



A GUIDE TO

DISCOVERING
YOUR NATURAL
FERTILITY

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CELEBRATE YOUR PERIOD

You are a powerful woman, your period is a gift you came into the world with when you started the journey to becoming. The thought of your period may conjure up thoughts of feeling 'un clean' or 'impure' which may have caused shame somewhere for you. These ideas have only been created by lack of education, some religious beliefs, ignorance and possibly ancient male bias.

My hope is to get you to connect with your period at a deep level and celebrate your female spirit.

The more you can accept and love every bit of yourself, you will experience a smoother transition through the many phases of your life. Most importantly you will gain a deeper level of connection with your body to conceive naturally.

This is a great starting point to action 'self care' for the rest of your life.



YOUR PERIOD DAY 1 - 5

The first day of the period is when you start to see consistent flow of blood, not spotting on wipe. If you are coming to acupuncture treatment this is what your acupuncturist will ask you:

- Flow of blood each day
- Colour of the blood each day
- Clots
- Any pain? Where? What day, how many pain killers?
- Unusual discharge or mucous in the blood
- How many days did you bleed
- How do you feel? Run down, headaches, bowels, urinary, appetite, cravings, breast pain or distension, emotional up's & downs, irritability or anything which might be out of pattern for you

The average length of a woman's cycle is anywhere between 24 to 32+ days, however this is unique to each person's physiology and variations can occur. Using a diary to record daily signs is valuable to connect with the subtle signs of each day of your cycle



Mind & body connection - Your period

What is happening in your uterus? As your period ends, the lining sheds and the dominant follicle is awakening to start to prepare for ovulation and release.

What is FSH? (Follicular stimulating hormone) FSH is the hormone responsible for stimulating your ovaries to release the follicle, if you are getting your FSH tested it is usually done on Day 3 of the cycle with a simple blood test.

Tips for Day 1 - 5

- Tampons should not be used as they stagnate blood in the uterus which needs to be released, if this is a challenge only use them in the day. Use organic cotton pads & tampons. (Naturacare)
- Refrain from sex during your period (esp if you experience strong cramping & pain)
- Don't swim during your period
- Try to rest; go to bed early as often as possible
- A gentle walk can be good to reflect and take in nature around you
- Try emotional quietness, as a more reflective time in your cycle it's a good idea to avoid confrontation
- If you get pain with your period try some peppermint or chamomile tea

Action: Journaling

This is a powerful tool to not only record important changes each day but to connect with your unique fertility. Over time you this will provide a better understanding of what is commonplace for you.



FOLLICULAR PHASE TO PRE OVULATION DAY 6 - 13

Whats happening to me?

You're finished with your period, your body is preparing for ovulation. You should be feeling lighter and more apt to feel creative within any aspect of your life.

Physical & Sexual Connection

Start to have as much sex as you can, empower your sexuality and enjoy. If you can avoid 'scheduling sex' everything may feel easier.

Mind & body connection

Get excited about the preparation your body is going through as the follicle is about to emerge from the fallopian tubes and the endometrium (womb lining) is now starting to build.

**Tips for day 6- 13 to support the follicular phase approaching ovulation**

- Nourish your blood through diet choices (leafy dark greens, red meat)
- Feeling more energy? You might feel really productive, but don't overdo it
- Try nettle tea and/ or raspberry leaf tea, this helps nourish blood
- Connect at a deep level, this might be meditating for 10 minutes and visualising free flow energy in the uterus.
- Think about creative expression; try: writing about how you feel in your body, drawing or colouring
- Stretch, whether in a yoga class or at home, even for 10 minutes
- Don't forget about self care time each day, schedule it if it helps. This focus calms and creates a connection with your being

Please take care with things which may dry your cervical mucous


Why? At this point your body is starting to generate fertile cervical mucous allowing the sperm easy transit to swim upward into the fallopian tubes to fertilise the egg. If fertile mucous is dried out then your partner's sperm may struggle to reach the egg.

Reduce or don't use the following:

- Antihistamines - dries your fertile mucous
- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- Caffeine
- Air conditioning
- Any place which is really too hot - environmental
- Too much time at the computer
- Spicy foods

Action: Visualisation

Imagine your cervical mucous strengthening to welcome sperm to travel up the fallopian tubes to your egg.



OVULATION BALANCE OF YIN & YANG DAY 14

What's happening with my hormones?

