

Acupuncture for Infertility: Is It An Effective Therapy?

Conclusion: Most of the studies suggested that acupuncture plays a positive role in the management of infertility including ovulation dysfunction, IVF-ET, and male infertility. Acupuncture may improve ovulation via modulation of the central and peripheral nervous system, the neuroendocrine and endocrine system, the ovarian blood flow, and metabolism. Acupuncture can improve the outcome of IVF-ET, and the mechanisms may be related to an increased uterine blood flow, inhibition of uterine motility, and a reduction of depression, anxiety and stress. Its effect in modulating immune function also suggests helpfulness in improving the outcome of IVF-ET. Acupuncture may play a positive role in male infertility.

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ABSTRACT: Acupuncture has been used to treat infertility extensively, including ovulatory dysfunction, in vitro fertilization and embryo transfer (IVF-ET), and male infertility. This review summarizes the recent studies which investigated the role of acupuncture in infertility. In conclusion, most of the existing studies suggest a positive effect of acupuncture in infertility treatment. Firstly, acupuncture may improve ovulation by modulating the central and peripheral nervous systems, the neuroendocrine and endocrine systems, the ovarian blood flow, and metabolism. Secondly, acupuncture can improve the outcome of IVF-ET, and the mechanisms may be related to the increased uterine blood flow, inhibited uterine motility, and the anesis of depression, anxiety and stress. Its effect on modulating immune function also suggests helpfulness in improving the outcome of IVF-ET. Finally, the studies suggest that acupuncture plays a positive role in male infertility, the mechanism of which is not yet clear. Even though a positive effect of acupuncture in infertility has been found, well-designed multi-center, prospective randomized controlled studies are still needed to provide more reliable and valid scientific evidence. Furthermore, it is urgent and necessary to clarify the mechanism of acupuncture for infertility.

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