

SOWA RIGPA

Sowa Rigpa is a traditional medical practice that means “science of healing”. It is one of the oldest, living and well documented medical traditions in the world.

The practice explores the interconnectedness between mind, body and soul.

Sowa Rigpa is the predominant form of health care for people living in remote mountainous areas such as Nepal, Tibet, India, Bhutan and Mongolia.



DIAGNOSIS

An Amchi uses three main tools to diagnose a patient:

- **Diagnosis by sight** - This visual method involves checking the nature of a patient's nose, eyes and urine. It also involves the examination of nature, colour and texture of the tongue
- **Diagnosis by sight** - Examination of radial artery pulse on the wrist and inspecting any points of tenderness or abnormalities.
- **Diagnosis by questioning** - The Amchi will ask questions about a patient's lifestyle, family background and changes to environment.

TREATMENT

Amchi practitioners will use four main treatment methods:

- **Diet** - Proper regulation of diet and inclusion or exclusion of particular foods.
- **Behaviour and lifestyle** - Recommendations on changes to a patient's lifestyle and could include yoga and meditation.
- **Medicine** - Medicinal plants are used to provide herbal medicine for ailments.
- **External therapies** - In advanced stages, Amchis will use other therapies including Venesection, Moxibustion and Compression.



AMCHI

The term 'Amchi' is used to refer to a Himalyan Doctor, a Tibetan medical practitioner or someone who practices Sowa Rigpa.

For centuries, Amchis have been the sole health care providers to large marginalised communities in Nepal. People will visit an Amchi for common problems including arthritis, fever and cold, gastritis and infection.

BENEFITS

There are a number of benefits to seeking Sowa Rigpa practices:

- **Access** - Amchis will visit patients at home whereas patients may have to travel 5-8 hours to nearest health facility.
- **Cost** - Amchis are low cost and do not require payment to treat patients
- **Cultural beliefs** - Many believe in the healing power of the tradition and prefer Sowa Rigpa to western medicine.
- **Discrimination** - Amchis pride themselves on treating all patients equally irrespective of gender, status and caste.

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