



Healing with Heat, Wonders of Moxibustion and the Near Infrared

A 4 CEU Hour course ©2008 by Dr. Harvey Kaltsas, A.P., Dipl. Ac. (NCCAOM)

Take the Test

Those of us who practice acupuncture are so very blessed with the tools we have at our disposal to help people get well. The wonders of TCM diagnosis, acupuncture, and Chinese herbal remedies don't need recounting here; and moxibustion is a therapy dedicated Western doctors would beg to learn if they only knew how effective it can be.

This course will discuss various mechanisms by which heat can heal. It will first retell a bit of ancient moxibustion history; then it will describe points prohibited to moxa; then it will list some precautions to observe when performing moxa; next it will discuss Clinical pearls from Dr. So about doing moxa to certain points, how and when to use them; and finally it will explore some scientific research on the use of moxa.



Moxibustion in Prehistory

From prehistoric times, heat has been used on acupuncture points to support health and ward off illness. Even the prehistoric man, Otzi, born circa 3300 B.C. and found preserved in a glacier in 1991 near Tyrol, Italy, bore evidence of moxa type scars on his body. The following three articles tell an interesting story to bolster your awareness of how ancient our medicine may very well be.

Wikipedia reports that "He had approximately 57 carbon tattoos consisting of simple dots and lines on his lower spine, behind his left knee, and on his right ankle. Using X-rays, it was determined that the Iceman may have had arthritis in these joints. Some scientists suggest that the designs might have been used to mark the passage from youth to manhood, or it has been speculated that they may be related to acupuncture."

"It looks like an early form of acupuncture originated in central Europe," said Dr. Frank Bahr, president of the German Academy for Acupuncture, who was in Vienna to present the results of a study into the tattoos. "I was amazed, 80 percent of the points correspond to those used in acupuncture today".

Five groups of linear tattoos along the spine were probably applied to combat back pains, and were found to be located on - or close to - classical acupuncture points. The iceman, nicknamed Oetzi by his finders and who is thought to have died of exhaustion at the age of about 45, suffered from acute arthritis, worms and diarrhea.

Ancient Chinese acupuncture is thought to have originated in about 1,000 BC and scientists said the iceman's therapeutic tattoos were applied in 3,200 BC.

"It is the oldest evidence we have of an early form of acupuncture," Bahr said. Why the iceman's skin was tattooed rather than pierced without leaving scars was unclear. Either the fresh wounds were

rubbed with charcoal to create slight irritation and a longer-lasting effect, or the tattoos were intended as a kind of chart to show relatives where to massage and relieve the pains of the man. Another theory holds that after the lines were incised in the skin, the incisions were filled with a mixture of herbs which was then burnt. Most of the tattoos were made on the skin over joints that were affected by arthrosis (lumbar spine, knee, and ankle). After a six-year custody dispute between Austria and Italy, Oetzi's mummified body was returned to Italy in January. He is now housed in a special windowed fridge in the Museum of Archaeology in Bolzano, the capital of Italy's Alpine Alto Adige region.¹



“Ancient Acupuncture or Tattooing?”

Science Magazine



"The oldest European mummified human body shows 15 well-preserved tattoo groups on his back and legs. In all 58 tattoos have been counted on his body. His tattoos were only simple dots and little lines.

“Tattoos on the Tyrolean Iceman have a simple linear geometric shape and are located on parts of the body that seem to be located on Chinese acupuncture points.

“The tattoos were investigated morphometrically, and according to the expert opinion of three accredited acupuncturists nine of the tattoos were on or within 5 millimeters of acupuncture points. Computer tomography revealed that the iceman suffered from arthrosis of the lumbar spine.

“Acupuncture points used for treatment of this condition coincide with the tattoos. Science Magazine explains “the Theory of acupuncture predicts that perforation or irritation of the skin at special locations, the acupuncture points, results in modified function of related, not necessarily adjacent, organs, allowing relief of pain or inflammation.”

“These findings raise the possibility that the practice of therapeutically intended acupuncture originated long before the medical tradition of ancient China (approximately 1000 B.C.) and that its geographical origins were Eurasian rather than East-Asian, consistent with far-reaching intercultural contacts of prehistoric mankind.”

¹ Journal of Chinese Medicine, cited on theamt.com.

