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Natural help for infertility

Infertility is becoming a more and more common condition in modern society. Stress and overwork definitely play a part, as do toxins in our air, water, and food. As well, the fact that many couples are waiting until later in life to start a family may also be a factor, as the vitality of the body tends to decrease with age. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) brings strength, balance and flow to the body and mind – restoring the most important factors in conception and carrying a baby to term. (Of course, there are also factors depending on the father, which must be addressed as well!)

Frequently, clients with infertility arrive at my clinic having been through the medical system. They've had all the tests, only to be given the diagnosis of "unexplained infertility". Others have been given an explanation, and maybe even treatment, but are still not pregnant. They are often frustrated, starting to lose hope that they will ever become pregnant. And in many cases, the biological clock is ticking!

When I examine them through the lens of TCM, the cause of infertility is usually not unexplained to me! Often there are imbalances that aren't detectable through medical tests, and may not be treatable with drugs, but can be corrected through acupuncture and Chinese herbs. In the case of endometriosis, fibroids and cysts, acupuncture and herbs can be very effective in treating the root cause, (generally, stagnation of energy and blood) even helping the client to avoid surgery. Even if surgery is required, treating the root cause will help prevent recurrence, and revitalize the system as a whole. Once balance and flow is restored to the body, not only does the client feel better, but a healthy pregnancy can take place.

In Chinese medicine, conception and pregnancy depends on the flourishing and free-flow of the blood and *Qi* (bioenergy) that runs through the body, as well as the strength and balance of the organ systems. (In TCM, we are referring not just to the organs themselves, but to their functions within the body and mind.) A thorough TCM diagnosis will determine areas that are weak, and where there is heat, cold, stagnation, etc. During the first treatment, I go through a series of questions related to physical and emotional factors, as well as many questions regarding the menstrual cycle. As well, I'll perform a pulse and tongue diagnosis, which gives a picture of how the organ systems are balanced, and the "landscape" of the body. Often, I'll have clients record their basal body temperature (BBT) every morning. All this gives valuable information regarding the imbalances that may be causing the infertility, and will determine the focus of the treatments.

Many of my clients have been amazed to discover how much better they feel after being treated with Traditional Chinese Medicine. They find their menstrual cycle is balancing out, with reduced cramps and increased energy. As well, they find they are less irritable and weepy around their period. This is all evidence that the body systems are more balanced. From this starting point, a healthy pregnancy can occur. Clients who had almost lost hope have been able to conceive and deliver a healthy baby. What a joy to see my client with their newborn, knowing the dedication that went into preparing their body for this miracle!

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