Moxibustion Elective

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Mugwort

Mugwort and moxa floss

- Mugwort is the common name for艾葉 Ai Ye (Folium Artemisiae argyi).
- Mugwort floss (艾絨 ai rong) is also known as mugwort wool, mugwort punk, or loose moxa.

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- Mugwort is a common weed. It grows almost everywhere.

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What you see here is California mugwort (Artemisia douglasiana)

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Chinese mugwort looks a bit different, but the local version makes floss just fine.

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This is Artemisia argyii, the preferred source, but A. vulgaris is also used.

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The leaves are green on top but have white fur on the bottom.

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It has a fragrant odor that is easy to recognize once you know it.

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The Best Dates for Harvesting Mugwort

- Traditionally, mugwort was picked on the third day of the third lunar month or the fifth day of the fifth lunar month and then dried in the sun.

Year	Third day of third lunar month	Fifth day of fifth lunar month
2011	April 5	June 6
2012	March 24	June 23
2013	April 12	June 13
2014	April 2	June 2
2015	April 21	June 20

Mugwort in April in Malibu (around the 3rd day of the 3rd lunar month)

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Mugwort in June in Malibu (around the 5th day of the 5th lunar month)

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Once mugwort starts to make flowers or seeds, it is too late to pick for floss.

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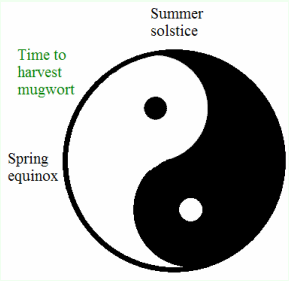
Harvesting mugwort

- Besides being the right time to get the leaves (before the plant starts to flower), this is the time of the year when yang is increasing or near its peak within the universe. So mugwort picked at this time retains more yang qi.



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Traditionally mugwort was picked on the fifth day of the fifth lunar month (端午節 Duan Wu Festival) and hung over the door to protect the house from toxic things such as snakes and scorpions.

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Making Floss

Making floss

- After harvesting the mugwort, strip the leaves off the stalks and dry them in the sun, or hang the stalks upside down while the leaves dry, probably for a couple of weeks.

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By the way, California mugwort is sometimes called '**dream sage**.'

- Native Americans used it to promote vivid dreams and sometimes even lucid dreaming. The dreams are usually peaceful.
- If you hang the mugwort to dry in your bedroom, you may be pleasantly surprised!

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Once dry, remove the leaves from the stems. You can store the leaves for later.

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To make floss, grind the leaves.

- Use a rough mortar and pestle.
- A Mexican molcajete works very well.
- It helps to pick out the stems and large veins before grinding.

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In the first grinding, the leaves are broken up.

Pick out any stems.

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Use a sieve.

- Put the floss in a sieve. Rub it against the sides.
- Discard the powder that comes out the bottom.
- Pick out any sticks or foreign matter.

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Look at the fine fibers at the edge of the leaf. That is what we want. The rest needs to be removed.

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Repeatedly grind it and sieve it until it is the quality you want.

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This is a dusty job, so you might want to wear a mask if you do a lot.

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Still needs more work

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You can also use an electric herb grinder to make more faster.

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Aging the floss

- Floss should be aged for three years, sometimes placing it in the sun.
- Floss looks green when freshly made.
- It will turn golden or brown as it ages, depending on the quality.

not aged

aged in sun

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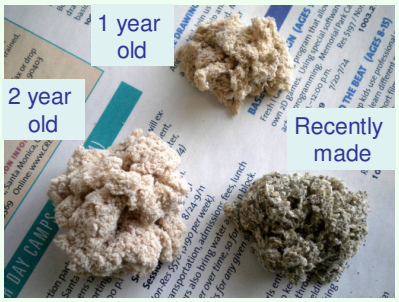
Aging the floss



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New versus Old

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Storage

- Floss should be stored inside a dry container.
- Periodically, perhaps shortly before it is used, you can dry it in the sun or bake it in the oven at a low temperature. This is especially important if you live where there is high humidity.

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Note: Why would anyone want to pick mugwort and make floss?

