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## **Center of Oriental Medicine of the Ministry of Health, Republic of Buryatiya: Integration of traditional medicine with practical public health services**

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**Key words:** Traditional Oriental medicine, modern Western biomedicine, integrative, Republic of Buryatia, public health facility, scientific activity, practical application

**Abstract:** The Centre of Oriental Medicine – a Public Health Institution of the Republic of Buryatia – promotes integration of modern and traditional medicine. This is a multidisciplinary institution that includes a clinic, a polyclinic, a drugstore of medicinal herbs, a new clinic & diagnostic building. It cooperates with research and educational institutions, modern and traditional medicine clinics. Many years of research on practical use of traditional Oriental medicine confirmed the effectiveness of this approach. The core activities of the Center include: medical activities; production of herbal remedies; research activities; health-related tourism.

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In recent decades, traditional medicine is becoming more important for preserving and strengthening human health, traditional methods and means of medical treatments stimulate increased interest of physicians and the general population. Integration of modern medical technology and traditional methods is



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a promising direction of development and potential for increased health protection.

The Ministry of Health of the Republic of Buryatia has accumulated multi-year experience of integrating science and practice of Oriental medicine in modern conditions of the activities of a State Treatment-and-Prophylactic Institution – the Centre of Oriental Medicine.

The Center includes: a clinic, a polyclinic, a rehabilitation clinic, a drugstore of medicinal herbs, a new clinical-diagnostic building. The main activities of the Centre: medical activities based on synthesis of academic and traditional medicine; manufacturing herbal remedies, scientific research into implementation of traditional methods and means of medical treatments in clinical practice; medical health-improving tourism.

Annually, more than 30, 000 people receive treatment and rehabilitation in the Center, i.e. up to 30% of patients from other regions of the Russian Federation. Treatment of patients involves an integrated approach when not only a specific disease, but the whole patient's body is taken into consideration. The specialists of the Centre promote an integrative form of health care services, which efficiently combines two systems – traditional and contemporary.

Methods of diagnosis	Methods of treatment
Traditional:	
pulse diagnostics, computed pulse diagnostics; acupuncture (Chinese) diagnostics, diagnostics by the method of R. Follya; iridodiagnostics	rational nutrition, herbal medicine, acupuncture, homeopathy, hirudotherapy, manual therapy, massage, keep-fit exercises with elements of yoga and Wu-shu.
Contemporary:	
clinical and biochemical, functional, ultrasound	pharmacotherapy, physiotherapy, kinesiotherapy, mechanotherapy
Natural sanative factors, balneology	
Mineral baths, herbal baths, climatotherapy, mud treatment	



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As clinically indicated conventional methods are used alone or in combination with modern methods of treatment. Complex application of the methods of Oriental medicine, modern medicine and natural healing factors can achieve high efficiency in the treatment of many diseases, reduces the time of hospitalization, and increases the duration and quality of remissions. The effectiveness of joint use of traditional and modern medicine is substantiated by data of clinical and statistical research.

Center for Oriental Medicine of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Buryatia dynamically and efficiently supports cooperation and exchange of experience in traditional medicine. Our Partners are: Buryat Scientific Center of the Siberian Branch of Russian Academy of Sciences, the Yury Gagarin Cosmonauts Training Center, Buryat State University, Tomsk Research Institute of Health Resort Treatment, Mongolian Medical Institute, Department of Health in Sukhe-Bator district in Ulan Bator, the Central Hospital in Ulan Bator (Mongolia), China Institute of Traditional Medicine, Academy of Traditional Medicine (Germany), International Academy of Traditional Tibetan Medicine (Italy), etc.

Medical Tourism: In 2006 a Rehabilitation Center was opened near Lake Baikal (Goryachinsk). The basic methodology of clinical care is based on the combined use of Oriental medicine and balneology factors. The uniqueness of spas consists in application of mud treatment, natural mineral water and herbal baths on the basis of Tibetan formulas. High effectiveness of restorative treatment is proven clinically and confirmed by the increasing demand for treatment. In 2008, according to the agreement between the Government of the Republic of Buryatia and the Yury Gagarin Russian State Science Research Cosmonauts Training Center, the Center held health-promoting meetings of Russian cosmonauts which yielded positive results and laid the foundation for future cooperation.

The drugstore of medicinal herbs produces herbal remedies according to original recipes developed by doctors of the Center and scientists of Buryat Scientific Center. The drugstore provides medical facilities and health resorts of



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the Republic of Buryatia and neighboring regions of the Siberian Federal District with plant-based medicines. In 2011 it is planned to launch industrial production of herbal remedies.

As for the Centre's activities in integration of tradition and modernity, it is necessary to highlight its core strategies:

- working out and introducing new rehabilitation and health-improving technologies based on application of academic and traditional medicine for various diseases;
- working out and introducing standards of care in traditional medicine;
- applying a program of detoxification and desensitization of the organism with the means and methods of traditional medicine;
- investigating the source of raw materials in the region, analyzing clinical and experimental research in traditional medicine;
- an agreement was signed that stated the intention of the Center to collaborate with the Cosmonaut Training Centre;
- developing innovative technology improvement and rejuvenation of the body based on the achievements of modern medicine and traditional medicine resources;
- planning joint activities as applied to traditional methods of treatment in the rehabilitation of athletes;
- the Centre has traditionally maintained a close creative relationship with research institutes, centers and educational institutions of China and Mongolia.

Prospects for integrating traditional medicine in the restorative and rehabilitation areas include:

- Creation of a unified Republican concept of regenerative medicine using traditional methods;
- Introduction of integrated health-improving programs in health-preventive, social and spa facilities of the Republic; opening offices of phyto- and reflexotherapy on the base of Republican institutions;



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- Creation of continuity in a single system of institutions for rehabilitation using existing medical technologies from high technologies to traditional methods of treatment;
- Coordination of traditional medicine, drawing up appropriate legal and regulatory framework;
- Establishment of an Association of doctors and experts in traditional medicine;
- Development of industrial technologies for mass production, release of pilot orders, widening of mass production of medicinal and health-improvement resources of Tibetan medicine in contemporary forms of consumption that meet the requirements of GMP.

Thus, medical activities in the field of traditional medicine in the Republic of Buryatia have a strong research and clinical basis, and are supported by the Ministry of Health and the Government of the Republic. A clear conception of successful integration of two health systems was formed inside the Centre. This conception has been used for over twenty years to promote and preserve the health of the population.