Fertility Program

Whether you are planning a pregnancy, already preparing for new baby on the way, have just had a baby, or are having difficulty conceiving, acupuncture, acupressure and Chinese herbal medicine can increase the overall health and well being for you and your child.

Through over 30 years of clinical practice, Dr. Angela C. Wu has discovered that the most important aspects for ensuring a healthy pregnancy are lifestyle, and eating and drinking habits. Her fertility treatment program includes eating and drinking guidelines, special herbal formulas, and stress reducing techniques including Healing Tao’s Inner Smile and Six Healing Sounds, to maximize your fertility potential.

Why Should I Use the Chinese Medical Approach to Fertility?

Chinese Medicine views the person as a whole. The goal is to harmonize and balance the body, mind, and spirit. When these three aspects are aligned, there is a greater potential for the body to perform its natural functions smoothly. Dr. Wu works with women who are using Western modalities such as IVF, IUI or egg donation, as well as women who are only interested in the natural approach. Acupuncture and acupressure can be especially helpful for women using the Western approach because they can help rebalance the body’s systems if they become worn down by hormone therapies. Dr. Wu has successfully treated middle-aged women from 45–50 who are going through menopause, enabling them to become pregnant and carry their pregnancy to term. She has also worked with women who have FSH levels as high as 118 to bring the levels down below 10, and women whose FSH levels are rising (as high as 65). In both circumstances, the pregnancies were successful. Her approach has helped women whose linings are thin, women who have endometriosis, and women who have irregular menstrual cycles, all who have been able to conceive with the assistance of Chinese Medicine.

Musculoskeletal Balancing: Key to Whole-Body Healing

In the spirit of holistic medicine, treating body, mind, and spirit, Wu’s Healing Center is pioneering a new definition of “whole body” healing—one that addresses “internal” conditions by also healing the body’s infrastructure: skeleton, muscles, and tendons.

The spine, for example, integrates all the major energy channels associated with vitality and longevity. A healthy spine is particularly important in treating infertility because it manufactures the blood cells vital to conceiving and carrying a baby. When the spine is congested or misaligned, blood and Qi—life energy—cannot flow freely. When the spine and the channels it supports are open and balanced, all the body’s organs and core functions are optimized.

Dr. Angela C. Wu—who practices Traditional Chinese Medicine—and Devin G. Wu—whose clinical practice incorporates both acupuncture and physical therapy techniques—have discovered that treating the body’s skeletal core can make a significant difference in overcoming a wide variety of health challenges, including infertility. While Dr. Wu works with clients to balance and harmonize the body’s
internal environment, Devin focuses on musculoskeletal balancing, with an emphasis on the spine—opening up the flow of energy to all internal organs.

Clients who include both “internal” and “external” approaches in their therapy find that, in addition to addressing back, neck, and other musculoskeletal problems, they’re better able to achieve and maintain the whole-body balance and harmony required to conceive, carry, and deliver a healthy baby. Most important, they also discover that maintaining a healthy infrastructure delivers benefits far beyond babies—including general vitality and longevity.

**What Is Dr. Wu’s Fertility Treatment Plan?**

**PC1: Preconception Care**
Dr. Wu recommends allowing your body 3 to 6 months to prepare for pregnancy. During this time you will come for the acupuncture and acupressure treatments once a week. It is important that your partner comes in for a diagnosis with Dr. Wu. Even if their sperm count is normal and no Western diagnosis has been given, the Chinese medical approach may detect unforeseen variables such as stress or other imbalances. For clients who are going through an IVF/IUI cycle, Dr. Wu might suggest coming 2 to 3 times per week for the acupuncture and acupressure. You will be asked to follow a fertility eating/drinking habit and to take the herbs that Dr. Wu prescribes. There may be different herbs for the first and second half of your cycle as well as additional herbs for your unique condition.

**PC2: Prenatal Care**
Once you have conceived, it is important to continue coming for treatments. This will increase your chances of securing the pregnancy. Dr. Wu recommends coming for acupuncture twice a week during the first trimester and resuming treatment once a week during the last 6 to 8 weeks of the pregnancy. You will continue with herbs at this time but it may not be necessary to receive the acupressure.

**PC3: Post-Partum Care**
This is also an integral part of the treatment plan. The sooner you are able to come for the treatments, the more benefit you will receive. Dr. Wu suggests coming for treatment once a week for 3 months. By taking care of your body after having a baby you are strengthening your reproductive organs and allowing your body the quickest possible recovery, which can provide you with future healthy pregnancies. You will be given a tea to take 24 hours after your delivery, for one week. This tea will help to disperse any left over blood or fluid from the pregnancy. You should dry your hair before leaving the house for at least 1 month after giving birth. Wearing socks to bed at night and avoiding cold foods is also very important.

