Yoga and Infertility/Impotency

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The contents of this bibliography do not provide medical advice and should not be so interpreted. Before beginning any exercise program, see your physician for clearance.


**Cason, Charity.** Forthcoming online book on Yoga for infertility. If you would like to participate in answering a questionnaire on this topic, email the author at: charity@bellsouth.net.

**Ceallaigh, Mary.** Lotus Fertility: Yoga and Birth Education. URL: http://www.lotusfertility.com.

“Preconception, prenatal, birth, postpartum doula services and intuitive consultations for yoginis, their partners, and all women on the self-healing path.”


**Delmonte, M. M., and M. Bradwood.** Treatment of retarded ejaculation with psychotherapy and meditative relaxation: A case report. *Psychological Reports*, Aug 1980, 47:8-10. (“The treatment was successful and led to conception.”)

**Derrick, Jeanne-Marie.** Yoga for Fertility course. Upper West Side Yoga Studio, New York. Phone: 212-579-3222, email: Jmyoga@aol.com.

A 3-class series that explores “the use of Yoga asana that are appropriate for enhancing fertility, and health. Through this process, the body can naturally come into a balance that may enhance the chances of fertility as well as support the challenges of reproductive medicines and their side effects.”


Complete text: “Phaladatwa and saphalatwa are two phases of human fertility control that could be considered as a part of yoga-chikitsa. It has been scientifically shown that the use of the oli mudras can control female ovulation and the production of sperm in the male. Oli mudras or shat mudras are: vajroli part 1 and part 2; sahajoli part 1 and part 11; and amaroli, part 1 and part 2. These mudras should not be confused with vajra karmas from the cleansing system of Hatha-Yoga sometimes known by the same names.”


Addresses premature ejaculation, erectile dysfunction, and impotence.


Heller, Elisabeth. Pulling Down the Moon Yoga program for individuals/couples undergoing fertility treatments in the Chicago area. Contact: ElisHel@netscape.net.

Elisabeth wrote her thesis on fertility for her teacher training certification, and the response to her program in Chicago has been excellent.


Karmananda Saraswati, Dr. Swami. Sterility and impotence. In Dr. Swami Karmananda Saraswati under the guidance of Swami Satyananda Saraswati, *Yogic

Knox, Hansa. Post on infertility to the Kripalu KIN-YOGA mailing list, 21 Sep 2000. (Provides asana and pranayama practices for opening the hips and loosening the gluteal muscles.)


“Conventional infertility treatments can cause a whole range of problems, including painful side effects, financial strain, and emotional stress. But many would-be parents are turning to the yoga mat for a more natural, effective approach—with surprising results.”


Abstract: Background: The recognition of the distressing character of infertility diagnosis and treatment has led to the development of several psychosocial interventions for infertile couples. At the Leuven University Fertility Centre, a body-mind marital group intervention was developed to help infertile couples cope with the distress related to infertility. Methods and Results: This treatment programme was originally adapted from a mind-body approach, but integrated concepts and techniques from body-oriented therapy, art therapy and multi-family group therapy. In this paper, the therapeutic foundations, treatment goals and practical implications of the mind-body marital group intervention are outlined. Further, the treatment procedure is explained in detail and illustrated by clinical vignettes. Conclusions: Although the first clinical impressions about the usefulness of the body-mind group programme in fertility clinics seem promising, further research is needed to assess its effectiveness.

Monro, Dr. Robin, Dr. R. Nagarathna, and Dr. H. R. Nagendra. Reproduction; Male reproductive disorders. In Dr. Robin Monro, Dr. R. Nagarathna, and Dr. H. R. Nagendra, Yoga for Common Ailments. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990, pp. 78; 81.


Powers, Sarah. Answers the inquiry: “I want to choose a yoga class with the best possible benefits to aid fertility and conception. I do have a fertility video on yoga but was wondering if Yin yoga would be a good choice.” Yoga Journal. Article available online: http://www.yogajournal.com/practice/814_1.cfm.


