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Manage Your Reproductive Health with Acupuncture

Oriental medicine has a long history when it comes to enhancing reproductive health and fertility for both men and women. In fact, evidence that acupuncture and herbal medicine have been used to aid fertility can be found in early medical literature dating back to 3 AD.

Statistics state that one in five couples over the age of 30 have difficulty conceiving after one year of trying. Many of these couples are turning to acupuncture and Oriental medicine for a safe, effective and natural solution to have a healthy baby.



Fertility treatments were 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 or Essentials of the Golden Cabinet.

According to the principles of Oriental medicine, a person's health is determined by the quality of Qi, the vital life energy, and blood circulating through the body. When Qi and blood are circulating properly, the body is properly nourished and functioning optimally which, in turn, enhances fertility.

Researchers have confirmed the benefits of acupuncture and Oriental medicine for:

- * regulating the menstrual cycle
- * improving sperm count and motility
- * reducing stress and anxiety associated with infertility
- * normalizing hormone and endocrine systems
- * improving blood flow in the uterus
- * decreasing the chance of miscarriage
- * increasing the chance of pregnancy for women undergoing in vitro fertilization (IVF)

Fertility treatment approaches can vary from person to person, but are usually scheduled for at least three consecutive cycles (twelve weeks). Treatments can include acupuncture, customized herbal therapy, stress reduction and dietary counseling.

If you or someone you know is experiencing difficulties with their reproductive health please call to see how acupuncture and Oriental medicine can help.

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Oriental medicine can help treat various male disorders. As men age a decrease in the function of male reproductive organs occurs and they experience andropause, or male menopause. Andropause differs from menopause as there is not a dramatic or marked physiological change.

Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS)

Gynecological conditions including premenstrual syndrome (PMS), fibroids, endometriosis, menopause and infertility are some of the problems treated most successfully by acupuncture and Oriental medicine. Oriental medicine has long recognized that health and vitality can be sustained over a woman's lifetime by restoring balance within the body and supporting the natural production of essential hormones.

Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS)

Premenstrual syndrome covers a broad spectrum that can include emotional symptoms such as depression, irritability, sadness, anxiety, or poor concentration and can also include physical symptoms, such as breast tenderness, a change in bowel habits, acne, or loss of libido. Symptoms can change from month to month and vary widely in terms of severity. Imbalances can arise from a variety of factors, including poor diet, too much work, physical or emotional trauma, constitutionally weak Qi (energy) or stress.

In Oriental medicine, the liver is considered responsible for the smooth flow of Qi (life force) throughout the body and for smoothing our emotions. When the liver's function of moving Qi is disrupted, Qi can become stuck. This is referred to as Liver Qi Stagnation and is commonly associated with PMS. In addition to irritability and moodiness, signs and symptoms may include: distending pain in the area below the ribs, stuffiness of the chest, sighing, abdominal distention, nausea, sour regurgitation, belching, diarrhea or constipation, feeling of a lump in the throat, irregular periods, painful periods and distention of the breasts prior to periods.

If you or someone you know is struggling with symptoms associated with premenstrual syndrome call today to see how acupuncture can help!

Pregnancy & Childbirth

Pregnancy is an amazing time in a woman's life. Many women report feeling healthier than they have ever felt before; however, the physical growth of the baby and changes in hormone levels can bring about pain, discomfort and a variety of health problems.

Acupuncture and Oriental medicine can provide a safe, effective alternative for many of the health complications that may arise before, during and after pregnancy. A growing number of women are choosing acupuncture to manage their health throughout their pregnancy and as an optional treatment for an overdue or difficult labor.

Planning for a Healthy Baby

Healthy parents produce healthy babies. With acupuncture and Oriental medicine, parents can improve their health to create the most optimal environment for their unborn child. In addition to their ability to strengthen, support, and balance overall health and well-being, acupuncture and Oriental medicine are effective treatments for regulating menstruation and hormone levels, reducing stress and addressing any pre-existing medical conditions or concerns.

Acupuncture during Pregnancy

Acupuncture and Oriental medicine can play a vital role in the comfort of a pregnant woman. There is strong evidence to support the belief that acupuncture is highly effective in treating some of the most common problems experienced during pregnancy.

Unlike the more dramatic reproductive hormone plunge that occurs in women during menopause, changes in men occur gradually over a period of many years.

Some male reproductive health conditions that acupuncture and Oriental medicine can help include:

- * premature ejaculation
- * low sperm count
- * diminished motility
- * impotence
- * hernias
- * testicular pain
- * prostatitis
- * male infertility
- * andropause

If you or someone you know is struggling with symptoms associated with any of these conditions, call today!

Prostate Health

The prostate is prone to enlargement and inflammation as men age, affecting about half of men in their sixties and up to ninety percent of men as they approach their seventies and eighties. If left untreated, benign prostate gland enlargement, which presents with symptoms such as frequent nighttime urination, painful urination, and difficult urination, can lead to more serious conditions such as prostate cancer, urinary tract infections, bladder or kidney damage, bladder stones, and incontinence.

Acupuncture and Oriental medicine can be used to

Some of the problems that an acupuncturist often treats during pregnancy include:

- * nausea, vomiting and morning sickness
- * heartburn
- * constipation
- * edema and swelling
- * pelvic pain
- * neck and back pain
- * sciatica
- * leg cramps
- * fatigue and exhaustion
- * insomnia
- * anxiety and depression
- * water retention

Acupuncture for Childbirth

While there are acupuncture points that can provide natural pain relief during labor, acupuncture is more commonly used to induce labor. There are several points that stimulate contractions and influence cervical ripening. There is also an acupuncture point that has been found to turn a breech baby.

