

Notes from Japanese Acupuncture Techniques- TCMCH Seitai Shinpo Acupuncture Program

Thoughts on Moxibustion

-moxa has been used for 2300 years

-injury to the skin or subcutaneous tissue=stimulation=physical response=stimulation of natural healing

-Moxa works better on blood conditions, whereas acupuncture affects Qi.. Moxa is good for organic problems and difficult diseases. Moxa and acupuncture used together are an extremely effective modality to soften indurations in muscle tissue, relieve contracture, and improve mobility. Needles penetrate and moxa warms, moves, and stimulates. Maximizes capillary action and revitalizes tissue. -apply moxa to tight spots that needling hasn't released- moxa is softening

-compares to the heat stimulus achieved by lasers. The heat penetrates deeply

-Positive effects of moxa: return to homeostasis, resistance to disease, sleep is improved, appetite is restored, general well-being improved, bowel elimination regulated, regulation of autonomic nervous system, improve blood circulation, improve mobility, increase energy, softens hardened tissue, relieves pain, reduces inflammation, relieves hard knots due to overuse and repetitive movement that causes degeneration and hardening in the tissues, inspires longevity (Dr. Hara 108, Manpei 300 by moxa on ST36 every day). stimulation in tissue receiving moxa by denatured proteins which are histotoxins that are released in the blood and stimulate the production of red and white blood cells). Increases blood cell counts, especially white blood cells, increases phagocytosis of white blood cells. T Helper cells and Natural Killer cells released. Avoid catching colds. Increase in RBC and hemoglobin. Sedimentation rate of RBC increases. Blood glucose increases (important for diabetics), blood calcium increases which increases muscle strength and endurance, serum complements increase. Cancer cells decrease. Improved blood circulation- blood stasis clears up, rough and dark skin disappears. Bones become stronger. Hormonal secretion improves, infertility resolved, skin becomes clear and one looks younger. Increases cytokines(essential protein for cell metabolism) therefore invigorating metabolism. Thermal effect (warming), Heat stimulation of moxa can correct the abnormal antigen-antibody reaction of autoimmune disease. Corrects immunity disorders. Rheumatism, collagen disease, allergic conditions, and AIDS. Dermatitis.

-Regulates autonomic nervous system. Qi and Blood, Ying and Wei can be interpreted as functions of the autonomic nervous system. Qi and Wei being energetic/stimulating and Blood and Ying being nutritive/relaxed. Moxa therapy tends to activate the parasympathetic nervous system. Patients relax, their blood pressure reduces and appetite increases. Moxa on the Back Shu points are regulatory points for the nerves of the organs. Treating CV 12 and TW4 will always improve the patient's health. (Sawada tradition). CV 12 is the starting point of all meridians, central point of the middle burner, and central to the solar plexus (celiac ganglion).

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How to use moxa

-application amount based on constitution of patient and whether they are dealing with a deficient or excess condition. Always listen to what patient is telling you. If they feel pain and their body contracts, use smaller cones and apply pressure to reduce pain. In general-

Excess: return to homeostasis easily, good appetite, good sleep, good elimination, good movement (no pain). Vitality, strong in spirit, good physique. These people can handle more moxa. Reduce and disperse. Bloodletting, purging okay.

Deficient: return to health slowly. Thin, frail, little presence. Tendency toward chilling. Treatment is to strengthen- fortify physical strength, unblock meridians, improve circulation of qi and blood, tonify spleen and stomach. Whole body treatment is good. Treat abdomen (strengthens organs)

Apply in odd numbers. A classical dosage is “if heat is felt, apply until the heat cannot be felt; if heat cannot be felt, apply until it can be felt”.

-indirect moxa uses shiunko ointment (Purple Cloud) made of danggui, zigen, beeswax, and lard. Good effect for burns and hemorrhoids, minimizes scars

-sizes include thread-like, sesame seed, half rice, rice grain, bean, and egg

-can use a bamboo tube to decrease the heat sensation, or press the skin on either side with fingers. By rolling moxa between light weight boards and properly pulling the moxa from the roll, the cone can be kept fluffy and cooler burning.

-suppurative moxibustion- effective for softening the hardened muscle fibers from myofascial fibrosis. A special ointment is applied to encourage the discharge of pus. It will scar and some localized inflammation and itching may occur during the healing process. Dano-kyu reduces pain, knots in tissue. Good for very stubborn cases. The excretion of pus eliminated metabolic wastes lodged in the tissue.

-it's okay to apply moxa onto blisters. If it becomes infected, discontinue until healed. Apply shiunko or healing ointment. Don't panic.

