

acupuncture & pregnancy



in vital health they are successful, confident, happy, fertile people).

Reflexology helps in the early stages with symptoms such as morning sickness and breathlessness etc. I have never had a client who has had more than 8 hours in labour after having reflexology.

I have had several breach babies who were to be 'turned'. They were referred to me by midwives first to see if reflexology could help and each case has been successful. Working on the diaphragm seems to be a key thing for, if the baby has not been able to turn fully, reflexology can release the diaphragm and then hopefully allow baby to move.

I work with the right, then the left foot in the original Ingham Method, preferring to follow the clockwise pattern of the colon. Different therapists may work differently going back and forth between feet, but I find when I finish with right foot and move onto left, the baby has normally started to move and stretch out and reposition itself.

Remember too this contact is good for the baby. Baby massage reports show that (if attached to a scan) the baby's hand comes up to meet the mother's massaging hand on the abdomen - what a lovely bonding opportunity? The same is true with the feet. Recently I worked on a colleague as often as possible through her pregnancy and the baby could be seen doing cartwheels virtually through her clothes when we got to the left foot.

People have the misconception that reflexology will bring on birth. In the last year I have had so many people show up believing that if we press a particular point you go immediately into labour. Mercifully this is not the case. One of the most magical things I think about carrying the child is that it overrides the mother and takes what it needs from her body and so is always protected albeit at the cost of mum. If mum decides to diet, the baby won't so mum will end up undernourished, not the other way round. Likewise the baby will be born when it is ready and not before. All reflexology does is create the best environment by bringing about these conditions in the body, but will force nothing. (Having said that, in early stages we do not touch the reproductive reflexes as we don't want to unsettle development..

Acupuncture treatment during pregnancy benefits both Baby and Mother. Regular balancing treatments throughout pregnancy enhance the health of the mother, prevent complications and influence the development of the baby.

An Australian study showed its particular effectiveness in relieving morning sickness or the potentially more dangerous hyperemesis gravidarum (severe vomiting during pregnancy). The study, published in the journal **Birth**, reports that of 593 women less than 14 weeks pregnant who participated, those who received traditional acupuncture reported having less frequent and shorter periods of nausea than the women who received no acupuncture. These improvements were felt immediately and lasted throughout the study's four-week duration. In the first trimester, acupuncture can also relieve fatigue, migraines and bleeding.

Daniel Maxwell, a member of the British Acupuncture Council, the regulatory body for acupuncturists, said *"the benefits of acupuncture for pregnant women was well known. Many pregnant women turn to acupuncture to relieve pain, especially pelvic pain."*

"It is good because it does not involve any drugs, which women have to be careful about taking during pregnancy." But he said the medical profession needed to be more consistent in recommending acupuncture as a treatment. *"Some GPs and midwives do refer people on for acupuncture, but some don't. It really does vary from area to area."*

Dr Graham Archard, vice-chair of the Royal College of GPs, said 60% of family doctors use alternative therapies. *"The use of acupuncture to treat pain during pregnancy certainly seems credible."*

"Pregnant women should be avoiding drugs so acupuncture, which releases the bodies natural painkillers, should be of benefit."

Acupuncture in Pregnancy

"feel better and able to cope with the demands of pregnancy, including morning sickness, backache/sciatica, anaemia and anxiety".

Acupuncture is beneficial for both mother and baby.

To find out more please call 01892 519689

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