

HypnoFertility - Hypnosis for Unexplained Infertility.

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“Unexplained infertility” actually means that there is no physiological reason for a woman not to become pregnant. Although women often feel helpless upon learning of this “condition”, it is actually good news. In the absence of a pathological impediment, many women can be helped to achieve fertility by exploring prior programming or emotional blocks.



Negative feelings left unexpressed or unresolved, hold considerable energy which can block conception. Unexpressed emotions such as anguish, guilt or shame often felt after a termination, or the grief felt after a miscarriage, can create extreme emotional conflict, which affects every cell of the body and can cause or compound reproductive problems [see table 1].

The chemistry of our bodies can be altered by our every thought and feeling. The powerful mind-body connection is bi-directional - the health of one depends on the health of the other. Neurotransmitters (the brain’s chemical messengers) are the powerful chemicals that regulate numerous physical and emotional processes and have a profound influence on overall health and well-being. If neurotransmitter levels are disrupted by negative and/or stressful thoughts and feelings, signals between the mind and the body are affected and physiological problems occur [see Table 2].

Stress (or more specifically, one’s inability to cope with stress) is one of the major problems of unexplained infertility. Conceiving – whether the couple is attempting to conceive naturally or with medical assistance such as IVF – is wrought with stress. For both of them, there is the worry about why they aren’t conceiving when all the tests appear to be normal. For the woman, there is the added disappointment each month when her period arrives which, if recurrent, can lead her to fear that she may never be a mother. If she’s undergoing IVF treatment there are the drugs and procedures (plus the financial burden) that are anxiety-provoking. If she’s also working in a stressful workplace environment, this only adds to the stress. Then there are the constant questions and, sometimes, hurtful references from family and friends about her inability to have a family.

There is also ongoing stress for her husband or partner and semen quality and motility can be affected by this. In addition to undergoing intrusive tests and the worry over finances (and possibly a stressful job), he also has to contend with a woman who can be (understandably) quite emotional and upset. When this happens, it’s often difficult to know exactly what to do and say and women can sometimes feel that they are not getting emotional support because the words and actions they’re expecting are not forthcoming. This misunderstanding just adds further fuel to the fire.

Hypnosis has been proven to be very effective in removing stress and unresolved issues about having a baby. In an article by Suzy Greaves entitled “Can Hypnosis Help to Make You Pregnant” Dr. Elizabeth Muir, a clinical psychologist working with hypnotherapy for infertility, explains how hypnosis affects the hypothalamus (the neural centre at the base of the brain linked to the pituitary gland) and controls the flow of hormones in the body. The hypothalamus is sensitive to stress and acts as a bridge between the emotional and physical, turning emotional messages into physical responses that affect hormone levels.

Two further studies by Alice Domar support Muir’s theory. In the first study, published in 1999 in the Journal of the American Medical Women’s Association, 42% of 132 infertile women conceived within six months of completing a mind-body programme. In the second study, published in 2000 in the Journal of Fertility and Sterility, 55% of the previously infertile women conceived, compared to 20% of the control group who used no mind-body techniques.

Hypnotherapy therefore reduces stress and increases confidence, instilling a sense of control, which in turn maximises the chances of conceiving naturally and/or increase the success of medical assistance.

Table 1.

Issues that are blocks to conception.

- sexual abuse
- rape
- miscarriages
- terminations
- dysfunctional family relationships
- concern about her body image/physical changes to the body
- self-doubt/fear of failure
- career + baby
- fear of labour and birth
- fear of hospitals
- fear of medical treatments
- fear of loss of independence and individuality
- concern about her husband being a good father
- concern about the new baby being a threat to the marital relationship

Table 2.

The physiological effects of stress, negative feelings or emotions, on fertility.

- The triggering of the “fight or flight” response (sympathetic branch of ANS) where the blood moves to the extremities and away from the reproductive organs such as the uterus.
- Parasympathetic branch of the ANS concerned with conservation of energy and restoration is unable to fulfil its regenerative duties.
- Disharmony between the sympathetic & parasympathetic branches > lack of health and vitality.
- Increased cortisol levels, which inhibit release of GnRH (gonadotropin-releasing hormone) > poor follicle production and quality.
- Creation of a negative response by the hypothalamus (the control centre in the brain for reproductive activity) > disruption or switching off reproductive functions – one of which is the production of hormones by the pituitary gland.
- Weakening of the adrenal glands which can > the lowering of progesterone levels.
- Increased prolactin levels, which can interfere with ovulation.
- Creation of uterine fibroids.
- Irregular cycles.
- Male fertility issues.