

-- ABSTRACT --

Effect of acupuncture on sperm parameters of males suffering from subfertility related to low sperm quality.

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The aim of this prospective controlled study was to assess the effect of acupuncture on the sperm quality of males suffering from subfertility related to sperm impairment. Semen samples of 16 acupuncture-treated subfertile patients were analyzed before and 1 month after treatment (twice a week for 5 weeks). In parallel, semen samples of 16 control untreated subfertile males were examined. Two specimens were taken from the control group at an interval of 2-8 months. The expanded semen analysis included routine and ultramorphological observations. The fertility index increased significantly ($p < \text{or} = .05$) following improvement in total functional sperm fraction, percentage of viability, total motile spermatozoa per ejaculate, and integrity of the axonema ($p < \text{or} = .05$), which occurred upon treatment. The intactness of axonema and sperm motility were highly correlated ($\text{corr.} = .50, p < \text{or} = .05$). Thus, patients exhibiting a low fertility potential due to reduced sperm activity may benefit from acupuncture treatment.

-- ABSTRACT --

A substance isolated from *Cornus officinalis* enhances the motility of human sperm

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The effects of a Chinese herb, *Cornus officinalis*, on the motility of human sperm was studied. An aqueous extract was prepared from the dried fruits of the herb and used in this study. The crude extract at a final concentration of 0.5 microgram/microliter in phosphate buffered saline (pH 7.4) increased sperm motility from 25.8 +/- 7.7% to 42.8 +/- 10.3% (i.e. 68% increase, $n = 7$), as determined by the computer-aided-sperm-analysis (CASA) method. The crude extract was fractionated by high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) into four fractions: C1, C2, C3 and C4. Their effects on sperm motility were further studied by CASA. Only the C4 fraction showed substantial stimulatory effects on sperm motility. At a concentration of 5 ng/microliter, C4 increased the sperm motility from 15.7 +/- 3.8% to 34.5 +/- 6.4% (i.e. 120% increase, $n = 6$) by CASA and from 14.9 +/- 4.3 to 28.5 +/- 8.1 (i.e. 91% increase, $n = 8$) by transmembrane migration ratio (TMMR) method. This result suggests that C4 is the active component in *Cornus officinalis* that enhances sperm motility.

-- ABSTRACT --

Effects of guizhi-fuling-wan on male infertility with varicocele.

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Thirty-seven infertile patients with varicocele were treated with Guizhi-Fuling-Wan (7.5 g/day) for at least 3 months. Before and after the administration, semen qualities such as sperm concentration and motility were examined, and the varicocele was graded. A varicocele disappearance rate of 80% was obtained with 40 out of 50 varicocele, and improvement of sperm concentration and motility were found in 71.4% and 62.1% of patients, respectively. From these results, Guizhi-Fuling-Wan is considered to be effective for circulation disorders in varicocele as well as semen quality.