- **Not to save money on moxa supplies!**
- **We are so out of touch with nature (heaven and earth). This is a good excuse to get out of the city and follow a stream.**
- **This is an activity that doctors have done for thousands of years. It is a way of connecting with our predecessors.**
- **I live in my head way too much and working with my hands takes me back to my heart.**

Quality of Moxa Floss

Here is some homemade floss from California mugwort. You can see sticks and dark spots, so it still needs more work.

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Here is a batch of homemade floss, fairly good quality (but still needs more aging)

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Homemade floss

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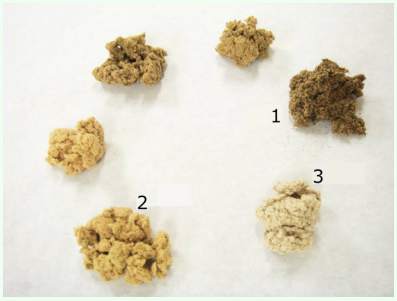
The lighter color, softer, and cleaner it is, the better the quality.



1 low quality commercial floss

2 high quality commercial floss

3 homemade floss, not yet aged

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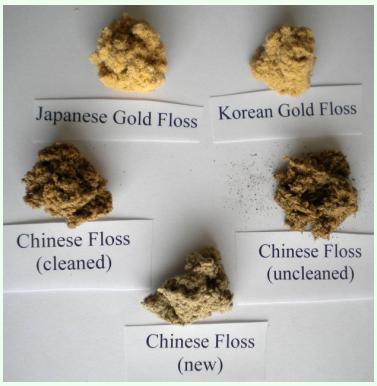

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Quality of Moxa Floss

Good quality floss	Poor quality floss
Yellow, pale	Greenish-brown, dark
Soft, fine texture	Coarse texture
No pieces of twigs	Has impurities
Cones hold together	Cannot make small cones
Spongy	Not springy
500 g of leaves makes 100-150 g of floss	500 g of leaves makes 300-350 g of floss

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Low quality floss on the left, high quality on the right
(both are store-bought)

Note the color and texture differences.
Note the dust underneath the poor quality floss.

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High quality floss is used for direct moxibustion.

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Why is high grade floss reserved for direct moxibustion?

- High quality floss holds together as grain-of-rice size cones or smaller. It makes much less smoke and smells pleasant. Its heat is less 'fierce' so it will not damage the flesh.
- High grade floss is pure fiber without any leaf matter, twigs, or excessive amounts of volatile oils. This makes its fire more mellow.

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High quality floss

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High Quality Floss

- Ultra Pure Gold floss from Japan (on the left) is considered the best.
- High quality Korean floss (on the right) is almost as good and is a third of the price.

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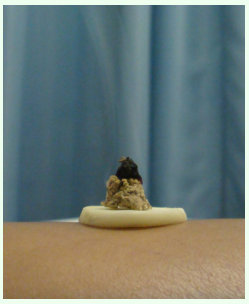

Lower quality floss is still useful. It is used for indirect moxibustion or in moxa sticks.

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Low quality floss

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However, I suggest avoiding the lowest quality floss as it is more smoky, smell, and 'fierce.'

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Low quality floss can be improved

- If you buy low quality floss for indirect moxibustion, you can still improve it some by using the sieve. The more dust you get off it, the less smoke and smell it will make.

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Modern commercial production of floss

- In modern times machines are used to grind the leaves and sift off the residue.
- We still want to remove all stems and leaf matter (the green parts of the leaf) and retain the fine white fibers from the leaf.

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Leaves to floss ratio

- The quality is determined in large part by the ratio of dried leaves to floss obtained from it.
  - A 3/1 ratio means three grams of leaves are processed for every gram of floss obtained.
  - The higher the ratio, the better the quality.
  - Commercial floss may have a 3/1, 5/1, 12/1, or 30/1 ratio.
- Unfortunately, this ratio is not written on the package when you buy floss.

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黃金艾絨 gold moxa floss

- Floss with a 30/1 ratio is called gold moxa floss (黃金艾絨).
- High quality mugwort floss like this undergoes several weeks of being ground, cleaned with a sieve, and dried in the sun, perhaps a few dozen times.

