



March 05...

In our March 2005 issue, journalist Sarah Vaughan told how acupuncture finally put an end to her infertility. Inspired by her story, five readers – also having trouble getting Project Baby off the ground – visited acupuncturist Gerard Kite. They tell their stories to Ophelia Zwart



‘After reading eve, we all got pregnant by the same time’



...and 5 pregnancies later

pregnant the man'

Beverley Reeves, 37

is on maternity leave from her job as a travel agent in the City. She lives with her husband, Jerry, a 42-year-old reinsurance broker, and her four-month-old daughter, Elizabeth, in Kent.

'When I first read Sarah's story in eve, I was very sceptical. But I'd also been trying to conceive for five years. Jerry has two sons from his first marriage, so we knew the problem lay with me and what doctors had called my prematurely ageing eggs. We'd been through three cycles of IVF – we discovered our last attempt had failed on New Year's Day 2005 – and, heartbreakingly, miscarried the baby we'd conceived naturally in-between. Our life had become one long, relentless, expensive drive to get pregnant – to such an extent that Jerry had put a six-month lid on further treatment. After that, he said, he wanted us to just get on with our lives. I booked a last-ditch appointment with Gerad.

'I went alone. I remember dashing up from the tube and running into my first meeting with him feeling really flustered, but he was very calm: I felt as if I was seeing a therapist. We talked, he looked at my tongue, checked my pulse points and put the fine needles into my arms, shoulders and back – and described my uterus as "cold". Two hours later, I went back to work a different person: I felt totally stress-free for the first time in my career.

'By April 2005, I'd had three sessions with Gerad. I was still doing my temperature charts, so I knew I was due to ovulate the day we left to go on holiday. When we woke at 5am for our flight, I suggested to Jerry that we made love. Later, on the flight, I felt this unfamiliar twinge and knew I'd just ovulated. Two weeks later, as we passed back through Gatwick, I picked up a pregnancy test. I did it at home that night and I was elated to discover I was pregnant.

'In December, Elizabeth, our daughter, was born. Having wanted her for so long and been through so much disappointment, the joy was indescribable. I am sure that I got pregnant because of acupuncture and my advice to any woman struggling to conceive would be to try this before IVF.' >

ve people



Sarah Hetherington, 30

is an information officer at Brunel University. She lives in Middlesex with her 29-year-old husband, John, who's in the RAF. Their first baby is due in July.

'I first heard about Gerad when I read about him on the eve website in March 2005. Then, a few months later in July, I heard him being interviewed on the radio. It seemed such a strange coincidence that I booked an appointment straight away.

'John and I married in June 2004 and, in September of that year, I came off the Pill, which I'd been on for 10 years. We were in no great rush to have a baby – we just wanted to see what would happen. But nothing did. My periods didn't resume, which meant I wasn't ovulating. In December 2004, my mother was diagnosed with a tumour. I went part-time at work so I could take her to and from her radiotherapy appointments – and we also moved house. It was a hugely stressful time. I needed Gerad's help.

'John, who's pretty open-minded, came with me. We talked for an hour about everything

from my circulation to my family. Then Gerad put needles in my feet, chest, abdomen and back. I noticed this dull ache when they went in – but then nothing. Walking out, I didn't feel any different. But when we got home three hours later, I discovered that my first period in nearly a year had started.

'I couldn't believe that the acupuncture had worked so fast. It was such a huge relief to finally be having periods again. As my cycle stabilised, my hormone levels changed and my mood lifted. I felt happier and more confident than I had in months.

'Nearly four months later, after 10 sessions with Gerad, my period was late and I felt very sick. I did a pregnancy test and was amazed to find that it was positive. It was an incredible result; all I'd hoped for was a regular cycle.

'I've no doubt that it was the acupuncture that brought back my periods and enabled me to conceive. The last time I saw Gerad was the day after I discovered I was pregnant. I burst into tears of happiness when I saw him. Now my mother sees him for her ailments.'

'When we got home from our session, I discovered that my first period in nearly a year had started'

Anya Sizer, 31

is a part-time charity worker from London. She lives with her 33-year-old teacher husband, Damion, and her daughter, Hope, three. Their second child is due in August.

'I was reading eve in the bath last March and the headline, "Acupuncture made me pregnant", grabbed my attention. I'd never thought of it as a potential solution to the problems we were having conceiving, particularly as the theory goes against my Christian beliefs.

'We'd been told that our chances of conceiving were as slim as one in 125,000. When he was a teenager, Damion had an operation to correct a twisted testicle, but the surgery rendered him unable to produce motile sperm – a condition called azoospermia. Before we closed the door forever on the idea of having kids, we decided to give IVF a try using ICSI [a procedure called Intracytoplasmic sperm injection, where sperm is surgically collected from the man and injected individually into an egg]. Miraculously, our little girl, Hope, was born nine months later. A year later, we tried to have another baby, but two successive rounds of IVF failed.

'In March of last year, we had one last bash at IVF. We booked an appointment to see Gerad at the same time. During our first session, Gerad

inserted needles in my fingers, back and stomach. They felt like tiny umbrellas popping up under my skin. Gerad said he thought that the reason we weren't conceiving had as much to do with my emotional baggage – I'd been anorexic in my teens – as Damion's fertility problems. I came out of that first session feeling more serene than I had in years – as though something huge had been lifted from me.

'Gerad also began to treat Damion to boost his sperm production. With the IVF cycle under way at the same time, we found out that incredibly he was producing twice as much sperm as usual.

