

Chu-Tsanor Hot Spring the rapy of Sowa-Rigpa.

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ABSTRACT:

Chu-Tsan, also known as Hot Spring Therapy, is a prominent holistic healing practices of the Sowa-Rigpa system of medicine. This ancient healing system emphasize to restore equilibrium within the three bodily humours i.e. Wind (rlung), Bile (mKhris-pa), and Phlegm (Bad-kan). The therapy involves immersion or bathing of body into mineral rich natural hots pring to treat various of ailments ranging from mild to severe chronic diseases. These springs are thought to increase blood circulation, relax muscles, relieve pain, and detoxify body. The therapy procedure is followed under the administration of sManpa, a traditional Sowa-Rigpa doctor in order to enhance the rapeutic effect of hot-spring.

KeyWords: Sowa-Rigpa, Chu-Tsan/HotSpring, Diseases, Therapy, Healing

I. INTRODUCTION:

Sowa-Rigpa, commonly known as the Amchi system of medicine or Traditional Tibetan medicine, is a comprehensive traditional medical system that has been practiced for over 2500 years in the Himalayan region of Central Asia [5]. It encompasses traditional knowledge and practices of medicines from several countries like Indian, Tibet, China and Nepal[1].

Sowa-Rigpa medicine focus esmainly on maintaining the balance between three bodily principles i.e Wind (rlung), Bile(mKhris-pa), and Phlegm(Bad-kan). Several form of principles such as diet modification, life style modification, medicines and external the rapies are used to maintain the harmony with in these bodily principles.

This system of medicine incorporates various external therapies such as Dugs (hot and cold the rapeutic compress), Lums (medicinal bathing) Sku-mnye (Massage), Gtarga

(venesection) and me btsa' (moxibustion)to promote overall well being.

Lums generally refers to the principles of making body moisturised and soft, associated withthe concept of wetness. It can be classified into two categories i.e. "Chu-Tsan or rang by ungchu Lums" natural hot spring bathing and "bcosma' ichulums"man-made medicinal bathing.

II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

In sowa-rigpa, hot spring known as Chu-Tsan is considered as a natural phenomenon formed due to blessing of all living beings [1].Underground water, deposit of mineral and geo thermal heat are regarded as gift from nature, believed to be the source of hot spring formation. Historically Chu-Tsan therapy can be traced back to ancient Bon religion era. Its traditional knowledge and practices are deeply rooted into the life style of Himalayan region peoples. Many of the People living in the Himalayan plateau since ancient times used to take bath inhot spring as a part of their religious practices and wellness therapy. They believe that the heat and unique minerals content of hot spring can balance the body's energies. According to the famous Sowa-Rigpa Physician, Youthok Younten Gonpo's biography, its mentioned that the doctors from Bonreligion has already mastered the therapy of Bathing[7].

There are five forms of Chu-Tsan with its own therapeutic characteristics are documented in the fundamental text book of Sowa-Rigpa's medicine known as "rgyudbzhi" authored by Youthok Younten Gonpo during the eight centuries. The reis also a chapter dedicated to lums that describes Chu-Tsan and its formation. It also highlights the indications, contraindications, medicinal benefits and treatment procedures of natural and manmade Chu-Tsan bath therapy[8].



Field photo graphs of hot springs in the Ladakh region.(a)Demchok hot spring site.(b)Puga hot spring site.(c)Chumathang hot-spring sign board.(d) Chumathang hot-spring site.

III. CLASSIFICATION OF CHU-TSAN:

According to “rgyudbzhi” Chu-Tsan can be classified into five types of hot springs based on their minerals composition. The composition of the five common hot springs are i) Coal & Calcite, ii) Coal & Sulphur, iii) Coal & Bitumen, iv) Coal, Calcite and sulphur, and v) Coal, Sulphur, bitumen and realgar[2].

IV. HEALING PROPERTIES OF FIVE COMMON HOT SPRINGS:

1. Coal & Calcite rich hot spring: known for high calcite content is believed to heal hot disorder.
2. Coal & Sulphur rich Hot spring: known for high sulphur content is believed to cure cold disorder and serum.
3. Coal & Bitumen rich hot spring: known for high bitumen content is believed to cure both the hot and cold disorder.
4. Coal, Calcite and sulphur combined hot spring: known for rich in sulphur and calcite content is believed to cure cold dominated disorder.
5. Coal, Sulphur, bitumen and realgar combined hot spring: known for high content of sulphur, bitumen and realgar is believed to cure mingled fever and serum disorder.

V. CHU-TSAN BATHING PROCEDURE

It's very important to follow some of the basic procedure of Chu-Tsan Bathing therapy to enhanced healing effect and to avoid adverse effect. This procedure involves following approaches:

- A. Consultation:** Chu-Tsan bathing therapy is practiced under the guidance of sManpa (traditional physician). sManpa evaluates the health condition of individuals based on their bodily constitutions, ailments and overall well-being before recommending Chu-Tsan bath.
- B. Preparation:** Before bathing, physical and mental preparedness of individual is crucial to follow the lifestyles guidance provided by sManpa during the bathing course. This guidance may involve adherence to specific practices, dietary recommendation, or behavioural adjustment. Consumption of nutritious food and application of specific ointment during the bathing course are some practices recommended by the sManpa to enhance the overall effectiveness of treatment and to support healing process. Therefore, individual must undergo through the guidance of sManpa during the bathing in order to gain

the optimum healing benefits.

C. Bathing procedure: before immersing one’s body into the hot-spring water, it’s important to splash litter water on chest and head to gauge the temperature of water and to ensure comfortable and safe bathing. Instead of bathing in very hot spring water on first day, one must use warm water at the beginning and gradually use the hot water later. These precautions can prevent uncomfortable bathing and provide more pleasant bathing experience.

