



## **Postpartum Depression and Acupuncture**

### **What is PPD, and How Does Chinese Medicine Interpret PPD?**

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Postpartum depression (PPD) is a surprisingly underestimated imbalance which can begin any time in the first year after childbirth. A woman experiencing symptoms of PPD can be overwhelmed in her efforts to both care for a new infant and working to overcome the powerful effects that PPD can have on her health. PPD can feel very isolating, especially if the patient does not have family help with the infant. A woman with PPD can often be misdiagnosed as having anxiety, but the range of emotions she may be feeling are not limited to anxiety; they will often include loss of appetite or overeating, difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much, difficulty bonding with her newborn, withdrawing from family and friends, excessive crying, exhaustion, and/or depressed mood or severe mood swings. Chinese medicine views these manifestations very differently than Western medicine. In Chinese medicine, each person is unique and each treatment is likely to be different than those given to another person.

#### **How can Chinese Medicine help with PPD?**

In treating PPD with Chinese medicine, the experienced practitioner will spend a substantial amount of time with the client, taking her medical history and listening to her recent experiences. The practitioner will take her pulse, look at her tongue, and will be observing her color, posture, and a host of other tools to best determine the right Chinese medicine diagnosis and treatment plan. Once a treatment plan is determined, the choice of acupuncture points is not the same for each person: this will be a combination of points that the practitioner feels is best suited based on both the Chinese medicine diagnosis, and the individual and her particular imbalance.

#### **How does it work?**

Once the needles are inserted, the needles work together on energy pathways called meridians. The intent of the manipulation of this energy network by the practitioner is to assist to rebalance the body, teaching the body the most optimal way of operating by redirecting the Qi, or energy of the body. The treatments typically take about 20 minutes, depending on the person's age and disorder. The patient may feel a range of emotions during the treatment, and most people feel very relaxed afterward. The number of treatments required to harmonize the body will vary according to the individual, and the practitioner may also recommend dietary or lifestyle changes, and may recommend herbs to support the body in its recovery efforts.

#### **About the Practitioner...Atara Noiade, 703.488.0366**

**Dr. Atara Noiade, DAOM, LAc**, is committed to providing excellence in healthcare via the centuries-old system of Chinese Medicine. The effectiveness of acupuncture is well- documented and is endorsed as a system of primary health care by the World Health Organization. Atara practices Chinese Medicine including Acupuncture and holds a DAOM (Doctor of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine), M.BioSci. from Johns Hopkins in Biosciences/Regulatory Affairs. She is an NCCAOM Diplomate in Herbal Medicine and has served as Chair of the Herbal Medicine Committee of the American Association of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine. She has been actively involved with promoting and protecting access to Chinese

Medicine since 2001. She assisted the Washington State association by serving on their Executive Board of Directors in passing the law permitting East Asian Medicine Practitioners to recommend and treat using Chinese herbs. Formerly on Bainbridge Island, she now practices in the Del Rey neighborhood of Alexandria, bringing her expertise in Chinese Medicine to Alexandria. Call now to see Dr. Noiade 703.488.0366 Read more about her philosophy and practice at [www.AcupunctureHerbMedAlexandria.com](http://www.AcupunctureHerbMedAlexandria.com)