



# Conceptual Exploration Of *Istifragh Ghayr Tabai'I* (Abnormal Elimination) And Its Effect On The Body - Literary Research

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** *Istifragh* (Elimination) is a crucial component of "*Asbab Sitta Zarooriyya*" (six key components), whose equilibrium is said to be essential for maintaining the health of individuals as per *Unani* medicine's principle. Health is maintained as long as six essential factors are in balance otherwise it requires moderation and adjustment. There are several means of *Istifragh* that occur regularly in the body, referred to as *Istifragh Tabai'i* (physiological elimination), including *Bawl* (urine), *Baraz* (stool), *Arq* (Sweat), breast milk, postpartum discharge, semen, Raal (saliva), and menstrual blood. An excessive increase in the amount of *Istifragh* may result in several diseases. *Ishal* (purgation) is an elimination technique employed to expel various toxic and undesirable substances from the intestines via the anal orifice.

**Methods:** Existing literatures surveyed to collect useful and valuable information regarding the concept of *Istifragh Ghayr Tabi'i* (IGT) and its effect on the body. Classical Unani texts, previous dissertations, and published research have been examined. Multiple search engines, including Google Scholar, PubMed, MEDLINE, and the Cochrane Library, were also utilized. **Result:** The concept and idea of IGT, dispersed throughout Unani literature, have been methodically compiled. Disease resulting from IGT and various regimens such as *Ishal*, *Qay*, *Fasd*, *Irsale alq*, *Idrare Bawl*, *Jima*, *Kasrate Tamth*, *Ehtelam*, and *Tari'q* have been described as useful in managing IGT.

**Conclusion:** The compiled literature systematically provides clear insights and comprehension of IGT; further particular study on the causes, mechanisms, and preventive approaches for managing IGT can be conducted to validate these findings.

**Keywords:** *Ishal*; *Fasd*; *Purgation*; *Menorrhagia*; *Unani Medicine*; *Asbab Sitta Zarooriyya*.

## INTRODUCTION

Various types of *Istifragh*, such as diarrhoea, vomiting, bleeding, sweating, polyurea, menorrhagia etc., whether they occur naturally, are induced by a physician, or happen due to some mistake, sometimes need to be controlled. That is, as long as they are being expelled in moderation, they should be allowed to continue because this is essential for health. However, when these excretions become excessive, every effort should be made to stop them. The equilibrium among the four humours—*Dam* (blood), *Balgham* (phlegm), *Safra* (bile), and *Sauda* (black bile)—is essential for optimal health, and any departure may result in sickness or the onset of specific ailments. *Asbab Sitta Zaoriyya* is a significant factor in Unani Medicine for preserving or restoring health. <sup>[1]</sup>

Excessive *Isifragh* (*Istifragh Ghayr Tabai'i* / IGT) expels those substance that nourishes and sustains the innate heat. Therefore, when this substance is expelled from the body, the body's innate heat weakens. As it weakens and diminishes, coldness develops. When a significant amount of body fluid is lost during diarrhoea and vomiting etc., leading to the development of various diseases, with dryness and coldness dominating the body. Sometimes, this dryness increases to such an extent that it leads to fainting. IGT can lead to a number of pathological changes in the body, such as the development of infections, inflammation, and damage to various organs and body systems.

From the perspective of modern medicine, this is also supported. When excessive *Istifragh* occurs, it results in a reduction of fluid, along with the onset of dryness, which is referred to as dehydration or moisture deficiency. This condition generally arises due to IGT as observed in excessive diarrhoea and vomiting, wet cupping, venesection etc. In such condition, a significant amount of fluids are lost, along with the expulsion of essential and beneficial elements like sodium, potassium, chloride, etc., leading to weakness and making it difficult for the person to move around. Sometimes, this weakness increases to such an extent that the person reaches the brink of death. Therefore, in cases of dehydration, immediate efforts are made to replenish the body's fluids to compensate for the lost elements.

Thus, the loss of bodily fluids can have a significant impact on an individual's quality of life, including physiological, biochemical, psychological and social well-being. Despite its prevalence and impact, the condition remains under-researched, and there is a lack of knowledge regarding the cause, risk factors, prevention, principle of treatment and effective treatments for IGT.

Therefore, this study was aimed to investigate the all about IGT and its impact on human body and an individual's quality of life, as well as the etiology, risk factors and also to find a suitable principle of treatment.

