

Bleeding		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bleeding • Bleeding at needling site • Mild / transient / minor bleeding • Subcutaneous bleeding • Hematoma • Minor hematoma • Subcutaneous / superficial hematoma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small hemorrhage • Lesion of blood vessel • Bruising • Bruising at needling site • Mild / transient bruising • Heavy bruising • Subcutaneous bruise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecchymosis or hematoma accompanied by pain • Ecchymosis or hematoma without pain • Petechia or ecchymosis
Local pain		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain • Needle (-site) pain • Pain where needle was inserted / at the site of the needle / in the punctured region • Mild / transient pain at needling site • Severe / strong / significant pain at needling site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain upon insertion / stimulation • Pain while needle was in place • Pain upon needle withdrawal at the acupuncture point • Pain after needle was removed • Remaining / residual needle site pain • Prolonged / unacceptable pain at needle site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild pain at the acupuncture site more than one hour after treatment • Pain disappearing after > 3 days • Chest pain (pneumothorax ruled out) • Electroacupuncture problems e.g. too strong current resulting in pain • Local muscle pain • Unknown pain
Other local AE		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wheal • (Local) swelling • Redness • Flare • Localized erythema • Needle-site / local skin reaction • (Skin) irritation at acupuncture point • Skin infection • Local (skin) infection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflammation at application site • Itch • Itching and redness • Itching in the punctured region • Itching and erythema (suspected contact dermatitis) • Local allergic reaction (urticaria) • Needle allergy • Allergic phenomena / reaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant rash on abdomen few days after acupuncture • Cellulitis after treatment of edematous leg • Edema in m. tibialis with anterior toe lifting weakness (fully resolved) • Other local AE (around the acupuncture site)
Central nervous system		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aphasia • Dizziness • Mild / transient dizziness • Imbalance • Severe dizziness, vertigo or loss of balance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vertigo • Disorientation (length unspecified, 1 h, 1 day) • Severe disorientation • Disturbed speech • Slurred speech 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disturbed vision • Spontaneous sensory perceptions • Shivering • Seizure shortly after treatment • Tremor
Peripheral nervous system		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cold sensation at needling site • Feeling of acupuncture point at contralateral arm • Paraesthesia • Temporary paraesthesia • Tingling • Tingling, prickling, burning, dysesthesia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolonged deqi • Strong acupuncture or heavy sensation • Hypaesthesia • Numbness • Numbness in upper extremity • Numbness and unusual sensation • Severe stiffness or numbness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hypaesthesia with numbness for three days • Insensibility • Itching, pins & needles, tingling or burning sensation • Nerve irritation • Neuritis
Aggravation of symptoms		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggravation • Aggravation of complaints / existing ailment / existing symptoms • Unexpected, severe or prolonged worsening of symptoms • Aggravation of symptoms during acupuncture session / after treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transient aggravation of symptoms • Aggravation of existing symptoms followed by improvement • Deterioration / exacerbation of symptoms • General aggravation of symptoms • Worsening of health state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worsening of condition (after removing needles) • Headache and or facial pain • pressure and or tension in the teeth • Increased pain
Vegetative nervous system		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Generalized) sweating • Isolated sweating of hands • Mild sweating • Flushed cheeks and body warmth • Hot flash • Feeling of warm / heat / cold • Coldness / feeling cold • Freezing • (Feeling of) fatigue • Extreme feeling of fatigue • Feeling tired (mild transient) • Tiredness and exhaustion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abnormal tiredness • Severe / significant tiredness or exhaustion • Lethargy • Dazed • Vasovagal reaction: collapse, dizziness, nausea & vomiting • Unconsciousness • Fainting • Faint / dizzy • Feel faint / drowsy • Feel faint (significant) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant / severe drowsiness • Drowsiness not causing hazard • Prolonged drowsiness (one day, one week) • Drowsiness or restlessness • Orthostatic problems • Malaise • Poor concentration • Dry lips / mouth • Xerostomia • Hunger / thirst

Motor system		
• Cramp	• Heavy legs	• Joint problems
• General muscle tenderness	• Knee went weak	• Restricted movement
• Muscle spasm / tension / weakness	• Weakness in legs / legs or arms	• Stiffness
Distant pain		
• Pain / ache / discomfort other than at needling site	• Mild transient pain not at needling site	• Generalized muscle pain
• Reactive pain at other body sites	• Chest pain / tightness	• Other / unspecified pain / aches
Gastrointestinal / gynaecological system		
• Nausea	• Tiredness next day after ten hours of diarrhoea (significant)	• Increased peristalsis
• Mild and transient nausea	• Stomach ache	• Loss of appetite
• Severe nausea	• Abdominal distension	• Other gastrointestinal complaints
• Vomiting	• Impaired bowel function	• Increased haemorrhage during menses
• Severe vomiting	• Digestive problems	• Menstrual problems
• Constipation	• Entero- / gastrospasm	
• Diarrhoea		
Cardiovascular system		
• Cardiovascular / circulatory problems	• Increase in blood pressure	• Tachycardia
• Depression of blood pressure	• Palpitation	• Other cardiac disturbances
Respiratory system		
• Asthma attack	• Breathing difficulties	• Bronchitis or airway problems
Generalized skin reactions		
• Dermatological problems	• Other dermatological phenomena	
Headache		
• Headache	• Headache for three days	• Severe headache or migraine
• Headache the next day	• Migraine attack	
Emotional interference		
• Aggressive behaviour	• Depressive mood	• Severe emotional outburst and anger at practitioner
• Anxiety	• Discomfort	• Fear
• Anxiety and panic (up to one hour)	• Restlessness or nervousness	• Grief / crying / tearful
• Significant panic with sensation of heat and sweatiness	• Disorientation, anxiety, nervousness, insomnia or emotional	• Needle phobia, anxiety and rage
• Severe panic / agitation / depression with anxiety	• Emotional / psychological reaction	• (Severe) nightmares
• Depressed emotional state or neurovegetative dystonia	• (Uncontrolled) euphoria	• Other mood swings
	• Significant emotional release (manic, relaxed, rage or confusion)	
Sleeping problems		
• Sleep disturbances	• Severe sleeping problems	• Insomnia
• Impaired sleep	• Severe sleeplessness	
Moxa caused adverse events		
• Burn injury	• Burns	• Blister following moxibustion
Needling malpractice		
• Left alone / unattended in the treatment room for too long	• Failure to remove needle(s)	
• Broken needle	• Forgotten / dropped needle	
• Stuck or bent needle	• Needle lost or forgotten	
Other or unclassified adverse events		
• Change of symptoms	• Nose bleeding	• Additional comments
• Illness	• Miscellaneous symptoms	• Other systematic symptoms
• Sick	• Haematuria on next day	• Other neurological problems
• (Systemic) infection	• Increased urinary frequency	• Others / unspecified / other (mild) adverse events
• Fever	• Concomitant diseases of recent appearance	• other negative reactions
• Angina	• Change of taste	• Unknown due to incomplete record form
• Eye irritation	• Change of weight / weight reduction	
• Irritated tongue		

Online supplementary appendix S3: Categorization of adverse events

Subheadings represent the categories to which adverse events (AE) were assigned. AE descriptors extracted from the included publication are reported verbatim or in spirit in order to provide an overview of the different wordings concerning AE type and severity. Slashes indicate that expressions were also used separately. Terms in brackets indicate that such terms were not used in all of the descriptors with otherwise similar wording.