

Alternative Fertility Treatment: Acupuncture and Moxibustion

Natural Fertility, Unexplained Infertility, Preparing for IVF

There are many natural healing methods that are useful in infertility, acupuncture combined with or without moxibustion is one of the very best of them. Acupuncture theory recognises that we are a holistic being...mind, body and spirit and that all aspects of what it is to be a healthy and functioning human being have to be addressed in order to become fully well, including fertility. Acupuncture is whole body healing, this therapy is recommended as part of general health maintenance.

Some people who have never tried acupuncture are a little scared of it, assuming it will be very uncomfortable...but surprisingly it is not. Acupuncture is the practice of inserting needles into very specific acupoints on the body to stimulate healing. Before treatment a thorough assessment and consultation will be undertaken in order that the acupuncturist can prescribe the specific acupoints required in your unique circumstances. This assessment is much more in-depth than a normal medical examination and will include finding out about your diet and lifestyle, as well as your general medical history, menstrual history, your attitude and emotional health, your exercise/sleep balance, your complexion, tongue, pulse diagnosis. As an acupuncturist I will be assessing where the imbalances are within your system, and what may be causing them.

In this practice we also recognise that the root cause of infertility of any kind may involve the accumulation of toxicity within your system which will interfere with general health, hormone production, can lead to Candida (a fungal overgrowth often seen in unexplained infertility) and much more. Not until the toxicity has been identified and removed can the body start to return to its normal natural balanced self. (see Meat Health Scan)

Once a thorough assessment has been undertaken the acupuncturist chooses certain points on the body to insert the needles, based on rebalancing body energy (yin and yang) for healing. The needles are inserted using a gentle tap. The practitioner then manipulates the needles. The needles used are very fine, and most points are painless. The needles are inserted about 1/8 inch.

Some Acupuncturists find that using moxibustion in combination with acupuncture, greatly enhances the healing of infertility. There are different types of moxibustion, also called moxa. Moxa comes from the word mugosa, which means Mugwort herb. Mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*) is burned in different ways for moxa treatment. The intention of using moxa, is to bring heat to the area being treated. Mugwort is known to stimulate blood flow to the pelvic area, especially the uterus. This enhances the healing benefits of acupuncture. It is especially effective for what Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) refers to as *blood stasis*, or a *cold uterus*.

Frequently asked questions

Q: How can Acupuncture help support healthy fertility?

A; Acupuncture stimulates circulation of blood in the pelvis, relaxes the cervix and uterus, regulates the menstrual cycle and can even dissolve small fibroids, when combined with a specific detoxification plan, supplementation and dietary changes. Acupuncture, together with supplementation and dietary changes is also helpful in regulating hormone levels- especially low progesterone, and this approach is also helpful in treating PCOS. Acupuncture is also excellent for the treatment of stress and anxiety, which often occur with a diagnosis of infertility.

Q. Can acupuncture be complimentary treatment for medical fertility treatments?

A; Yes. In fact, fertility doctors often recommend acupuncture treatments while a patient is undergoing IVF, as acupuncture has been clinically found to enhance success rate of IVF from 40-60%!

Q: Am I a good candidate for acupuncture specific to fertility?

A: I have worked successfully with patients who have a diagnosis of unexplained infertility, poor pelvic blood flow, blocked fallopian tubes, PCOS and luteal phase defect. Often, there is not a definite western medical diagnosis for the infertility, but in this practice we can uncover more subtle imbalances that are at the root of a patient's infertility by the utilization of the Meta-Health scan.

Q: Is acupuncture for fertility good for men with low sperm count?

A; Yes. Functional Nutritional Advice and lifestyle changes are often used in combination with acupuncture for poor sperm count, mobility or morphology issues. Sperm health is related to general health. Again a Meta-Health Scan will identify if low sperm count, mobility and morphology issues are related to toxicity, and if so a specific tailored detoxification plan will be prescribed along with a course of acupuncture. This has proven very successful.

Q: : What is moxibustion? How does it aid in healthy fertility?

A; Moxibustion is the application of prepared Artemesia that is lit and burned either directly on an acupuncture point, or used to warm the acupuncture needle by heating the needle shaft with moxa burning on the handle. Moxa is warming, moving and tonifying and I often use it to warm the uterus.

Q: Is acupuncture helpful for women preparing for IVF, how far in advance of the transfer should I begin acupuncture? How often after the transfer should I get acupuncture?

A; As soon as a woman knows she is going to undertake IVF treatment, at least a month before the first cycle, ideally. At the very least 1 month before transfer, twice per week. After the transfer within 24 hours is deal.

If you are someone who has suffered with difficulties in trying to conceive, or have known fertility issues such as PCOS, endometriosis, uterine fibroids, ect., you may want to consider acupuncture as part of your Natural Fertility healing plan.

It is important to remember that acupuncture cannot be as effective if other healthy lifestyle habits are not in place, such as proper diet and exercise! Be well and walk in peace!

References:

1. [wikipedia.org/wiki/Acupuncture](https://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acupuncture)
2. [wikipedia.org/wiki/Moxibustion](https://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moxibustion)