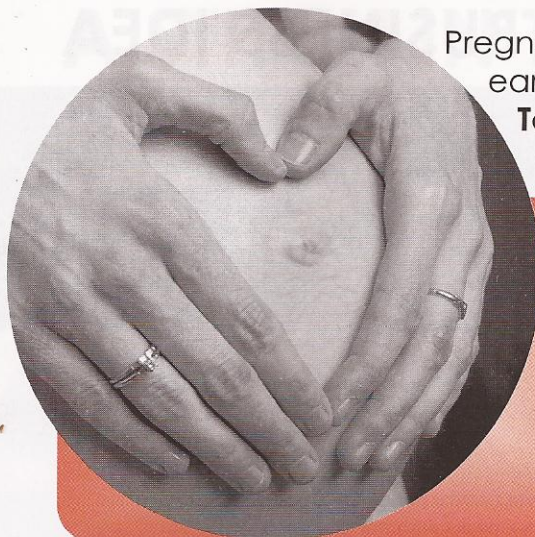


Combat pregnancy related nausea and vomiting with Acupuncture

Bumps 'n Babes



Pregnancy-related nausea and vomiting can often make the early stages of pregnancy difficult for expectant mothers.

Toni Tucker explains how Oriental Medicine Acupuncture can help ease the symptoms.

The Acupuncture Treatment and Planning

The main aim of my treatment is to subdue any rebellious Qi, to harmonise the stomach and to stop nausea and vomiting. At the same time, any other patterns of disharmony that the mother may be having will be treated such as IBS, fatigue, headaches and stress. The severity of the sickness may depend on any pre-existing patterns of physiological and emotional imbalance. I would normally recommend four to six treatments to help with the symptoms.

I endeavour to gain a very clear concept of the improvement I want to achieve in my treatments and to guide the process accordingly. It is of paramount importance that the practitioner has sound knowledge of midwifery practice and is also highly experienced in treating expectant mothers with acupuncture. If this is the case, the outcome of the treatment should be successful. However, if during the course of the treatment any serious underlying factors are found, medical referral will be highly recommended.

Pregnancy related nausea and vomiting is a common phenomenon, particularly in the first and second trimesters.

Although there are a number of medications available on the market today that are designed to combat nausea and vomiting, pharmacological solutions can be problematic when treating pregnant women. Avoiding exposure of the fetus to any unnecessary medication while pregnant is preferable.

Nausea and vomiting is a common 'minor' disorder of pregnancy, affecting up to 70% of the pregnant population (Weigel and Weigel, 1989). Indeed it is often regarded as a normal occurrence and is taken to be a presumptive sign of pregnancy.

For an alternative medicine approach to the treatment of pregnancy related nausea, acupuncture has become a popular method, explored by many women looking for a non-pharmacological solution to their distress.

Having also worked as a midwife for 35 years, I know nausea and vomiting can affect many women during pregnancy and can be very debilitating, it is definitely worth considering alternative treatments for it. Acupuncture treatment is aimed at strengthening the energetic function of the stomach and correcting any underlying disharmonies, such as anxiety. I also give dietary advice for reducing the energetic workload of the digestive system.

When looking at the problem using traditional Chinese medicine, I believe although the nausea associated with pregnancy can arise from a variety of conditions, these all involve the stomach's energy. Pregnancy can interfere not only with the process of digestion, but also the stomach's energetic nature of aiding downward movement of food through the digestive tract. Strong upward rebellious energy or a weakness in this down bearing function results in the nausea and vomiting.

The causes of nausea and vomiting in pregnancy

Pregnancy related nausea and vomiting has several explanations. The rising levels of pregnancy hormones are widely accepted as a causative factor, as both the Human Chorionic Gonadotrophin (HCG) and Oestrogen stimulate the chemo-receptor in the brain.

Other explanations include the following (Thorp et al., 1991, Boyce, 1992; Tucker-Blackburn and Loper, 1992):

- Physiological changes of pregnancy, such as reduced ability to digest food.
- Metabolic changes, such as carbohydrate deficiency, vitamin B deficiency.
- Genetic incompatibility
- Psychological factors, such as fear and anxiety caused by physiological changes in the body.



Toni is the clinic director of the **Berkshire Health Clinic**, based in Maidenhead and is a practitioner of Oriental Medicine Acupuncture. She also treats at 10 Harley Street in London. Her

background has been totally concentrated within the medical field and she has 35 years of midwifery experience. Toni's medical knowledge therefore inevitably assists her to help to treat minor ailments of pregnancy and childbirth through Oriental Medicine Acupuncture. For more information call 01628 525299 or 07958 730157 or email tonitucker@btinternet.com. www.tonituckeracupuncture.co.uk

Berkshire Health Clinic
The Centre for Integrated Medicine



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