**What Benefits will I experience From Chinese Medicine During Prenatal Care?**
By closely following Dr. Wu’s Fertility Treatment Guidelines, including the eating and drinking guidelines, you will experience:

- Less tiredness / More vitality
- Fewer emotional outbursts / Calmness / Happiness
- Less nausea / Normal appetite
- A tremendous decrease in miscarriages / Full term pregnancies
What Benefits Will the Baby and I Experience During Post-partum Care?

- Your baby will be healthier
- Your baby will have a better temperament
- It will be easier for both parents to raise the child
- You will be able to bounce back quicker
- You will have increased energy
- You will not be mentally depressed
- If you are breast feeding, the quality of your milk will be better
- You can enjoy sex sooner and the quality of your sexual enjoyment will be greater
- In the long run the aging process is slowed down
- You will decrease your chances of a prolapsed uterus
- You will have healthier reproductive organs

Please Remember That This Is a Standardized Guideline Only

- Each client will need further instruction from Dr. Wu in order to develop an individualized guideline.
- Please do not share this guideline with anyone unless s/he has been seen by Dr. Wu.
- Do not give this guideline or your personal guideline to your spouse or partner to follow. He or she must see Dr. Wu for an appointment at which time a personal guideline will be given.
- We recommend that your partner schedule an appointment within two weeks of your first appointment to receive this initial diagnosis.

Fertility Treatment Guideline

Please notify us if you are already following a Western Medical fertility program such as IVF, IUI, etc; we may need to see you more often.

- Submit a copy of your Western Medical report within the last 3 months including FSH/LH levels, your partner’s sperm count and etc.
- Allow 3 to 6 months to prepare your body for conception. (This may increase your probability to conceive.)
- Schedule weekly acupuncture treatments with Dr. Wu or her associates (they will administer treatment per Dr. Wu’s Fertility Program instructions).
• Both partners must meet with Dr. Wu at least once. While Western Medical sperm count and motility tests may appear normal, Dr. Wu’s Chinese Medical diagnosis may reveal other conditions that need to be addressed.

• Please avoid using laptop computers near the groin area or keeping cell phones in your pockets.

• Please discuss with Dr. Wu before dying your hair.

• Please inform Wu’s Healing Center immediately when you have a positive result for a pregnancy test.

Pre-ovulation: 1st Day of Full Flow to 24 Hours Before Ovulation

• Weekly treatment to be determined between Dr. Wu and yourself

• Moxibustion: Centering, moving, staying

• Traveling allowed

• Vigorous exercise allowed

• Sexual activity allowed (up to and including the day of ovulation)

• Baths/swimming allowed

• Spicy/pungent foods okay

• Please avoid poultry (chicken, turkey, and duck). Silky Chicken Soup, however, is highly recommended during both the pre- and post-ovulation parts of your cycle.

Post-ovulation: 24 Hours Before Ovulation to Day 1 of Next Cycle or Birth!

• Weekly treatment to be determined between Dr. Wu and yourself

• Moxibustion: Uplifting, moving, securing

• Please avoid traveling by air/flying (radiation risk, recycled air) and by road (excessive bumping, poor circulation)

• Gentle exercise with upper body allowed. Please avoid exercise with abdomen or below (i.e., no crunches, jogging/running).

• Chicken is recommended (Please avoid other poultry unless approved by Dr. Wu.)

• Please limit intake of spicy/pungent foods: Garlic, ginger, cinnamon, onion, pepper

• Avoid intense emotional experiences: Conversations, arguments, books, movies etc

• Please avoid sexual activity

• Please avoid baths/swimming: Affects body’s temperature; chlorine

• Please avoid wearing high-heeled shoes, if possibly pregnant.
Fertility Eating and Drinking Guidelines

• All foods and drinks must be at least room temperature.

• All foods must be cooked.

• Please note that except where specified, women must follow these eating and drinking guidelines throughout their entire cycle. Men must follow these eating and drinking guidelines during the pre-ovulation phase of their partner.

• If you have any questions concerning your Fertility Eating and Drinking Guidelines, Dr. Wu will be happy to answer 3 questions after each treatment. Please feel free to contact our clinic by phone or by e-mail at admin@wushealingcenter.com. Please write your name and “Food Guidelines” as the subject of the e-mail.

