

MOXIBUSTION FOR TURNING BREECH BABIES.

THE EVIDENCE:

One randomized control trial¹, the gold standard of research, indicated that moxibustion works in turning breech babies.

Three comparisons were made between those women who had moxibustion (moxi-group) and those who did not have moxibustion (control group).

1. More women in the moxi-group noticed an increase in fetal movement than the control group (The study made the assumption that an increase in baby movement plays a role in babies turning from being bum down to head down.)
2. At 35 weeks pregnancy the percentage of babies that were head down was 75% for the moxi-group versus 48% in the control group
3. At birth the percentage of babies that were head down was 75% for the moxi-group versus 62% in the control group

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING MOXIBUSTION:

- ❖ Start at 33 weeks of pregnancy
- ❖ Either see a professional for training/demonstration or follow directions below:
- ❖ Light a moxa stick and blow out the flame. The result should be a hot, smoking tip - like a cigarette. Caution: moxa sticks give off LOTS of smoke, so if you have any breathing/asthma issues we suggest you use smokeless moxa sticks.
- ❖ Stimulate both acupoints BL67 (located at the outer edge of each baby toe by the nail bed) with the smoking moxa stick for a total treatment time of 15-20 minutes. The point of treatment is that it is applied to each toe in an alternating way, heat to left toe then heat to right toe, so there is no need to stimulate each BL67 point for 15 minutes.

As reaching your baby toe is likely challenging for you in the last trimester and your optimal position for successful moxibustion is semi-reclining, we suggest you encourage your partner or a friend to help with the treatment.

- ❖ Repeat this treatment once or twice per day for 7 days or, if your baby is still breech, for 7 more days.
- ❖ Use moxibustion to individual tolerability. First you'll feel warmth, then some mild tingling and after that it'll feel too hot and it's time to switch sides. You'll want to feel the heat (with some reddening of the skin) but do not cause a blister!

DISCONTINUE MOXIBUSTION:

If you experience

- ❖ abdominal pain
- ❖ other suspect adverse effects
- ❖ if you feel the baby has turned
- ❖ If your baby has not turned with moxibustion and you opt for external cephalic version (ECV), you should discontinue moxibustion 1 week prior to ECV to ensure a relaxed uterus for the ECV.

SOURCES:

1. Cardini F, Weixin H. Moxibustion for Correction of Breech Presentation – A Randomized Controlled Trial. JAMA. 1998 Nov 11; 280 (18).
2. James Saper, Registered Traditional Chinese Medicine Practitioner