□ Photo on right is of Ötzi's lower leg with tattooed acupuncture points in evidence; photo on left is of his spine.

"...some of the tattoo locations on the back and the left leg of the Iceman are in close proximity or directly on the locations of classical acupuncture points for treatment of arthritis of the lumbar spine. Radiological studies found evidence of exactly that disease in the Iceman. Signs of degeneration were found along the lumbar spine as well as in the joints of the hip, knee, and ankle.

"In acupuncture, perforation or irritation of the skin at specific locations, the acupuncture points, causes a reflectory change in the action of the related inner organs, or in the relief of pain or inflammation. Different modes of irritation are used in Chinese and Asian acupuncture: moxibustion (combustion of herbs over the points), puncture with needles and sometimes tattooing, in chronic diseases.

"Nine of the 15 tattoo groups are from the urinary bladder channel, acupuncture meridians in which Chinese medicine organizes acupuncture points. This channel running along the back and down to the feet, is also the primary location for treatment of back pain. Five additional tattoos are located on or proximal to acupuncture points connected to digestive functions."

[None of my own patients in Florida are quite that old, but they have also benefited dramatically from moxibustion done for a variety of ailments, including the lumbar, joint, and digestive problems from which Otzi suffered.]

Precautions and Prohibitions when Using Moxa

Before I describe actual moxa treatments for specific problems, let us first discuss some precautions to take when using moxa. One of my greatest teachers, Dr. James Tin Yau So, once recounted an experience from his own early days as a practitioner. He knew of a Buddhist monk who had high blood pressure treated with direct moxa to GV26. The monk had a stroke and died. Forever after, Dr. So warned his students never to use moxa on GV26. Heed this advice. It came hard earned.

The only death I ever caused by using moxa was in 1978, also unintentional and a delayed reaction. It came as quite a surprise, and the patient's wife never forgave me. I am not making this up. My patient was a 72 year old man with marked kidney yang deficiency suffering from diabetes, lethargy, and continued dribbling after urination. He had been impotent for a number of years. I treated several points with acupuncture, and I did moxa three times indirectly to Kidney 2, mindful not to burn the patient because he was, after all, diabetic and slow to heal.

After a few treatments, his energy returned dramatically, some of his diabetic symptoms improved, and his erections returned. Although he had been married for over 50 years, he soon started an extra-marital affair. He died of a heart attack while making love with his 26 year old secretary.

I am certain that moxa to Kidney 2 restored the patient's kidney yang, because I have used it on several patients with the same positive results, but not that tragic side effect.

□ Above is a depiction of the Tyrol Iceman as displayed at the South Tyrol Museum. www.iceman.it/en
Photo courtesy of the University of Minnesota Duluth. www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/troufs/anth1602/video/Ice_Man.html

There are Two Main Concerns When Using Moxa:

1. Points that are prohibited to moxa; and
2. Improper techniques which may burn the patient.

We'll start first by looking at which points are prohibited to moxa. Both direct and indirect moxibustion fall under this category. Almost all of what I learned about prohibited points came directly from attending lectures with Dr. So and listening to him in private at the clinic. The clinical rationale underlying some of Dr. So's prohibitions may not be readily apparent, but I trust his reliance upon the very old traditions of Chinese medicine which informed his viewpoints. Again, all credit goes to Dr. So for the following information, which was gathered from his lectures and in private conversations:

Prohibited to Moxa:

XF-4 – Extra Face 4 – Yu Yao (fish loins)

XF-5 – Pie Yen (eyes of the nose)

XF-7 – Hai Chuen – No moxa in the mouth

XF-8 - Jin Jin and Yu Yeh – No moxa in the mouth Governing Vessel 4 – Ming Men (gate of life) – Do not do moxa to this point on young men under age 20. This is a fire point; young men already are abundant in fire. Fire to a fire point in them will create ashes, resulting in impotence.

Governing Vessel 6 – Ji Jung (middle of the spine) – Moxa here will cause curvature of the spine.

Governing Vessel 9 – Jyh Yang (extreme yang) – Don't use moxa when the patient has jaundice.

