



IVF and Chinese Medicine

If a couple is diagnosed as infertile, In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) has proven to be a successful method of achieving pregnancy. IVF is a fantastic solution if either the male or the female has anatomical or structural damage within the reproductive organs and tissues.

Going through IVF can be expensive and both physically and emotionally challenging. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) can be very effective in assisting with achieving pregnancy in conjunction with IVF and thereby increasing the chances of success.

The natural way

Using TCM is not a quick fix approach to optimising the health and vitality of your body. Obtaining the desired outcome of a healthy ovulation and pregnancy may take a number of months.

If there are irregularities within the menstrual cycle or hormonal system, this will be reflected in a significant imbalance within the TCM organ system. Reducing unhealthy influences such as stress, alcohol or spicy food and undertaking TCM treatments of herbs and acupuncture will allow the body to be ready for conception.

Acupuncture & IVF

Acupuncture has been statistically proven to increase the chances of conception by up to sixty percent after an embryo transfer. From a Western medical perspective acupuncture is believed to improve the circulation of the lining in the uterus, which assists with implementation of the embryo.

An acupuncture treatment is best undertaken on the day just prior to the transfer and once again on the same day after the transfer. Acupuncture will balance the Yin and Yang within the body. Usually treatment will nourish the kidneys and sooth the liver Qi as well as treating the patient's individual body pattern. The duration of treatments will typically be about half an hour.

After an embryo transfer, it is recommended to avoid physical strain and try to minimise anything which may cause stress or tension.

Herbs & IVF

Chinese herbal medicine can be very helpful in preparation for someone who is going to undergo IVF treatment. Ideally herbal treatments are used in preparation before commencing IVF treatments. If there is no hormonal therapy being used during the IVF cycle then TCM herbs can be used through the whole process.

However, if hormonal drugs are being used to manipulate the cycle to enhance ovulation, it is most important the Chinese Medicine Practitioner communicates closely with the IVF specialist to ensure one therapy will not contradict the other.

Unpleasant IVF side effects

IVF hormonal therapy can create unpleasant side effects such as nausea, bloating and lower abdominal pain; these symptoms are often associated with ovarian hyper stimulation syndrome (OHSS). Sometimes the symptoms of OHSS require further medication or even hospitalisation if severe. Acupuncture can effectively help soothe harsh adverse reactions. The number of treatments necessary will vary according to the individual's needs and circumstance. Normally more than one treatment will be required to treat issues such as bloating and nausea.