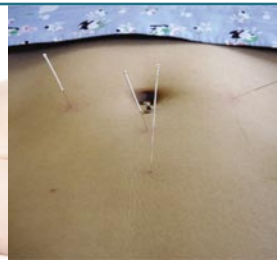




# ABORM



**American Board Of Oriental Reproductive Medicine**

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## **IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE 07/23/07**

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**Subject: ABORM**

**RE: ABORM Response to Copenhagen Study**

July 4, 2007 a research paper was presented at the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology. The discussion examined the impact of alternative therapies on women receiving in vitro fertilization (IVF). Of 800 Danish women studied, 261 were administered treatments including reflexology, herbal supplements, homeopathy, kinesiology and acupuncture. According to the researchers, the women using such treatments were 20 % overall less likely to conceive than those who received no intervention.

However, experts agree that the lack of comparable data in this study, remains an issue. "Anything could have a positive or negative effect," Braverman said. "But without the evidence, we have to be cautious." Dr. Jacky Boivin and Dr. Lone Schmidt, lead researchers in the study, acknowledged that their findings were inconclusive and difficult to interpret. They simply looked at the effect on women taking a wide range of complementary therapies, rather than the effect of any one treatment modality. "Our findings do not allow us to make a direct causal link between complementary or alternative therapy and pregnancy rates," admits Dr. Boivin.

Furthermore, CBS and the Associated Press reported: "Some experts worried the study might be skewed." The important question is whether the chicken or the egg came first," said Edzard Ernst, professor of complementary medicine at Exeter University, who was not connected to Boivin's work. "Those women who are more prone to stress and have more health problems are more likely to try complementary medicine," he said. "So, complementary medicine could only be a marker, and not the cause, of stress or lower success rates." Ernst said similar results had been found in looking at the use of alternative therapies in cancer patients.

**The American Board of Oriental Reproductive Medicine (ABORM)** is a professional board dedicated to advancing knowledge of integrated fertility treatment methods including acupuncture, herbal therapy, and standardized biomedical research. **ABORM** is concerned about the impact of this study on the public's perception as to the safety of alternative medicine for infertility. The **ABORM** questions whether the study, by not differentiating between diverse treatment modalities, adheres to standard research methods and is thus credible or useful and expresses concern over the speculations engendered by this study, regarding the safety of alternative treatments for fertility, that may mislead and unduly alarms the public. The above may prevent women from seeking safe and effective acupuncture treatments.

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Acupuncture, unlike other alternative modalities, has been subject to a number randomized controlled trials (RCT) and clinical trials and has demonstrated a benefit when combined with IVF. Both the RCTs and clinical trials show improved outcomes of 12-15%, including increased pregnancy rate, fewer ectopic pregnancies, a decrease in miscarriages and more take-home babies.

**ABORM** board member Dr. Paul C. Magarelli, MD, Ph.D. a Reproductive Endocrinologist and author of numerous studies on acupuncture and IVF, states, “To say that alternative therapies are all the same is similar to saying that all drugs are the same, and that all surgeries are the same, and that all western medical treatments are the same - simply because we call them therapies.”

In addition to Dr. Magarelli’s findings, several peer-reviewed journals have studies published on acupuncture measuring the outcome of pregnancy rates with the following results:

- 1) **An article in Fertility and Sterility in May 2006 concludes that “Acupuncture on the day of embryo transfer significantly improves the reproductive outcome in infertile women: a prospective, randomized trial concluded that clinical and ongoing pregnancy rates were significantly higher in the acupuncture group as compared with controls.”**
- 2) **A second article in Fertility and Sterility in 2006 reported that luteal-phase acupuncture has a positive effect on the outcome of IVF/ICSI.**
- 3) **An article in Acupuncture in Medicine in March of 2006 measured acupuncture prior to and at embryo transfer in an assisted conception and reported a success rate of 57.7% compared with 45.3% for patients in the IVF unit not treated with acupuncture.**
- 4) **An article in Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine in 2007 reviewed literature that suggested 4 possible mechanisms by which acupuncture could improve the outcome of IVF: modulating neuroendocrinological factors; increasing blood flow to the uterus and ovaries; modulating cytokines; and reducing stress, anxiety, and depression.**
- 5) **An article in Fertility and Sterility in 2002 reported on the influence of acupuncture on the pregnancy rate in patients who undergo assisted reproduction therapy. Clinical pregnancies were documented in 34 of 80 patients (42.5%) in the acupuncture group, whereas pregnancy rate was only 26.3% (21 out of 80 patients) in the control group. The conclusion was that acupuncture seems to be a useful tool for improving pregnancy rate after ART.**

In conclusion, the **ABORM** postures that acupuncture and Oriental medicine is safe and effective in addressing infertility. The **ABORM** continues to support peer-reviewed, rigorously designed studies and is dedicated to improving the treatment of infertility through both traditional and modern biomedicine. The **ABORM** is committed to providing the public with the most accurate, up-to-date information on integrated fertility treatments. The American Board of Oriental Reproductive Medicine recommends that patients with fertility disorders seek treatment from qualified Oriental medicine practitioners.



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