HOW ACUPUNCTURE IMPROVES BOTH IVF SUCCESS RATES AND SUCCESSFUL PREGNANCY RATES

New research measures the biochemical mechanisms by which acupuncture increases IVF (in vitro fertilization) success rates. The study notes that acupuncture improves both IVF success rates and successful pregnancy rates. In this randomized controlled study on laboratory rats, acupuncture was measured against a progestin group and a control group. The researchers concluded that, “Acupuncture could improve the poor receptive state of (the) endometrium due to mifepristone by promoting Th2 cytokines secretion and inhibiting Th1 cytokines to improve blastocyst implantation.” A blastocyst is the embryonic structure of approximately 70-100 cells that forms 5 days after fertilization in humans. Cytokines are proteins secreted by cells and are cell-signaling molecules used extensively in intercellular communication.

Successful pregnancies are proportional to higher levels of Th2 cytokines. Higher levels of Th2 cytokines (IL-6 and IL-10) are present in healthy pregnancies whereas women with chronic miscarriages have higher serum levels of Th1 cytokines. The results show that acupuncture raises serum Th2 cytokines and lowers Th1 cytokines- exactly what is needed to prevent a miscarriage and to enhance IVF success rates.

Reference: Juan Gui, Fan Xiong, Jing Li, and Guangying Huang, “Effects of Acupuncture on Th1, Th2 Cytokines in Rats of Implantation Failure,” Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine, vol. 2012, Article ID 893023, 10 pages, 2012.
THE PSYCHOSIS-INDUCING BEVERAGE INGREDIENT YOU'VE PROBABLY NEVER HEARD OF

About 10 percent of sodas sold in the US contain an additive called brominated vegetable oil (BVO), which has been banned in food throughout Europe and Japan. BVO is corn or soybean oil bonded with the toxic element bromine. BVO has been shown to bioaccumulate in human tissue and breast milk, and animal studies have found it causes reproductive and behavioral problems in large doses.

Bromines are common endocrine disruptors, and are part of the halide family, a group of elements that includes fluorine, chlorine and iodine. When ingested, bromine competes for the same receptors that are used to capture iodine. This can lead to iodine deficiency, which can badly impact on your health.

Bromine is a central nervous system depressant, and can trigger a number of psychological symptoms such as acute paranoia and other psychotic symptoms. Bromine toxicity can also manifest as skin rashes, acne, loss of appetite, fatigue, and cardiac arrhythmias.

Coca-Cola and Pepsi do not contain brominated vegetable oil (BVO), but the following citrus-flavored sodas and energy drinks, sold in the US, do: Mountain Dew - Sunkist Pineapple; Squirt - Gatorade Thirst Quencher Orange, and Powerade Strawberry Lemonade; and Fanta Orange - Fresca Original Citrus. It is uncertain whether the drinks produced in Australia do contain BVO. If you consume these drinks it would pay to contact the manufacturer to find out. http://goo.gl/LuMzX

MUSICAL PROSTATES

Having a digital prostate examination is no laughing matter, and having a biopsy done on your prostate takes things to a whole other level. New research however, has shown that a little headphone music might ease things a bit. If prostate cancer is suspected the only way to truly confirm it is via examining small amounts of prostate tissue collected by biopsies, using an ultrasound probe in the rectum. A transrectal ultrasound (TRUS) biopsy of the prostate gland uses ultrasound to outline the prostate and guides the placement of needles used for obtaining cores of prostate tissue. The needle is spring-loaded and has an audible trigger. A TRUS biopsy collects tissue from several areas of the prostate gland which are then examined to confirm the presence of prostate cancer. The biopsy can be performed under local anaesthetic, but a general anaesthetic or sedative can also be used.

A degree of discomfort can be felt using a local anaesthetic and with or without a general there is understandable anxiety about the procedure itself as well as the outcome. All in all, prostate biopsies do not rank among the “little comforts” of life.

To see whether music might serve as a distraction and make the whole process easier, researchers from Duke University divided men receiving prostate biopsies into three groups. One group had no headphones during the procedure, one had noise cancelling headphones but no music, while a third group listened to Bach concertos. Using blood pressure as a measure of anxiety, the researchers found that among the group who listened to no music their blood pressure was still elevated after the biopsy. The men who listened to Bach through their headphones however, had no such spike in their blood pressure and presumably therefore experienced less anxiety overall. It would seem then that the adage is true; music hath powers to soothe the savaged prostate, especially if you listen to a “Bach passage” concerto. http://goo.gl/YGDZ

IS YOUR YOGA MAT CAUSING YOU HARM?