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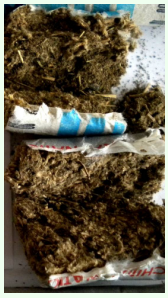
Quality of moxa sticks

- Moxa sticks are also judged by the quality of floss inside them. There is ordinary grade, grade A, high grade, ultimate grade, and so forth.
- The ordinary grade is basically 1/1 (one unit of leaves makes one unit of floss – just the broken up mugwort leaf with nothing sifted off). There are twigs and all kinds of coarse materials inside these moxa sticks.



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Aging

- Mugwort to be used in herbal formulas has different standards than mugwort floss.
- Ming and Qing dynasty books often wrote: 煎服宜鮮，灸火宜陳。 “Fresh is suitable to be decocted for internal use; aged is suitable for moxibustion fire.”

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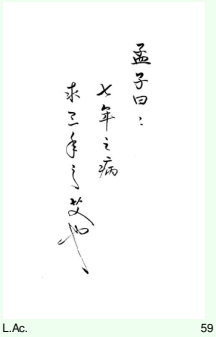
Aging

- Mengzi (Zhou) said: “A disease of seven years needs three-year-old mugwort.”
- Li Shizhen (Ming) said “Moxibustion with fresh mugwort floss damages a person’s flesh and vessels.”



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Aging

- Floss needs to be aged for some time so that excessive volatile oil content can evaporate. As it ages, the floss color changes from green to gold (high quality floss) or greenish-brown to brown (low quality floss).

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Week 2
Zi Yun Gao,
Clinical Overview

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Before we talk about moxibustion...

- ... we need to begin making 紫雲膏 Zi Yun Gao because it takes a long time.
- We are making Zi Yun Gao so we can use it in direct moxibustion.
- I will tell you the details soon, but let's start cooking it first.

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Purple Cloud Ointment
(紫雲膏 Zi Yun Gao,
Shiunko in Japanese)

- An ointment made with
- sesame oil and beeswax

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紫雲膏 Zi Yun Gao
Purple Cloud Ointment

- The original recipe was called **Flesh Moistening Ointment** (*Run Ji Gao*), from 陳實功《外科正宗·潤肌膏》 ***Correct Model of External Medicine*** by Chen Shigong (Ming dynasty)

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紫雲膏 Zi Yun Gao
(Purple Cloud Ointment)

1 liter	麻油 Sesame oil
100 grams	紫草 Zi Cao (Zi Gen) (紅條紫草 or 紫根)
100 grams	當歸 Dang Gui (Radix Angelicae Sinensis)
300 grams	黃蠟 Beeswax

- If you make this for yourself, you can make a half recipe.

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紫雲膏 Zi Yun Gao
(Purple Cloud Ointment)

- Heat the oil and wax to 120° C.
- Simmer the Dang Gui until it floats.
- Remove it with a slotted spoon.

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紫雲膏 Zi Yun Gao (Purple Cloud Ointment)

- Let the heat rise to 142° C.
- When the temperature is 142°, turn off the heat and add the Zi Cao. The oil will immediately turn quite red.

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紫雲膏 Zi Yun Gao (Purple Cloud Ointment)

- When the Zi Cao stops foaming (maybe 10 minutes), remove the big pieces of Zi Cao and strain it through a cloth.

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紫雲膏 Zi Yun Gao (Purple Cloud Ointment)

- As it cools, stir it to make it the proper texture. If not, it becomes hard like a candle.
- When it is very thick like honey or yogurt, pour it into small containers. Let it cool.

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Stirring gives you the proper texture

- Making this type of ointment is like making ice cream – you have to stir it if you want the soft texture. Otherwise the ice cream would freeze into a solid block.

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紫雲膏 Zi Yun Gao (Purple Cloud Ointment)

Functions: moistens the skin, stops itching, engenders flesh, kills fungus, reduces inflammation, stops pain, and helps close open sores.

Uses: burns, bleeding hemorrhoids, dry skin, wrinkles, ulcers, eczema, tinea, calluses, corns, acne, cold sores, frostbite, alopecia, external injuries, itchy bug bites, and various skin problems.

紫雲膏 Zi Yun Gao (Purple Cloud Ointment)

Functions: For direct moxibustion, it is used to help stick cones on the point, aid in healing, and prevent scars.

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Clinical Overview and Safety

What is moxibustion?

enduring	久	灸	moxibustion
fire	火		

灸法	*jiu fa*	moxibustion
針灸	*zhen jiu*	acupuncture-moxibustion

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What is moxibustion?

