Session 5

Disorders during pregnancy

• Abdominal Pain
• Morning Sickness
• Threatened Miscarriage
Session Contents

- Briefly review the knowledge of conception and pregnancy

- Discuss / Analyse the main aetiology and pathology factors of disorders in pregnancy and the treatment principles.

- Introduction to acupuncture treatment during pregnancy and childbirth

- Discuss the pattern differentiation & the treatments principle & methods, precautions & prevention of each disorder during pregnancy.
Learning Outcomes

After this session study, students should be able to:

- Describe and explain the aetiology & pathology of the main disorders during pregnancy.

- Outline the TCM pattern differentiation and treatments principles & methods of these disorders.

- Outline the principles to ensure the safety of acupuncture treatment for pregnant women.
TCM theory Knowledge Recall:

• conception
• pregnancy
Review

Conception relies on:

- Abundant supply of Blood and Essence
- Pre Natal Qi in form of Essence, and Post Natal Qi in form of Blood - Yin energies
- Yang energies - Mingmen Fire, in form of insubstantial Minister Fire, which provides the spark necessary for the Essence and Blood to form a new being
- Flourishing of Kidneys and Liver
- Healthy Chong and Ren
Review

Pregnancy relies on:

- Abundance of Yin - no menstruation and increase in fluids (amniotic fluid)
- Excess Yang - no menstruation, accumulation of Minister Fire
- Chong and Ren go though many changes, cause various symptoms or a sense of discomfort
- Menstruation stops, and Blood increases to nourish and protect fetus
Pregnancy

- No menses during pregnancy leads to
  - Abundant Yin
  - Excess Yang
  - Changes in Chong Mai
  - Changes in the Ren Mai
Pregnancy

- Increased blood nourishes the fetus

- Blood is sent to uterus via the Chong Mai (depends on Stomach descending function)

- Some blood is also transformed into breast milk
Pregnancy

- Kid Qi & Jing nourish and consolidate / hold fetus (via Bai Luo)

- Blood is not stored in the Chong which increases body heat
Pregnancy TCM style Month by month

Month one: Like a pearl of dew on a leaf
Month two: Like a peach flower
Month three: Fetus like a cocoon
Month four: Collect in the Field of Elixir
Month five: Gender differentiation
Month six: Fetus muscles and hair growth
Month seven: Big bright eyes and one nose
Month eight: Irritable mother 😞
Month nine: Fetus very large
Month ten: Baby ready to emerge

This progress is found in detail in Maciocia G, (1998) on page 446
The Main Pathological Conditions of Pregnancy

- Deficiency of Blood / Yin & Kidneys
- Stagnation of Qi
- Spleen Qi Xu with Phlegm
TCM Care Advice for Pregnant Women

To reduce risk of miscarriage:

- No heavy lifting
- No sexual intercourse
- Avoid frightening situations (to avoid Qi sinking due to fear)
- Avoid herbs with strong descending actions (e.g., strong purgatives & diuretics)
- No acupuncture on contraindicated points
Care Rules for Pregnancy

The cardinal rules for treating in pregnancy are:

1. Treat the body with respect and always be careful and considered in what you are doing

1. Do not use any strong needle stimulation during pregnancy, unless you are doing an induction of labour, in which case strong stimulation is necessary.
The Main TCM Treatment Principles During Pregnancy

- Nourish the blood & tonify the kidneys
- Move Qi and eliminate stagnation
- Tonify the spleen and resolve the phlegm
Safety of Acupuncture Treatment

- Acupuncture points contra-indicated during pregnancy
  - Points below umbilicus, on lower abdomen
  - After fifth month, no points upon upper abdomen
  - Sp 6, LI 4, BI 60, BI 67
  - Any treatment to induce sweating - LI 4

- Needling Techniques?
- Positioning & comfort for patient during treatment?
Forbidden Points

**LI-4 and SP-6:**

- These points are used for induction with strong stimulation and should be avoided throughout pregnancy.

- They should also not be used if a woman who comes for treatment is unsure whether or not she is pregnant.
Forbidden Points

- **GB-21**: this has a strong downward movement and must not be used before the second stage of labour.

- **BL-31 and 32**: these are in the first and second sacral foramina, very good for induction and not points that can easily be needled in error.

