

Natural and Integrative Care for PCOS

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Natural and Integrative:

Combining the best approaches to achieve and
maintain your health

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What is Integrative Medicine?

Integrative medicine is healing-oriented medicine that takes account of the whole person (body, mind, and spirit), including all aspects of lifestyle. It emphasizes the therapeutic relationship and makes use of all appropriate therapies, both conventional and alternative.

The Principles of Integrative Medicine

- A partnership between patient and practitioner in the healing process
- Appropriate use of conventional and alternative methods to facilitate the body's innate healing response
- Consideration of all factors that influence health, wellness and disease, including mind, spirit and community as well as body
- A philosophy that neither rejects conventional medicine nor accepts alternative therapies uncritically

The Principles of Integrative Medicine

- Recognition that good medicine should be based in good science, be inquiry driven, and be open to new paradigms
- Use of natural, effective, less-invasive interventions whenever possible
- Use of the broader concepts of promotion of health and the prevention of illness as well as the treatment of disease
- Training of practitioners to be models of health and healing, committed to the process of self-exploration and self-development

-- Dr. Weil

Features of PCOS

Metabolic

- High insulin
- High androgens
- Weight gain
- Risk of diabetes
- Risk of metabolic syndrome

Hormonal

- High androgens
- Acne
- Unwanted hair growth
- Hair loss
- Lack of ovulation
- Irregular menses
- High insulin
- Elevated cholesterol
- Heart disease

Other Common Symptoms

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Fatigue
- Difficulty waking up in the morning
- Sleep apnea
- Poor concentration, difficulty focusing

Gather Support and Build a Team

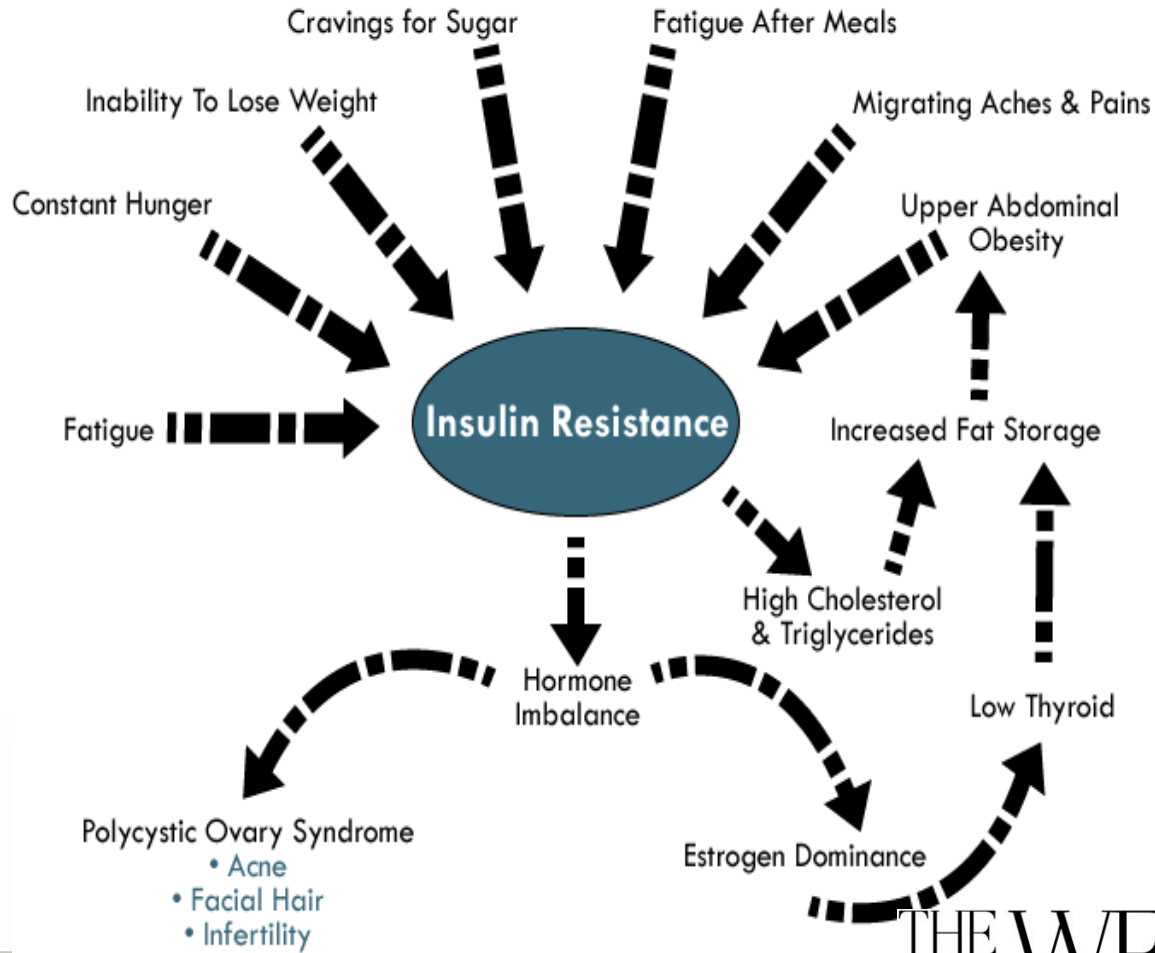
- Nutritionist
- Physician
- Acupuncturist
- Skin care specialist
- Meditation/Mindfulness/Yoga
- Exercise buddies/personal trainer
- Peer support group – in person/online



