



MINISTRY OF HEALTH
SINGAPORE

MH 34:24/8

MOH Circular No. 07/2023

16 February 2023

To all registered TCM practitioners

UPDATED GUIDANCE ON THE PROVISION OF TCM SERVICES AND SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR TCM SERVICE PROVIDERS WITH STEPPING DOWN TO DORSCON GREEN

On 9 February 2023, the Multi-Ministry Taskforce announced the stepping down to DORSCON green as Singapore takes a further step towards living with COVID-19. **This Circular highlights the updated guidance on the provision of TCM services and Safe Management Measures (SMMs) following this announcement, with immediate effect.** This circular supersedes the earlier guidelines in MOH Circular No. 41/2022, dated 4 Apr 2022.

PROVISION OF TCM SERVICES FOR PATIENTS WITH MILD SYMPTOMS OF ACUTE RESPIRATORY INFECTION (ARI)

2. As we step down to DORSCON green, patients with mild symptoms of acute respiratory infection (ARI) who wish to be clinically managed by TCM service providers / TCM practitioners (TCMPs) **will not be required** to present at TCM clinic with a self-administered negative Antigen Rapid Test (ART) result obtained prior to the visit.
3. However, we still need to take precautionary measures for the healthcare sector where vulnerable individuals may need to access services, and where the risk of infection could be compounded by large crowds and prolonged close contact with others who might be infected.
4. TCM clinics should continue to segregate ARI patients from other non-ARI patients seeking TCM consultation and treatment, and advise them to self-isolate at home as far as possible. In addition, TCMPs should advise them to monitor their condition and visit a GP clinic for management, if their ARI symptoms worsen and/or test ART positive.



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UPDATED SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR TCM SERVICE PROVIDERS

5. Even as we step down to DORSCON green, compliance to mask-wearing requirement (per MOH circular 06/2023 dated 14 Feb 2023) and relevant healthcare protocols and infection prevention and control measures must continue to be implemented for all **staff, patients, caregivers, visitors, students and vendors regardless of their COVID-19 vaccination status**, including:

- a. **Mask-wearing for all individuals who are six years old and above shall be required during face-to-face patient interaction or care delivery and/or at patient-facing areas (including waiting areas) of indoor premises of all TCM clinics** where the risk of infection and transmission is assessed to be higher, except when they are eating, drinking or consuming medication.
- b. Masks must be put on again once they are no longer engaging in any of the above activities.
- c. Individuals are strongly encouraged to exercise social responsibility and maintain an appropriate safe distance from others when unmasking. Mask-wearing requirement also applies for students who are on attachment, internships, research or clinical training at TCM clinics.
- d. Surgical masks must be worn by TCMPs, clinic staff and students. Patients, caregivers, visitors and vendors must wear minimally a reusable mask;
- e. Patients and caregivers with ARI symptoms are strongly encouraged to wear their masks even if they are waiting at an outdoor area of the TCM clinic.
- f. To wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or applying at least 60% alcohol-based disinfection rubs before entry;
- g. Conduct regular cleaning of facilities and equipment, and surfaces with patient contact e.g. treatment couch/bed and pulse pillow etc. must be disinfected after each patient.

6. A list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) is provided in [Annex A](#) for reference.

7. The above is for compliance, please. For enquires and clarifications on the guidelines outlined in this Circular, please email gobiz_healthcare@moh.gov.sg. Thank you.



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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) ON PROVISION OF TCM SERVICES AND SAFE MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR TCM SERVICE PROVIDERS WITH STEPPING DOWN TO DORSCON GREEN

1. Are patients with mild ARI symptoms required to produce a negative ART result prior to their visit to the TCM clinic?

Patients with mild ARI symptoms will not be required to present at TCM clinic with a self-administered negative Antigen Rapid Test (ART) result obtained prior to the visit. With vaccination, most COVID-19 infections tend to be mild, with uneventful recoveries. Hence, testing is no longer routinely required for every patient with ARI symptoms, although TCMPs should encourage ARI patients to perform a self-test.

