

# **SEA-BAND UK LTD**

**STUDY INTO THE EFFECTS**

**OF ACUPRESSURE**

**ON THE P6 POINT**

**FOR THE RELIEF OF MORNING SICKNESS**

**in conjunction with**

**Your Complete Guide To Pregnancy & Birth**

**By**

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## **Summary**

Your Complete Guide to Pregnancy & Birth ran a call for volunteers to take part in a trial into the effects of acupressure for morning sickness.

The group who responded recorded the severity and frequency of sickness and other symptoms frequently encountered during pregnancy over a period of 12 consecutive days, ten wearing the bands and the final two with no treatment.

No side effects were reported other than swollen wrists and the trial was completely safe for mother and child

Of the small-scale trial involving 18 pregnant women, it was demonstrated that stimulation of the Pericardium 6 (Neiguan) acupuncture point on the wrist would reduce the incidence of nausea and vomiting associated the early stages of pregnancy.

## **Introduction**

Nausea and vomiting occurs in a vast number of pregnancies. For some women, it can be only a minor nuisance, but for others with severe vomiting, it is particularly troublesome. Many people believe morning sickness is the sign of a healthy pregnancy due to the quantity of hormones present in the body.

Those in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy were asked to take part as from earlier studies<sup>1</sup> it is known that this is the most usual time to be suffering from morning sickness. There are also other reports of acupuncture on the P6 point being used for the control of this commonly encountered problem<sup>2</sup>.

The respondents were each sent a pair of Sea-Bands (elasticated wristbands to stimulate the P6 point on the wrist, manufactured by Sea-Band UK Ltd) and a questionnaire to complete each day from the first day of wearing the bands, along with general information about their age, previous children etc. An example of the questionnaire is shown in Appendix 1.

## Results

Twenty two questionnaires were returned out of 55 issued, but two respondents found they had already got over the morning sickness stage and two women lost the baby shortly after receiving the package, leaving a working total of 18.

The course was designed to run over 12 days, with the Sea-Bands being worn on the first ten, and removed for the last two to see if there was any noticeable change in feelings of nausea and/or vomiting.

The list of 10 possible symptoms which may occur (and an option for 'other' as necessary) were graded on the scale as defined in Table 1.

*Table 1. Grading of symptoms*

0	None	No symptoms
1	Slight	Occasional nausea; no vomiting
2	Moderate	Daily nausea
3	Troublesome	Periodic vomiting with or without nausea
4	Severe	Daily nausea and vomiting

Fourteen people completed the 12 days, and of these, the Sea-Bands helped 12 people ie. over 85%. Of the non-completers, acupuncture was found to have helped 50% of the group within two days, hence the discontinuation of the trial (14 people out of 18 found improvement or 77.8%).

The women who completed the trial were in the age range 20 -39, with 50% being in the 30-39 age group.

It was the first baby for 67%.

Those who found using the Sea-Band helped relieve morning sickness were more likely to have tried other alternative remedies to try and control their morning sickness. The most popular other method was dry toast/biscuits before getting up in the morning. Ginger was also a popular remedy.

The Sea-Bands seem to be most effective in weeks 6-12 of pregnancy.

### **Conclusion**

From this small scale trial, it can be concluded that the use of acupressure to stimulate the pericardium 6 (Neiguan) acupuncture point on the wrist is a useful and satisfactory method of controlling nausea and vomiting associated with morning sickness.

It is an especially valuable line of treatment to consider, as acupressure is free from side effects and can cause no harm to mother or child, irrespective of the control of nausea.

The reticence of many pregnant women with severe morning sickness to embark on anti-emetic therapy is justified and this course of action is therefore usually a last resort.

A pair of Sea-Bands costs considerably less than many mainstream pharmacological agents which may be considered. Furthermore, the bands can be reused by a family member or friend for the control of nausea due to travel, anaesthesia or chemotherapy, or any situation where nausea may present. For the relatively cheap outlay, Sea-Bands may provide the solution to a centuries-old and widespread problem.

## **Acknowledgements**

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## **References**

- <sup>1</sup> Fagan EA, Chadwick VS. Drug treatment of gastrointestinal disorders in pregnancy. In: Lewis P, ed. *Clinical pharmacology in obstetrics*. Bristol: Wright, 1983:114-37
- <sup>2</sup> Lewith GT, Lewith NR. *Modern Chinese acupuncture*. Wellingborough: Thorsons, 1980