"I think we need to have a chat about your 'support team'..."

The Importance of Nutrition

Break the Cycle



Androgens and Insulin

- Suppressing androgens, e.g. with OCPs, does not lower insulin
- Lowering insulin does lower androgens
- Let's tackle the insulin!
- But not like this:



Remember All That Led to PCOS

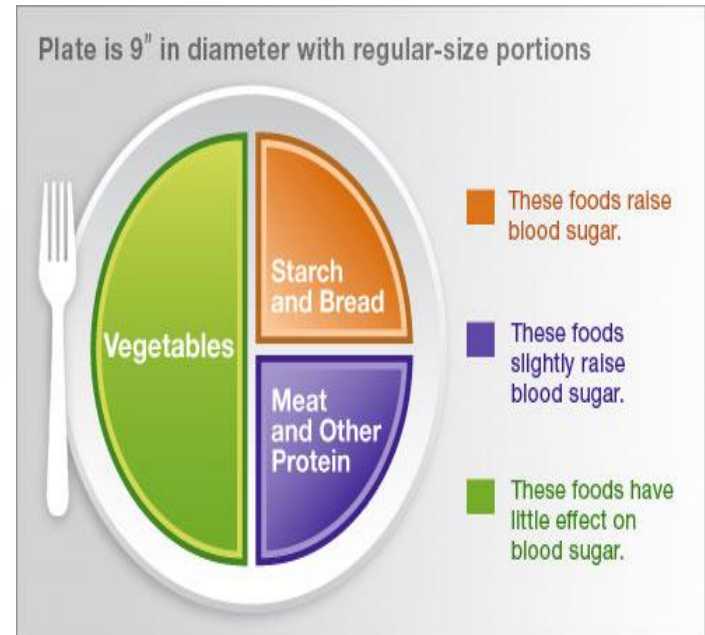
- Genetics
- Prenatal exposure
- Cravings and establishment of eating habits based on biology
- Marketing of processed foods
- Large portions became the norm
- Busy and sedentary lifestyles
- Limited understanding by the medical community

Be kind and patient with yourself

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General Nutrition Guidelines

- Do not skip a meal
- Have small, healthy snacks with you
- Fill one half of your plate with vegetables
- Read labels
- Consult a dietician/nutritionist
- Consider a food store tour with a nutritionist – this is invaluable





Shopping Tips for Healthy Eating



Shop the outer perimeter of the grocery store for fresh produce.



