



Treatment of intestinal obstruction with cattle bile in traditional Iranian medicine

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Abstract:

In traditional Iranian medicine, humoral medicine is based on thousand years of experiences. Awareness of this knowledge would make us be able to develop more efficient approaches to disease management. Of those diseases, intestinal obstruction could be treated successfully in traditional Iranian medicine. Intestinal obstruction may be improved by conservative treatments, but if partial obstruction progresses to complete obstruction, intestinal necrosis will occur. Subsequently, surgery is needed to remove the affected part of the bowel with high risk of mortality and morbidity. Researchers have shown that oral treatment with laxatives is effective in improving the management of intestinal obstruction and shortening the hospital stay, though oral administration of laxatives may increase the risk of bowel perforation.

In traditional Iranian medicine, cattle bile is considered a detergent laxative and potent penetrative substance which is used in treatment of intestinal obstruction as ointment, enema and suppository. Cattle bile, containing deoxycholic acid, chenodeoxycholic acid and taurochenodeoxycholic acid, could be effective in relieving symptoms of intestinal obstruction by increasing colon transit, decreasing consistency and facilitating forward movement of intestinal content and inhibiting bacterial overgrowth. On the other hand, due to high amount of cholic acid, cattle bile has good skin absorption and its topical consumption is more safe and simple rather than oral laxatives; therefore, it is hypothesized that adding the cattle bile to the standard treatments may improve the success of intestinal obstruction treatment and decrease the need for surgery and consequently morbidity and mortality.

Keywords: traditional Iranian medicine, cattle bile, intestinal obstruction.

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