

4.1.2. Methods of Diagnosis and Treatment

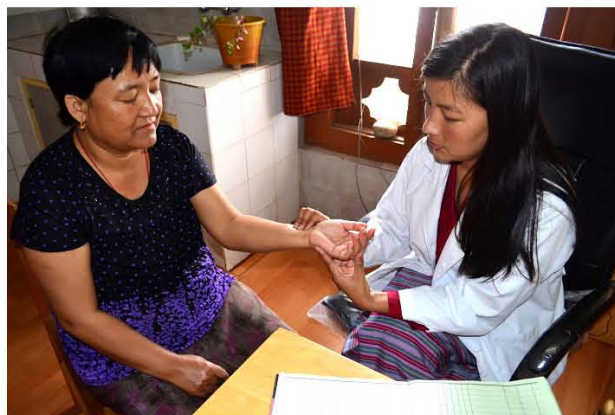
The fundamental principles of indigenous medicine grew out of philosophy that the bile (*thripa*) corresponds to fire, the phlegm (*beken*) to water and the air (*lung*) to the wind of the universe. It is believed that disease or physical disharmony is caused by an imbalance of any of these three factors in the body. A drungtsho diagnoses or treats patients by means of physical or pharmacological procedures. The main methods of diagnosis are feeling the pulse, checking urine, and examining the bodily organs or parts, as well as interviewing the patient.

The methods of diagnoses and treatments offered by the Traditional Hospital include:

OPD Services

General Out Patient Department's (OPD) services, include, but not limited to the following services:

Physical examination and pulse reading: methods of physical assessment through observation and pulse reading on radial artery as per sowa rigpa text.



Urine Analysis: A diagnosis method where urine is analysed in a laboratory to assess the colour, bubbles, sediments, scum frothing, smell, etc. at various temperature, as per sowa rigpa text.

History taking: preliminary method of diagnosis by asking a series of questions with regard to diet, behaviour, onset of illness and overall condition of the patient.

Observation: is an act of perceiving physical signs and symptoms of different illness in order to arrive at certain prognosis to ascertain further investigations.

Health education on diet and behaviour: is a process of imparting health information to other parties including patients on dos and don'ts on healthy living.

Referral of patients to allopathic and within: process of referring patients to other health facilities, either to allopathic or traditional practitioner.

Dispense traditional medicine: is a method of dispensing traditional medicine that are prescribed by registered physician to patients and providing them with counselling as per good dispensing practices.

Therapy Services

Jamched (byams-dpyad - Non-invasive/mild Therapy)

The following services are provided by a drungtsho or *menpa* who is registered with the Bhutan medical and Health Council.

Langdug (blangs dug): A therapeutic way of applying herbal steam on the concealed points as prescribed by drungtsho or menpa.

Chulum (chhu lums): Herbal bath therapy services provided by an experienced Drungtsho or Menpa.



Langlum (blangs lums): A therapeutic way of applying herbal steam as prescribed by drungtsho or menpa.

Chinglum (bchings lums): A process of applying herbal compression on the conceal points as prescribed by drungtsho or menpa.



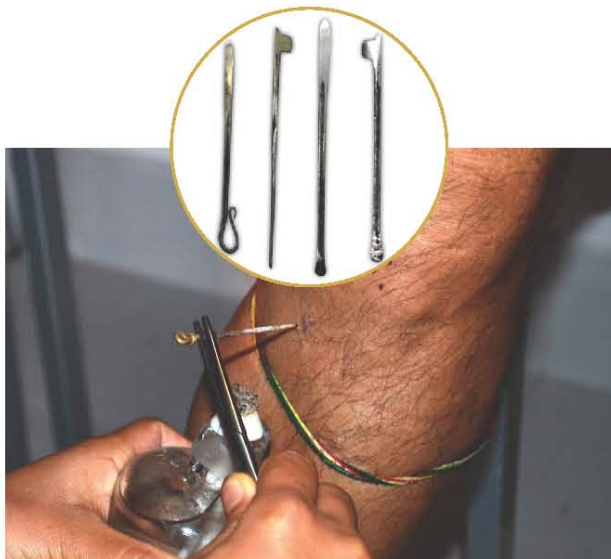
Jugpa (*rgyugs pa*): A massage therapy service prescribed by drungtsho or menpa.



Tsubched (*rtsub dpyed* - Invasive/strong Therapy)

The following services are provided by a drungtsho or menpa who is registered with the Bhutan Medical and Health Council.

Serkhab: a therapeutic way of inducing the heat through gold needle as prescribed by drungtsho or menpa.



Ngulxhab (*dngul khab*): a therapeutic way of inducing the heat through Silver Needle as prescribed by drungtsho or menpa.

Tar (*gtar*): A process of extracting blood from points using specific instruments and is provided by an experienced drungtsho.

Metsa (*me btsa*): A direct moxibustion therapy provided by an experienced drungtsho or menpa.

