



RESEARCH ARTICLE



# Comparison of characteristics of urine specimens at physiological state versus post-artificial heating at the National Traditional Medicine Hospital, Bhutan



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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Urine reflects the body's functional status playing a central role in the diagnosis of disease conditions. This study aimed to compare six of the nine features of urine at physiological and lukewarm states after artificial heating – colour, odour, steam, bubbles, sediment, and frothiness.

**Method:** This comparative study utilized the Bhutan Analysis System for Urine Properties (BASUP) chart. The study was conducted from July 2021 to January 2022 at the Eastern Regional Referral Hospital, Wangdicholing District Hospital, and the National Traditional Medicine Hospital. The properties of urine were evaluated soon after collection at physiological state. After the urine specimen had cooled down to room temperature, it was heated to body temperature following a standard procedure for reassessment of its properties.

**Results:** A total of 91 specimens from 35 men and 56 women were analysed. There were no significant differences observed in the colour, odour, steam, bubbles, sediment, or frothiness between physiological and artificially heated specimens. However, there were differences in the colours of དམར་ཤས་ཆེ་བ། (*Marshechewa*) with  $p = 0.023$  and སེར་ཤས་ཆེ་བ། (*Sershechewa*) with  $p = 0.015$ .

**Conclusion:** The study found no significant differences in the majority of the properties of urine in specimens at physiological state and after artificial heating. However, further studies are required to evaluate the physicochemical properties and the differences in the *Marshechewa* and *Sershechewa* colours noted.

**Keywords:** Diagnosis; Traditional Medicine; Observation; Urinalysis; Urinary Sediment Analysis

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## INTRODUCTION

Traditional Medicine (TM), known as *Sowa Rigpa*, holds that the human body consists of three primary elements: *rLung* (Air), *mKhris-pa* (Bile), and *Bad-kan* (Phlegm). A state of health is achieved when these elements are in harmonious balance within the body [1]. In TM, the primary diagnostic techniques are pulse reading and urine analysis. Urine reflects the body's metabolism and the functional status of various organ systems [2].

In *Sowa Rigpa*, urine analysis is regarded as the most distinctive and effective diagnostic method due to the extensive clinical information it provides. There are nine clinical features assessed at three different temperature states. Historically, urine analysis at the National Traditional Medicine Hospital

(NTMH) was performed on cold samples, which is different from the natural physiological state at body temperature. At the NTMH, this method was officially adopted in 2014 following thorough deliberations among traditional medicine practitioners. The practice of heating urine for analysis was first introduced by Sangay Gyatso (1652 – 1705) in Tibet [3, 4].

Urine is analysed at three temperature stages: body temperature, lukewarm, and cold stages. Soon after evacuation from the bladder at body temperature, the urine specimen is evaluated for colour, vapour, odour, and bubbles. At the lukewarm stage, the specimen is evaluated for frothiness and sediments. In the cold stage, the timing and pattern of colour changes, along with the clarity or cloudiness of the fluid after transformation are recorded (Figure 1) [5]. The location of sediments in the tube indicates the location of the disease in the body (Figure 2). Sediments at the upper part of the test tube suggest symptoms like dizziness, heart, or lungs-related issues; sediments at the middle part of the test tube suggest indicate liver or spleen-related disorders; and sediments at the lower part of the test tube point to colon, intestine, kidney and bladder issues, lower body *rlung* problems, or diarrhoea [6].

The characterization of the colour of the specimen was compared to the standard template from the Bhutan Analysis System for Urine Properties (BASUP) chart 2021 (Figure 3). This was developed through expert consultation among Traditional Medicine experts at the NTMH, Thimphu, Bhutan.

As per *Sowa Rigpa* text, it is preferred that the characteristics of urine specimens are assessed at physiological state [7]. However, this method is often not feasible owing to patient timing for hospital visit. Thus, it is important to determine whether the characteristics of artificially heated urine specimens are comparable to those from specimens in their natural physiological state. Therefore, the objective of this study was to compare the characteristics of artificially heated urine specimens with that of characteristics as physiological state.

