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A comparative study to assess variation of illness behavior with temperament and type of medication in diabetes mellitus-II patients

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The cognitive, behavioural and emotional factors act synergistically in maintaining a successful self-management and understanding these dynamics is essential in the design and practice of patient education and disease management. This has more implications for a disease like diabetes because Diabetes treatment is predominantly behavioural (involving daily medication-taking, glucose testing, exercise, and dietary modification) and is at heart a self-management issue.

According to the concept of temperament in Unani medicine, it is established that the personality and activities of a person are determined by his inherent temperament. These personality characteristics tend to be reflected in illness behaviours in case the person falls ill. Such behaviours tend to affect both-the outcome of disease, as well as the quality of life of the patient, which is of special significance in chronic disorders. For understandable reasons, the type of medication prescribed, especially injectible, has a potential impact on the psyche of the patient' which may be reflected as non-compliance and/or abnormal behaviour.

In the above context, a study was planned to explore the behavioural pattern of diabetes patients and the effects of temperament and type of medication on the same. It was found that abnormal illness behaviours were more prevalent among patients having a melancholic temperament, followed by those having a phlegmatic temperament. Abnormal behaviours were also more prevalent among patients being treated on insulin, as compared to those taking oral drugs.

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