Additionally, the study also offers a deeper understanding of the composite and multi-factorial nature of the condition, which will help to identify potential targets for the development of preventive strategies, principles of treatments, and to inform development of guidelines for the diagnosis and management of IGT.

The results of the study provide an understanding of the impact of IGT on human body as a result of abnormal elimination. These changes are analyzed and the results are reported.

This study highlights the importance of understanding the etiology, risk factors and modes and impact of IGT, as well as the impact of this condition on body. This study aims to fill the knowledge gap in this field and provide valuable insights for the *Unani* system and individual affected by *Istifragh Ghayr Tabai'i*.

The term "*Istifragh*" in *Unani* medicine refers to the natural removal of waste materials from the body such as through *Idrar-e-Bawl* (urination), *Ikhrāj-e-Baraz* (defecation), *Tari'q* (sweating) and *Idrar-e-Haiyd* (menstrual bleeding). A variety of practices including *Hijamah* (cupping), *Dalk* (massage), *Fasd* (venesection) and *Ishal* (purgation) in order to eliminate the *Istehalati-Mawad-e-Raddiya* (metabolic waste products). However, accumulation of metabolic waste leads to various illnesses. *Istifragh* is called *Ghayr Tabai'i* (abnormal elimination) when matter which must be hold back inside the body, starts eliminating. [2]

**Indications of *Istifragh*:** Neuralgia, Paralysis, *Malankholia*, Obesity, Joints pain, Retention of Urine, Fever, Skin diseases, Constipation, Insomnia, Headache, Chorea, Ascites, Indigestion, Epilepsy. Jaundice, Colitis, Gout are the disease where various means of *Istifragh* are indicated. [3]

**Complications of Excessive *Istifragh*:** It produces *Burudat* (coldness) and *Yubusat* (dryness) in every organ and body. Although, after some *Istifragh*, *Hararate ghariba* (poor heat) and abnormal fluid is also produced. And sometimes after excessive *Istifragh*, one of the diseases of *Amraze Aliya* or *Amraze Tarkib* (diseases of synthesis/structure) is caused due to the fact that the blood vessels become so *yabis* (dry) that their supply is struck off. In the same way after excessive *Istifragh* there is occurrence of *Tashannuj* (convulsions) and *Kuzaz* (tetanus). [4]

## METHODOLOGY

The present study entitled "Conceptual Exploration of *Istifragh Ghayr Tabai'i* and its Effect On the Body" was conducted in the department of *Mahiyatul Amraz* (Pathology), Govt. Tibbi College and Hospital, Patna,

Bihar. The study period was 12 months from March 2023 to March 2024. For the collection of data and literary support, we reviewed the classical Unani text, Online research articles and books.

**Classical Unani text:** The primary source of material was classical text of *Unani* Medicine, manuscripts and their translations i.e., *Kulliyat Qanu'n*, *Kulliyat Nafisi*, 'The canon of Medicine of Avicenna', *Aksir-e-Azam*, *Firdaus al-Hikmat*, journals, proceedings, periodicals, thesis, reports, dissertations, gazettes, etc. were mainly searched and collected from the Central library namely Kabiruddin Central Library of the Govt. Tibbi College and Hospital (GTCH), Patna.

**Online Research Articles /Books:** The data was also gathered through various online platforms like Google, PubMed, Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Sci-Hub to collect useful and valuable information regarding the concept of *Istifragh Ghayr Tabai'i* and its effect on the body. The collected material placed in a systematized and in comprehensive manner. Based on reviewed observations and findings, discussion and conclusion has been made.

**Place of Study:** Department of Mahiyatul Amraz, GTCH, Patna.

**Research Design:** Theoretical Literary Research.

**Analysis:** The available relevant literature on the topic was analyzed to get the core findings, conclusion and summary of the study.

