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Respiratory Comfort in Singapore

Allergies, cough, nasal symptoms, air-conditioning and safer TCM conversations

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This guide is designed to be read, saved and shared. It uses practical language, keeps TCM terminology in context and clearly separates general education from symptoms that need medical assessment.

Before you begin

Singapore's climate, indoor air-conditioning and common allergy triggers can make respiratory symptoms feel confusing. This guide brings the practical questions together: what to observe, what you can do at home, when conventional medical care should come first and where TCM may fit responsibly.

What this book is designed to do

A practical reading approach

- Explain the topic in plain language without turning TCM terminology into a biomedical diagnosis.
- Help you notice useful patterns: timing, triggers, medicines, habits, associated symptoms and change over time.
- Show where everyday self-care may be reasonable and where medical review should come first.
- Make consultation more useful by helping you arrive with clearer information and questions.

A safety note

Emergency or red-flag symptoms come before complementary care. Tell healthcare professionals about prescription medicines, over-the-counter products, herbs, supplements, pregnancy, allergies and important chronic conditions.

CHAPTER 01

Blocked or Runny Nose in Singapore: Rhinitis, Environment and TCM Support



A straightforward overview of preparation, common sensations, hygiene and when to tell your practitioner about medical conditions.

Key points

- A blocked or runny nose can have allergic, infectious, environmental or structural causes.
- Note triggers such as dust, pets, haze, air-conditioning, exercise and time of day.
- Breathing difficulty, facial swelling or severe systemic symptoms need prompt medical attention.

“Seasonal” symptoms can happen all year here

Singapore does not have a cold winter season, but nasal symptoms can still fluctuate with rain, haze, dust, air-conditioning, indoor mould, pets or infections. It helps to notice where and when symptoms happen rather than assuming the weather alone is responsible.

Observe the pattern

Record whether symptoms are mainly sneezing, watery discharge, blockage, itch, facial pressure or reduced smell. Note fever, cough, eye symptoms and obvious triggers. Persistent or recurrent symptoms may need a medical diagnosis, especially if they disturb sleep or breathing.

How TCM may frame support

A TCM practitioner may ask about nasal symptoms alongside digestion, sleep, energy, temperature preferences and other observations. Traditional pattern terminology may guide TCM care, but it does not replace assessment for allergies, sinus disease, asthma or other respiratory conditions.

Practical environmental steps

Keep bedding and frequently used surfaces clean, address obvious dampness or mould, and consider whether very cold dry air from air-conditioning worsens symptoms. Avoid smoke and known personal triggers where possible. Saline rinsing or medicines should be used appropriately and, when unsure, discussed with a pharmacist or doctor.

When to seek medical care

Seek medical attention for breathing difficulty, wheezing that is new or severe, facial swelling, high fever, severe facial pain, dehydration, or symptoms that are persistent and significantly affecting sleep or daily function. Call 995 for severe breathing difficulty or other emergencies.

Adapt advice to Singapore rather than a four-season script

Notice whether heat, humidity, rain, haze, air-conditioning, travel or indoor environments change your symptoms. Ask which advice is simply general lifestyle support, what is based on TCM tradition, and what symptoms require modern medical diagnosis. The useful goal is adaptation, not forcing Singapore life into a climate pattern that does not fit.

Build your own Singapore trigger map

Instead of assuming every symptom is caused by “heat” or “dampness”, note whether it appears after haze, rain, outdoor heat, a cold office, travel, poor sleep or a particular indoor environment. This keeps traditional lifestyle ideas connected to your real surroundings and helps separate a useful observation from a vague label that could fit almost anything.

CHAPTER 02

Cough in Singapore: When Self-Care Is Enough and When to Get Checked

A practical guide to common cough patterns, useful home observations and the signs that deserve medical review.

Key points

- Most short-lived coughs improve with time, but duration and accompanying symptoms matter.
- Breathlessness, chest pain, blood, high fever or significant worsening deserve medical attention.
- TCM may be discussed as complementary care only after important medical causes are considered.

Start by describing the cough, not naming it

A cough can be dry, tickly, wet, phlegmy, mainly at night, worse after meals, triggered by air-conditioning or associated with a runny nose. Those details are more useful than assuming one cause. In Singapore, viral infections, allergic rhinitis and postnasal drip are common possibilities, but asthma, reflux, medicines and other conditions can also contribute.