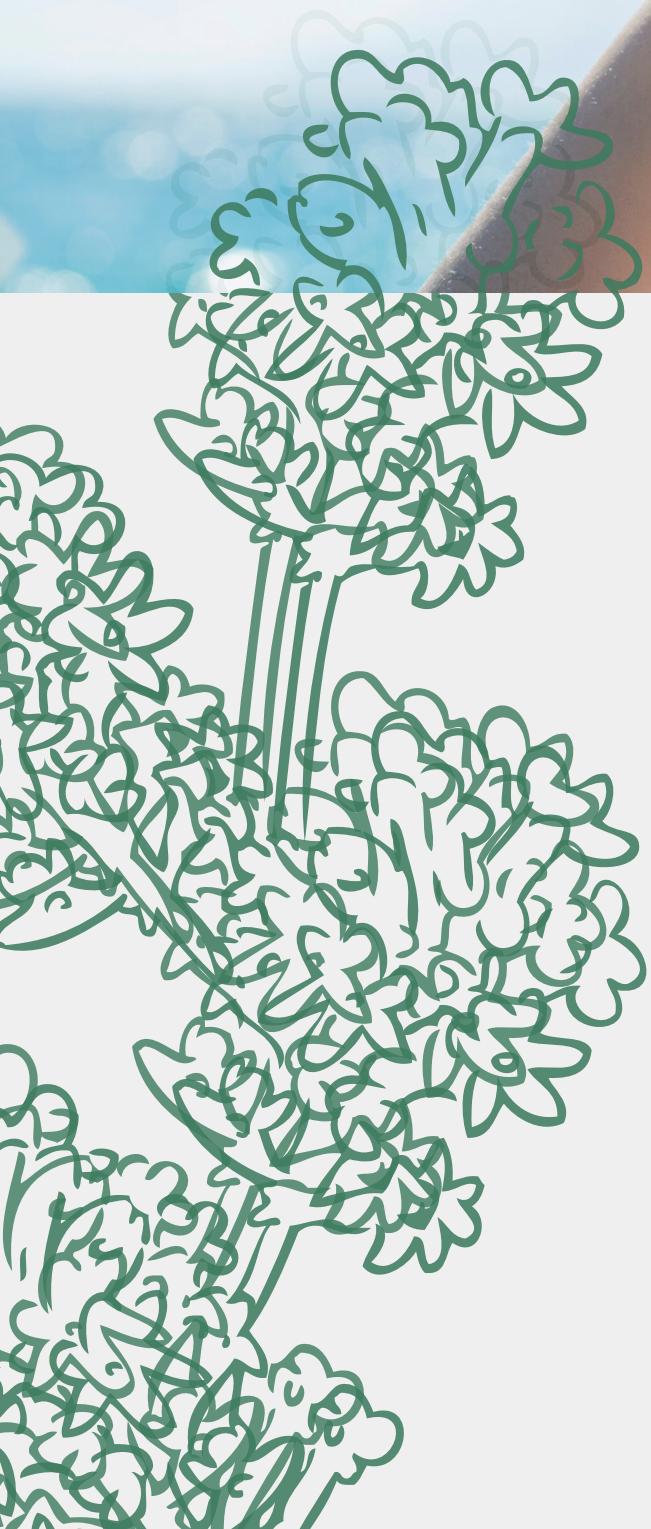
FSH (follicular stimulating hormone) floods the ovaries which increases the amount of oestrogen until day 7, then LH (lutensising hormone) begins to release. Around day 13, when LH is at its highest point, the egg (ovulation) will be released in a 28 to 36 hour window.

Mind & body connection

This is time when you might feel more sexy. Your oestrogen is kicking in and it's your fertile time! Wear your sexy bra & knickers set in the back of the drawer, try a lipstick you only reserve for a night out and wear your favourite perfume. Research shows that our faces and scent changes at this fertile time.

Try to relax into intimacy and enjoy yourself and your partner's sexuality.

Reduce alcohol intake or drugs (abstain) at this time because your hormones can shift to a negative balance.





Tips for day 14 - Ovulation

- Concentrate on building your Qi (energy) Eat cooked foods which are more digestible. Avoid cold raw foods, these expend more energy for your body to digest
- Use meditation or mindfulness to avoid feeling stress
- Try camomile tea for its calming properties
- Try abdominal massage to invigorate energy and blood in the abdomen, ask your partner to massage
- Increase your intake of fatty acids (salmon, herring, tuna, sardines, flax seed oil)

Try to avoid:

- Flooding your system with too much water, drink at room temperature or warmed
- Don't take cough mixture, it can thin your fertile cervical mucous
- Don't use lubricants or saliva as a lubricant, this can also affect the fertile mucous

Pain at ovulation?

Some women do experience an awareness or discomfort at ovulation, they may also experience light spotting, nausea and cramps. Try a hot water bottle, warm bath or rest at this time.

