

moxa for breech presentation



WHAT IS BREECH PRESENTATION?

This means the baby is positioned bottom- or feet-first instead of head-down. This can happen in approximately 3–4% of full-term pregnancies. Common causes may include low amniotic fluid, uterine shape, fibroids, or multiple pregnancies.

WHY USE MOXIBUSTION? (MOXA)

In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), burning moxa near the point BL-67 (Zhi Yin) is understood to promote movement, unblock Qi, and warm the channels. From a biomedical perspective, the heat may stimulate hormones like estrogen and prostaglandins, increasing fetal activity.

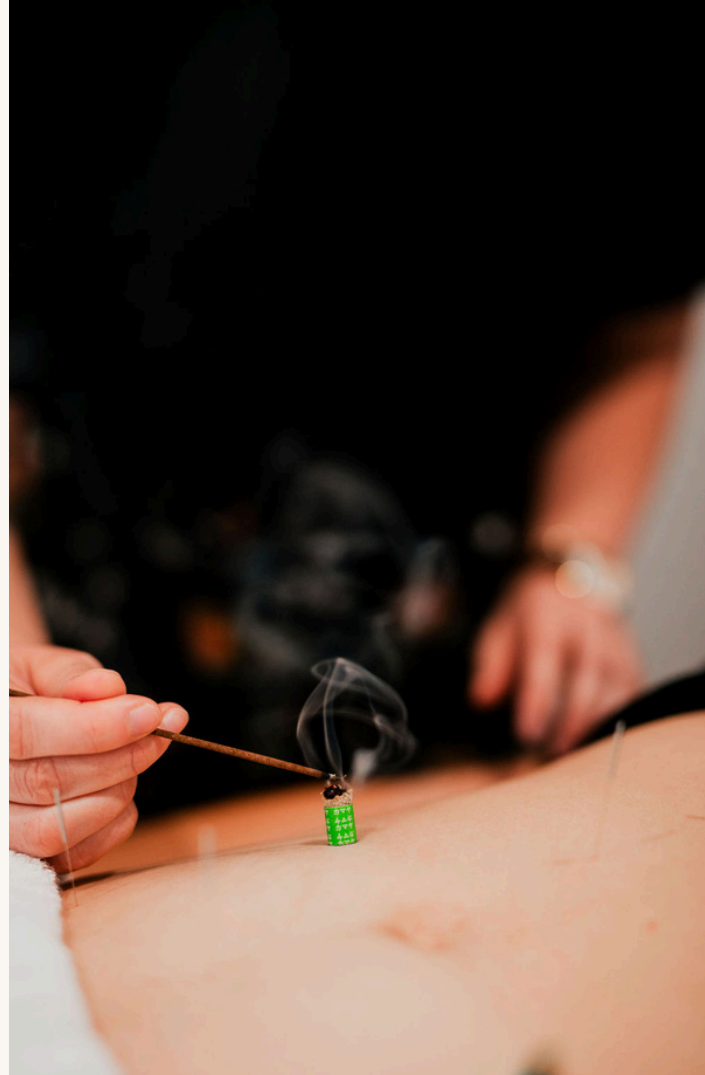
A 2023 Cochrane Review showed that moxa may reduce the chance of breech presentation at birth and lower the need for oxytocin.

WHEN TO USE IT

The ideal time to start is between 33–35 weeks gestation. Before 33 weeks, many babies may turn on their own. After 36 weeks, there's less space in the uterus for baby to move into position.

IS IT SAFE?

When used correctly, Moxa is considered a safe practice in low-risk pregnancies. If you have any concerns you can contact your Chinese Medicine practitioner, midwife, or OB.



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APPLY MOXA AT HOME

BL-67 is located at the outer corner of the pinky toenail. Light moxa stick and hold it 2–3 cm above the point until the area feels warm (not hot or burning). Apply heat to each toe for 20 minutes daily, ideally at the same time each day. Sit comfortably and keep your back supported.

POSITIONING TIPS TO ASSIST BUB

After moxa, try kneeling on hands and knees or using a yoga ball in a forward-leaning position for 2–3 minutes. This may encourage your baby to move into an optimal position.

WHAT TO EXPECT

You may notice more fetal movement during or after treatment, such as fluttering, shifting, or a rolling sensation. Some people notice hiccups in a new spot, indicating bub may have turned.

