The Treasure Vase (bumpa) represents the contents of Buddhist teachings and stands for long life and prosperity.

For centuries, Bhutan has been known in the eastern Himalayas as the “Land of Medicinal Plants.” An extensive pharmacopoeia describes many treatments made from plant, animal, and mineral substances found in Bhutan.

Indian Ayurvedic and traditional Chinese medicine have influenced Bhutanese medicine, which is similar to traditional Tibetan medicine. Like most of Bhutanese life and culture, the “science of treatment” is deeply rooted in Buddhist teachings.

To reach a diagnosis, doctors interview patients, take their pulses, and examine their tongues and urine. The Bhutanese believe that sickness results from imbalances caused by bad food, improper nutrition, weather, evil spirits, unhealthy lifestyles, and other things harmful to the body. Remedies combine dietary changes with medicinal supplements and spiritual exercises.

In 1979, a traditional medical hospital with research and laboratory facilities was opened in Thimphu. Its health practitioners conduct training projects and research studies. Today, the Bhutanese are exploring combinations of traditional and Western medicine.