

WELCOME TO THE WORLD

We are always happy to see the babies our patients have welcomed into the world! This month we would like to congratulate all the new mums and dads and wish you all health and happiness.



This month we explore all things pregnancy from pre-conception to post-natal care and everything in between.

Featuring articles from two of our amazing women's health specialists, Kerry Marshall and Kirsten Wolfe, questions on pregnancy care answered and finally a great lactation recipe thanks to belly-belly!

Mornington Complementary Medicine

February 2014

THIS MONTH

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Acupuncture and Pregnancy

Acupuncture treatments throughout pregnancy enhance the health of the mother, prevent complications and positively influence the overall health of the baby.

The following can be safely and effectively treated using Acupuncture:

-THREATENED MISCARRIAGE	-PREGNANCY INDUCED HYPERTENSION	-OEDEMA
-MUSCULOSKELETAL PAIN	-BREECH/POSTERIOR PRESENTATION	-HEARTBURN
-GESTATIONAL DIABETES	-STRESS AND ANXIETY	-MORNING SICKNESS
-FATIGUE	-PAIN RELIEF DURING LABOUR	-POST PARTUM CARE
-LABOUR INDUCTION	-LABOUR PREPARATION	-INSOMNIA

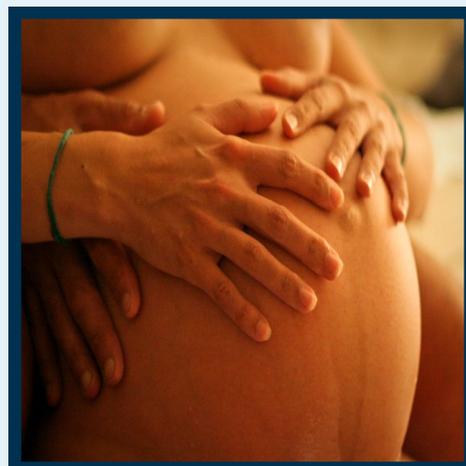
Threatened miscarriage, if due to an imbalance in the mother's system (but not if due to genetic problems with the foetus), can often be overcome with application of herbs, moxa or acupuncture. It is important to contact your obstetrician and then the clinic at any signs of miscarriage so treatment can begin immediately.

Due to the intense demand placed on the mother's resources by the growing foetus, all pregnant women experience fatigue. While nothing can substitute for sleep and a nourishing diet, acupuncture ensures that the internal organs are functioning optimally, therefore increasing energy. Acupuncture is also very effective in reducing both the severity and incidence of nausea and vomiting. Back pain, rib pain, sciatica and symphysis pubis pain can also be markedly reduced with acupuncture. Any early pregnancy back pain should be thoroughly checked out by an obstetrician or midwife.

Women with mild oedema often come for treatment in the later stages of pregnancy as their body struggles to cope with the extra fluids generated by the pregnancy. Acupuncture can have an important role in assisting to reduce high blood pressure, especially if treatment is commenced early when hypertension is first noted. As hypertension has the potential to escalate quickly, ongoing monitoring with a midwife or gynaecologist remains essential throughout pregnancy.

Pre-Birth treatment involves a series of treatments from 36 weeks to prepare for labour. Women who receive pre-birth acupuncture and do not go into labour spontaneously respond very well and quickly to induction either by acupuncture. Acupuncture can provide a gentle inducement of labour and can be an effective alternative to Syntocinon drip or prostaglandin gel induction.

Birth is a natural process, our bodies are specifically designed for. From a TCM point of view pain during birth is caused when there is an obstruction on some level, for example the baby is not in optimal position, your pelvis may be misaligned or that you are in fear. TCM aims to reduce all of this in order for your body to release endorphins which relax the body. It's all about letting your body and baby know that you trust and are ready.



BIRTH SUPPORT—WHY USE A DOULA?

There are many choices to make when you discover you are pregnant, hospitals, primary health carers, ante – natal classes and so on. The actual birth can feel far away but planning your birth support team, those who will be with you for the duration of the labour and preparing yourself for birth can be worth thinking about even before the second trimester.

In labour many women have their partner present, this has become expected and common since the 70's when they allowed men in the delivery room. You could also choose to have a friend, relative or known midwife with you. Another option woman are seeking out is a Birth Attendant also called a Doula to be part of their support team.

A Birth Attendant is a woman with experience and knowledge in the birth process and birthing environments. She gets to know you during your pregnancy, becomes familiar with your pregnancy health history and birth wishes and offers continuous physical and emotional support for the duration of your labour. She is a non – medical presence and does not over ride decisions made by a Midwife or Obstetrician.

To birth effectively a woman needs to 'let go' of over thinking mind activity to access her primal instincts. For some women this can be a daunting prospect, a sense of losing control in unfamiliar territory. With the stable presence of a birth attendant watching over, the birthing woman can feel uninhibited, calm and safely supported therefore more able to access her birthing potential.

On a more practical level a Birth Attendant can share support with your team, hold your hand, rub your back or offer acupressure for pain relief. She may suggest birthing positions, relay information from medical staff and keep the music going, the lights dimmed and make sure you are drinking enough fluids.