Governing Vessel 15 – Ya-men (Door of muteness) – No moxa, can cause loss of speech. If this occurs, the antidote is to perform direct moxa within 80 days on the following points: L.I. 4 (1 moxa), P. 5 (2 moxa), TW 17 (3 moxa), G.B. 2 (1 moxa), G.V. 20 (2 moxa)

Governing Vessel 16 – Feng Fu (wind mansion) – No moxa, can cause loss of speech

Governing Vessel 17 – Nao Hu (brain door) – Moxa will damage patient's brain causing death.

Governing Vessel 22 – Shin Hui (meeting of the skull bones) – No moxa for those under 8 years old

Governing Vessel 23 – Sheng Hsing (rising star) – More than 5 moxa here will cause dimness of the eyes.

Governing Vessel 25 – Su liao (pure white bone hole) – No moxa

Governing Vessel 26 – Shui Kou (water ditch) – No moxa, can cause death! How is this possible? In a hypertensive patient, it can bring too much blood to the brain, causing a stroke and sudden death. Perhaps the same could happen with a non-hypertensive patient as well.

Governing Vessel 28 – Y'n Jiao (gum crossing) – No moxa in the mouth

L. I. 20 – Ying Hsiang (accept fragrance) – no moxa

L.I. 19 – Ho Liao (brain bone) – no moxa

C.V. 4 – Kuan Yuan (gate arising) - No moxa with pregnant woman...may cause an abortion

C.V. 5 – Shi Men (stone door) – The old book says no moxa on women – may cause sterility, although this certainly did not work on Dr. So's wife. She seemed to be more fertile after he did this.

C.V. 11 – Chien Li (established mile) – No moxa during pregnancy, can lead to abortion and fetal deformation

XP 1 – Gwei Tau (head of penis) – No moxa here – for obvious reasons

Lung 3 – Tian Fu (heavenly mansion) – No moxa

Lung 5 – Chih Tzen (foot marsh) – No moxa

Lung 8 – Jing Gu (meridian gutter) – No moxa

Lung 10 – Yu Ji (fish border) – No moxa

TW 16 – Tian You (Window of Heaven) – No moxa, will cause patient’s face to swell, closing the eyes

TW 23 – Si Jhu Kung (silk bamboo hollow) – No moxa

PC 9 – Jung Chung (middle rushing) – No moxa – No fire to a fire point of a fire element

Spleen 2 – Da Du (big capital) – No moxa during pregnancy or for three months after confinement

UB 1 – Jing Ming (eye bright) – No moxa, once caused blindness on a patient

UB 2 – Ts’uan Jhu (drilling bamboo) – No moxa

UB 6 – Cheng Kuang (receive light) – No moxa

UB 37 – Yin Men (prosperous gate) – No moxa

UB 40 – Wei Jung (entrusting middle) – No moxa, will shorten the nerve

UB 62 – Shen Mo (extended meridian) – No moxa

UB 67 – Jih Yin (extremity of yin) – No moxa for pregnant women – except at the very end stage to turn a breech baby for delivery

GB 1 – Tung Tzi Liao (bone hole of eye) – No moxa

GB 22 – Yuan Yeh (the liquid of the deep waters) – No moxa – “It will cause a carbuncle to grow. If the carbuncle breaks on the inside, the patient will die.”

GB 42 – Di Wui Hui (earth five meetings) – No moxa

S.I. 18 – Chuan Liao (cheekbone hole) – No moxa – in general Dr. So was very reluctant to use moxa on the face

Spleen 7 – Lou Gu (leaky valley) – No moxa

Stomach 1 – Cheng Chi (receive tears) – No moxa, will cause eye to swell as big as a fist and nasal polyps to grow to be the size of a peach

Stomach 2 – Si bai (four whites) – No moxa

Stomach 7 – Shin Guan (lower gate) – No moxa

Stomach 8 – Tou Wee (head binding) – No moxa, may cause blindness

Stomach 9 – Yen Ying (man welcome) – No moxa. You don’t want to coagulate blood in the carotid artery with moxa here and cause a stroke.

Stomach 32 – Fu Tu (crouching rabbit) – No moxa

Things to Avoid When Doing Moxa

1. First and foremost, by all means avoid using the rigid, compressed smokeless rolls made by a special charcoal process. These can be a disaster!