Postpartum Recovery

Many women feel depleted after the birth experience. Acupuncture and Oriental medicine can help smooth the transition during those first few months after birth to ensure a quick recovery.

Some postpartum disorders that can be treated with acupuncture:

- * fatigue
- * postpartum depression
- * mastitis
- * insufficient or excessive lactation
- * post-operative healing
- * night sweats

Postpartum care focuses on the physical, emotional and psychological recovery of the mother from the effects of pregnancy and labor, as well as encouraging breast feeding.

If you would like learn how acupuncture and Oriental medicine can facilitate your postpartum recovery, please call for more information.

treat prostate problems to relieve the urinary symptoms and prevent more serious conditions from occurring. The few studies completed on acupuncture and prostatitis show positive results with participants noticing a marked improvement in their quality of life, a decrease in urinary difficulties and an increase in urinary function.

Call today to see how acupuncture can improve your prostate health!

Menopause

Menopause is a transitional period marking the cessation of ovulation in a woman's body. Symptoms are brought on as a woman's body tries to adapt to decreasing amounts of estrogen. Varying from mild to severe, symptoms can include hot flashes, night sweats, insomnia, fatigue, mood swings, memory loss, dryness, headaches, joint pain and weight gain.

With its deep understanding of the female body, Oriental medicine has always addressed the special needs of women throughout their lives. Menopause, in particular, is an area in which Oriental medicine shines.

Acupuncture and Oriental medicine have the ability to detect energetic changes that occur in the body and quickly relieve uncomfortable symptoms that accompany the onset of menopause.

Genetically Modified Foods - Are They Safe? Part 1

A genetically modified organism (GMO) is created by taking genes from the DNA of one species and artificially forcing them into the genes of an unrelated plant or animal. Most commonly, the genes of bacteria and viruses are introduced into foods such as corn, soy, canola, and cotton.

First introduced into the food supply in the mid-1990s, GMOs are now present in up to 80% of processed foods in the United States. While they are banned as food ingredients in Europe and elsewhere, our own FDA does not even require the labeling of GMOs on our food labels!

Currently, commercially grown GMO crops in the U.S. include soy (93% GMO), cotton (93%), canola (90%), corn (87%), sugar beets (95%), Hawaiian papaya (> than 50%), yellow squash and zucchini (10-30%). There are others and more are on the way.

The U.S. government claims that genetically modified foods are no different from their natural counterparts which have existed for centuries. But this is more of a political rather than a scientific claim. The radical changes being made by bio-technologists could never happen in nature. Because living organisms are highly complex, genetic engineers can't possibly predict all of the effects of introducing new genes into them.

Numerous scientists at the FDA consistently describe these new "foods" as cause for concern. Many scientific study results have echoed their concerns. Food allergies, asthma, reproductive failures, organ failure, and higher death rates are just some of the findings of animal studies. From the safety tests that have been conducted, the results are disturbing, to say the least.

The physicians of the American Academy of Environmental Medicine have called on all physicians in the U.S. to warn their patients about the dangers of GMO foods. Biologist David Schubert of the Salk Institute warns that "children are the most likely to be adversely affected by toxins and other dietary problems" related to GMO foods. He states that without adequate studies, the children become "the experimental animals". Pregnant women are also at greater risk.

The process of genetic engineering can introduce dangerous new allergens and toxins into foods that were previously naturally safe. Already, one genetically engineered soybean was found to cause serious allergic reactions, and bacteria genetically engineered to produce large amounts of the food supplement, Tryptophan, have produced toxic contaminants that killed 37 people and permanently disabled 1,500 more.

When GMO soy flour was fed to female rats, most of their babies died within 3 weeks. And likewise, male rats that were fed GMO corn or soy experienced testicular discoloration, damaged sperm cells, DNA function alterations, fewer offspring, and smaller babies.

Some U.S. farmers have reported that thousands of their pigs, cows, or bulls have had reproductive complications including infertility or sterility after GMO corn consumption. In India, most buffalo that ate GMO cottonseed also had reproductive issues similar to U.S. animals.

Interestingly, in the U.S. human population, the incidence of low birth weight babies, infertility, and infant mortality are all escalating. That coincides with our increased consumption of genetically modified foods. Could there be a connection?

Oriental medicine does not recognize menopause as a particular syndrome and treats symptoms unique to each individual using a variety of techniques to restore imbalances found in the body.

Unlike safety evaluations for drugs, there are no human clinical trials of GMO foods, which I find shocking, given the potential for harm. The only published feeding experiment revealed that the genetic material inserted into GMO soy transfers into bacteria living inside our intestines and it continues to function. This means that long after we stop eating GMO foods, we may still have their GMO proteins produced continuously inside us. Sounds scary to me! The FDA and the food industry are not looking out for our best interests in this case. We all need to educate ourselves about the dangers of eating genetically modified foods.

In part 2 of this article next month, I will provide additional information on genetically modified foods and also I'll provide you with ways you can avoid GMOs as much as possible.

To your continued good health,

David Mortell, Registered Acupuncturist

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