine diseases of thorax), Khunaq-e-Damavi (sanguine diphtheria), Waja-ul-Hallaq (sore throat) and Waja-ul-Katif (shoulder pain). Hijamah at Kahil enfeebles the stomach and causes palpitation. So it is advised to change the site of Hijamah slightly upwards to prevent the weakness of heart and stomach. Contradictory to this well accepted concept, Isma'il Jurjani states, Hijamah at this site is beneficial in Khapqan-e-Khooni (sanguine palpitation).¹⁰ It should preferably be done slightly downwards for Nafs-ud-Dam (haemoptysis) and Sua'al (cough).

Mankibain/Katifain (Shoulders)

The part of back just opposite to clavicle is known as Mankib or Katif.⁸ Hijamah of both shoulders is beneficial in Khafqan-e-Har Imtila'i (palpitation due to congestion), poisoning and rib fracture. Hijamah of right shoulder is beneficial in Auja-ul-Kabid Harrah (Hepatalgia due to hotness) and other diseases of liver, whereas Hijamah of the left shoulder is indicated in Auja-ut-Tihal (pain of spleen) and Humma-e-Rub (quotidian fever).

Taht-us-Sadyain/ Baynus-Sadyain (Below the bust line/In between breasts)

According to Hakim Ali Geelani, Hijamah Taht-us-Sadyain (below the bust line) is indicated in the Metrorrhagia or Menorrhagia, while as the actual site is in between breasts according to Ibn Abbas Majusi and Ibn Rushd.

Rusgh-ul-Yadain/ Batnai-al-Zindain (Carpus/Ventral aspect of forearms)

Hijamah at this site is substitute of Fasd-e-Basleq (Basilic vein), Fasd-e-Akhal (Median cubital vein) and Fasd-e-Qifal (Cephalic vein) because it drains the blood from all those venules which are embedded in the muscles of the

area and these venules are the tributaries of those large veins which are the branches of the above veins. The deep incision or scarification is avoided because this area has a rich arterial and nerve supply.^{9, 31} The indications are Jarb-ul-Muzmin al-Damavi (chronic sanguinous scabies), Al-Hakkah (pruritus), Sa'fa (Favus) and Shiqaq fil-Yad (cracked palms).

Naghiz (Superior border of the shoulder blade)

Hijamah at right Naghiz is beneficial in Auja-ul-Kabid Harrah (hepatalgia due to hotness), hepatitis and Hijamah at the left Naghiz is beneficial in Auja-ut-Tihal (Pain of spleen), splenitis and poisoning.

Warikain (Buttocks)

Hijamah at this site is beneficial in Bawaser (hemorrhoids), Sailan-ul-Dam min Afwah-il-Uruq min-ar-Reham (hemorrhage from uterine blood vessels), Dard-e-Reham (Uterine pain), Waram-e-Maq'ad (proctitis), Nazf-ud-Dam wa Baul-ud-Dam (hemorrhage and haematuria), Hararat-ul-Kilyatain (hotness of kidneys), Harqat-ul-Baul (burning micturation), Zarbban-ul-Maq'ad (anal throbbing), bleeding per rectum, Waram-e-Unsiyain (oophritis), Badbu-e-Reham wa Badb-e-faraj (Fowl odouring uterus and vulva), Hakka-e-Reham (pruritus vulva), Istihaza (dysfunctional uterine bleeding), Paechish (intestinal colic/tenesmus) and Damamel-e-Fakhizain (carbuncles of gluteal region).

Qatn (Lumbar region)

Hijamah at this site is beneficial in Damamel-e-Fakhiz (carbuncles of gluteal region), Jarb-e-Fakhiz (scabies of gluteal region), Busur-e-Fakhiz (furunculosis of gluteal region), Niqras (Gout), Bawaser (haemorrhoids), Da-ul-Fel (filariasis), Riyah-ul-Masanah-wa-Reham, Hikkat-ul-Zahr (pruritus on back), Niqras (gout). If this Hijamah is done with fire (Hijamat-e-Nariyah), then it is beneficial in all the above diseases irrespective of scarification. Hijamat-bila-Shart is more beneficial in Amraz-e-Rehiyah (disorders due to pneuma) where as Hijamat-bish-Shart is more beneficial in Amraz-e-Ghair- Rehiyah.