However, for patients who are medically vulnerable and would benefit from early COVID-19 diagnosis and treatment, TCMPs should strongly encourage these individuals to be tested before their visit to TCM clinics.

In addition, patients with travel history in the 7 days prior to the onset of ARI symptoms are also recommended to self-test before their visit to the TCM clinic.

2. What should I do if an ARI patient presents with a positive ART result?

For ARI patients with mild symptoms, they should stay at home until symptoms resolve. If they wish to be clinically managed at the TCM clinic, TCM service providers and/or TCMPs must assess whether the patients can be managed at the TCM clinic.

Medically vulnerable persons (i.e. seniors and those with chronic medical conditions) are at risk of poorer clinical outcomes in the event of COVID-19 infection, hence while keeping with advisories applicable to the general population, greater precautions should be taken for such individuals, including:

- a. Persons who are aged 60 and above¹;
- b. Patients who are immunocompromised or have concurrent medical conditions such as obesity (e.g. adults with BMI ≥ 30), hypertension, diabetes, chronic heart and lung diseases, kidney diseases on dialysis, hypercoagulable states, cancer, or patients on drugs that cause immunosuppression;

¹ While persons of age 60 and above are most susceptible to poorer clinical outcomes in the event of a COVID-19 infection, persons aged between 50-60 years old are also considered to be at higher risk of developing severe disease from COVID-19 infection, relative to younger age groups.



- c. Pregnant women;
- d. Persons with Down's syndrome.

Hence for medically vulnerable ARI patients, or persons with severe, prolonged or worsening ARI symptoms, TCMPs should advise these patients to visit a GP clinic for management.

3. Why do I still need to segregate ARI patients from other non-ARI patients since there is no need for ART tests prior to entry?

To prevent the spread of other influenza-like infections e.g. seasonal flu and common cold, TCM clinics should place these patients in a separate area while waiting to consult the TCMP. You may wish to refer to the General Advisory on Good Clinical Practice and Infection Control on TCM Practice, Section 3.2 TCM Clinic Workflow during Pandemic, and customise the guide to fit the physical constraints and layout of your TCM clinic.

4. Can I choose not to see patients with ARI symptoms, even if they produce a negative ART result?

TCM service providers / TCMPs may choose to continue to refer all patients with ARI symptoms to GP clinics.

5. Why is there a need for mask-wearing requirement at patient-facing areas (including waiting areas) of indoor premises of TCM clinics when the legal requirement for mask-wearing in indoor settings have been eased?

Face-to-face patient interaction or care delivery and/or at patient-facing areas (including waiting areas) of indoor premises of TCM clinics will continue to require mask-wearing as these premises are where vulnerable persons can access TCM services. The risk of infection is compounded by large crowds and prolonged close contact with others who might be infected.

Hence, to protect the vulnerable persons seeking and receiving care, mask wearing will continue to be required in patient-facing areas (including waiting areas) or when there is interaction with patients at TCM clinics.

6. Can I take off my mask when I am waiting at the outdoor area of the TCM clinic?

You may remove your mask while waiting at the outdoor area of the TCM clinic. However, patients and caregivers with ARI symptoms are strongly encouraged to keep their masks on even at outdoor areas.



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7. What are the measures that employers may impose for employees who do not want to comply with the mask-wearing requirements?

Employers can consider redeploying them to suitable jobs which can be done from home or at premises where mask-wearing is not required, place them on no pay leave or, as a last resort, employers may exercise their right to contractually terminate employment if the employees do not comply with the mask-wearing requirement.

As far as possible, employers should strongly encourage their staff to comply with the mask-wearing requirement. Measures may be taken against employers who do not adhere to the mask-wearing requirement and allow their staff to work onsite without wearing a mask.

8. If I wish to purchase retail items at a TCM medical hall, will I be required to wear a mask?

For medical halls with retail section at patient-facing premises (e.g. retail section shares the same area as patient waiting area, or registered TCMPs providing over-the-counter consultation), individuals making purchases at the retail section are required to wear masks. This is to protect the vulnerable customers when patients seek TCM consultation and treatment at these medical halls.