## RESULT

The byproducts of digestion/metabolism normally excrete from the body. Just as it is necessary to retain the useful components in the body after the metabolism, in the same way, it is necessary to remove the remaining useless byproducts. If it not eliminated after a certain period, causes different types of diseases and at that time the body requires the help of a physician for the treatment of the disease. Any imbalance in retention of useful matter and elimination of useless byproducts surely leads to the disease. Same way excessive elimination of useful matters (*Istifragh Ghayr Tabai'i*) from the body may also cause various disease or ill condition in the body. On the basis of extensive literary search, following major findings has been compiled;

Factors favors <i>Istifragh Ghayr Tabai'i</i>		
1	<i>Quwat</i> (Power)	The <i>Quwate Dafia</i> (Excretory power) should be strong. The <i>Quwate Masika</i> (Retentive power) become weakened.
2	Matter of expulsion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Harmful and <i>mozi</i> (abnormal or dangerous) matter.</li> <li>▪ Excessive amounts - they create tension due to their nature or because of their intensity it creates burning and irritation.</li> <li>▪ The matter become so thin that it begins to flow spontaneously.</li> </ul>
3	Organ/Route	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organs become weak.</li> <li>▪ The ducts have become widened.</li> <li>▪ <i>Infijar</i> (hemorrhage from veins), bursting or opening of the blood vessels or ducts. <sup>[5]</sup></li> </ul>

<i>Usoole Istifragh</i> (Principles of elimination)	
Principles of <i>Istifragh</i> (Elimination)	Matters that needs to excreted should be taken out/excreted only.
	It ought to face the outflow direction.
	It must to happen via/through a suitable organ and in the direction of the one where the morbid substance is slipping away. <sup>[2]</sup>
	The selection of time should be based on whether or not there is any <i>Nudj</i> (Concoction) present <sup>[2]</sup> .
	The amount of debris/abnormal matter that needs to be excreted ought to be calculated from the following factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Amount of matter.</li> <li>▪ Patient Power.</li> <li>▪ Possibility of difficulties or complications <sup>[2]</sup>.</li> </ul>

Modes of <i>Istifragh</i> , if in excess may leads to <i>Istifragh Ghayr Tabai'i</i>	
Modes which may cause <i>Istifragh Ghayr Tabai'i</i> if implies in excess	<i>Qay</i> (Vomiting). <sup>[6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16]</sup>
	<i>Ishal</i> (Purgation). <sup>[17,18,19,20,21,22]</sup>
	<i>Hijamah</i> (Cupping). <sup>[23,24,25,26,27,28,29,30,31,32,33]</sup>
	<i>Fasd</i> (Venesection). <sup>[34,35,36,37,38,39,40,41]</sup>
	<i>Alqa</i> (Leeching). <sup>[42,43,44,45]</sup>
	<i>Idrār-i-Bawl</i> (Diuresis). <sup>[10,12,43,44]</sup>
	<i>Idrar-i-Hayd</i> (menorrhagia). <sup>[46,47,48]</sup>

	<i>Jima</i> (Sexual intercourse). <sup>[49]</sup>
	<i>Kasrat' al-ehtilam</i> (Excessive Nocturnal Emission). <sup>[50,51,36]</sup>
	<i>Dalk</i> (Massage). <sup>[51,52,53,54,55]</sup>
	<i>Riyaz'at</i> (Exercise). <sup>[56,51,55]</sup>
	<i>Ta'riq</i> (Diaphoresis). <sup>[57,35]</sup>
	<i>Hammam</i> (Bathing). <sup>[58,59,60,61,62,63,64]</sup>

<b>Diseases due to <i>Istifragh Ghayr Tabi'i</i></b>	
<i>Ishal</i> (Diarrhea)	<i>Kasrat'al bawl</i> (Polyurea)
<i>Qillat-e-Ma'a</i> (Dehydration)	<i>Kasrat'al-ehtilam</i> (Excessive Nocturnal Emission)
<i>Idrar-i-Hayd</i> (Menorrhagia)	Sailan ur -rehim (Leucorrhoea)
<i>Kasrat al Tareeq</i> (Excessive sweating)	<i>Nazla-o-Zukam</i> (Cough and cold)
<i>Mudir-i-Labn</i> (Excessive secretion of breast milk)	Diarrhea-predominant irritable bowel syndrome (IBS-D)
<i>Dam'a</i> (Epiphora)	Cardiovascular accidents (CVA)
<i>Ru'af</i> (Epistaxis)	<i>Saiylan-ul-uzn haad</i> -Acute suppurative otitis media-(ASOM)
<i>Qay-ud -dam</i> (Hematemesis)	<i>Saiylan-ul-uzn muzmim</i> ,Chronic suppurative otitis media (CSOM)
<i>Nafs-ud-dam</i> (Hemoptysis)	<i>Saiylan-ul-luab</i> (Hypersalivation/Sialorrhoea)
<i>Bawaseer Khooni</i> (Bleeding Piles)	<i>Ta'riq</i> (Diaphoresis)
<i>Ghuraq-ul-arq</i> (Hyperhidrosis)	
<i>Saiylan-ul-labn</i> (Galactorrhea)	

## DISCUSSION

There are many factors which are influencing the IGT, extracted from the literature search and are systematically arranged in observation and finding section.

