

Features of Islamic Health-Treatment Doctrine

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Abstract

Background and Objectives: Islam has particular style and doctrine about health and treatment that makes it different from other treatment methods. The aim of this article is studying the principles and methods of Islamic health treatment and the attitudes of this religion toward appearance of disease caused by material or immaterial factors.

Methods: This article is review type and it is presented by descriptive analysis method from religious sources.

Results: Islam is a religion which is oriented towards health with health-treatment features, priority of prevention over treatment by reforming nutritional principles, tolerance of disease and avoidance of taking medicine if the disease is not sever, paying attention to spiritual causes of illness in addition to physical factors and necessity of treatment as a Divine Will and avoidance of treatment by Haraam because God has not placed healing in Haraam.

Conclusion: These features have made Islamic health - treatment doctrine as unique.

Keywords: Doctrine. Health, Islam, Treatment.

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Introduction

There is no doubt that Islam is a Health - oriented religion and is taken seriously about health and treatment which are the indicators of measuring health development in communities. In Islam, physical and mental health are necessary for human perfectionism. Islam has a particular style and doctrine about health and treatment, some of which are explained below.

Methods:

This article is review type and it is presented by descriptive analysis method from religious sources.

Results:

In studying Islamic health features, we reach to these principles :

1- The Priority of Prevention over Treatment
In medical culture of Islam, prevention is one of the main and basic principles, which is related

mostly to nutrition. Hence forward" stomach is the house of all diseases" (1). Recommendations of Islam about nutrition are as follows:

A) starting the meal with the name of Allah: Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said:" when eating the meal, utter the name of that with whose name no pain will hurt and therein lies the cure of all diseases" (2).

B) Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said to his son Imam Hassan (peace be upon him): "Must not I teach you four words by which you do not need medicine?" Then he said, "do not eat except when you are hungry, before having your fill, stop eating, chew food well and drain the bowel and bladder before bedtime" (1).

C) Starting the meal with salt: Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) has narrated that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said to Imam Ali (peace be upon him):" Ali start and end your meal with salt and any one doing this will be safe from 72 type of diseases including leprosy, madness and vitiligo" (3).

D) Eating less: the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: "anyone who eats less has a healthy body and a pure heart" (2). Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: "continuation of overeating brings different type of diseases (4).

E) Not leaving out dinner: Imam Ali (peace be upon him) said: not eating dinner brings about body destruction (3). In addition, in some narrations it has been specified that dinnertime is after darkness (3).

2- Disease Tolerance and Avoidance of Taking Medicine

This principle states that one should avoid taking medicine as far as the illness can be endured. The philosophy behind this junction is that medicines have side effects and one should cure himself/herself by avoiding them as much as possible.

Imam Ali (peace be upon him) Said: "a Muslim should not take medicine and treatment unless the illness is not overcome" (2). Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said: any one whose health predominates his illness and yet he takes medicine, he works against his health" (2).

The seventh Imam (peace be upon him) said about the side effects of drugs: "there is no medicine unless it stimulates other illness" (2). He also said, "As long as the illness disappears itself, do not go to doctors" (2).

3- Paying Attention to Non-material as well as Material Factors of Diseases

It should be noted that in addition to material factors of diseases, which the medical profession is committed to treat, there are also non-material factors that influence the occurrence of some diseases, which, of course, can be unveiled by only Revealed Knowledge, some of which are introduced in divine teachings of Islam and their spiritual healings are also expressed there. In other words, some sins are effective in the occurrence of certain diseases whose treatment is praying, retraction and repentance. As an example, charity prevents certain illnesses and accidents from happening. Imam Reza (peace be upon him) said: "if people commit a new sin which they did not commit in the past, God will bring them a new and unprecedented affliction and disease" (5).

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said, " God revealed a prophet and he said to him: tell your

people, verily if people or a family that were under my obedience and due to harm that has come to them, have changed their way of doing what is my favorite and turned to what is unpleasant to me, I will turn their pleasures into malady (and illness)" (5).

Imam Reza (peace be upon him) also said: "certainly there is not any vein that is cut neither is there is a disaster, headache and sickness (with which humans are afflicted) unless it is because of a sin that he has committed. In addition, this is what God has said in His book: any disaster that befalls you is due to the (bad) actions that you have done and God forgives most (of your sins) (and will not make you suffer from the ill consequences of your sins) (5).

According to these verses and traditions, some sins in addition to afterlife effects, have deleterious results in this world that can affect the individual and society. It should also be mentioned that medical and material treatment is not sufficient for being immune from their deleterious effects. The community, therefore, should refrain from committing those sins and by means of retraction, praying and repentance it be liberated from the deleterious effects of the committed sins. In some traditions, it is said that charity as a moral agent can prevent bad accidents and illnesses from happening .

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said, "commence your day with charity because disasters do not take precedence over charity, whoever gives charity at the beginning of the day, God will be dispel from him the evil that befalls from the sky that day and if he gives charity at the beginning of night, God will dispel from him the evil that befalls from the sky that night (1). In addition, in some traditions, affability with people and spreading knowledge among them are presented as manifestations of charity .

4- The Necessity of Treatment

When necessary, you should go to your doctor in order to treat the disease. The messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: treat yourself because Almighty God does not send a pain unless he sends a cure (and medicine) for it (1). Moreover, the patient should not hide his illness from his doctor. Imam Ali (peace be upon him)

said: "who hides his illness from physicians has betrayed his body" (1).

5 -Avoidance of Treatment by Haraam

Imam Sadiq (peace be upon him) said: "there is no healing in Haraam"(1). In response to a person who had asked him whether grape wine could be used in medicine, he has replied: it is not worthy for anyone to seek healing in Haraam (3). In another narration, he has also said: "Almighty God has not put healing in what he has forbidden" (3). For example, masturbation is a Haram act and it is impossible to treat an individual's physical or mental problem by advising him to do masturbation. Hence, a psychiatrist or psychologist should not advise his mental patients to masturbate and so on, because in this case, he has an illusion of treatment and according to mentioned traditions; this therapy is miles away from the truth because God has not put the healing of an illness in Haraam act.

Discussion and Conclusion:

According to the above-mentioned principles, Islam has taken both material and spiritual factors into account. In addition, spiritual treatment methods including avoidance of treatment by Haram beside prevention and health care by proper nutrition which are in accordance with material and spiritual truths have been considered in this regard. It is obvious that in contemporary treatment methods, whether it is about mental or physical patients, there is no mentioning of spiritual factors of illnesses or avoiding Haram acts. May a day come in which the life-giving Islamic teachings in the field of health and treatment be considered by scientists and doctors.

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