Us'us (coccyx)

Hijamah at this site is advised in Bawaser (haemorrhoids), wounds of the lower parts of the body. Since the Hijamah at this site needs heavy suction so the cups should preferably be made of copper instead of glass and incision should be slightly bigger.

Maq'ad (Anus)

Hijamah at this site is beneficial in Waram-e-Maq'ad (proctitis), Harqat-e-Maq'ad (pruritus ani), Auja-e-Maq'ad (pain at anal region), Jarb-e-Maq'ad (scabies of anal region), Bawaser (haemorrhoids), Dard-e-Ama (intestinal colic), Bawaser-e-Reham, Ihtibas-e-Tams (amenorrhoea), backache and pain in hip region. It is also beneficial in increasing size of female buttocks and

thighs. To obtain the maximum benefits, this Hijamah should be done after Tanqiyah-e-Umumi (evacuation).

Fakhizain (thighs)

Hijamah at the dorsal aspect of the thighs is beneficial in Waram-e-Khusyah (orchitis), Quruh-e-Mot'affinah (infected wounds) of the shanks, Waram-e-Reham (Metritis), Busur wa Damamel-e-Fakhiz wa saqain (boils and carbuncles of thighs and shanks), Ihtibas-e-Tams (amenorrhoea). Contradictory to this well accepted concept, Ibn-al-Quf Masihi and Allama Mehmood Amli writes in their treatises that Hijamah at the dorsal aspect of the thigh is beneficial in Sailan-ul-Dam min Afwah-il-Uruq min-ar-Reham (hemorrhage from uterine blood vessels).^{8,13} Hijamah at the ventral aspect of thighs is beneficial in Bawaser (hemorrhoids) and Shiqaq-e-Maq'ad (anal fissure), Awram-wa-Inharajat-fil-alyatain (swellings and boils of buttocks). Besides the above indications, Hijamat-e-Fakhizain is also beneficial in Niqras (Gout), Da-ul-Feel (Filariasis), Reh-e-Masana, Hikkat-ul-Qutn (lumbar pruritus) and arthritis.³⁶⁻³⁷

Rukbah (Knee)

Hijamah at this site is indicated in Waram-e-Rukbah (swelling of the knee), Waja-ul-mafasil-Damavi (sanguine arthritis), Zarban-e-Rukbah Har (throbbing of the knee joints), abscess and chronic wounds of the leg and shank. According to Ibn-ul Quf Masihi and Hakim Ali Geelani, the method to apply Mihjahmah at this site is that, "The patient should be in standing posture with his leg fully extended. Then the cups are applied on the border (edge) of femur near knee joint".^{6,8}

Saqain (Shank)

According to Aflatun, Hijamah at Saqain is substitute of Fasd-e-Baselq (Venesection of basilic vein), whereas according to Yuhana Ibn Masuya, it is substitute of Fasd-e-Mabiz and Fasd-e-Safin (Venesection of saphenous vein).¹⁰ Ibn Sena writes in his book Al-Qanun-fit-Tib, "Hijamah at this site is substitute of Fasd-e-Safin (venesection of saphenous vein) and it is even better than Fasd-e-Safin in women having fair complexion which are Mutakhkhil-ul-Badan (flabby) and have thin blood". It is also substitute of Fasd-e-Irqubain.^{9,31} It is advised in the chronic renal and uterine colic. It is beneficial in Busur and Damamel (boils and carbuncles), Ihtibas-e-Tams (amenorrhoea), pain in the throat, initial stage of Khunaq (diphtheria), Namla (herpes) of shank, Amraz-e-Gurdah (disorders of kidneys) Zakhm-e-Masana (wounds of bladder), Malankholia (Melancholia), Saqtah, Sara' (Epilepsy), Fasad-e-Dehan (halitosis), Dawar (vertigo), Jarb wa Hikkah (scabies and pruritus), Ringworm, Irqun-Nisa (sciatica), Tareeki-y-e-Chashm (loss of vision), Tape-Damvi (sanguine fever). Besides Hijamah at Saqain has also blood purifying effect, and is also beneficial in Imtila (congestion) because it drains the blood from whole body. It is preferable for the Hijamah at this site, that patient should take Hamam (Turkish bath) or pour warm water on his shanks so as to increase the blood circulation of the