- **The narrow definition**: Moxibustion is the medical application of *burning mugwort floss* on or over an acumoxa point or an affected site.

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What is moxibustion?

- **The broader definition**: Moxibustion is an *external heat therapy* applied on or over an acumoxa point or an affected site.
- Mugwort or other combustible materials may be used. Mulberry twigs (Sang Zhi, Ramulus Mori), peach twigs (Tao Zhi, Ramulus Persicae), Deng Xin Cao (Medulla Junci), and even incense may be burned as moxibustion.

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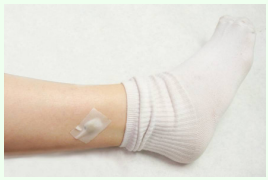
What is moxibustion?

- Some moxibustion doesn't even use fire. You can use chemically-induced heat to warm the points.
- **Example**: the external application of a warm-natured medicinal such as garlic. This is called *heavenly moxibustion* or *medicinal application moxibustion*.



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What is moxibustion?

Moxibustion Summary		
Burning mugwort	Burning other medicinals	The use of other medicinals without fire

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Advantages of moxibustion

1. Cost-effective and fairly convenient to perform.
2. Variety of application methods and functions.
3. A fully developed system with its own theories, scope of practice, methods for supplementation and draining, contraindications, and a long record of clinical experience.
4. Effectively treats many diseases. Modern research and clinical experience confirm this.

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Advantages of moxibustion

5. In some cases, moxibustion is more effective than other modalities:
   - Can be used when the patient is too weak for acupuncture or medicinal formulas cannot be digested.
   - In acute conditions, moxibustion provides quicker results than internally administered formulas.
   - There are also some conditions that respond better to moxibustion than to acupuncture or medicinals.

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Disadvantages of moxibustion

1. Time-consuming and requires stocking various substances.
2. Smoke and ash: smoke alarms, odor, messy, etc.
3. Risk of fire and burns. Some malpractice insurance policies do not allow direct moxibustion.
4. Possible the toxicity of the fumes when certain powdered medicinals are burned. Example: 雄黄 Xiong Huang (Realgar).

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Functions of Moxibustion

Warms whatever is cold	Moxibustion is yang so it counters yin evils
Transforms dampness	
Warms the channels and frees the network vessels	Moxibustion is yang so it moves qi and blood. This also stops pain.
Moves qi, quickens the blood, stops pain	
Disperses blood stasis, resolves qi depression	

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Functions of Moxibustion

Supplements the center, boosts post-heaven qi	Moxibustion supplements qi, blood, and yang.
Supplements qi, nourishes blood	
Warms yang, supplements qi and yang	
Returns yang, stems desertion	
Upbears yang, lifts the fallen	
Prevents disease, safeguards health, strengthens the body, boosts longevity	

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Functions of Moxibustion

Regulates and contains the thoroughfare (*chong*) and conception (*ren*) vessels	Commonly used for gynecology because of its functions (moving blood, nourishing blood, dispersing cold, etc.)
Repositions the fetus	

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Functions of Moxibustion

Nourishes yin	If the right points and techniques are chosen, can be used to descend qi and nourish yin... but these functions are somewhat controversial.
Downbears counterflow, descends qi	
Levels (or calms) the liver, subdues yang, extinguishes wind	
Expels evils from the body	Can be used to radiate evils outward, including heat evils.
Clears heat, resolves toxins	

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Functions of Moxibustion

Hand technique plus *point selection* defines which *function* is activated.

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Overview of techniques

Mugwort Moxibustion		
Mugwort cone moxibustion	Direct moxibustion	Non-marking or marking moxibustion
	Indirect moxibustion	Using various substances to isolate the cones

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Direct (left) and Indirect (right) Moxibustion

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Mugwort Moxibustion

Mugwort stick moxibustion	Pure mugwort stick moxibustion	Both have	Suspended moxibustion: techniques such as wandering, sparrow-pecking, circling, gentle moxibustion, etc.
	Moxa sticks with other medicinals added		Pressing moxibustion
			Isolating substance moxibustion

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Pressing (left) and Suspended (right) Moxibustion

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Mugwort Moxibustion

Warm-needle Moxibustion	Using moxa floss, slices of moxa roll, moxa caps, etc.