**METHODS**

**Study Desin**

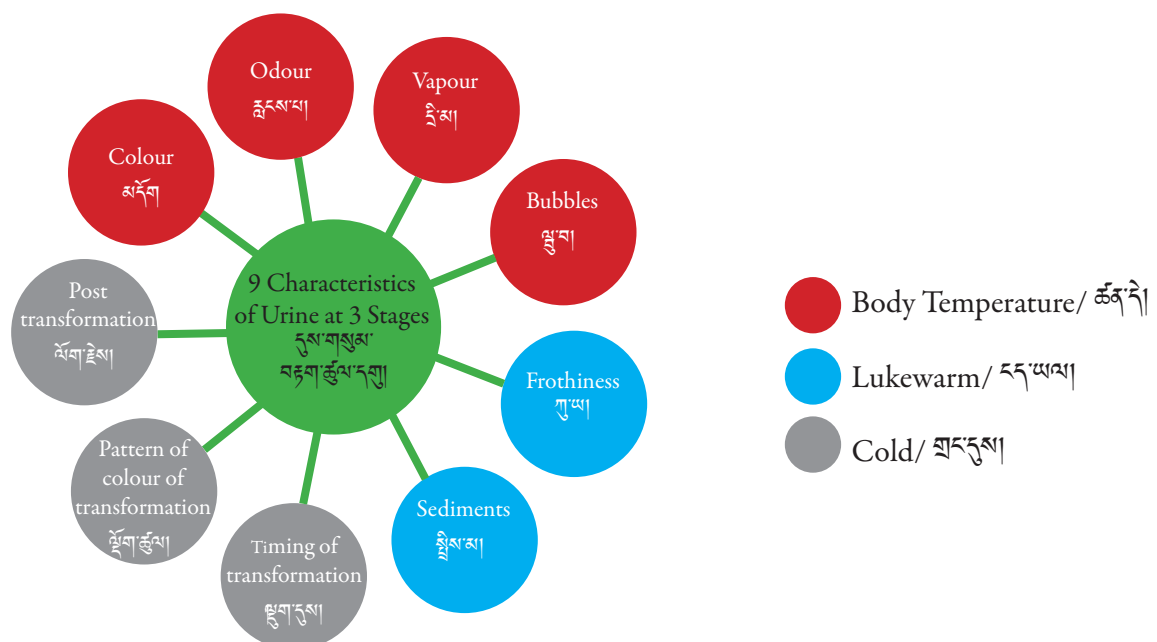
This was an observational study. In this study, the following selected characteristics were compared with urine specimens analysed at physiological state (soon after evacuation) and after artificial reheating to body temperature: colour, vapour, odour, bubbles, sediment and frothiness.

**Study site**

This study was conducted at the National Traditional Medicine Hospital, Thimphu; Eastern Regional Referral Hospital, Mongar; and Wangdicholing Hospital, Bumthang between July 2021 and January 2022.

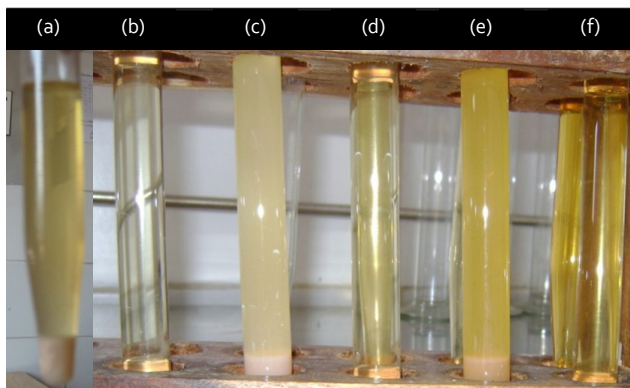
**Study population, sample size and sampling method**

All patients visiting the selected hospitals, irrespective of their diagnoses, were invited to participate in the study. The patients were provided advices on di-



**Figure 1.** The nine properties of urine specimen assessed at body temperature, at lukewarm and in cold stages. The properties of specimen in cold stages were not included in this study.

etary restrictions (avoidance strong tea, butter milk, alcohol and milk) and behaviour restrictions (avoidance of dehydration, sleep deprivation, sexual activities, mental stress, and excessive physical activity) as per the *Sowa Rigpa* text until specimen collection [8]. All patients who consented and reported to the hospital to provide their specimens were included.



**Figure 2.** Positions of urine sediments in a test tube. In tubes, (a), (c) and (e), the sediments at the bottom. In tube (d), the sediments are in middle layer of the tube. In tubes, (b) and (f), there are minimal sediments dispersed across all three layers of the test tube.

### Urine specimen collection and handling

The flow of patients involving screening, collection and analysis of urine specimens is shown in [Figure 4](#). Among the nine clinical features of urine, three related to cold-state specimens were excluded, as the study focused on comparing artificially heated urine with its physiological state.

