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## **Holistic Health Center, Pathways to Wellness, Prepares to Launch a New Fertility Enhancement Program for Women and Men Who Are Struggling with Infertility Problems**

BOSTON – In October, Pathways to Wellness, a Boston-based provider of holistic health services, will launch a new Fertility Enhancement Program that combines acupuncture and yoga and is specifically designed to help women and men overcome problems related to infertility.

According to the American Society of Reproductive Medicine, an estimated 3 million couples are unable to conceive after one year of trying.

“The inclusion of acupuncture and yoga along with biomedicine creates a comprehensive fertility treatment plan that addresses all the various and complicated issues that can be present in the patient with infertility,” says Kristen Porter, MAc, LAc, Executive Director of Pathways to Wellness and New England School of Acupuncture faculty. “Holistic care provides an adjunctive treatment that brings support and nurturance to the patient in body, mind and spirit. Addressing infertility on all of these levels cultivates a landscape within that can better create and support a healthy pregnancy.”

Recent studies led by Dr. Paul C. Magarelli, an infertility doctor at the Reproductive Medicine and Fertility Center in Colorado Springs, CO and an earlier study conducted in 2002 by researchers at the University of Ulm in Germany have shown that acupuncture can enhance the

success rate of in vitro fertilization (IVF). These studies indicate that using acupuncture in conjunction with IVF therapy increases the chance that the embryo will be implanted successfully and reduces the chance of miscarriage.

A 2003 *Fertility and Sterility* article, co-authored by a team of researchers at New York Weill Cornell Medical Center, provided a summary of research that supports acupuncture's potential fertility-boosting benefits including regulating reproductive hormones, increasing blood flow to the uterus, and lowering stress hormones.

For many women, adding acupuncture to their infertility treatments has helped them become pregnant. And unlike many fertility drugs, acupuncture has no harmful side effects nor do women need worry about multiple births or ectopic pregnancies, common concerns when undergoing IVF and other infertility treatments.

Men, too, who are being treated for infertility problems may benefit from acupuncture according to a new study published in the July 2005 issue of the journal, *Fertility and Sterility*.

Findings from that study indicate that acupuncture treatments improved the quality of sperm and increased the overall number of normal sperm in a group of men with infertility problems. The researchers who conducted the study estimate that 10 percent of men are infertile, and that the male partner is a factor in up to 50 percent of infertile couples.

Acupuncture and yoga can also relieve the stress and anxiety associated with infertility problems. According to the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, women being treated for infertility face stress levels on a par with those of women coping with illnesses such as cancer and heart disease.

Pathways' Fertility Enhancement Program's yoga classes are designed to strengthen the body while quieting the mind and provide a supportive environment for women who are trying to conceive.

“The goal of the Fertility Enhancement Program is not simply a pregnancy, but rather identifying and rebalancing the energies of the body that are not flowing smoothly,” says Porter. “When we work at this root level, the patient experiences benefits in multiple aspects of their health and well-being. Acupuncture and yoga during pregnancy can continue to provide support and balance along with drug-free treatment of symptoms that may arise during the course of pregnancy.”

A free orientation to the Fertility Enhancement Program will be held on Wednesday, September 28 at 6:30pm at Pathways’ Back Bay clinic located at 142 Berkeley Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Boston. Additional Program information is available at [www.pathwaysboston.org](http://www.pathwaysboston.org) or by calling Pathways to Wellness at 617-859-3036.

### **About Pathways to Wellness**

Celebrating 15 years, Pathways to Wellness is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing equal access to high quality holistic therapies including acupuncture, shiatsu, Chinese herbal medicine, and yoga.

Open to all people needing care, Pathways to Wellness is one of the country’s largest providers of free and low-cost holistic medicine. Pathways practitioners specialize in chronic and life threatening illness, and work collaboratively in a team environment and in conjunction with Western medical professionals to offer an integrated approach to care.

Located at 142 Berkeley Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Boston, MA 02116, Pathways to Wellness can be reached at 617-859-3036 or [kporter@pathwaysboston.org](mailto:kporter@pathwaysboston.org). Additional information on Pathways to Wellness’ services can be found on its web site at [www.pathwaysboston.org](http://www.pathwaysboston.org)

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