Suggested Foods for Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protein</th>
<th>Cooked Vegetables (cont.)</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red meat</td>
<td>All bell peppers</td>
<td>Raspberry leaf tea (Yogi tea or traditional medicinals)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td>Asparagus (ok w/ lamb)</td>
<td>Raisins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish (with scales) or freshwater fish</td>
<td>Spinach (ok w/ lamb)</td>
<td>FOS—Fructooligosaccharides</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken (post-ovulation)</td>
<td>Snow Peas (ok w/ lamb)</td>
<td>Salt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lamb</td>
<td></td>
<td>All cooking oils: Olive oil / sesame oil / canola oil (no corn oil)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soybeans / edamame</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wheat-free tamari sauce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-sweetened soy milk</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wheat-free soy sauce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rice milk</td>
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<td>Rice wine (to cook with)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goat’s milk</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ginger (okay on pre-ovulation)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Almond milk</td>
<td></td>
<td>Garlic (okay on pre-ovulation)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Onion (okay on pre-ovulation)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Scallion (okay on pre-ovulation)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Pepper (okay on pre-ovulation)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Hot / spicy / pungent foods (okay on pre-ovulation)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Tofu (ok in small amount)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Nuts (ok in small amount)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Fresh ground nut paste / nut butters</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Hummus (choose one with less garlic)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Honey (okay in small amount)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Starches</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese broccoli</td>
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<td>Green or purple cabbage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bok choy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chard</td>
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<td>Kale</td>
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<tr>
<td>String beans / green beans / wax beans</td>
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<tr>
<td>All beans / lentils (except mung beans)</td>
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<tr>
<td>All peas</td>
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<td>All mushrooms</td>
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</table>
### Foods to Avoid for Women

#### Protein
- Poultry
- Chicken (pre-ovulation)
- Turkey
- Duck
- Pork (cooler constitutions)

#### Rooted Vegetables
- Carrot
- Turnip
- Regular potato
- Sweet potato
- Yam
- Beet

#### Cooling Vegetables
(See page 89 of *Fertility Wisdom*)
- Corn: Including corn oil, starch, popcorn, corn cereal
- Eggplant
- Mung bean and sprouts
- Bamboo shoot
- Mustard greens
- Cucumber
- On choy
- Napa / Chinese cabbage
- Cauliflower
- All seaweeds
- All squashes
- All melons
- Miso
- Sage

#### Dairy
- Cow’s milk
- Oat milk
- All cheeses: Including goat, soy, rice or almond
- Yogurt
- Ice cream

#### Starches
- Wheat
- Wheat flour / white flour / whole wheat flour
- Bread / noodles / pastry / tortilla / pita
- Rye flour / bread / cracker
- Spelt flour / pastas / pita / tortilla
- Spelt bread / waffles / pretzels
- Kamut flour / bread
- Oat flour / bread / crackers
- Gluten
  (Please be aware that Gluten is found mainly in foods but may also be found in everyday products such as medicines, vitamins, and lip balms.)
- Seitan
- Barley
- Brown rice
- Millet

#### General
- Cold temperature food
- Raw food
- Alcohol
- All caffeine: Coffee, black / green tea, chocolate
- All sodas
- All mint drinks
- Chamomile tea
- Sweet: All sugar, syrup, fruit juices, molasses
- Most fruits: Including tomatoes and olives (See page 81 of *Fertility Wisdom*)
- All Shellfish: Shrimp, crab, lobster, oyster
- All processed food: Lunch meat, hot dogs
- All fast food
- All junk food
- Wheat grass / wheat grass juice
- Vinegar

#### Other Things to Avoid
- Smoking
- Avoid using laptop computers near the groin area or keeping cell phones in your pocket.
Seems Like We Need Subhead Here (or move individual bullets to more relevant part of doc…)

- Bread Alternative = Food For Life Wheat and Gluten Free White Rice Bread
- Soy Milk Sweetened with Honey and Vanilla Only = Wildwood (in plastic container)
- Vegetarians may take “Dry Powder” Vitamin E.
- Please dry your hair thoroughly before going outside.
- Please avoid the use of all scented products such as bath oils, essential oils, incense, candles, sachets, lotions, perfumes etc. These can be potentially irritating for our pregnant clients.

- Prenatal
  - No ginger juice / no dried ginger
  - No sexual activity (esp. intercourse, orgasm) until clearance from Dr. Wu.
  - No exercise

- For women of blood type “O”, discontinue the Vitamin E after ovulation.

- Submit your daily meal list for Dr. Wu to review within your first month of treatments at Wu’s Healing Center.

- Please consult with Western doctors for vitamin supplements. The following vitamins have been approved by Dr. Wu. Dr. Wu recommends pre-natal vitamins for all clients to take each day. You may also wish to ask your doctor for advice on vitamins to take.
  