Galon Metsa (*sga rlon me btsa*): Indirect moxibustion therapy using a layer of thinly sliced ginger to buffer the heat produced by the moxa and applied at prescribed points.

Tradhen Serkhab (*spra lden gser khab*): Another type of gold needle therapy but using moxa as source of heat introduced at the other end of the needle and is provided by a drungtsho or menpa.



Mey bum (*me bum*): Another way of bloodletting therapy using a heated copper or glass vase (*bumpa*) to extract unwanted blood at the prescribed points provided by an experienced Tsubched Khedzin and Khechok.

Kam Khab: An acupuncture treatment provided by Kam khab Khechok and Kam khab Rabjam who has specialized training in Acupuncture.

Numtshug: A therapeutic compression using warm oil with medicated herbs applied on the prescribed points, provided by Tsubched Rabjam.

Tshug rig: A method of applying different therapeutic compression using medicated herbs packed in a piece of cloth as provided Tsubched Khedzin and Tshubched Rabjam.

Lay Nga (*las Inga* - Five Therapeutic Measures)

The following services are provided by a drungtsho or menpa who is registered with the Bhutan Medical and Health Council.

Shel (*bshal*): A process to evacuate the bowels and its content using herb decoction infused with oil, provided by Lay Nga Khechok, Khedzin and Rabjam.

Chug (*skyug*): A method of cleansing the upper body



through emesis using herb infused with oil, provided by Lay Nga Khechok, Khedzin and Rabjam.

Najong (sna sbyong): A process of nasal cleansing using medicated warm oil introduced through nasal cavity, provided by Lay Nga Khechok, Khedzin and Rabjam.

Jamtsi ('jam rtsi): Another form of enema prescribed

for cleansing the bowel using medicated warm oil introduced through anal route, provided by Lay Nga Khechok, Khedzin and Rabjam.

Niruba (ni ru ha): Another form of enema prescribed for cleansing the bowel using medicated decoction introduced through anal route, provided by Lay Nga Khechok, Khedzin and Rabjam.

4.2. LOCAL HEALING PRACTICES

Before the introduction of modern medical treatment, illness, misfortune/ill luck were usually attributed to demonic causes. Local deities, demons and spirits of all kinds were considered to be responsible for certain illnesses. To heal these diseases, it was necessary to practice certain rituals where only the great lamas, monks, gomchens, and shamans were in a position to do so. This healing practice, thus involved much divination in the means of diagnosing and recognizing the spells causing the illness and exorcism as the way of treating the patient.

The local healing practices are categorized under the following themes:

4.2.1. Healers Treating through Physical Observation

Bone-setter

Bone-setters (Dz. *ru to btsug mi*) treat dislocations and fractures of the limbs, hip traumas, joints and limbs sprain. Local bone-setters are not formally trained but rather claimed to have generated the skills through practical experience usually gained by treating animals while some of them have learnt from their fore fathers. They resort to gentle handlings, and bringing back the bones into position, then steadying them with the help of wooden or bamboo splints (sometimes tree bark or by soaking the bandage cloth in clay) and cloth bandages.

Most of the healers give the patients some alcohol prior to the treatment in order to reduce the pain and to "warm the muscles". Some do apply oil or butter massage as a remedy on the injured part, stimulate with boiled leaves; or administer orally a remedy supposed to enhance the healing process either by decoction of leaves or bark or mixing grounded lac with water, or remedy using a mineral called *doshal* (*rdo mtshal*), which probably is cinnabar. Most bone setters recommend the intake of rich food (fresh meat, butter,) for speedy recovery.

Dug Jibmi (Poison-sucker)

The healers, as the name indicates – poison suckers (*dug lakhan* in Tshangla language) – are supposedly known to extract substances like poison (*dug*) locally from various parts of the patient's body. The beliefs and fears related to those affected by poison are mostly found in Eastern Bhutan. Poison in this context is very vague, and does not clearly define the substances or agents. It is rather believed to have been contracted through the intake of food especially rancid butter, meat, cheese and alcohol warmed with fried eggs, and also believed to be given by certain families.

Further, it is believed that a person can contract poison without any material penetration into the body:

- by sitting in certain places especially in a cold or wet places in the forest (*ron dug*);
- through wind, and by being hit by the invisible arrow of a *tsan*-spirit (*tsan dug*);
- through a quarrel with another person (*khon dug*);
- by being looked upon by certain women, or the frustrated desire of a woman (in case of a man falling ill).

There is a belief that sometimes the curse of the poison stays in the family which is involuntarily passed on from mother to daughter. The poison then affects people from outside one's family circle. It is also believed that the poison is contracted when one's fortune-vitality is low (negative *lungta* or *wangta*). The notion of evil also comes close to that of poison in certain areas. In certain places of Western Bhutan, drip (pollution) is also viewed as a cause for coming closer to poisoning (*dug*) and therefore extracted in the same way.