Duration changes the conversation

A cough that is gradually improving after a simple respiratory infection is different from one that keeps returning or does not settle. HealthHub advises medical review when a cough fails to improve with self-treatment, becomes worse or persists for a prolonged period. A clinician can listen to the chest, review medicines and decide whether further assessment is needed.

Know the warning signs

Seek medical care promptly for difficulty breathing, wheezing with distress, chest pain, coughing blood, pink frothy phlegm, significant weight loss, high fever, marked weakness or rapidly worsening symptoms. People with asthma, COPD, heart disease, immune suppression or other important medical conditions should have a lower threshold for review.

What you can observe at home

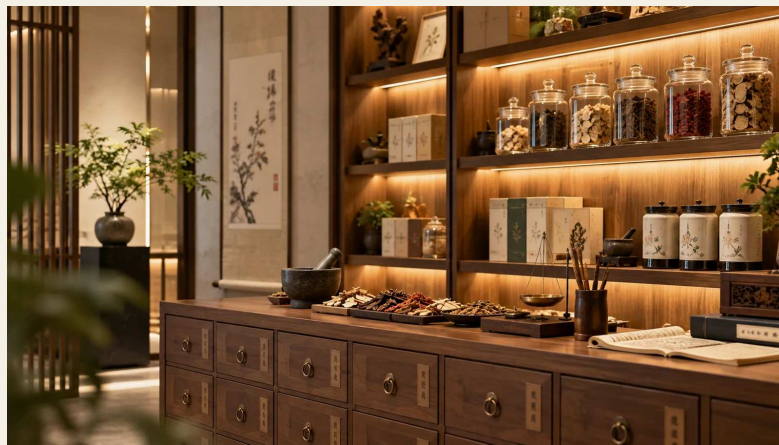
Note when the cough happens, whether there is phlegm, fever, nasal blockage, heartburn, shortness of breath or a new medicine. Hydration may help if you are not on fluid restriction. Avoid smoke and obvious irritants. A simple symptom diary can make a consultation much more productive.

Where TCM may fit

A TCM consultation may explore sleep, appetite, throat comfort, digestion and other symptoms through a traditional framework. That discussion should not delay medical assessment of persistent or concerning cough. Tell the TCM practitioner about inhalers, medicines, allergies, pregnancy and any known respiratory diagnosis.

CHAPTER 03

Air-Conditioning, Dry Throat and Nasal Comfort in Singapore



Why long hours in cool indoor air can feel uncomfortable, and practical ways to separate irritation from allergy or illness.

Key points

- Dry or cool indoor air can aggravate throat and nasal discomfort without being the only cause.
- Look for patterns: office hours, bedroom air-conditioning, dust exposure, fever, wheeze or persistent symptoms.
- Persistent or severe respiratory symptoms should be medically assessed rather than repeatedly self-treated.

Why indoor comfort can become a health question

Singapore is hot and humid outdoors, yet many people spend long hours in strongly air-conditioned offices, malls and bedrooms. Cool moving air can make the nose, throat, eyes or skin feel dry or irritated. The useful question is whether symptoms are mainly environmental or whether allergy, infection, asthma, reflux or another condition is present as well.

Check the room before blaming your body

Direct airflow toward the face, dusty filters, very low temperatures, fragrances and long periods without movement can all worsen comfort. Try moving away from the vent, cleaning filters according to the manufacturer's schedule, drinking water regularly and observing whether symptoms improve when you leave the environment.

Allergy can look similar

Sneezing, clear runny nose, itchy nose or eyes and repeated symptoms around dust or bedding can fit allergic rhinitis. Dust mites are a common allergen in Singapore. Fever, body aches, thick mucus or a clearly infectious pattern suggest a different conversation. Persistent symptoms are worth discussing with a doctor or pharmacist.

Avoid a cycle of constant remedies

It is easy to keep adding lozenges, sprays, supplements or herbal products without asking why symptoms keep recurring. Record the setting and timing first. If you use medicines or nasal sprays, follow professional advice because some products are not intended for unrestricted long-term use.

