

Tinnitus, a well-known medical issue in medieval Persia

Despite scientific advances, tinnitus still remains as a clinical ambiguity in Modern medicine.^[1] It has a relatively high prevalence rate worldwide, 10%–15% in adults, especially in elders and almost gender independently. Tinnitus, derived from the Latin verb “*Tinniere*,” means “ringing,” which reflects a conscious sense of hearing that may not have an external source or stimulus.^[1] Tinnitus can be subjective when the experience is of the individual alone, or less commonly objective when an observer can also hear the sound. The sensation is generally of an elementary nature, but in some cases, more complex sounds are perceived.^[1] The precise mechanism of tinnitus is still unclear; therefore, the diagnosis is almost based on the patient’s accurate medical history and self-reported questionnaires.^[2] Furthermore, existing therapeutic methods mostly address symptoms.^[2] Searching for alternative recommendations in other medical schools such as Persian medicine (PM) may be the key to solving this medical issue. PM, is one of the most important branches of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM), rooted in more than 7000 years ago studied by outstanding scientists, especially those who lived in the golden age of Islam (9th–13th century AD) such as “*Avicenna*.”^[3] PM has a holistic viewpoint about health, and its protective roles are before curative ones.^[4] The fundamental paradigm of PM is based on “*humoral theory*,” named as “*Khelt*” (Humor), with four basic humors, which are known as “*Balgham*” or “*Pblegm*,” “*Safra*” or “*Yellow-bile*,” “*Soda*” or “*Black-Bile*,” and “*Dam*” or “*Sanguine*.” As a PM basic law, the balance of these four humors leads to health and imbalance of each one, in quality, quantity or both causes various types of disease, which classified as a category named “*Su-e-Mizaj*”

(*Distemperament*).^[5] Tinnitus history is as old as PM antiquity. In PM, Tinnitus is known as “*Tanin*” or “*Davi*” and divided into two categories: real sounds (objective tinnitus) and unreal ones (subjective tinnitus), the same as the division in Modern medicine.^[5] In the context of PM, to maintain health and prevent disease, PM scholars have recommended nonmedical essential Principles of Health which are six and named as “*Sett-e-Zaroorieh*.”^[5] According to this, the most important principles in tinnitus are hearing pleasant music or sounds and avoid loud ones or speaking out loud, having moderate physical activity, having fun, avoiding in excessive sexual activity, avoiding long-term starvation, having complete and proper defecation daily and avoid constipation, avoiding prolonged exposure to sun, heat or showering and Restriction of smoking or consumption of the alcoholic beverage.^[5]

As Table 1 depicts, the pathophysiologies, descriptions, and recommendations in PM are signs of the antiquity in diagnostic and therapeutic methods of confronting tinnitus and the prominence of PM as a CAM.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

Authors' contribution

Ali Aminian designed study, drafted the initial manuscript. Ehsan Zaboli revised and approved the final manuscript. Seyde SedigheYousefi supervised the study, revised and approved the final manuscript.

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Table 1: The pathophysiology of tinnitus and common suggestions in Persian medicine

Pathology of Tinnitus in PM ^[5]	Common PM suggestions ^[5]
The sharpness of hearing sensation	Ear drops such as Bitter almond oil or boiled rose oil as a moisturizer
Impairment of hearing sensation	Strengthen the hearing sensation with lemon syrup or breathe a mild odor
Accumulation of Pussey secretions due to ulcer or infection	Focus on controlling the infection and wound healing
Blood concentration or high blood pressure in the brain vessels	Decreasing the blood concentration or blood pressure by using ear drops, such as night-scented stock oil in combination with Lilly flower oil or a combination of marjoram, mint, and thyme as a steam inhalation
Eating foods which can inherently cause abdominal distention and flatulence, named in PM as “ <i>Rih</i> ” such as garlic, onion or pepper	Restriction or prohibition of consuming flatulent foods or herbs
The disease originates by hot and dry distemperament named in PM as “ <i>Su-e-Mizaj-e-Safravi</i> ” like fever	Disease adjustment by consuming foods or herbs with cold and damp temperament (<i>Mizaj</i>) like violet flower decoction or steam inhalation
Tinnitus caused by food poverty or malnutrition which can cause excessive body dryness known in PM as “ <i>Su-e-Mizaj-e-Yabeth</i> ”	Use the appropriate amount of food with good quality in addition to close observation of eating and drinking principles which called in PM as the law of “ <i>Maakol-o-Mashrob</i> ”

PM: Persian medicine

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Ali Aminian¹, Ehsan Zaboli², Seyde Sedighe Yousefi¹

¹Department of Traditional Persian Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences, ²Gastrointestinal Cancer Research Center, Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences, Sari, Iran

ORCID:

Ali Aminian: 0000-0002-3313-6364;
Seyde Sedighe Yousefi: 0000-0002-0204-0837

Address for correspondence: Dr. Seyde Sedighe Yousefi, Department of Traditional Persian Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences, Sari, Iran.
E-mail: s.yousefi@mazums.ac.ir, dr_sseyousefi@yahoo.com

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