

INTRODUCTION

All through this work you will see words that may be differently used, or be just different. As this work is designed to be with a package, please look at the glossary found in [The Pregnancy Map](#) for clarification.

In my training as an acupuncturist over 35 years ago, moxa use was an integral part of any work we did. Having worked with pregnant women for all this time, and having been trained as a classical energy acupuncturist, I find myself using a very different process in constructing treatments than many recent university trained acupuncturists.

Moxa still features greatly in my work for a number of reasons. This small eBook has been written to alleviate any doubt in the minds of lay people (or in fact acupuncturists) who may worry about safety of moxa use in pregnancy.

I personally have been doing this work with pregnant women for well over thirty years, so the practical clinical research is done. I initially came into this hands-on version of acupuncture enhancement, when I was an acupuncture course writer and teacher, who was also a thinking woman trying to do the best for her patients.

I kept revisiting pregnancy myself. I wondered why everything written back in the '70's and 80's was not particularly relevant to my own, and my pregnant patient's lives. Back then, we as acupuncturists were taught to not treat pregnant women, as no one really did – and there was no published work to base what I was doing upon.

My first pregnant case was a friend – whose tongue and pulse and history were well known to me. My second was a heroin addict who was also very asthmatic. I reasoned that anything I did would have to be an improvement on what her baby was experiencing. This common sense approach grew as I was then the only women practitioner in Brisbane city, and consequently saw mainly women. The lack of fertility assistance and the lack of modern birthing interventions meant many women had no other choices, not just no other *natural* choices but to see me to become, and stay pregnant, and to birth calmly and well.

These days moxa use seems to have been stymied by the over cautious teaching of those recently graduated in TCM (not classical acupuncture) who may have had teachers who were not seasoned clinicians themselves.

Safe and effective pregnancy acupuncture is based on a sound understanding of a natural healthy life, and of energy circulation and vibrational, heart felt medicine. Well past the point protocols – as we work with the individual not the named medical condition.

Moxa

Moxa/massage is THE therapy of choice in my opinion for nearly every problem pregnancy situation. This is because together they free up any congestion/stagnation. This is especially so in the pelvis, where all the angst and life repression is held. (Please see '[Liberate Your Butt!!](#)', as part of the [Livewell package](#), or any of the '[What Dad Can Do](#)' work).

What is moxa?

Moxa is the name of a substance that was a plant (*Artemis Vulgarus*). The process of burning it - either as a stick (looking much like a cigar) above acupuncture points, or on the handles of the needles in acupuncture treatments was far more likely to happen decades ago. Currently due to the lack of good ventilation in modern clinics, the presence of smoke detectors and clean air legislation, anti smoking environments and public expectation, the use of moxa has dwindled. This means that your local acupuncturist may not use it, or may use instead 'smokeless' moxa.

Smokeless moxa is nothing like the real stuff. It does not work at all the same way. Heat; yes - vibrational healing herbal oil penetration; no. As the name suggests, smokeless burns without smoke – and yet the toxic gases emitted when it is burning are not 'safe'. I would love it if it really worked as it would be so much easier in clinic – but it does produce different poisonous gases which you can't see, or necessarily smell.

Moxa is usually found in a roll similar in appearance to a cigar. It is lit at one end — it does not flame, but smoulders. To use, hold the lit end about a centimetre away from the skin; the heat penetrates and feels wonderful. By moving the stick up the back, it helps move the energy through a major energy meridian /channel, allowing all the structures around the heated area to relax. This is particularly helpful in late pregnancy to help relax mum and the entire abdominal load/structure, or when the person is feeling tired/achy.

I teach the use of the stick on the sacral area of pregnant women. It does a beautiful job of releasing all tension, relaxing and relieving back aching, whilst strengthening the local area. Opening up the sacral area using a moxa stick to loosen and warm is far less painful and more effective than using massage alone.

In clinics, heat lamps (easier and less smell) have tried to replace the moxa. But like using smokeless moxa, it is not the same thing. Why use moxa? To warm and relax. It apparently burns at the vibration of the far infra red rays from the sun. Before massaging with prebirth opening intentions, or whenever about to massage deeply in the sacral/pelvic area, always start with moxa as it allows movement on all levels. The massage is then much less painful. To get around the smell problem, [all moxa is to be used OUTSIDE](#), bringing in a whole new set of health and wellbeing issues – namely – [not getting cold](#) /in a draught whilst using it.

Why use moxa?

(Here I am not talking about fixing all life's woes – just many small ones). Why?

1) - Mainly because it feels so good. **Relaxation.**

This translates as less discomfort, back pain, easier sleeping and generally a more comfortable late pregnancy. This is about life improvement. It is not to say that there is anything that needs fixing/ or is wrong and that you can't get through the pregnancy without help. It is just so much more comfortable to relieve the weakness and the lack of circulation that is causing the pain.