

Acupuncture and its effect on getting pregnant.

Acupuncture

Acupuncture is a technique similar to acupressure, except that fine needles are inserted at specific points along the meridians just under the skin to stimulate, disperse and balance the flow of energy, relieve pain, and treat a variety of chronic, acute and degenerative conditions. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) identifies more than 2,000 acupuncture points connected with pathways called meridians that conduct vital energy or qi (pronounced "chee") throughout the body. Illness or symptoms are associated with an imbalance of this vital energy.

Acupuncture uses hair-thin, disposable needles to penetrate and stimulate specific points in the body to restore normal energetic balance. This acupuncture technique stimulates specific areas associated with organ functions in order to restore balance and help the body maintain its own health. As more women seek drug-free treatment for the conditions of pregnancy, this ancient Chinese healing art has much to offer. Acupuncture may be able to help with many conditions relating to infertility for which more conventional treatments are not effective or long lasting. Acupuncture treatments are normally given once a month. An average session lasts 45 minutes, and women usually only feel a mild sensation such as a feeling of slight heaviness at the site of needle insertion.

Practitioners of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) believe that a variety of energy patterns can interfere with becoming pregnant. Acupuncture can be used in combination with other Western Medicine treatments for infertility when trying to get pregnant. **Acupuncture provides a noninvasive, holistic approach to reversing infertility and has a surprising success rate of sixty percent among infertile women;** a very high number, considering that many women discover acupuncture late in their search for infertility solutions.

Acupuncture with IVF and ICSI

Many couples who have difficulty conceiving a child by traditional methods often employ various techniques to assist them in the reproductive process. The most common assisted reproduction therapy is in-vitro fertilization (IVF), in which a woman's eggs are harvested and fertilized with a man's sperm in a laboratory. In cases where a male's sperm count is extremely low, a different procedure known as intra-cytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) may be used.

Although assisted reproduction techniques like IVF and ICSI have been in use since the 1970s, they are still something of an inexact science. Success rates for each therapy range from as low as 1% to as high as 50%, and a successful pregnancy depends on a variety of factors, including the age of the woman, the cause of infertility, and the skill of the technician performing the procedure. Acupuncture is a useful tool for patients looking to increase their chances of becoming pregnant following assisted reproduction therapy.

Two teams of researchers in Germany and China have found that adding acupuncture to the treatment regimen of women using assisted reproductive techniques to have a child can dramatically improve the woman's chances of getting pregnant by up to 20%. In these women the chosen acupuncture points were those that relax the uterus according to the principles of TCM. This greatly increased the chances of getting pregnant because acupuncture has a great influence on the autonomic nervous system and needling specific points would optimized endometrial receptivity in these women.

Acupuncture and PCOS

Between 5 percent and 30 percent of women have characteristics of a condition called [PCOS or polycystic ovarian syndrome](#). The extent is so large because PCOS often goes undiagnosed or misdiagnosed because of its variety of symptoms. Polycystic ovarian syndrome is a hormonal imbalance that leads to weight gain, excessive hair growth, irregular menstrual cycles and difficulty getting pregnant. Such patients are often prescribed hormonal drugs which may have side effects and interfere with getting pregnant. With the use of acupuncture, doctors say that such patients may have an option of a drug free treatment.

Acupuncture has shown promising results in women with polycystic ovarian syndrome in regulating their periods. Almost all women suffering from polycystic ovarian syndrome who subscribed to acupuncture had their periods regulated in a study conducted. It has also helped women lose weight and relieve headaches in the long run leading to a calmer and stable mind.