



When You Become Pregnant A Chinese Medicine Guide For the 1st Trimester

Acupuncture

Frequency: During the first 12 weeks, acupuncture can greatly reduce the risk of miscarriage and for this reason we highly recommend coming in weekly.

When to call: Spotting, bleeding and/or cramping are not uncommon in early pregnancy and can be completely normal. However, since bleeding and cramping are often signs of threatened miscarriage, please contact us immediately if you're experiencing these symptoms. We are often able to stop threatened miscarriages and hold the pregnancy with acupuncture and moxibustion.

Rest

The first three months is stillness. Find times to rest throughout the day, even if for 5-10 minutes at a time. Some camps of thought view "morning sickness" as a protective mechanism to encourage rest. Whether or not you experience nausea/vomiting in the first trimester, take rest seriously.

Place something beautiful (flowers, art, something sentimental) in your bedroom, in your line of vision when you wake up. When you open your eyes every morning, it's the first thing you should see.

Nutrition

Never allow yourself to become hungry. Carry complex carbohydrates (ex. whole grains, oats, quinoa, brown rice) and protein (ex. raw or dry roasted nuts, eggs, fish, lean beef or chicken, beans, yogurt) with you at all times.

Avoid drinking liquids with meals. Wait until 20 minutes after eating to drink liquids.

Eat peacefully. Put your fork down between bites. Pay attention to your body and stop when you're full. Eat when you're hungry.

Date Energy Balls

Ingredients:

- 2 cups walnuts (or other nut/seed of choice)
- 1 cup shredded unsweetened coconut
- 2 cups soft Medjool dates, pitted
- 2 TBS coconut oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Directions:

In a large food processor fitted with an "S" blade, process the walnuts and coconut until crumbly. Add in the dates, coconut oil, vanilla and sea salt and process again until a sticky uniform batter is formed.

Scoop the dough by heaping tablespoons, then roll between your hands to form balls. Arrange them on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, then place in the freezer to set for at least an hour before serving.

Store the balls in a sealed container in the fridge for up to a week, or in the freezer for an even longer shelf life.

Recipe taken from Detoxinista (www.detoxinista.com)

Nausea/Vomiting

Get acupuncture: Depending on the severity of your symptoms, it may be beneficial for you to receive acupuncture one to three times a week. Don't worry, we offer discounted sessions in these cases.

Re-read the sections on "Rest" and "Nutrition" above. Eat small amounts of foods that are high in protein, and do so often.

Take walks after you eat. This encourages the digestive "qi" to descend rather than "rebel" upwards.

Ginger: 500-1500mg/day. Keep in mind that ginger isn't going to work for all people. It's effectiveness depends on specific aspects of your constitution. Ginger is warming when there is "cold in the stomach."

Peppermint or peach leaf tea: try this if you find that ginger has no effect or worsens your symptoms. These herbs are cooling for instances of "heat in the stomach."

Vitamin B6: 10-25mg, 2-3 times/day.

Travel

If possible, avoid flying during the first trimester. For some people, this will be unavoidable. If you do have to travel by air, your acupuncturist can teach you how to use moxibustion (heat-therapy) to counteract the effects of flying. If you have a choice, drive or schedule trips later in your pregnancy.

Sex

Limit or abstain from sex during the first trimester, especially if you have a history of miscarriage. Intercourse releases the hormone oxytocin, which contracts the uterus. Don't let

this keep you from having sex at all. Just remember that too much of a good thing isn't always a good thing.

Supplements

Fish oil: Omega 3 fatty acids are essential for the brain and nervous system development of your growing baby. They also support healthy pregnancy by boosting immunity and decreasing inflammation. We recommend Prenatal DHA by Nordic Naturals, which is available for purchase at Family Tree Acupuncture and contains 830 mg of omega-3s and 400 IU of vitamin D3.

Prenatal Vitamin: We recommend New Chapter Perfect Prenatal Multivitamin. This is an organic, whole-foods-based vitamin that includes essential vitamins for pregnancy and is gentle on the stomach. You can purchase this on Amazon.

Probiotics: If you're not already taking this supplement for digestive help, we strongly recommend you do so no later than week 20. Probiotics can help prevent Group B streptococcus (GBS), which is a type of bacterial infection that can be found in a pregnant woman's vagina or rectum and can be passed to the baby during delivery. We recommend OrthoBiotic, by OrthoMolecular, which is available for purchase at Family Tree Acupuncture and contains a carefully assembled cast of probiotic organisms to support microflora balance and maintain a healthy environment for vitamin uptake and optimal immune function.

Vitamin D: It is unlikely your prenatal vitamin provides enough vitamin D. A recent study found women taking **4,000 IU of vitamin D daily** had the greatest benefits in preventing preterm labor/births, preeclampsia and infections. Vitamin D supports healthy bone development in your growing baby.

Stress

Identify things in your life that are stressful and eliminate them. Easier said than done, but mind-body practices can help you relax and maintain energetic boundaries that will serve you and the baby well throughout your pregnancy:

- Mindfulness meditation: this can be a very effective tool for reducing stress and promoting relaxation. Michael Kane offers free natural meditation groups on Tuesday evenings from 6-8pm (Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ormond Beach: 56 N Halifax Dr, Ormond Beach, FL) and Thursday evenings from 7:15pm - 8:15pm (Renew-Yoga: 220 S. Beach St., Daytona Beach, FL). Cost: FREE.
- Pre-natal yoga classes are available at Renew-Yoga on Thursdays at 5:45pm: 220 S. Beach Street, Daytona Beach, FL. Cost: \$14 drop-in rate.
- Avoid talking with people about their own pregnancy, labor and delivery experiences. Their experience, whether ideal or less-so, will not be your experience. Nevertheless, talking about it can create unrealistic fears or expectations. Learn how to gracefully exit the conversation when it comes up by saying something like, "I appreciate that you trust me enough to share

your personal experience. I'm working on staying present and accepting my own experience with pregnancy by limiting the amount of stories I hear."

Exercise

Not too much, not too little. Pay attention to your body and you'll find a happy medium. If you have an exercise regimen, continue what you're doing at a moderate level. Now is not the time to start training for a marathon or enroll in boot camp at your local cross fit gym.

If you don't have an exercise regiment, start to incorporate 30 minutes of low-impact exercise into your life a few days a week. Consider walking, cycling, swimming, yoga, tai chi, or qi gong.