### Assessment of urine properties at physiological state

#### Step 1

A sterile container was handed over to the patient to collect about 40 mL of mid-stream urine. This specimen was handed over within one minute to the TM physician and the urine characteristics at physiological and warm states (vapour and odour) were recorded.

#### Step 2

From this specimen, 30 mL of the specimen was transferred into a ceramic bowl ([Figure 5a](#)) to assess colour and bubbles, and the remaining 10 mL of urine was transferred into a test tube and allowed to settle sediments for 20 minutes.

#### Step 3

Urine characteristics at a lukewarm stage were recorded: sediments and frothiness. Following this, the specimen was left still at room temperature for 20 minutes and the position of the sediments (upper, lower or bottom layer) in the test tube was recorded.

### Assessment of urine properties after artificial heating

#### Step 4

The specimen from the ceramic bowl and test tube was transferred into a beaker with a thermometer, and was then immersed in a jar containing hot water when the temperature of the specimen reached 37 °C ([Figure 5b](#)), the contents were poured back into the ceramic bowl to assess colour, bubbles and odour.

The procedure for assessment of urine characteristics after artificially re-heating is described in the Standard Operating Procedure adopted by the NTMH, 2014 [9]. The template for reporting the urine characteristics after artificial heating is shown in [Figure 6](#).

### Data collection

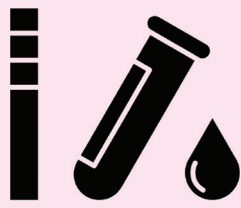
The data on the characteristics of urine specimens were recorded in a pro forma that was designed for the purpose for this study. The TM physicians at all the three participating sites were trained through a workshop on the use of the pro forma and the use of BASUP chart.

### Data analysis

The data was double entered and validated using EpiData Version 3.1 (EpiData Association, Odense, Denmark). STATA version 13 (licenced Khesar Gyalpo University of Medical Sciences of Bhutan) was used for analysis. The comparison of the six characteristics were made using chi squared test. P values < 0.05 to as considered significant.


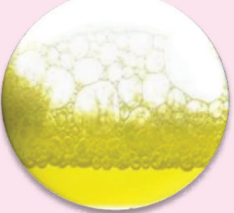




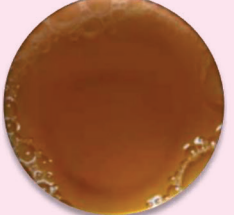


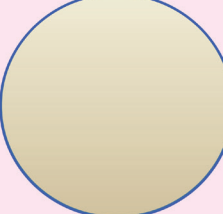

### Ethics considerations

Ethics approval for this study was obtained from Research Ethical Board of Health, Ministry of Health, Royal Government of Bhutan (REBH/approval/2020/10053). Administrative clearance was obtained from the Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Health and from the respective Medical Superintendents of the hospitals. Informed consent was taken from the study participants prior to specimen collection.