Many years ago, in the mid 1980’s, I made the mistake of using these carbonized smokeless moxa sticks, which are unfortunately still on the market and even being sold by Lhasa OMS. While treating one patient with indirect moxa on his back shu points, the moxa stick exploded and hurtled a glowing red hot ember onto my patient’s back.

The reason why this occurred I learned thereafter is because sometimes a bit of water is trapped inside the carbonized stick during the manufacturing process, and when that moisture is exposed to heat, it vaporizes into an expanding gas which serves as a propellant to shoot the carbonized missile forward. The Chinese were always good at fireworks.

Anyways, without a moment's hesitation, I snatched the glowing moxa coal off my patient's back with the index finger and thumb of my left hand, searing my own flesh but minimizing the burn on my patient. I immediately applied Ching Wan Hung to my patient and put a little Band-Aid over his afflicted area. He thought it was all part of the treatment and no burn mark, discomfort, or scarring ensued for him – and no major malpractice lawsuit befell me.

Parenthetically, I was once called as an expert witness in another case in which a patient's leg had been severely burned by an indirect moxa stick. The patient required a skin graft, and the practitioner and his liability carrier were responsible for \$50,000 in damages.

As for my own scorched fingers, I embalmed them in Ching Wan Hung and wrapped them in gauze. Within minutes the searing pain had stopped. I replaced both gauze and ointment every 24 hours, which is its preferred method of use when treating burns with Ching Wan Hung, and within a week my fingers were as good as new with no sign of scarring. This personal testimonial is representative of comments many of my patients have told me and is why Ching Wan Hung is considered a state national treasure in China.

I've tested the compressed charcoal smokeless moxa sticks again (but not on patients) and have found them to be very iffy. Sometimes they explode or break off suddenly; sometimes they don't. So I stay away from them altogether. Instead I use the Hand Power rigid compressed smokeless moxa sticks from Japan that are not carbonized.

I've not had any trouble with them doing indirect moxa. Actually they are not smokeless, but the smoke is much less than with a traditional moxa roll.

2. When using a traditional moxa roll, to protect yourself most of all, for God's sake, please remove the colored outside wrapper! It is often dyed with lead based colors, and burning the wrapper of just one entire moxa roll in an enclosed room is enough to create lead poisoning in a child. Burning many such wrapped traditional moxa rolls over the course of many years of practice is going to put a serious crimp in your plans for living into a healthy old age. This is not just idle chatter. I sent moxa roll wrappers off to a testing lab and they came back heavily contaminated with lead.

3. I cringe when I see illustrations of how to do indirect moxa with the glowing moxa stick held perpendicular to the patient's body, with nothing between the head of the moxa stick and the body but air! Instead, when doing indirect moxa with a moxa pole or moxa roll, rest the small intestine channel of your hand on the patient's body, if at all possible, to serve as a buffer between your glowing moxa stick and the patient's body. Hold the stick so that it is parallel to the body, with the glowing end over the point.

Consider this all too common occurrence. You are holding a moxa stick perpendicularly one inch over C.V. 6, gently warming the point with the stick pointed down, when the patient suddenly coughs, abruptly thrusting the abdomen up one to two inches – right into the red hot tip of your moxa roll! The next thing you smell is burning flesh, then you hear the sound of a shrieking patient.

This is counterproductive. It harms both the patient and your relationship with the patient and is therapeutically altogether unnecessary. No practitioner is quick enough 100% of the time to pull the moxa stick safely away as the patient’s abdomen, or shoulder, or leg, or back heaves. Sometimes the patients even decide to move suddenly or roll over. You can never underestimate a patient’s ability to put him/herself in harm’s way.

However, it is a simple matter to make sure the moxa pole does not get too close by having your hand somehow touching the patient when you are applying the heat. When the patient moves, your hand moves, maintaining a consistent distance between the heat and the patient’s skin.

For some points such as Spleen 1, Liver 1, or L.I. 11, you can rest your middle finger against the patient’s skin while applying the moxa heat. It’s always best to put yourself in a position to prevent burning the patient.

4. When using a moxa pole, make sure to blow the ash off regularly – away from the patient. Otherwise it may fall off onto the patient.

5. When doing direct moxa, make sure to have some wet paper towels around to help extinguish the moxa if things get out of hand; and definitely keep Ching Wan Hung nearby to apply afterwards.

