

# **Chinese Medicine Workshop** **Natural Remedies for a Healthy Pregnancy,** **Delivery, and Postpartum Recovery**

Chinese medicine is a philosophical medicine. It is based on one's view of the world. Although this workshop is about some of the tools of Chinese medicine, it is helpful to be able to place those tools into the larger context of the medicine.

Some of the basic concepts of Chinese medicine are Yin Yang, the Five Elements, and Qi. These are explained below.

## **Yin Yang:**

Yin and Yang are metaphors for the idea that we live in a dualistic reality. In the “ultimate dimension” there is no Yin-Yang differentiation, only the Tai Yi (Supreme Oneness), but in the “historical dimension” we experience the world as the interaction of opposites.

Yin is seen as the shady side of the mountain. Yang is the sunny side of the mountain.

Yin represents solidity, substance, nourishment, while Yang represents activity.

Yin and Yang are not absolute terms: they each contain each other and can only be defined in relationship to each other. When we say something is Yin, it is in relationship to something else that is more Yang in nature. What was Yin in relationship to one observation may become Yang in another relationship. Yin and Yang oppose each other, are interdependent of each other, consume each other, and transform into each other.

Ultimately, one can say that the highest form of medicine is to bring Yin and Yang back into balance.



## Five Elements:

By further differentiating Yin and Yang, we can define a number of phases in the cycle of Yin moving into Yang and Yang moving into Yin. This is like a wave that may represent the cycle of the day, of the season, or of life.

Life is said to begin with substance - that is as Yin as we might get.

### Wood:

Life then goes through a process of “bursting out”, of being born, of becoming. This is considered Yang from within the Yin. This phase is called the Wood element.

This is spring, or morning.

### Fire:

Then comes the phase of full expansion, maximizing growth potential. This is Full Yang, and this phase is called the Fire element.

This is summer, or noontime.

### Metal:

Inevitably, every thing reaches its maximum potential and it begins to withdraw, to shrink, contract, or decline. This is the beginning of Yin from within the Yang, and this phase is called the Metal element.

This is fall, or evening.

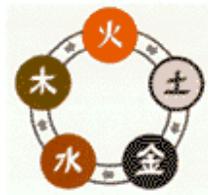
### Water:

And then the cycle of this particular existence ends, the activity ends, although a new cycle will begin as a result of the death of the previous one. This is Full Yin, the coming back to potential, and is the Water element.

### Earth:

This is the transition phase between each phase, that which allows for transformation.

The Five Elements are seen as generating each other in a never ending cycle, from Wood to Fire to Metal to Water to Wood, etc., each transition being represented by Earth. However the hardest transition is that from full activity (Fire) to the decline of that activity: this is where we seem to need the most transformative energy. (Most of us do not complain when spring comes, but we do often have difficulty with the autumn.) And hence the traditional representation of the elements is as follows:



It is important to remember that the Five elements are not static. Each element contains within it all other elements and is moving towards and away from the others. Some acupuncture systems emphasize this model very strongly and type people as being a certain elemental type (for example, an angry person might be considered to have a strong Wood influence). But such classifications are not absolute and are merely pointing at a useful direction.

## Qi

Qi is often translated as energy or life force. The Chinese character Qi is of a grain of rice and the steam that comes out of it, thus representing the transformation of a grain of rice into cooked rice, into something that can be used, and representing influences and relationships in transformation (and everything is considered to be transforming at all times).

To the Chinese Qi is life (and life is Qi). Yin and Yang are in fact just Qi with a certain flavour, as are the Five elements. We can say that Qi has quality, and direction. It takes many forms, shapes, and qualities.

Humans come into existence as the interaction of the Qi of Heaven and the Qi of Earth. This is another way of saying that we extend what was given to us by heaven (Shen – Spirits) or our ancestors, by using our physical form (the seed of which is called the Essence – Jing: that which generates life).

To be in good health is to ensure that the Qi is flowing in accordance with nature. And since everything is changing, our Qi is adjusting and changing all the time. This change and our adjustment, or lack of adjustment, to change is often viewed as the cause of disease. (Change can be internal or an external influence.)

### Wind:

Change is seen as Wind since it is movement. When we are unable to accept the change in our lives, we might begin to have Wind signs: headaches, tremors, itchiness, or a cold or flu.

### Cold:

When we are slow to move with the changes in our lives, we might be having Cold signs: we are slow to move, stiff, contracted, and feel cold.

### Heat:

When we move toward change with too much enthusiasm and too fast we might experience Heat signs: feeling hot, flushed, rashes.

### Damp:

When we are unsure how to react to changes, we begin to hesitate and we try to “dampen” life so as to slow the change down. We then get Damp signs: feeling heavy as if swimming in a swamp, lots of mucus and discharges.

These climatic factors are different qualities of Qi that we might display as we go through life encountering its challenges (changes). And much of Chinese medicine is concerned with bringing one into balance, into the ability to flow with change with ease. And hence we speak of subduing the Wind, expelling or warming the Cold, cooling the heat, and draining Dampness. We do this in order to find balance. The climate in question may display itself physically, emotionally, or spiritually within our being.

Change is inherent in life and is, in fact, the basis of life. On the larger scale, we must grow up and then grow old. On a smaller scale, there must be flow in our bodies at all times, and stopping the flow at any point (in space or time) will result in obstruction. All disease is considered to be the result of the lack of flow, of stagnation. Hence another strategy often talked about in Chinese medicine: to remove stagnation and renew the flow. Acupuncture is primarily concerned with removing blockages and facilitating flow, as flow (that is correct flow) means health.

Sometimes in correcting the flow we may need to tonify what is weak in order to enhance a weak flow, and sometimes one might need to remove excess obstruction. The choice needs to be made by the practitioner in accordance with what they see, but either way the primary purpose is to “order the Qi” back into normal and healthy flow.

The meridians are seen as the pathways of Qi. They can be seen as physical entities which may have Western equivalents in terms of connective tissue, nerves, and muscle strands, or they may be seen purely as philosophical statements exemplifying different aspects of the flow between heaven and earth and the human condition (both in health and disease).

## **General View of Pregnancy in Chinese Medicine:**

The five elements also show us how the fetus develops into a fully conscious being over the ten lunar months of pregnancy. Each two-month period relates to one element, so that the generation cycle of the five elements is completed as we move from conception to birth. Beginning with wood, each element represents part of the cycle of physical, mental and emotional development that eventually leads to the birth of a healthy, whole and conscious human being.