# BASUP CHART

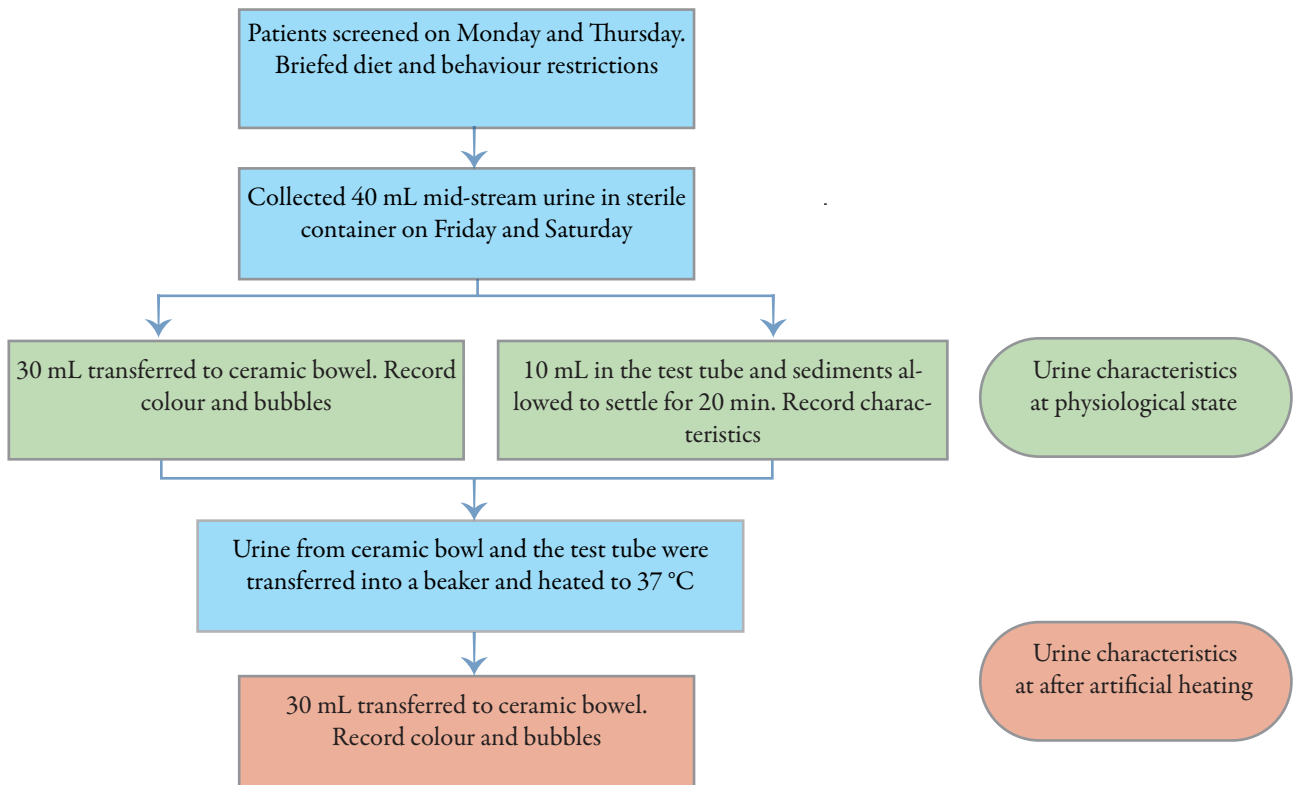
Bhutan Analysis System for Urinary Properties (BASUP) chart 2021 for the characterization of colour of urine specimens.

 སྒོ་བ། Ngowa	 དཀར་བ། Karwa	 སེར། Ser	 དམར། Mar
 ཁྱུ་བཤམ། Jashel	 སྒྲིག་དུག་ལ། Mukduk	 སྒོ་སེར། Ngoser	 སྒོ་སྒྲི། Ngocha
 སེར་སྒྲི། Sercha	 སྒོ་དམར། Ngomar	 དམར་སེར། Marser	 དཀར་དམར། Karmar
 མར་ནག། Marnak	 དམར་ཤམ་ཆེ་བ། Marshay Chewa	 སེར་སྒྲི། Sercha	 འཇམ་ཚོན། Jatshen
 ནག། Nak	 ཁྱུ་བ། Chawa	 དམར་སྒྲི། Marcha	 སྒོ་སེར་གཉིང་སྒྲི། Ngosertingcha

Source: National Traditional Medicine Hospital, Thimphu, Bhutan

Design: Bhutan Sorig Journal

**Figure 3.** Bhutan Analysis System for Urinary Properties (BASUP) chart 2021 for the characterization of colour of urine specimens.



**Figure 4.** Schematic diagram on the observation and recording of urine characteristics at physiological state (soon after evacuation) and after artificial heating of cooled specimen to body temperature

**RESULTS**

There were 91 urine specimens examined: 29 at NTMH and 31 each at Wangdicholing Hospital and Eastern Regional Referral Hospital. These specimens were from 35 male and 56 female participants.

The details of comparison of colour, odour, steam and bubbles is shown in [Table 1](#). In the comparison of urine colour, there were no differences in སྒོ་བ། (Ngowa), དཀར། (Kar), སེར། (Ser), སྒོ་སེར། (Ngoser), སྒོ་སྟོ། (Ngocha), དམར་སེར། (Marser), སྒོ་དཀར། (Ngokar) and others such as སེར་སྟོ། སྒོ་དམར། རྒྱ་ཤེལ། དཀར་སེར། དམར་སྟོ། དམར། དམར་ཉལ།. However, there were significant differences in the colours of དམར་ཤེལ་ཆེབ། (Marshchewa) with  $p = 0.023$  and སེར་ཤེལ་ཆེབ། (Serschewa) with  $p = 0.015$ .

