

Research Publications of Acupuncture and ART

Influence of acupuncture on the pregnancy rate in patients who undergo assisted reproduction therapy.

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OBJECTIVE: To evaluate the effect of acupuncture on the pregnancy rate in assisted reproduction therapy (ART) by comparing a group of patients receiving acupuncture treatment shortly before and after embryo transfer with a control group receiving no acupuncture.

DESIGN: Prospective randomized study.

SETTING: Fertility center.

PATIENT(S): After giving informed consent, 160 patients who were undergoing ART and who had good quality embryos were divided into the following two groups through random selection: embryo transfer with acupuncture (n = 80) and embryo transfer without acupuncture (n = 80).

INTERVENTION(S): Acupuncture was performed in 80 patients 25 minutes before and after embryo transfer. In the control group, embryos were transferred without any supportive therapy.

MAIN OUTCOME MEASURE(S): Clinical pregnancy was defined as the presence of a fetal sac during an ultrasound examination 6 weeks after embryo transfer.

RESULT(S): Clinical pregnancies were documented in 34 of 80 patients (42.5%) in the acupuncture group, whereas pregnancy rate was only 26.3% (21 out of 80 patients) in the control group.

CONCLUSION(S): Acupuncture seems to be a useful tool for improving pregnancy rate after ART.

Acupuncture on the day of embryo transfer significantly improves the reproductive outcome in infertile women: a prospective, randomized trial.

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OBJECTIVE: To evaluate the effect of acupuncture on reproductive outcome in patients treated with IVF/intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI). One group of patients received acupuncture on the day of ET, another group on ET day and again 2 days later (i.e., closer to implantation day), and both groups were compared with a control group that did not receive acupuncture.

DESIGN: Prospective, randomized trial.

SETTING: Private fertility center.

PATIENT(S): During the study period all patients receiving IVF or ICSI treatment were offered participation in the study. On the day of oocyte retrieval, patients were randomly allocated (with sealed envelopes) to receive acupuncture on the day of ET (ACU 1 group, n = 95), on that day and again 2 days later (ACU 2 group, n = 91), or no acupuncture (control group, n = 87).

INTERVENTION(S): Acupuncture was performed immediately before and after ET (ACU 1 and 2 groups), with each session lasting 25 minutes; and one 25-minute session was performed 2 days later in the ACU 2 group.

MAIN OUTCOME MEASURE(S): Clinical pregnancy and ongoing pregnancy rates in the three groups.

RESULT(S): Clinical and ongoing pregnancy rates were significantly higher in the ACU 1 group as compared with controls (37 of 95 [39%] vs. 21 of 87 [26%] and 34 of 95 [36%] vs. 19 of 87 [22%]). The clinical and ongoing pregnancy rates in the ACU 2 group (36% and 26%) were higher than in controls, but the difference did not reach statistical difference.

CONCLUSION(S): Acupuncture on the day of ET significantly improves the reproductive outcome of IVF/ICSI, compared with no acupuncture. Repeating acupuncture on ET day +2 provided no additional beneficial effect.

More publications:

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4. Smith C, Coyle M, Norman RJ. Influence of acupuncture stimulation on pregnancy rates for women undergoing embryo transfer. *Fertility and sterility* 2006; **85**(5): 1352-8.
5. Westergaard LG, Mao Q, Kroglund M, Sandrini S, Lenz S, Grinsted J. Acupuncture on the day of embryo transfer significantly improves the reproductive outcome in infertile women: a prospective, randomized trial. *Fertility and sterility* 2006; **85**(5): 1341-6.
6. So EW, Ng EH, Wong YY, Lau EY, Yeung WS, Ho PC. A randomized double blind comparison of real and placebo acupuncture in IVF treatment. *Human reproduction (Oxford, England)* 2009; **24**(2): 341-8.
7. Craig L CA, Hansen K, Marshall L, Soules M. Acupuncture lowers pregnancy rates when performed before and after embryo transfer. *Fertility and sterility* 2007; **88**(Suppl 1): S40.
8. El-Toukhy T, Sunkara SK, Khairy M, Dyer R, Khalaf Y, Coomarasamy A. A systematic review and meta-analysis of acupuncture in in vitro fertilisation. *BJOG : an international journal of obstetrics and gynaecology* 2008; **115**(10): 1203-13.
9. Sunkara SK, Coomarasamy A, Khalaf Y, El-Toukhy T. Acupuncture and in vitro fertilization: updated meta-analysis. *Human reproduction* 2009; **24**(8): 2047-8.