area. After taking Hamam, patient should rest for an hour prior to Hijamah.

Urqubain (Tendocalcaneus)

The benefits of the Hijamah at this site are similar to those of Hijamat-e-Saqain. The method is that first to increase the blood circulation of the area. The cups are applied repeatedly for a short duration before making the incision. Thereafter blood is sucked out slowly from a single incision if a little amount is to be sucked out; and from the multiple incisions if large amount of blood is to be sucked out. In case of viscid blood a slightly deeper incision is given but the depth should not exceed the thickness of the skin in any case.

Ka'bain (Ankles)

Hijamah at this site is indicated in the Ihtibas-e-Tams (amenorrhoea), Irq-un-Nisa (Sciatica) and Niqras (gout), Shiqaq-ul-Qadam.

Batn-wa-Teht-us-Sirah (Abdomen and below navel)

Hijamah on abdomen is beneficial in Damamel (carbuncles) and Busur (furunculosis) of thighs, Bawaser (hemorrhoids), Reh-ul-Masan-wa-Reham, Niqras (gout), Da-ul-Feel (filariasis). Hijamah below the umbilicus is beneficial in warming and absorption of Riyah-ur-Reham and Riyah-ul-Galeez which has been accumulated at navel. Hijamah is done at the site of liver (i.e., right hypochondrium) when there is epistaxis from right nostril; and Hijamah is done at the site of spleen (i.e., left hypochondrium) when epistaxis from left nostril.

Contraindications

- Hijamah should be avoided during the beginning and the end of the lunar month (only in case of Hijamat-e-Ikhtiyariyah).^{6,8,10-14,17,25-28}
- Hijamah should be avoided in children below age of two years and in elderly persons after sixty years with exception of some special circumstances.^{8,10-13,26} According to Mohammad Hasan Qarshi, the age group is 10-60 years.^{17,27}
- Hijamah should be avoided or done to a lesser extent in extremely cold or hot weather (only in case of Hijamat-e-Ikhtiyariyah).^{7,33-34}
- Hijamah should be avoided in persons having viscid blood and who are obese.^{6,27}
- Hijamah should be avoided in persons whose body has become flabby due Kasrat-e-Tahalul (excessive dissolution).⁸
- Hijamah should be avoided or done to a lesser extent in people who have thin build, are pallor and are weak.²⁸
- Hijamah should be avoided after strenuous exercise but can be done having viscid blood, as it can result in excessive dissolution of morbid material which in turn can result in weakness.⁸
- Hijamah should be avoided after coitus.⁸

