

Certified Fertility Counselor Course- Session 12- Alternative Treatments for Fertility and Infertility. The use of Medicinal Herbs

Chinese Medicine

Chinese medicine has been used for many centuries and recently became more popular in the last decade to treat infertility and even boost fertility rates. Chinese medicine has a 70 percent success for treating infertility. However there are different types of Chinese therapies including acupuncture and cupping.

Acupuncture used with Chinese medicine is sometimes abbreviated as TCM. Acupuncture involves placing hair-thin needles into particular points on the body. These points, according to the Chinese tradition, run along lines of energy, or meridians. From the TCM perspective, the idea is that an imbalance of these energies in the body can lead to illness, including infertility. Correcting the imbalance by stimulating particular points along the meridians is thought to improve health. Women who are going through in vitro fertilization can benefit from Acupuncture, as it increases pregnancy rates by 23 percent.

Acupuncture can help with infertility if there are issues with ovulation. It has been shown to improve ovulation by 83 percent.

Cupping, used together with Acupuncture and Chinese medicine can help a couple to increase their fertility. The process helps relieve inflammation in the area of the body where the treatment is applied. This healing technique consists of creating a vacuum by placing a cupping glass on the skin which creates a suction on the skin stimulating blood flow to the area where the cup is placed. Chinese cupping treatment is often used to treat lung and respiratory inflammation, however has found to be extremely useful in cases of infertility as it helps detoxify the body.

Meditation and Yoga

Because couples have the stress of day to day stressors, on top of the stress of trying to conceive, a lot of times meditation can help put the mind at ease and in some cases if performed on a daily bases, can help ovulation.

Yoga can also be beneficial to boosting fertility by getting the blood flow moving. Daily activities and yoga will also help the body's stress levels. Yoga can also be beneficial to those who have little inactivity or are overweight.

Fertility Yoga is not exactly as beneficial as in vitro fertilization (IVF) treatments or hormone therapy, although yoga can help women trying to conceive by helping them take a moment to relax and calm down. Fertility Yoga uses gentle poses that help ease anxiety. Women who do go through in vitro fertilization, experience anxiety, but by helping the body with Yoga to ease this, it may help the conception process.

Herbs used for Fertility

There are many herbs that are used for fertility and infertility, either to boost or to heal the body so hormones will function as they should. The following is a guide to help the different herbs used in the reproductive systems.

High Estrogen Imbalances (Female)

Chaste Tree
Pasque Flower
Pro-G-Yam Cream (through NSP)
Sarsaparilla
Wild Yam and Chaste Tree together

Low Estrogen Imbalances (Female)

Black Cohosh
Clary Sage Essential Oil
Dong Quai
Licorice
Phyto-Soy
Pregnenolone
Red Clover

High Progesterone Imbalances (Female)

Black Cohosh
Clary Sage Essential Oil
Geranium Essential Oil
Phyto-Soy
Rose Essential Oil

Low Progesterone Imbalances (Female)

Blue Cohosh
False Unicorn
Pro-G-Yam Cream (through NSP)
Sarsaparilla
Wild Yam and Caste Tree

Other Female Hormones-

Oxytocin Enhancers-

Blue Cohosh
Chocolate
Clove Essential Oil
Lady's Mangle
Goldenseal
Scotch Broom

Oxytocin Inhibitors-

Cramp Bark
Jasmine Essential Oil
Lavender Essential Oil
White Willow

Prolactin Enhancers-

Alfalfa
Blessed Thistle
Fennel
Marshmallow
Milk Thistle
Nettle Leaf

Prolactin Inhibitors-

Parsley
Sage

FSH Inhibitors-

Hops
Sage
White Willow
Wild yam and Chaste Tree

Other Female Issues-**Heavy Bleeding**

Capsicum
Bayberry
Sarsaparilla
Yarrow

Painful Periods (Dysmenorrhea)

Lobelia
Wild Yam and Chaste Tree
Caster Oil Packs
Dong Quai
Ginger
Niacin

Menopausal Issues- aid menopause

Black Cohosh
Eleuthero
Evening Primrose oil
False Unicorn
Dong Quai
Licorice Root
Pro-G-Yam Cream

High Testosterone Imbalance (Male)

Milk Thistle

Liver Balance (from NSP)

Low Testosterone Imbalances (Male)

Eleuthero

Ginseng, Korean

Horny Goat Weed

Muir Puama

Pine Tree Pollen

Pregnenolone

Sarsaparilla

Tienchi ginseng

Tribulus

Other Male Issues-

Erectile Dysfunction-

Damiana

Ginseng, Korean

Maca

Yohimbe

Herbs to assist in fertility-

Damiana

Maca

Red Raspberry

Red Clover

Skullcap

A lot of herbs work together, Herbalist Rosemary Gladstar recommends an herbal formula to help female fertility.

4 parts rehmania

1 part astragalus

1 part dong quai

2 parts false unicorn root

3 parts wild yam

1 part chaste tree berry

Normally taken as a capsule or tincture three times a day. Herbalist Amanda McQuade Crawford often uses fertility formulas, especially for those who have a diagnosis of infertility, or twisted tubes.

Common Herbs for Fertility

Cervical Mucus (Female)

Evening Primrose Oil, no more than 1500mg a day, taken with 4 glasses of water. This will enhance fertile cervical mucus. Should be taken a week prior to ovulation.

Cysts on ovaries and tone the uterus

Red Raspberry leaf, taken as a tea, capsule or tincture. Used to tone the uterus, excellent after child birth to assist in the uterus to go back down. Helps alleviate cysts.

Maca Root (both male and female)

Maca Root, grown in the Rainforest of Peru, this herb is beneficial to both male and female reproductive systems, and enhances sexual arousal. This Rainforest herb assists in balancing out male and female hormones. Leslie Taylor explains the breakdown of this powerful rainforest herb in her book *Healing Power of Rainforest Herbs*.

Damiana root, the sexual herb

Damiana root is a shrub that grows in Mexico and is known to have an aphrodisiac effect. This herb is often used to help sexual enhancement, especially in men.

Dong Quai, a part of the Chinese remedies

Dong Quai is best known for its blood-tonifying and blood-strengthening properties. It vitalizes the blood and tonifies the uterus and female generative organs. It is used for anemia (in both men and women), amenorrhea, dysmenorrhea, and irregular menstruation.