VI. DURATION OF BATHING:

According to the “rgyudbzhi” bathing in Chu-Tsan has a duration pattern to follow, which is

resembling to the shape of barley. The bathing pattern often starts with shorter duration on the first day and gradually increase the duration day by day to reach an optimal period. When certain optimal period is reached maintain the duration for a couple of days. Then again gradually reduce the bathing duration from longer to shorter duration[6].

In some cases, the duration might vary because of the individual health status, nature of diseases and treatment plan.

The duration and frequency of bathing in a single day and the course of bathing can be recommended for three, seven or fifteen days by the s Manpa accordingly to the nature of illnesses and bodily constitutions. Following table shows the duration pattern to be followed during Chu-Tsan bathing[6].

Table1: depicting the three days ChuTsan bathing procedure.

Time	FirstDay	SecondDay	ThirdDay
Morning	10:00–10:15	10:00 –10:35	10:00 –10:50
	11:00–11:30	11:00 –11:45	11:00 –11:35
	12:00–12:45	12:30 –13:30	12:00 –12:20
Noon	Rest	Rest	Rest
Afternoon	15:00–15:20	15:00 –15:35	15:00 –15:45
	16:00– 16:35	16:00 –16:45	16:00 –16:30
	17:00– 17:50	17:00 –18:00	17:00 –17:15
Total	195Minutes	260Minutes	195Minutes

Table2: depicting the Seven-day Chu-Tsan bathing procedure.

Time	First Day	Second Day	Third Day	Fourth Day	Fifth Day	Sixth Day	Seventh Day
Morning	10:00–10:15	10:00 – 10:20	10:00–10:35	10:00 – 10:35	10:00–10:35	10:00–10:50	10:00 – 10:50
	11:00–11:30	11:00 – 11:35	11:00–11:45	11:00 – 11:45	11:00–11:45	11:00–11:35	11:00 – 11:35
	12:00–12:45	12:00 – 12:50	12:00–13:00	12:00 – 13:00	12:00–13:00	12:00–12:20	12:00 – 12:20
Noon	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest	Rest
Afternoon	15:00–15:20	15:00 – 15:20	15:00–15:35	15:00 – 15:35	15:00–15:35	15:00–15:50	15:00 – 15:45
	16:00–16:35	16:00 – 16:35	16:00–16:45	16:00 – 16:45	16:00–16:45	16:00–16:35	16:00 – 16:30
	17:00–17:50	17:00 – 17:50	17:00–18:00	17:00 – 18:00	17:00–18:00	17:00–17:20	17:00 – 17:15

Total	195 Minutes	210 Minutes	260 Minutes	260 Minutes	260 Minutes	210 Minutes	195 Minutes
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VII. BATHING SEASON:

Due to favourable weather condition during the Spring and Autumn season, bathing in hot-spring water is consider to be the most ideal season for almost all the peoples. During these seasons the weather is tends to be moderate, with temperature neither too hot nor too cold. Also, there is a specific astrological timing known as Karma Rishi Period, which is believed tobe auspicious period for Hot spring bathing. It’s celebrated on the first Week of the Eight month of Tibetan Lunar Calander.[11] There is a cultural believe among many of the Buddhist traditions peoples, that the idea of Karma Rishi has some cosmic influence on healing properties of hot spring water. They believe that the therapeutic properties of hot spring water become more the rapeutic and the body become more receptive to its healing effects.

VIII. POST BATH THERAPY:

After taking a bath in Chu-Tsan, one must ensure their body is fully wiped and dried in order to prevent from catching cold and flu.Wearing warm clothes, eating nutritious food and easily digestible warm meal is also important to maintain the body warm after bathing. Oil massaging is alsore commended after bathing in Chu-Tsan in order to pacifier lung energy and to balance the energies in body. They are also advised to avoid sitting in cold places, exposure to cold wind, and consuming cold meals in order to maintain the therapeutic effect of bathing in body.

IX. HEALTH BENEFITS:

Hot spring therapy signifies the traditional knowledge of Sowa-Rigpa therapy and practices of soaking body into natural hot springs, medicinal water, or steam to ensure healthy life and to cure some ailments. Bathing in hot spring has a significant impact on both physical and mental health in increasing life satisfaction and lowering mental stress[10]. It can help to detoxify the skin by opening of pores and eliminating to xin through skin, killing harmful germs and viruses. It improves the skin's tone and increases moisture content. It can also alleviate stress and tension in the body's nerves, muscles, ligaments, and tendons, leading in pain relief. Some Chu-Tsan are believed to treat skin problem like eczema, psoriasis, acne and improve skin nourishment. Most of the peoples are

used to prefer Chu-Tsan therapy for arthritis, gout and nerve disorders. It can also help in burning calories, especially for people who aren’t able to exercise [9].

X. CONCLUSION:

Chu-Tsan or hot spring bathing therapy hold a significant role in Sowa-Rigpa system of medicine. It is considered as a part of five external the rapies. The practices of bathing in Chu-Tsan are considered as a cultural part of Himalayan peoples due to its holistic approach of healing since from the ancient times. Procedures and the duration of Bathing in Chu-T san are supervised and practised under the guidance of s Manpa (traditional physician). The rapeutic benefit of bathing in Chu-Tsan, minerals rich hot water’s renowned for promoting balance in bodily energies. Its efficacy is known for detoxifying body, skin nourishment, relaxation and curing several diseases. In order to ensure healthy and disease-free life, bathing in five types of Chu-Tsan is consider as important.

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