

## How to do moxibustion to turn a breech baby



Moxibustion, a Traditional Chinese technique, involves using moxa sticks (made from dried mugwort, a herb) as a heat source applied to acupuncture points on your feet. The Bladder meridian is an acupuncture energy line running through the body which connects with your uterus, & ends with the Bladder 67 point on the outer edge at the base of your little toe nail on each foot. It is thought to stimulate hormones to increase your baby's heart rate & movements & to relax your uterus slightly, enabling your baby to turn to head first. Research shows that it is about 65-70 % successful & may be effective even up to 38 or 39 weeks of pregnancy. Once your baby has been confirmed as still being breech, you & your partner can do the procedure at home, any time after 35 weeks of pregnancy.

**DO NOT** try this if you are expecting twins, have had a previous Caesarean, any bleeding during pregnancy, any major medical conditions or if your baby is due to be delivered by Caesarean for a specific reason other than breech. It is *absolutely essential* that you check with your midwife that your baby is still breech & that it is safe for you to try this procedure. If you are consulting an acupuncturist try to find one who is also a doctor or midwife who can check if it is safe for you to try moxibustion. If in doubt, contact Expectancy.



Choose a well ventilated room to do this. Empty your bladder & sit comfortably in a chair with your legs raised; loosen tight clothing & relax your tummy muscles. Remove half a centimetre of paper from the tips of the two moxa sticks, light the ends & extinguish the flame – the tips will now be smoking &

hot. Direct the heat towards the two points on your toes, holding the sticks about a half a centimetre away from your skin so that it feels comfortably warm but not excessively hot. **The hot stick should not touch your skin.** It is usually done for 15 minutes, twice a day, up to a maximum of ten treatments. Your baby may be more active than usual during or just after the treatment. To stop the sticks from burning further, knock them gently against a sink or metal bin so that the ash falls off, but don't get them wet. If for any reason you think your baby has turned, or if you have any concerns, **stop the treatment** & contact your midwife so she can check your bay's position.

Expectancy has an interactive CD ROM on *What to do if Your Baby is Breech* with more suggestions for turning your baby, as well as using complementary therapies if you have to have a Caesarean.

Leaflet written by Denise Tiran, Expectancy's Director, and intended as a general guide only