TCM and everyday care

A TCM practitioner may discuss constitutional patterns, sleep, food, stress and environmental exposure. Keep the practical basics in place: ventilation, hydration, appropriate room temperature and medical review when symptoms are persistent, severe or accompanied by breathing difficulty.

CHAPTER 04

Postnasal Drip and Throat Clearing: What to Notice Before a Consultation

A clear guide to nasal symptoms, throat clearing and cough patterns that may travel together.

Key points

- Nasal symptoms and cough can be connected through postnasal drip.
- Clear mucus, sneezing and itchy eyes may suggest allergy; fever or a changing illness pattern needs a broader review.
- Breathing difficulty, chest pain, blood or prolonged cough should not be managed only as a nose problem.

The nose and throat are connected

Mucus draining from the back of the nose can create a sensation of something in the throat, frequent swallowing, throat clearing or cough. This can happen with allergic rhinitis, viral illness or other nasal problems. The pattern matters more than the label.

Notice what comes with it

Write down whether you have sneezing, itchy eyes, blocked nose, facial pressure, fever, reflux symptoms or wheezing. Also note whether symptoms are worse after waking, in air-conditioning, around dust, pets or particular rooms. These details help separate environmental triggers from other causes.

Simple comfort measures

Adequate fluids, avoiding smoke and reducing obvious dust exposure can help general comfort. If you already use allergy or nasal medicines, follow the instructions from your pharmacist or doctor. Avoid combining many remedies just because each one targets a different symptom.

When cough deserves its own review

A prolonged cough, worsening breathlessness, chest pain, fever, blood, significant weight loss or symptoms in someone with asthma or chronic lung disease deserves medical assessment. Do not assume every cough is caused by postnasal drip simply because nasal symptoms are present.

TCM perspective without overclaiming

TCM may describe nasal and throat symptoms using traditional pattern language and may discuss acupuncture or Chinese medicine after assessment. These terms are not substitutes for biomedical diagnoses. Bring a list of medicines and tell the practitioner about allergies and known respiratory conditions.

CHAPTER 05

Heat and Humidity in Singapore: Everyday Wellness Without Overcomplicating It



Singapore's heat and humidity affect sleep, exercise, appetite, skin comfort and hydration. The useful response is usually simple: pace activity, replace fluids and recognise danger signs.

Key points

- Heat exhaustion and heat stroke are medical issues, not TCM "heatiness".
- Hydration needs vary with activity, sweating and health conditions.
- TCM lifestyle advice should sit alongside basic heat-safety measures.

Start with exposure

Outdoor work, long commutes, exercise, crowded events and poorly ventilated rooms can all increase heat load. Plan heavier activity for cooler times where possible, take shaded breaks and change out of sweat-soaked clothing if skin irritation becomes a problem.

Hydration is not one fixed number

People who sweat heavily, exercise or spend long periods outdoors may need more fluid. Some also need electrolytes during prolonged heavy sweating. People with heart, kidney or other conditions may have individual fluid advice.

Sleep in a humid climate

Cooling the bedroom can improve comfort, but very cold air-conditioning may dry the throat or worsen nasal symptoms in some people. Aim for a comfortable environment rather than a dramatic temperature change.

TCM language and practical habits

TCM may describe some symptoms using terms related to heat, dampness or constitution. These are traditional concepts and should not be confused with heat exhaustion, dehydration or infection.

Know the danger signs

Confusion, fainting, very high body temperature, severe weakness, inability to keep fluids down or collapse can indicate serious heat illness. Seek urgent medical help rather than relying on drinks, herbs or home remedies alone.

CHAPTER 06

Acupuncture: What to Expect Before, During and After a Session

A straightforward overview of preparation, common sensations, hygiene and when to tell your practitioner about medical conditions.

Before acupuncture

Have a light meal unless you have been told otherwise, avoid arriving intoxicated and wear clothing that allows access to the treatment area. Tell the practitioner about pregnancy, blood thinners, bleeding disorders and implanted medical devices.

During the session

Needles should be sterile and single-use. People describe sensations differently: some notice pressure, heaviness, tingling or a dull ache. Sharp or intolerable pain should be reported immediately.

After the session

Some people feel relaxed or tired. Move slowly when getting up, drink normally and follow any individual instructions provided. Contact the clinic if you have an unexpected reaction that concerns you.