In the comparison of urine odour, there were no differences in རྩི་ཆེབ། (Drechewa), རྩི་ཚུང་བ། (Drechungwa) and other odours གཟུར་ཤི། and ཟས་ཤི།.

In the comparison of steam, there were no differences in རྩི་ཆེབ། (Langchewa), རྩི་ཚུང་བ། (Langchungwa) and other forms of steam རེས་ཆེར་སེར་ཚུང་། and ཡུན་ལྷུང་།.

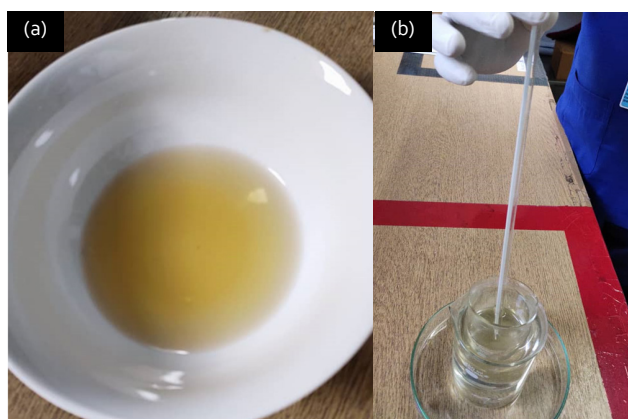
In the comparison of bubbles, there were no differences in སྒོ་ལ་ཆེབ། (Ngolachewa), བྲ་སེར་སངས་སྟེན། (Thrasersangken), མཚེལ་མ་འདྲ་བ། (Chelmadrawa), འཇའ་ཚོན་འདྲ་བ། (Jatshendrawa), ཚེག་སྐྱ་ཡལ་བ། (Tsheg Dra Yelwa), བནྟན་པ། (Tenpa), རྟོན་པ། (Goepa), གཤོག་བནྟན། (Sog Ten) and ཡལ་བུལ་བ། (Yel Bulwa).

The details of comparison of tremas and sediments is shown in [Table 2](#). In the comparison of tremas, there were no differences in སྐབ་པ། (Sapa), མཐུག་པ། (Thukpa), རྩི་མ་འབྲུག། (Langzha) and དུམ་བུར་ཆད་པ། (Domburchewa).

In the comparison of sediments, there were no difference in སྐུ་ཚེ་འདྲ་བ། (Putse-drawa), སྐྱིན་འདྲ་བ། (Tren-drawa), བྱེ་མ་འདྲ་བ། (Jema-drawa), མཐུག་པ། (Thukpa), གཟུག་གཤུབ་པ། (Sumgacham), བར་གནས། (Barnepa), འོག་གནས། (Wognepa), རོ་ཤི་འདྲ་བ། (Zhoshedrawa), སྐབ་པ། (Sapa), སྐུ་འདྲ་བ། (Pudrawa) and བལ་འདྲེན་ཚུམ་ཚུར། (Baldap chuchur).

**DISCUSSION**

This study demonstrates that the majority of the characteristics of urine specimens artificially heated to body temperature were similar to that at physiological state. This study was done to assess if



**Figure 5.** (a) Observation of urine colour and bubbles in a ceramic bowl with white background. (b) A beaker of urine that was heated to 37 °C