- When there is excess morbid material in an organ, then Hijamah (Tanqiy-e-Khas) should be avoided before Tanqiy-e-Aam (general evacuation)²⁶, or it should be done after Fasd (Venesection).¹⁷⁻²⁷
- Hijamah at the Nuqra (nape) results in amnesia, over Kahil (inter-scapular region) impairs in cardiac orifice of stomach and over Akhda'in (lateral sides of the neck) results in tremor of the head, so it is advised that the Hijamah at Nuqra should be a little lower and at the Kahil a little upper. Hijamah at the Kahil and Akhda'in enfeebls the stomach and causes palpitation of heart.^{6,11-12}
- It is proper to avoid Hijamah after Hamam (Turkish bath) except in case of viscid blood.^{6,11-12,17-18,23}
- Hijamah should not be done in standing position or in sitting position on that type of chair, which has no support to prevent patient from falling down, as the patient may get fainted.³³⁻³⁴
- Hijamah should not be done on an area having poor musculature.³³⁻³⁴
- Hijamah should not be done on an area having major blood vessels such as dorsum of the hand and feet especially in those people who are lean and thin.³³⁻³⁴
- Hijamah should be avoided on torn ligaments of the joints.³³⁻³⁴
- Hijamah should not be done over arteries as it can result in hemorrhage that would difficult to stop.⁷ Hijamah should be avoided on varicose veins but may be done on either sides of the vein.³³
- Hijamah should be avoided on edematous knee but may be done on the surrounding area.³³⁻³⁴
- Hijamah should be avoided after heavy meals for at least two hours.³³ According to Hakim Ali Geelani, "Eating of eggs before and after Hijamah should be avoided as it can result in Facial palsy".⁶
- Hijamah should not be done in pregnant women on the lower abdomen and chest particularly in first trimester.³³⁻³⁴

Complications of Excessive bleeding

According to Ali Ibn Abbas Majusi, if large amount of blood is sucked out, it will enfeeble the stomach and liver; result in Barudat-e-Jigar, Barudat-e-Meda and causes yellow discoloration of the body. In addition to these, excessive bleeding will complicate in the Istisqa (ascites), Qillat-wa-Zo'af-e-Bah (decreased libido), weakness and general debility, Khafqan (palpitation), Falij (paralysis), Behaq-e-Abyaz (pityriasis alba) and Zo'af-e-Basar.

Hijamat-bila-Shart (Dry Cupping/Cupping without scarification)

It is the type of Hijamah in which only cups are applied on the body surface without any scarification. It may be divided in following two types:

- Hijamat-e-Ghair-Mutaharikah (Stationary cupping)
- Hijamat-e-Mutaharikah (Gliding or Moving Cupping)

Hijamat-e-Ghair Mutaharikah

This is the main type of Hijamat-bila-Shart, which is used in Unani medicine, and includes both Hijamat-e-Nariyah and Hijamat-e-Ghair-Nariyah. It is indicated in the following conditions:

- To prevent the vomiting of food from stomach, so that the stomach can work on the food and the proper digestion may take place. For this purpose, Hijamah is done on epigastrium.⁸
- To divert the material from one place to another place. For this purpose Mihjamah are applied at that site where material is to be diverted. e.g., in case of menorrhagea, Mihjamah are applied below the bust line.^{6-8,10-18,23-24,26}
- To divert the material from the upper part of the body to the lower part of the body. e.g., in Sarsam (meningitis), relieving colicky pain.²⁶ In case of nervous disorders, Hijamah on the Saqain (shanks) is beneficial while as in Bukharat-e-Dimag, Hijamah on Fakhizain (thighs) is beneficial.^{18,25}
- When the Warm (swelling) lies in the depth and the effect of topical medication is not gained. Then for this purpose Mihjamah are applied on the surface against the swelling and proper suction with alternate relaxation is applied many times until the Warm (swelling) appears on the surface. Then topical drugs are applied on it.^{6,8,10-14,17,23-26}
- To make morbid material evident on the surface of an organ which lies inside its contour, e.g., Ratubat (fluid) that lies inside the Farj-e-Zan (female genital tract) and is secreted during coitus. This Ratubat (fluid) is cleared by applying Mihjamah.¹⁰
- When the abscess is deep and contains large amount of pus which is difficult to drain completely. In this condition the Mihjamah is placed on the opening of the abscess and pus can be sucked out completely.^{6-8,10}
- When there are fistulae in the ears that are profusely bleeding, then the Mihjamah are applied on the applied and sucked.⁷
- When the swelling is in any important viscera then Mihjamah are applied on a relatively less important organ to divert the morbid material from the visceral organ.^{6,8,11-14,25-26}
- Sometimes the purpose is to warm up any particular organ which has become cool and to increase its blood circulation. Hijamat-e-Nariyah will be preferable for the purpose.^{6-8,10-16,23-26}
- When there is excessive accumulation of Riyah (pneuma) in any part of the body, then application of Mihjamah on the same part dissolves the Riyah (pneuma). Hijamat-e-Nariyah in particular is more effective as it is done in Qaulanj-e-Rehi (intestinal colic due to pneuma).^{7-9,11-13,15-16,18,24-26,31}
- Hijamah is also beneficial in hernias and dislocations. e.g., when the vertebra of cervical spine dislocates inside or when fractured rib is shifted inside compressing the lungs; or in case of hernia. Then the Mihjamah is applied.^{6-8,11-17,24-26}

