**MODULE 4**

**Class Title**: *Shifa* from *sunnah* – part 1 (1st part of a 2 lesson series)

**Aim of Lesson**: To introduce common healing ingredients used by the Prophet (pbuh)

**Lesson Format**: Presentation with narration and discussion

(Greeting to students*) Assalam alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatu*

*(Ta’awwudh) Aoodhubillahi min AsShaytanir Rajeem*

*(Tasmiyah) Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem*

*(Du’a) Rabbish rahli sadri wa yassirli amri wahlul uqdatum millisani yafqahu qawli* (Surah At Ta-Ha 20: Verse 25-28)

Slides 1-2:

Who knows the meaning of the word “shifa”?

“Shifa” means healing.

Can the *Qur’an* and S*unnah* of the Prophet (pbuh) teach us how to cure our physical ailments and pains?

The *Qur’an* is not a book of medicine or of health sciences, but in it there are hints which lead to guidelines in health and diseases. For e.g. Allah (swt) has told us about the healing quality of honey. We will discuss that later.

You might have heard the term – *Tibb-al-Nabvi*. Have you wondered what that means? Was the Prophet (pbuh) a doctor?

No, he wasn’t a medical doctor or physician. Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) has been sent as an example to mankind, so his *sunnah* in matters of health and personal hygiene are also a guide for his followers.

Practice and sayings of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) on hygiene, sanitation and treatment of diseases by medicine are called *Tibb-al-Nabvi* (Medicine of the Prophet or Prophetic Medicine) by Muslims all over the world.

About fifty *ahadith* on specific ailments and their remedies have been grouped together under the Chapter called *Kitab-al-Tibb* (Book of Medicine) of well-known collections of *Ahadith1* In addition of this fifty, more than three hundred traditions on aspects of hygiene, cleanliness, habit of eating and drinking etc. are also recorded2.

All these *ahadith*, which number about four hundred, constitute the Prophetic Medicine, and can be found together in classic books of great Islamic scholars 3 Most of these original Arabic works have been recently translated in English and other languages.

Slide 3:

To understand the context of Prophetic medicine, let us quickly look at a brief history of medical science.

Many cultures in ancient times treated illnesses with magic and herbal remedies.

The Egyptians used to believe in magic and they had witch doctors who they called ‘Shamans’.People believed that the supernatural powers of a shaman (sha-man), also known as a medicine man or witch doctor, healed the sick. Ancient Egyptians thought that their gods healed them.

The ancient Greeks pursued medicine as a science. Hippocrates, the most famous physician of the time (c. 400 B.C.), believed that diseases had natural causes, not supernatural ones. Greeks like Aristotle and Hippocrates claimed that magic could not heal our ailments and that cures have to heal you physically, like medicines.

Later the Romans adopted many Greek philosophies but made their own advancements in publichealth.

During the 8th century Hijri (14th century CE) – yeah long time ago! – a new kind of medical writing emerged, it was called “Prophetic medicine”. This was intended as an alternative to the Greek-based body of medical science.

The authors were religious scholars, rather than physicians. They revived the traditional medical knowledge applied and practiced by the Arabs during the Prophet (pbuh)’s time, and advocated *Qur’anic* teachings and those of the *Sunnah* over Greek medical practices, thus producing a new way of practice that was eagerly accepted by religious Muslims. Most famous among them were the writings of Ibn Al Qayyim Al Jauziyah and Imam Dhahabi, which forms the basis of “Islamic medicine” as known today.

Slide 4:

In Islamic medicine, the mode of practice started with physiotherapy and nutritional assessment, if that didn’t work, then drugs were used.

The Arabs at that time had a refined and mature knowledge of food and nutrition, and were aware that to diagnose and treat patient, information about what they eat is an important element.

Medical science today tells us – we are what we eat. Right? Many medical conditions are related to our diet.

Then the other thing about Islamic medicine was that if medication was to be used, it should be similar or related to regular food and should not contain any harmful or noxious stuff.

Slide 4:

Allah (swt) says; “We send down from the *Qur’an* that which is a healing and a mercy to those who believe.”(Surah Al-Isra’ 17: Verse 82)

However, the *Qur’an* can only be a *shifa* if Allah (swt) wills and if we believe in it.

Slide 5:

The Prophet (pbuh) once said, “There is no disease that Allah (swt) has created except He has also created its treatment.” [Muslim and Ahmad].

This means that every illness has a cure. We need to strive to find it.

Slides 6-9:

The *Qur’an* and the sayings of the Prophet (pbuh) encouraged the gaining of medical knowledge. And that is exactly what earlier Muslims did.

