



Fertility Power the Chinese Medicine Way

by Shoshanna Katzman

Chinese medicine has a long history of success aiding couples with their fertility. It is traditionally believed that such positive outcomes are gained through regulating hormones, increasing blood flow to the pelvic area, balancing the menstrual cycle, strengthening sperm, triggering ovulation, nourishing egg quality, and calming the mind. Historically, the first record of treatment for infertility and

miscarriage was in 200 A.D. in the well-known Chinese medicine text of the Shang Han Lun. Moreover, in 1237 A.D., "The Complete Book of Effective Prescriptions for Diseases of Women" was published, which was the first book of its kind dedicated to gynecology and obstetrics. More recently in 2002, a German study of 160 women found that acupuncture combined with IVF treatment increased pregnan-

cy rates by 42.5 percent, as compared to 26.3 percent for the women without acupuncture added into their treatment. Therefore, within the last fifteen years more and more women and men in the United States are seeking help from Chinese medicine as a sole natural fertility approach or in combination with assisted reproductive technology.

The most effective treatment strategy recommended for increasing conception, implantation, and full term reproduction is a combination of acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine. These treatments are further strengthened through addition of dietary recommendations, therapeutic massage, as well as qigong and tai chi exercise. Chinese medicine life style suggestions are also shared, such as ways to reduce stress, attain proper sleep and rest, and balance work and play. With each approach, a Chinese medicine provider evaluates an individual in terms of their medical history and presenting signs and symptoms. This involves a holistic treatment approach that addresses the physical, mental, emotional, energetic and spiritual aspects of one's being. In each

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case, the goal of treatment is to increase flow of qi and blood throughout the body to restore hormonal balance, optimal health, and well-being. After a complete evaluation, a practitioner decides upon a particular diagnosis based on an individual's underlying energetic imbalance. Recommendation for treatment is then offered, followed by its application to re-establish balance and normal body function.

According to the principles of Chinese medicine, health is restored through the unrestricted, free-flowing and abundant flow of qi or vital energy throughout the body. Several energetic imbalances have been determined as the underlying root cause of fertility issues. One of the most common causes stems from a state of energetic deficiency that effects reproductive ability due to its impact on the hormonal system. The kidney and liver energetic organ systems are the most commonly involved with such deficiency. Moreover, deficiency of liver blood can lead to a Chinese medicine imbalance known as "excessive cold of the uterus." In this instance, the uterus becomes obstructed by cold and the blood of the liver can't be properly stored, leading to more blood deficiency and thus more coldness. This can become a vicious cycle leaving a woman without enough blood to nourish herself, let alone a fetus.

