

# The role of acupuncture in assisted reproductive technology.

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### Abstract

The aim of this paper was to provide reliable evidence by performing a systematic review and meta-analysis for evaluating the role of acupuncture in assisted reproductive technology. All randomized controlled trials that evaluated the effects of acupuncture, including manual, electrical, and laser acupuncture (LA) techniques, on the clinical pregnancy rate (CPR) and live birth rate (LBR) of in vitro fertilization (IVF) or artificial insemination were included. The controlled groups consisted of no acupuncture and sham acupuncture groups. The sham acupuncture included sham acupuncture at acupoints, sham acupuncture at non- or inappropriate points, sham LA, and adhesive tapes. Twenty-three trials (a total of 5598 participants) were included in this paper. The pooled CPR from all acupuncture groups was significantly higher than that from all controlled groups, whereas the LBR was not significantly different between the two groups. However, the results were quite distinct when the type of control and/or different acupuncture times were examined in a sensitivity analysis. The results mainly indicate that acupuncture, especially around the time of the controlled ovarian hyperstimulation, improves pregnancy outcomes in women undergoing IVF. More positive effects from acupuncture in IVF can be expected if a more individualized acupuncture programs are used.

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