Among the factors that favours the *Ghayr Tabai'i Istifragh*, power of body and specific organ, quality, quantity and status of matters being eliminated, organ involved and the route of expulsion. It was found that strong *Quawate dafia* (Excretory power) and Weak *quawate masika* (Retentive power) of particular organ favours the IGT. In such case study suggest the care of overall *quwate badan* and specific organs are to be considered, and better to adopt all the measures to strengthen the particular *Quwat* while managing the IGT. Similarly abnormal, dangerous and excess of matter by possible means of inducing burning and irritation favours IGT. Even extra fluidity of matter liable to eliminated easily. In case of organ and route is involved weak organ, widened, ruptured and weak ducts/vessels are the favourable conditions for IGT. In such cases measures should be specifically focused on managing the local conditions of the ducts/vessels altered anatomically along with general measures to strengthen the organ involved.

*Istifragh* as a tool of prevention and treatment may be employed in range of conditions and ill health like Neuralgia, Paralysis, Gout, Melancholia, Obesity, Fever, Retention of Urine, Skin diseases, Constipation, Insomnia, Headache, Chorea, Ascites, indigestion, Epilepsy, Jaundice, Colitis, Gout etc. This shows the importance of *Istifragh* for health and diseases and how it is useful if employed correctly.

For *Istifragh* process employed correctly, following conditions has been mentioned, which need to be followed strictly to avoid IGT, these are; *Imtila-e-mawad* (congestion of matter), patient power, *Mizaj* of patients and matter, *Sahna-e-Mariz* (stature), *Awarize Lazima* (inevitable complications), Age of the patient/person, Season, *Weather*, Profession and Habits of the person/patient. The above factors are principally considered while employing *Istifragh*, otherwise process may lead to IGT.

As far as principle of *Istifragh* is considered, following are mentioned to follow strictly to avoid IGT; matters that needs to excreted should only be considered for excretion, it ought to face the outflow direction, it must to happen via/through a suitable organ and in the direction of the one where the morbid substance is slipping away, the selection of time should be based on whether or not there is any *Nudj* present, the amount of

debris/abnormal matter that needs to be excreted ought to be calculated from the factors like - amount of matter, patient power, possibility of difficulties or complications. The above principle must be followed to restrain from the IGT.

There are approximately fourteen regimens of *Istifragh* and physiological act which are being practiced are if not done properly or in access may cause IGT, these are; *Qay, Ishal, Hijamah, Fasd, Alqa, Idrar-i-Hayd, Idrār-i-Bawl, Jima, Kasrat' al-Ehtilam, Dalk, Riyazat, Hammam*. So, we suggest proper indication and practice of the above mentioned to prevent IGT.

Almost two dozen of diseases/disease conditions which are directly caused by *Istifragh Ghayr Tabai'i*, these are; Diarrhoea, Polyurea, Dehydration, Excessive Nocturnal Emission, Menorrhagia, Leukorrhoea, Excessive sweating, *Nazla-o-Zukam*, Excessive secretion of breast milk, IBS-D, Epiphora, CVA, Epistaxis, Excessive lacrimation, Hematemesis, ASOM, Haemoptysis, CSOM, Bleeding Piles, Hypersalivation/ Sialorrhoea, Hyperhidrosis, Galactorrhoea and Diaphoresis. We can only guarantee that IGT does not occur if there is continual care, adoption of principles and careful adherence to regimens especially utilized for *Istifragh*. This shows how important IGT is; there is a constant care, adoption of principle and strict to the conditioned adherent to regimens specifically used for *Istifragh* is needed, only then we can ensure IGT not happens.