They translated Greek and Persian medical books into Arabic, and then added their own observations and research to this body of knowledge.

Have you heard of the most famous Muslim Physician – Ar Razi? 4 He was really interesting because instead of giving prescribing medicines, he used to tell people to follow moderate life styles, eat fruits, and exercise, etc.

In Baghdad, he put pieces of meat in different areas of the city. The site was selected as the district in the city where meat took longest to decompose - it was thought that the location must be clean and therefore hinder the spread of diseases.

Then there was Ibn-e-Sina, now known as Avicenna, he was a famous scholar who wrote many books which opened pathways in the field of medicine. After that, people began to broaden their horizons and started thinking outside the box.

Slides 10:

Did you know that it was Muslims who invented shampoo? There would have been no bubble baths if it was not for the Muslims. Just a lice-filled, sticky- haired world!! Do you know that in the olden days, the Roman Catholics used to compete in not taking showers, as they felt that one shouldn’t spend any time on oneself and the Pope of the time, who was supposedly the holiest, was the one who spent the least amount of time on personal hygiene and he even had lice all over his cloak!

Muslims were sympathetic and knowledgeable about medicine and that is why the first hospital was also created by Muslims. There would have been no place to go to, when you feel sick, if it hadn’t been for the earlier Muslims.

Not only that, they thrived on natural beauty and hence they created gardens. The first garden was developed as a place of beauty and meditation in eleventh century, in Muslim Spain. If it was not for Muslims, cities would have been ugly places. These days we see a lot of people who have mental or emotional problems; they are sent to rehabilitation centers where there are beautiful gardens to soothe the mind.

Are you wondering – hmm, what do gardens have to do with medicine or curing illness? I’ll tell you what...

Slides 11 - 12:

Does anyone know what holistic means? It means ‘complete’ (from ‘whole’).

Unlike regular conventional medicine, holistic therapy does not concentrate on our physical body only. It looks at us human beings as a combination of 5 bodies:

The physical body: which includes the muscles and bones and all our organs and systems like the digestive system, cardiovascular system etc.

The biochemical body: which is all about the chemical compounds and reactions that happen inside these bodies of ours. For e.g the enzymes that work while food is being digested.

The intellectual body: that concerns all that we do with our minds. The mind is the center of all our thoughts. It is the driving force of our actions and behavior. This is how we make choices. The intellectual body also involves our instincts and subconscious mind. Heavy stuff, huh?

The emotional body: which deals with our psychological state – what we feel, our relationships with other people, how stressed we are or how relaxed etc.

The spiritual body: The soul or the higher self. This is the part we usually neglect and don’t even think about. This is the body that connects us with Allah (swt) and gets its energy from the *wahi* (revelation) of Allah (swt). Yeah, “food for the soul” is the word of the Creator who made the soul!

According to the holistic approach, health is not only the absence of illness but also a balance between these 5 bodies. The World Health Organization (WHO) describes health as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing – and that is exactly what Islamic teachings of health are all about.

Islam completely cures us, keeping our mind, body and soul in harmony, and teaches us every phase of healing; it teaches us prevention before cure.

What we need to do is mix rich traditions and Islamic teachings with today’s beneficial scientific knowledge in order to live a wholesome, healthy life.

Slide 13:

Let us now look at some common ingredients – you know stuff that we are all very familiar with – that the Prophet (pbuh) advocated for a healthy life. Keep the holistic approach in mind – health issues are physical as well as emotional ,spiritual and psychological.

Slides 14 - 15:

**Honey:**

The Prophet (pbuh) said once said, “Honey is a remedy for every illness and the *Qur’an* is a remedy for all illness of the mind, therefore I recommend to you both remedies, the *Qur’an* and honey.' [Bukhari]

The *Qur’an* tells us, “And thy Lord taught the bee to build its cells in hills, on trees and in (men's) habitations..... there issues from within their bodies a drink of varying colors, wherein is healing for mankind. Verily in this is a Sign for those who give thought.” [Surah An-Nahl 16: Verses 68-69]

So we should have honey. How does it work? For general health people can take one teaspoon two to three times a day. Incredibly, it also helps us when we have diarrhea or stomach ulcers; you can consume the same amount i.e. two to three teaspoons a day. Fantastically, it heals burns and cuts and wounds as well. If you have an open cut, you can put honey right over it and, *in sha Allah,* it will make you feel better. It actually has antifungal and antiseptic properties. It’s a natural way of curing yourself as compared to taking pills.