Safety first

Acupuncture is not a substitute for emergency care. New neurological symptoms, chest pain, breathing difficulty or severe worsening symptoms should be assessed urgently by conventional medical services.

A good session starts before the first needle

Eat normally unless you have been given specific instructions, arrive with enough time to settle, and avoid alcohol before treatment. Wear clothing that gives reasonable access to the area being discussed. Tell the practitioner if you are pregnant, take blood-thinning medicines, have a bleeding disorder, are prone to fainting, have implanted devices or have a

condition that changes skin sensation.

What should feel normal - and what should not

People describe acupuncture sensations differently. A brief dull ache, heaviness, tingling or pressure may occur. What matters is communication: sharp, burning, electrical or intolerable pain should be reported immediately. The practitioner can adjust or remove a needle. You do not need to “endure” severe pain to make a treatment effective.

After the appointment

Some people feel relaxed or tired, while others feel little difference immediately. Get up slowly, hydrate normally and follow any individual instructions. Mild local tenderness can occur, but unexpected or concerning reactions should be discussed with the clinic.

Acupuncture should complement, not delay, investigation of serious or rapidly worsening symptoms.

Sterile technique matters more than ceremony

Acupuncture needles used in modern clinical practice should be sterile and single-use. The practitioner should clean the relevant area where appropriate, use safe handling technique and dispose of sharps properly. You do not need to understand every infection-control detail, but it is reasonable to expect a clean clinical environment and to ask questions if something makes you uncomfortable.

Point selection is individual, not a fixed recipe

Two people with similar pain can receive different point selections because the practitioner may consider location, movement, other symptoms and the TCM pattern being used. This does not mean every variation is automatically correct. You can still ask what the chosen points are intended to support and how the practitioner will decide whether the approach is helping.

More needles are not automatically better

A session may use only a few needles or more, depending on the treatment plan. Number of needles, stronger sensation and longer retention do not automatically mean a more effective session. The treatment should remain tolerable, and a good practitioner should adapt if you are anxious, sensitive, frail or prone to fainting.

Certain situations deserve extra discussion

Pregnancy, blood-thinning medicines, bleeding disorders, immune suppression, implanted electrical devices, severe skin problems, reduced sensation and a history of fainting can affect how acupuncture is planned. These factors do not always mean acupuncture is impossible, but they should be disclosed before treatment rather than discovered afterwards.

Know what would count as progress

For a recurring problem, decide what improvement means before starting a long course. It may be fewer pain days, easier movement, better sleep or improved function at work. If nothing meaningful changes after a reasonable review period, ask whether the diagnosis, treatment approach or overall plan should be reconsidered.

A course of care should not be open-ended by default

Some problems may justify several sessions, but the number should be linked to a review plan. Ask when the practitioner expects to reassess symptoms and function. If each visit automatically leads to another without any discussion of progress, the treatment plan is

incomplete. A reasonable course should have a purpose, a review point and a clear reason for continuing.

Aftercare is usually simple

Most people can return to normal activity after acupuncture unless given individual advice. Mild local soreness or a small bruise can occur. Contact the clinic if something unexpected worries you, and seek medical care for severe or rapidly worsening symptoms. Avoid turning normal aftercare into a long list of unnecessary restrictions unless there is a specific clinical reason.

CHAPTER 07

Chinese Herbs: Questions to Ask Before Taking a Formula



Learn why medication lists, allergies, pregnancy, supplements and ongoing medical care should be discussed before using herbal products.

Start with your full medication list

Herbs and supplements can interact with medicines or duplicate ingredients. Tell the practitioner about prescription drugs, non-prescription medicines, vitamins, supplements and products from other clinics.

Share important health information

Pregnancy, breastfeeding, allergies, kidney or liver problems and upcoming surgery can affect what may be appropriate. Do not assume a product is suitable simply because it is described as natural.

Understand the product

Ask what you are taking, how much to use, how often, for how long and what reactions should prompt you to stop. Keep the original packaging and directions where possible.

Do not delay necessary medical care

Persistent, severe or worsening symptoms deserve proper assessment. Traditional products should not be used to postpone urgent or necessary conventional medical care.

