

HEALTH REPORT

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ACUPUNCTURE FOUND TO ENHANCE FERTILITY AND IN VITRO FERTILIZATION SUCCESS

Lucy Appert had suffered through two miscarriages, a stillbirth and an intensive illness during pregnancy that resulted in surgery. After five years of trying to bring a healthy baby to term, she and her husband found success after she underwent a series of Acupuncture treatments. In March 2005, she delivered a healthy baby boy.

Appert stated, "I recommend Acupuncture to everyone. It does work. I did everything possible for years to have a baby. I almost lost hope."

Acupuncture has become more popular as a remedy for female infertility after a handful of American and European studies showed that it improved the success rate of in vitro fertilization.

Dr. Paul Magarelli, an infertility doctor in Colorado Springs, Colorado, said, "Do I believe in it? Absolutely." Dr. Magarelli is the co-author of an ongoing study into the use of Acupuncture with in vitro fertilization with Dr. Diane Cridennda. Dr. Cridennda is a licensed Acupuncturist with a master's degree in Oriental Medicine. Dr. Magarelli, while initially skeptical of the possible benefits of Acupuncture, finally admitted, "No matter how I look at this data, I see an improvement. I'm pretty much of a convert."

In general, studies seem to indicate that doing Acupuncture about 30 minutes before and after in vitro fertilization can increase the chance that the embryo will be implanted successfully. The Colorado study so far shows a 7% higher birth rate among those who received Acupuncture treatment.

Acupuncture seems to help some women conceive because it improves circulation to the ovaries which makes for healthier eggs, and to the uterus which increases the chances that the lining will be strong enough to hold those eggs to full-term.

SOURCE: www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,154472.00.html

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TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE, ACUPUNCTURE SOLVE FERTILITY PROBLEMS

Women who've been unsuccessful at becoming pregnant may find the long-awaited solution through Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and Acupuncture. This is the message of author and doctor of medicine Randine Lewis, Ph.D. from her book *The Infertility Cure*. Dr. Lewis found personal success in becoming a mother through the practices of TCM. Following her own delivery, she started on a 4-year study quest that has helped numerous Western women through her discoveries and practice of Eastern medicine.

"For years I have used Acupuncture in my clinic to treat many different fertility problems. Almost every stage of a woman's cycle and pregnancy can benefit from the balancing effects of working with the meridians (pathways) to promote the flow of Qi (life energy) through the body and to bring the organs up to the highest level of health," she says in her book.

The western focus on drugs and a reliance on science to achieve pregnancy caused Dr. Lewis to eschew such practices. "Western medicine relies on scientific measurements to determine the problem, and then it provides remedies that are supposed to overcome that particular effect," she says.

"Chinese medicine, on the other hand, looks at the whole patient, seeking imbalances in the system rather than focusing on disease." Maintaining and restoring balance is at the heart of diagnosis and treatment in Chinese medicine, and Acupuncture plays a key role in the entire process.

"Many hormonal problems occur because of slight imbalances in the endocrine system, altering the way the body produces hormones. Modern Western diagnostic techniques may not detect any abnormality, but even a slight aberration can throw the entire system off so it no longer functions smoothly. We need to get hormones and the other systems back into balance," she says.

Dr. Lewis has a basic four-step approach that she advocates and utilizes with her patients to balance energies and prepare a woman's body to nurture a child. The first step involves an examination from the point of view of diagnosing what's going on with a woman's system and harmonizing reproductive energies. Next would be a change in diet to eliminate any deficiencies. Third would be the introduction of Acupuncture to clear energy meridians and get the Qi properly flowing to the system. Finally, Chinese herbs are included as a final step in correcting any underlying deficiencies and clearing obstructions to pregnancy.

Through her experience, Dr. Lewis knows that some Western women will have a bit of an aversion to Acupuncture. Some of this is based on the fear of needles and a general misunderstanding of the effectiveness of Acupuncture. But she encourages them to include it in their programs. "All you really have to know is that Acupuncture works," she says. "There is scientific proof of its efficacy in treating a wide range of conditions, as well as millions of satisfied patients all over the world."

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FAILED FERTILITY SOLVED WITH ACUPUNCTURE

Vera had been through every conceivable type of conception program Western medicine had to offer. Nothing worked. She remained childless. Fortunately, she met Dr. Randine Lewis who introduced her to Acupuncture. A little over a year later, she gave birth to a health baby boy.