Clinical Pearls, almost all from Dr. So, about Doing Moxa to Certain Points...from A to Z, plus four.

A.

Treating shingles or herpes zoster is big business. Virtually every baby boomer had chicken pox as a child, so consider this to be a growth industry. The following data comes from a Medical Expenditure Panel Survey prepared for the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality³:

- ▶ On average in 2003–2005, 1.1 million persons, per year, had shingles or its complications; and .9 million sought medical treatment.
- ▶ Medical spending to treat shingles or its complications totaled on average \$566 million per year for 2003–2005 (in 2005 dollars).
- ▶ For 2003–2005, there was an annual average of 2.1 million ambulatory care visits for the treatment of shingles or its complications.
- ▶ The elderly were seven times as likely to report shingles as the non -elderly (1.5 percent of elderly versus 0.2 percent of non-elderly).

³ December 2007, “Average Annual Health Care Use and Expenses for Shingles among the U.S. Civilian Non institutionalized Population, 2003–2005 “ by Anita Soni, PhD and Steven C. Hill, PhD

- ▶ Among those who received treatment for shingles, \$525 per person (in 2005 dollars), on average, was spent on treatment.

Fortunately, unlike medical and pharmaceutical approaches to treating shingles, acupuncture and moxibustion actually work, and often quite dramatically. In my own practice I have found that the herpes zoster attacks respond best to indirect moxa applied repeatedly (19 x) to the various back shu points associated with the outbreak.

Most shingles outbreaks manifest somewhere intercostally, along the G.B. or Spleen channels alongside the body. It helps to surround the dragon with indirect moxa stimulation at the site of each outbreak, but more importantly it works to trace rib at the site of the outbreak back to the spine. The virus actually resides along the spine and is very sensitive to the heat of indirect moxa, which will put it into remission. Of course direct moxa works as well, but it is usually unnecessary.

For outbreaks of shingles on the face, which can get very serious as they can imperil the eyes, I treat with good effectiveness local points on the U.B. channel adjacent to the intervertebral spaces of the neck instead of using moxa, direct or indirect, on the face.

You can do indirect moxa any number of ways, on ginger or on garlic or with the Ibuki or Chosei-Kyu stick-on moxa. I prefer simply to use the Hand Power moxa sticks held out about an inch from the back shu points and brought closer intermittently.

In addition to the moxa treatment, which by itself is very effective, I usually also recommend Chuan Xin Lian and Long Dan Xie Gan Wan, depending upon the patient's internal condition.

That's the treatment of shingles in a nutshell, a \$566,000,000 million sector of the health care profession, almost all of which in a sane world should rightfully devolve to acupuncturists, since we do treat it best.

Consider that there are about 20,000 licensed acupuncturists in the USA, and the Department of Revenue and Taxation of California estimates our net average annual income to be only \$24,000 per practitioner per year. That computes to a net yearly income for our profession of \$480 million, less than we should be earning for the treatment of shingles alone. Alas, it is not a sane world.

B.

Moxa to GV 20 to wake up patients after a stroke really works. First you have to do a differential diagnosis to ascertain that is a stroke from overcooling (pale face, sinking pulse) rather than from overheating (red face, floating pulse).

My own father suffered a stroke which left him mute and with facial paralysis. The next day I treated him with indirect moxa to GV 20, bled the endpoints on his fingers, and bled Jin Jin and Yu Yeh under his tongue. He made a 100% recovery with no impairments at all.

Another patient, George, suffered a massive stroke and was completely paraplegic and mute. Even though he was the President of the local hospital, Western medicine could do nothing for him and

wanted to literally pull the plug on him. They expected him to survive less than a month. His courageous wife, a saint, nursed him 24/7 and insisted that he get acupuncture.

As part of my treatment plan for him, I used indirect moxa to GV 20. Over the course of the next seven years he came to regain limited use of his arms and legs, could take a few steps, and could even speak in limited sentences. He never lost his sense of humor and made quite a contribution to the spirit of his family before he eventually passed away.

C.

Direct moxa to Lu 11, 3x, rice grain size, to stop epistaxis (nosebleed). This is very effective.

D.