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Mugwort Moxibustion

Mugwort cake moxibustion	Using ironing, sunlight, hot-water bottles, or heat lamps

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Mugwort Moxibustion

Mugwort-fuming and steaming moxibustion	Using smoke or steam to treat an area

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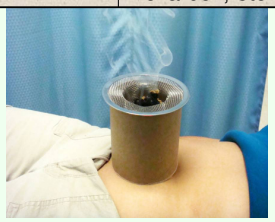
Mugwort Moxibustion

Warming device moxibustion	Using a warming cylinder, moxa box, etc.



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Mugwort Moxibustion

Modern methods	Liquid moxa, self-heating cones, point plasters, and other modern innovations

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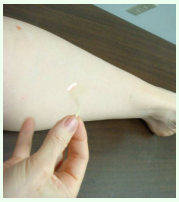
Non-mugwort Moxibustion

Moxibustion by burning medicinals	Peach or mulberry stick, Deng Xin Cao (Medulla Junci) moxibustion, and other types



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Non-mugwort Moxibustion

Moxibustion without burning medicinals	Heavenly moxibustion (blistering)
	Medicinal application moxibustion (non-blistering)

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Non-mugwort Moxibustion

Electrical moxibustion	Electrical heat moxibustion
	Electrical warm-needle moxibustion

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Related External Heat Therapies

Ironing	Placing medicinals on the body and using a hot iron to press them.
Fuming	Burning mugwort or other medicinals and holding the affected part in the smoke.
Steaming	Medicinals, often mugwort, are boiled in a liquid. The affected region is held in the steam.
Washes, soaks, or baths	All of these methods begin with a decoction. • *Wash*: the decoction is applied to the affected region with a cloth or the liquid is poured over the site. • The affected part is immersed in a *soak*. • The whole body is immersed in a *bath*. Often a steaming liquid is used as a wash, soak, or bath when it is cool enough.
Roasting	Medicinals are applied to a site, then heated near a heat source.

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Clinical overview

- The treatment room should have good ventilation but not be drafty or cold.
- Have the equipment ready: moxa supplies, lighter, ash tray; but also fire extinguisher, first aid kit, etc.
- Position the patient comfortably.

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Clinical overview

- How will you put out the fire? Be prepared.
- Be ready to remove the moxa from patient. Don't leave patient alone. Do you need tweezers, moxa scoop, etc.?
- Moxa ash can cause burns and is messy if not properly managed.
- Avoid burns on the patient, yourself, counters, and treatment tables.

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Apply Moxibustion to Yang First and Yin Second

Yang First	Yin Second
Upper body	Lower Body
Head and trunk	Limbs
Yang channels	Yin channels
Back	Front
Left side	Right Side
Also	
First less	Later more

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Dosage

- Moxibustion must be strong enough to be effective. Moxibustion is generally given in weaker doses in the west than in China: it is given less frequently and with less intensity.
- A treatment with moxibustion uses fewer points than an acupuncture treatment. It is better to give adequate treatment to a few points than to give inadequate treatment to many points.

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Dosage

Dosage is Determined By	Appropriate Dosage is based on
Number of cones	Condition of the patient
Size of the cones	Constitution of the patient
Duration (course) of treatment	Age of the patient
Frequency of treatment	Site or point to be treated
	Philosophy of the doctor

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Dosage

Half the dose	Standard dose	Double the dose
Very old or very young patient, emaciated, weak		Strong patient or serious disease

- Moxibustion for 養生 *nourishing life* usually uses a lower dose per session with frequent sessions over a long period of time.
- Moxibustion to treat disease usually uses a higher dose per session and treatment should be ceased as soon as the patient recovers.
- More moxibustion is given in the autumn and winter than in the spring and summer: as yang increases in the universe, less yang is needed in treatment.

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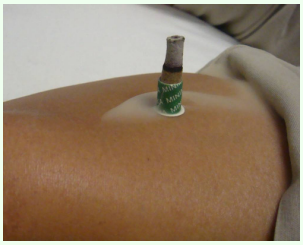
Dosage

Low dose for yang areas;
high dose for yin areas of the body.