'By this time, I was visiting Gerad every three weeks and felt freer and more peaceful than ever. This cycle failed, too, but, on Gerad's advice, I booked a consultation at another clinic, which found my immune system was working overtime and was potentially reacting to an implanting embryo as something genetically foreign. I was treated with steroids and a blood transfusion.

'On 9 December last year, after our fourth round of IVF, my father took me for a blood test that would tell me whether or not it had worked. We were wandering aimlessly round a bookshop when we got the call. They had to tell me five times before the news that I was really pregnant sank in. Dad and I were both in floods of tears.



'There's no question that Gerad was a vital part of our support system as we struggled to conceive our second baby. Without a doubt, the acupuncture boosted Damion's sperm production and helped me emotionally through the IVF treatment: I felt so serene through the last two cycles. I'd recommend that anyone having IVF do it hand in hand with acupuncture: this bump is proof that miracles do happen.' >

Five people

Jeanie Gordon, 36, a part-time charity worker, lives in Chiswick, West London, with her husband, Simon, 36, an IT manager. Their first baby is due in June.

"Two things about Sarah's story in the magazine stuck in my mind: the fact that, after the first session, she felt strong enough to cope if she never had a baby. And that it was a drug-free process. This was important to me after everything we'd been through.

"We had been trying for a baby since September 2001. I'd had suspected ovarian cysts, a fibroid in my womb removed and been through two rounds of IVF, which had both ended in miscarriage. The second time I was distraught. To get pregnant but not be able to carry the baby to full-term was unbearable. Two weeks after reading about Gerad in eve, we made an appointment to see him.

"Instead of lecturing Simon about his smoking and drinking habits, Gerad told him to eat bacon

sandwiches for breakfast since, at the time, he was only eating one meal a day. That was all it took to win Simon over. He told us to drink two litres of water each a day and precisely when to have lots of sex. Gerad put needles in my feet to "calm my liver function" and in my lower abdomen to "warm my womb". I felt heat in my abdomen, uterus and left leg straight away. Afterwards, walking down Regent Street, I felt as if I was on holiday.

"We put off the next round of IVF to give the acupuncture a chance and I carried on seeing Gerad weekly. Just two months after our first meeting, my period was three days late. When the blue line came up on the home test, I remember screaming, "I don't ****ing believe it!" I was stunned. Simon was gobsmacked.

"I'm convinced acupuncture allowed my body to do its job properly and I still see Gerad regularly. I just wish the eve article had been around years ago, before I started all that fertility treatment."



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Charlotte Claydon, 34,

is a retail manager for Laura Ashley. She lives in Stevenage, Hertfordshire, with her husband, Tim, 34, a recruitment consultant, and son Thomas, seven. Her second child is due in early May.

"One day last May, a friend pulled a crumpled eve feature out of her pocket and gave it to me. She knew Tim and I were suffering from what's called secondary infertility. When Thomas was two, we had started trying for another baby – but nothing happened. Ten attempts at IUI (intrauterine or artificial insemination) and one at IVF followed, but the IVF treatment over-stimulated my ovaries, leaving me dangerously ill – and still not pregnant. We found that you don't get any sympathy when you already have a child.

"In late June, I went to see Gerad alone as Tim thought it was a con. His exact words were, "At £85 a go, that's a nice little scam."

"Gerad put needles in my back, left foot, left leg and knee. Apart from a series of short electric shocks, I didn't feel anything straight away but, on the train home, I experienced this huge energy rush. I said to a friend that night, "It doesn't matter if I don't have another baby because life will be OK." I began a course of weekly sessions for a month.

"After the second treatment, I woke up with milk dripping out of my breasts – my nightie was soaked. We were a bit freaked out – particularly since I'd never breastfed Thomas. After the fourth treatment, I had the first pain-free period

of my life. At the end of that cycle, Gerad asked me to do a pregnancy test. Although it was three days before my period was due, Gerad was detecting a "slippery" pulse – a sign I might be pregnant – and I felt a bit sick. I was so used to negative tests that I sat at my computer working for 10 minutes before I even bothered to check it. When I finally did, I saw two lines. I was in shock. I was finally pregnant. I made Tim go and buy another packet of tests. All were positive.

"I still see Gerad every six weeks – he's treating me for backache now – and, two weeks ago, Tim came, too, to shake his hand. In fact, Tim is such a convert now, he even wants me to do a degree in acupuncture."



Gerad Kite has been practising Chinese Five Element Acupuncture for 17 years. Here, he explains how he helps women to conceive.



"I don't treat infertility;

I work to restore the healthy function of a patient's mind and body," says Gerad. "This type of acupuncture is based on an ancient Chinese practice that believes physical problems are linked directly to emotional distress.

"The elements of wood, fire, earth, metal and water are evident in the human body. A woman's state of health manifests itself according to the balance of these elements. As soon as she walks in, I can sense which element needs treating.

"Each element relates to a body part. When the flow of a particular element becomes blocked, physical symptoms will occur. My job is to identify which element is in distress and use the needles to support its flow of energy through a specific physical point. I also ask questions to confirm my diagnosis and pinpoint any other elements that need working on. I look at the patient as a whole and ask, "Is this woman well enough for new life?"

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Gerad Kite Clinics, 144 Harley Street, London W1 (020 7701 0980) and 84 Camberwell Grove, London SE5 (020 7701 1174). Acupuncture sessions cost £85; an initial one-hour consultation costs £195. Find out more at www.geradkite.com.