A vibrant, cheerful young woman, Vera epitomizes the Southern belle, according to Dr. Lewis who tells her story in the book *The Infertility Cure*. This attractive and petite woman had been unsuccessful at achieving pregnancy, and this led to numerous unsuccessful adventures at conception utilizing the techniques of Western medicine.

Vera had laparoscopic surgery because of painful periods and ovulation; she'd undergone hormone testing; and tried 6 months of the drug Clomid™ to stimulate ovulation at the recommendation of a doctor. As each procedure escalated in intensity and became more invasive she submitted to several cycles of intrauterine insemination and had one failed IVF (in vitro fertilization).

Growing discomfort with medical treatments brought her to the office of Dr. Lewis, where she was examined from a perspective of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). Dr. Lewis spent 4 years studying and practicing TCM in China and attributes her own successes with motherhood to this background. *The Infertility Cure* is one of her ways of sharing this information with everyone seeking to conceive.

A thorough examination of Vera's condition led Dr. Lewis to a diagnosis of hyperactivity (over activity) in her sympathetic nervous system. This was depriving the pelvic organs of blood flow. Twice a week Acupuncture was recommended to address the disharmony.

Dr. Lewis used traditional needle-type Acupuncture to address energy disturbances, reduce sympathetic dominance and to harmonize menstruation. Some electro-acupuncture to more strongly stimulate points in the lower back was also used. Vera was also introduced to self-administered femoral (upper leg) massage to increase blood flow to the uterus and ovaries.

"After beginning treatment, Vera's next menstrual flow was heavier and without any pain," says Dr. Lewis. The treatment was continued during the early phases of her next cycle of ovulation and changed only slightly about the time conception could occur. Dr. Lewis noted that 10 days after ovulation, Vera's pulse became "rolling and lively." This indicated to Dr. Lewis that Vera had conceived. This turned out to be true and months later Vera gave birth to a son!

Here is Dr. Lewis's belief: "If you have been told you are infertile, I have one message for you: There is no such thing as infertility; it is a myth! Rarely have I met a woman of childbearing age with all her reproductive organs intact who isn't capable of bearing children. As long as the anatomical structures are present, a medical diagnosis of "infertility" is often a fallacy. Many factors can cause a woman to have difficulty conceiving, but once these factors are overcome and a woman's body is restored to health, conception can occur naturally." Acupuncture is one of the tools that helps bring this about!

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ACUPUNCTURE IMPROVES FERTILITY IN MEN, TOO

It's become rather commonly known that Acupuncture has produced some very positive and even remarkable success stories in solving fertility problems in women. Now, new research shows there's a very good possibility that Acupuncture might hold some enhancement benefits for their male counterparts as well.

Over the years, women have born all of the children as well as the brunt of criticism when they are unable to do so. In reality, men suffer from infertility issues almost as frequently as women. According to statistics from the National Infertility Association (an organization also known as RESOLVE), between 35% and 40% of infertility problems among couples are actually caused by male conditions.

Male fertility issues commonly fall into the categories of low sperm count, abnormal sperm shape, abnormal sperm size and reduced motility (capability of movement). Additional influencing factors can also fall into the areas of lifestyle, genetics and physiological changes, but these were not really major areas of consideration for this study.

Twenty-eight men who were diagnosed with idiopathic (unknown) infertility issues were chosen for this study. Sperm samples were taken from each man prior to the start of the study with each individual asked to abstain from sexual contact for 3 days prior to sampling.

A portion of the men received Acupuncture twice per week over a 5-week period, while the control group received no such treatment.

Overall, the men in the Acupuncture group showed significant improvements in sperm motility; number and percentage of healthy sperm produced; and showed significant changes in sperm structure and quality.

For instance, while median motility levels increased some in the control group, they increased from 44.5% to 50% in the Acupuncture group. At the start, the percentage of healthy sperm among men in the Acupuncture group and their sperm volume were on the low side. After 10 sessions of treatments, the healthy sperm of the average person in the group had increased four-fold, with the number of sperm per sample increased five-fold. In addition, significant changes in sperm structure and quality were seen in the samples from the Acupuncture group. There was little to no significant changes in the sperm of the control group.

The authors concluded that despite the inability of Acupuncture to significantly reduce some sperm abnormalities, the treatment could be used to improve overall sperm quality, leading to the possibility of increased fertility.