Plan meals ahead of time so that you won't be tempted to get fast food when you become hungry.



1st Choice: Fresh Food
2nd Choice: Frozen Food
3rd Choice: Canned Food



Avoid ALL soda (diet and regular).



Canned and packaged food should be considered last, and ideally, not at all.



Always read the labels in order to avoid sugar and chemical additives.



Food Guidelines

Manage insulin

- Foods which are absorbed slowly
- Proteins – low fat
- High fiber
- Whole grains
- Certain fats – olive oil
- Cinnamon



Reduce inflammation

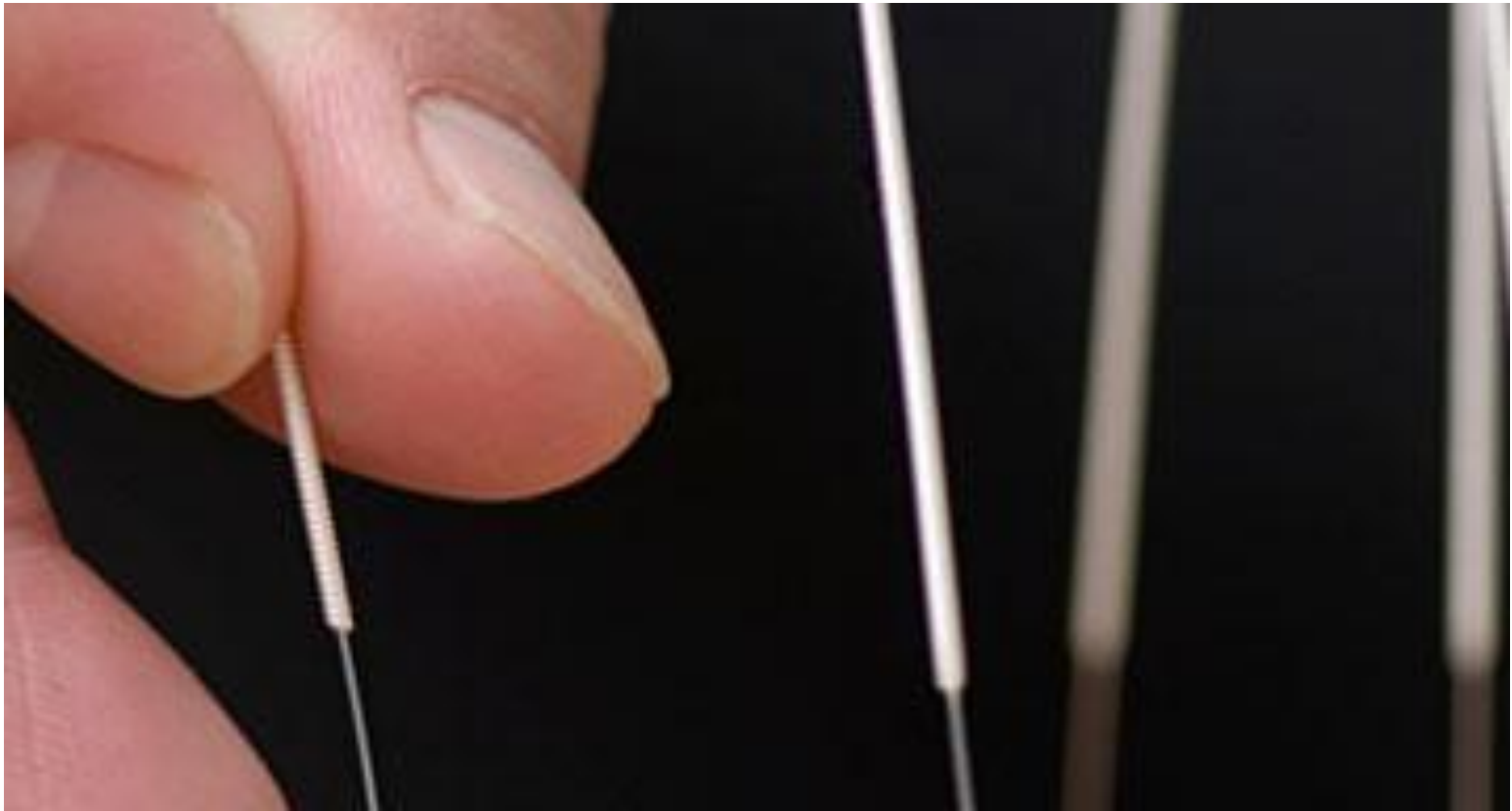
- Anti-inflammatory foods
- Low fat proteins
- Plant-based proteins
- Non processed foods
- Olive or canola oil
- Organic
- Turmeric, ginger, cloves, sage, thyme