ནད་པའི་དྲི་ཚུབ་རྟག་དཔྱད་འབྲི་ཤོག

སྤྲོད་ཁང་གི་མིང།		ལྗང་ཚོས།								
ནད་པའི་མིང།		ལོ།		ལོ།		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		
ཁ་བྱང།		གསལ་པ།		<input type="checkbox"/>		རྒྱུ་ལུས།				
ཚན་དེའི་དུས་				དད་ཡལ་དུས་			གྲངས་འདུས་			
མདོག།	ལྡངས།	དྲི།	མོ་ཉོག།	ཀྱུ་ཡ།	ལྷིས་མ།	ལྷོག་དུས།	ལྷོག་ཚུལ།	ལོག་རྒྱུ།		
ལྷོ།	ཆེ།	དྲི་ཆེ།	ལྷོ་ལ་ཆེ་བ།	སྤྱ་འདྲ་བ།	སྤྲེལ་བ།	སྤྲེལ་མ་ཡལ་བ་ ལྷོག་པ།	མཐའ་ནས་ལྷོག་པ།	སྤྲེལ་བ།		
ཤིང།	རྒྱུང།	དྲི་རྒྱུང།	སྤྲེལ་མ་ལ་ལྷོག།	ལལ་འདབ་རྒྱུ་རྒྱུར།	མཐུག་པ།	ཡལ་རྒྱུ་ལྷོག་པ།	གཉིས་ནས་ལྷོག་པ།	ཉ་ཅང་སྤྲེལ་བ།		
དཀར།	ཡུན་རིང།	གཡའ་དྲི།	མཆིལ་མ་འདྲ་བ།	སྤྱ་ཚེ་འདྲ་བ།	ལྡངས་བཞག།	ཡལ་ལྷོག་མཚུངས།	མཐའ་ནས་དུས་སྤྲེལ་བ།	སྤྲེལ་བ།		
དམར།	ཡུན་ལྷང།	གསུང་དྲི།	དམར་བ།	སྤྲིན་འདྲ།	དུས་བྱུར་ཆད་པ།		སྤྲོན་དུ་ལྷོག་པ།	ཉ་ཅང་སྤྲེལ་བ།		
རྒྱ་བཤམ།	རེས་ཆེ།	ཤིག་དྲི།	འཇའ་ཚོན་འདྲ་བ།	རྟག་འདྲ།	ལྷིས་མེད་པ།		མི་ལྷོག་པ།	འོ་ལྷོག་པ།		
སྤྲོ་ལྷོག་པ།	རེས་རྒྱུང།	ཆོལ་དྲི།	སྤྲོ་ལ་ལྷོག་པ་ གཉིས་འདྲ།	ལྷོ་བ་འདྲ་བ།				དད་པ།		
སྤྲོ་ཤིང།		ལྷོག་དྲི།	ཚོག་སྤྲོ་ཡལ་བ།	སྤྲོ་བཞག་པ།						
སྤྲོ་སྤྲོ།		ལྷོག་དྲི།	བརྟན་པ།	བར་གནས།						
ཤིང་སྤྲོ།		ལལ་ལོ་འདྲི་མ།	ལོ་དཔ།	འོག་གནས།						
སྤྲོ་དམར།		རྟག་དྲི།	གསོག་བརྟན།	ཞོ་ཤི་འདྲ་བ།						
དམར་ཤིང།		ཀོ་སྤལ་དྲི།	ལྷོ་བ་ལྷོ་འདྲ་བ།	མཐུག་པ།						
དཀར་དམར།		ཐམ་དྲི།	ཚོག་སྤྲོ་མེད་པ།	སྤྲེལ་བ།						
མར་ནག།			ཡལ་བུལ་བ།	གསུམ་གཞུབ།						
དམར་ཤེས་ཆེ་བ།										
ཤིང་ཤེས་ཆེ་བ།										
འཇའ་ཚོན།										
ནག།										
རྒྱ་བ།										
སྤྲོ་ཤིང་གཉིས་སྤྲོ།										
དམར་སྤྲོ།										
མདོག་ལྷོག་འདྲ་བ།	དམར་གསོ།									
སྤྲོ་ཚོན་ལྷོ་འདྲ་བ།										
རྒྱུ་ཚད་འདྲ་བ།										
འོ་མ་ཤི་འདྲ་བ།										
མཆིལ་ཆད་འདྲ་བ།	དྲི་ཚུབ་རྟག་ཞིབ་འཇོ་དཔོན།									

Figure 6. Bhutan Urinalysis Report Form, 2014

**Table 1.** Comparison of colour, odour, steam and bubbles of urine specimens at physiological state (body temperature) and in specimens artificially heated to body temperature in Bhutan, 2021 – 2022 (n = 91)

