



Fact Sheet

Natural Infertility Treatment

Maximising your chances of achieving a full term pregnancy

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Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine are ancient Chinese methods used for the treatment and prevention of disease. These systems are as ancient and effective as any other medical techniques used in the world today. They have been practiced consistently for the past five thousand years in the Orient. Seventy percent of one quarter of the world's population uses acupuncture and herbs as their main form of health care. The benefits of Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine in treatment for the infertile couple can be found in early Chinese medical literature dating back to the 11AD. Not only do these techniques assist in regulating the menstrual cycle and invigorating the sperm, but they also serve to enhance the function of the whole body. This is especially appropriate for the over 40 couple as it stimulates overall health to effect reproductive health and a reduction of biological age.

PMS, amenorrhea, endometriosis, blocked fallopian tubes, immune system incongruities, and infertility related hormonal problems yield to many of these old world (traditional) procedures. Furthermore, herbal formulas that tonify the Kidney energy (renal and adrenal function), and Kidney essence (jing) are especially beneficial in raising sperm count and motility. The highly technical and expensive methods used in Orthodox medicine can be enhanced by the complimentary set of procedures and herbal medicines. In the oriental sexological literature there are also specific sexual positions that enhance a man's sperm count and motility as well as regulating a woman's cycle. There are currently a number of studies being conducted in the west that are focused on understanding the effects of these techniques.

Advantages of Using Chinese medicine to Increase Fertility

1. Chinese medicine sees the person as an integral Mind/body organism, thereby does not treat just symptoms/diseases. Chinese medicine ventures to stimulate the body's natural healing potential by treating root causes rather than just symptoms.
2. Chinese medicine, used in the treatment of infertility, minimizes undesired side effects and accumulated toxicity from invasive procedures and drug therapies.
3. Chinese medicine may be used to strengthen and balance one's general health so that IUI, IVF, GIFT, ICSI, AHT and TET procedures are more effective.

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4. The Chinese medicine patient derives general health benefits and endocrine system balancing from specific acupuncture and herbal regimes. Pregnancy becomes easier to achieve, maintain and postpartum recuperation happens faster. Medical studies have been done in China to verify this type of whole body health enhancement.
5. Chinese medicine is a complete traditional medical health care system and can be used with or without the integration of Western medical techniques. The integration of Orthodox medicine, as we know it in, began in the Orient less than a century ago. I believe that an integrated approach to reproductive medicine works best. This is achieved by combining western and eastern diagnostic techniques to arrive at a holistic diagnosis which is then treated .with acupuncture, herbal medicines, dietary therapy and where appropriate supplemented with modern assisted conception procedures. This approach is best termed “Integrated Medicine” and provides the best results available today.

Unexplained Infertility

Irritability, depression, frustration are keywords to the Liver Qi Stagnation. It must be noted that whenever an organ is mentioned in oriental medicine it implies the related conduit or meridian. A meridian is a pathway along which energy / Qi flows. The psychological aspect of the Liver is said to assist us in planning easily and wisely. The person who suffers from Liver Qi congestion may be found in a job that they don't enjoy, working late hours, and with a history of taking birth control pills. There frequently exists an inner psychological frustration about having and raising children. Dysfunctional family factors play a major role in the upset Liver, as the condition may have existed for many years.

Physical symptoms of irregular periods, PMS, dark colored blood with small clots, breast pain with distention, worry and frequent sighing and headaches often accompany the psychological symptoms. Pulse diagnostic palpation at the radial artery usually reveals a wiry and small quality pulse in the person with a Liver imbalance. Pulse diagnosis at the radial artery is an extremely sensitive and skilled art that takes many years to perfect. It is like a laboratory blood test. There are over twelve different pulse positions on each wrist and twenty-eight pulse qualities that can be related to each one of these positions. The readings yield a multitude of relationships when integrated and compared with the patients' signs, symptoms and tongue characteristics. The different pulses can confirm a diagnosis and be used to monitor a patient's progress.