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Supplements, Teas and Herbs

- Chromium picolinate – decreases insulin
- Cinnamon – decreases insulin
- Magnesium Myo/d-chiro-inositol 40:1 – decreases insulin, androgens, inflammation
- N-acetylcystine – decreases inflammation
- Omega 3 fats (EPA and DHA) – insulin, androgens, weight
- Spearmint tea – decreased androgens
- Vitamin D
- TCM herbs – consult an expert

Acupuncture for PCOS



Acupuncture Treatment

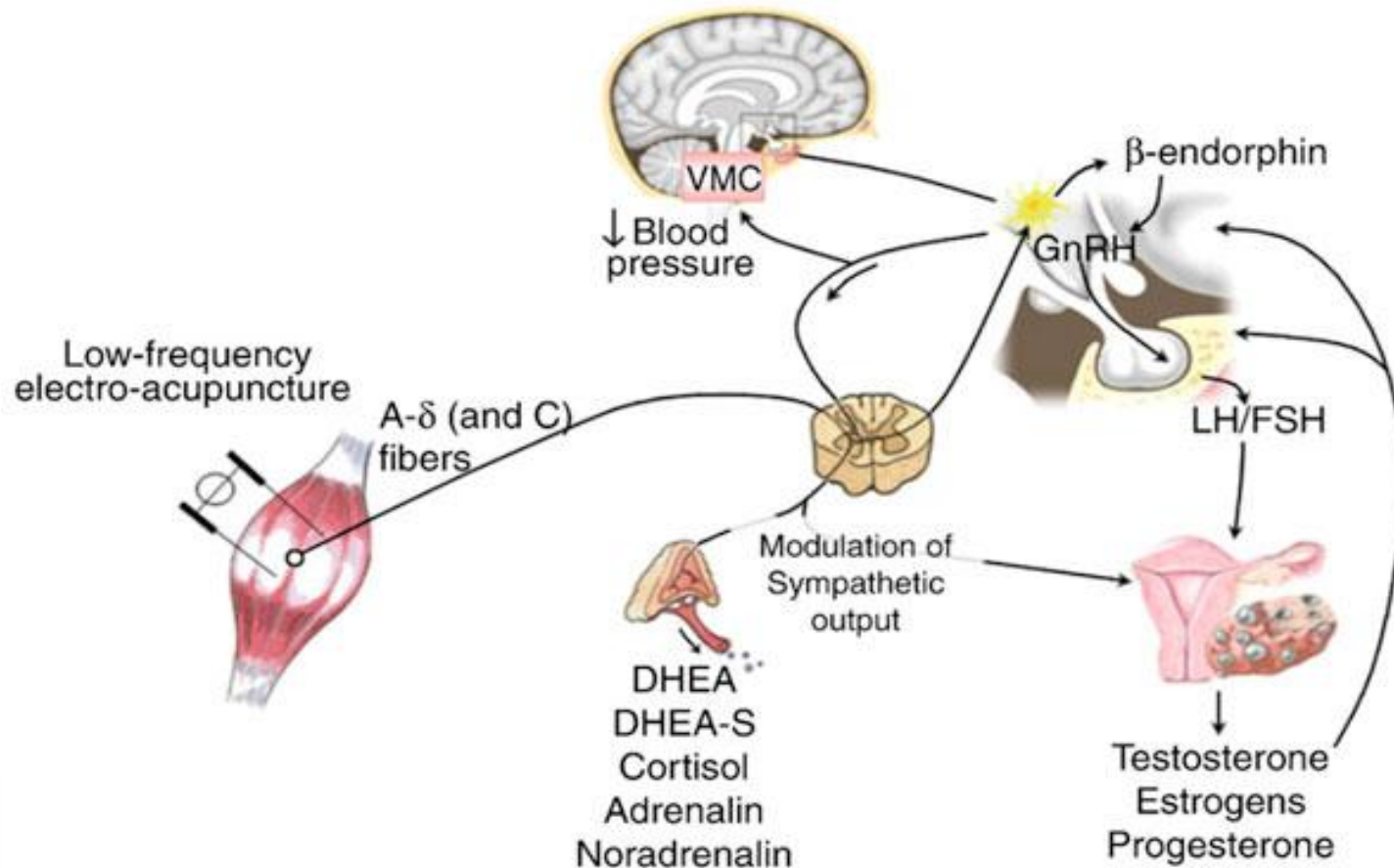
- Reduces anxiety, tension
- Evens out hormonal imbalances (menopause, infertility, PCOS)
- Reduces inflammation
- Restores GI health – constipation, bloatedness
- Reduces fluid stagnation – allergies, bloatedness
- Reduces stress hormones (and therefore one of the causes of insulin spikes)

