

IVF ACUPUNCTURE TREATMENT PROTOCOL

FRESH CYCLE

Fresh eggs are retrieved, fertilized and then transferred. We get patients to come in weekly during a fresh IVF cycle. Appointments are recommended as follows:

1. **Initial phase** – we get you in for a treatment between **Days 2 and 8** to work on egg quality and quantity and thickening the uterine lining.
2. **Pre-Pick up** – this appointment occurs just prior to egg pickup to help with ovarian function and improve egg quality before retrieval.
3. **Pre-Transfer** – **on the day of transfer or 1 – 2 days prior** to increase blood flow into the uterine lining to help the embryo implant.
4. **Post-Transfer** – **on the day of transfer or 1 – 2 days after** transfer to help with implantation. A special Chinese herbal formulation called “Implant” (keep the fetus formulation) will be given after (or sometimes before) transfer and should be continued up to 12 weeks should the transfer be successful. This is to help with preventing miscarriage and assists implantation.
5. **1 week post transfer** – we see you **again 1 week after** the post transfer treatment in between waiting for your results. This is a very stressful time and the waiting does get to everyone. It is strongly recommended that patients come in to help de-stress and enhance implantation further.
6. **Blood Test** – an appointment is necessary the week you get your results. This treatment assists implantation for positive results and where results are negative the treatment will assist with dealing with the emotions and regulating the menstrual cycle. Hopefully everyone gets a positive result ☺
7. **Regular Acupuncture** – should be maintained **fortnightly**. For patients who partake in our Fertility Program acupuncture and specially selected herbs will be given at each treatment time and instructions given on how to take them.

FROZEN CYCLE

Frozen eggs are thawed and viable ones transferred. We get patients to come in 4 times in the cycle again, but our aim is slightly different:

1. **Initial Phase** – as per normal we get you in for a treatment between **Days 2 and 8** to work on thickening the uterine lining and increasing circulation to assist when the embryo is transferred.
2. **Pre-transfer** – **on the day of transfer or 1 – 2 days prior** to transfer to increase blood flow into the uterine lining to help the embryo implant.
3. **Post-Transfer** – **on the day of transfer or 1 – 2 days after** transfer to help with implantation. A special Chinese herbal formulation called “Implant” (keep the fetus formulation) will be given after transfer and should be continued up to 12 weeks should the transfer be successful. This is to help with preventing miscarriage and assists implantation.
4. **1 week post transfer phase** – we see you again **1 week after the post transfer treatment** in between waiting for your results. This is a very stressful time and the waiting does get to everyone. It is strongly recommended that patients come in to help de-stress and enhance implantation further.
5. **Blood Test** – an appointment is necessary the week you get your results. This treatment assists implantation for positive results and where results are negative the treatment will assist with dealing with the emotions and regulating the menstrual cycle. Hopefully everyone gets a positive result ☺
6. **Regular Acupuncture** – should be maintained fortnightly. For patients who are part of our Fertility Program acupuncture and specially selected herbs will be given at each treatment time and instructions given on how to take them.

IUI (Intra-uterine insemination)

The same protocol as a frozen IVF cycle is followed except treatment would be pre and post IUI instead of pre and post transfer. There would also be a 1 week post IUI treatment instead of 1 week post transfer.

PREGNANCY

Once a successful pregnancy is confirmed it is very important to maintain regular treatment of acupuncture, herbs and supplements, to prevent miscarriage and to help with implantation. Acupuncture, herbs and vitamins are a very important part of a general health and a trouble free pregnancy. After the first **12 weeks** we maintain treatments **monthly** until **36 weeks**, when they come **fortnightly** and then **weekly** until **40 weeks**.

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THE STATISTICS

Chinese Medicine is about treating the cause, not just the symptoms and relies on a series of treatments to balance the body and maintain health. The following statistics are a review of seven previous studies on acupuncture and fertility:

- Acupuncture increases the chances of conceiving via IVF by 65%
- Acupuncture increases the chances of maintaining a pregnancy by 87%
- Acupuncture increases the rate of maintaining a pregnancy to full gestation by 91% - (*The British Medical Journal, February 9, 2008*)
- Acupuncture when combined with Chinese herbs & Nutritional support increases the chances of conception up to 96% (Shen Therapies research data)

TIPS TO INCREASE THE CHANCES OF A SUCCESSFUL CYCLE

1. Reduce stress

The biggest cause of fertility issues and cycles not working is stress. Stress increases cortisol and adrenalin and these can affect your hormones. Stress can also lead to production of natural killer cells that reduce implantation and kill off your embryos. Stress can also interfere with blood circulation

2. Eat more protein

Protein is the essential building blocks for life. They are also the building blocks for making your hormones and making healthy eggs and sperm. Increased protein also helps prevent ovarian hyper-stimulation and also dampens down inflammatory response caused by over eating starchy carbohydrates.

3. Increase your Electrolytes

Water alone will not stop you from dehydrating. Electrolytes are a very important part of the body chemistry and hormone therapy, certain drugs and medications drastically reduce them. It is important to keep the cells body hydrated at all times and especially during an IVF cycle and during pregnancy. Electrolytes consumption during IVF cycles also helps prevent ovarian hyper-stimulation.

4. Regular climax

Regular climax, self induced or with a partner, (also before and especially after embryo transfer) assists with implantation and health blood supply to the uterus. An embryo feeds off blood supply from the uterus and regular climax helps optimise this blood flow. Without a healthy blood supply the embryo will die.

5. Take time off work

Everyone should take time off before and after transfers to ensure stress levels are kept to a minimum. Work stress and lack of time out does decrease the chances of implantation. If someone gave you a baby this very instant what would you have to do to ensure that babies survival? The answer is the same as what you have to do now to bring a baby into this world.