However, if the retail section of the medical hall does not share the same area as patient-facing premises, individuals making retail purchases at this retail section will not be required to wear masks.



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致：中医注册执业者

随疾病暴发应对系统（DORSCON）级别下调到绿色，更新中医服务提供者给予中医服务及安全管理措施的指导原则

随着新加坡与2019冠状病毒疾病（COVID-19）共存更迈进一步，政府跨部门工作小组于2023年2月9日宣布我国疾病暴发应对系统（DORSCON）级别将下调到绿色。此通告重点叙述中医服务提供者给予中医服务和安全管理措施的最新原则，并从即日起生效。此通告将取代卫生部于2022年4月4日发布的41/2022通告的指导原则。

为患有轻微急性呼吸道感染（ARI）症状的病人提供中医服务

2. 随着我国 DORSCON 级别转绿，出现轻微急性呼吸道感染（ARI）症状并希望到中医诊所求诊的病人，不需要在到诊所前出示自行抗原快速检测（ART）阴性结果。
3. 虽然如此，我们仍需要对医疗保健领域采取防范措施。这是因为脆弱群体会在该场所寻求医疗护理服务，而他们的感染风险可能因为人群拥挤和与其他可能受感染的病人长时间接触而加剧。
4. 中医诊所应该继续将患有急性呼吸道感染的病人与其他寻求中医诊疗的非急性呼吸道感染病人进行分离，并劝请他们尽可能在家自行隔离。此外，中医师应该建议病人监测自己的病情，如果急性呼吸道感染症状恶化和（或）抗原快速检测呈阳性，应该前往西医诊所进行管理。

更新中医服务提供者安全管理措施

5. 即使我国 DORSCON 级别下调到绿色，所有员工、病人、看护者、访客、学生和供应商等，无论是否已接种 COVID-19 疫苗，都必须遵守有关戴口罩的规定（根据卫生部2023年2月14日06/2023通告）以及相关的医疗方案和感染预防与控制措施，包括：



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- a. 凡是六岁及以上的人士在与病人面对面交流或提供护理服务时，以及/或在所有中医诊所的室内场所面对病人的地方（包括等候区），都必须戴口罩。因为这些地方的感染和传播风险较高，除非他们在进食、饮水或服药。
- b. 当他们不再从事上述任何活动时，必须重新戴上口罩。
- c. 当摘下口罩时，强烈鼓励大家履行社会责任与其他人保持适当的安全距离。实习、跟诊、进行科研或临床培训的学生也必须遵守该规定。
- d. 中医师、诊所员工和学生必须穿戴一次性的手术口罩；病人、看护者、访客和供应商至少要穿戴可重复使用性口罩。
- e. 强烈鼓励患有急性呼吸道感染症状的病人和看护者即使在中医诊所的户外区等候时也戴上口罩。
- f. 在进入场所前，访客需用肥皂和清水洗手至少20秒，或使用含有至少60%的酒精消毒搓手液。
- g. 定期清洗设施和设备，以及与病人接触的表面，例如诊疗床、脉枕等，必须在每位病人使用后进行消毒。

6. 附件 A 列出了一些常见问答（FAQs），以供参考。

7. 请遵守以上的指导原则。若对此通告有任何疑问，请发送电邮至 gobiz_healthcare@moh.gov.sg。谢谢。



卫生部医药总监
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以上文件以英语原文为准



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关于中医服务提供者给予中医服务及安全管理措施的常见问答（FAQs）

1. 患有轻微急性呼吸道感染（ARI）症状的病人是否需要在就诊前出示抗原快速检测（ART）阴性结果？

患有轻微 ARI 症状的病人无需在到访中医诊所就诊前出示自行抗原快速检测（ART）阴性结果。通过接种疫苗，大多数 COVID-19 感染往往症状轻微，病情康复顺利。因此，我们不再需要对每个患有 ARI 症状的病人进行检测，但是中医师可以鼓励病人自行检测。