  Dr. Wu recommends that you take these supplements each day in the specific amounts listed:
  - Folic Acid 1600 mcg/day
  - Vitamin C 1000 mg/day (Buffered Ascorba, Mineral Ascorbated)
  - Vitamin E 1000 iu/day (Tocopherol, D-Alpha)
  - Zinc 100 mg/day

  These supplements are okay to take in any amount.
  - Amino Acids (Arginine, Carnitine)
  - Calcium
  - Isoflavenoid
  - Magnesium
  - Vitamin B 6

- Dr. Wu recommends leafy green vegetables available at:
  
  May Wah Market
  
  707–719 Clement St. (between 8th and 9th Avenue)
  
  San Francisco, CA 94118

  小白菜
  油菜
  青江菜
  芥蘭
Dr. Wu’s Proprietary Formulas
These are the ingredients for a few formulas and may not be prescribed to everyone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredients for F1 Formula</th>
<th>Ingredients for F2 Formula</th>
<th>Ingredients for F3 Formula</th>
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Additional Reading

We understand that for many of our patients, Chinese medicine is new and unfamiliar and that you may have many questions about the nature of your condition, diagnosis and treatment. As we journey together, please refer to this list of books. They contain the answers to most of these questions and will assist you to better understand the practice of Chinese medicine. Most of these are for sale in the clinic, so please be sure to ask the front desk about them. We are certain you will find these books to be a valuable part of your healing process.

Required Reading:

• *Fertility Wisdom*, Angela C. Wu, L.Ac., O.M.D.
• *Tao of Healthy Eating*, Bob Flaws
• *Transform Stress into Vitality*, Mantak Chia
• *Parenting Begins Before Conception*, Carista Luminare-Rosen
• *Taking Charge of Your Fertility*, Toni Weschler, MPH

Recommended Reading:

• *The Web That Has No Weaver*, Ted J. Kaptchuk
• *Healing Love Through the Tao*, (Male and Female) Mantak Chia
• *Taoist Cosmic Healing—Cosmic Chi Kung*, Mantak Chia
• *Multi-orgasmic Couple*, Mantak Chia and Maneewan Chia
• *Bone Marrow Nei Kung*, Mantak Chia and Maneewan Chia
The Other Brain, the One with Butterflies, also Deals with Many Woes

Correction Appended

Two brains are better than one. At least that is the rationale for the close—sometimes too close—relationship between the human body's two brains, the one at the top of the spinal cord and the hidden but powerful brain in the gut known as the enteric nervous system.

For Dr. Michael D. Gershon, the author of “The Second Brain” and the chairman of the department of anatomy and cell biology at Columbia, the connection between the two can be unpleasantly clear. “Every time I call the National Institutes of Health to check on a grant proposal,” Dr. Gershon said, “I become painfully aware of the influence the brain has on the gut.”

In fact, anyone who has ever felt butterflies in the stomach before giving a speech, a gut feeling that flies in the face of fact or a bout of intestinal urgency the night before an examination has experienced the actions of the dual nervous systems.

The connection between the brains lies at the heart of many woes, physical and psychiatric. Ailments like anxiety, depression, irritable bowel syndrome, ulcers and Parkinson's disease manifest symptoms at the brain and the gut level.

“The majority of patients with anxiety and depression will also have alterations of their GI function,” said Dr. Emeran Mayer, professor of medicine, physiology and psychiatry at the University of California, Los Angeles.

A study in 1902 showed changes in the movement of food through the gastrointestinal tract in cats confronted by growling dogs.

One system's symptoms—and cures—may affect the other. Antidepressants, for example, cause gastric distress in up to a quarter of the people who take them. Butterflies in the stomach are caused by a surge of stress hormones released by the body in a “fight or flight” situation. Stress can also overstimulate nerves in the esophagus, causing a feeling of choking.

Dr. Gershon, who coined the term “second brain” in 1996, is one of a number of researchers who are studying brain-gut connections in the relatively new field of neurogastroenterology. New understandings of the way the second brain works, and the interactions between the two, are helping to treat disorders like constipation, ulcers and Hirschprung's disease.

*The role of the enteric nervous system is to manage every aspect of digestion, from the esophagus to the stomach, small intestine and colon. The second brain, or little brain, accomplishes all that with the same tools as the big brain, a sophisticated nearly self-contained network of neural circuitry, neurotransmitters and proteins.*

The independence is a function of the enteric nervous system’s complexity.

