

Acupuncture for Morning Sickness

By Brook Canning

BHSc Acupuncture (Sydney, UTS) Ad Dip TCM (China)



‘Morning sickness’ is the name given to the experience of nausea and vomiting in early pregnancy. Ironically for many women ‘morning sickness’ can be suffered at anytime of the day or night, sometimes constantly. It is often described as a terrible hangover that never relents or constant food poisoning. It is experienced mostly in the early stages of pregnancy between six and sixteen weeks, although for some unfortunate women it is a constant presence until they reach full term. It is thought that this often debilitating condition is caused by the huge surge of circulating hormones, it is not known why some women are more sensitive than others. Stress and fatigue are also thought to be contributing factors.

Most women’s understandable reluctance to take medication in the early stages of pregnancy has meant that the symptoms associated with morning sickness, including nausea, vomiting and retching; are considered par for the course. Morning sickness often interferes with productivity and can result in time off work needed or extra childcare if there are other young children to look after.

According to Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) the natural flow of Qi (or energy) can be disrupted in early pregnancy as the body deals with the myriad of adjustments required to sustain a pregnancy. The objective of the Acupuncture treatment is to assist the body to re-establish the correct flow of Qi. This will diminish; and often completely resolve the symptoms of morning sickness. This restoration of balance will also help to assist fatigue, boosting energy levels and decreasing stress.

The effectiveness of Acupuncture to treat morning sickness has been recognised in the western medical arena. With clinical research finding Acupuncture is a safe and effective treatment for morning sickness (Smith et al. 2002). For women suffering with morning sickness, Acupuncture provides a safe, effective solution that can improve the experience of early pregnancy.

