

Grief and loss in fertility.

A supportive guide from a Chinese Medicine lense.



Hi, I'm Kerrie, an APHRA-registered acupuncturist
and Chinese Medical Herbalist.

If you are reading this, chances are you have or are
currently experiencing a miscarriage or a stillbirth.
I'm sorry to find you here.

Grief is complex and layered, and each person
experiences it differently. The intention of this guide
is to show how Chinese Medicine can help support
you after pregnancy loss, stillbirth, recovery from
childbirth, and to care for your future fertility.

Move gently and be kind to yourself.

Recover

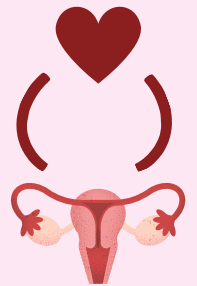
Your recovery is the most important thing. Through acupuncture and Chinese Herbal Medicine we can support both physical and emotional recovery.

Pain

Acupuncture is most well-known for pain relief, and pain during a miscarriage is no different. When an acupuncture needle is inserted, it activates the central nervous system, triggering the release of endorphins that help relieve pain. PMID: [39520569](#)

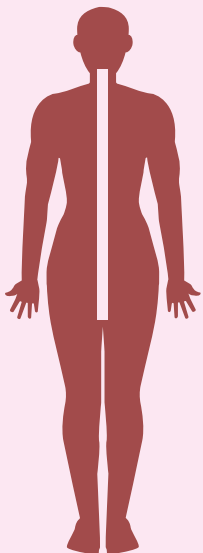
Emotional Support

The emotions in Chinese Medicine theory are deeply intertwined with our physical body. We rarely ever treat one without the other. With acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine, we aim to support your emotional recovery by addressing the heart (emotion: joy) and lungs (emotion: grief). There is also a strong relationship between the heart and the uterus, known as the 'Bao Mai'. The Bao Mai can be likened to the Hypothalamic-Ovarian Axis (HPO Axis), which is how the brain and ovaries communicate to influence menstruation and ovulation.



Bao Mai

Acupuncture has been shown to influence both the HPA axis and the parasympathetic nervous system. These are two distinct but complementary systems that influence how your body handles stress. PMID: [24761151](#), PMID: [42065037](#)



We also look to ensure the free flow of Qi and Blood through the 'Chong Mai' (Penetrating vessel, sea of blood) and 'Ren Mai' (Conception channel, sea of Yin). Both the Chong and Ren channels run through the centre of the body and pass through the reproductive organs. They both play important roles in recovery from miscarriage and childbirth and in caring for future fertility.

Nurture

Nourishing the body is where Chinese Medicine shines. After miscarriage and childbirth, we look to nourish the body with acupuncture, Chinese Herbal Medicine and Chinese Dietary therapy. We want to ensure you have an abundance of Qi & Blood.

Eat: warm, slow-cooked foods.

In Chinese Medicine, our digestive system is known as "digestive fire." Eating too much raw and cold food can affect our digestion by putting out our digestive fire.

Our digestive system is also affected by stress, and when we are going through a difficult time, we don't want it to work overtime.

Find Joy

Joy is the emotion attached to the heart. The heart also has a close relationship to the reproductive organs. Throughout life, it is imperative that we experience joy often, especially after loss.

Ways to find joy:

- Hobbies (i.e craft, cooking, gardening).
- Get outside
- Spending time with family and friends who make you feel good.

Keep Warm

In Chinese Medicine Theory, it is important to keep warm, particularly after childbirth or miscarriage, as resources (Qi & Blood) have been depleted and there is often not enough to protect your body from external pathogens (viruses). Keeping your feet warm at all times and making sure your hair is dry before bed and before going outside can help.

Acupuncture & Chinese Herbal Medicine

Acupuncture & Chinese Herbal Medicine play an important role in recovery from childbirth & miscarriage. In general, acupuncture is used to support the nervous system, relieve any pain, and support future fertility. Chinese Herbal medicine is used to nourish Qi & Blood and support any underlying or constitutional health conditions. Treatment is always individualised, and we meet you where you are on your path to building a family.

Acupressure Points

Acupressure is a tool that can be used anytime, just by applying pressure to specific acupuncture points. Use your thumb or index finger to apply firm pressure (it shouldn't be painful) to the point for 1- 3 minutes. You can also gently massage the area. You can apply acupressure to yourself, or have a loved one do it for you.