What Is Acupuncture?

- Acupuncture is a key component of Traditional Chinese Medicine.
- It is a technique which involves the placement of tiny needles at specific sites called acupuncture points.
- In Chinese medicine this is believed to restore balance and the flow of energy in the body. The Western view focuses on the stimulation of muscles, nerves and tendons created by the needles as well as changes that can occur in certain areas of the brain.

38% of women ovulated and their testosterone and LH/FSH levels were still normal after 3 months

E. Stener-Victorin, X. Wu / Autonomic Neuroscience: Basic and Clinical xxx (2010) xxx-xxx



Healthy Living is not
just what you eat



or how much you exercise.
It is also Mental health.

Stress

- Causes increased insulin
- Causes increased inflammation
- Increases fatigue
- Exacerbates anxiety and depression
- Releases adrenal hormones, adrenaline and cortisol
- Linked to heart disease



Many and varied choices:

Mindfulness

Meditation

Yoga

Massage

Spirituality

Exercise

Nature

Hobbies

Support groups

Friends

Family

Therapy

Something everyday!



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Massage

Massage is helpful for the mind and body in many ways. Certain massage techniques can be used for:

- Loosening tense, tight or achy muscles
- Eliminating muscular knots and spasms
- Creating alignment
- Lessening joint discomfort
- Reducing inflammation
- Improving circulation
- Moving retained fluid

Massage (continued)

- Draining stagnant lymph
- Soothing repetitive stress
- Promoting good posture
- Increasing flexibility and mobility

Massage also has proven benefits for mental and emotional health, such as:

- Relieving stress and anxiety
- Releasing endorphins that calm the nervous system
- Pushing out toxins

Fertility Massage

- Massage therapy has several distinct advantages for those attempting to conceive.
- In a fertility massage, special techniques that focus on the lower half of the body stimulate blood flow and the movement of fluids such as lymph throughout the body. These actions bring oxygen to the reproductive organs and encourage their ability to function optimally.

Support Groups

- PCOS Support Group
- Topics determined by those participating in the group and may include fertility, managing symptoms such as weight gain, hair growth/loss and mood swings, and ways to live a balanced and healthy lifestyle.
- Many find this additional community and friendship a critical factor in maintaining emotional wellness during their journey.
- If members of the group decide it would be valuable, they can choose to bring in additional support to one or more meetings, e.g. psychologist, music therapist and meditation instructors.

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