Liver 1 - Da Duen (Big Heap) for excessive menstrual flow – with 3 direct moxa, ½ rice grain size, especially if the excess flow is caused by emotions. This is more powerful than treating Spleen 1 for this purpose. My ex-wife was saved this way from persistent menorrhagia by Dr. Kenneth Chang in Dr. So's clinic. The liver meridian helps many sexual organ diseases because it circumnavigates the sexual organs in its path up the body.

E.

Liver 12 – Ji Mai (quick pulse) – for pain of the penis and scrotum, moxa 5x

F.

Liver 13, For chronic constipation, 5 to 10x – indirect

G.

CV 3 - for urinary incontinence; dysuria, dysmenorrhea, menorrhagia – 5x – 100x

H.

CV 6 – for impotency, yang qi empty – 7 to 100x

I.

CV 8 – for cholera – very effective – 20x – direct moxa – ½ peanut size – fill the navel with salt so that it is level with the abdomen. A blister will probably form; don't break it. Apply Ching Wan Hung to the burn. Better a burn than to die of cholera.

J.

CV 10 – for abdominal tumors – 27x each day till you reach 100

K.

GV 2 - Yao Yu (loins yu) – bed wetting in children

L.

UB 15 – Shin Yu (heart yu) – for stuttering and speech difficulties in children, moxa 3-5x

M.

UB 23 – Shen Yu (kidney yu) – moxa 1x for each year of life (but not for boys under 20)

N.

UB 28 – Pang Guang Yu (bladder yu) – for treatment of genital herpes outbreaks, moxa 3-7x

O.

UB 67 - Jih Yin (extremity of yin) – for breech birth, moxa direct 7x; for dysuria, spermatorrhea, urinary incontinence, moxa 1 to 7 x

P.

XB 1 - Pee Gun (root of tumor) – This point is located 3.5 divisions lateral from under the 12th thoracic vertebra. It is quite useful for treating both benign and malignant tumors systemically. 10 direct moxa rice grain size. Wait 14 days between treatments.

Q.

Spleen 1 – Yin Bai (hidden white) for insomnia and hypertension, direct moxa 3x, 1/3 rice grain size. Why does this work? Because moxa here pulls down the blood and energy from the head. Too much blood and energy there are a manifestation of high blood pressure and also make the brain too active, disturbing sleep.

R.

Spleen 8 – Dee Jee (Earth Secret) for sterility in males, moxa 6 or 7x

S.

Spleen 10 – Xuehai for genital herpes outbreak, as this point cleans the blood – moxa size according to the severity of the case: not so severe, ¼ rice grain size; slight, sesame size; severe, rice grain size – or do indirect moxa. This point is good for chronic skin diseases, especially of the lower half of the body.

T.

GB 36 – Wai Chu (outer mound) for rabies – The old book says that three different people from three different families must burn moxa on this point. Try convincing your patient to trust this treatment protocol!

U.

St 36 – Tsu San Li (leg three miles) for every type of stomach and intestinal disease – moxa 3 to 7x. In 1978, after a sojourn to a Nogales, Mexico restaurant, I was once beset for hours with gut wrenching pain and diarrhea. Eventually, as I lay writhing on the floor with my face pressed against the rug [true story], I thought to myself: “Maybe Chinese medicine can help. “I did moxa a few times indirectly to Stomach 36, and the pain and cramping went away in minutes. Moxa applied to this point is famous for reputedly extending vigor and lifespan.

V.

Heart 1 – Ji Chuan (extreme spring) – to combat body odor, moxa is needed; the needle not enough; moxa 7x

W.

Heart 3 – Shao Hai (young sea) – for hand tremors, first needle GV 14; then do 7 green bean size moxa to Heart 3 with the arm bent at 90 degrees. Dr. So used to have patients hold onto a contraption like a toilet paper roller that was held up by a coat hanger hooked to something up above. Why does the hand shake? Because the heart gets weak.

X.

Heart 5 – Yin Hsi (wall hole of the yin) for night sweating, this is the most powerful treatment. Moxa 3 to 7x.

Y.

Pericardium 5 - Jian Shih (intermediary messenger) for any heart problem this is a very important point. Burn 5 moxa here in a crisis. Even a glowing cigarette used indirectly can help.

Z.