- **BL-67**: No needling this point during pregnancy but heat it with moxa to turn a breech baby.

- **Abdominal points**: Not needle lower abdominal points unless the patient is suffering a great deal of pubic pain.
MORNING SICKNESS DURING PREGNANCY
Characters of Morning Sickness in Pregnancy

- One of the earliest signs of pregnancy, usually lasts in the first 3 months pregnancy (6WKS-16WKS). Not all the pregnant women have it (about ½ of pregnancy);

- can occur at any time of day although it usually more pronounced in the morning;

- May range from a mild nausea to very severe and frequent vomiting.

- The mild sickness in the first 3 month needs no treatment, but if it is the very severe with frequent vomiting or it continues beyond the first 3 months, treatment intervention is beneficial.
Pathology of Morning Sickness in Pregnancy

- The uterus connects with stomach through the penetrating Vessel.
- Pregnancy places a certain strain on the Blood, Essence and Kidney energy of the mother’s Penetrating Vessel.
- Therefore, the morning sickness is closely linked to a relative imbalance between Blood and Qi within the penetrating Vessel (Chong Mai).
- In addition, Liver-Qi stagnation and deficiency of SP & ST may all contribute to the pathological morning sickness condition.
Treatment of Morning Sickness During Pregnancy

- TCM treatment principles based on your TCM pattern identification
- What TCM treatment methods you will choose or combine based on your TP?
  - Acupuncture?
  - Moxibustion?
  - Cupping?
  - Gua sha?
  - Tui Na?
  - Electro acupuncture?
  - Laser acupuncture?
Identification of patterns and treatment

What are the main factors to consider to distinguish the Heat from Cold, Deficiency from Excess when you identify the pathological morning sickness condition?

- Heat & Fullness: vomiting soon after eating
- Cold & deficiency: vomiting of dilute fluids
- Liv-Qi stagnation: vomiting with retching and belching
  vomiting of sour fluids
- ST-Qi deficiency: only slight nausea
- ST & Liver-heat: vomiting of bitter fluids
General Guideline for Acupuncture Treatment of Morning Sickness

- What are the general treatment principles? What dietary advice you can give your patient?

- What are the main Acu-points can be used to achieve the above treatment principles? what points may be used in the first 3 months of pregnancy but not after that?

- What herbs have a specific anti-nausea effect? What do you think about the value of herbal therapy in morning sickness?
# Morning Sickness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Symptoms and Signs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stomach Qi Xu with Xu Cold</td>
<td>Slight morning sickness; nausea without vomiting or vomiting dilute fluids; tiredness, feeling cold, poor appetite. Pale and wet tongue, weak pulse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stomach Yin Xu</td>
<td>Slight morning sickness &amp; nausea; dry mouth; no desire to drink or wants small sips, poor appetite; tongue without coating; stomach crack; fine-empty pulse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liver Qi invading Stomach</td>
<td>Morning sickness; nausea, retching; belching, vomiting of food with sour /bitter taste, aversion to strong food smells; abdominal and epigastric distension, irritability. Slightly red sides tongue; wiry pulse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stomach heat</td>
<td>Morning sickness longer than 3 months, vomiting food soon after eating, dry mouth &amp; lips, insomnia; bleeding gums; red tongue with yellow coating ; overflowing pulse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition</td>
<td>Symptoms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phlegm/Damp accumulation (Sp/St Xu)</td>
<td>Morning sickness; profuse vomiting, watery vomiting, occasional vomiting of clear fluids with mucus, a feeling of oppression of the chest. Swollen with sticky coating; slippery pulse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Qi Xu</td>
<td>Morning sickness; palpitations; anxiety; depression; pale tongue; empty on the left front position pulse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Fire</td>
<td>Morning sickness may last longer than 3 months; mental restlessness; anxiety; agitation; insomnia; red tongue with redder tip and yellow coating; overflowing on the left front position</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Treatment of morning sickness
P6 can be used for all patterns (anti-emetic action)
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Acupuncture Points</th>
<th>Chinese Medicine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stomach Qi Xu with Xu Cold</td>
<td>ST36, CV12, CV13, BL20, BL21 Reinforce &amp; moxa</td>
<td>Li Zhong Wan (Ginseng &amp; Ginger)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stomach Yin Xu</td>
<td>CV12, ST36, ST44, ST21 reinforce</td>
<td>Shen Ling Bai Zhu Wan (Ginseng &amp; Atractylodes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liver Qi invading Stomach</td>
<td>LIV14, GB34, CV12, CV13, TB6, ST34, KI21 even, ST36, reinforce</td>
<td>Xiao Yao Wan (Bupleurum &amp; Dang Gui)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stomach heat</td>
<td>ST44, CV11, ST21, ST34, PC3 reduce</td>
<td>Si Ni San (Bupleurum &amp; Zhi Shi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phlegm/Damp accumulation (Sp/St Xu)</td>
<td>ST40, SP9, CV13, ST21, KI21, ST22, CV11, CV9, ST19 even method, CV12, BL20 reinforce</td>
<td>Li Jun Zi Wan (six gentlemen decoction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Qi Xu</td>
<td>HT5, BL15, CV14, ST36 reinforce</td>
<td>Gui Pi Wan (Ginseng &amp; Longan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Fire</td>
<td>HT8, CV14, BL15 reduce or even method</td>
<td>Dao Chi San (Rehmannia &amp; Akebia)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
ABDOMINAL PAIN DURING PREGNANCY
Abdominal pain during pregnancy