Poly cystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)

If you have this gynaecological condition which causes you not to ovulate regularly, often electro acupuncture will be used on abdominal points as well as dietary lifestyle advice would be provided by your acupuncturist.

Action: Visualisation

Visualise the egg being released and try to feel an openness between the upper chest area (around the heart) downward toward the uterus. Chinese medicine puts a big emphasis on the connection between the heart and the uterus at this truly magical time. If you have anxiety around this mention it to your acupuncturist, there are points which can help release this tension.



IMPLANTATION OR PMT DAY 15 - 27

What happens after I ovulate?

For implantation to happen, three pivotal steps need to occur:

- 1) a good quality embryo has to be produced**
- 2) fertilisation must take place**
- 3) womb lining has to be around 8mm**

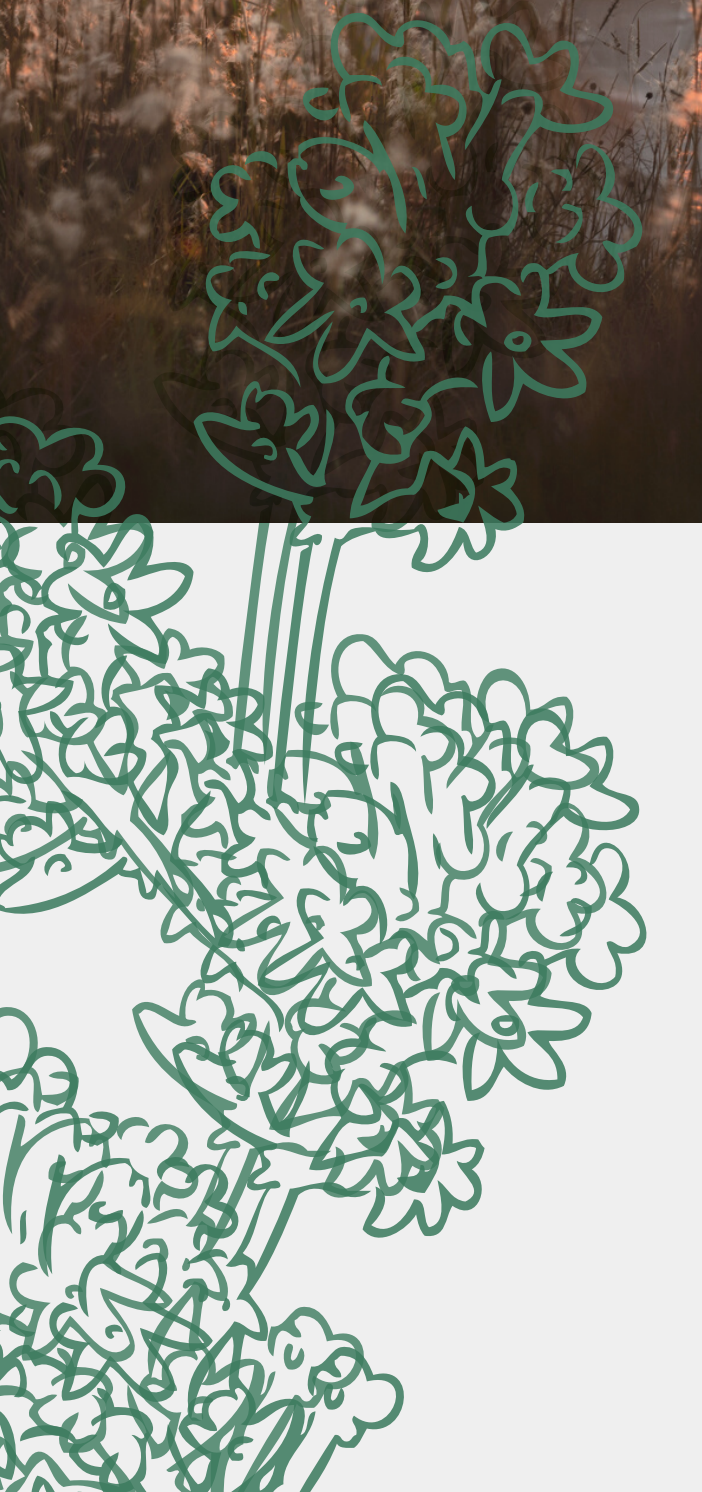
After you glide out of ovulation you enter the luteal phase of your cycle known as the yang part of your phase in chinese medicine

What is yang?

Yang is an upright warming energy in your body, it is the counterpart to yin which is the cooler beginning phase of the cycle. You have to have warmth in the uterus in order for the embryo to implant and hold the pregnancy in place.