Honey contains 35 percent protein (one-half of all the amino acids), and is considered to be a complete food. It is highly concentrated source of essential nutrients, containing large amounts of carbohydrates (sugars), the B-complex vitamins, vitamins C, D, and E, and some minerals. It is used to promote energy and healing. Two tablespoons daily is sufficient. It is twice as sweet as sugar and therefore not as much is needed. Only unfiltered, unheated, unprocessed honey should be purchased. People with diabetes and hypoglycemia should be careful when consuming honey and its by-products.

You all know what honey is, but does anyone here know how to test honey to see if it’s pure? Take a tablespoon of honey and put it in the fridge for a few days. If you see a crust of sugar forming over it, the honey is not pure.

Beauty:

When you mix honey with milk, it’s very good for your skin. It’s a delicious face mask which makes your skin extremely soft and the lactose inside the milk cleanses your skin.

Honey is really good for your hair as well. You can mix half a cup of honey with a quarter cup of olive oil and massage it in your hair. It’s especially good if you have dandruff because it will clear that out.

General health:

Take one teaspoon 2-3 times a day.

Diarrhea and stomach ulcers: The prophet prescribed honey for a man who was having stomach problems. Studies indicate that honey shortens the duration of diarrhea.

Burns, cuts, wounds, bruises and lacerations: Apply topically

Slides 16-18:

**Water:**

This includes both plain water and Zamzam water!

The Prophet (pbuh) said, “Fever is from the heat of Hell so put it out with water.” [Bukhari]

When women used to come to her with a fever, Asma bint-e-Abu Bakr (ra) would pray to Allah (swt) for them and then sprinkle some water on their chests and they would feel better.

I won’t go over the history of the Zamzam, as I’m sure you all know it.

The Prophet (pbuh) said “The water of Zamzam is for whatever it is drunk for.” [Ibn Majah] Therefore ask for whatever you want while you’re drinking Zamzam water; pray and drink till you drop.

Modern science tells us today the importance of keeping our bodies hydrated. Your body depends on water for survival. Did you know that water makes up more than half of your body weight? Every cell, tissue and organ in your body needs water to function correctly. For example, your body uses water to maintain its temperature, remove waste and lubricate joints. Water is essential for good health.

Symptoms of dehydration include:

• Little or no urine, or urine that is darker than usual

• Dry mouth

• Sleepiness or fatigue

• Extreme thirst

• Headache

• Confusion

• Feeling dizzy or lightheaded

• No tears when crying

Don’t wait until you notice symptoms of dehydration to act. It can be hard to recognize when you’re dehydrated. Actively prevent dehydration by drinking plenty of water.

Slides 19-20:

**Milk:**

Did anyone say yuck? Milk is the coolest drink for our body because of the valuable nutrients in it.

Did you know what all milk gives us? Amino acids, calcium & phosphorus, vitamins and potassium. Let’s not forget dairy products: cheese and yogurt and yes, I scream, you scream we all scream for ice-cream!

It is narrated that on the night of *Isra*, Rasool Allah (pbuh) was given two cups: one containing milk and the other wine. He (pbuh) looked at them, and chose milk. Jibril (as) said, Thank Allah Who has led you to what is natural, if you had taken the wine, your followers would have gone astray. [Bukhari & Muslim]

The Prophet (pbuh) has taught us a *du’a* for after drinking milk. “Whoever Allah grants some milk let him say “O Allah! Bless it for us and grant us more of it,” for I do not know of a more complete food or drink than milk.” [Tirmidhi, Abu Dawood]

The Prophet (pbuh) used to eat cheese. [Muslim & Abu Dawood]

Camels’ milk is very good because it has double or triple the nutritional value that cows’ milk has. Camel milk is rich in potassium, protein, iron, and MORE fat, water, phosphorus, calcium, and Vitamin C than cow's milk. It also stays fresh much longer than cow's milk.

Slides 21 – 22:

**Dates:**

*Khujoor*; the candy that grows on trees! There are various types of date trees and each *khujoor* has a special taste to it; each *khujoor* is different. Different dates are good for healing different ailments. For example, a certain kind is good for joints; you mix it with milk and boil it until it’s completely blended in the milk and then drink it.

There is one which gives us good breath and is called *Amber*. *Ajwah* dates also have a lot of *shifa*. The Prophet (pbuh) himself sowed *Ajwah* date palms and these fruits will also grow in *Jannah*.

The Prophet (pbuh) said “He who eats seven *Ajwah* dates every morning will not be affected by poison or magic on the day that he eats them.” [Bukhari]

When a baby is born we often either put honey on its tongue or mash *khujoor* very well and put it in its mouth. Scientists have claimed that this regulates their heartbeat and relieves them of the pain they go through because of the blood tests, vaccinations etc. that are performed on them.