“Rather than Mother Nature’s trying to pack 100 million neurons someplace in the brain or spinal cord and then sending long connections to the GI tract, the circuitry is right next to the systems that require control,” said Jackie D. Wood, professor of physiology, cell biology and internal medicine at Ohio State.
Two brains may seem like the stuff of science fiction, but they make literal and evolutionary sense.

“What brains do is control behavior,” Dr. Wood said. “The brain in your gut has stored within its neural networks a variety of behavioral programs, like a library. The digestive state determines which program your gut calls up from its library and runs.”

When someone skips lunch, the gut is more or less silent. Eat a pastrami sandwich, and contractions all along the small intestines mix the food with enzymes and move it toward the lining for absorption to begin. If the pastrami is rotten, reverse contractions will force it—and everything else in the gut—into the stomach and back out through the esophagus at high speed.

In each situation, the gut must assess conditions, decide on a course of action and initiate a reflex.

“The gut monitors pressure,” Dr. Gershon said. “It monitors the progress of digestion. It detects nutrients, and it measures acid and salts. It’s a little chemical lab.”

The enteric system does all this on its own, with little help from the central nervous system.

The enteric nervous system was first described in 1921 by Dr. J.N. Langley, a British physician who believed that it was one of three parts—along with the parasympathetic and sympathetic nervous systems—of the autonomic nervous system, which controls involuntary behaviors like breathing and circulation. In this triad, the enteric nervous system was seen as something of a tag-along to the other two.

After Langley died, scientists more or less forgot about the enteric nervous system. Years later, when Dr. Gershon reintroduced the concept and suggested that the gut might use some of the same neurotransmitters as the brain, his theory was widely ridiculed.

“It was like saying that New York taxi drivers never miss a showing of ‘Tosca’ at the Met,” he recalled.

By the early ’80s, scientists had accepted the idea of the enteric nervous system and the role of neurotransmitters like serotonin in the gut.

It is no surprise that there is a direct relationship between emotional stress and physical distress. “Clinicians are finally acknowledging that a lot of dysfunction in GI disorders involves changes in the central nervous system,” said Gary M. Mawe, a professor of anatomy and neurobiology at the University of Vermont.

The big question is which comes first, physiology or psychology?

The enteric and central nervous systems use the same hardware, as it were, to run two very different programs. Serotonin, for instance, is crucial to feelings of well-being. Hence the success of the antidepressants known as S.S.R.I.’s that raise the level of serotonin available to the brain.

But 95 percent of the body’s serotonin is housed in the gut, where it acts as a neurotransmitter and a signaling mechanism. The digestive process begins when a specialized cell, an enterochromaffin, squirts serotonin into the wall of the gut, which has at least seven types of serotonin receptors. The receptors, in turn, communicate with nerve cells to start digestive enzymes flowing or to start things moving through the intestines.

Serotonin also acts as a go-between, keeping the brain in the skull up to date with what is happening in the brain below. Such communication is mostly one way, with 90 percent traveling from the gut to the head.
Many of those messages are unpleasant, and serotonin is involved in sending them. Chemotherapy drugs like doxorubicin, which is used to treat breast cancer, cause serotonin to be released in the gut, leading to nausea and vomiting. “The gut is not an organ from which you wish to receive frequent progress reports,” Dr. Gershon said.

Serotonin is also implicated in one of the most debilitating gut disorders, irritable bowel syndrome, or I.B.S., which causes abdominal pain and cramping, bloating and, in some patients, alternating diarrhea and constipation.

“You can run any test you want on people with I.B.S., and their GI tracts look essentially normal,” Dr. Mawe said. The default assumption has been that the syndrome is a psychosomatic disease.

But it turns out that irritable bowel syndrome, like depression, is at least in part a function of changes in the serotonin system. In this case, it is too much serotonin rather than too little.

In a healthy person, after serotonin is released into the gut and initiates an intestinal reflex, it is whisked out of the bowel by a molecule known as the serotonin transporter, or SERT, found in the cells that line the gut wall.

People with irritable bowel syndrome do not have enough SERT, so they wind up with too much serotonin floating around, causing diarrhea.

The excess serotonin then overwhelms the receptors in the gut, shutting them down and causing constipation.

When Dr. Gershon, whose work has been supported by Novartis, studied mice without SERT, he found that they developed a condition very much like I.B.S. in humans.

Several new serotonin-based drugs—intestinal antidepressants, in a way—have brought hope for those with chronic gut disorders.

Another mechanism that lends credence to physiology as the source of intestinal dysfunctions is the system of mast cells in the gut that have an important role in immune response.

“During stress, trauma or ‘fight or flight’ reactions, the barrier between the lumen, the interior of the gut where food is digested, and the rest of the bowel could be broken, and bad stuff could get across,” Dr. Wood said. “So the big brain calls in more immune surveillance at the gut wall by activating mast cells.”