Range	Location	Exceptions
Low dose	Head, face	More on Bai Hui (Du 20)
	Arms	-
	Chest, upper abdomen	Less on Ju Que (Ren 14) and Jiu Wei (Ren 15)
	Upper back	Less on Xin Shu (UB 15)
		More on Gao Huang (UB 43)
	Bony areas	-
High dose	Fleshy areas	-
	Legs	More on Zu San Li (ST 36)
	Lower abdomen	More on Shen Que (Ren 8), Qi Hai (Ren 6), and Guan Yuan (Ren 4)
	Low back	Less on Ming Men (Du 4)

Number of Cones

- Generally, when cones are used, the ancient books would specify an odd (yang) number if the count was less than 10, such as 1, 3, 5, or 7 cones.



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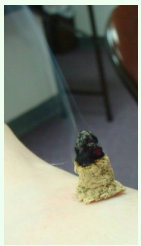
Number of Cones

- The effect of moxibustion treatment is cumulative, so treatment may be spread out into sessions.
- If a low number of cones is suggested, such as 3, 5, or 7 cones, this probably means to give this treatment every day until the patient is better.
- When a formula says 100 or 300 cones, do it all in one day or spread it out over a few consecutive days.



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Moxa Sensation

- Like needling sensation or *de qi* (得氣) with acupuncture, there is also "moxa sensation."

In an effective treatment, the patient experiences a reaction (one or more of these):
Hot qi moving through the channel
Hands and feet feel warm
Feeling of heat throughout the body
Tip of the nose sweats
Lips turn red

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After Treatment

- Wipe ash, moxa tar, and/or ointment off the point.
- Moxa tar sometimes appears as a yellowish-brown oily film around the point. Since studies show moxa tar has beneficial qualities, don't be in a hurry to clean it off.
- Do not use alcohol as this is cold and will counteract the treatment.
- If you want to clean it further, use warm water.

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After Treatment

- You may choose to apply an ointment afterwards.
- Keep the area that received treatment covered up so the mugwort qi and warmth do not escape.

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Self-care after moxibustion

Do	Don't
Immediately rest for a while without eating or drinking (besides water)	Engage in sex for 24 hours
	Get stressed or upset for 24 hours
Eat a simple bland diet for some days	Participate in sports or intense activity
This table assumes a high dose of moxibustion.	Eat cold or damp foods
	Overeat or get too hungry
	Allow exposure to wind

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Moxa Sores

- According to past masters, moxa sores are necessary for effective treatment. This is when moxibustion causes a blister followed by a sore.
- Since a moxa sore takes a while to heal, one treatment gives continuous stimulation for an extended period of time.
- Compared to a patient that gets a weekly treatment which only results in redness and warmth, there is obviously a big difference in the dosage.

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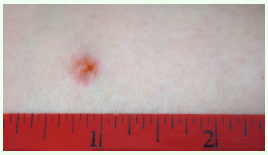
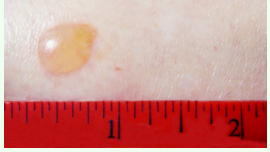
Moxa Sores





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Moxa Sores

- 楊繼洲《針灸大成》 *Zhen Jiu Da Cheng* (Ming): "If the moxa sore-opening closes easily, the disease qi is unable to exit."
- For repletion evils, moxa sores create an opening through which the evil qi can be expelled. This is like opening the pores to expel wind evils from the exterior. Sweating affects the most superficial layers, but moxa sores open into the channel system. So this method can expel evils from deeper in the body.
- Moxibustion is also used on an affected site such as an abscess. In that case, it directly lets the evil qi exit.

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Practical considerations when making moxa sores

- Proper written *informed consent*.
- Be sure your *malpractice insurance* covers it.
- Others could *incorrectly attribute moxa sores to abuse*, so educate the family.

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Practical considerations when making moxa sores

Do not make moxa sores on

- people with compromised immune systems
- diabetics
- people who cannot keep the region clean
- people who form keloid scars
- the face or areas that would disfigure the patient
- the soles of the feet: walking would be painful.

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Practical considerations when making moxa sores

- If you are new to this, first *practice on yourself*.
  - Try Zu San Li (ST 36), Qi Hai (Ren 6), or Guan Yuan (Ren 4).
  - This builds technical skills
  - This helps you understand what the patient experiences.
  - You receive immediate feedback, helping refine your technique.
- Moxa sores often show up some hours after treatment. If you try to make them appear during treatment, you will over-do it.
- Use more small cones, not few large cones. The clinical results will be the same but the patient will suffer less.