In traditional Chinese medicine, each element represents both an internal organ of the body and an aspect of mind/spirit. This is an “energetic” map that shows us how each aspect of our bodies, minds and spirits is related to the others. It is also one possibility for understanding how we can honor and nurture the life that is growing within us during pregnancy.

### **Wood:**

Weeks 1-8 Liver  
Hun-The ethereal soul that carries messages from the ancestors

### **Fire:**

Weeks 8-16 Heart  
Shen-The spirit that animates us and determines the spirit with which we will live our lives

### **Earth:**

Weeks 16-24 Spleen  
Yi-Intentionality-The ability to have intentions that are based on learning remembering, and reflecting.

### **Metal:**

Weeks 24-32 Lungs  
Po-The earthly soul that gives us our identity in this body and in this life.

### **Water:**

Weeks 32-40 Kidney  
Zhi-The will to live and our individual preferences/desires that allow us to act as an individual in the world.

Conception is the merging of the essences of two people. (Regardless of how conception is actually achieved.) It is important to note that, according to traditional Chinese medical theory, both the pre-natal (genetic) and post-natal (acquired) essences merge to form the embryo. What this means is that the state of health of the parents at the time of conception will profoundly effect the future health of the child. Therefore, it is important in the pre-conception period (3-6 mos. before you begin trying) that both parents get adequate sleep, food, and exercise, and that they maintain a peaceful state of mind as much as possible.

After conception, the mother produces increased kidney *essence*, which in turn causes greater production of blood to nourish the fetus. The *blood* is diverted to the uterus to support the pregnancy. This diversion of blood can cause insomnia, as well as fatigue, sleepiness, and food cravings. The increase of essence also stimulates the increased functioning of all the organs and channels.

At the same time, the *qi* ascends upwards, causing breast development and the dark line along the lower abdomen. The upward movement of *qi* can also cause morning sickness, dark patches on the face, and heat signs such as mouth sores, a red complexion, or excess appetite.

Strong emotions can cause the *qi* to move too strongly, too quickly, and upset the fetus, therefore people, environments, or media (movies, tv news) that upset the mother should be avoided. Throughout pregnancy, the body is sending as much *qi* and blood as possible to the uterus to nourish the growing baby. As a consequence, less *qi* and blood are circulating in the other channels and organs of the body. *Qi* and blood can easily stagnate and cause hemorrhoids, varicose veins, constipation, breathlessness, insomnia, irritability, edema, and other symptoms. This is why it is important to keep the *qi* and blood moving with mild physical exercise, meditation, yoga, breathing exercises, or other forms of relaxation.



A simple way to increase and circulate the *qi*/energy of the body is to use moxa to warm and activate the stomach/earth channel.

In particular, use moxa on the point ST36, about 4 fingers below the knee, just lateral to the edge of the tibia (cup the knee, the point is where your middle finger ends).

The most important advice we have to give pregnant women can be summarized as follows: rest, reduce stress, and keep your belly warm inside and out.

Warm, cooked foods are essential to nourish both you and your baby. Avoid cold, raw foods, and try to maintain an acid/alkaline balance in your diet. It is best to eat light, bland, warm, nutrient-dense foods.

Rest allows your body to focus the energy it needs on the growing baby. Being well rested also makes you less susceptible to colds and flu.

Stress taxes our precious reserves of physical, mental and emotional energy. Mental/emotional stress can be even more detrimental to our well-being than physical stress.

Finally, it is important to keep the belly and pelvis warm. Wearing flannel boxer shorts, or wrapping scarves or cloth around the belly (swaddling ourselves and the baby) provides support and increases the “yang qi” of the body. This may also decrease low back pain and fatigue, as well as fight colds and flu.

### **General Guidelines for the Safe use of Herbs During Pregnancy**

[See chart of herbs that should be avoided or used with caution during pregnancy.]

Most herbs should be avoided in the first trimester of pregnancy, unless the mother has a severe condition that must be treated. For example, severe nausea or threatened miscarriage can be treated with herbs.

Avoid standardized or highly concentrated extracts. It is always best to cook the whole plant or the part of the plant indicated. Plants often work synergistically with other plants or with multiple constituents with the same plant.

Do not use essential oils **internally** during pregnancy.

Avoid herbs that promote menstruation, or “move the blood” (sometimes called emmenagogues).

Nervous system stimulants including ephedra, kola nut, and guarana are best avoided.

Stimulant laxatives can stimulate the uterus. Avoid rhubarb, castor, senna, and aloe. Yellow Dock should be used with caution.

## **Nutrition For Maternity:**

It is important to have plenty of blood and a strong body prior to conception so as to facilitate a good pregnancy. During pregnancy it is not advisable to go through detoxification regimens, as these can both weaken the mother and, since sluggish bowels are common in pregnancy, the toxins can be floating in the blood stream and affect the baby. Therefore if you need to detoxify or fortify your body nutritionally, it is best done 3 months prior to conception.

A diet rich in minerals and vitamins is important, hence the use of dark leafy greens, good quality grains, nuts and seeds. Avoid sugar, smoking, alcohol, drugs, and stress.

During pregnancy, the caloric requirement increases by only 50 calories per day for the first 6 months. Avoid cold foods (it is best to cook foods and avoid raw salads) and spicy foods. Fruits can be eaten raw (though baked pears are excellent tonic for the lungs). Vegetables are best if they are lightly cooked or steamed. Avoid anything that comes straight out of the fridge (cold cuts, cheese, etc.), and iced drinks (waiters in San Francisco are well used to serving water with no ice). Mothers who drink coffee may want to switch to black or green tea.

Some foods to seek are:

**Carrots** – for B-Carotene, a pre-cursor of Vitamin A, an essential for growth and eye, skin, and mucosal membrane development

**Dark leafy greens and seaweed** – for B-complex and minerals. A good source of folic acid to prevent spinal and neurological damage.

**Root vegetables** – for folic acid

**Avocado** – for Vitamin E and iron

**Sesame and pumpkin seeds** – for zinc which prevents birth defects and is needed for cell division and growth, and the development of the immune and hormonal systems

**Sprouted seeds** – these are enzymatic and aid in digestion. Contain high levels of chlorophyll (“plant blood”) and zinc.

