

Acupuncture helped make her a mom!

Think acupuncture's only good for aches and pains? So did Erika Deschodt. But after years of trying unsuccessfully to conceive, she was willing to try *anything* to become a mom . . .

One look at his wife's face and Gregory Deschodt knew something was wrong. And from the date, he could guess what. "It didn't happen this month, huh?" he said gently, folding Erika into his arms.

"I don't think it's ever going to happen," Erika blurted through tears.

"It will," Gregory insisted. But the truth was, after a miscarriage, then not being able to conceive again for two years, they both had their doubts.

Will we ever have a baby? Erika wondered.

"There's no reason you can't try again," Erika's obstetrician insisted when her first pregnancy unexpectedly ended. "Sometimes these things just happen."

I guess it wasn't meant to be, Erika tried to convince herself. And eventually, as the pain of loss slowly ebbed, she and Gregory decided to start trying again.

But while the Tampa, Florida, couple had no trouble conceiving the first time, month after month passed with no baby—even though tests showed Erika was ovulating and Gregory's sperm count was fine.

"Maybe we should see an infertility specialist," Gregory suggested.

Yet Erika had heard countless horror stories of couples going through artificial insemination, fertility drugs, IVF . . . to no avail.

"I think that might stress me out so much it would make it *harder* to conceive," she decided. "Let's try on our own a little longer."

Hope—and needles!

But now, after two long years, Erika felt more discouraged than ever. And it wasn't only Gregory who noticed: When Erika went to see Carolyn Huffman, a licensed Acupuncturist who'd been taking the kinks out of her back for

years, Carolyn commented, "You seem down."

It took all of Erika's strength not to burst into tears. "I'm beginning to think this 'baby' thing is just not going to happen."

Carolyn nodded. Then she asked, "Have you ever tried acupuncture?"

Used since ancient times to relieve pain, acupuncture is based on the belief that vital energy, called "qi," circulates along pathways, or meridians, in our bodies—and that for us to truly be healthy, this energy must be balanced.

"Studies show that stimulating certain pathways can remove blockages in the Fallopian tubes preventing pregnancy," Carolyn explained. "And not only does acupuncture relieve stress,

but it increases blood flow to the reproductive system, improving the odds of getting pregnant."

It could take a few months for results, she added. "But I've seen it work miracles."

Still, there were no guarantees. And that night, when Erika told Gregory, he hesitated.

"I don't know," he said. "It sounds . . . quirky."

But it wasn't dangerous, Erika pointed out. And if there was even a tiny chance it could work . . .

"Let's try it," they agreed.

A miracle for Erika

So Erika began undergoing weekly acupuncture sessions. Based on which point it was during Erika's cycle, Carolyn would place sliver-thin needles along the energy pathways in Erika's head, feet, legs—or, when Erika was ovulating, her lower abdomen.

It didn't hurt. In fact, lying on a massage table listening to classical music as Carolyn gently inserted the needles, Erika felt so relaxed she actually fell asleep!

Did you know?
Acupuncture is such a powerful pain reliever that the U.S. Military will begin teaching a "battlefield acupuncture" class to medics serving in Iraq and Afghanistan!



"Acupuncture worked like magic for me—and now I'm the happiest mom ever," says Erika, with son Matthew.

"I feel so . . . hopeful!" she gushed at the end of a session. "Like a weight's been lifted!"

So Erika kept going for weekly sessions, where her anxiety would just melt away. And after two months, she swore she felt healthier and happier than ever. But can this really help me *conceive*? she wondered.

Her answer came one month later. Erika's periods had always been like clockwork. So when she realized, while on vacation, that she was five days late, she decided to take a home pregnancy test. And when she saw the results . . .

"How would you like to be a daddy?" she beamed to Gregory. "We're pregnant!"

And she knew it was thanks to acupuncture! So with her obstetrician's blessing, Erika continued having acupuncture right up until giving birth.

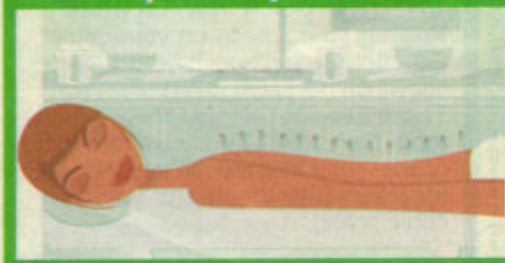
"He's perfect!" she wept when Matthew Alexander came into the world. And, marveling at their tiny new son, Gregory laughed, "I guess acupuncture really *does* work!"

Today, Matthew is nearly two, and Erika is still amazed that he's here—and that he's *hers*.

"I know it sounds 'out there,'" she admits. "But after wanting a baby for so long, I was willing to try anything. And I'm so glad I did. Just look at the miracle acupuncture brought me!"

—Deborah Bebb

More ways acupuncture can improve your health!



✓ Have arthritis?

Multiple studies have shown that weekly acupuncture sessions reduce pain and improve quality of life in patients 50 or older who have osteoarthritis in their knees or hips—without the side effects of anti-inflammatory drugs.

✓ Suffer from migraines?

Two new scientific reviews found that acupuncture can cut the incidence of migraines in half. Even better? Most patients experienced continued benefits months after treatment was over!

✓ Scheduled for surgery?

Talk to your doctor about receiving acupuncture treatments before or after surgery. In a recent study, surgical patients who received acupuncture felt significantly less pain, nausea, itchiness and dizziness than those who were given pain medication alone.

✓ Diagnosed with fibromyalgia?

Just six sessions of acupuncture can significantly improve symptoms, according to a recent Mayo Clinic study.