

## Enhance Fertility with Chiropractic Care

Thirty-five year-old Tracy had tried everything: monitoring her cycles through body temperature, over-the-counter fertility predictors and finally, fertility-enhancing drugs and *in vitro* fertilization. But after three years of trying, she still wasn't pregnant. She began to think she was "too old" to have a family, though she was seemingly in great physical shape.



Tracy is not alone. Thousands of women go to fertility specialists each year. "After fertility treatments fail, many women are told 'no' [about having children] because of their age," says Darcy Brown, DC. But chiropractic may offer hope. At least one recent study showed that, after receiving chiropractic care, previously infertile women were much more likely to become pregnant (*Journal of Vertebral Subluxation Research*, 2003). And while reasons behind chiropractic's success in treating infertility aren't certain, there are a number of possibilities why it may work.

Dr. Brown, who practices in Aspen, Colorado, believes proper alignment works in several ways to increase the likelihood of becoming and staying pregnant. Chiefly, improper alignment of the cranial, spinal, and pelvic bones can hinder the nervous system, which controls a woman's reproductive system, causing imbalances and hampering her ability to get and stay pregnant.

Distortions of the sphenoid bone in the skull— which can result from passage through the birth canal or from accidents later in life— are particularly problematic, says Brown, since misalignments there can affect the cranial nerve and pituitary gland. The pituitary gland is the regulator of a number of hormones important to fertility, including the follicle-stimulating hormone, estrogen, and progesterone. If any of these are out of balance, explains Brown, it can be very difficult to get pregnant.

Like Tracy, many of the patients Brown sees for infertility have tried everything. They come to chiropractic as a last resort. Brown first talks to them about their menstrual health history, noting signs of imbalance, which have often been problematic since the onset of menstruation, including heavy cramping, mood swings, and missing periods. "We balance the body [through chiropractic]," says Brown. Patients receive a combination of chiropractic and craniosacral adjustments, three times a week to start. After adjustments start to hold, patients visit once or twice a week.

How long should chiropractic take to work? Not long, says Brown. "We give it three months. Often women will become pregnant in the third or fourth month of treatment." Brown has an impressive 75 percent success rate so far. Unless there have been serious compromises to reproductive health, he says, such as a history of extreme athletic activity or substance abuse, chiropractic may set the stage for a successful pregnancy for women like Tracy.

Source: NCCA 2008