**Brazil nuts** – a good source of essential fatty acids.

**Flax seeds** – a good source of EFAs (you can buy the oil and store in the freezer, or buy the seeds, grind in a coffee grinder and sprinkle on food).

**Chlorophyll** – is plant blood, although it does not contain iron.

**Protein** – 60gms of protein a day is advised, which is rarely a problem. Vegan mothers can supplement with protein powder drinks.

The general rules are eating a wide variety of foods, of good quality (organic when possible), and well prepared (simple preparations, cooked or steamed, not greasy, no preservatives), and avoiding junk foods and simple carbohydrates.

You may want to familiarize yourself with the grain section at whole food stores such as Rainbow or Real Foods. In our wheat (breads and pasta) oriented culture we often ignore the multitude of other wholesome grains: rice, millet, quinoa, barley, oats, etc.

During the week before due date, a higher level of carbohydrate is recommended so as to sustain a greater glycogen reserve during the process of labour. Higher amounts of whole grains, fruits and vegetables are recommended, along with Vitamins A, B, C, and E supplementations, and flaxseed or primrose oil.

The following are vitamins and minerals considered important before conception as well as during pregnancy. Most pre-natal supplements will have all of these and you need not seek them individually.

**Calcium** – to leach lead, cadmium and aluminum, forms bones and teeth. Half of the baby's calcium is absorbed in last two months of pregnancy (1,200mg is the recommended daily dose).

**Iron** – is needed to build the blood which nourishes the baby, for prevention of eye, bone and brain defects. Deficiency is implicated in poor memory and fatigue. (18-20mg daily)

**Magnesium** – act against aluminum

**Phosphorus** – antagonizes lead

**Selenium** – antagonizes mercury, arsenic, cadmium. It is an anti-oxidant and aids immunity.

**Zinc** - Zinc contributes to fertility not just in men but in women also. Research shows that high copper and low zinc levels (copper will deplete zinc) will contribute to infertility. Zinc also reduces lead and cadmium levels, both of which are toxic. Iron can also deplete zinc levels, and hence it is wise to supplement your zinc intake.

**Vitamin A** – acts as an anti-oxidant detoxifier (take as Beta Carotene)

**B-Complex** – protects against lead

**B6** – act against aluminum

**Vitamin C** – reduces lead, copper, cadmium, arsenic, anti-oxidant and aids in absorption of iron. (taking 250mg with iron supplement is recommended, and not as orange juice)

**Vitamin D** – aids calcium metabolism and is important for formation of bones. (Deficiency in Vit D is very rare, except in Asian women, as it is produced by the skin upon exposure to the sun.)

**Vitamin E** – reduces lead, anti-oxidant (400 IUs is recommended for miscarriage prevention)

**Folic Acid** – prevents spina bifida and cleft palate. Recommended dose is 0.4mg a day (most prenatal supplements contain up to 1mg; however, in cases of folate deficiency anemia, the dose is increased to 5mg).

Note: this section was written with the vegetarian mother in mind.

The following commonly-available herbs are rich in minerals, including calcium, and can be considered as an alternative to milk.

**Mineral Content of Selected Herbs** (Duke, 1985; Pederson, 1994)

	Iron	Calcium	Magnesium	Potassium	Beta-Carotene	Zinc
Nettle (dried)(per 100g)	32.2mg	2970mg	650mg		20.2mg	
Alfalfa (per ounce)	0.87mg	299 mg	76 mg	400 mg		
Horsetail (per ounce)	4.1 mg	630 mg	145 mg	520 mg		
Oatstraw (per ounce)	0.4 mg	476 mg	400 mg	90 mg		
Red Raspberry (per ounce)	3.3 mg	403 mg	106 mg	446 mg		
Dandelion (per ounce)	52 mg	960 mg	150 mg	3480 mg		1.75 mg
Mint (per teaspoon)	4.5 mg	445 mg	192 mg	3550 mg		

**“Stabilise fetus tea”**

sang ji sheng  
 du zhong  
 ginger  
 peppermint  
 orange peel

Alternatively, one may combine 2, 3, or 4 of the following herbs:

Red Raspberry Leaf  
 Nettle  
 Dandelion  
 Lemon Balm  
 Wild Oats  
 Alfalfa  
 Spearmint or Peppermint  
 Rose Hips

## **Treating Pregnancy Related Conditions:**

### **Morning Sickness:**

Foods to avoid – greasy foods, coffee concentrated sugars.

Many women find that eating small, frequent meals often helps.

Eat rice gruel – bland carbohydrates that are well cooked (soggy) are easier to digest.

Rest and fresh air also help in many cases.

Ginger tea is a very common remedy. Some women find ginger ale useful. It is best to use fresh ginger: grated or sliced, either boiled and simmer, or just steep in water. Adding fresh peppermint is recommended.

Using ginger and peppermint tea is also a good idea for pregnant women who are not experiencing morning sickness as a preventative measure (see our “stabilise the fetus” teas as well).

Red raspberry tea is also soothing and relieves nausea for many women.

Peppermint essential oil has worked in every case I have tried it on. Make sure the oil you use has a sweet flavour. Apply a drop just under the nose.

(Some practitioners recommend the use of other essential oils such as lavender, ginger, lemon, and rosewood, but I have found that some of these, even ginger, can actually aggravate the nausea, and that peppermint never has, to date.)

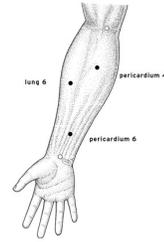
B6, Magnesium, potassium, zinc and folic acid deficiencies are all suspected to be cofactors in morning sickness. Pumpkin seeds, avocado and broccoli are good sources of magnesium, dried apricots, figs, and pineapple are good sources of potassium, and ginger is very rich in zinc.

“Pill Curin” is the miracle formulation for all digestive problems in Chinese medicine, and is often used as the first line of defense. The original formulation comes in vials with tiny little pellets and can be swallowed with a warm water or tea chaser.

Points to use in morning sickness:

Many women find that smell of moxa can trigger the nausea, and thus we recommend the use of acupressure instead of a moxa stick or tiger warmer.