Mind & body connection

As much as I suggest you avoid stressing whether you have conceived or not, even the most calm person will struggle at this point. Try to strengthen calming practices you have learned during this journey. Connect with your body and mind with daily stretching, yoga, gentle walking. Try to schedule time in your diary each day in this part of the cycle for some form of self care. When you write an intention down in your diary or phone you are more likely to commit an action.



Tips for Implantation Day 15 - 27

- Keep the uterus warm for implantation
- Wear slippers at home, keep your feet warm during the day, wearing socks to bed if it's cold outside
- Dry your hair after washing
- Avoid sitting in draft, outside or inside
- Keep your lower back warm - use a Haramaki
- Avoid swimming if you can during this time

Avoid:

- Busy or stressful social events
- Vigorous exercise
- Stress & over work

The power of the mind

- Don't give into fear, doubt or indulge in bad thoughts; practice forgiveness
- Practice daily affirmations, post them around your house
- It's a good time for self development, consider a paper or audio book for your travels
- Keep up with the positive visualisation, imagine what is going on in the uterus

How to support your self with diet

- Don't go hungry! Research shows eating at irregular times causes dips in blood sugar which has a disabling affect on your progesterone. A drop in blood sugar causes your adrenaline to be released (fight or flight mechanism). This stops the natural flow of your progesterone which is absolutely integral in implantation of the egg.
- Eat a warm good sized breakfast, warm lunch & warm dinner. Keep snacks with you to eat during the periods between meals. These should be slow release snacks, such as almonds, homemade nut butter balls, apples, dates. Your acupuncturist should provide further suggestions depending on your diagnosis. No refined sugars, this will just spike your blood sugar and crash your energy.
- Try not use microwaves, if you do, don't warm foods in any plastics
- Limit raw fruit intake; e.g try cooked apples with warming spices (cinnamon, nutmeg)
- Preferred cooking methods: try your slow cooker, roasting, baking, stir fry veggies
- Teas to try: Chai, Pukka 3 cinnamon, ginger, cardamon
- Balance raw food intake, if you eat a salad then balance with a soup, if you like smoothies set out cold veg or fruit to bring up to room temperature before blending & drinking
- Avoid cold drinks - drink water at room temperature
- Avoid stodgy carbohydrates, "if it's white it ain't right" (Oprah Winfrey)



I'M NOT PREGNANT

You may not find statistics helpful today, but here is some useful research to consider: 84 out of 100 couples will get pregnant within a year if they have regular sex and don't use contraception

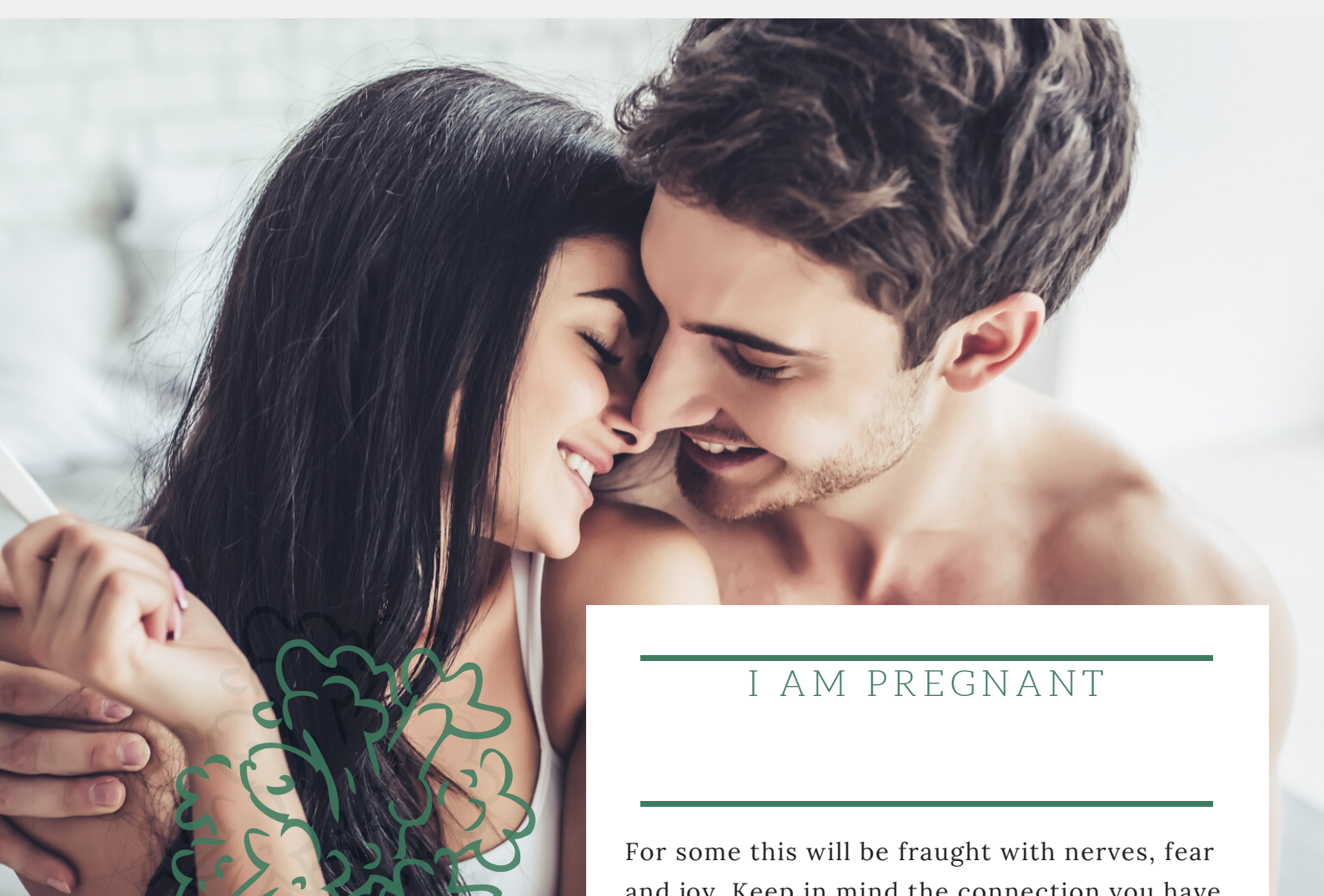
- Couples aged 19 to 26 – 92% will conceive after 1 year and 98% after 2 years
- Couples aged 35 to 39 – 82% will conceive after 1 year and 90% after 2 years