Pericardium 6 - Inner Pass

PC 6 is located three finger widths below the crease of the wrist. To find it, have your palm face up and place the first three fingers of the opposite hand across the wrist. Place your thumb or index finger on the point; it is between two large tendons.

- Calms the Heart & Spirit (anxiety, irritability, insomnia)
- Nausea & vomiting

Large Intestine 4 - Union Valley

LI 4 is located on the back of the hand, between the webbing on the thumb and the index finger.

- Headaches
- Pain in the body

Heart 7 - Spirit Gate

HT 7 is located on the wrist crease at the base of the pinky finger.

- Calms the Spirit (emotional support)

Chicken Soup Recipe

Chicken Soup may be one of the most nourishing meals one can eat. When we add some Chinese herbs, it gives it an extra boost. This is a basic recipe; if you have a favourite, use that and add the Chinese Herbs.

Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 6 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 yellow onion
- 1 large carrot, thinly sliced
- 2 celery stalks, roughly chopped
- 1 Tbsp fresh grated ginger
- 1 Tbsp fresh grated turmeric (or 1 Tsp ground turmeric)
- 6 cups chicken broth
- 500g boneless chicken thighs or breast
- 1 Tsp fresh chopped rosemary
- 1 Tsp fresh chopped thyme, stems removed
- Salt & Pepper to taste

Chinese Herbs

- 1 slice of astragalus root (Huang Qi) - Tonifies Qi
- 2 Tbsp Goji Berries (Gou Qi Zi) - Tonifies Blood
- 8 dried red dates (Da Zao) - Tonifies Qi
- 3 slices Angelica Root (Dang Gui) - Tonifies Blood
- 10 pieces Codonopsis root (Dang Shen) - Tonifies Qi

These herbs can be found at your local asian grocer. If you can't find them all, just add what you can. To prepare herbs, rinse and drain.

Along with Chinese Herbs, ginger and turmeric also have medicinal uses in Chinese medicine. Ginger & turmeric are warming and are often used to support digestion and the immune system.

Instructions

Step 1

- Place a large pot over medium-high heat and add oil. Once hot, add garlic, onion, carrots and celery; cook for a few minutes.

Step 2

- Add grated ginger & turmeric. Saute for 30 seconds. Add chicken broth, chicken, rosemary, thyme, salt and pepper, and Chinese Herbs.

Step 3

- Bring soup to a boil, then stir in cous cous. Make sure the chicken is covered by the broth.

Step 4

- Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer uncovered for 20- 25 minutes.

Step 5

- Scoop out chicken and Chinese herbs with a slotted spoon or tongs. Throw away Chinese herbs. Cut/shred chicken and return to pot.

Serve and enjoy.

This soup is the perfect meal to make for a friend or loved one who has just experienced loss. You can freeze the soup in single-serve portions.



This recipe is from Ambitious Kitchen & Daily Cooking Quest.

Common Questions.

I've never had acupuncture before; what should I expect?

Each practitioner treats a little differently, but generally speaking, you will have a consultation with your practitioner, where you will go through your health history and your treatment goals. From there, the practitioner will get you onto a treatment table and may ask you to remove some clothing, most commonly socks and jackets. You never have to do anything you're not comfortable with in treatment. The practitioner will insert single-use acupuncture needles at specific points based on your needs. You may start to feel relaxed at this point. The needles will be retained for about 20 minutes, then removed.

How should I prepare for my first appointment?

Once you have booked in, you will often receive an intake form that asks you to enter your details and health history. You can bring in any relevant tests, such as blood test results or ultrasound results. Before a treatment, it's best to have eaten something and be hydrated. Wear comfy (preferably loose) clothing.

Does Acupuncture hurt?

Acupuncture normally doesn't hurt, sometimes you may feel a little pinch which will quickly dissipate. If you feel as though something isn't right, speak to your practitioner – you always lead the treatment.

What is the training like to become a registered Acupuncturist?

In Australia, to become a registered acupuncturist, you must complete a 4- 5-year bachelor's degree. After graduating, you must register with APHRA and with an association such as ANTA or AACMA. You are required to complete 20 hours of continuous development each year, meet a certain number of practice hours, and have a relevant WWC and First Aid to maintain registration status.

What role does my Acupuncturist play in my path to building a family?

Many people choose to see an acupuncturist to help improve fertility outcomes, get advice from another healthcare provider, and for nervous system support. Many people find that it bridges the language gap between Fertility specialists and themselves. Acupuncturists can provide individualised care that supports both your physical and emotional health during your fertility journey.