

Acupuncture is one of the oldest, most commonly used medical procedures in the world, originating in China more than 3,000 years ago.



ACUPUNCTURE IS PART OF THE PICTURE

The complete system of Oriental Medicine includes acupuncture as one of the most well known and rapidly growing therapies in our medical community. Other traditional techniques such as herbal medicine, massage, therapeutic exercise, and nutrition make up a versatile group of healing systems.

The National Institutes of Health describes acupuncture as a family of procedures involving stimulation of anatomical locations on the skin by a variety of techniques. The most studied mechanism of stimulation of acupuncture points employs penetration of the skin by thin, solid, metallic needles, which are manipulated manually or by electrical stimulation.

NO PAIN WITH LOTS OF GAIN

Acupuncture needles are so thin that most first-time patients hardly notice when they've been used. The relaxation achieved through using these fine, flexible needles continues to pleasantly surprise our patients.

HOW ACUPUNCTURE WORKS

As more studies are funded, our understanding of the mechanisms of acupuncture continuously

evolves. The latest discoveries suggest relationships of cause and effect between several reoccurring events.

Conduction of electromagnetic signals.

Scientists have found evidence that acupuncture points are strategic conductors of electromagnetic signals.

Activation of opioid systems. Research has found that several types of opioids may be released into the central nervous system during acupuncture treatment, thereby reducing pain.

Changes in brain chemistry, sensation, and involuntary body functions. Studies have shown that acupuncture may alter brain chemistry by changing the release of neurotransmitters and neurohormones. Acupuncture has also been documented to affect the parts of the central nervous system related to sensation and involuntary body functions, such as immune reactions, blood pressure, blood flow, and body temperature.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF CONDITIONS

Initial evaluation averages a one-hour office visit. Oriental diagnosis is based on:

- Patient past medical history
- Family medical history
- Conventional medical diagnosis
- Overall health evaluation
- Observation (Tongue)
- Palpation (Pulse)

LECTURES AND DEMONSTRATIONS

The acupuncture staff has an active schedule of presentations with local organizations and clubs. We welcome the opportunity to interact with your group on clarifying the emerging field of complementary medicine and enhancing your knowledge of this beneficial health process.

Learn more about all our services and the dynamic practitioners by visiting our website at

www.FirstHealthofAndover.com

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ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENTS FOR INFERTILITY: *OPTIONS FOR HOPE*



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Celebrating Hope, Health, and
Wellness

A JOYFUL AND REWARDING EXPERIENCE

As practitioners, one of the most rewarding experiences we have encountered is to be part of a team of healthcare providers who successfully assist a couple with having a baby.

Recently acupuncture has been featured in many newspaper articles and television programs for its therapeutic ability to increase the chances for pregnancy during in vitro fertilization or IVF. An article published by W. Paulus, M. Zhang, I. El-Danasouri, E. Strehler and K. Sterzik entitled "Influence of Acupuncture on the Pregnancy Rate in Patients Who Undergo Assisted Reproduction Therapy," appeared in the April 2002 issue of Fertility and Sterility (Fertility and Sterility, vol.77, No.4, Apr.2002). The authors concluded "acupuncture seems to be a useful tool for improving pregnancy rate after assisted reproductive techniques." They went on to say "*The analysis shows that the pregnancy rate for the acupuncture group is considerably higher than for the control group (42.5% versus 26.3%).*"



AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

We continue to work in concert with many of the regions physicians and fertility clinics. Both partners are advised to have medical evaluations in order to assist us in planning your acupuncture treatment protocol. Patients are encouraged to share their experiences with all their health care providers, and we are most willing to facilitate better communication. Acupuncture therapy is used most successfully to compliment your existing care.

BENEFITS OF ACUPUNCTURE

IMPROVED OVERALL HEALTH

The process of dealing with infertility issues can be draining both physically and emotionally. One of the goals of acupuncture is to support our patient's overall health, while addressing their specific needs. Many couples have said they look forward to their acupuncture treatments because of the deep relaxation they experience. In many instances, a patient's overall health will improve during the course of acupuncture therapy leading to a greater sense



of quality of life. More research on acupuncture is currently underway to better understand the parameters of care. Please reference our website for updates on existing acupuncture research. Conditions commonly addressed during treatments for infertility include:

- **Amenorrhea**
absence of menstruation
- **Chronic bladder infections**
- **Dysmenorrhea**
painful menstruation
- **Endometriosis**
- **Fatigue**
- **Menorrhagia**
heavy uterine bleeding during menstruation
- **Menstruation**
early, delayed or irregular
- **Metorrhagia**
uterine bleeding between menstrual periods
- **Ovarian cysts**
- **Ovulatory dysfunction**
- **Polycystic ovarian syndrome**
- **Stress reduction**

PEACEFUL AND LOVING MOMENTS

Acupuncture has also demonstrated an ability to improve the sperm parameters in males as sited by Shealy et al., 1990; Gerhard et al., 1992; Siteman et al., 1997). Studies have found that acupuncture twice per week has improved the percentage of



sperm viability, total number of motile sperm and total functional sperm fraction. Since sperm maturation averages 70-90 days, most acupuncture protocols recommend receiving treatments several months prior to beginning the IVF procedure.

ACUPUNCTURE IN THE UNITED STATES

- 38 states and the District of Columbia have passed statutes or regulations for the practice of acupuncture and Oriental medicine.
- In 1996, the FDA classified acupuncture needles as medical devices for general use by trained professionals.
- Acupuncture is a three-year masters-level program. Oriental medicine is a four-year masters-level program. Pre-med is a requirement for both. Over 40 colleges are accredited or in candidacy status.
- In Massachusetts, licensed acupuncturists are required to attend 30 hours of continuing education every 2 years.
- Evidence clearly shows that acupuncture is very safe when performed by a well-trained practitioner.
- Practitioners at **FirstHealth of Andover** have passed state and national boards, practice universal precautions, and use only stainless steel, disposable needles.