



story / J. CHAPIN

As a woman standing on the curb of menopause, one step from being hit square on by a bus filled with hormones, hot flashes and 20 pounds that I just can't shake, women's health is a personal and passionate topic. Having been a woman my whole life, this is just another chapter in a lifelong journey of health related conditions that are unique to those of us harboring XX chromosomes. Starting with the long list of 'firsts'; your first best friend, your first period, boyfriend, degree, job, advanced degree, child, husband and so on.

With today's environmental factors including more women than ever in the workforce, starting families, raising children and pursuing advanced studies and degrees, the stress and pressure can affect even the most health conscious of women. While we seek desperately to maintain balance in each area of our life, we all realize that it is as elusive as the perfect man, or for that matter, the perfect anything. So in our search for health, we want options and choices as much as we want our chocolate desserts.

The good news is that complementary medicine alongside conventional, provides options for each health milestone you reach as a woman. Integrative medicine including acupuncture has shown to be an effective way to address health concerns specific to women: premenstrual, post menopausal, gynecological health, fertility, pregnancy and emotional well being. From the National Institute of Health

to the halls of leading medical universities and even to the pages of Women's Health magazine, the word is out.

All you have to do is let your fingers do the walking on the World Wide Web to find various studies regarding the effects of acupuncture and women's health. According to a study in the journal, Fertility and Sterility, acupuncture reduces nighttime hot flashes caused by menopause. Researchers found seven weeks of acupuncture treatment reduced the severity of nighttime hot flashes by 28 percent among menopausal women compared with a 6 percent decrease among the control group.

Published in a February 2008 issue of the British Medical Journal, women undergoing IVF were 65 percent more likely to become pregnant when they combined the procedure with acupuncture. The considerable success rate occurred across seven acupuncture trials involving 1,366 women and was carried out by scientists from the University of Maryland and the VU University Amsterdam.

"While acupuncture is one of the oldest systems of medicine, having been practiced for thousands of years, the current access to evidence-based research is of critical importance," states Joseph Williams, Acupuncture Physician, D.O.M. and founder of Sunshine Integrative Health. "It is a fundamental part of my practice to share research directly with my patients and to maintain a Trusted Sources section on my website." So while the perfect man eludes us, Williams comes close to fitting

the bill. With a patient-centered practice, great listening skills, and a concentrated focus on women's health, I know who I'm calling when the next hot flash hits.

To reach Joseph Williams directly, please call 352-665-1090, located in the Seagle Building, 408 West University Avenue, Suite 503 or visit www.sunshineih.com. Sunshine Integrative Health is also a proud sponsor of the American Cancer Society's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer in North Central Florida. **GT**

Driven by his passion to integrate medicine with a specialized focus on women's health, Williams has treated women in every stage of life and health, from pregnancy to wellness and infertility.