

FARRAR DURO, DOM, FABORM

FERTILITY COACH AND DOCTOR OF ORIENTAL
REPRODUCTIVE MEDICINE

Preparing for IVF/IUI

Steps to Take Now To Boost Success

EXCERPT FROM:
THE SMART COUPLE'S GUIDE TO GETTING PREGNANT, AN INTEGRATED APPROACH
BY DR. FARRAR DURO

INTRODUCTION



As a licensed acupuncture physician certified by the American Board of Oriental Reproductive Medicine, I have treated hundreds of couples undergoing assisted reproductive techniques over the past 15 years with acupuncture and Traditional Chinese medicine.

Navigating the rough waters of infertility can prove to be extremely frustrating, so I created this guide for couples like you who want to make the most informed decisions on questions that may not be answered in a typical fertility clinic or gynecological setting.

By reading this excerpt from The **Smart Couple's Guide to Getting Pregnant, An Integrated Approach** you have taken an exciting step in gaining control of your fertility treatment and better understanding your treatment.

Experience has shown that by having a clear plan and understanding what your reproductive endocrinologist, nutritionist, psychologist, gynecologist, acupuncturist, etc. have in mind can lead to shorter, more effective treatment. In the end, we all want what you want- a healthy mom and baby with as few complications as possible.

It is the aim of this guide to provide clarity and reassurance to you, whether you have been struggling with infertility for nine months or nine years. If this book saves you from one more month of waiting for a child, then its purpose has been fulfilled.

Baby dust and blessings,

Farrar Celada Duro, DOM, FABORM

www.FloridaCompleteWellness.com

Author,

The Smart Couple's Guide to Getting Pregnant, An Integrated Approach

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Florida Complete Wellness, Inc 4745 Volunteer Rd, Ste 304 Southwest Ranches, FL 33330 www.FloridaCompleteWellness.com

Disclaimer: The contents of this guide are for informational purposes only and are NOT a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, treatment or substitute for a formal medical consultation. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition. You should always consult your physician regarding the specifics of your case. Nothing contained in this book, including the questions and answers written, is intended to be medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

PREPARING FOR IVF/ IUI

After rounds of strenuous fertility testing, you and your partner are ready to take the plunge. If all of the planets align and your period comes as expected, then you will probably start a course of fertility medications at that time.

If you have already done a course of acupuncture and possibly Chinese herbs consisting of 2-3 months of treatment, you will usually be recommended by your acupuncturist to increase the number of weekly treatments to 2-3 times per week during ovarian stimulation. This is particularly true if you have been labeled a “poor responder” by your fertility doctor or have just been referred for acupuncture without much prior treatment.

As we have discussed, laying the foundation of creating a healthy endometrium for the embryo(s) to implant is of utmost importance. By the time you start an IVF or IUI cycle, your acupuncturist would like to see that your menses have become more bright red and less clotty, and your hormones have normalized signaling a healthier response to the medications. In a nutshell, these are the suggestions that our patients follow:

- Emphasize increasing intake of fiber along with fresh organic fruits and vegetables to boost the liver’s detoxifying capacity so that it is able to cope with the drugs that you will have to take during the treatment. Incorporating liver detoxifying herbs such as milk thistle or Liver GI Detox from Pure Encapsulations is also helpful when begun 3-6 months prior to starting a medicated cycle or trying naturally to conceive.
- Abstain from smoking and avoid smoky atmospheres: smoking damages the lining of the uterus and fallopian tubes, along with being detrimental to egg quality
Try to avoid strenuous exercise, such as aerobics, or running. Your body needs rest as your hormonal system shuts down to prepare for IVF. Try gentle forms of exercise instead, such as walking or yoga.
- Avoid chocolate, sugary and processed foods, salty snacks, coffee, tea, cola and other carbonated drinks, and alcohol. These all counteract the beneficial effects of vital nutrients, and some have a diuretic effect.
- Drink at least 2 liters of filtered water a day. Water is vitally important for every cell in the body and to ensure the drugs you are taking during IVF go where they need to go in the body. Water is also important to prevent OHSS (ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome.)
- Eat about 60grams (2 oz) of protein a day. Insufficient protein in the diet can result in a reduced number of eggs.
- Undergo **Arvigo Techniques of Maya Abdominal Therapy™ (ATMAT)** 2-3 times per month if available to enhance blood flow and properly prepare the uterine lining.