- Hijamah is also used to relieve severe pain in any part of the body. This purpose is achieved either due to diversion of materials away from the site of pain e.g., Hijamah in Irq-un-Nisa (sciatica) at medial and dorsal aspect of the thigh; or by dissolution of morbid material causing pain. e.g., Hijamah in Qaulanj-e-Rehi (gaseous colic) at umbilicus. Likewise in the uterine pains particularly during menstruation in young girls.^{6-18,23-25,31}
- Hijamah is also helpful in restoring the normal size of an atrophied organ or to increase the size of an organ. Oil application followed by frequent application of cupping results in hyperaemia and improves its Hararat-e-Ghariziah along with resolution of morbid materials.^{6,8}
- Hijamah is also helpful in restoring the normal size of hypertrophied organ. The purpose is achieved by applying the cups in the surrounding area which diverts the material to the site of Hijamah and leads to the reduction of the size of the organ.⁸
- When the heat of some organ has decreased and due to same reason its movement has been restricted or decreased, but the nerve supply is intact. Then the applying of Mihjamah at that site not only increases the heat but also blood circulation. If such condition is seen in liver, then Mihjamah will be applied first on the shoulders then on the site of pathology. This will be repeated several times.^{7,10}
- Hijamah is done at the site of liver (i.e., right hypochondrium) when there is epistaxis from right nostril; and Hijamah is done at the site of spleen (i.e., left hypochondrium) when epistaxis from left nostril.^{7,10}
- Hijamah over the Warikain (Buttocks/hip) is beneficial for Irqun-Nisa (sciatica) and when there is fear of dislocation of the hip.^{6,11-17,36-37}
- Hijamah in between the Warikain (Buttocks/hip) is beneficial for the disorders of hips, thighs and Bawaser (piles) and also for persons suffering from hydrocele and Niqras (gout).^{6,11-14,36-37}
- According to Hakim Ali Geelani, Hijamah over the Maq'ad (anus), "Whether Hijamah with scarification or without scarification or whether Hiijamat-e-Nariya or Hiijamat-e-Gair-Nariya", drains morbid matter from entire body and especially from the head. It is beneficial for intestines, Fasad-e-Haiz (menstrual disturbances) and Bawaser (piles); and makes the body light. Besides, Hijamat-e-Nariya at this site is also beneficial in Riyah-e-Galez-e-Maq'ad, Barudat-

wa-Hararat-e-Maq'ad and Ratubat-wa-Lazujat-e-Maq'ad^{6-7,11-14}

- Hiijamat-e-Nariyah at the Na'f (umbilical region) is beneficial in Paech-e-Shikam (tenesmus), Qaulanj-e-Rehi (colicky pain), Fasad-e-Haiz (menstrual disturbances), dysmenorrhoea, Gishi-ba-sabab-e-Haiz (syncope due to menstruation). Besides, Nazaf-e-Reham (dysfunctional uterine bleeding), Ratubat-e-Reham and Ratubat-e-Farj (vulvular/uterine discharge) especially during coitus.^{7,11-13}
- Hiijamah at the site of loin is beneficial in Suda'-wa-Hisat-e-Gurdah (renal obstruction and calculus).^{7,9,31}

