

Kids Kut

The #1 Salon for Kids & Families



Fun Stations



Goodies for Kids



Kid Friendly Staff



Free Valet Parking



Hair Kut
\$4.00 Off

Reg. Price with this coupon
(First time customers only)

LAF



Open 7 Days

310-914-9095

11701 Wilshire Blvd. # 14 B-1 W.L.A.
Wilshire & Barrington

Infertility Part 2: Off the Beaten Track

By Dr. Jenn Berman

Most people don't expect to have trouble getting pregnant, but each year 6.1 million couples do. In last month's column, I explored some of the more traditional approaches to infertility. This month, I will examine the less traditional methods.

In the autobiographical book, "Inconceivable: A Woman's Triumph Over Despair and Statistics", author, Julia Indichova, tells how she refused to accept the "no's" she kept hearing from fertility experts. At 42, Indichova was told she had little chance of getting pregnant using her own eggs, but Indichova took her medical health into her own hands. After researching nontraditional experts, she defied the odds by using alternative approaches such as acupuncture, meditation, yoga, and dietary changes, and ultimately conceived her daughter naturally. She now runs an organization geared toward women looking for holistic approaches to infertility called Fertile Heart (FertileHeart.com). Her story speaks to the importance of exploring options, doing research, and listening to your own instincts.

On Pins and Needles

Gynecologists and fertility experts have increasingly recommended acupuncture to fertility patients ever since an April 2002 study was released by the journal, "Fertility and Sterility". The study of 160 patients found that acupuncture significantly increased the pregnancy rates of women undergoing in vitro fertilization (IVF). Acupuncture can be used on its own or in conjunction with fertility treatments, but it is important that both your Western medicine doctor and your Eastern medicine doctor are aware of what each other are doing. When choosing an acupuncturist, it is important to work with someone who has expertise in infertility and is a licensed practitioner.

"Just Relax"

The longer you struggle with infertility, the more stressed you are likely to become. Women who are highly stressed and depressed are less likely to get pregnant, whether it is done naturally or through assisted reproductive technology. According to Dr. Alice Domar, author of "Conquering Infertility: Dr. Alice Domar's Mind/Body Guide to Enhancing Fertility and Coping with Infertility", "If you're struggling with infertility, stress creates a vicious circle. You get stressed because you can't conceive, which makes you more stressed, and that makes it harder for you to conceive!" Scientists believe that high levels of stress can affect a woman's hypothalamus gland, which

controls ovulation, and can lead to irregular menstrual cycles. Stress can also affect prolactin levels, which can also interfere with ovulation. In addition, stress can produce high levels of cortisol, the "fight or flight" hormone, which can interfere with the ability of an embryo to successfully implant in the uterine lining.

There is much you can do to reduce stress and help yourself relax. While psychotherapy and hypnotherapy are great methods to improve your stress levels, some books worth checking out are "The Relaxation & Stress Reduction Workbook" (New Harbinger Publications) and the aforementioned Dr. Alice Domar guide (Penguin

Books), which offer great at-home methods that are easy to use. In addition to reading, listen to a relaxation CD from "A Journey to the Heart," offering CDs by Jennifer Bloome (Anjionline.com or Amazon.com), or Health Journeys' guided meditations by Belleruth Naparstek (HealthJourneys.com).

Just Say "Om" or "Mom"

Many people find yoga to be a gentle exercise that calms the mind. Yoga Villa in North Hollywood is the only studio in Los Angeles currently offering "Yoga for Fertility" classes. According to their website (YogaVilla.com), "This yin style of yoga focuses on maintaining homeostasis and increasing energetic flow in the area of the second chakra, or seat of creation, where the reproductive organs are located. Adapted specifically to support women on a journey toward wholeness in their reproductive capabilities and to reduce the stress created by its pursuit," this class is based on the work of Brenda Strong, who created the video "Yoga 4 Fertility" (Yoga4Fertility.com).

Baubles for Babies

While there is no medical proof that fertility jewelry can aid in conception, many



Continued on Page 40

The thinking of a number between one and six. With a price of \$10.00, it's a steal.

LA

Infertility

Continued from Page 38

women find it to be comforting, whether because of the materials and/or symbols used or the energy believed to be infused in the pieces. LaBelleDame (labelledame.com) sells bracelets and necklaces for fertility and even offers Reiki, an energetic healing practice, to accompany the jewelry they sell. Energy Muse (EnergyMuse.com) offers the Fertility Miracle Bead Necklace, which they recommend using for at least 40 days along with a fertility mantra. And, Herbal Shop (herbalshop.com) also offers fertility necklaces. In addition to whatever properties these baubles may possess, most women struggling with infertility can use the "pick me up", and a simple piece of jewelry is a great place to start.