P.6 (Nei Guan-Inner Gate) – this is the most famous point for any kind of nausea. It is located on the arm about 3 fingers’ width above the wrist (palm side), and is in the centre (in line with the middle finger). You will find the point is tender on pressure and has a deep “distended” feeling when pressed. You can massage the point regularly, and apply a wrist band with a magnet on it (from OMS), or simply tape a magnet to it (north side towards skin). Wristbands designed to provide constant pressure on this point can also be purchased.



S.J.8 (San Yang Luo-Three Yang Nets) – this point releases the SCM, and hence relaxes the nervous system and releases constriction in the diaphragm, stomach and esophagus. It is located on the arm, about one third down from the elbow, on the dark side of the arm (dorsal side). Use a magnet on this point (south facing skin if you already have north on P.6).



Stomach Qi – this is a series of points on the outside edge of the shinbone where there are bumps. Massage downwards towards the foot. This is one area where application of essential oils (lemon/lavendar/ginger/petitgrain) is appropriate as it is far enough away from your nose, and you can have someone else apply them with a downward massage... enjoy...



## **Heartburn:**

This is more common in the second trimester.

Try to avoid alkaline preparations as they deplete iron.

Avoid large meals.

Avoid hot and spicy foods.

Avoid coffee, alcohol, and chocolate.

Not drinking any fluids with food may help.

Don't lie down right after a meal.

Wear loose-fitting clothing.

Apples and cabbage can help with heartburn.

Peppermint, nettle, and lemon balm tea can be drunk two or three times a day.

Essential Oils – Roman chamomile, peppermint, lavender, ginger: use 5 drops each in 50 ml of carrier oil (olive oil, or a bland lotion) and massage on SCM (the muscles of the throat).

Points to use are the same as those for morning sickness. You can use a tigerwarmer, especially on the Stomach Qi line.

### **Varicose Veins:**

Lymph massage (that is upwards) with lemon and lavender essential oils (also cypress).

Astragalus lentil soup, and astragalus tea.

Burdock Vinegar Poultice for swollen legs and varicose veins:

Soak a bunch of burdock leaves in a quart jar of apple cider vinegar overnight. Heat the vinegar-soaked leaves by steaming, baking, or putting them in boiling water before applying them to the effected areas.

If you can't find burdock leaves, try Red Clover instead.

Liv4 (Zhong Feng-Central Enclosure) – use tigerwarmer moxa.



### **Constipation:**

Be sure to drink plenty of fluids, as the most common cause of constipation is insufficient fluids.

Exercise, yoga stretches or massaging the lower abdomen on a regular basis helps many women.

The following foods can aid in moving the bowels:

cabbage, apples, pears, bran, figs, carrots, prunes, bananas

Dried fruits may help.

Supplement with acidophilus.

Banana Fig Shake with Molasses

Place 1-2 Bananas, 2-3 figs and 1 tablespoon of molasses in a blender and blend until smooth. Drink once per day.

Place the palm of one hand over your navel and massage in circles. Do 50 clockwise and 50 counterclockwise.

Massage the inner thigh above the knee, especially left side (Inner Yin). You can use a rolling pin, or massage the adductors up towards the quads. You can also use lavender essential oil on this area.

### **Back Pain:**

Generally back pain, especially in pregnancy, responds to heat and not to ice. Use a Lulu (or a sock with uncooked rice), microwave it and place on the back and buttocks. You can also have a friend apply moxa (with a stick or with a lion warmer) on the painful area.

Wearing flannel boxer shorts or other methods of keeping the lumbar back and buttocks warm is very important.

Wrapping the belly to support the weight often helps: use a long sheet of flannel and wrap around the waist so as to slightly support the abdomen.

The pigeon yoga pose, is an excellent stretch for the buttocks. Often it is a congested buttocks that affects the back.

Points to use:

G.B.31 – where the arm naturally touches the outside of the thigh – tigerwarmer.

Inner Yin – the area of the inner thigh just above the knee (up to half way up the thigh): massage.

Essential Oils:

Hot baths with chamomile (Roman) and lavender.

Lemon applied on G..31 and Inner Yin.

### **Muscle Cramps:**

These can be caused by calcium, magnesium, or B vitamin deficiency.

Sugar over-consumption can also contribute to muscle cramps.

Gentle exercise (such as swimming) is recommended to improve circulation.

Massage with lavender and lemon essential oils (diluted in a carrier oil).

Points to use:

SP3 – at the edge of the bunion bone, on the muscle, massage towards the heel, also use a tiger warmer, and lavender and lemon essential oils (this works best when sugar imbalance is involved). You can leave a magnet in place here.

G.B.34 – opposite side to cramp, use a press tack, a magnet, tiger warmer moxa, or a drop of lemon essential oil.

UB 57-the point at the base of the bulging muscle on the back of the calf. Massage this area with your thumbs to relieve cramps in the calves.

Ensure that the buttocks are not tight (see above, section on back pain)

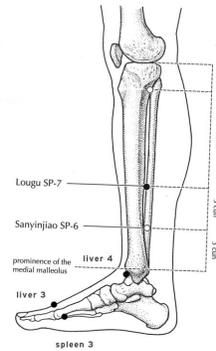


### **Swelling and Edema:**

Barley is a good grain to circulate water.  
Squashes help remove excess water.  
Parsley and garlic aid in circulation.

Elevate the feet as often as you can.

SP7 – tiger warmer moxa



Massage the area upwards (lymphatic massage). Lemon, lavender, and geranium essential oils are often recommended, diluted in a massage lotion.

(Beware that edema can be precursor to blood pressure problems)

(See burdock vinegar poultice under varicose veins.)

### **Carpal Tunnel:**

There is no easy remedy for pregnancy induced carpal tunnel (or any other kind of carpal tunnel). It is sometimes structurally induced, but more commonly a result of the excess blood (or possibly hormonally related).

If it is the result of bad posture (shoulders being pulled by weight of abdomen and hanging forward) then exercises to open the shoulders and neck can be useful. These

include neck roles and gentle back bends (you can also use a towel to roll your arms above the head to stretch the pectoral muscles).

It is also important to make sure that your neck is comfortable and well supported when you sleep. Sometimes arm pain is actually a result of problems in the cervical spine.

### **Hemorrhoids:**

Use Astragalus in soups

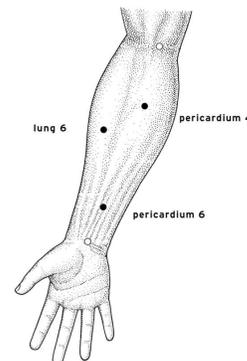
Cypress essential oil – either as a bath or compress. Add geranium and lavender for itching and burning feeling.