Infertility due to Liver Qi Stagnation manifests mostly in women and is a frequent cause of unexplained infertility. This is because this type of Liver stagnation effects the blood flow in the pelvic cavity. Acupuncture at the right time in the menstrual cycle, in conjunction with an herbal formula and some counseling, very likely can clear the congestion in several months. The resulting pregnancy is more than welcome along with the emotional clarity that arrives when the Liver organ/meridian is less toxic (stagnated).Couples must realize, however, that the prevalence of Liver Qi Stagnation in modern society is not something simple that can be relieved over night. It may take 9 months or more to release the stress, trauma, and toxin in the system, if it is at all possible. There have been cases resolved within a month's time.

Miscarriage

Since the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC.- 24 AD.), Chinese people have been using traditional medicine to effectively treat both male and female infertility. Many texts have been published in the medical literature focusing on these problems that have so recently come to the forefront in western society. Chinese medicine for threatened miscarriage includes acupuncture, herbs, diet and an a different approach to exercise. It must be remembered that treating infertility and miscarriage using any method is complicated and involved. The medicine that helps the patient attain a healthy vital energy (Tian kwei) can greatly aid the woman who has had miscarriages due to a hormonal imbalance. For the woman over 40 there are herbs that nourish the deeper vitality that is necessary for the body to call forth healthy ovum. Currently Chinese medicine, both in China and the west, is used in conjunction with Western medical techniques and testing to design an effective course of treatment for the couple wishing to achieve not only pregnancy, but a healthy baby delivered at full term.

Sixty percent of all spontaneous abortions occur in the first half of the first trimester of pregnancy. Genetics play a key role in habitual miscarriages. To presume that Chinese medicine alters genetic structure without triple blind studies etc., would be a stretch of most peoples imagination. However, Chinese medicine is very effective in strengthening a persons' constitution.

If a woman has miscarried, it is important to build and conserve her Qi and build her Blood. This usually means building and conserving Kidney Qi, as within the Kidney both Yin (Blood) and Yang (Qi) are generated. We must remember that Kidney does not just mean the ear shaped organs guarded by the ribs just above the lower back. It means the whole psycho physical interrelated matrix and visceral relationship of Kidney function and its meridian pathways.

In oriental medicine we say that all chronic imbalances affect the Kidney organ/meridian network. What this means is that if a person has a weak constitution i.e., is pale, feels cold is undernourished, etc., then this is a result of either prenatal (genetic) influences and or lifetime habits and illnesses. The way to change these conditions, if possible, is to change them through treating the Kidney with tools of acupuncture, herbs, diet, and exercise. Kidney means bone and bone marrow and from the marrow is made blood. Blood nourishes Qi and the cycle regenerates and builds. Essentially, in oriental medicine it is said that the Blood nourishes, the Qi protects, and the Kidney Qi holds the fetus. The Kidney is injured by cold; therefore dietary considerations are generally applicable for this patient. Recent studies have also shown that good dental hygiene and quality dental work can increase fertility.

There is a very famous formula that builds both Qi and Blood, which is used to strengthen the body and prepare a woman for conception. This is especially useful if she has a history of miscarriage. The formula should be given for three to six months before conception is attempted. It is called "The Rock on Tai Mountain Decoction." This somewhat poetic name refers to a great mountain that many Chinese religiously pilgrimage to, hoping to get their prayers answered. It is an extremely demanding climb of a thousand steps, just as pregnancy is demanding of the modern mother. Just giving this herbal decoction does not guarantee that conception will take place and the next baby delivered to full term. Seeing the patient as a whole person and thereby considering their total health picture helps the Chinese medicine physician decide how to choose and change a formula to be specific to the patient.

Raising Your Fertility with Chinese medicine Treatment

Timing and consistency of treatment, whether having acupuncture or just taking herbs, is of primary importance. Consistency of treatment is most important for men, as to raise sperm count and motility with herbs starts to take effect at the fourth month of treatment. It takes 70 days to generate new sperm. Timing and consistency is also important for women as there are specific hormonal adjustments that can be made at each week of the cycle. Missing a week of treatment may lose an important opportunity to heal a particular segment of the four phase menstrual cycle. It takes a minimum of three consecutive cycles (12 treatments) to do the foundation work of regulation regardless of biological age. Most women can benefit from this type of concentrated foundational treatment every two years, even if they aren't trying to conceive. This should be started before a woman reaches 28 years old or earlier if birth control pills have been taken.