Urine characteristics	Urine specimen at physiological state		Urine specimen artificially heated to body temperature		p value
	n	%	n	%	
<b>མདོག། (Colour)</b>					
སྟོབ། (Ngowa)	4	4.40	4	4.40	1.00
དཀར། (Kar)	6	6.59	6	6.59	1.00
ཤིང། (Ser)	14	15.38	8	8.79	0.256
སྟོ་ཤིང། (Ngoser)	14	15.38	11	12.09	0.667
སྟོ་སྐྱ། (Ngocha)	5	5.49	7	7.69	0.765
དམར་ཤིང། (Marser)	18	19.78	14	15.38	0.559
དམར་ཤམ་ཆེབ། (Marshechewa)	1	1.10	9	8.89	0.023
ཤིང་ཤམ་ཆེབ། (Sershechewa)	11	12.09	20	21.98	0.015
སྟོ་དཀར། (Ngokar)	4	4.40	2	2.20	0.678
Others (ཤིང་སྐྱ། སྟོ་དམར། རྒྱ་ཤེལ། དཀར་ཤིང། དམར་སྐྱ། དམར། དམར་ནག།)	14	15.38	10	10.09	0.511
<b>རི་མ། (Odour)</b>					
རི་ཆེབ། (Drechewa)	49	53.85	40	43.96	0.236
རི་རྩུང་བ། (Drechungwa)	38	41.76	46	50.55	0.298
Others (གསུང་རི། ཟམ་རི།)	4	4.40	5	5.50	1.000
<b>སྐྱངས་པ། (Steam)</b>					
སྐྱངས་ཆེ། (Langchewa)	13	14.29	8	8.79	0.353
སྐྱངས་རྩུང། (Langchungwa)	74	81.32	79	86.81	0.418
Others (རེས་ཆེ་རེས་རྩུང། ཡུན་ལྷང།)	4	4.40	4	4.40	1.000
<b>ལྗེ་བ། (Bubbles)*</b>					
སྟོ་ལ་ཆེབ། (Ngolachewa)	45	49.45	53	58.24	0.298
ཕྱ་ཤིང་མངས་སྐྱེན། (Thrasersangken)	59	64.83	63	69.23	0.636
མཆིལ་མ་འདྲ་བ། (Chelmadrawa)	26	28.57	23	25.27	0.738
འཇའ་ཚོན་འདྲ་བ། (Jatshendrawa)	3	3.29	3	3.29	1.000
ཚོག་སྐྱ་ཡལ་བ། (Tsheg Dra Yelwa)	58	63.73	55	60.43	0.760
བརྟན་པ། (Tenpa)	15	16.48	11	12.08	0.525
གོད་པ། (Goepa)	15	16.48	11	12.08	0.525
གཤོག་བརྟན། (Sog Ten)	1	1.09	1	1.09	1.000
ཡལ་བུལ་བ། (Yel Bulwa)	8	8.79	7	7.69	1.000
དམར་བ། ཐུག་ཚོན་ཁམ་གཏོར་འདྲ། ཐུར་བུར་འོང་བ། ཚོག་སྐྱ་མེད་པ།	0	-	0	-	

\*Multiple responses allowed

artificial heating of urine specimens had any untoward alteration of its characteristics. The findings from this study support the practice of artificial heating of urine specimens aligning with the methodology utilized by Sangay Gyamtsho [10].

The comparison between physiological and artificially heated urine samples showed that most cloudiness and sediment characteristics remain consistent across both methods. The thick and thin sediments in urine play a crucial role in disease diagnosis was said by Yothok Yoenten Gonpo, “མུམ་རེས་ཇི་ལྟར་འདུག་ཀྱང་སུང་། ཀླུ་ལ་མཐུག་ན་ཚེ་བ་དང་། ཀླུ་ལ་སྐབ་ན་བྲང་བ་ཡིན། ། In addition to the eight clinical characteristics, the key factor in analysis of urine is the sediment.” According to his teaching, thick sediments in the urine point to heat-related diseases, while thin sediments indicate cold-related conditions [4, 11].

No significant disparities were detected across all

parameters concerning frothiness and sediments between the two methods. This finding aligns with the statement “རང་ལམ་དུས་སུ་ཀླུ་ལ་སྐབ་མ་བརྟན།” which describes that frothiness and sediments are typically observed in the lukewarm stage, where temperature variation is minimal across both urine samples [12].

According to the Subsequent Tantra, the presence of thick and thin concentration frothiness layers on the urine surface suggests hot and cold disorders, respectively [13]. Among the five frothiness specimens analysed, there was no turnover observed in the “*Trema thukpa*/Very thick frothiness” and “*Tremen*/No frothiness” categories. This lack of turnover indicates that there were no extreme patterns of hot and cold conditions among the participants in this study. The *Sowa Rigpa* phrase “སྐྱིལ་མ་སྐབ་ན་བྲང་བ་ལྟག་ན་ཚེ” highlights the connection between urine frothiness and the body’s internal heat. Thick frothiness in the urine

**Table 2.** Comparison of *trema* and sediments of urine specimens at physiological state (body temperature) and in specimens artificially heated to body temperature in Bhutan, 2021 – 2022 (n = 91)

