

Moxa with cones

Direct moxa – scarring for asthma, gastro, etc.

### Indirect Moxa

Indirect Moxa refers to the method of using a buffer between the skin and the moxa cone. Various “buffers” are used, but most commonly you will see ginger, garlic, salt, and fu zi cakes.

#### Moxa on ginger

Indications:

- Expels cold
- releases exterior
- warms the interior
- stops vomiting.

Use indirect moxa on ginger for exterior syndrome and deficient cold syndrome, such as common cold, cough, wind damp Bi, vomiting, abdominal pain, and diarrhea. This gives the action of the point, of heat, and of the ginger. Ginger is also absorbed by skin in this way. Moxa is penetrating, pushes the action of the ginger into the body. Use it on Du 14 for cold/cough, LI 4, BL 12 or 13 – all of these release exterior and are related to Lung function.

Moxa with ginger is also good for wind/cold/damp in varying combinations and Bi syndromes. Includes arthritis and other problems. Usually do this on the locally affected areas.

For vomiting, abdominal pain and/or diarrhea due to cold retention, Yang deficiency of Spleen or Kidney: use points just above stomach, on abdomen, on middle back, on Stomach, Spleen or Kidney channels depending on the deficiency or cold retention area.

Method:

- cut ginger slice ¼ “ thickness
- puncture several holes in it so heat can penetrate through, the put moxa cone on it.

Size of cone: medium and large sizes.

How many cones? 3 to 7 cones or can burn until patient feels warm there, or until skin is moist, reddish.

#### Moxa on garlic

Garlic plus heat guides and penetrates the point upon which it is used also.

Indications:

- Removes toxins
- Kills germs.  
Garlic is a natural antibio.
- Treat early starge of sore, carbuncle, boil; insect bites, psoriasis, tuberculosis, scrofula, etc.

Method:

- cut garlic slice ¼ “ thickness
- puncture several holes in it so heat can penetrate through, the put moxa cone on it.  
Put it where the sore/bite is. Skin will absorb the juice and remove toxin. Great for ant bites, by the way.

This was a very common practice in China for tuberculosis. It was/is used on points related to Lungs, points to nourish Yin such as [Bladder 13](#), [Bladder 17](#), [Bladder 19](#) (Bladder 17 and 19 are called the “Four Flowers” which nourishes yin and blood to treat wasting that comes with TB). This method is also used for psoriasis at the local area affected.

### **Moxa with salt**

- Treats problems of the whole body, and is especially good for kids. Use on Ren 8 (umbilicus) – for the 1<sup>st</sup> 9 months you were fed thru this tube! Even after you are grown Qi is spread to the whole body through this portal. For adults this treats local digestive, urinary, and reproductive system disorders.
- Warms the interior
  - Good for abdominal pain and pain around umbilicus due to cold of either an excess or deficient nature (cold foods either by temperature or nature of food – more on that in Nutrition - can cause pain of abdomen)
  - Pain of hernia either caused by cold or of an acute onset nature.
  - Prolonged dysentery
  - Chronic diarrhea
  - Urinary retention (indicating chronic Kidney deficiency, prostate problems. Post surgical patients have this too, as surgery disturbs the local function). This also applies to patients with postpartum urinary retention.
- For yang collapse  
Signs include profuse sweating, cold extremities, hidden pulse. You could also use moxa by itself, but with salt is more effective. Now it is only used for severe yang deficiency. Not a convenient method basically, so modern method developed from this is a belt with a bag that can cover above abdomen so that the patient wears it. They can control the heat, turn on/off, etc. Similar effect.

Method:

Salt fills the belly button and the moxa cone goes on top of it. Dr Wu recommends making a paper cone to put into the belly button then filling that with salt – makes it easier to discard and keeps the grit out of the belly button.

This guides heat into skin better more than medicinal effect. On top of salt might have something else between cone/salt - keeps salt from jumping from the heat. Often you use ginger as the medium layer because it too has a warming effect. *Don't use garlic!* Moxa cone on top.

Other materials used also – depending on the problem. Like treats like principle – branch of cinnamon tree can go to limbs better than other parts because are more like limbs. White part of the green onion smashed and used for urinary retention.

### **Moxa with Fu Zi cake**

Warms kidney Yang. Also for yang defic expressed as impotence, premature ejac, yin type sore. Fu Zi is very hot/warm in nature, slightly toxic so you cook very long to reduce toxicity (cook til the tongue doesn't go numb when you touch a drop to it). Cake however is safe internally. Cake on the spot, burn moxa on it.

Yin type sore – long term, won't heal, isn't hot, paler color, little pain at local area. Not enough yang qi to heal the sore.

Many other materials you can use for moxa – black pepper, etc. – depending upon what you need to treat.

In clinic these methods are not that common due to lack of availability of materials.

### **Moxa with warming needle**

Warms and opens meridians, moves Qi and blood.

Needle in point, moxa cone on top, paper covering skin around needle. Must use a metal handle needle (duh). Depth should be deep enough that cone doesn't cause the needle to bend/drop. Can use premade cones or you can use a wad of moxa wool.

1. get qi sensation.
2. now warm needle.

This pushes the heat deeply into the body.