These mast cells release histamines and other inflammatory agents, mobilizing the enteric nervous system to expel the perceived intruders, and causing diarrhea.

Inflammation induced by mast cells may turn out to be crucial in understanding and treating GI disorders. Inflamed tissue becomes tender. A gut under stress, with chronic mast cell production and consequent inflammation, may become tender, as well.

In animals, Dr. Mawe said, inflammation makes the sensory neurons in the gut fire more often, causing a kind of sensory hyperactivity. “I have a theory that some chronic disorders may be caused by something like attention deficit disorder in the gut,” he said.
Dr. Gershon, too, theorizes that physiology is the original culprit in brain-gut dysfunctions. “We have identified molecular defects in the gut of everyone who has irritable bowel syndrome,” he said. “If you were chained by bloody diarrhea to a toilet seat, you, too, might be depressed.”

Still, psychology clearly plays a role. Recent studies suggest that stress, especially early in life, can cause chronic GI diseases, at least in animals. “If you put a rat on top of a little platform surrounded by water, which is very stressful for a rat, it develops the equivalent of diarrhea,” Dr. Mayer said.

Another experiment showed that when young rats were separated from their mothers, the layer of cells that line the gut, the same barrier that is strengthened by mast cells during stress, weakened and became more permeable, allowing bacteria from the intestine to pass through the bowel walls and stimulate immune cells.

“In rats, it’s an adaptive response,” Dr. Mayer said. “If they're born into a stressful, hostile environment, nature programs them to be more vigilant and stress responsive in their future life.”

He said up to 70 percent of the patients he treats for chronic gut disorders had experienced early childhood traumas like parents' divorces, chronic illnesses or parents’ deaths. “I think that what happens in early life, along with an individual’s genetic background, programs how a person will respond to stress for the rest of his or her life,” he said.

Either way, what is good for one brain is often good for the other, too. A team of researchers from Penn State University recently discovered a possible new direction in treating intestinal disorders, biofeedback for the brain in the gut.

In an experiment published in a recent issue of Neurogastroenterology and Motility, Robert M. Stern, a professor of psychology at Penn State, found that biofeedback helped people consciously increase and enhance their gastrointestinal activity. They used the brains in their heads, in other words, to help the brains in their guts, proving that at least some of the time two brains really are better than one.

Correction: August 30, 2005, Tuesday
An article in Science Times last Tuesday about the enteric nervous system, the body’s gastrointestinal “second brain,” misstated the context of a remark by Dr. Michael D. Gershon, chairman of the department of anatomy and cell biology at Columbia, about an intestinal disease’s potential to bring on depression. He was referring to ulcerative colitis, not irritable bowel syndrome.
Dr. Wu’s Experience with Nefful

Dr. Wu had a student from Taiwan who was interning at her clinic. The intern had a lot of health problems and was also going through some transitions in her personal life. She eventually moved back to Taiwan.

When Dr. Wu saw her again two years later, the intern looked amazing! Knowing the intern’s circumstances, Dr. Wu’s first response was, “You look great! Did you get a divorce?” The intern said, “No”, and began to tell Dr. Wu about a product called Nefful. Dr. Wu asked if she had any proof or research to show the results were from the Nefful, but the intern did not. Unconvinced, Dr. Wu figured this was some kind of direct sales plan, and assumed the intern was now a distributor for this product. To help out the intern, Dr. Wu said, “Okay, okay. How much do you want me to buy?” Dr. Wu bought a few items, and stored them at the back of her closet, certain she would never use them.

Later, Dr Wu had a client who previously had tuberculosis, and now had something abnormal growing in her lungs. After seeing Dr. Wu for 4 years, her condition remained stable. She then told Dr. Wu that she would like to stop seeing her for about 6 months to try something else. Dr. Wu knew it was the client’s choice and agreed, still curious about what the client was going to try.

After 6 months, the client came back to tell Dr. Wu that her x-rays were absolutely clear and the doctors couldn’t believe it. Dr. Wu asked the client what kind of treatment she had, and she hadn’t had any. Instead, she wore the Nefful products 24 hours a day, including the long sleeve shirt with pants. Dr. Wu became extremely interested.

One day Dr. Wu threw her back out, so she decided to pull the Nefful from her closet and try it out. That night, she slept in the Nefful. Upon awakening, she realized that her back pain had disappeared. Now she was convinced.