If a **woman is nearing forty years old** and has had either numerous fertility drugs (over 3 cycles), birth control pills, PMS, ART procedures, elevated FSH, polycystic ovaries, endometriosis, sperm antibodies, or a history of drug, alcohol, or smoking abuse, then it usually takes longer to balance her reproductive system. Likewise, if a man has a history of STDs, history of drug, alcohol, smoking, or sexual abuse, urinary tract infections, burning urination, chronic lower back pain, prostatitis, difficulty passing urine, or other urological health issues it takes longer to rejuvenate the reproductive function. The extent of rejuvenation is relative to the effort and inherent constitution of the individual. The couple must expect to focus six to nine months before really expecting to evaluate results. There is no quick path when it comes to conception, full term pregnancy and recovery after delivery. "Turning back the clock" is indeed possible.

If a **woman is in a state of high level wellness** from a traditional medicine's point of view (warm hands and feet and no PMS are just several indicators), and has a "normal" active and relatively a low stress energy abundant lifestyle, then it is appropriate to evaluate between the sixth and ninth month of consistent treatment.

Biological vs. chronological age. According to the 2,000 year old Chinese medical classic (Nei Ching su wen ling shu) there are some precepts of health and aging that are very important in this day and age. Accordingly, the normal life span for humans is over 100 years. There are documented life spans of monks that have lived in good health to well over 150 years old. In the Nei Ching there is a dialogue between the Yellow Emperor and an old Taoist teacher named Chi-po. Why does medicine exist? asks the Yellow Emperor, "...because people have severed themselves from their roots (Tao)". The reconnection between the individual and their "roots" (spirituality) is a very important aspect in the maintaining of youthfulness and is thereby inherent in the basic foundation of traditional medicine. Modern science supports this in the focus on the emerging stem cell technologies and the possible cures for major life threatening diseases. Stem cells are found in abundance in the umbilical cord which suggests this deep root connection to the Jing Qi (essential energy). Understanding the root cause and quality of one's own longevity can slow the aging process and rejuvenate the body as thoughts can create reality. Knowing with certainty that we are an ageless body is the basis for creating high level wellness in the modern world. Longevity however is more than just belief.

Correct **dietary and exercise habits** are just as important for the preconceptive mother as for the father. Eating salads (cold nature food) for a year is not the best diet for a person who has generally a low basal body temperature (BBT). Sometimes eating meat such as lamb (warming food) can help tonify a "cold" barren uterus. For male factor and unexplained infertility there are specific physical and mental exercises to be done by couples to generate the right environment necessary for creativity and conception.

Combining conventional reproductive technologies with ancient acupuncture and herbal techniques demands accurate communications between team members which includes the patient as captain. Communication between the patient, the acupuncturist and the reproductive specialist is a delicate process. It is important for the physician to have knowledge of the procedures of the acupuncturist/herbalist and vis a vis. Lacking knowledge of an herbal program that a patient is on can effect the results of an ART procedure. It can even be detrimental as alternative therapies are effective in changing a person's body. Likewise it is important for the patient to inform the acupuncturist of any herbs or vitamins that are being taken while undergoing treatment, other than prenatal vitamins. Traditional Chinese medicines and acupuncture work quite differently than orthodox medicines. They are gentle and deep acting rather than flashy and bright. Expect to feel a growing subtle influence that permeates your life like the smell of star jasmine on a summer's night.

Our Female Healthcare Philosophy

At the Women's Natural Health Practice we specialise in providing comprehensive natural, reproductive, gynaecological, obstetric and general healthcare for females from adolescence to post-menopause. Our approach is to integrate techniques in both oriental and western medical diagnosis in order to formulate a naturally oriented treatment plan combining acupuncture, herbal medicine, nutritional therapy, exercise and lifestyle. Each treatment plan is tailored specifically to each individual woman maximising results

Please email us at enquiries@naturalgynae.com with questions, we are more than happy to provide any information via email that will assist you in deciding which treatment approach would be best for you

For more information, contact details and appointments click here www.naturalgynae.com