Art for ART

Many women enjoy utilizing fertility symbols, carrying them around and as art for their home. While some consider objects like this to be nothing more than old world superstition, others swear by them. One such example is the "Akua'ba" fertility doll, which the Asante tribe uses to help young women hoping for a child. Legend has it that a woman who has worn one of these dolls will give birth to a beautiful child. Traditionally, the user of the Asante doll would carry it the way she would a real child and generally tend to the doll as if it were alive. Asante dolls can be purchased at AuthenticAfrica.com and look beautiful in the home.

Knowledge is Power

Infertility can deeply affect a person who

is struggling to have a child. The more you know, the more equipped you will be to make decisions, so it is important that you do your research. It is imperative that you are surrounded by a team of professionals and loved ones. Take advantage of your support system to help you through this difficult time, and don't hesitate to get additional support from a professional therapist who is familiar with fertility issues. Make sure that you consult your treating physician about any nontraditional therapies you may want to use, and make sure that your doctor is on the same page as you are.

Dr. Jenn Berman is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice in Los Angeles. For more information on her upcoming Prime Time TV appearances and her Monday night radio show (10 to midnight) on Star 98.7 (FM), check out Dr. Jenn's website at www.DoctorJenn.com.

Pregnant and on Bedrest: What About Preparation?

by Leslye Adleman

You have registered for every prenatal education class available because you want to become consummately prepared for whatever will make labor, birth, breastfeeding and the first weeks of parenting painless, manageable and, perhaps, even a breeze. Classes are to begin in four weeks, and you are anticipating learning birthing techniques, meeting others due at around the same time, and sharing the experience with your partner.

But unfortunately, your uterus decides to start contracting prematurely and your doctor has put you on bedrest at home. Your head is spinning with what is going on and what is ahead of you. You must call into work to let them know you have been ordered to go on immediate disability and will most likely not return until after the baby is born. And, you should cancel other obligations and contact your childbirth educator to inform her of your situation. Your only concern is maintaining the pregnancy and for the health and well-being of the baby, so you resign yourself to what lies ahead.

After a few weeks you have accepted your new cautious lifestyle, and although you are at times tired of the tedium, you are holding your own. As you leaf through yet another pregnancy magazine, you suddenly realize that no book is going to prepare you for what lies ahead like an experienced instructor would. The obvious dilemma: you can't leave home, so you cannot attend the classes you are scheduled to begin next week. You must instead find someone who will travel to your home and give you all the necessary information you would have received in the classroom. Where are you going to find the

right teacher, one whom you will open your home to for hours of instruction? You want an educator cognizant of your health restrictions and lack of energy (they usually go hand-in-hand), which will require frequent classes, each of short duration.

To find a teacher who has the expertise and flexibility to work with you, check with the facility where you scheduled your classes. You need to cancel those classes anyway, so find out if the instructor offers private classes, and if she does, what the rate is. Also, check what the refund policy is on the classes you will miss. For other recommendations, you can also check with your physician, call any of the stores or centers that provide classes, or go on line and do a search.

You most probably won't have the time or energy to do personal interviews so you may need to rely on a phone conversation and then go with your gut reaction. Make certain the instructor is familiar with your particular situation and is willing to meet you for an hour or two each time, two or three times a week, until you have completed all the instruction you have requested.

Prices will vary, but since you are receiving private instruction in your own home, you can expect the costs to be about double (or higher) what you were paying for the group classes. Compassion should play into getting a refund on the initial classes. And, depending upon your health insurance, you may be able to get reimbursed for the classes if your doctor writes a letter of explanation for you to submit along with a claim form and a receipt from the instructor.

There are instructors who predominantly

do private instruction who will be able to offer exactly what you need. You may find you can handle less than you had originally anticipated and you can always get hands-

Read the entire article at www.lafamily.com

The SafeGuard Child Seat

The Most Advanced Child Seat in the World is designed for children 22-65 pounds and comes packed with innovative safety and convenience features tested far beyond industry standards. Built around an aircraft aluminum frame, the SafeGuard Child Seat is designed to be stronger and to absorb crash forces better than typical plastic seat shells.

The patented SafeGuard Posi-LATCH system retracts and tightens like a car seatbelt, making it much easier to secure in a vehicle. In fact, installation takes less than one minute with LATCH and Top Tether. Comfort is key with SafeGuard, so the patented unique 5 point retractable Harness System and One-Touch Height Adjuster ensure a secure and proper fit for your child. Shaped like a vehicle bucket seat, SafeGuard is constructed from special SmartCore™ foam, which cradles the head and body while absorbing shock from bumps in the road, providing your child with a comfortable, and most importantly, safe ride.

The SafeGuard seat is available at select retailers and online at www.safeguardseat.com, pricing starts at \$429.