

REPLY TO DR CAKMAK ON THE ELECTROACUPUNCTURE ON IVF OUTCOME

To the Editor:

I am glad to know that Dr Cakmak is interested in my conclusion on the effects of electroacupuncture on *in vitro* fertilization (IVF) outcome. I appreciate Dr Cakmak's opinions. This was a preliminary study evaluating the effects of electroacupuncture on IVF. We drew the conclusion from the results of limited cases. We know that the sample size of our study is rather small and a further study with a larger sample size is required to verify our conclusions.

There are many factors affecting the success rate of IVF. These include endometrial thickness and pattern, hormone profile, maternal age, causes and duration of infertility, and the quality of embryo; however, endometrial thickness is one of the most important factors. Measurement of endometrial thickness is used to predict the success of IVF. Measurement on the day of embryo transfer is most commonly used. However, there are some researchers that measured the endometrial thickness on a day other than embryo transfer. For example, Rashidi et al [1] and Dietterich et al [2] measured the endometrial thickness on the day of human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG) administration; McWilliams et al [3] assessed endometrial thickness at three defined points during IVF to predict the success: after pituitary suppression, on the sixth day of gonadotropin stimulation, and on the day of hCG administration; and Gonen et al [4] measured endometrial thickness daily from day 10 of the cycle until the day after hCG administration to predict implantation in IVF.

Some researchers have used other parameters to predict IVF outcome. Ng et al [5] and Maugeul-Laulom et al [6] measured endometrial and sub-endometrial blood flow to predict pregnancy in IVF.

For the convenience of patients and our research staff, we measured the endometrial thickness on the day of oocyte retrieval and performed electroacupuncture twice a week for 2 weeks. There was no significant

difference in endometrial thickness between the study and control groups (1.0 ± 0.3 cm vs. 1.0 ± 0.3 cm). I believe that measurement of endometrial thickness on the day of embryo transfer is an effective method to predict the success rate of IVF. We will modify our future study with Dr Cakmak's suggestions such that measurement of endometrial thickness occurs on the day of embryo transfer and frequency of electroacupuncture is increased.

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