

Increasing IVF success with medical acupuncture

Zogopoulos Panagiotis, S Kollias, A Pankos, G Vretakos and D Rologis
Metropolitan Hospital, Greece

Medical acupuncture can significantly improve in vitro fertilization success rates through various mechanisms and pathways. It can affect Hypothalamus-Pituitary-Adrenal (HPA) axis, increase blood flow to the uterus and ovaries and cause alterations at the levels of cytokines implicated in the successful implantation of the fertilized egg. Acupuncture can also significantly decrease stress, anxiety and depression that are commonly observed in women undergoing IVF. Stress is known to be strongly associated with the diagnosis and treatment of infertility, as well as with the treatment failure of IVF. Acupuncture has been found to alter levels of leptin, interleukins (IL-1, IL-1 β and IL-6), Leukemia Inhibitory Factor (LIF), Nitric Oxide (NO) and Nitric Oxide Synthetase (NOS), all associated with fertility and IVF success. Medical acupuncture treatment before and after embryo transfer has been found to increase pregnancy rates by 10-16%, depending on age group (with the highest increase in older age groups). Therefore, recent clinical and experimental evidence suggest that medical acupuncture should be incorporated in the treatment of infertility and eventually be part of IVF protocols in the future.

Biography

Zogopoulos Panagiotis is a Neurosurgeon specialized in Medical Acupuncture. He is currently the Chief of Medical Acupuncture Department at Metropolitan Hospital, Athens, Greece. He has completed his PhD at the University of Athens, School of Medicine and has received Advanced Clinical training (Clinical Research Fellowship) at the Neurosurgery Department of Osaka University Hospital in Japan. He has published a large number of papers in various international scientific journals.

p.zogopoulos@yahoo.com