Mind & body connection

You have made so many positive changes in your lifestyle, communication with your partner, coming to acupuncture treatment and other fabulous supportive activities. All of this culminates in attracting a higher vibrational energy.

Affirmation:

'I'm nourishing my body, mind and my spirit to conceive a healthy baby and my own wellbeing during the pregnancy, no experience has been wasted.'



I AM PREGNANT

For some this will be fraught with nerves, fear and joy. Keep in mind the connection you have worked on with your heart and your uterus which now is nourishing a tiny implanted embryo.

Nourish yourself!

Everything in your life needs a gentle approach, go slow, stop to smell the roses!

Tips:

Continue with folic acid and stick to any dietary suggestions your acupuncturist has made, these will be important in maintaining your unique balance.

Avoid raw eggs, raw meat, soft cheeses, any kind of pate, cold cured meats, liver products, game, shark, swordfish or marlin, raw shellfish, sashimi or sushi with raw fish.





HOW CAN ACUPUNCTURE HELP MY FERTILITY?

There is an abundance of research suggesting acupuncture can enhance fertility for women and men. The beauty of Chinese medicine is its ability to treat you as the 'whole' person. Often my job involves looking at physiological & /or gynaecological issues (PCOS, Endometriosis, tubal issues, male factor) as well as mindset on your internal strategies to gain the 'belief' you can conceive. I often hear from patients at the first consultation how relieved they are that someone 'listened to them'. Treatment is often anywhere from three to six months in a natural cycle to gain equilibrium with your menstrual cycle, strengthen ovulation to produce fertile cervical mucus and support the endometrium for implantation.

But really....

The most important and rewarding process is getting you to tune into what your body is telling you and to believe in the miracle of conceiving a healthy baby.



HOW TO WORK WITH ME

About me

I studied acupuncture later in life after many of my own health issues lead me to a path of an alternative health approach to manage issues such as rheumatoid arthritis, cancer and anxiety due to various traumas in my life. I was amazed at the power of this medicine and continue to be eight years into practice. I'm passionate in finding the light to each of my patient's journey to wellness. I'm a member of the British Acupuncture Council.

Considering working with me?

Still have some questions, that's completely normal!

I offer a free 20 minute chat in person, FaceTime or over the phone, it would be great to hear from you.

Is there a better time in my menstrual cycle to start working with you?

Anytime is a good time. Until I learn a bit more about your unique menstrual patterns and overall energy & health it's best to get started as soon as you're ready.

Do you treat couples?

Yes, your partner's sperm test may fall into the 'WHO clinical guidelines' and the consultant has said there are no issues but his sperm quality could likely be improved. Acupuncture treatment will also provide more energy, stronger libido and calm.

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