Hijamat-e-Mutaharrikah

This technique basically of Chinese origin, is also named as massage cupping. According to Anita Shannon, "This is the more common use for massage therapist and other healthcare practitioners. Before applying the cup, the therapist administers plenty of oil to facilitate the smooth movement. When applying oil, they palpate the tissue to discover the area of tension and congestion, create the vacuum and place the cup. The entire back may be treated including the neck, shoulders, middle and lower back and sacral area. The hip, thigh and the abdominal area may also be treated. People often describe deep warmth and a tingling sensation long after the treatment has ended. Cupping is not irritant to skin or body. It draws the inflammation out, yet does not add to it. This technique is excellent when used as a contrast therapy with cold compresses or liniments".³⁵

CONCLUSION

Hijamah or cupping therapy is an important emerging alternative non pharmacological regimenal mode of treatment. Hijamah is beneficial in a large number of disorders. Cupping Therapy has successfully been used as an effective therapy for various medical conditions like blood disorders, arthritic and muscular disorders, fertility and gynecological disorders, skin problems (eczema, acne etc.) as well as improving general physical and psychological well-being. Research has shown the clinical effectiveness of cupping for both physical and psychological conditions. Recent publications from China, Middle East and Iran in the form of Randomized Control Trials and Systematic reviews have provided a solid foundation for further studies. Many studies have been carried out about its utility and mechanism of action.

Table 1: Sites of Hijamat-bish-Shart and their indications

S. No.	Sites	Indications
1	Hamah/Yafookh	Confusional states, Vertigo. Diseases of Eye e.g., Scabies of ocular area, Eruptions of eye, Iridoptosis, etc. Facial pigmentation, Obtundation. ^{6-8, 11-13, 18, 23-25, 28}
2	Qamhadwah	
3	Nuqrah	Conjunctivitis, Otagia, Heaviness of head and eye lids, Freckle lentigo, Namash, Vascular Keratitis, Tarsitis, Ocular Scabies, Halitosis, Aphthous stomatitis, Meningitis, Diphtheria and headache. ^{3, 6-7, 8-9, 11-18, 23-28, 31}
4	Akhdain	Head tremor, Diseases of Face, Eyes, Ears, Teeth, Throat and Nose. e.g., Toothache, Lingual pain, Gingivitis, Conjunctivitis, Otitis, Headache, Migraine, Tonsillitis and Diphtheria. ^{6, 8-17, 21-24, 31}
5	Zaqn	Diseases of Teeth, Face, Throat, Head, Mandible and Maxilla. e.g., Glossitis, Halitosis, Stomatitis, Aphthous, and Tonsillitis), Epilepsy and headache. ^{6-16, 18, 21, 23-25, 28-31}
6	Uznain	Pain and heaviness of eyelids, Headache and Heaviness of head. ^{6, 8, 13}
7	Kahil	Asthma, Dyspnoea, Cough, Congestion, Diseases of thorax, Diphtheria, Sore throat and Shoulder pain. ^{6-18, 21-25, 28}
8	Mankibain/Katifain	Palpitation, poisoning and rib fracture. Hepatalgia and other diseases of liver (Right Mankib). Pain of spleen and Quotidian fever at Left Mankib. ^{6-10, 13, 22, 31}
9	Taht-al-Sadyain/ Baynus-Sadyain	Metrorrhagea or menorrhagea ^{6, 7, 13, 27, 32}
10	Rusgh-ul-Yadain	Chronic Scabies, Pruritus, Favus and Shiqaq fil-Yad (cracked palm). ^{6-9, 13, 17, 31}
11	Naghiz	Hepatalgia and hepatitis (Right Naghiz). Pain of spleen, splenitis and poisoning (Left Naghiz) ^{6-8, 13}
12	Warkain	Haemorrhoids, Uterine pain, Proctitis, Haematuria, Hararat-ul-Kilyatain (hotness of kidneys), Burning micturation, Anal throbbing), bleeding per rectum, Oophritis, Badbu-e-Reham wa Badb-e-faraj (Fowl odouring uterus and vulva), Pruritus vulva, Dysfunctional uterine bleeding, Intestinal colic/tenesmus and Boils of thigh. ^{3, 6-8, 13, 16-17}
13	Qatn	Carbuncle, Scabies and Furunculosis of gluteal region. Gout, Haemorrhoids, Filariasis and Pruritus on back. ^{6, 11-13, 17, 23, 26, 36}
14	Us'us	Haemorrhoids, wounds of lower part of body, Bleeding per rectum, Proctitis, Haematuria, Hararat-ul-Kulyatain, Burning micturation, Oophritis, Uterine prolapse and Pruritus vulva. ^{9, 31}
15	Maq'ad	Proctitis, Haemorrhoids, Scabies of anal region, intestinal colic and Amenorrhoea. ^{6-8, 13, 15-16}
16	Fakhzain	Orchitis, Metritis, Furunculosis, infected wounds and Carbuncles of thighs and shanks, Amenorrhoea, Gout, Elephantiasis, lumbar pruritus, Arthritis. ^{6-7, 10-18, 23-27}
17	Rukbah	Swelling and Arthritis of knee. Abscess and chronic wounds of the leg and shank. ^{6, 8, 10-13, 17-18, 23-24, 36-37}
18	Saqain	Chronic renal and uterine colic, boils and carbuncles, Amenorrhoea, pain in the throat, Diphtheria, Herpes of shank, disorders of kidneys, wounds of bladder, Melancholia, Apoplexy, Epilepsy, Halitosis, Scabies and Pruritus, Sciatica, Loss of vision and Fever. ^{6-18, 20-21, 23-28, 31, 36-37}
19	Urqu bain	All those diseases in which Hijamat-e-Saqain is useful. ^{9, 31}
20	Ka' bain	Amenorrhoea, Sciatica and Gout. ^{6, 7, 11-14, 17-18, 23-26, 36-37}
21	Batn-wa-Teht-us-Sirah	Hijamah on abdomen- Carbuncle and Furunculosis of thighs, Haemorrhoids, Gout, Elephantiasis; on right and left hypochondrium for epistaxis from respective right and left nostrils. ^{9, 22, 27, 31}