Excited about this new experience, Dr. Wu searched for more information on Nefful, eventually finding Chinese translations of the original Japanese literature. In Japan, Nefful is a regular clothing whose healing properties are in common use by people of all ages—even children. It is also widely used in Japan by women with infertility concerns.

These amazing health benefits are now available to all of Dr. Wu’s patients.
Pregnancy: Some Depression Relief, Without Drugs


Up to a quarter of all women suffer from depression during pregnancy, and many are reluctant to take antidepressants. Now a new study suggests that acupuncture may provide some relief during pregnancy, even though it has not been found to be effective against depression in general.

The Stanford University study recruited 150 depressed women who were 12 to 30 weeks pregnant, and randomly assigned 52 to receive acupuncture specifically designed for depressive symptoms, 49 to regular acupuncture and 49 to Swedish massage.

Each woman received 12 sessions of 25 minutes each; those given acupuncture did not know which type they were getting. (In the depression-specific treatment, needles are inserted at body points that are said to correspond to symptoms like anxiety, withdrawal and apathy.)

After 8 weeks, almost two-thirds of the women who had depression-specific acupuncture experienced a reduction in at least 50 percent of their symptoms, compared with just under half of the women treated with either massage or regular acupuncture.

The findings appear in the March issue of *Obstetrics & Gynecology*. The lead author, Rachel Manber, a professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Stanford, said the results suggested that some symptoms of depression during pregnancy might be related to physical discomfort that is alleviated by acupuncture. Still, the results were striking, she said.
The Truth About Our Eggs

By Kris Richardson Brewer, June 2004
*Excerpts from The Infertility Cure by Randine Lewis, Ph.D., Master of Science in Oriental Medicine.

“A woman’s fertility is influenced by many factors, no matter what her age. Understanding these factors and which energies decline with maturation can help restore youthful energetics and, in essence, turn back the reproductive clock. With a little help, we should be able to prolong our reproductive health and longevity.”*

“Many in the Western reproductive medical community believe a woman’s age is the only factor determining ovarian health. Medical studies conclude that our ovaries start to produce fewer and fewer healthy eggs when we reach our thirties. By age forty, they tell us, we have scant chance of producing an undamaged, healthy egg that can be fertilized. But believing these assertions about age-related fertility decline is like believing the only thing influencing the creation of a wave is the amount of water it contains. Certainly, the natural process of aging in every human being brings with it some decrease in fertility. But there are many factors that can help us maintain our fertility regardless of our age. The ocean of our fertility doesn’t dry up; it just becomes still. And with help, it can flow once more.”*

“The DNA contained within our eggs does become less stable as we get older, and a woman’s eggs are usually “healthier” when she is thirty-two than when she is forty. But contrary to what Western medicine would lead us to believe, a woman’s eggs do not have an expiration date. They respond to their surroundings, just as the rest of our bodily systems do. This news is a double-edged sword—our ovaries and eggs respond negatively to poor diet, drugs, toxins, and stress hormones, but they also respond positively to a healthy diet and pure lifestyle.”*

[Ultimately, what makes our eggs less responsive is not age, but hormonal fluctuation and reduced blood flow to the uterus and ovaries. As we approach menopause, the ovarian blood flow is around five times less than when we were in our reproductive prime. Better circulation to any organ improves its function and this is also true of the ovaries and their residing eggs.]

Acupuncture and acupressure are the only known medical methods of improving the blood flow to the uterus and ovaries.

“It seems logical to assume that is we could encourage a woman’s body to return to more youthful levels of hormonal balance and blood flow, then the ovaries would produce and release eggs in the same way they did when we were younger. This assumption was confirmed in a recent scientific study in which the ovaries of older rats that had stopped ovulating were transplanted into hormonally youthful rats’ bodies. Once the older rats’ ovaries were placed in the youthful environment of the younger rats, the old ovaries became capable of ovulating again. If women want to become pregnant in their 40s, they need to provide more hormonal fuel and blood flow to their remaining thousands of eggs.”*

“Fortunately, the steps involved in turning back the reproductive clock are all natural. Unfortunately, rejuvenating the reproductive system takes time. With a little effort, however, older women can give the entire reproductive system the attention that a young woman’s body provides effortlessly. Through Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), we can help direct the body’s attention to the mid-brain, pituitary, ovaries, and uterus, as well as create the spiritual, mental, and emotional health required to produce healthy eggs, provide appropriate conditions for their fertilization, and foster a welcoming environment in the uterus so the egg may be implanted, grow into a fetus, and be carried to term.”*
East Meets West:
Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and Its Compliment, Western Medicine

TCM is concerned with long-term prevention of disease and with a more gentle, non-invasive approach. Just as a river becomes polluted over time, so must that river be cleansed gently and over time. This philosophy is the most difficult part of TCM for most Americans to accept. We have been led to believe there is a pill for every syndrome, a quick fix.