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Practical considerations when making moxa sores

- You can give one treatment using many small cones, or use a somewhat milder treatment for 2-3 days in a row. The latter will be less painful for the patient but can still make moxa sores.
- With moxa sores, the dosage is already fairly high so use only 1-2 points (bilaterally). This is a potent treatment and will not need repeating more than approximately once per month (you could use acupuncture or herbs in between). Once a blister has formed, no more moxibustion is needed until the site has healed.

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Practical considerations when making moxa sores

- Gradually increase the intensity of treatment to help the patient tolerate it more easily. Burn the first cone half way and the second cone two-thirds of the way down. Then the third cone can burn all the way down with less discomfort (if it is not too big). This is based on "first use less and later use more moxibustion."
- Generally, blisters do not need bandaging unless they are in an area that will easily get dirty or will be rubbed by clothing.

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Practical considerations when making moxa sores

- Inform the patient about proper after-care. Perhaps give written instructions. The patient must keep the area clean and should not break the blisters. Leave them to heal naturally unless they are extremely large. If large, you can open them with a sterile needle. Then apply antiseptic and bandage them.
- Follow up on the patient to be sure that infection does not develop. If the sore begins to look infected (more redness, swelling, and pus), apply an antibiotic ointment and bandage it.

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Moxibustion & safety

1. Burns - Unintentional burns should never happen.

Be especially careful or avoid moxibustion on:
• People who cannot report what they feel: comas, dementia, or otherwise impaired consciousness, small children, people with reduced sensitivity (numbness or neuropathy).
• People with immune disorders that make the healing of sores difficult: immunosuppressant drugs, advanced HIV disease.
• People with certain bleeding disorders (occasionally a burn or sore may bleed).

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Burns

Do not use moxibustion on the extremities of patients with diabetes as they may have less sensation due to neuropathy and also have a harder time recovering from infections.
Be sure the patient knows to report their sensations during treatment. Frequently glance at the patent's face or notice if their body is tense.
Often touch and look at the skin around the site to monitor skin temperature.
Remember, blisters often do not show up for some hours after treatment.

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Burns

Don't let hot ash drop on the patient. Frequently remove ash from moxa sticks or incense. For warm-needle, place a skin shield at the base.
Always have a plan for extinguishing the moxa before it is lit and have the proper equipment nearby.
Make sure all materials are completely extinguished before you leave the treatment room. Be careful that nothing burning is thrown in the trash. One ember can burn down a clinic.

- **First Aid**: standard for burns or infection.

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Moxibustion & safety

2. **Smoke**: Inhaling any kind of smoke, including moxa smoke, is harmful.
- Moxa rolls containing other medicinals such as 雄黄 Xiong Huang (Realgar) are especially harmful. Xiong Huang contains arsenic sulphide. Other medicinals may also be unsafe.
- Have adequate ventilation. Maybe use an air purifier or a smoke-eater. →

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Moxibustion & safety

3. Preventing fire
- Always have a fire extinguisher nearby.
- Smoke alarms should never be disconnected.
- Do not leave a patient who is receiving moxibustion unattended.

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Moxibustion & safety

- Have on hand the proper equipment for extinguishing the moxa. Always have a plan for extinguishing the moxa before it is lit.
- Make sure all materials are completely extinguished before you leave the room.

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Moxibustion & safety

4. Side effects of an unbalanced or improper treatment and other prohibitions

- Too much moxibustion, especially on the upper body can cause agitation and restlessness: heat agitates the spirit which resides in the heart.
- If a patient has heat, dryness, or yin vacuity, improper use of moxibustion can make it worse. That is why some doctors prohibit moxibustion in these cases.
  - However, other doctors believe that, when the proper techniques are used, these prohibitions are unnecessary. If care is taken to descend and circulate heat or to radiate it out of the body, moxibustion will not cause harm. Combined with a diet that provides the raw materials to increase yin, moxibustion can help the body nourish yin.

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Side effects of an unbalanced or improper treatment and other prohibitions

- Some patients are thirsty after receiving moxibustion. Let them drink.
- If the patient has heat (dry mouth, thirst, feels feverish, dark urine, constipation, etc.) after moxibustion, give them a decoction to engender fluids (see below).
- Next time, use less moxibustion, focus more on the lower body, and make sure there is enough time between treatments.

