Acupuncture for fertility and during IVF

Research


The aim of this research was to see the effect of acupuncture on blood flow to the uterus. The results showed that acupuncture does increase blood flow to the uterus and concluded that perhaps this was one of the many reasons why acupuncture increases fertility.

Steer et al. (1992) had previously shown that a low blood flow to the uterus could be used to predict about 35% of pregnancy failures.


The aim was to study the mechanism by which acupuncture may help regulate the menstrual cycle. 10 women with long-term ovulation problems were given acupuncture for three consecutive days on day 10 of their cycles. 8 suffered with PCOS, 1 had no periods and 1 had infrequent periods. 5 volunteers with normal cycles were used as a control.

The study concluded that acupuncture regulates the menstrual cycle by normalising the function of the hypothalamic-pituitary-ovarian axis (HPOA) and may be useful treat women with endocrine dysfunction.


The aim was to review the use of acupuncture in the treatment of female infertility. A collection of research articles were studied to understand better the mechanism by which acupuncture helps in the treatment of female infertility.

The review concluded that although the definitive role of acupuncture is yet to be determined, the studies suggest that acupuncture affects the menstrual cycle due to its effect on the central nervous system. It also concluded that acupuncture might affect the blood flow to the uterus through this same mechanism.
The aim of this study was to show the effects of acupuncture directly before and after egg transfer.

The results show that it may increase pregnancy rates by about 60%.

The aim was to study the effects of using a different set of acupuncture points from the Paulus study, directly before and after egg transfer.

The results still showed a 60% increase in on-going pregnancies and 180% increase in implantation rates.

This was a retrospective study looking at the medical records of patients that had attended clinics between January 2001 and November 2003.

It concluded that the data supported the advantage of acupuncture, and with acupuncture that patients with poor prognoses (elevated FSH, longer history of infertility, poor sperm morphology) can achieve similar pregnancy rates to normal prognosis patients.

The aim was to carry on from the Paulus study and look at the effects of another set of acupuncture points on fertility. It also added another group to see if more acupuncture around the time of implantation increased pregnancy rates.

The results, as with the Paulus study, found that acupuncture improves pregnancy rates by about 60%. It also discovered that having acupuncture at the time of implantation doesn’t increase the chances of becoming pregnant.

The **aim** was to discover the effects of acupuncture having removed any psychological effects of having treatment. It did this by using a sham acupuncture group (using points that have no effect on fertility) versus a genuine acupuncture group.

The **results** showed that of the 225 women in the whole study, the acupuncture group were found to have 106% higher pregnancy rate than the sham acupuncture group and 100% higher likelihood of on-going pregnancy.


The **aim** of this study was to compare acupuncture to standard hormone therapy in the treatment of infertility. 45 women suffering from oligoamenorrhea or luteal insufficiency were treated with auricular acupuncture and compared to 45 women treated with hormonal treatment. Both groups were matched for age, duration of infertility, body mass index, previous pregnancies, menstrual cycle and tubal patency.

The **results** showed that acupuncture increased pregnancies by 28% over hormone therapy on its own, even though the acupuncture group had more pronounced hormonal imbalances. Combined acupuncture and hormone therapy achieved the best results, producing 10% more pregnancies than hormone therapy alone. There were no side effects in the acupuncture group but there were in the hormone group.


The **aim** of this study was to compare acupuncture treatment with Clomid administration in the treatment of endocrine dysfunction infertility.

The **results** found acupuncture to have significantly higher pregnancy rates than Clomid administration (65% versus 45%).

The study concluded that acupuncture is an effective treatment for infertility secondary to endocrine dysfunction.

The aim of this study was to discover if acupuncture might help with difficulties due to the ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome (OHSS) often induced by using human menopausal gonadotropin (HMG) and human chorionic gonadotropin (HCG) for ovulation induction.

The results showed acupuncture as effective in ovulation induction, and also the remission of OHSS induced by HMG. Due to the small sample size (10) and the fact that there was no control group it is impossible to state the findings as statistically significant but the study suggests that they are clinically significant.


The aim was to study the effects of acupuncture on ovulation. The results showed an 82.35% success rate and concluded that acupuncture might adjust the endocrine function, thus stimulating ovulation and that it seems to increase progesterone levels, and regulate FSH, LH and E2 levels.