TCM takes into consideration the body as a whole, including all of its interactive systems, as well as the mind and spirit. TCM does not ignore any part of what makes us a whole being.

Western medicine is skillful at cutting and exploring the body, as well as providing intervention once disease is already progressed. Assisted Reproductive Techniques, or ARTs, can be invaluable solutions for women facing fertility challenges.

More and more women are creating families by combining a program of TCM with one of the many technologically advanced methods Western medicine offers. Following rigorous testing in many countries in Europe, it has been shown that the success rates of pregnancies from IVF have risen from 26% to over 60% when this combination was employed.

_Realistically, the cycle of an egg is one year_, and to maintain a pure lifestyle for at least six months of the egg’s journey through the body is the most advantageous for producing good quality and quantity of eggs. Generally, Western doctors focus on the last thirty days of each woman’s cycle for an IVF procedure. But they’re actually just catching the egg in the last 30 days of its maturation. TCM, however, focuses on the last one hundred and fifty days of the cycle of the egg, or five months.

In China, it is typical for a woman to receive acupuncture and acupressure treatments every day for the last 6 months of the egg’s journey and then, many times a day in the last 30 days of the egg’s maturation.

In Sweden and Germany, the success rates for women who were treated with acupuncture for 6 months once a day increased to 50% (up from 26% without TCM). In another study, the women who had the 6 months of acupuncture also had acupuncture “once, just before the egg transfer,” and “once, just after.” These women had a 60% increase in success rates. It is now “required protocol” in these countries to combine TCM with ARTs procedures.

TCM is the only known process for breathing life back into older ovaries and uterus. This is why Western medical doctors are now embracing Chinese medicine like never before, as there is no drug within Western medicine which increases blood flow to the uterus or increases uterine receptivity. Only TCM has been successful in these areas.

What You Can Do at Home:

1. Keep the body warm (not hot—stay away from extremes). Envision a human incubator.

2. Eat only warm foods and beverages.

3. Limit stress on the digestive system. Eat a simplified diet (see handout) of only cooked foods. Remember that you’ll be eating this diet only for a short time to aid in the goal of pregnancy.

4. Massage the ovaries and uterus to increase blood flow.
5. Massaging the hand and feet and the kidneys can be beneficial.

6. Take recommended herbs consistently.

7. Make sure that your TCM doctor as well as your Western doctor know all of the herbs, supplements, and medicines you are taking!

8. Have your thyroid checked: One third of women experiencing infertility have low thyroid. Thyroid is easily treatable. Typical symptoms are: fatigue, low libido, cold hands and feet, and others.

9. Lower stress and keep a positive mental outlook...remember, whatever you focus on gets more pronounced in your life.

Understanding what is behind the recommended diet can help each woman accept and even embrace this new way of eating.

Example: If a woman eats a raw carrot instead of a warm, cooked carrot, the body has to take valuable attention away from the reproductive organs to warm it up, break it down, and digest it.

The body focuses on survival first, reproduction second. So anything we can do to make digestion less taxing on the body is helpful. Eating only warm foods and beverages helps maintain our human incubator. It takes a tremendous amount of energy to warm the body back up after it has become cold due to cold drinks and cold food—or cold weather!

Any stimulant, such as caffeine or sugar, or depressives, like alcohol, takes attention away from the reproductive organs as the body’s systems must work to balance themselves and detoxify, again taking focus off of the uterus and ovaries. Even fruit, if eaten in excess, acts like a stimulant. Having any amount of alcohol within the last 30 days of an IVF cycle has been shown to cut chances by 50%!

Teach husbands, lovers, friends, and family to massage the uterus, ovaries, hands, feet, and kidneys.

Receive as many acupuncture treatments as you can weekly to increase the blood flow to uterus and ovaries, and take herbs individualized for each woman. The herbs work together with the acupuncture treatments.

Finally, creating a strong support system for yourself can be very important. Surrounding yourself with positive people for a sometimes difficult, but often rewarding journey, can make all the difference.

The author, Kris Richardson Brewer is a grateful mother at 43 (using a combination of TCM and IVF, and her own eggs!) After many failed attempts at natural pregnancy, Kris attempted pregnancy with 1 cycle of artificial insemination, and 2 attempts at IVF before coming to Dr. Angela Wu in February 2002. After working with Dr. Wu and her staff for only 3 months, Kris became pregnant following an IVF procedure and gave birth to Ryan Richardson Brewer on Christmas Eve, 2002.