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Background

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), subfertility is the form of reduced fertility characterised by the prolonged time of unwanted non-conception. Women with infertile problem was affected with psychological problem.

Although, there are numerous conditions can cause subfertility, many effective treatments are available to increase the chances for conception in the patients. The treatments included drugs, hormone, surgery, intra-uterine insemination (IUI), controlled ovarian hyperstimulation (COH), assisted reproductive technology (ART), in vitro fertilisation (IVF), gamete intra-fallopian transfer (GIFT) and in traditional and complementary treatment including herbal medicine and acupuncture.

Acupuncture services in subfertility is on demand. Currently, acupuncture services offered in the T&CM Division as a complementary treatment to the allopathic medicine of post-stroke management, chronic pain management and chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting. Thus, to expand the services for this indication as well as to cope with the demand, further assessment on acupuncture as an adjunct treatment for subfertility is required.

Objective

To assess the efficacy/effectiveness, safety and cost-effectiveness of acupuncture as an adjunct treatment for subfertility.

Methods

Literature search was conducted by an *Information Specialist* who searched for published articles on nasogastric feeding tube. The following electronic databases were searched through the Ovid interface: Ovid MEDLINE® In-Process & Other Non-Indexed Citations and Ovid MEDLINE® 1946 to Jun 2023. Parallel searches were run in PubMed, US FDA and INAHTA database as well as CADTH. Some limitations applied during search (animal study). Additional articles were identified from reviewing the references of retrieved articles. The last search was performed on 30 Jun 2023

Results and conclusion:

Based on the review, acupuncture showed a potential to improve clinical pregnancy rate among subfertile women who were undergoing IVF procedure. However, the findings were supported with low to moderate quality of scientific evidence. For ongoing pregnancy rate, biochemical pregnancy rate, live birth rate and miscarriage, the findings varied. On the other hand, there were studies reported that patients who underwent IVF either with or without PCOS showed no significant difference in CPR, OPR, LBR, and miscarriage when compared to control group. In terms of safety, those with acupuncture experience significant mild adverse events such as local pain, itching and pain.