Urine characteristics	Urine specimen at physiological state		Urine specimen artificially heated to body temperature		p value
	n	%	n	%	
<b>སྐྱིལ་མ། (<i>Trema</i>)</b>					
སྐབ་ས། ( <i>Sapa</i> )	28	30.77	27	29.67	1.00
མཐུག་ས། ( <i>Thukpa</i> )	62	68.13	64	70.33	0.872
ལྷངས་བཞག། ( <i>Langzha</i> )	0	-	0	-	-
དུས་སུར་ཆད་ས། ( <i>Domburchewa</i> )	1	1.10	0	-	-
<b>ཀླུ་ལ། (<i>Sediments</i>)*</b>					
སྤྲུ་ཅེ་འདྲ་བ། ( <i>Putse-drawa</i> )	12	13.19	10	10.99	0.820
སྤྲུ་ན་འདྲ་བ། ( <i>Tren-drawa</i> )	9	9.89	15	16.48	0.273
བྱེ་མ་འདྲ་བ། ( <i>Jema-drawa</i> )	52	57.14	60	65.93	0.286
མཐུག་ས། ( <i>Thukpa</i> )	47	51.65	48	52.75	1.000
གསུམ་གཟུབ་ས། ( <i>Sumgacham</i> )	34	37.36	29	31.87	0.533
བར་གནས། ( <i>Barnepa</i> )	1	1.10	4	4.40	0.364
འོག་གནས། ( <i>Wognepa</i> )	22	24.18	29	31.87	0.322
ཞོ་ཤི་འདྲ་བ། ( <i>Zhoshedrawa</i> )	10	10.9	8	8.79	0.804
སྐབ་ས། ( <i>Sapa</i> )	28	30.77	31	34.77	0.751
སྤྲུ་འདྲ་བ། ( <i>Pudrawa</i> )	34	37.36	32	35.16	0.877
བལ་འདབ་ཚུལ་ས། ( <i>Baldap chuchur</i> )	16	17.58	16	17.58	1.000
རྣག་འདྲ་བ། རྣོང་གནས།	0	-	0	-	-

\*Multiple responses allowed



suggests an excess of heat in the body, which causes the body's fat to melt and appear as oil-like froth in the urine [14]. On the other hand, a lack of frothiness indicates a cold-related condition that reduces the body's inner heat, leading to froth-free urine [15].

Anecdotal evidence also suggests that the lack of frothiness in urine nowadays may be attributed to people consuming less oil in their diets. Tumours can also be diagnosed through the observation of urine frothiness. If cracks are seen within the froth, it may indicate the presence of a tumour. Additionally, a tumour can be suspected if small, fish-eye-like bubbles are observed in the middle of the urine specimen [16].

In *Sowa Rigpa*, patients are advised to follow specific dietary and behavioural restrictions the day before providing a urine sample. This may be a potential influence on the content of the urine specimen and its properties. Further chemical analysis of the impact of dietary and behavioural restrictions on urine specimens is recommended to be studied.

This study is the first of its kind conducted in the country. This study standardizes the use of BASUP chart 2021 in the assessment of colour or urine specimens. However, the primary limitation of the study is all the nine parameters of the urine characteristics in the physiological stage could not be compared in an artificially heated stage. Future studies may be done in larger sample sizes with additional assessment of physicochemical characteristics to further substantiate these findings.

## CONCLUSION

Urine characteristics of colour, odour, steam, bubbles, sediment, and frothiness were consistent between urine samples in the physiological state and those subjected to artificial heating. However, there were differences in colour of *Marshchecha* and *Sershechewa* in the two methods of analyses. Future studies in larger sample sizes and detailed physicochemical characterization of urine specimens are recommended.

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### Declarations

**Ethics approval and consent to participate.**

Ethics approval for the study was obtained from Research Ethical Board of Health, Ministry of Health, Royal Government of Bhutan (REBH/approval/2020/10053). Administrative clearance was obtained from the Policy and Planning Division, Ministry of Health and from the respective Medical Superintendents of the hospitals. Informed consent was taken from the study participants prior to specimen collection.

### Consent for publication

Not applicable

### Competing interests

KU, TG, S Tenzin and KT are members of the editorial board of this journal. They were blinded during the peer review process of this article.

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### Availability of data materials

The dataset is available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

### Author contributions

Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal analysis, Investigation, Resource: ND, DW, S Thinley, TG, S Tenzin, KT

Writing - Original Draft, Writing - Review & Editing: KU, TG

Formal analysis, Investigation, Data Curation: DW, S Tenzin

Methodology, Resources, Supervision: TG, S Tenzin, KT

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