Ensuring soft stool is one way to circumvent the hemorrhoid pain (as long as the veins are not too loose): do this by drinking plenty of fluids and eating stool softening foods such as prunes.

Hemorrhoid Soak:

Boil nettle leaves for 30 min., allow the liquid to cool, then use as a poultice or a sitz bath.

LU6 – 3 fingers below the crease of the elbow on the thumb side. Left side only – use a tiger warmer.



### **Anemia:**

The most common type is iron deficient anemia (others can be folic acid deficiency, cell malformation and blood loss).

Iron is depleted by coffee, tea, antacids, and dairy.

Although chlorophyll is basically hemoglobin without iron, it is still good to supplement with chlorophyll.

Good sources of iron are whole grains, dried fruits (figs, dates, raisins, prunes, apricots), avocados, dark leafy greens, beans and peas, nuts (sunflower seeds, brazil nuts, almonds, peanuts, sesame seeds), black strap molasses, nutritional yeast, seaweed, watermelon. Also the following herbs: nettles, alfalfa, chickweed, burdock, kelp, mullein, sorrel, parsley, chicory, watercress, all of which can be brewed into a

tea. Yellow Dock is an American herb used for anemia and can be found in capsules or tincture form. Iron is best absorbed with Vitamin C.

**Vitamins for anemia:**

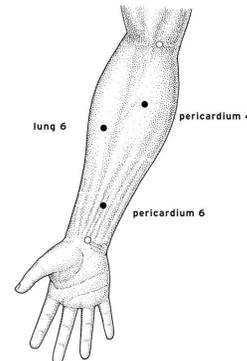
- Folic Acid 1 mg daily
- Vitamin C 500mg (minimum)
- Iron 60mg daily
- B12 – for iron absorption
- B6 – for RBC production

**Anemia Prevention Tea:**

- ½ oz dried nettle leaves
  - ½ oz dried parsley leaves
  - ½ oz dried yellow dock root
  - ¼ oz peppermint leaves
  - 1 teaspoon Rise Hips
- Put herbs in a half-gallon jar. Pour boiling water over herbs and steep for 8 hours. Drink up to 4 cups daily for one week during each month. Stevia may be added to enhance flavor.

**Points to use:**

- P.4 (3 fingers below the centre of the elbow crease – you will find a very slight depression upon light palpation)
- Use this point with a tiger warmer.



**Hypertension:**

- Omega-3 oils – 1,000mg 3 times a day
- Magnesium – 200mg 3 times a day (dilates vessels)
- Increase protein intake

**Herbs:**

- Passion flower
  - Hawthorn berries
  - Cramp bark
  - Milk thistle
- Use these as an infusion

Note that our “stabilise the fetus” tea also acts to reduce blood pressure.

Points to use:

Under the 3rd toe – where the toe meets the ball of the foot, in the centre of the crease. Apply a magnet (north facing skin) and tape it on (since you will be walking on the magnet you will receive gentle stimulation throughout the day). Apply tiger warmer moxa twice a day on this point (on top of the magnet) for extra stimulation.

Ylang ylang is the recommended essential oil for HTN.

(Do not self-treat hypertension that is considered pre-eclampsia: use the above as preventative measures only).

### **P.U.P.P.S:**

External Use Only:

Bai xian pi		15grams
Pu gong ying	15g	
Huang Bai		15g
Ku fan	15g	
Di gu pi		15g
Ai ye	15g	

Soak herbs for 45 min in 1 quart of water. Cook for 15 min, or until about 3 cups are left. Strain through a cheesecloth. Let decoction cool. Use as a compress on effected areas morning and evening. The same liquid may be reused for 2 days.

### **Fatigue:**

Immune and Energy Tonic Tea

Astragalus	1 ounce
Schizandra Berries	¼ ounce

Make decoction by boiling in 4 cups of water. When water boils, reduce heat and simmer until about 2 cups of liquid remain. Drink ½ cup twice daily.

This decoction may also be added to beverage teas.

Massaging the Stomach Qi area and using moxa on Stomach 36 can also help.

## **Breech:**

This is one of the most commonly uses of acupuncture in pregnancy and with a very high success rate.

U.B.67 – located at the outer corner of the nail of the little toe is the point used to affect the amniotic fluid and allow for the baby to turn. It is not recommended to use this point unless you are certain that the baby is not positioned head down on the day of treatment.

This point is used with a moxa stick.

Research shows that this point affects amniotic fluid and placental hormones. By warming the point, myometrial movement is created, increasing the baby's heart rate and movement.

It is best used around week 34 (up to week 36). It is done by heating the point with a moxa stick for about 10-15 minutes for up to 10 treatments. Some practitioners heat both points at once, some alternate sides (moving from one side to the other as soon as the heat is intense), some use comfortable heat while other use intense heating (and alternating sides). The mother should be lying back with elevated feet and pelvis, so as to allow movement to occur. Once a confirmation that the baby is head down, squatting will help stabilize it in that position. It is also recommended to do an abdominal wrap after turning the baby (see section on back pain).

(This method of turning the baby is not recommended for mothers with high blood pressure, Rh(-) , twins, or previous history of breech.)

## **Preparation for Labour:**

Perineal massage (in bath) daily starting at week 34.  
Mula Bandha can be performed regularly during pregnancy.

Squatting and stretching the inner thighs.

One week prior to due date increase caloric intake (see section on nutrition).

Practicing your relaxation exercises, breathing exercises, meditation, and keeping stress to a minimum now will pay off not only in the present moment but during the moments when they might not come very naturally to you during birth.

This is the time to build strength and address any weaknesses (if seeing a practitioner) in preparation for labour.

Herbs to Prepare for Labor (Make or purchase a tincture with the following):

Partridgeberry	3 parts
Black Haw	2 parts
Black Cohosh	1 part

You can begin taking this during the 36<sup>th</sup> week of gestation. It is best to consult your midwife or other health care provider for dosages and advice before beginning to take this tea.

Alternatively, you can take 30 drops of black cohosh tincture alone three times daily or partridgeberry infusion (4-8 ounces 3 times daily) alone.