What ever your birthing environment or baby number having a supportive team surrounding you can make all the difference in the direction your birth takes.

Kerry Marshall

Kerry is a registered Acupuncturist working at MCM Tuesdays and Fridays she will also be available for Birth Attending from August 2014

Birth attending service includes:

- * Initial free meeting*
- * Minimum two prenatal meetings, allowing time to get to know you and your partner, discussion of birth wishes, concerns, questions and birth preparation*
- * Email and phone contact throughout pregnancy*
- * Information and resources*
- * On call 24 hours from 38 weeks*
- * Support for the duration of your labour and couple of hours post birth once settled*
- * One post natal visit and debriefing of birth*
- * Access to a back up birth attendant*



Acupuncture for breech and posterior presentation

Kirsten Wolfe

Discovering your baby is breech can be a devastating experience. It can often leaving you feeling there is no choice but to have a Caesarean-section or an external cephalic version, which is where the baby is turned by manipulating the baby through the mother's abdomen.

Luckily there is another alternative for turning a breech baby. Acupuncture & moxibustion is a simple, safe and relaxing treatment that gives the patient an option of natural birth. This technique can also be used to reposition transverse or posterior presentations. If treatment is unsuccessful, accepting a change of plan is often easier, knowing that at least all other options have been explored.

Acupuncture is an integral component of Chinese Medicine (CM), a wholistic system of healthcare continually practised and developed throughout Asia for many thousands of years. Chinese Medicine has developed specialised treatment for women in promoting fertility, pregnancy care and postpartum recovery. Today CM care is increasingly valued in Australia, as it is in New Zealand, England, Germany and France where acupuncture is available in specialised antenatal clinics and maternity hospitals.

Pregnancy, child birth and postnatal recovery are viewed in Chinese Medicine as a window of opportunity to enhance and support the woman's wellbeing. Conversely if adequate care is not taken the resulting problems may continue long after birth. Value is therefore placed on offering preventive care to strengthen the mother and baby as well as dealing with problems as they occur during pregnancy.

Chinese Medicine offers a safe, effective alternative for treatment of pain and discomfort during pregnancy and a great alternative to western medicine drugs. Moreover, it provides an excellent complement to midwifery, doula, and obstetrical care.

*A Cochrane review of several randomised controlled studies into breech presentation and moxibustion was completed and concluded **approximately** 70% of breech babies will turn using moxibustion applied to BL67. Further information on this study can be found in the Cochrane Library.*

*So what is moxibustion? "Moxa" is made from the herb *Ai Ye* (Chinese Mugwort) that has been used for over 2000 years in China. The herb is compacted into a cigar shape and then lit and held above a specific acupuncture point to produce a focused radiant heat that stimulates the point.*



During an Acupuncture treatment, the practitioner will take a comprehensive case history, make a diagnosis and will often do more than just moxa on BL67. We find it even more successful to treat the whole body; treatment often involves a moxa fan & massage on the sacrum to open up the hips, and various acupuncture points to treat the underlying condition of why the baby has turned breech.



After your Acupuncture session, self-treatment continues at home for 20 minutes a day for ten days straight. It is important to continue with the treatment even once the baby turns, as it helps the baby stay in optimal position and become engaged.

It is recommended to have weekly treatment with your acupuncturist which also helps with birth preparation (which reduces labour time, reduces need for drugs or intervention, help the release of oxytocin, and ripens the cervix).

How does it work?

Explaining from a Chinese Medicine perspective is often hard to convey in layman's term. In brief, breech presentation is caused from Kidney deficiency, with Qi being deficient or stagnant.

Yang is activity & Yin is rest – to turn a baby you need activity. Stimulating BL67 with moxa (the point where yang turns into yin) promotes yang in the body, therefore activity to move the stagnation, boost the Qi and turn the baby.

As we are working with the body and not manually turning or forcing the baby to turn, it is completely safe. It can also improve the outcome of external cephalic version (ECV) if used at least five days before.

How it works from a western perspective is still uncertain. Some findings suggest that what is happening could be any of the following:

- *Adreno-cortical stimulation*
- *Increased placental oestrogens and changes in prostaglandin levels*
- *Increased fetal activity*
- *Increased blood flow to the uterine and umbilical arteries*
- *Relaxation of the uterine myometrium (muscle layer) making a more favorable environment for the fetus to move*

Timing of treatment

The optimum time for turning a breech baby is most efficient at 34-36 weeks, earlier if you have a bicornuate (heart shaped) uterus. Clinically, we have found it is still possible to turn up to 39 weeks, especially if it is your second baby.

Choosing your Acupuncturist

First and foremost please ensure that your acupuncturist is registered with the Chinese Medicine Board of Australia (AHPRA). This ensures your practitioner has a four year degree level of training specifically in acupuncture. Secondly, an important factor is how much the acupuncture practice focuses on treating Women's Health. A practitioner who devotes most of his/her time to treating infertility, pregnancy & birth is most likely more knowledgeable in that area. A practitioner who sees an occasional Women's Health patient may not have enough experience or expertise to offer the best treatment available.