Table 2: Sites of Hijamat-bila-Shart and its indications

S. No	Site	Indications
1	Tahat-us-Sadyain (Below the Bust Line)	Metrorrhagia, menorrhagia and epistaxis ^{6, 7, 9, 10-17, 23-26}
2	Na'f (Umbilical Region)	Tenesmus, Abdominal colic, Menstrual disturbances, Dysmenorrhoea, Syncope due to menstruation, Dysfunctional Uterine bleeding, (Vulvar/uterine discharge) especially during coitus. ^{6, 7, 9, 11-13, 31}
3	Lower abdomen	Inguinal hernia (on the respective site) ^{6-8, 11-17, 24-26}
5	Loin	Renal obstruction and calculus ^{7, 9, 31}
6	Site of Liver	Hepatic problems due to pneuma, epistaxis from right nostril ^{7, 9, 10, 31-32}
7	Site of spleen	Problems of Spleen due to pneuma, epistaxis from left nostril ^{7, 9, 10, 31-32}
8	Warikain (Buttocks/hip)	Sciatica and when there is fear of dislocation of the hip ^{6, 11-17, 36-37}
9	In between Warikain (Buttocks/hip)	Piles, Hydrocele, Gout and disorders of Hip and thigh ^{6, 11-14, 36-37}
10	Maq'ad (Anus)	Hijamah over the anus drains morbid matter from entire body especially from the head. It is beneficial for intestines, menstrual disturbances and Piles; and makes the body light. Various disorders of anus. ^{6, 7, 11-14}
10	Medial and dorsal aspect of thigh	Sciatica ^{8, 36-37}
11	Uzun (Ears)	Fistula ⁷

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