## Labour:

### Induction Points:

L.I.4 – located in the sensitive flesh between the thumb and index finger

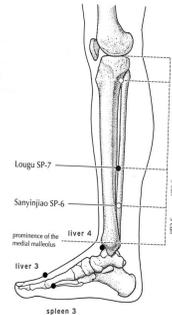
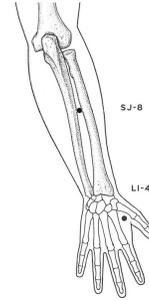
SP6 – 3 fingers above the inner ankle bone

Liv3 – between the big toe and second toe joints (equivalent to L.I.4 but on the foot)

You can use magnets, or massage on these points. Also essential oils.

U.B.32, U.B.31 – these are the foramans in the sacrum – use a tens machine on the sacrum.

Ear points – use press tacks (ShenMen and Uterus)



If you are seeing a practitioner, these points will be needed, and you may be given press-tacks on the points to continue the effect of the treatment.

Points for self massage:

U.B.2 - at corner of eyebrows by third eye)

U.B.10 – below the occiput

G.B.21 – at the top of the shoulder

Inner Yin – on the inner thigh the width of 5 fingers above the knee.

Other methods of induction:

Castor oil (also curry)

Caulophyllum hoemopathics

Copper under the tongue

Black Cohosh and Cottonroot as teas or tinctures.

Clary sage essential oil is a common essential oil used for induction (use on the points above). Some women find the smell to cause the nausea. In a 1990 study at John Radcliff Maternity Hospital, clary sage was used to increase contractions.

Other delivery facilitation essential oils are:

- Palmarosa
- Fennel
- Peppermint
- Nutmeg
- Aniseed
- Clove
- Thyme (vulgaris)

Fennel or Aniseed combined with lavender can be applied on G.B.21  
Fennel can be used diluted (in a massage oil) during labour for massaging the feet.

Relaxing during labour is extremely important, both emotionally and physiologically, since oxytocin (the hormone responsible for contractions) release is reduced by fear, anxiety (and anesthesia).

Holding the breath will induce anxiety, and will also prevent you from using the diaphragm as fully as possible during contractions.

Neroli (orange blossom) is a wonderful oil for delivery time: it is calming and relates to the uterus through the Ren and Chong channels. Use a drop on LU7, SP4, and either Ren17, or Ren15. You may also just massage around the ankles, wrists, and on the sternum (breastbone) with this oil.

**Points to use during labour for pain management:**

All of the points under labor induction may be used with the addition of the following:

Ear points (with press tacks): Point 0, Bladder, Endocrine

G.B.31 – where the hand touches the outer thigh in a standing position

This is an excellent point for perineum pain

It can be used in the later stage for burning and tearing sensation

U.B.60 – at the depression on the outside edge of the Achilles tendon, between the tendon and the outer ankle bone.

These points can be stimulated by doula, partners, etc. by doing massage. You can have press-tacks placed in them if you are sure of the location (you can have your acupuncturist mark them for you). A tens machine can be rented and the pads placed on the sacrum.

Massaging the shoulders during labour is very beneficial, and is easily done if you are in an assisted squatting position (with your labour partner in back of you) or if you are maintaining an upright standing position. Besides relaxation, specifically the point at the top of the shoulder (G.B.21) aids down-bearing and contraction force.

You may want to consider including instructions in your birth plan for the umbilical cord be cut only after it stops pulsating so that the baby gets his/her full share of your immunity. Allergies often will show as pressure pain on the navel later on in life, a testament to the affect of that original scar and lack of immunity transmitted by the mother.

## Post-Labour:

This is a time when exhaustion easily sets in, emotions can be intense, and demands extremely high. It is extremely important to take care of oneself and not have too high expectations for an immediate “return to normal” or becoming a “super mom.”

Keeping warm right after delivery is crucial. After losing blood, exposure to drafts, wind, cold air, can be very depleting and may produce long term damage.

About a week after birth, start applying moxa on the lower abdomen and lumbar back. Keep wearing your “Hara warmer” (flannel boxers?) for at least 4-6 weeks.

SP6 and ST36 are excellent points to warm up with stick moxa during the months after labour.

Applying moxa on the lower abdomen and back is tonifying for the whole system: the Chinese view the area below the navel as the Cinnabar Field (Dan Tian) where our energy emanates from. Moxa on the lower abdomen will also tone the abdomen and help with stretch marks. (To prevent stretch marks use the following essential oil combination during months 3-9 of the pregnancy: mandarin - *citrus reticulata* - 4 ml, rosehip seed oil 20 ml, hazelnut oil 200 ml: mix these and massage on the skin of the abdomen once a day for three days, take a break for three days, and continue. To heal stretch marks after pregnancy, use the following: sage 1 ml, rosemary - *verbenone* - 2ml, rosehip seed oil 20ml, hazelnut oil 40 ml: mix these and massage into skin with a loofah, 3 days on 3 days off.)

Astragalus (Huang Qi) and Dang Gui in soups are excellent tonifiers and this combination is also used for lochia retention. You can put the herbs in soups or rice (or anything that cooks for a long time) and fish them out. You can also boil them into a decoction (2 ounces astragalus, one third ounce Dang Gui in 4 cups of water: boil and simmer for 45 minutes). He Shou Wu (or Fou Ti) is another excellent herb and it is sold in Chinese shops as a drink (Shou Wu Chih).

Postpartum nutritional needs are still very high with a greater demand for:

Zinc – to reduce copper levels (copper levels are high during delivery). The placenta contains much zinc, and is traditionally cooked and consumed. (Zinc is found in ginger, pumpkin, sesame, and sunflower seeds, almonds, wheat germ, and leafy greens)

Magnesium and chromium – to help maintain blood sugar levels  
(these are found in nuts, leafy greens, barley, and grains)

Iron – to ensure good blood supply for healing

Vitamin C – which is important for wound healing and iron absorption

Essential fatty acids (flaxseeds, primrose oil, olive oil)

Dehydration can easily occur, and drinking lots of fluids is essential.