Slides 23 – 24:

**Olives**:

Olive oil is very good for your scalp and it chases your dandruff away. It’s also very good for you if you have the flu; you simply take one tablespoon of olive oil before you sleep and it will cure your flu within a week, *in sha Allah*.

If you take a drop of olive oil mixed with black seed oil and put it in your nostrils, you will be able to breathe very well. It’s very effective for a blocked nose. It also helps cure inflammation of the joints and slows down wrinkles. It helps with indigestion and high blood pressure, amongst many other things.

**Key benefits of olives**

• Massaged onto the body, Olives strengthens the skin, the limbs, combat against inflammation, and sooth away aches and pains from tired muscles and so on.

• Help against wrinkles and delaying the effects of old age.

• Help combat against strokes, heart-disease, High blood pressure, diabetes.

• It aids digestion and strengthens the bowels, as well as the stomach.

• Soothes pain

• Strengthens the body's immune system

• The tea from Olive leaves help against High blood pressure.

Slide 25:

**Figs:**

Does everyone know what figs look like? I’ve brought some dry figs. Has everyone seen these before? They work like magic and are very good for you. They prevent constipation, help reduce weight, lower cholesterol, prevent heart diseases, prevent colon and breast cancers, are good for diabetic patients strengthen bones and prevent muscular degeneration.

Slides 26:

**Black Seed**s:

Abu Hurairah (ra) related that the Prophet (pbuh) said: The black seed contains a cure for every type of ailment except death. [Tirmidhi]

Usually, you are supposed to take a pinch of it in the morning. It doesn’t taste that good, but you can mix it with yoghurt. You can also put black seed oil on eczema, or use it as a scalp ointment. We use black seed quite often in our recipes in this part of the world. If you can drink it on its own, it’s very good for your health.

The way to make black seed oil at home is to mix a teaspoon or tablespoon of black seed with gently heated olive oil, and then let it come to a pop. Strain it and mix it with one tablespoon of honey and lemon water. It’s extremely good for colds, indigestion and asthma.

Slides 27 - 28:

***Miswak*:**

The Prophet (pbuh) was passionate about using the *miswak*. He even used the *miswak* on his deathbed; that was the last thing he did. So we should also use the *miswak* regularly and extensively.

The Prophet (pbuh) stated, “Had I not thought it difficult for my *ummah* {followers}, I would have commanded them to use the *miswak* before every *salah* {prayer}*.*” [Bukhari and Muslim]

That is how important it is. Instead of only using your toothbrush and Colgate, you can also use the *miswak,* as it’s natural. You don’t have to worry about the bleach, fake mint and chemicals which are in toothpastes. *Miswak* helps strengthen the gums, prevent tooth decay, eliminate bad breath, cure headaches and assist in digestion.

We never imagined a branch could do so much, right?

Let me tell you how we use *miswak*. Sometimes, when we get it, it is very hard so you have to leave it in lukewarm water; don’t leave it in for too long or it will get fungus on it. Remember it’s a stick, and just take it out after ten to fifteen minutes, chew off the end or you could use a cutter. You can chew off the top part and it will end up like it is shown on the picture in the slide: straight. Then, if you feel it’s still too hard for your teeth, you can leave it in warm water for a little longer. Then you say the *Basmallah* and you start brushing from the right side of your upper jaw, moving to the left of your jaw, tooth by tooth. Then you start on the bottom jaw, going from right to left again, then you go up and on top of your teeth, behind your teeth, on the roof of your mouth, underneath your tongue, everywhere. Don’t do this (vigorous up and down motion) because you might harm your gums. Some people find *miswak* bitter but there are many kinds available, and not all of them are bitter.

*In sha Allah*, we will continue this lesson next week and talk about some other methods of healing used by the Prophet (pbuh).

(Du’a for end of a gathering) *Subhana Rabbika Rabbul Izzati ‘amma yasifun wa salamun ‘alal mursaleen, walhamdulillahi Rabbil ‘alameen*

(Parting salutation to students) *Assalam alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh*

*REFERENCES:*

2 They find mention under the head of Drinks. *(Kitab al-Ashribah),*Foods (*Kitab al-Atimah*) Clothing (*Kitab al-libas*), Purification (*Kitab al-Tahara*), Menstruation (*Kitab al-Haid*), Funerals (*Kitab al-Janaiz*), Diseases (*Kitab al-Marza*) etc.

3 Ibn al-Qayyim Aljouzi (8th century *Hijrah*) Abu Nu’aim (5th century Hijrah). Abu Abd-Allah al-Dhahabi (8th century *Hijrah*), Abu Bakar Ibn al-Sani (4th century *Hijrah*).