

**Nawei's Acupuncture Clinic
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Chinese Medicine and Infertility

By Dr. Nawei Jiang

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Evidence that Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine have been used to aid fertility can be found in early medical literature dating back to 3AD.

The condition was first recorded by Zhang Zhong-jing, a famous physician from the Han Dynasty, in his discussion of diseases in women in the Jin Gui Yao Lue (Essentials of the Golden Cabinet).

How does Acupuncture work?

According to the principles of Oriental Medicine, a person's health is determined by having a balanced flow of "Qi", the vital life energy circulating through the body. Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine are means of influencing this energy to induce a particular effect in the body. In more modern terms, acupuncture can affect the nervous system.

Many modern researchers have confirmed its benefit in the following areas:

- Regulate menstrual cycle.
- Invigorate sperm. Enhance a man's sperm count and motility.
- Enhance general health.
- Reduce stress, control anxiety, enhance sleep and increase energy level.
- Balance endocrine system.
- Improve blood flow in pelvic cavity.
- Increase the chance of pregnancy for women undergoing in-vitro fertilization (IVF).

Good candidates for acupuncture and Chinese medicine are people who have a functional, rather than structural reason for infertility.

Infertility due to hormonal problems, immune disorders, amenorrhoea, irregular menstruation, stress and age related factors all fall into the category of functional infertility.

Stress can dramatically decrease fertility in both men and women. Acupuncture increases fertility by reducing stress.

Acupuncture and in-vitro fertilization(IVF)

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A study, published in the April, 2002 edition of the medical journal Fertility and Sterility, found that acupuncture increases the chances of becoming pregnant for a significant number of women undergoing in-vitro fertilization (IVF).

Researchers included 160 patients undergoing IVF for the study. The patients, who were all required to have good quality embryos, were evenly and randomly divided into two groups similar in age and diagnosis.

When the patients were examined using ultrasound six weeks after their IVF procedures, the differences in pregnancy rates were notable. In the control group, 26 percent of the women, or 21 out of 80 patients, became pregnant. Of the patients who had received acupuncture treatments, 42 percent of the women, 34 out of 80, became pregnant.

What to expect

Fertility treatments may vary from practitioner to practitioner, but on the average, an acupuncturist will see you once a week for at least three consecutive cycles (twelve weeks).

Your treatments will begin with a comprehensive consultation with your practitioner in which you will discuss details of your menstrual cycle, medical history, lifestyle, nutrition and exercise habits.

Treatment will usually include acupuncture, customized herbal therapy, stress reduction and a reasonable diet.