TAKING SUPPLEMENTS

If possible, start taking your nutritional supplements at least 3 to 4 months before your IVF treatment commences. I strongly advise that you ask your doctor or IVF nurse before taking any supplements. For those patients with abnormally elevated FSH levels, an interesting protocol of oral contraceptives, DHEA, L-arginine and acupuncture have been successful at “resetting” the pituitary in many of our patients and restoring hormonal balance. This protocol is recommended by several fertility clinics and has been tried with patients with poor ovarian reserve who wish to try with their own eggs.

We recommend Pure One by Pure Encapsulations for both partners which is a multivitamin high in antioxidants that contains the following:

- Vitamin B complex: will help your body cope with the stress of invasive procedures.
- Vitamin C: 500 mg a day will help collagen production and is vital for wound healing following egg retrieval. There is some evidence to suggest that it may help to prevent miscarriage. Reduce Vitamin C intake to 250mg before transfer.
- Vitamin E: enhances healing, improve fertilization rates (choose the natural version, known as d-alpha-tocopherol).
- Zinc: promotes cell formation and wound healing after surgery and is vital for hormone production and implantation, plays a vital role in cell division.
- Selenium: improve fertilization rates, prevents chromosome breakage -Magnesium: improve fertilization rates.
- Folic Acid: prevents spina bifida, produce DNA and RNA. Some patients require a special form of folate called Metafolin which is more readily absorbed.
- CoQ10: improve blood flow, enrich endometrium, may improve fertilization rates.
- Myoinositol: Supports healthy mood and promotes healthy ovarian function. Some studies have shown it to improve egg quality as well.
- Essential Fatty Acids: (not found in Pure One) We recommend the brand Omaprem due to higher EFA concentration, improves blood viscosity, mood support.

OTHER TIPS:

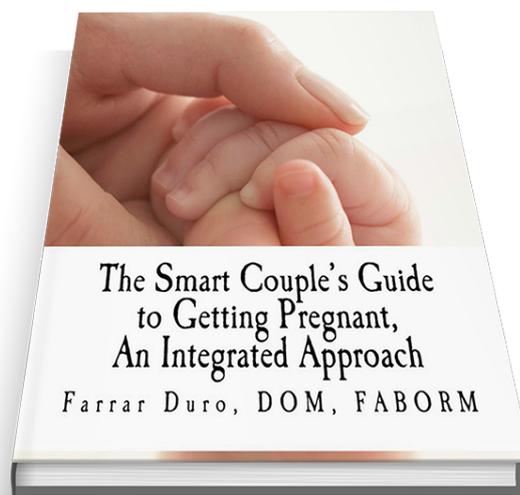
- **Arnica:** this homeopathic remedy may help prevent bruising after injections, especially for those on blood thinners like Lovenox or baby Aspirin. Use topically after injections as a preventative measure if you are prone to bruising.
- Apply ice to numb the injection sites briefly prior to administering shots if you experience discomfort. -Use a hot water bottle to keep the abdomen warm and assist healing.
- Rest as much as you can in preparation for placing of the embryos in the uterus. Strenuous exercise during and following an IVF cycle is contraindicated and can have a negative effect of diverting blood flow away from the uterus in order to supply more vital organs such as the heart and lungs.
- Practice deep breathing and relaxation techniques to encourage good blood flow and energy around the body. There are several guided meditations available for download now online that specifically address the concerns of a medicated cycle.

We use guided meditation for fertility (available at www.circlebloom.com) during acupuncture treatments at our clinic to enhance relaxation and request our patients to play these at home in the days leading up to the transfer.
- After an embryo transfer, rest for a minimum of two days. Activity diverts blood to your extremities and vital organs, while lying down allows blood to flow to the endometrium. Especially if you have small children at home, try your best to recruit help at this time.

During the (approximate) two-week wait, just say no to:

- Caffeine, tobacco, alcohol, drugs
- Heavy lifting (over 15 lbs.)
- Strenuous exercise, including housework
- Bouncing activities, such as horseback riding
- Sun bathing, sauna, hot tubs, Jacuzzis, hot baths and swimming
- Sexual intercourse

After the embryo transfer, our clinic usually recommends to continue twice weekly acupuncture visits starting 4-5 days after the procedure and continuing until the pregnancy test. Research shows the stress and anxiety inherent in the 10-day wait period can be greatly reduced by receiving acupuncture and practicing relaxation strategies such as meditation or positive imagery. If the pregnancy test is positive, our patients continue their twice-weekly sessions until the ultrasound shows a heartbeat and they are mostly out of the “danger zone” of the first 6 weeks of pregnancy.



To learn more tips for surviving infertility, purchase the full version of this guide [here](#), and best of luck in the journey ahead!!