### Perineum Care:

Although some recommend ice for the bruising and tearing, ice is not only extremely unpleasant after the experience of birth (or at any time between one's legs), it is also in absolute contrast to the theory of Chinese medicine that calls for warming and tonifying. Instead use a poultice made of grated fresh ginger. The following herbs are also useful and can be added to the ginger:

- comfrey (soothes pain, builds new cells)
- plantain (similar to comfrey)
- rosemary (an antiseptic, also raises the Qi)
- myrrh (antiseptic, good for wounds and sores as it moves the blood)
- lavender (calms tissue)

Brew these in water for 5 minutes and let it steep until temperature is comfortable. Soak a cloth in, and apply directly on perineum and vulva for 15 minutes several times a day.

(Natural Resources also sells a prepared sitz bath for perineum recovery.)

You can also add 2 drops of lavender essential oil, 2 drops of cypress essential oil, and 4 drops of tea tree oil to the compress (or use the essential oils separately in warm water application).

### Insufficient Lactation:

Anise, fennel and dill are lactogenic, and can be used as teas, as food, or as essential oils (apply on S.I.1 - on the outside edge of the nail of the little finger, and S.I.11 – in the centre of the scapula).

### Mother's Milk Tea:

- blessed thistle leaves
- fennel seeds
- coriander seeds
- chamomile flowers
- lemon grass
- borage leaves
- star anise
- fenugreek seeds

You can use blessed thistle leaves alone, or add any of the other herbs. The recommended quantity is that each other herb be half the amount of the blessed thistle.

Geranium essential oils is used to decrease milk production.

## Breast Soreness/Breast Infection:

### Hot Compress:

Grated ginger – simmer for 20 minutes  
after 20 minutes, optionally add comfrey root and simmer for 10 more minutes  
add slippery elm powder and simmer for 5 minutes (optional)  
take off heat, add comfrey leaves (optional)  
steep

apply as hot compress onto breast.

Even just hot water (without ginger or any other herbs) can be helpful.

Add lavender essential oil to the compress.

(Geranium and peppermint are also very good for breast pain and mastitis  
do not use these over long periods as they may then affect milk production.)

Poke root – 1-2 capsules three times a day for three days.

Echinacea – for 3 days

Vitamin C – 1000mg 4 times a day.

## Weaning

60g of Mai Ya (barley sprout malt) 2-3x/day

## Using Acupuncture Points:

Points have textbook anatomical locations but each human body is different energetically (and often anatomically also). The textbook location is simply a target area. This area is often the size of a quarter and may be displaced up to 1 inch away from the prescribed location. We encourage you to look for the points through touch until finding the point that works best for you.

The simplest way to use acupuncture points is doing massage: gentle pressure in circular motions, increasing the pressure slightly and letting go. We recommend that no matter what other technique you use to stimulate the point, do massage it first, as this will allow you to find the point most accurately. Most points have a clear sensation when you are on the right point – a certain “ouchy” feeling that can be described as pressure pain, nerve pain, distension, or any other kind of feeling that tells you “this is it.”

### Moxa:

Moxibustion (or moxa for short) is a method of heating points or areas using herbs (artemesia vulgaris) as your heat source. Artemesia Vulgaris has special heating properties which allow the heat from the moxa to penetrate deeply into the body. Two forms of moxa are referred to in this handout: stick moxa and tiger warmer moxa.

Stick moxa – This moxa comes in the form of a large cigar. Light one end of the cigar: this may take a while, and is best done with a lighter rather than a match. Once the stick is simmering, place the burning side about one-half to one inch away from the skin of the target point. Make small clockwise circular motions with the stick, **never** touching the skin. When the point feels hot, remove the moxa stick and press on the point. This cools down the skin and pushes the heat in. It also gives you a chance to tap or blow off the ashes off the stick (the ashes make it cooler). Then reheat the point. Sometimes the heating sensation is strong and can feel like a burn or a mosquito bite. Moxa is complete after about 6 to 7 strong sensations at the point. If you are warming an area (such as the low abdomen), start with one specific point, and warm it up well until it is nice and red. Now increase the diameter of your circular motion and begin to draw the redness away from the original point. Extend the red area one inch at a time (it is impossible to warm up too large an area at the same exact time). Keep drawing the redness away throughout the desired area, returning to the original spot and the areas in between every so often.

After use, place the burning end of the moxa stick in a bottle, or in sand so as to snuff it out: be sure it is truly snuffed out!

This form of moxa is very tonifying and is the cheapest form of moxa. However, it is quite smoky, smelling like marijuana. So-called “smokeless” moxa sticks are not smoke free and are less effective.

Tiger warmer moxa – A tiger warmer is an instrument that holds an incense stick inside it. Light the incense stick, and close the tiger warmer so that the lit end of the

incense stick is placed level with the air ducts. Touch the end of the tiger warmer to the point with slight pressure, vibrating the tiger warmer. When an heat/ouchy is felt, lift the tiger warmer, press the skin, and repeat 10 to 15 times. You can adjust the heat on the tiger warmer by sliding the incense stick away from the tip (cooling) or towards it (warming). When the tip gets too hot, open the tiger warmer and wipe the tip on a piece of cloth to cool it down. The tiger warmer should be nice and warm so you can touch your face with it, and the heat sensation is created partially by pressure. Tiger warmer moxa is best done for specific points. Its advantage over stick moxa is its specificity. It is also considered to be less warming and more stimulating. The tiger warmer produces far less smoke than moxa sticks and you can further get less smoky incense sticks.

Lion Warmer moxa – The lion warmer is a tiger warmer that is larger and uses thicker incense sticks. It is used for areas rather than points.

### Magnets:

Magnets can be taped onto the skin of the body on points. This is especially good on points on the feet (walking will stimulate the magnet), and is obviously not as useful on the hands (where frequent washing will peel off the magnet). One can always apply a magnet on point and then further stimulate it with moxa.

Medical magnets come so that the north side is facing the skin. The expensive Japanese varieties will have a nipple indicating the north side. We use the cheaper Korean hand magnets which do not indicate the north side (the side facing the tape is south, so the side facing the skin is north). The Korean magnets also have the disadvantage of a weak tape, and need to be reinforced with surgical tape.

Magnets are used to stimulate points, such as P.6 for morning sickness, and are rather specific. If you are using one point only (if you are using the same point on both sides of the body, this is considered still as one point), simply tape the magnet on, north facing the skin and reinforce if necessary. If you are using more than one point, then make your main point a north point, and your secondary point a south point.

In truth, it does not matter which point is south and which is north, but the following rules do apply:

- Use the same polarity (north or south) on the same point on opposite sides.
- Use opposite polarity (one north, one south) when two different points are used on the same side of the body.