“In the informal Internet poll, approximately 75 percent of Americans wrestling with fertility problems say they find Mother’s Day and Father’s Day a little depressing. Of 434 responding to the poll during a six-week period in May and June, a total of 327 said they approach both holidays with some hesitance because of difficulties in trying to conceive.

“Respondents were also asked to choose among five options their preferred methods for dealing with the stress. Among the various forms of support the respondents sought, 29 percent said that they had increased participation in religious or spiritual activities; 22 percent reported practicing some form of regular meditation; and 18 percent said they utilize yoga, Pilates or other stress-reduction physical exercises.

“Indeed, spiritual and meditative techniques were twice as popular a coping method as seeking help from mental health counselors. Among respondents, professional counseling through an infertility clinic was used by 13 percent, while similar services outside a fertility clinic were utilized by 12 percent of respondents.

“The poll was an unscientific snapshot, posted on the homepage of the IntegraMed Web site, with invitations to site visitors to participate voluntarily . . .

“For couples struggling to start families, the weeks-long process of advanced fertility treatments often means grappling with daily tides of hope and disappointment. And more Americans are facing the challenge: from 1996 to 2001, the number of Americans pursuing in vitro fertilization grew by 60 percent.

“The dramatic increase—in combination with increased attention on the psychological impact of infertility—has resulted in infertility medical practices adding mental health counseling to their professional services . . .
“According to the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, infertility now affects 6.1 million people in the U.S., or 15 percent of all couples. The ASRM anticipates that by 2025, that will grow to 7.7 million couples.”

**Pluta, Nataly.** The “Seat of the Soul”: Yoga therapy for infertility. For information, see http://www.yogatherapy.com/infertility.htm or write to plutamov@cts.com.

**Quinn, Tamara.** Pulling Down the Moon. *YOGAChicago*, May-Jun 2003, p. 34.

On Pulling Down the Moon’s Yoga for Fertility Program.

**Rai, Lajpat.** *Yoga and Sexual Virility*. Haryana, India: Anubhav Rai Publications. Email: Irai@ndf.vsnl.net.in.

**Ranade, Dr. Subhash, and Dr. Mrs. Sunanda Ranade.** Frigidity; Impotency; Sterility - infertility. In Dr. Subhash Ranade and Dr. Mrs. Sunanda Ranade, *Yoga and Ayurveda*. Pune, India: Anmol Prakashan, 1995, pp. 67; 84; 112-113.


Discusses some fundamental differences between Western and Buddhist approaches to sickness and health and specifically considers in-vitro fertilization, surrogacy, contraception, infertility, abortion, preventive medicine, death from cure, alternative medicine, unnecessary treatment, why doctors treat patients, terminal illness, suicide, euthanasia, signs that a person has died.


**Shivananda Saraswati, Srimat Swami.** Impotency (klaibya rog); Sterility (bandhyatva). In Srimat Swami Shivananda Saraswati, *Yogic Therapy or Yogic Way to Cure Diseases*. 7th ed. Guwahati, Assam: Shivananda Math, 1994, pp. 219-222; 312-315.

**Strong, Brenda.** *Yoga 4 Fertility* video. Terra Entertainment, 2002.


Yoga Biomedical Trust. Male Problems classes. URL: http://freespace.virgin.net/yogabio.med/ (click on “Yoga Therapy & How to Try It,” then click on “Index-Alphabetical,” then click on “Male problems”).


From the website: “Becoming pregnant and experiencing a positive labor and delivery requires a balance of active and receptive energies. Before nurturing another person, one must take care to prime one’s own body’s capacity to support and sustain the life of a growing fetus. Yoga can enhance this very natural process by using postures and movement to strengthen the body’s capacity to carry the baby to term, breathwork to generate and increase one’s life force and guided imagery to foster receptivity and tap into the body’s own innate wisdom.

“This workbook can help you overcome the fears and anxiety caused by past negative experiences due to infertility or miscarriage. Specific exercises known to enhance conception and support a successful pregnancy (carrying the baby to term and experiencing the exhilaration of a positive labor and birth) are outlined in this . . . workbook.”

