

Student

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Moxibustion

Do you know about Moxibustion (Moxa)? Moxa is a type of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). It involves burning moxa, a cone or stick made of ground mugwort leaves, on or near your body's meridians and acupuncture points. The English term "moxibustion" was derived from the Japanese "mogusa" (moxa). (1) When we translate "Acupuncturist" in Chinese or Japanese, it is written 针灸师; the first letter is Acupuncture, the middle letter is Moxibustion and last letter is a master or teacher. It is very rare to use only "Acupuncture" in Chinese or Japanese. "Acupuncture and Moxibustion" are always together. Moxa is respected to practice with licensed practitioners in Japan. However, moxibustion is not well-known technique in North America. Also, moxibustion modality is not regulated in Canada (2021). It leads to practice moxibustion in our home for family health, if you aware of burn the skin and ventilation. The best part of Moxa treatment is that it is extremely affordable, under \$20 for a dozen sticks in a box. Moxa treatments effects all disease and syndromes, even unknown pandemic disease or breech baby presentation. Additionally, it prevents to become diseases.

TCM practitioners believe that the resulting heat helps stimulate these points and improves the flow of qi (energy) in the body. The history is older than acupuncture, over two thousand and couple hundred years. According to the records of Chapter 12 of Plain Questions (Chinese ancient medical book): "The treatment with bian stone needle was originated in the east coast of China where the inhabitants lived on fishery, and moxibustion was originated in the north where the people subsisted on animal husbandry. Because it was cold and windy in the northern areas, people had to warm themselves by fire. Living in camps and subsisting on milk, they easily suffered from abdominal pain and distension by cold, suitable to be treated by heat. Through long-term accumulation of experiences, moxibustion therapy and hot compression were created." (2) Ancient Chinese believed that their global idea of human's life is with heat; "born with fire, gradually losing it, finally we become cold and finish our lives". They invented the moxibustion to prevent losing the heat of life energy for longevity.

Later on, the Tang Dynasty (618–690, 705–907), several schools described about moxibustion for special treatments of tuberculosis and emergencies. The British charity group, Moxafrica dedicated to investigate the use of moxibustion therapy for the treatment of tuberculosis, particularly drug-resistant tuberculosis (MRD-TB), in resource-poor environments since 2008. (8) Currently it is estimated that 600,000 new cases of MRD-TB are occurring each year, the fatality rate is roughly a 40%. Furthermore, a recent review on global antimicrobial resistance predicted that 75 million lives will have been prematurely lost just to this drug-resistant part of the pandemic by 2050, with 2.5 million a year then dying just from MRD-TB. (9) In other words, they are about one third of world population are suffering from MRD-TB and 5000 people die every day. Additionally, many people are suffering from AIDS in Africa as well. In Moxafrica's reports, moxa therapy works strongly boost the patient's immunity for treating MRD-TB and AIDS. It shows 30% more than using only medications groups, turns to be negative in 6 months. Interestingly, moxa therapy affects not only treating the patients, but also preventing from

infections of MRD-TB and AIDS viruses. “Moxibustion saves the world”, and “Turn the world over” in near future, the report says.

There is well-know about moxibustion for breech presentation. It must start the moxibustion treatments at 33 weeks' gestation, repeated twice daily for 15 minutes. In a study by Cardini et al. published in JAMA in 1998, 75.4% of babies were turned into a cephalic presentation (head down, normal position for birth) by 35 weeks. (4) From a Western medical perspective, the mechanism of action is unknown, the treatment for pregnancy women appears to be entirely safe, easily administered option and is applied externally only.

The acupuncture students are taught that moxa is contraindication for patients with any heat patterns. In Chinese classic medical book of Huang Di Nei jing Su Wen, Chapter 60, was written about moxa treatment for cold conditions for each acupuncture points. Also, “When fever and chills are caused by food poisoning or stomach flu that do not respond to moxibustion treatment, the illness is due to an excess of heat pathogen. In this case acupuncture the shu/stream points on the overheated channel at frequent intervals in order to disperse the pathogen and rectify the imbalance”. (3) In recent research, it showed the moxa can treat the heat syndrome as well. The effects are antipyretic and anti-infective. Moxa regulates on peripheral metabolism of humoral factors, the level of central neurotransmitter. (5) The research still continues presently. However, according to the basic TCM theory of Yin and Yang, “opposite yet complementary energies”. Yang contains Yin always; Yin contains Yang as well. Moxa the nature is warm and cool taste containing, I wrote in later paragraph. If this contraindication became disappearing, moxa’s usage will be easier.

Moxa was boomed for girls in 2013, Japan. They were called “Moxa girls”, gathering and enjoying moxa treatments with healthy Chinese herbal tea. They expected the moxa effects for their beauty, rejuvenation or relief from their daily stress. Moxa companies achieved 20 times more selling the moxa products for few years. It was surprised that one of popular products was moxa for facial. Moxa on facial is contraindication in TCM, however, the product is indirect to touch on the skin, additionally, low temperature with aroma. In traditional Japanese medicine, Moxa is said only not to do before or after hot bath. Otherwise, there is no caution.

The moxa material’s mugwort grow powerfully in desert, highland and cold places. Also, mugwort is edible, contains vitamin K; help to make blood and keep blood clean. The material of mugwort contains cineole (eucalyptol). Eucalyptol has a fresh mint-like smell and a spicy, cooling taste. (6) In TCM herbology, mugwort is called Ai Ye (艾叶). The nature is warm. The taste is bitter, acrid and aromatic. The actions are warming the channels, warms the womb, stops bleeding. Moxibustion is the warm sensation leads to sooth the qi and improves blood flow. Qi is the mother of Blood; Blood is the commander of Qi. Qi and Blood are inseparable. There are the words; “痛即不通”, “通即不痛” in TCM. First words mean, “Painful means blocking the blood flow”, Second words mean, “if blood flow is proper, no pain.”, therefore moxa heat treats the pain, from the point of view in TCM.

Modern research works of the moxibustion mechanism mainly relate to the thermal effects, radiation effects, and pharmacological actions of moxa. (10) The pharmacology effects are anti-inflammatory, analgesic, sedation and so on. The heat from mugwort leaves affects the skin, turned into protein denaturation. The immunity system recognizes it as foreign bodies, leading to the immunity system raises in the body. This system is very effective to cancer treatments, Immune system disorders, allergic

disease and so on. Experimental results showed that moxibustion thermal stimulation affects both shallow and deep tissues of the skin.

Sachiko Itaya, who is Moxafrica director; studied Acupuncture and Moxibustion in England, mentions English Acupuncturists do not use Moxa often for treatment same as other countries. As the background, she shows 3 reasons; there are not proper Moxa directors, Moxa research is not progressing compared to acupuncture research and there are few opportunities to know about Moxa.

This is Acupuncturist's big job to spread this great Moxa to help patients and to prevent being sick.

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(2) http://www.china.org.cn/archive/2006-10/27/content_1185663.htm

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(3) The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Medicine, : A New Translation of the Neijing Suwen with Commentary, Book by Maoshing Ni, CH60

(4) <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/medicine-and-dentistry/moxibustion>

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(5) <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1003525717300971>

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(6) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eucalyptol> Eucalyptol - Wikipedia

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(8) <https://www.moxafrica.org/> Moxafrica

(9) https://0ae0a1d7-a6c4-4056-b75e-67603ca9f194.filesusr.com/ugd/d850bb_b657c833914240688c6ddf3d6cc97dc7.pdf

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