Kirsten Wolfe (nee Doughty) is the senior acupuncturist and founder of ***NOURISHING LIFE FERTILITY METHOD*** as well one of the directors of ***Mornington Complementary Medicine***. Her passion for Women's Health and a culmination of studying natural healing techniques over the past 20 years, gives Kirsten a unique understanding of the human body and spirit.

Known as "the baby maker" Kirsten has treated thousands of couples and helped them conceive from the easy case to the most difficult cases. Kirsten solely focuses on treatment of Reproductive & Women's health conditions such as infertility (natural and IVF), pregnancy, pre-birth, labour and post natal. Our Nourishing Life Method approaches patients with an open mind, compassion and a medically integrative perspective, working closely with patients to return them to optimum health. Striving to integrate traditional and complimentary care in order to effectively improve and maintain patients' lifelong health. This expertise provides patients with comprehensive treatments to address the needs of individuals and couples suffering from infertility and sub-fertility.

Kirsten has built a strong reputation on the Mornington Peninsula in gynaecology and fertility over 13 years providing optimum patient care pre- and post-natally alongside midwives, gynaecologists and obstetricians. Currently completing a Masters of Science in Traditional Chinese Medicine from the University of Western Sydney specialising in Gynaecology and Fertility. Having trained under Fertility experts such as Randine Lewis, Heather Bruce, Lily Lui, Jane Lyttleton and Debra Betts gives her a vast knowledge of Chinese Reproductive Medicine. She is a registered Acupuncturist with APRHA as well as a certified Master NLP practitioner, Natural Fertility Awareness trainer and Doula (Birth attendant).

- *Master of Traditional Chinese Medicine (currently completing)*
- *Adv. Dip. H.Sc (acupuncture)*
- *Master NLP practitioner*
- *Doula (Birth Attendant)*
- *Reiki Master*
- *Cert Massage*
- *Chinese Medicine Registration Board, Victoria Member - AHPRA*
- *Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association (AACMA),
Practitioner number: 1588*

***Kirsten is one of 5 fabulous women's health and fertility Practitioners at
Mornington Complementary Medicine***



Lactation Cookies

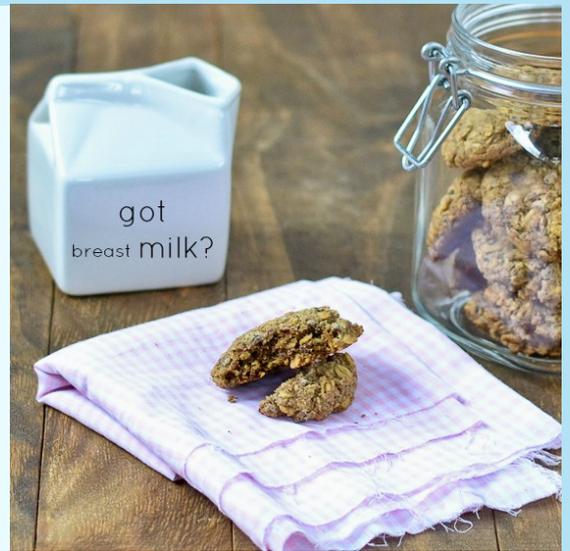
Prep time: approx. 15 minutes

Oven temp: Preheat to 170C

Makes approx.: 14-16 cookies

INGREDIENTS

- ◆ 1 cup self raising wholemeal flour (if you have plain flour, add 1/2 tsp baking powder)
- ◆ 1/2 cup low fat butter (for a healthier option, use organic, virgin coconut oil instead which is super good for you!)
- ◆ 3/4 cup brown sugar (if wanting to reduce sugar, you could try just 1/2 cup, or coconut sugar)
- ◆ 2 tablespoons flaxseed meal
- ◆ 1 egg
- ◆ 2-3 tablespoons of water (depends if you prefer moister cookies)
- ◆ 1 tablespoon vanilla (optional, for flavour)
- ◆ 1 teaspoon cinnamon (optional, for flavour)
- ◆ 1-2 tablespoons of brewers yeast.



DO NOT leave out or substitute the brewers yeast for any other products or yeasts... it's one of the main ingredients that makes them work. Nutritional yeast and bakers yeast are different – don't use these.

METHOD

- In a large mixing bowl, cream the butter and sugar then add the egg and vanilla. Mix well.
 - In a separate bowl, combine the flaxseed and water, let sit for a few minutes before adding to mix.
 - Add the dry ingredients (apart from the oats and your additional ingredients) and mix well again.
 - Finally, stir in the oats and your additional ingredient.
 - Make the biscuits (I use a desert spoon as a rough size guide) and place them onto a lightly greased or lined baking tray. Flatten them a little with your fingers or a spatula – if you like a soft centre, don't squish them down too much. If you like you can just make them into balls – I do this and love the soft centre!
- Bake for around 10-12 minutes depending on how well cooked/crunchy you like your biscuits – I prefer them a little soft and lightly cooked.

Try to source organic, local ingredients where possible

We stock organic virgin coconut oil in store at Mornington Complementary Medicine, as well as Goji berries and raw cacao powder which would make delicious and healthy variation ideas!

Thanks to Bellybelly.com.au for this fabulous recipe!