Indications: cold damp Bi with joint pain, numbness and cold sensation. Also for paralysis, muscle weakness and atrophy. Mainly used in local areas.

### **Other techniques**

Moxa Box. Container with holes in the bottom of the box. Put several moxa cones/sticks inside. Use where big box can be held – lower ab, back, places where strong heat is needed. Never on chest or upper back – heat in body rises up more so generally this is not necessary. If too much heat in upper body = palpitations, insomnia, irritability.

If there is qi deficiency, there is lack of heat. Qi is needed to gen heat.

Rush burning moxa – deng xin cao. Bit of rush soaked in an oil, heat the end, touch the burning end to the point (often on the top of the ear) which puts the fire out and leaves a little brown spot. Used to treat mumps. This is a rare treatment process.

Crude herb moxa – fresh herb to make a small blister on the point, later body will recover and give benefits like scarring moxa. Can be used for asthma – chronic asthma can = yang qi defic and phlegm retention deep inside that is hard to resolve. In hottest days when yang qi is stronger most asthma pts don't have symptoms due to yang boost from the environment. At this point is easiest to resolve phlegm deep inside body – july or august. Bl 13, 20, 43. 43 for general deficiency – good place for a moxa scar! For long term stimulation of the point. Usually repeat x3 in successive days.

### **Application of Moxa**

The moxa sensation – warm, slight burning pain. Sensation is of local skin, deep inside or along channel.

The process for moxa generally the order is similar to acupuncture order:

- ◆ Yang side of the body first, yin later  
Back (bladder channel) → abdomen.
- ◆ Upper part first (also yang), lower 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Head → body → 4 limbs
- ◆ Small cone first, then bigger cones  
Usually start with small/medium size – harder to control the tiny ones, big ones might generate too strong heat for patient.
- ◆ Fewer and smaller cones first, more later.  
Like acu, start with milder stim.

Ge Hong – a practitioner famous for moxa skills. In some schools think moxa tonifies, acu reduces the body because moxa warms, pushes herbals internal where acu does not. This is old school. Now moxa used less due to convenience, smoke issues, etc.

**Volume of moxa:**

In general, 10-15 min for moxa stick on each point or until skin turns pink or reddish.  
3-7 cones for each point or until skin turns pink/reddish. Some patients may require more time, some less. Stimulation intensity different by person and disease condition. Stronger and younger can tolerate more stimulation than a weaker/older person.

Upper excess with lower deficiency – liver yang rising upward. In that case can still do moxa, but do it in lower part of body, use less cones. Not too much heat introduced to body, so use little bitty size so you are stim point, but not adding heat.

Too much moxa on upper body, drink much water, eat nourishing foods. Use moxa on lower body to guide heat downward.

	Big cone, more units	Small cone, less units
constitution	Young men, strong,	Women, children, elder, weak
area	Low back, lower abdomen, thick skin and big muscle area	Head, chest, four limbs, thin skin and thin muscle area
disease	Yang collapse, severe cold syndrome with a long history	Wind cold damp Bi, upper excess with lower deficiency

**Precautions**

Explanation prior to treatment of expected sensation, possible blister/scar formation. Have patient sign an informed written consent. Be very clear and make sure they understand!

Position patient suitably – usually in a lying position. Moxa cone – be sure it won't drop on the table, esp if using knee points. You want the bottom of the cone flat so heat is going up thru top. Make sure when you are removing cone it doesn't go across the other body parts.

Especially be careful for places on side of body – have them lie so that heat goes up, bottom of cone is level.

Use cautiously in cases of Yang hyperactivity with yin defic, excess heat syndrome.

Direct, scarring moxa should not be applied to:

- ◆ Face
- ◆ Private parts
- ◆ Vicinity of lg bld vessels or joints
- ◆ Forbidden on the ab region and lumbosacral area of preggers!

Observe pt's rx during moxa to adjust the intensity of heat in time to avoid causing burns. For pts with coma, numbness of skin and extremis, diabetes pts with neuropathy, local nerve damage, paralysis, etc., need even more care and attention.

When using indirect moxa, protect pt's skin from falling moxa or ashes.

Check temp of skin with your fingers. Remove the cone at the right time. Always apply burn cream afterwards.

### **Management of burn**

Small blisters will heal on their own.

Large blisters should be punc'd with sterile needle, drain, dress with sterile gauze.

Burn ointment applied when necessary

Infection is the primary concern here.

Moderate or severe burns should be referred to emergency room/phys.

**Quality of moxa wool** will be greater if you buy good stuff which is bluish yellow in color. Keep it in a cool dry place and it'll keep for a coupla years.

### **Commonly used pts in moxa**

- ◆ ST 36
- ◆ REN 8, 4, 6, 12
- ◆ DU 20, 14, 4 (yang qi of whole body, esp kidney)
- ◆ BL 23 and other back shu
- ◆ KID 1 – yang rising. SP 1 – heavy menstruation. BL 67 – turn fetus abt 6-7 months.

Tonify/reduce methods in Moxa

- ◆ Cone
  - Reducing – after burn, blow so cone burns faster. Heat is more intense.
  - Tonify – leave it burn naturally, will extinguish on its' own.
- ◆ According to diff methods

- Monkshood – strengthn yang
- Garlic – remove toxin
- ◆ Area
  - Du 20 mild warming method