

Moxa Aftercare Advice

Moxibustion is an essential part of Chinese medicine. This involves moxa, a substance prepared from mugwort leaves (*Artemisia vulgaris*), being placed either directly on the skin, on top of acupuncture needle, or held just above the skin, usually over specific acupuncture points or meridians.

The herb is lit, and as it smoulders slowly, the heat permeates the skin and affects the flow of "qi" (energy) and blood in the area being treated.

Most people find the gentle heating sensation of moxa treatment very pleasant. Practitioners usually check that the level of heat is comfortable and will explain that the patient must alert them if it feels too hot. This helps to ensure that the treatment is safe and that the skin is not overheating.

In rare cases, patients may find that the area where moxa was applied has become red and a little sore after the treatment. This may come as a surprise, especially if they felt no discomfort during the treatment. If this is the case with you after today's treatment, you may develop a small burn.

For a minor burn

- soreness and sensitivity at the moxa site
- marks or red spots under the skin that fade in 5-10 days
- darkening or reddening of the skin that should resolve within 10 days but in some cases, may last a little longer
- fatigue
- temporary dizziness or nausea
- fainting (rare)

Serious adverse events associated with moxa are rare, but may include:

- fluid-filled blisters associated with excessively strong moxa
- burns associated with negligent treatment/accident

What to do following an adverse reaction

Should you have any concerns, contact your practitioner for further guidance. They should be able to deal with most incidents and refer you on if necessary. It's important that your practitioner is made aware of any responses to treatment, so that they can adjust any future treatments, and to make sure that you aren't experiencing anything out of the ordinary.

Many minor adverse events pass very quickly following treatment, and most self-resolve within 24 – 48h. In some cases, symptoms can last a little longer, and have been known to last several weeks and beyond.

If the burn is larger than the size of a postage stamp, it will require medical attention. Please go immediately to your GP, who may then refer you to your nearest A & E Department at a Hospital.

All deep burns of any size require urgent hospital treatment. For ALL burns:

- **DO NOT USE LOTIONS, OINTMENTS OR CREAMS**
- **DO NOT USE ADHESIVE DRESSINGS**
- **DO NOT BREAK BLISTERS**