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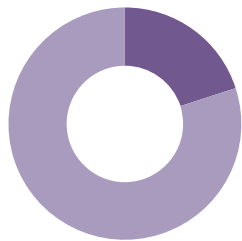
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# Embryo Implantation: The Interplay of Yin and Yang

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## Unexplained Infertility



In the US, up to 20% of  
infertile couples have  
unexplained infertility

## Signs of Early Pregnancy Loss

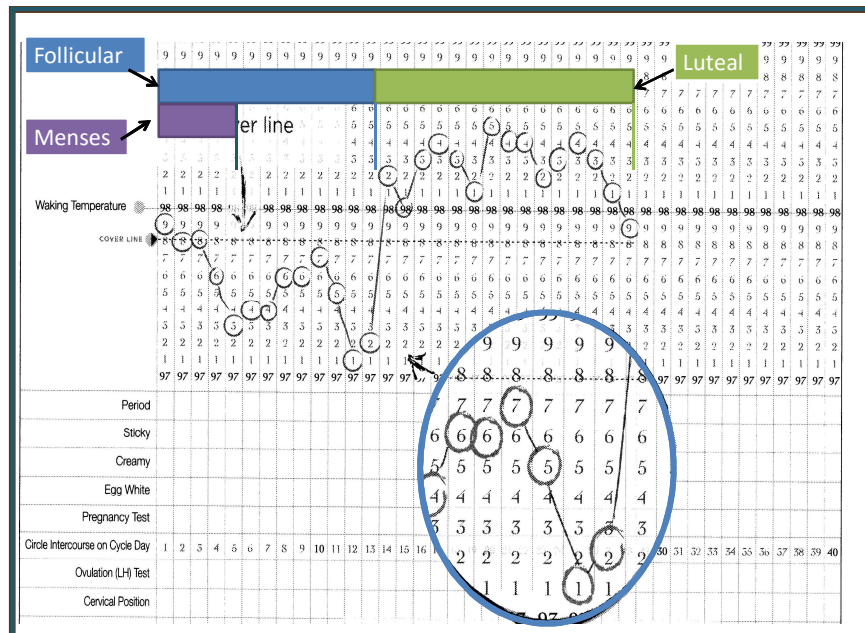
Implantation spotting in luteal phase 5-12 days after ovulation with subsequent period or late period

Symptoms of early pregnancy (breast tenderness and swelling, fatigue, bloating, nausea) in mid to late luteal that go away before a period

A period that is heavier with more clots than you usually have

A late period with any of the above symptoms

A luteal phase that is longer than 14 days



## Biomedical reasons for implantation problems



## Luteal Phase Timeline

### Conception: The First 30 hours

- Fertilization usually takes place in the fallopian tube
- The corpus luteum begins to produce progesterone which:
  1. Switches off production of FSH and LH, thereby preventing the release of any more eggs.
  2. It thickens the endometrium and helps it secrete nutrients so that it will be ready to nourish an embryo if called upon to do so.
  3. Causes the basal body temperature (BBT) to rise
  4. Closes the cervix
  5. Thickens cervical mucus

## Luteal Phase Timeline

### Window of Implantation

#### 5 – 10 days after conception

- Approximately day 6 embryo hatches out of it's shell
- Blastocyst begins to attach to the uterus
- Endometrial cells change to increase the likelihood of an embryo implanting
- Pinopodes protrude into the uterus to make the embryo more likely to implant
- Trophoblast cells in the embryo burrow into the uterus
- The uterus holds embryo in place by pressing its walls together
- HOX genes are up-regulated
- Endometrium becomes more secretory

## Luteal Phase Timeline

### Post Implantation

- Embryo releases HCG
- HCG signals to the corpus luteum to continue to to release progesterone
- An inflammatory reaction in the endometrial cells supports implantation
- 14 days after ovulation implantation is complete

## Embryo implantation requires

- Synchronization
- Blood flow
- Hormonal support
- Healthy corpus luteum
- Endometrial receptivity
- Healthy egg and sperm

## Luteal Phase Defect

### Definition

- Luteal phase < 12 days
- Low progesterone levels in the luteal phase
- A slow transformation post ovulation

### Causes

- Too little yin in the follicular phase leading to yang vacuity in the luteal phase
- Stagnation of qi or blood leading to and slow transformation from yin to yang
- QI and Yang vacuity

## Thoughts on using Chinese medicine to support implantation

Treat the patient's constitution first,  
then the phase of the cycle.

Look for and correct potential  
problems in the luteal phase

**BEWARE OF PROTOCOLS!**

## Research into acupuncture in the luteal phase

“The use of acupuncture in the luteal phase of the cycle should not be encouraged in routine clinical practice until further evidence is available from properly powered RCTs concerning the possible associations between luteal phase acupuncture and miscarriage”

-*Acupuncture and Assisted Conception (Review)*, Cheong  
YC, Hung Yu Ng E, Ledger WL, Cochrane Library.

