

# Medicial Studies -Immunity

## Black Seed and the Immune System

by Dr. Ahmed El Qadi & Dr. Usama Qandil

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Black Seed is a plant which has been used widely as a natural treatment for more than 2000 years. Modern experiments have proved that *Nigella sativa* has a dilating effect on bronchi, an antimicrobial effect, a regulating effect on blood pressure and a secretory effect on the bile. This led us to think that it could have a stimulating effect on the immunity.

Laboratory experiments were carried out on healthy volunteers even though they had some deficiency in their immunity as proven by experiments. In the first group that contained 27 volunteers, they were given 2 grams daily, and the black seed showed a positive effect on the ratio of Th, Ts. This ratio improved by 55% for those who were given the black seed. In the second group which contained 19 volunteers the ratio improved by 72%. So, the black seed could be considered as a natural stimulant of immunity, and could play a role in the treatment of cancer, AIDS and other diseases that are accompanied by immunity deficiency.

Black Seed has been used in many countries of the Middle and Far East as a natural treatment for more than 2000 years. There are many Traditions that mentioned this seed since more than 1400 years. The active ingredient (Nigellone) was not extracted from the oil of the black seed until 1959. The role of the cummin seed in natural immunity was not estimated until 1986. This study was for the authors of this research and was presented to the fourth International Conference for Islamic Medicine held in Karachi in November 1986.

### Means and Substances

18 volunteers who looked healthy were divided into two groups. Group one was composed of 11 volunteers and they were given *Nigella Sativa*, 1 gram, twice a day. The other group which was composed of 7 volunteers were given charcoal (as a control). They were both contained in similar capsules, so the volunteers would not know which capsule was given to them. The volunteers contained 11 males and 7 females aged between (12-50) years, with an average age of 30. Afterwards a complete count of the lymphatic cells (B, T) was done including Ts and Th. After 4 weeks of taking the capsules, the whole process was repeated. The activity of the phagocytic cells was also measured by putting cells taken from the volunteers together with carcinogenic cells which were grown inside the lab in different ratios. The ratio of the effector to the target was as follows (10:1, 50:1, 100:1).

### Results

In most of the *Nigella* groups, there was a

certain ratio of enhancement whether in Th or Ts or the phagocytic cells. At the same time the enhancement of the immunity system decreased in a few of them. The final results showed an improvement in the ratio of Th:Ts of an average of 72% . It also showed an improvement of the effect of phagocytic cells in ratio 187%, 29%, 7% for the previous ratios of effector to the target. As for the group that was given charcoal, the final result was an increase in the ratio of Th:Ts of 7%.

#### Discussing the results

The results proved the positive role of Nigella Sativa in the enhancement of the immunity system. This effect was particularly clear in the ration of Th:Ts, which could not be found in the control. A remark was noticed on both chains of study, the volunteers were not very healthy. Of the factors that should be taken into consideration when reviewing the results:

- The no. of volunteers for the study was small. A larger number would give more reliable results.
- We used one dose of Nigella one gram twice a day. Larger doses may have a stronger effect.
- The volunteers even though they had a deficiency in their immunity (their ration of Th:Ts is 1.2, while the normal is 2), they were still healthy and did not suffer from cancer or any medical symptoms causing a disturbance in immunity.

#### Conclusion

We proved through this study that taking Nigella Sativa (Black cummin seed), orally in a dose of 1 gram twice a day, has an enhancing effect on the functions of immunity. This was noticed in the improvement of the ratio of Th:Ts and in improving the phagocytic cells. The importance of these results is due to the possibility of using the black seed as a natural enhancement of immunity in the treatment of cancer, AIDS and other cases of immunity deficiency.

What was mentioned in the Sunnah about the value of the Black seed:

It is known that the immunity system has a direct and indirect effect on all bodily systems. Any disturbance in the system affects all the systems of the body as in AIDS. Also the soundness of this system and its enhancement would have a direct or indirect effect on all the systems of the body. When a human being is infected by any disease, the power of the immunity system affects the cure of this disease whether directly or indirectly. We proved through this research that the black seed enhances both the immunity system of the body and improves its functions.