- Uterine contractions cause most cases of abdominal pain during pregnancy.

- The most important issue is to establish whether there is uterine bleeding or not when health practitioner see a pregnant women with abdominal pain, as this sign may indicate a threatened miscarriage or an ectopic pregnancy.
TCM View

- Mild abdominal pain is relatively frequent during pregnancy and *in most cases it poses no danger to the mother and fetus.*

- TCM partitioner should *first exclude the possibility of miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy* when see a pregnant women with abdominal pain. The different characters of pain indicate different aetiology and pathology.
Clinical Notes

- Pain differentiation:
  - Pain improved by pressure—deficiency
  - Pain worsened by pressure—Fullness
  - Pain eased by warm liquids—Cold
  - Pain aggravated by warm liquids—Heat
  - Pain with distension—Qi stagnation
  - Severe pain—Blood stasis
Pathology

- BLOOD DEFICIENCY
- STAGNATION OF QI
- EMPTY-COLD
- BLOOD STASIS
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
<th>Acupuncture Points</th>
<th>Prescribed Formula</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deficiency of blood</td>
<td>Mild abdominal pain that comes and goes and improves with pressure, dull, pale complexion, bluured vision</td>
<td>LR-8, ST-36, BL-23, BL-20,BL-17 and BL-18</td>
<td>Dang Gui Shao Yao San</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stagnation of qi</td>
<td>Abdominal pain with a feeling of distension, hypochondriac pain and distension, irritability and belching</td>
<td>LR-3,BL-18,LR14,TB-6,PC-6 and BL-23</td>
<td>Xiao Yao San</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empty-cold</td>
<td>Dull abdominal pain that improves with the application of heat and by drinking warm liquids, feeling of cold, dull cold limbs and bright complexion.</td>
<td>BL-23, ST-36,CV-12 KI-5</td>
<td>JIAO AI TANG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood Stasis</td>
<td>Severe abdominal pain, uterine bleeding, mental restlessness.</td>
<td>SP-4, PC-6,BL-17,SP-10,LR-3 and KI-3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THREATENED MISCARRIAGE
Threatened miscarriage
(vaginal bleeding & abdominal pain during pregnancy)
Western Medicine & TCM Views

- A western medical term, refers to a collection of symptoms and signs experienced by a pregnant women usually during the 1st 3 months of pregnancy.

- Threatened Miscarriage corresponds to 2 TCM diseases categories:
  - **Tai Lou** (Vaginal bleeding during pregnancy): the only symptoms
  - **Tai Dong Bu An** (Restless Fetus): besides vaginal bleeding, may accompanied with backache, abdominal pain and a bearing-down feeling
TCM AETIOLOGY & PATHOLOGY

❖ The common aetiology factors / causes:
✓ Overwork/excessive physical work
✓ Chronic illness, irregular diet
✓ Emotional problem
✓ Falls, jumps, traumas
✓ Excessive sexual activity during pregnancy

❖ Essential Pathology:
A weakness of the Ren & Chong Mai—fail to gather the blood to nourish the fetus
TCM Treatment

- The first thing to establish is that the fetus is alive or not.