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Side effects of an unbalanced or improper treatment and other prohibitions

Formula to engender fluids after excessive moxibustion
Decoct 15 grams each of:
生地黃 Sheng Di Huang (uncooked Radix Rehmanniae)
麥門冬 Mai Men Dong (Tuber Ophiopogonis)
玄參 Xuan Shen (Radix Scrophulariae)
肉蓯蓉 Rou Cong Rong (Herba Cistanches)

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Formula to engender fluids after excessive moxibustion

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Side effects of an unbalanced or improper treatment and other prohibitions

- If the patient is fearful or the treatment strong, explain the procedure and obtain consent. If the patient is overly frightened, moxibustion may not be the best modality.
- If the patient is extremely weak, acupuncture is forbidden but moxibustion may be applied to the *dan tian* region or Zu San Li (ST 36).
- A woman with profuse menstrual bleeding should not be given moxibustion except to stop bleeding.
- Be extremely careful when using moxibustion on pregnant women.

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Side effects of an unbalanced or improper treatment and other prohibitions

Fainting can be caused by an excessive fear or a treatment that is too strong.

- Other causes include extreme hunger or weakness.
- If the patient is weak, the cones should be small.
- Do not use too many points; 2-5 bilaterally is usually enough.
- Symptoms of fainting include dizziness, blurred vision, nausea, pale face, thin pulse, cold hands, low blood pressure, difficulty speaking, palpitations, sweating, and impaired consciousness.

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Side effects of an unbalanced or improper treatment and other prohibitions

Fainting

- If a patient starts to faint, the procedures are the same as for fainting during acupuncture.
- Stop the treatment immediately. Make sure the patient does not fall. Help him or her lie down and elevate the feet, placing the head in a lower position.
- You can apply pressure to Ren Zhong (Du 26) if the patient does not revive immediately.
- When the patient comes to, he or she can sip warm tea.
- If fainting is due to weakness or hunger, apply gentle moxibustion to Zu San Li (ST36), but do not do this if the cause was fear or an overly strong treatment.

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Moxibustion & safety

5. Legal liability

- Check your malpractice insurance.
- Make sure your consent form covers your use of moxibustion.

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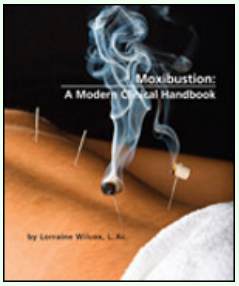

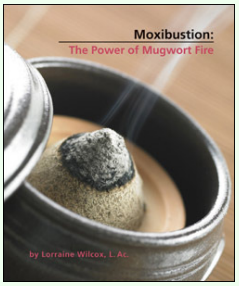

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My Books and Facebook Page

Moxibustion: the Power of Mugwort Fire	Blue Poppy Press http://bluepoppy.com/	History, translation of Ming writings on moxibustion
Moxibustion: A Modern Clinical Handbook	Blue Poppy Press http://bluepoppy.com/	Practical guide to using moxibustion
Moxibustion: the Power of Mugwort Fire	Facebook Group	My Facebook group with lots of photos and information on moxibustion
***Zhen Jiu Da Cheng*, Volumes 5 and 9**	Chinese Medicine Database www.cm-db.org	Translation. Volume 9 coming in 2011.

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Suppliers

Blue Poppy	http://bluepoppy.com/	My books, moxa supplies, burn ointment
KM Supplies	http://www.kmsupplies.com/	Korean moxa supplies
K.S. Choi	http://www.goacuzone.com/	Korean moxa supplies
Lhasa-OMS	http://lhasaoms.com/	Moxa supplies, generally more expensive
CAI	http://www.caicorporation.com/	Moxa supplies

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Suppliers

Kenshin	http://kenshin.com/	Japanese style; Shiunko (Zi Yun Gao), moxa supplies
Hiromi Paper	http://www.hiromipaper.com	Mulberry paper for making moxa sticks

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Good Works

Moxafrica	http://www.moxafrica.org/	Moxafrica is a charitable organization set up to investigate the use of moxibustion for the treatment of tuberculosis, especially in Africa.

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