- adverse reactions to moxa include: temporary aggravation of presenting symptom, dizziness, nausea,
- Healing reaction includes: sense of fatigue, feeling of heat all over the body, flushing, slight fever, heavy head, loss of appetite, dizziness, nausea and diarrhea. This is a exacerbation of symptoms (usually lasting 2-3 days) followed by total improvement in the condition. Tell the patient to rest.

Good for so many things

-Reduces chilling disease due to poor circulation. This is usually from sympathetic response in which the adrenaline release causes vaso-constriction. Warm fingertips indicate a relaxed state and the blood supply and circulation is sufficient. This is parasympathetic dominance. Always check the fingertips and toes even if the person feels warm to estimate the function of the blood. Check the abdomen and buttocks for

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coldness. In peripheral coldness, burn Jing Well points, Back Shu points, DU 20, BL 10, CV 12, CV 6, CV 4, etc. It is important to reduce this chilling because blood stagnation is a primary cause of disease. Warm hands and cold feet can mean heat above and cold below. Check the occiput around BL 10 for redness. In this case, burn moxa on the legs. Moxa on ST 36 and LI 11 can draw warmth to the joints and help relieve counterflow heat. The five phase points help as well to pull heat down. -Tension in the back shu points is due to an extremely high level of stress. These people tend to get heat above and cold below.

- Sawada Ken style is Tai Kyoku Ryoho (Tai Chi Treatment). Aimed at harmonizing five zang and six fu. Basic points of the Sawada school include CV 12, CV 6, LI 11, TW 4, ST36, KD 6, GV 20, GV 12, BL 17, BL 18, BL 20, BL 23, BL 52, BL 32. "These basic points are well-distributed throughout the whole body. That is to say, all the points on the limbs are located around the four large joints: the wrist, elbow, ankle, and knee (Four Joints). These joints must maintain a very high level of activity. Disorders such as arthritis which occur frequently due to fatigue or overuse of the joints is caused by the obstruction of Ki (Qi) and Ketsu (Blood). Therefore, the Four Joints should always be kept in good condition in order to maintain the primary function of the human body *which is movement*. As well, the points on the abdomen and back are the most important points of our body and represent the upper, middle, and lower (triple) warmer which stimulate our congenital and acquired Ki energy. At the same time, the points on the back reinforce the spine which is the framework of our body." PG 10 A whole body moxa treatment such as this is excellent for deficiency, signs of aging, over-work, over-fatigue, too much stress, recovery from surgery, etc. In whole body moxa treatment, limit the number of cones burned on each site. Use 3-7 in order not to overtax the system. In local treatment many cones can be burned to eliminate pain. Dosage is determined by pulse strength, condition of the abdomen, general constitution, and intuition/wisdom of the practitioner.

Similar to Seitai Shinpo

- OK to treat Yin Deficiency with Heat cases with moxa. Yin fluids are lacking due to nutritional deficiency or vitality of the Yin organs. Musculo-skeletal system is also deficient. These people are usually in pain. Can use Taiji Therapy (whole body moxibustion). Whole body moxa vitalizes the Zangfu, improves digestion, and increases physical strength and the Yin Deficiency resolves.
- Pierce through moxa can be used for reaching points through the limb on the opposite side. Used for reducing heat in cases of inflammation in addition to curing chilling in the extremities. For example: PC 6 and TW 5, SP 9 and GB 34, SP 6 and GB 39, ST 34 and SP 10.

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- Can apply one thread size moxa about every centimeter around inflamed areas. AS the inflamed area decreases, move moxa cones inward. Will facilitate absorption and reduce inflammation.
- Can use with fever if temperature is under 38 degrees Celsius as long as patient is not in a diseased state.

-Treatment of children with moxa is aimed at balancing their nervous systems. GV 12 is the moxibustion point for children. It is called Chirike. Nurtures health and strength. Aids sleep and digestion. Can be used on adults and has a tranquilizer effect.

-For acute myofascial pain, concentrate on key tender points and burn as many cones as needed until the warmth is felt deeply. In chronic muscle fatigue, light stimulation on many points is useful. This releases the tight muscles associated with sympathetic overstimulation, also known as stress.

-TB 1 will stimulate the sympathetic nervous system. It stimulates the circulation of source qi and boosts vitality.

-special points: LI 2 for styes

ST 34 for abdominal pain and diarrhea

SP 6 and BL 67 for breech presentation

LU 5 (found one cun proximal) for sore throat

BL 10- sore and stiff neck

LI 15- hives

BL 43- arm pain

GV 12- childhood fright

GV 14- cold and flu

GV 23- sinus infection, rhinitis

Shitsumin (shimian-center of heel)- insomnia (and edema)

BL 32- releases the occiput

Bibliography:

North American Journal of Oriental Medicine

Thyme Manual