Yoga therapy for infertility. Yoga World, Apr-Jun 2000, no. 13, p. 3. (On Nataly Pluta’s program, plutamov@cts.com.)

Of Related Interest


OBJECTIVE: To assess the potential effect of intercessory prayer (IP) on pregnancy rates in women being treated with in vitro fertilization–embryo transfer (IVF-ET). STUDY DESIGN: Prospective, double-blind, randomized clinical trial in which patients and providers were not informed about the intervention. Statisticians and investigators were masked until all the data had been collected and clinical outcomes were known. The setting was an IVF-ET program at Cha Hospital, Seoul, Korea. IP was carried out by prayer groups in the United States, Canada and Australia. The investigators were at a
tertiary medical center in the United States. The patients were 219 women aged 26–46 years who were consecutively treated with IVF-ET over a four-month period. Randomization was performed after stratification of variables in two groups: distant IP vs. no IP. The clinical pregnancy rates in the two groups were the main outcome measure.

RESULTS: After clinical pregnancies were known, the data were unmasked to assess the effects of IP after assessment of multiple comparisons in a log-linear model. The IP group had a higher pregnancy rate as compared to the no-IP rate (50% vs. 26%, P=.0013). The IP group showed a higher implantation rate (16.3% vs. 8%, P=.0005). Observed effects were independent of clinical or laboratory providers and clinical variables. CONCLUSION: A statistically significant difference was observed for the effect of IP on the outcome of IVF-ET, though the data should be interpreted as preliminary.

From the Reuters Health article:

“Researchers followed 199 women undergoing in vitro fertilization at the Cha Hospital in Seoul, Korea. The women were randomly divided into two groups. Unbeknownst to the women or to their doctors, women in one of the groups were prayed for by prayer groups in the United States, Canada and Australia.

“The Christian-based prayer groups were divided into three groups: the first received a picture of the woman and prayed for her treatments to be successful. The second group prayed that the prayers of the first group be heard, while the third group prayed for the first two groups’ prayers to be heard.

“The groups began praying 5 days before the initial fertility treatments and continued for 3 weeks . . .

“The women who had been prayed for had a 50% pregnancy rate, compared with the 26% success rate for the women who had not been prayed for. For women between the ages of 30 to 39, the results were even more disparate, with 51% of those who were prayed for becoming pregnant, compared with 23% of the women in the other group.”


From the publisher: “In Conquering Infertility, Harvard psychologist Dr. Alice Domar—whom Vogue named the ‘Fertility Goddess’—provides infertile women with what they need most: stress relief, support, and hope. Within a year, more than 50 percent of the patients who used her mind/body techniques along with their infertility treatment conceived pregnancies that resulted in a baby, compared with 20 percent who did not use the mind/body tools.”


“Women struggling with infertility often experience high levels of stress that often consume their entire lives and lead to severe depression. Now, a program in Boston is helping women overcome their depression and shows other exciting benefits . . . Dr. [Alice] Domar, of the Mind/Body Medical Institute in Boston [617-632-9561], . . . teaches women how to deal with stress using relaxation techniques and stress management . . . Forty-two percent of the program’s participants conceive within six months.”


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“. . . two years ago a German study found acupuncture boosts the success rate of in-vitro fertilization (IVF), where egg and sperm meet in a laboratory dish and resulting embryos are transplanted to the womb. The study of 160 IVF patients found that women who had
acupuncture right before and after the embryo transfer increased their chances of pregnancy from 26 percent to 43 percent . . .

“Dr. LaTasha Craig at the University of Washington Fertility and Endocrine Center [is] about to put the German findings to the test. Starting this summer, she plans to enroll 200 women in a trial comparing IVF plus acupuncture to IVF alone. She anticipates her biggest challenge will be recruiting enough women to agree they won’t get acupuncture.”


Ongoing Research

John Friend
Anusara Yoga
Spring, Texas
888-398-9642
OneYoga@aol.com
Hansa Knox reported in 2000 that John Friend is conducting research on Yoga and infertility and thus far has found that “doing flows that open up the hips and loosen gluteal muscles makes a 40% difference in the ability to get pregnant.”