Tell the practitioner what is already in your body

Bring the names or photographs of prescription medicines, over-the-counter products, vitamins, supplements and other herbal products you take. Include allergies and previous reactions. Pregnancy, breastfeeding, liver or kidney disease and other significant conditions

can change what is appropriate. This information is not an inconvenience; it is part of making herbal decisions more safely.

Natural is not the same as automatically safe

A plant-derived ingredient can still have physiological effects, interact with medicines or be unsuitable for a particular person. Product quality also matters. HSA advises consumers to be cautious of dubious products, exaggerated claims and products that may contain undeclared potent medicinal ingredients. Use reputable sources and avoid buying purely on testimonials or “quick cure” promises.

Know what you are taking and why

Ask what the formula or product is intended to support, how it should be taken, what symptoms should lead you to stop and seek advice, and when it should be reviewed. Keep your doctor informed when you are receiving ongoing medical care, especially if new medicines are started or doses change.

Singapore regulates health products, but consumers still need judgment

Health Sciences Authority guidance is an important reference for product safety. Products promoted online or through informal channels can still carry exaggerated claims, undeclared ingredients or quality concerns. A professional label, celebrity testimonial or the word “natural” is not proof that a product is suitable for you. Use reputable sources and be cautious of products promising rapid cures for many unrelated conditions.

A prescription should be understandable

You do not need to memorise every herb, but you should know whether you are taking a customised formula, a proprietary product or a supplement, how often to take it and for how long. Ask what the main purpose is and when the prescription should be reviewed. If the plan changes, keep the most recent instructions rather than relying on an older packet or a family member’s advice.

Interactions are not limited to prescription medicines

Over-the-counter painkillers, cold remedies, vitamins, supplements, traditional products and alcohol can all matter. Bring photographs of labels if remembering names is difficult. If a doctor starts a new medicine while you are using Chinese medicine, tell the TCM practitioner; if a TCM prescription changes, tell the doctor or pharmacist when relevant.

Stop and seek advice when a reaction is concerning

Unexpected rash, swelling, breathing difficulty, severe vomiting, fainting, yellowing of the eyes or skin, marked worsening of symptoms or other serious reactions deserve prompt medical attention. Do not keep taking a product simply because someone tells you that discomfort means the body is “detoxing”. Serious or persistent reactions need assessment.

Do not share personalised prescriptions casually

A formula prepared for one person may not be appropriate for a spouse, parent or friend with a similar-sounding symptom. Differences in medicines, pregnancy, allergies, chronic disease and the underlying cause matter. Sharing leftovers also makes it harder to know exactly what was taken if an adverse reaction occurs.

Storage and labels help prevent simple mistakes

Keep products in their original labelled containers where possible, away from children, heat and moisture. Do not mix several powders into an unlabelled jar or keep old packets without

dates. If a reaction occurs, being able to identify exactly what you took makes medical assessment easier. Discard products that are expired, contaminated, badly stored or no longer clearly identifiable.

Children, pregnancy and frailty deserve extra caution

Dosing and suitability can change substantially for children, pregnancy, breastfeeding, older adults and people who are frail or have impaired liver or kidney function. Do not assume that a smaller amount of an adult product is automatically appropriate for a child. These situations deserve individual assessment, careful product selection and clear instructions.

CHAPTER 08

TCM and Conventional Medical Care: Using Both Responsibly

A safety-first guide to communication between healthcare providers and situations that require urgent conventional medical attention.

Tell each provider what you are using

Good communication reduces avoidable risks. Tell your TCM practitioner about your medical diagnoses, prescriptions and hospital care, and tell your doctor or pharmacist about herbs, supplements and TCM products.

Do not stop prescribed treatment on your own

If you are considering changing a prescription medicine, discuss it with the clinician who prescribed it. Stopping some medicines suddenly can be dangerous.

Keep records

A simple list of medicines, supplements, allergies and recent tests makes it easier for different providers to understand your care.

Recognise emergencies

TCM clinics are not emergency departments. For severe or sudden symptoms, difficulty breathing, major bleeding, stroke-like symptoms or loss of consciousness, call 995 or seek urgent conventional care.