然而，对于能从尽早获得 COVID-19 诊断和治疗受益的脆弱群体，中医师应强烈鼓励这些人群在到访中医诊所前进行自行抗原快速检测。

此外，也建议在 ARI 症状出现前的 7 天内有旅行史的病人，在到访中医诊所就诊前进行自我检测。

2. 如果患有急性呼吸道感染的病人的 ART 结果呈阳性，我应该怎么做？

出现患有轻微急性呼吸道感染症状的病人，应在家中自我隔离直到症状缓解。如果希望到中医诊所就诊，中医服务提供者和/或中医师必须评估病人是否适合在中医诊所接受中医诊疗。

感染 COVID-19 的脆弱群体（即老年人和患有慢性疾病的人士）有可能出现较差的临床预后。因此在实施适用于普遍国人指导原则的同时，应对这些脆弱群体采取更多的预防措施，包括：

- a. 60 岁及以上的人士¹；
- b. 免疫功能低下或有并发症的病人，例如肥胖症（如 BMI ≥ 30 的成年人）、高血压、糖尿病、慢性心肺疾病、需透析的肾病、高凝状态、癌症或服用免疫抑制药物的病人；
- c. 孕妇；
- d. 患有唐氏综合症的人士。

因此，对于患有急性呼吸道感的脆弱群体，或是出现严重、长期或持续恶化 ARI 症状的病人，中医师应建议他们到西医诊所求诊。

¹ 虽然 60 岁及以上的人士在感染 COVID-19 时最容易出现较差的临床预后，但相对于较年轻人群，50-60 岁的人士也因感染 COVID-19 而患上严重疾病的风险较高。



3. 既然在就诊前无需出示 ART 结果，为什么我还需要将患有急性呼吸道感染的病人与其他病人进行隔离？

为了避免其他类似流感的感染，如季节性流感和普通感冒的传播，中医诊所应该把急性呼吸道感染的病人与其他病人的等待区分开。您可参考《中医行业的良好临床实践与传染控制的一般咨询》第 3.2 节，了解大流行病期间中医诊所应采纳的工作流程，并依照您的诊所布局和局限，做出适当调整。

4. 即使患有急性呼吸道感染的病人抗原快速检测阴性，我可否选择不为他们提供诊疗？

中医服务提供者/中医师可以选择继续将患有急性呼吸道感染的病人转诊到西医诊所求诊。

5. 为什么放宽了室内戴口罩的法律规定，但在中医诊所室内面对病人的地方（包括等候区）仍需要继续戴口罩？

与病人面对面交流或提供护理服务时，以及/或在中医诊所的室内场所面对病人的地方（包括等候区）都必须戴口罩，因为这些是脆弱群体接受中医药治疗的场所。脆弱群体的感染风险可能因为人群拥挤和与其他可能受感染的病人长时间接触而加剧。

因此，为了保护接受中医治疗的脆弱群体，在中医诊所面对病人的地方（包括等候区）或与病人面对面交流时将继续规定戴口罩。

6. 在中医诊所的户外区等候时，我可以摘下口罩吗？

您可以在中医诊所的户外区等候时摘下口罩。但强烈鼓励出现急性呼吸道感染症状的病人和陪同的看护者即使在户外区，也继续戴上口罩。

7. 如果员工不愿意遵守戴口罩规定，雇主可以采取什么措施？

雇主可以考虑调派员工担任合适的工作，这些工作可在家中或在无须戴口罩的地方进行，亦可安排他们申请无薪假期。如果员工不遵守戴口罩规定时，作为最后手段，雇主可行使合约全力，终止雇用他们。

雇主应该尽可能强烈鼓励员工遵守戴口罩规定。如果雇主不遵守戴口罩规定，并允许员工在没有戴口罩的情况下在中医诊所工作，当局可能会对雇主采取措施。



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8. 如果我想在中药行购买零售物品，我是否需要戴口罩？

对于中药行在面向病人的地方设有零售区（例如零售区和病人等候区是共用的，或注册中医师在中药行柜台提供诊疗服务），在零售区购物的人都必须戴上口罩。这是为了在病人到中药行寻求中医治疗时，保护脆弱群体。

但是，如果中药行的零售区和面向病人的地方不是共用的，在该零售区购物的人无需戴上口罩。



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