## Paulus Study

*(Paulus et al 2002)*

Randomized, controlled trial  
80 received acupuncture 80 acted as control

### Pre Embryo Transfer

Gui Lai ST 29 Qi Hai REN 6 Di Ji SP 8

Tai Chong LIV 3 Bai Hui DU 20

Ear points: Shen men, Zhi gong, Nei fen mi, Nao dian

### Post Embryo Transfer

He Gu LI 4 San Yin Jiao SP 6

Xue Hai SP 10 Zu San Li ST 36

Ear points: Shen men, Zhi gong, Nei fen mi, Nao dian

### Results : Clinical pregnancy rate

Acupuncture group 42.5%

Control 26.3% (p<.03)

## Using Acupuncture post ovulation and pre-implantation

### **Post-conception and pre-implantation**

#### Local points

Shui Dao ST 28 Gui Lai ST 29

Si Man KI 14 Zhi gong xue

#### Distal points

Tai Xi KI 3 Zu San Li ST 36 Bai Hui Du 20

#### Damp and phlegm

Feng Long St 40 Yin Ling Quan SP 9



**Acupuncture during the implantation window**

Zu San Li St 36, Tai Xi KI 3,  
Bai Hui DU 20, Yintang  
Ear: Shen Men, Kidney, Spleen

**Formula to be taken 3 days post  
ovulation for 5 days**

**Pai Luan Hou Feng (After Ovulation Formula)**

Dang gui Radix Angelicae Sinensis

Bai Shao Radix Paeoniae Alba

Shan Zhu Yu Fructus Corni

Shu Di Huang Radix Rehmanniae Praeparata

Shan Yao Rhizoma Dioscoreae

He Shou Wu Radix Polygoni Multiflori

Gou Qi Zi Fructus Lycii

Tu Si Zi Semen Cuscutae

Dang Shen Radix Codonopsis

Wu Wei Zi Fructus Schisandrae

## Acupuncture post implantation

Bai Hui Du 20

Si Shen Cong

Yin Tang

Ear: Shen Men, Kidney, Spleen

## Herbal Formula for Post-Implantation

### Hu Tai Fang (Protect the Fetus Formula)

Sang Ji Sheng *Herba Taxilli*

Xu Duan *Radix Dipsaci*

Tu Si Zi *Semen Cuscutae*

Gou Qi Zi *Fructus Lycii*

Shan Zhu Yu *Fructus Corni*

Dang Shen *Radix Codonopsis*

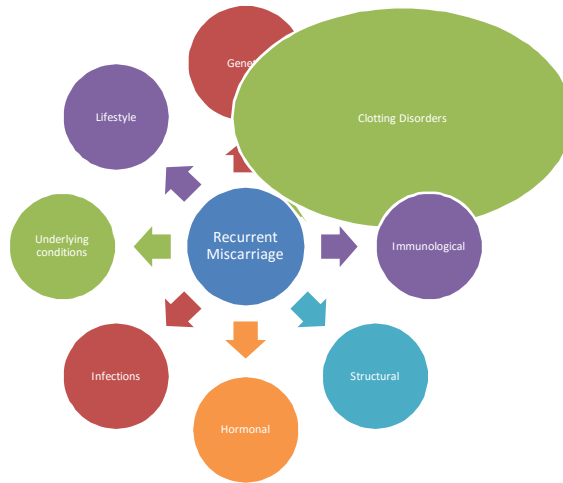
Bai Shao *Radix Paeoniae Alba*

Bai Zhu *Rhizoma Atractylodis Macrocephalae*

Huang Qi *Radix Astragali*

Suan Zao Ren *Semen Ziziphi Spinosi*

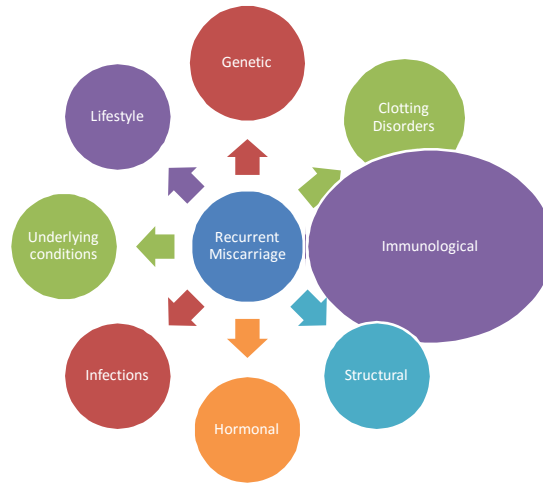
## Miscarriage Etiology



## Kang Mian Er Hao (Immunity formula for helping pregnancy #2)

Dang Gui 9 g Radix Angelicae Sinensis  
Bai Shao 9 g Radix Paeoniae Lactiflorae  
Chuan Xiong 9 g Radix Ligustici Wallichii  
Tao Ren 9 g Semen Persicae  
Hong Hua 9 g Flos Carthami Tinctorii  
Yan Hu Suo 9 g Rhizoma Corydalis Yanhusuo  
Dan Shen 30 g Radix Salviae Miltiorrhizae  
Yi Mu Cao 18 g Herba Leonuri Heterophylli  
Gui Zhi 6 g Ramulus Cinnamomi Cassiae  
Xu Chang Qing 9 g Radix Cynanchi Paniculati  
Yin Yang Huo 15 g Herba Epimedii  
Tu Si Zi 9 g Semen Cuscutae  
Huang Qi 30 g Radix Astragali  
Gan Cao 9 g Radix Glycyrrhizae Uralensis

## Miscarriage Etiology



## Immune related miscarriage

- Autoimmune disorders
- Antiphospholipid antibodies
- Anti-nuclear antibodies
- Elevated natural killer (NK) cells
- Altered Th1/ Th2 ratios
- Anti-thyroid antibodies

### Patients suffering from immune related miscarriage

- Spleen Qi vacuity or Kidney Yang Vacuity
- Stagnation of qi, blood, damp, phlegm
- Heat or damp heat
- Upper jiao yin vacuity

### An Tai Wan (Calm the fetus pill)

When given for three months to 277 patients 96 % testing within the normal levels after this time.

How does it work?

It appears to suppress the aggressive Th1 action of the NK cells, as well as supporting the TH2 suppressive response.

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