- The main treatment principle is always to ‘calm the fetus’ and strengthen the Ren & Chong Mai.

- Other treatment principles should also be adopted according to the specific conditions.
TCM Treatment (Cnt.)

- Discuss the treatment of the following patterns (treatment principle, treatment methods, explain)
  - Kidney deficiency
  - Qi & Blood deficiency
  - Blood-heat
  - Falls / traumas
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Acupuncture Points</th>
<th>Herbs or Formulations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Kidney deficiency          | Scanty vaginal bleeding & lumbar soreness early in pregnancy & Kid Yin or Yang Xu S/S | BL20, BL23, GV20, CV12, if in first trimester) ST36, KI3, Qimen (extra)  | Reinforce & moxa if Yang Xu  
Yin Xu: Liu Wei Di Huang Wan (Rehmannia 6)  
Yang Xu: Jin Gui Shen Qi Wan (Rehmannia 8) |
| Qi & Blood deficiency      | Scanty pale dilute vaginal bleeding towards the end of the first trimester & Qi & Blood Xu S/S | ST36, CV12, BL20, BL17, BL23, LR8 | Reinforce & moxa  
Gui Pi Wan (Ginseng & Longan)                                                      |
| Blood heat                 | Bright red scanty vaginal bleeding early in the term, feelings of heat & Blood heat S/S | LR2, LI11, SP10, BL17, SP1, KI2, LR3 | Reduce  
Huang Lian Jie Du Wan (Coptis & Scute)                                           |
| Falls, trauma              | Threatened miscarriage following a fall or trauma, abdominal pain, scanty vaginal bleeding | DV20, CV12 reinforce, PC6, SP10, KI6&LU7, GV3 even method | Sheng Yu Tang (Ren Shen, Huang Qi, Dang gui, Chuan Xiong, Shu Di Huang and Bai Shao) |
Notes /Questions

- What does the term ‘restless fetus’ mean in TCM? How do you understand the difference between ‘restless fetus’ in TCM and the movement of fetus / active fetus from a western point of view?

Break
Practical section
Session 5 Practical Activity

- Session review questions: assessment, diagnosis and management plan for each disorder discussed in this session
- Discussion: cautions and needling techniques for women in pregnancy
- Case study based practical skills building up
Points to be avoided during pregnancy

What are they?
Points to be avoided during pregnancy

According to Betts 2006 the caution points that are to be avoided during pregnancy are as follows:

- Gall Bladder 21
- Large Intestine 4
- Spleen 6
- Bladder 60
- Bladder 61
- Duyin (extra)

- Points on the lower abdomen and the lumbo-sacral area especially Bladder 31 and Bladder 32

Point *combinations* that should be avoided during pregnancy

- LI4 and SP6
- LR3 and SP6
- BL60 and SP6

Needle technique in pregnancy

- It’s best to keep both the number of needles and the needle stimulation as minimal as possible, unless labour is the desired outcome (in which case strong dispersal / tonification is necessary).

Case study

- Campus Lecturer prepared relevant case and activities for students practical tutorial.

Or

- See below case.
Case study

26 year old female two months pregnant presents with nausea and vomiting for two weeks. No appetite, vomiting food up immediately after eating. Vomiting of mucous and sour fluid when no food intake. Accompanying signs and symptoms include thirst, bleeding gums, dizzy.

Tongue: Red with yellow coating in the centre.
Pulse: Overflowing on the right middle position.
Case Questions

• What is the TCM diagnosis (Disease and Pattern)?
• What is the TCM treatment principle based on your diagnosis?
• What TCM treatment methods will you choose to combine in the management for the patient’s condition?
• Choose at least five acu-points for your acupuncture prescription to treat this condition based on your diagnosis.
• Give the rationale for the above acupuncture points & demonstrate your appropriate needling techniques.
• Recommend suitable lifestyle/dietary advice for this condition based on Chinese Medicine theory.
References

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