## CONCLUSION

The following conclusion can be inferred on the basis of the observations and finding:

- Strong and weak *quawate dafia* and *masika* respectively of a certain organ favors *Istifragh Ghayr Tabai'i*. The finding suggests caring for the general *quwate badan* and individual organs and taking all means to strengthen the *Quwat* (Power) while treating IGT.
- Aberrant, harmful, and excess stuff that may cause burning and irritation favors IGT. All IGT management should focus on halting the accelerating expulsion of matter and correcting quality and purifying specific materials.
- IGT is favored by weak organs, widened and burst ducts, and weak vessels. In such circumstances, local conditions of the ducts/vessels-altered anatomically should be managed together with general organ strengthening efforts.
- *Istifragh* can prevent and treat numerous diseases if used properly.
- The following conditions must be met to avoid IGT: *Imtila, Quwwate Mariz, Mizaj* of patients and matter, *Sahna-e-Mariz, Awarize Lazima*, Age of the patient/person, Season, Weather, Profession, and Habits. While doing *Istifragh* requires considering the above key attentions, to avoid IGT.
- In order to avoid IGT, matters that need to be eliminated should only be considered for removal, they should face the outflow direction, they must happen via/through a suitable organ and in the direction of the morbid substance slipping away, and the time should be based on whether there is any *Nudj* present, the amount of debris/abnormal matter and the of time.
- IGT can result from improper or improper practice of fourteen methods of *Istifragh* and physiological acts, we recommend adequate indication and practice to prevent IGT.
- Approximately 2 dozen of disease/ill conditions are directly caused by *Istifragh Ghayr Tabai'i*. IGT is so crucial that we must always care, adopt principles, and strict to the condition's adherent to *Istifragh* regimens to prevent it.

## SUMMARY

- The concept of *Istifragh* is unique method in Unani system of Medicine, literature available from the past and present clearly underlines the various *Ghayr Tabai'i* effects on human body according to respective regimens used. *Istifragh* and its abnormal effects on the human body is just like the double-edged sword which is to be used very smartly and carefully as even slight misjudgment in its employment can be dangerous or even fatal.
- The process of *Istifragh* is always going on in human body which is normal and it must be within its normal range and limits. The main problem arises whenever this normalcy is disturbed whether in natural excretion or any of regimens used for the purpose of eliminating out for treatment or preventives measures.
- *Ishal* is one of the elimination techniques used to treat a variety of illnesses, it is regarded as a secure regimental therapeutic technique for passing harmful and other undesired materials through the intestines, it removes three humors i.e. *Balgham, Safra* and *Sauda* by causing irritation of intestinal

mucous membrane which produces dehydration, increased thirst, dry tongue, cold skin and loss of skin turgidity.

- This research highlights the concept of *Istifragh Ghayr Tabai'i* (IGT) and its effect on human body is very important aspect of treatment and prevention in Unani System of Medicine (USM). As all regimens used in USM is very crucial for maintenance of health and preventing different diseases in human body. It is mandatory to follow Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of each and every regimen as it is mandatory to obey do's and don'ts of all methods of *Istifragh*. As we all know that for the purpose of proper *Istifragh* the matter of diseases must be *Muta'dil enough* in consistency to be easily eliminated out from *Tabai'i Mukhrij* (natural exit) and only its benefits can be achieved and complications can be avoided. As far as complications of various regimens are concerned even minor one can turn into serious or life-threatening, if any carelessness is happened while employing any of regimens.
- It is very clear that not a single *Istifragh* regimen is devoid of adverse reactions or complications, if we look at the *Qay* and *Ishal*, their excess may cause various complications like hypotension, electrolyte imbalance, dehydration, etc.
- In other regimens like *Hijamah* and *Fasd*, there is strong chances of anaemia, weakness and hypovolemia which if not controlled timely it could be fatal. *Irsale Alaq* may produce skin damage, local infection and occasionally allergic reactions. *Ifrat Hayd* can result in a number of problems including, anemia, implantation defects, intrauterine development retardation, facial colour changes, convulsions, diarrhea, urticaria, low back discomfort, pedal oedema and anasarca. Similarly, Excessive diuresis, excessive *Jima*, *Dalk*, *Riyazat*, *Tari'q* and *Hammam* may cause *Istifragh Ghayr Tabai'i*. We need to adopt all the means of *Istifragh* properly to avoid IGT.

### LIMITATION & FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

While few limitations were there like availability of classical books and subscription of various research journals and publications, we gathered all the possible data available, systematize them properly and extract the meaningful analysis, we further recommend extensive precise research on this topic to get value added outcome. Various regimens and means causing IGT must be evaluated separately to get precise result.

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