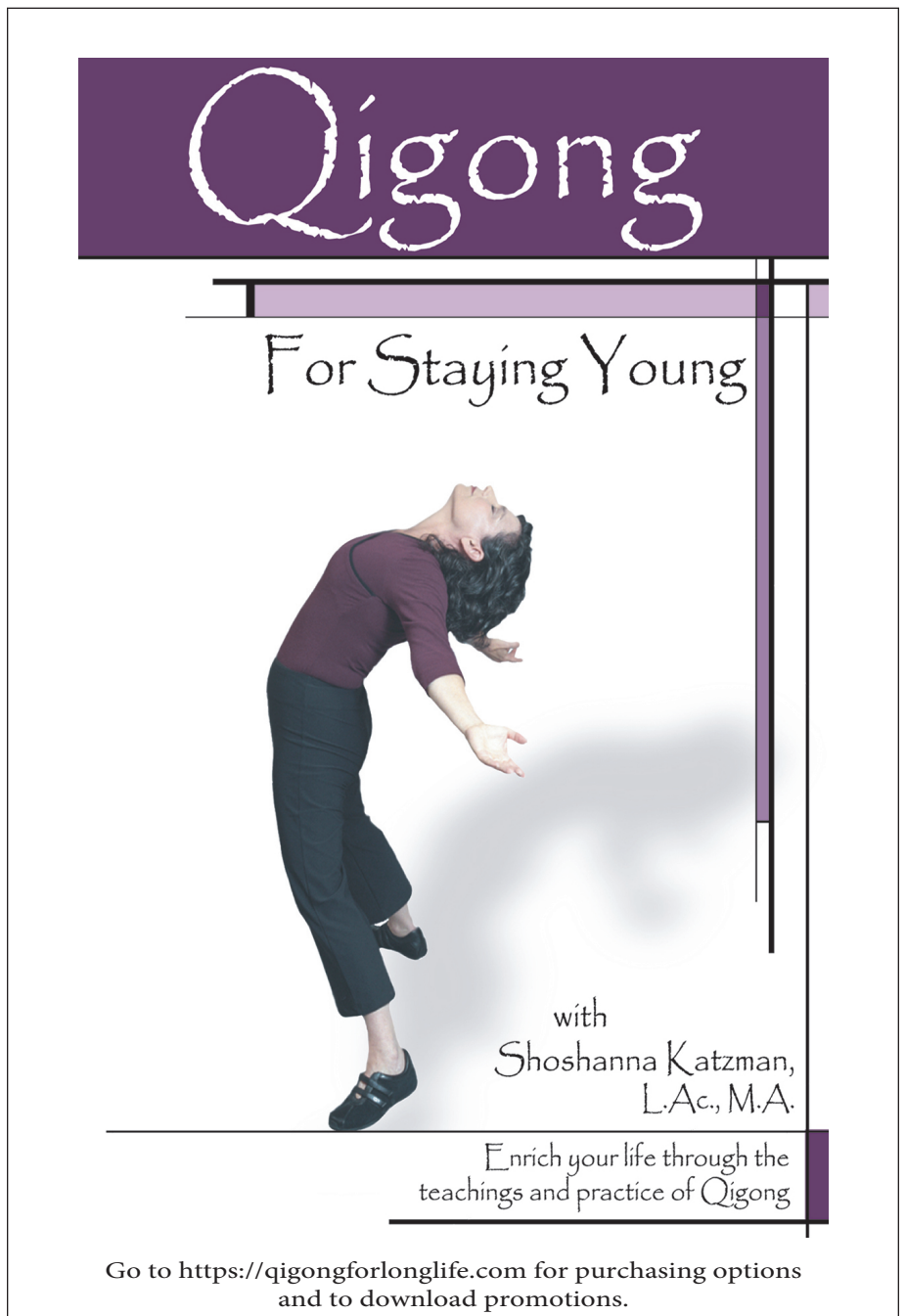
The Chinese medicine approach to rectify such deficiency is the application of acupuncture and herbs to strengthen the flow of qi and blood by balancing and invigorating the energetics of the kidney and liver meridians. Qi and blood stagnation is another typical imbalance at the root of infertility due to restriction in circulation of qi and blood to body areas needed for strong fertility. This oftentimes happens as a result of surgery, childbirth, traumatic injury, chronic infection, or history of painful menstruation. An infection or inflammatory problem is another cause of energetic imbalance due to excessive heat, which is often an underlying root cause of male infertility accompanied by problem with semen quality.

The beauty of Chinese medicine is that an individual's treatment is tailored to their specific needs. All variables

are taken into consideration to create the best course of treatment working together with the individual and in many cases with their physician and/or midwife. Fortunately, the ancient Chinese medicine approach is available as a viable treatment option to help couples manifest their dream of a growing family. It is best to seek help and form a supportive healthcare partnership with a qualified Chinese medicine practitioner for sustained positive results. The fertility quest can be one of the most difficult and heart-wrenching experiences of one's life. For many, Chinese medi-

cine has been their answer to having a beautiful baby in their arms. The most important thing to do when faced with a fertility challenge is to do everything humanly possible without "leaving one stone unturned" and then relax and trust in your body's ability, while allowing nature to take its course.

Shoshanna Katzman, L.Ac., M.S., is the author of Qigong for Staying Young, co-author of Feeling Light and the director of the Red Bank Acupuncture & Wellness Center in Shrewsbury, NJ. For more information, visit www.healing4u.com



The image shows the front cover of the book "Qigong For Staying Young" by Shoshanna Katzman. The cover has a purple and white color scheme. At the top, the word "Qigong" is written in a large, white, stylized font on a dark purple background. Below it, the subtitle "For Staying Young" is written in a smaller, white, serif font. The central image is a photograph of a woman with dark hair, wearing a dark purple long-sleeved top and black pants, performing a qigong pose. She is leaning forward with her head tilted back and her arms extended downwards. The background of the photo is a soft, out-of-focus white and grey. At the bottom right of the cover, the text "with Shoshanna Katzman, L.Ac., M.A." is written in a white serif font. Below that, the text "Enrich your life through the teachings and practice of Qigong" is written in a smaller white serif font. At the very bottom of the cover, there is a white box containing the text "Go to <https://qigongforlonglife.com> for purchasing options and to download promotions."