You do not have to choose one side

Many people use TCM while also seeing a GP, specialist, physiotherapist or other healthcare professional. The safest approach is transparency. Tell each provider what medicines, herbs, supplements and treatments you are using. This allows interactions, duplicated treatment and conflicting advice to be considered rather than hidden.

Different systems answer different questions

A TCM pattern description and a biomedical diagnosis are not interchangeable. One may be used to organise treatment within the TCM framework, while the other may rely on examination, imaging, laboratory tests or established diagnostic criteria. Keeping those roles clear reduces confusion and prevents traditional terminology from being mistaken for proof of organ disease.

Urgent care is not a competition

Chest pain, severe breathing difficulty, stroke-like symptoms, major trauma, uncontrolled bleeding, loss of consciousness and other emergencies need immediate conventional

medical care. Complementary treatment can be reconsidered after urgent problems are stabilised. Responsible TCM should never require delaying emergency assessment.

Give both sides the same medication list

One of the simplest safety habits is to keep a current list of prescription medicines, non-prescription products, vitamins, supplements and Chinese medicines. Show the same list to your doctor and TCM practitioner when relevant. This reduces the chance that each provider is working with only half the information.

Test results do not lose importance because you use TCM

Blood tests, imaging and specialist diagnoses can answer questions that traditional pattern assessment cannot. If a doctor has identified diabetes, anaemia, a fracture, infection or another condition, do not replace that information with a TCM label. Traditional care may still be discussed as complementary support, but the established diagnosis remains important for safety and planning.

Chronic disease needs coordination, not secrecy

People with high blood pressure, diabetes, kidney or liver disease, cancer, heart disease and other chronic conditions may still be interested in TCM. The safest approach is coordinated disclosure. Some herbs, supplements or changes in diet may affect medicines or laboratory results, so your treating medical team should know what you are using.

Do not stop prescribed medicine because of a broad promise

Be cautious if anyone tells you to stop essential medicine immediately because a complementary treatment can “replace” it, especially without speaking to the prescriber. Changes to long-term medication often need monitoring and should be made with the healthcare professional responsible for that treatment.

The best integration is practical

Integrated care does not require both systems to agree on every theory. It requires each to stay within its strengths, communicate clearly and avoid delaying necessary care. A patient should be able to use TCM for appropriate goals while still receiving vaccinations, screening, emergency care, surgery, medicines or rehabilitation when those are needed.

Preventive care still matters

Using TCM does not remove the value of vaccination, cancer screening, blood pressure checks, diabetes monitoring, dental care or other preventive services appropriate for your age and risk. Complementary care works best when it sits beside, rather than replaces, routine prevention and evidence-based follow-up for known conditions.

Transitions are the moments to communicate again

Hospital discharge, surgery, a new specialist, pregnancy, a new diagnosis or a major medicine change are good times to update every practitioner involved. Information that was safe six months ago may no longer be enough. Repeating your current medicine and supplement list during these transitions can prevent avoidable misunderstandings.

CHAPTER 09

Your First TCM Consultation in Singapore: What to Expect

A practical guide to preparing for a TCM consultation, what information to bring and what a careful assessment may involve.

Before you go

Write down your main concern, how long it has been present and what makes it better or worse. Bring a list of prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines and supplements. Relevant medical reports can also help the practitioner understand context.

What the practitioner may ask

A TCM consultation may include questions about sleep, appetite, digestion, energy, temperature preferences and other patterns in addition to the main complaint. The purpose is to understand the person as a whole rather than to rely on one symptom alone.

What you should ask

Ask what the practitioner is considering, what the proposed approach involves, how long a session takes, what it costs and whether there are reasons it may not be suitable for you.

When conventional medical care comes first

Sudden severe symptoms, chest pain, difficulty breathing, loss of consciousness, major bleeding, stroke-like symptoms or rapidly worsening illness require urgent conventional medical attention. Call 995 in an emergency.

What makes a first consultation useful

The first visit does not need to produce a dramatic answer in a few minutes. A useful consultation should help you organise the problem: what you are experiencing, how long it has been happening, what has already been investigated, what medicines or supplements you use, and what you hope to improve. If a recommendation is made, you should understand what it is intended to support, what practical limits apply and when the plan should be reviewed.

