

ACT meeting 10 May 2023 – Morning Sickness Discussion Round

Summary of two papers on morning sickness (Betts 2006 and Betts 2003) – followed by ACT group discussion (Pia Huber, 14 May 2023)

Betts 2003

Morning sickness > nausea and/or vomiting any time of the day (individuals' experience is varied in terms of timing and symptoms)

Mainly between weeks 6 to 16, with peak at 8-12 weeks (but can start at week 4 and last until birth)

Usually no concerns about lowered food intake, but dehydration can be a problem

Excessive vomiting > hyperemesis gravidarum may require hospitalisation and intravenous fluids plus medicines (blood tests > electrolytes and urine tests for ketone levels); violent and repeated vomiting can lead to torn blood vessels in throat (blood vomiting)

Factors:

fatigue, eating habits, stress

Reasons: rapid rise of hormones (HCG (human Chorionic Gonadotropin)) and Oestrogen

(Emotional factors; anxiety, fear, unconscious rejection of pregnancy)

Traditional CM view: penetrating vessel (Chong Mai) big changes when period stops. Chong Mai position near Stomach and Uterus

Rebellious Qi in Chong Mai/ weak Stomach and Spleen >> harmonise Chong Mai with

KD6, KD21 and KD 27 (KD6 and 27 = end points Kiiko Matsumoto)

Ear press needles on KD6 (tends to suppress vomiting) on KD 27 (tends to help with nausea)

Start with twice a week then once a week

Other points can be added such as

Ren12, Bl20, Liv3, St44, St40, Ren17 (block in chest), Ren22 (block in throat), Sp4 and Bl20 (excessive saliva spitting)

PC6 Also helpful Du20

Do not use too many points!

Other measures: keep hydrated (small sips or sucking on ice cubes, watery fruits, e.g. melons and pears.

Spread food over the day, regular (every one to two hours) snacks (raisins, nuts (esp almonds), slower release Carbohydrate foods. Protein snacks before bed and CH snacks when waking up.

Foods: almonds, baby rice (dried rice flakes that are mixed with boiling water to form a porridge), crackers, dried fruit (especially apricots and raisins), egg sandwiches, grapefruit, Marmite, miso, noodles, pasta, peaches, pears, peppermints, potatoes (in any form - baked, mashed, as chips), supermarket baby food, Vegemite, white bread, yoghurt (acidophilus). It might also be helpful to ask the women to consider the type of food that is suitable for an eight-month old baby (this concept works well with those women who have children), as these foods are easy to digest and gentle on the digestive system, such as; baked vegetables, cooked and raw fruits, well-cooked grains, soups (e.g. Potato soup) and gravies

Smells: incense burners, mint, lemon

Anti-emetics work well in combination with acupuncture

Betts 2006

Article describes acupuncture for a variety of complaints during pregnancy including pelvic pain, morning sickness and breech presentation

Pelvic pain, combination used included Du20, Bl60, Li4, St36 plus Bl32/33/34, Bl54, KD11, GB30 Sp12 and Yaoyan. Betts comments on the use of forbidden points and that she would not use those even after seeing the results in this study (no miscarriages reported).

Morning sickness – 3 groups: 1) traditional CM 2) PC6 3) sham acupuncture, all three groups improved, but 1 was fastest and 3 slowest improvement. 2 weekly tx 1st week then once a week for 4 weeks.

Traditional CM – point selection according to pattern differentiation:

Liver qi stagnation: Taichong LIV-3, Neiguan P-6, Yanglingquan GB-34, Shangwan REN-13, Youmen KID-21, Liangqiu ST-34, Zusanli ST-36.

Stomach or Spleen deficiency: Zusanli ST-36, Neiguan P-6, Zhongwan REN-12.

Stomach heat: Neiting ST-44, Jianli REN-11, Liangqiu ST-34, Liangmen ST-21, Neiguan P-6, Quze P-3.

Phlegm: Fenglong ST-40, Yinlingquan SP-9, Burong ST-19, Pishu BL-20, Youmen KID-21.

Heart qi deficiency: Tongli HE-5, Neiguan P-6, Zusanli ST-36, Jique REN-14.

Heart fire: Neiguan P-6, Jique REN-14, Xinshu BL-15.

Local abdominal points were also used, selecting from: Burong ST-19, Chengman ST-20, Liangmen ST-21, Youmen KID-21, Futonggu KID-20, Jique REN-14, Shangwan REN-13, Zhongwan REN-12, Jianli REN-11 and Xiawan REN-10.

Breech presentation

Moxa on Bl67 once a day for 2 weeks resulted in 75% of cephalic presentation (as opposed to 47% in the control group); Once a day for 15 minutes each side (30 minutes total)

Cervical ripening

Li4 and Sp6 lead to speedier labour, but none of the women had any labour onset during or up to 1 hour after acupuncture.

Wednesday, 10 May ACT meeting: Discussion points raised in the groups:

Practitioners have been seeing a handful to over 50 patients with pregnancy sickness over the years. They are usually trying to see them at least twice a week for the first and second week. Many use the Chong Mai points as recommended by Debra Betts (2003). Some also then do pattern differentiation. Others use Master Tung points (<https://www.mastertungacupuncture.org/acupuncture/tung/points/tongguan-t-8801>) and others again use the Magic 8 plus one point combination (see details below).

The point ST30 which is recommended by Debra Betts may be replaced with ST31 according to Claudia Citkovitz. Some in the group mentioned Ren point (Ren12 to Ren14 as being helpful).

Additional recommendations are to eat protein, meat protein being particularly helpful. It was recognised that this was a problem for Vegetarians and Vegans, but if they were told that it would be a transient measure to help save their pregnancy and growing baby and to stay out of hospital, some patients would accept it. One advice mentioned was to have protein in the evening (to last through the night) and carbohydrates in the morning.

Further measures were recommending electrolytes (sports or self-made versions), ginger in various forms (biscuits, ginger beer, ginger tea); Vitamin B6 - 25mg every 7 hours - max 100mg/day.

Homeopathic remedies: cocculus indicus 30c related to movement ; nux vomica when nausea persists with food; Sepia when triggered by smell all 30c

A very important measure is to rest, increase sleep time and reduce anxiety.

Further points from one discussion group

- Using hot lemon water to help the nausea (advice given to patients in France)
- Using just 5 element constitutional points for those who have had a long, emotional journey to pregnancy
- Differential diagnosis was discussed as important to figure out what type of nausea they have, maybe won't respond as well if the diagnosis isn't correct (such as Damp-induced nausea as a full condition for example if they can't even drink water)

Magical 8 + 1 combination for morning sickness, digestive issues, IBS.

Use the all the points together; i.e. don't leave any out or add anything in. Needle unilaterally as below, making sure points on the yang channels are diagonally opposite, and same for the yin channels

Points on the Left

*LI4 or LI3

SJ5

Points on the Right

P6

Ht 5

LU 7

Sp 9

Liv 8 (tan)

GB 34 (tan)

St 36

*Tan suggested you can needle LI3 instead of LI4 in pregnancy. If person isn't pregnant then use LI4.

Point Location:

Dr Tan's Liv 8: On the medial side of the condyle of the tibia bone, anterior and superior to Sp9. oblique insertion on the bone. This point is 1 inch in diameter – feel for and needle the tender point.

Dr Tan's GB34: On the lateral aspect of the lower leg, in the depression distal and anterior to the head of the fibula, superior and posterior to GB 34. This point is located directly in the tendon.