WHEN TO STOP

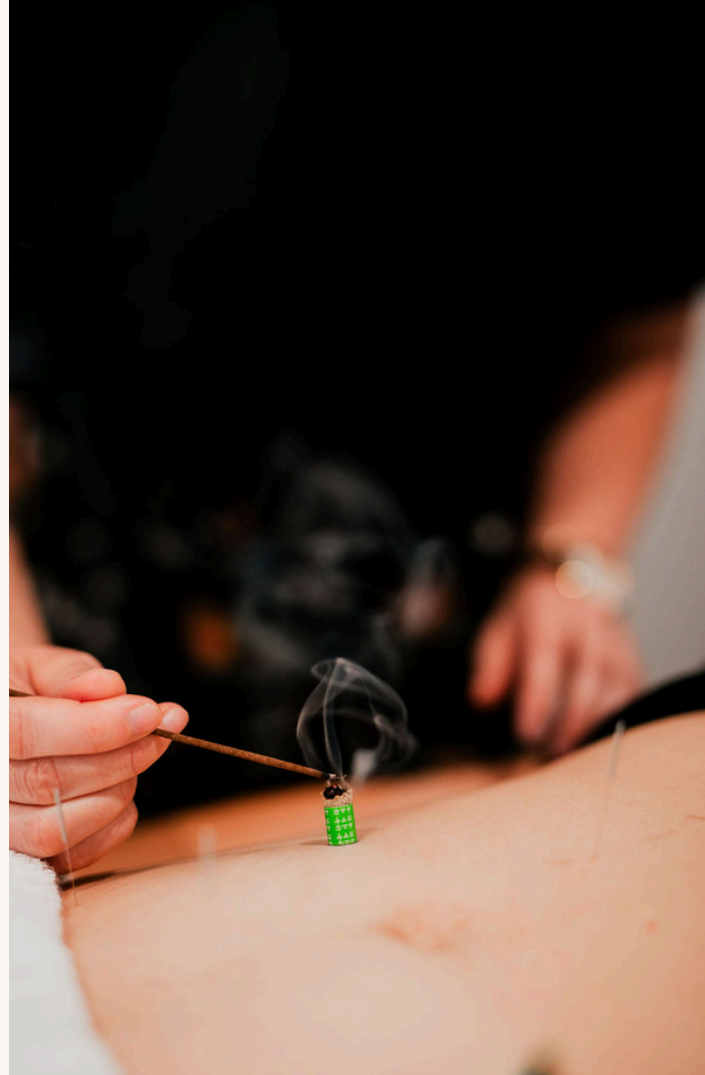
Discontinue use if you experience strong uterine contractions, pain, bleeding, reduced fetal movement, or your waters break. Always seek medical advice.

NEED SUPPORT?

We offer in-clinic moxa, acupuncture, and support for breech pregnancies. Book in to feel more confident and supported as your body prepares for birth.

READING & RESEARCH

1. Coyle et al, Cochrane Review (2023): Moxa before 37 weeks likely reduces breech and need for oxytocin. **2.** Cardini & Marcolongo, JAMA: Moxa at 33 weeks increased fetal activity and cephalic presentation. **3.** Li et al, Meta-analysis: Moxa + acupuncture significantly improved outcomes, especially in Asian populations. **4.** Zanini et al, Swiss trial (2009): Results mixed, suggesting population/context-specific effectiveness.



moxa guidelines:



WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- lighter or candle to ignite the moxa stick
- small ceramic or glass dish to tap off any ash
- small towel to protect surfaces beneath the treatment area
- glass jar with 1–2 cm of water to extinguish the stick after use

HOW TO USE MOXA STICK: LIGHTING THE STICK

Hold one end of the moxa stick over a candle or lighter until it begins to glow. Smokeless moxa can take a few minutes to fully ignite. Once lit, test the heat by holding it 2–3 cm away from the back of your hand — you should feel a gentle, radiating warmth.

APPLYING THE HEAT

Hover the lit end of the moxa stick over the acupuncture point (e.g., BL67 on the pinky toe), maintaining a distance of 2–3 cm from the skin. There should never be direct contact.

- breech or posterior-positioned babies, apply moxa for 20 minutes per point.
- use the “pecking” technique: briefly lift the moxa stick away when it gets too warm, then return it over the point once the heat subsides slightly.

MANAGING THE ASH

Occasionally, ash may build up at the tip. Gently tap the stick against the edge of your dish to remove it, keeping the stick burning evenly.

AFTER TREATMENT

When finished, extinguish the stick in the jar of water, making sure it's fully out. Allow it to cool and dry completely before storing or reusing. Never leave a lit moxa stick unattended.

CHECKING THE HEAT

If you're unsure whether the stick is still active, hold it 2–3 cm from the back of your hand to check for warmth. If it feels cold, re-light.

IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTE

Never touch the glowing tip, even if it doesn't appear to be lit — it remains hot and can burn the skin.