Bring the information that prevents guesswork

A medicine list, allergy information, recent medical reports and a short timeline of symptoms can save time. For recurring problems, note what makes symptoms better or worse and whether sleep, meals, stress, movement or menstrual cycle changes are relevant. You do not need to stop conventional treatment before seeing a TCM practitioner; in fact, accurate information about current care makes the consultation safer.

Questions you are allowed to ask

Ask why a particular treatment is being suggested, whether there are alternatives, what sensations or side effects may occur, how many sessions should pass before reviewing progress, and whether anything should be discussed with your doctor or pharmacist. A responsible consultation should make room for questions rather than relying on authority alone.

Prepare a one-minute summary before you arrive

A useful first sentence is simple: what the main problem is, when it started, how often it happens and what you most want help with. Then add the information that changes decisions - major diagnoses, current medicines, allergies, pregnancy where relevant, recent

procedures and important test results. This gives the practitioner a clear starting point without requiring you to remember every detail in perfect order.

Tongue and pulse are part of the TCM framework

Some TCM consultations include looking at the tongue and feeling the pulse at the wrist. These observations are interpreted within traditional diagnostic frameworks. They are not substitutes for blood tests, imaging, physical examination or a biomedical diagnosis when those are needed. If a traditional term sounds like the name of a modern organ disease, ask the practitioner to explain exactly what is meant.

A treatment plan should have a review point

Whether the recommendation is acupuncture, Tuina, Chinese medicine, lifestyle advice or a combination, ask how progress will be judged. A useful plan has a realistic review point rather than continuing indefinitely without reflection. Improvement might mean sleeping longer, walking farther, having fewer headache days or relying less on rescue medication - the goal should be concrete enough that both you and the practitioner can discuss whether the approach is worthwhile.

Tell the practitioner when something changes

New medicines, a new diagnosis, pregnancy, surgery, a fall, worsening symptoms or an unexpected reaction can change what is appropriate. Do not assume the information you gave months ago is still enough. Updating the practitioner is especially important when herbs, supplements or manual treatment are involved, because safety decisions depend on your current situation.

Leave with an explanation you can repeat

Before leaving, you should be able to explain in plain language what is being recommended, what it is intended to support, how often to use it, what normal reactions might occur, what warning signs matter and when to review. If you cannot explain the plan back to yourself, ask again. Clear communication is not a luxury; it is part of responsible care.

What a follow-up visit should clarify

A follow-up should not simply repeat the first appointment. It should compare what changed, what did not, whether any new symptoms appeared and whether the original goal still makes sense. If treatment has been tried, describe what happened between visits rather than only how you feel at that moment. This helps distinguish a temporary good day from a consistent trend and gives both sides a reason to continue, modify or stop a plan.

When it is reasonable to pause or seek another opinion

If you do not understand the explanation, feel pressured into a long package, are repeatedly told that worsening symptoms are always a good sign, or are discouraged from obtaining necessary medical assessment, it is reasonable to pause. A second opinion can be useful when the diagnosis is unclear, the recommended course is unusually long or expensive, or your condition is changing in a way that has not been adequately explained.

Practical consultation checklist

- What is the main concern, and when did it start?
- What clearly makes it better or worse?
- Which medicines, supplements or herbs are you taking?
- Are there allergies, pregnancy considerations or chronic conditions that matter?
- Which symptoms are new, severe, persistent or changing quickly?
- What is the single most useful outcome you want from this consultation?
- What would mean conventional medical review or emergency care should come first?

Contact Shande

For appointments and general enquiries, use WhatsApp or WeChat. Email is not presented as a routine customer-service channel.

WhatsApp: +65 8171 6002 | Fortune Centre, 190 Middle Road, Singapore 188979

References & further reading

The chapters in this guide are drawn from the Shande Health Library. Key safety points are linked back to the public-health or professional sources cited in those articles.

- **HealthHub: Cough**

<https://www.healthhub.sg/health-conditions/cough>

- **HealthHub: Allergic Rhinitis**

<https://www.healthhub.sg/health-conditions/allergic-rhinitis>

- **HealthHub: Allergic Rhinitis and Cough**

<https://www.healthhub.sg/health-conditions/allergic-rhinitis>

General health education | Not a diagnosis | Emergency in Singapore: 995