Pericardium 6 – Nei Guan (inner gate) for nausea and to treat heart, chest, and stomach problems. Use with Spleen 4, moxa 3 to 5x.

1.

L.I. 11 – Chu Chih (crooked pond) for chronic skin diseases. This point is good for chronic skin diseases, especially of the upper half of the body. Moxa 3,5, or 7x or daily for a total of 200x. Why is L.I. 11 helpful for skin problems? Because the L.I. is the yang paired channel of the Lung, and the lung controls the skin.

2.

S.I. 1 – Shao Tzer (young marsh) – for no lactation after delivery. Moxa 1x.

3.

XA 2 – Jhou Jian (sharp point of the elbow) for general inflammation especially of the appendix. It is very effective for inflammation of the cecum. This point is at the tip of the elbow when the arm is bent 90 degrees. The point is in a small cleft. Moxa 7 to 15 x. After 3 days or 7 days, moxa can be repeated until done 100x.

4.

XT 1 – Tu Yin (single yin) for morning sickness. This point is located under the second toe in the middle of the second crease. Sometimes there are several creases. Find the most painful one, with the patient's heel resting on the treatment table or a chair. Moxa this directly 7x (1/2 grain rice size). Use it in combination with moxa on PC 5. The treatment works really, really well. Pregnant mothers get great relief from this. It works well for other types of nausea as well.

Research into the Type of Heat Generated by Moxibustion

People often ask me “Why do you burn moxa instead of another herb?” I answer that practitioners settled on moxa after thousands of years of trial and error when they had literally thousands of other herbs at their disposal because it most closely resembles the smell of marijuana smoke and makes everyone in town think you’re a stoner after you leave the office from a hard day at work.

No, seriously – joking aside, the ancients did a great deal of trial and error research and settled upon moxa because it has special thermogenic qualities. When the skin is burned by moxa it usually does not get infected. It also gives off a particular wavelength of electro-magnetic radiation in the near infrared range.

One scientific study documented the following: “The main results are: the radiation power of moxibustion is distributed over the region very closed to near -infrared mainly and the wavelength corresponding to the peak value is about 2800 nm; Using tungsten-halogen lamp with wide spectral range can duplicate the spectrum of moxibustion by means of light-filtering and power manipulation.”⁴

This explains why rare earth heat lamps are so popular among Chinese practitioners, as they approximate the particular 2400 nm wavelength of the light emitted from burning moxa.

Another study observed that moxa burned alone fluctuates in wavelength, whereas moxa burned over the traditional methods to render it indirect – ginger, garlic, and aconite root – created a more consistent wavelength, and one suspects a more harmonious wave form as well. Having said that, I’d never burn the cardio -toxic aconite root in my office for fear of what its combusted alkaloid s might do to me or my patients.

Here’s the abstract of the aforementioned study: “MS96A type spectrum analyzer was applied to determine the spectral characteristic of near infrared radiated by moxa stick moxi-bustion, ginger-partitioned moxibustion, garlic-partitioned moxibustion and Aconitum Carmichaeli-partitioned moxibustion. The spectrum of moxa stick moxibustion was relatively discrete and several wave crests are appeared. But in the spectrum of ginger-partitioned moxibustion, garlic-partitioned moxibustion or Aconitum Carmichaeli [Fu Zi, prepared aconite root]-partitioned moxibustion, a specific and relatively steady wave crest formed respectively. It was concluded different indirect moxibustion could bring respective spectrum of near infrared and have the relevant physiologic and biochemical effects.”⁵

The use and effects of far infrared heat will be explored in a follow-up CEU course entitled “**Healing with Far Infrared Heat.**”

⁴ **Research on the Measuring and Duplication Techniques of Spectrum of the Moxibustion in Traditional Chinese Medicine** Hong Wenxue; Jing Jun; Song Jialin; Xu Yonghong; Cai Jianhong Engineering in Medicine and Biology Society, 2005. IEEE-EMBS 2005. 27th Annual International Conference of the Volume , Issue , 2005 Page(s):4267 – 4270 Digital Object Identifier 10.1109/IEMBS.2005.1615407

⁵ Yang Hua-yuan et alia, Shanghai University of TCM, 201203 Shanghai, China
<http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/Xplore/login.jsp?url=/iel5/10755/33900/01615407.pdf?temp=x>