

Acupuncture and IVF - Is it Safe?

by Iva Keene MRMed. ND. - Wednesday, June 01, 2011

<https://natural-fertility-prescription.com/acupuncture-and-ivf/>

Acupuncture and IVF (in vitro fertilization) work hand in hand to help you get pregnant. In vitro fertilization is the process of manually fertilizing an egg with a sperm in a laboratory dish. Once fertilized, the egg (now called a zygote) is manually placed into the uterus through embryo transfer.

There are five general steps in the In Vitro Fertilization and embryo transfer procedure. They are:

Step 1: Stimulate ovulation

Fertility drugs are often prescribed to women weeks before the extraction of the egg. This helps to control the time when the egg will mature and the number of eggs that will mature. It increases the possibility of collecting multiple egg cells in a single procedure on any given menstrual cycle. Extracting multiple eggs is desirable for IVF because not all eggs will develop or get fertilized. Prior to extraction, the development of your egg cells are monitored using ultrasound, urine tests and blood tests where urine and blood tests check hormonal levels in your system.

Many women undergo acupuncture and IVF treatment at the same time. Acupuncture may increase the chances of a successful pregnancy. Studies show acupuncture and IVF may increase conception success rates by 65% and increase live births by 91%. These results are from a collation of many previous studies on acupuncture and IVF. Currently, Dr Eric Manheimer of the University of Maryland School of Medicine is attempting to measure how acupuncture affects IVF success.

Step 2: Extract eggs

Egg cells are extracted from your ovary via a minor surgical operation that makes use of ultrasound imaging to direct a small speculum, called a follicular aspirator, through the pelvic cavity. This procedure requires you to be sedated and be given local anesthesia to help ease any discomfort you might feel from the procedure. You may experience some light cramping on the day of the extraction.

Step 3: Collect sperm

Sperm is obtained from the donor usually through ejaculation. These are then prepared for fertilization with the eggs later on.

Step 4. Fertilization

On Petri dishes placed in incubators, eggs are inseminated with sperm. When likelihood of fertilization is low, a procedure called intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI) may be used.

Step 5: Embryo transfer

The fertilized egg is then transferred to the woman's womb about 1 to 6 days after the IVF procedure. Usually, the fertilized eggs get transferred around 2 to 3 days after the egg extraction process. After the embryo has been inserted into your womb, you will be checked using blood tests and maybe ultrasound to know if the implantation was successful and if conception has occurred.

Acupuncture and IVF - The Benefits

There are many ways that having acupuncture and IVF could help increase the success rate of In vitro fertilization when the both acupuncture and IVF are taken together. Acupuncture's most known contribution (and most immediate effect) to IVF is its ability to "relax" the uterus during the embryo transfer process. The uterus contracts every now and then. Acupuncture relaxes the uterine muscles so that contractions are kept to a minimum. Contractions are unwelcome during the embryo transfer process because they might expel the transferred embryos and so cause a miscarriage.

There are other ways in which having acupuncture and IVF together could result in the influence of results on In vitro Fertilization - IVF. Acupuncture has been shown in some studies to affect the levels of pituitary and ovarian hormones. Electro-acupuncture may help improve blood flow in the uterine arteries of infertile women.

Infertile couples are advised to have acupuncture and IVF together because they then tend to respond better to medication, get more and healthier eggs, healthier sperm and higher pregnancy rates. Women with specific problems such as high FSH levels or miscarriages may benefit from combining acupuncture with dietary measures and supplements. Using age old therapies such as acupuncture can have many benefits even if these have not yet been properly studied or incorporated in our modern scientific methods. Only consult with a licensed acupuncturist about having acupuncture and IVF.

Have you used acupuncture and IVF together? What was your experience like and would you recommend it to other couples? Let us know your thoughts on acupuncture and IVF!

Source:

[Hawkes, Nigel. "Course of acupuncture may raise success of IVF treatment by 65%." The Times 8 February 2008. Accessed 15 April 2011](#)

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development of your egg cells are monitored using ultrasound, urine tests and blood tests where urine and blood tests check hormonal levels in your system.

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Electro-acupuncture may help improve blood flow in the uterine arteries of infertile women.

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<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/health/article3327648.ece>

Resource Box:

Do you want to optimize your chances of conception with [Acupuncture and IVF](http://www.natural-fertility-prescription.com/acupuncture-and-ivf/)? Leading Natural Fertility Specialist and Naturopath Iva Keene can help you. Go to <http://www.natural-fertility-prescription.com> and you'll

receive a 50 page special bonus report "How to Restore Your Fertility and Get Pregnant ASAP" full of tips to help you conceive a boy and get immediate access to over 100 articles full of tips on fertility and pregnancy.