

Acupuncture and Infertility Treatment

About acupuncture?

Acupuncture forms a part of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), which is a unique and independent medical system that originated in China. Records of treating infertility using acupuncture date back to the 11th Century AD.

Why acupuncture and IVF?

Research published so far did not demonstrate conclusively the benefit of acupuncture, in terms of increasing pregnancy rates for all couples. However, it also did not demonstrate that it could cause any harm, and indeed can be of assistance to patients in helping them to relax, and be prepared mentally and physically during their treatment and pregnancy. This is because acupuncture can:

- Help patients prepare their body for treatment.
- Support patients physically and mentally up to and after the procedure.
- Alleviate tension during this stressful time.
- Alleviate some of the side effects caused by some of the drugs, and improve response to hormonal stimulation. (See ref 1-3)
- Increase blood supply to the uterus and ovaries, strengthen the endometrial lining, and improve egg quality. (See ref 4-7)
- Calm the uterus to prepare for implantation.
- Maintain a pregnancy if successful, minimising the risk of miscarriage.

Live Birth Results 2008

From January 2008 – December 2008, 47 patients received acupuncture therapy from Dr Li Qin Zhao, as part of their IVF or FER treatment. Out of those patients 20/33 (61%) having IVF treatments had a live birth, and 7/14 (50%) of FER patients had a live birth. Although the numbers are relatively small, and this was not in the context of a randomised controlled study, these are obviously good results, and we will continue to analyse them on an annual basis.

How does acupuncture work?

Acupuncture can be used to treat the full range of problems associated with infertility in either partner.

The practitioner will take a full history from each partner and then make a diagnosis. In the view of TCM, different energies dominate each phase of the menstrual cycle, and treatment can be broken down into the different phases of the cycle.

An initial consultation with Dr Zhao is recommended before commencing treatment, as you may need a course of acupuncture sessions dependent on the history taken/problems experienced. Ultimately you are preparing your body to be in the best possible condition to receive treatment.

Some people decide only to use acupuncture on their procedure day at embryo transfer as a way of de-stressing and preparing the body for the embryos implantation.

How to contact a therapist

Dr Liqin Zhao is directly associated with the Clinic, and has twenty five years of clinical experience in treating infertility with Acupuncture. She is fully qualified in China, in both TCM, and Western Medicine studying at the Henan TCM University. Her details are as follows:

Liqin Zhao B.Med.Sci, M.BacC, FATCM
Zhong Jing TCM
74 Ecclesall Road South
Sheffield
S11 9PG

Tel: 0114 2681 868

Mobile: 07793 928078

E-mail: info@zhongjinguk.com

Website: www.zhongjinguk.com

Cost of treatment

Treatment costs are invoiced by the clinic, please ask at Reception for current charges.

Ref 1: Dr Liang L, Acupuncture & IVF, Blue Poppe Press, 2003. **2:** Dr. Lewis R, The Infertility Cure, Little, Brown and Company, London, 2004. **3:** Dr. Zeng Q, TCM Treatment of Infertility, Nanjing: Jiangsu Science and Technology Press, China, 2003.

Ref 4: Dr. Liang L, Acupuncture & IVF, Blue Poppe Press, 2003. **5:** Dr. Zeng Q, TCM Treatment of Infertility, Nanjing: Jiangsu Science and Technology Press, China, 2003.

6: Needle therapy " Boosts IVF Rates", British Medical Journal, Feb. 2008. **7:** Dr. Lewis R, The Infertility Cure, Little, Brown and Company, London, 2004.

