

Natural Fertility

Whole-Body Wellness with an Integrative Approach

by Kazaray Taylor

Couples facing fertility issues often think their only treatment options are medical procedures like in vitro fertilization (IVF) and intrauterine insemination (IUI). But local fertility experts say there have been advances in natural techniques that can help resolve root problems with fertility or boost the success rate of traditional medical procedures.

Acupuncture and IVF

One natural medical technique, acupuncture, has been used for centuries to help couples conceive, says Dr. Fred Lisanti of Integrative Med Solutions in Eastchester, NY. A naturopathic doctor and licensed acupuncturist, Lisanti says not every medical procedure yields the same results for each couple, but whatever procedure they choose, acupuncture can work as an effective complement.

"Everyone has a modality that is best suited for their constitution," he says. "For some, it's IVF or IUI. For others, acupuncture, herbs, nutrition, and detoxification. If it works, then wonderful." Integrative Med Solutions takes a "true team approach" to infertility, he adds; its practitioners coordinate care with patients and, if need be, their obstetrician/gynecologist and fertility specialists. "We have had

a trusted relationship with some of the best reproductive endocrinologists in Westchester for years," he says. "They see us as the doctors who 'strengthen the soil' before seeds are implanted for growth." In addition to acupuncture, Integrative Med Solution offers naturopathic medicine, nutritional counseling and detoxification to treat infertility and restore the patient's health, vitality and wholeness.

Acupuncture is often combined with traditional IVF procedures because it has been proven to enhance blood flow to the uterus and improve the odds of a successful procedure.

Acupuncture in Hartsdale, NY. "Beyond this," she says, "your acupuncturist will work with you to build a plan, interpret BBT [basal body temperature] charts and test results, regulate and understand your cycles and, most important,



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listen to you and your needs."

Dmytryk says she works with many IVF patients, and she often relies on test results from allopathic (traditional Western) medicine to help identify issues that she then can address holistically. Traditional Western medicine fertility treatments have their place, Dmytryk notes. "Many women might not be able to conceive without them," she says. "However, as this is one of the biggest money-making fields in medicine right now, one often sees women put 'through the mill,' so to speak. A good doctor should first find out why you are not conceiving—and then use as little intervention as possible to achieve results."

Dmytryk advises patients seeking allopathic treatment for infertility to educate themselves first. "Ask questions," she says. "Ask for tests before you go on drugs, and take charge of your body." She recommends the book *Making Babies*, by Dr. Sami David and licensed acupuncturist Jill Blakeway, as a good source of information.

Environmental Factors and Detoxing

Toxins are now widely regarded as a significant factor in infertility—although allopathic medicine often fails to address the problem, says Dr. John Foley, DC, a clinical researcher at BodyCures in Yorktown Heights, NY.

"Allopathic fertility treatments attempt to 'force' implantation while overlooking the devastating effects of environmental toxicity and nutritional deficiencies which can cause infertility and neurological problems during fetal development," he says. "For every IVF success story, there are just as many cases where IVF is ineffective."

Foley says he sees many women who are concerned about fertility as well as giving birth to a healthy child—and toxins in food and the environment can affect both. He says environmental toxins are the biggest and most overlooked cause of hormonal imbalances and infertility; the body often stores toxins in the reproductive system if it can't get rid of them through natural processes.

"The body would rather reject implantation, or miscarry, than allow a fetus to develop in such a toxic area," he explains. "Providing the correct nutrition while eliminating toxins restores our natural healing ability, allowing for a healthier conception and pregnancy. We provide safe, individualized, natural healing programs that precisely target and remove any hidden toxins while supporting the body energetically and nutritionally."

Foley says many couples he's seen were finally able to conceive and have a healthy pregnancy once toxins like pesticides, plastics, lead, mercury and radiation were safely and gently cleansed from the woman's body and reproductive system. He notes that many women now go to BodyCures as

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a proactive measure, to detoxify prior to conceiving to ensure the best possible outcome.

"We strongly recommend that women get tested and see what level of toxins they have, and then go through a program to detoxify prior to conceiving," he says.

Chiropractic and Enzyme Therapy

Like toxins, nutritional deficiencies and even emotional stress can be factors in infertility, say Drs. Hiro and Michiko Izumi, DC, of Harrison, NY. But because traditional allopathic doctors often chase the end result, such as hormone imbalances, they often overlook—and therefore fail to treat—the root cause of the problem.

The Izumis offer chiropractic services to optimize body function as well as enzyme nutrition therapy to identify stressors and improve digestion and elimination. This combination of therapies can often address the factors that inhibit a woman's ability to conceive and carry a healthy child.

"What we find in our practice is that infertility is often tied to lipid [fat and oil] deficiency caused by the inability to digest and absorb lipid, which is common among women," says Michiko Izumi.

Listening to the Body

Every woman is different, and so is her journey to parenthood, notes Dmytryk.

Medical specialists treating infertility should begin by recognizing that not all cases require an invasive or heavy-handed approach. For example, she says, "Some women simply need to relax in order to get their endocrine levels balanced."

It's also important to determine whether the problem lies with the

woman's physiology. When she treats a woman facing infertility, Dmytryk says, she routinely recommends a complete sperm analysis for the woman's partner.

And regardless of whether a woman is trying to get pregnant, Dmytryk says she reminds her female patients that being fertile is the best and healthiest state for women, from menarche to menopause—and menstrual cycles are a good gauge of health.

"A woman's cycle should be regular and easy," she says. "There should be minimal to no pain, calm emotions, and the flow should be moderate, neither too heavy nor too light. If this is not occurring, the woman's body is trying to tell her something—and we can help her decipher it."

SOURCES

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