If you've bought a yoga mat, you probably noticed that "new car smell" when you opened it, right? Some people love that scent. Do you? You won't after you find out that what you smell is the result of plastic that's been softened with phthalates, stabilized with lead and cadmium, and combined to make PVC. You see, PVC is an environmental toxin.

It presents significant hazards at every point of its cycle - from manufacturing, through its life, and disposal. In other words, PVC is potentially harmful long before you use it, as well as long after you've finished using it, and - of course - the whole time you're using it.

Some facts you need to know about PVC:

PVC does not biodegrade. Because of the toxins embedded within it, PVC can't be effectively or safely recycled. Known carcinogens are byproducts of the manufacturing process of PVC. When incinerated or placed in landfills, PVC continues to release harmful toxins - many that can contaminate groundwater. So, what do you do instead? As you probably know, hemp is an incredibly sustainable and durable material. It is a stronger, longer-wearing, pesticide-free alternative to cotton, and is the preferred option for the close contact you have with your yoga mat.

EATING THIS CAN "TEAR HOLES" IN YOUR GUT
Grains contain anti-nutrients and lectins that can damage your gut, and humans did not consume them until relatively recently in biological time. We’re often told that whole grains are healthy, but the high-fiber bran portion of grain, the part that makes it a whole grain, actually contains many of the anti-nutrients. There is a sizeable body of scientific evidence showing that grains, as well as legumes, contain anti-nutrients that may increase intestinal permeability and cause leaky gut and associated symptoms. Eliminating grains (and sugars) from your diet, while introducing traditionally fermented foods, can help prevent leaky gut as well as other chronic health conditions.

Leaky gut is a condition that occurs due to the development of gaps between the cells (enterocytes) that make up the membrane lining your intestinal wall. These tiny gaps allow substances such as undigested food, bacteria and metabolic wastes, that should be confined to your digestive tract, to escape into your bloodstream, hence the term leaky gut syndrome. Once the integrity of your intestinal lining is compromised, and there is a flow of toxic substances "leaking out" into your bloodstream, your body experiences significant increases in inflammation.

Also, your immune system may become confused and begin to attack your own body as if it were an enemy (autoimmunity). Most often, leaky gut syndrome is associated with inflammatory bowel diseases like Crohn's and ulcerative colitis, or celiac disease, but even healthy people can have varying degrees of intestinal permeability leading to a wide variety of health symptoms, and this can be influenced heavily by the foods you choose to eat. [http://goo.gl/s310Q](http://goo.gl/s310Q)

**HOW TO CONTROL ECZEMA**

The first step in controlling eczema is having it diagnosed. If a persistent itchy rash develops, that is a sign that you may have eczema. Because such a wide variety of conditions and substances can cause an outbreak of eczema, its cause is very difficult to self-diagnose. A qualified health professional will be able to give you a battery of skin tests and may be able to pinpoint the irritant. An example of this is nickel, which is often in jewellery and can cause an outbreak of eczema in some people. If the particular irritant cannot be found or removed (such as an environmental condition), there are many ways to control and minimise the severity of a flare up:

1. Application of a moisturiser immediately following bathing will help control the symptoms of eczema. However, use a moisturiser that does not contain ingredients that may aggravate the condition.
2. Bathing in lukewarm (not hot) water and using a non-soapy cleanser and/or hypo-allergenic bath oil will help prevent stripping the skin of the natural oils that help protect it.
3. Wearing soft, natural fibre clothing can help control eczema.
4. Removing carpets, stuffed toys and other items that harbour dust mites can help reduce the incidence of eczema.
5. If possible, pets should be kept outside.
6. If you get eczema on your hands, wear rubber gloves when doing the dishes or any regular activity that may trigger an outbreak.
7. Activities in extreme cold and activities that cause you to sweat can aggravate eczema or cause it to develop. Avoid these activities as much as possible. Also avoid rapid temperature changes, such as moving from a hot outdoor environment into an air-conditioned room.
8. Stress, too, can cause an outbreak of eczema and an outbreak of eczema can cause even further stress. As part of your treatment program, consider regular meditation or other stress-relieving activity. Because eczema can have so many causes, a holistic approach is the best way to minimise the severity and frequency of outbreaks. While a topical ointment may provide relief, when combined with other strategies such as those outlined above, you may find that you get even greater relief from eczema and less frequent outbreaks. [http://goo.gl/PPWTp](http://goo.gl/PPWTp)

All the very best wishes for your optimal wellness and longevity from Louis and Linda.