How to make a south point? Simply peel the magnet off the manufacturer's tape and flip it over. You now have a south magnet.

Do not use more than two points at a time (that is two to four magnets) on the body at one time. Do not mix magnets with press tacks (the non-magnetized metal of the

press tack can block the magnetic field created). Magnets can be left on for up to a week and then replaced, however, they often fall off in the shower before that time.

For pain, such as back pain, you can purchase larger magnets (magnet disks) and tape those on the pain area.

#### Press-tacks:

These can be used on the body, and are most commonly used on ear points. These are needles which look like little thumb-tacks which are pressed into the point. Because there is a needle in the skin, you must remove press tacks after 3 days of placement in order to ensure the area is clean. Place an extra tape on press tacks to keep them in place. To take off, simply lift the tape: the tack will come out with it.

Points with press tacks on them can be further stimulated with moxa. Due to the metal, the heat will feel quite a bit more intense. They can also be stimulated manually by pressure massage.

It is best to have press tacks inserted by your acupuncturist.

#### Essential Oils:

There are many ways to use essential oils. They can be massaged into the skin on an area (either diluted or not), be used in baths, inhaled (as in the case of peppermint for nausea), or placed directly on points.

When using an essential oil on a point simply dip the oil on your finger and then massage the oil into the point.

Essential oils are best used twice a day for three days, take three days rest, and then begin a three day on three day off cycle. If you are using essential oil for an acute situation, ignore this suggestion (use peppermint oil as long as you need every few hours for morning sickness).

#### Tens Machines:

These are not used on points but on areas, and are used to relieve pain. OMS carries a number of machines priced at \$65 (lead wires, adhesive electrodes and gel would cost another \$15 or so).

Apply the gel to the area, and place the electrodes onto it. Connect the clips to the electrodes (one lead has two clips and is inserted into the same outlet). The setting is then chosen (2 Hz, and pulse width of 200 microseconds), and the intensity is raised until a pulsation is felt.

General Points for Pregnancy:

Immune  
Return to Nest  
Kid9  
ST36

**Suppliers:**

OMS – 800-323-1839

Magnets – we recommend the small Korean hand magnets (SJC) (\$4.50 for 50)  
Micropore tape – ½ inch width (tan or clear): you can get this at most pharmacies  
press tacks -  
moxa sticks – Tai I or Nien Ying brands  
these can be gotten from Chinese herb shops also  
tiger warmer (and lion warmers) – be sure to get at least one box of incense sticks  
(\$17.50 for tiger, \$18.50 for lion, \$3.50 for sticks)

Original Swiss Aromatics – 415-479-9120

For essential oils. This is a very good company with excellent oils

Rainbow sells essential oils by Simplers and Aroma Vera, both of have very good oils.

Do not get “generic” brands or oils you are not sure are pure and properly extracted.

Meyer Distributing Company – 800-472-4221  
For lulus (warming pads)

**Herb Shops:**

Western Herbs can be purchased at Scarlet Sage or the San Francisco Herb Company.

You can buy herbs at any Chinese herb shop in China town or Clement Street. Many Chinese grocery stores carry common herbs such as Dang Gui, Astragalus, lotus root, etc. (Some Chinese herbs can be obtained at Rainbow)

The best source for bulk herbs is Asia Natural (415-920-2638). A minimum of one pound per herb is required, and they only sell Chinese herbs (no Western herbs).

## Recipes

### Dark Leafy Green Soup:

Dandelion greens – 1 bunch  
Kale – 1 bunch  
Collard greens – 1 bunch  
Broccoli – 1 pound  
Parsley – 1 bunch (straight leaf or curly)

Chop the greens: not very finely.

Place a handful of dried seaweed in a stock pot of water and let it soak for 20 minutes

Add the dandelion greens. (Now is also the time to add garlic if you choose)

Bring to a boil and lower flame to simmer.

Once water is boiling, add all other ingredients.

Simmer for 5 minutes, and take off flame.

Add 3 tablespoons of miso.

Liquify using a hand blender.

Keep refrigerated.

### Lentil Soup with Astragalus:

2 cups lentils  
10 pieces of Astragalus

3 leeks  
1 onion  
2 carrots  
2 potatoes  
1 head of parsley  
4 garlic cloves  
1 thin slice of ginger

kholorabi or any other root vegetable you like

Soak the lentils and Astragalus overnight or for at least 2 hours.

Bring to a boil, lower flame to a simmer.

Add the potatoes and other rooty vegetables of your choice.

Simmer for 30 minutes

Chop the vegetables (leeks, onions, carrots, etc.) finely.

In a wok – stir fry the vegetables, starting with the ginger, then half the garlic, onion, rest of garlic, leeks, carrots, and finally parsley. Use a thin layer of sesame oil to grease the wok. Stir fry for about 5 minutes.

Add stir-fries vegetables to the soup.

Add any herbs to taste (sage, rosemary, thyme, etc.)

Simmer for another 5-10 minutes.

Turn off flame and add 4 tablespoons of miso.

The Astragalus pieces can be chewed and sucked, but they are rather fibrous and you need not eat them: they can be fished out.

### **Quinoa with Lotus Root and Lycium Fruit (Chinese Wolfberries):**

1 cup quinoa

¼ cup lotus root (Lian Zi)

2 table spoons Lycium berries (Gou Qi Zi)

Rinse the chinese herbs well.

Place the quinoa and herbs in a pot with 2½ cups of water and let them soak for 10 minutes.

Cover and bring to a boil, then simmer for 20 minutes.

(You can also use a rice cooker)

This is an excellent breakfast cereal.

### **Rice Congee:**

½ cup rice

6-8 cups water or stock

Herbs (Shan Yao, Gou Qi Zi, Dang Shen, Da Zao, Long Yan Rou)

(omit herbs if suffering from morning sickness)

Wash the rice. Place the rice, herbs, and water or stock into a large soup pot.

Bring the entire mixture to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for at least ½ hour.

The longer you simmer the congee, the creamier it will be. You may also use a crock pot and simmer it overnight or all day. In that case, use 12 cups water for ½ cup rice.

You may also add sweet potatoes, pumpkin, or mung beans along with the herbs.

For morning sickness – add grated ginger and/or orange zest for the last 5 minutes.