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Fertility Centers of Illinois Where

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CRYSTAL LAKE – One of the cornerstones of President Obama's push for health-care reform is to find a new way to practice medicine.

Tami Quinn would like to believe that her group is putting those values into practice.

Quinn is the co-founder of Pulling Down the Moon, a holistic fertility clinic. Her group has partnered with Dr. Laurence Jacobs of the Fertility Centers of Illinois at their Crystal Lake office, offering patients medical and holistic care from the same offices.

"This is the first time we've ever cohabitated in an office with a doctor's practice," Quinn said. "There's a swinging door between the two suites in Crystal Lake. I think that's a pretty revolutionary idea – bringing integrative care right into a doctor's office, so a patient can have the best of both worlds."

Fertility Centers of Illinois provides in vitro fertilization (IVF) and advanced infertility services for its patients, both male and female. Jacobs has been working in the field for more than 20 years and opened his Crystal Lake office four years ago.

"There's really only a handful of names that we've recommended," Jacobs said. "It's important to me that they get good quality care. I know what the patient gets. I know what's legitimate. I tell my patients it may help, it can't hurt, and you'll feel better."

Quinn said her clinic focused on four main treatments: acupuncture, yoga, nutrition counseling and massage therapy.

"In addition to the physical benefits, we believe there are a lot of emotional and psychological reasons these work as well," she said.



Kara Canga-Arguelles removes acupuncture needles from Lydia Stankevych at Fertility Center of Illinois in Crystal Lake. The center offers holistic options such as acupuncture, massage and yoga to aid men and women with fertility. (Travis Haughton — thaughton@nwherald.com)

Jacobs said his in vitro treatment for women worked in two phases. The first phase involved getting the body prepared for hormone treatments and hosting the egg. The second phase involves the treatment, which includes hormone shots, blood tests and ultrasounds before beginning the fertilization process.

It's in the first phase, Jacobs said, that patients could benefit most physically from Pulling Down the Moon's services.

"If you start to do acupuncture, you want to do it during the month of preparation, if not sooner, before the stimulation cycle," he said.

Quinn said that the physical benefits could come from yoga and massage therapy, as well as acupuncture.

"We have a six-week program, and we focus on three different things," she said. "We have physical postures that can relieve chronic pain and increase the blood flow to the uterus. It can loosen tight muscles and detoxify the body, which can help it carry the hormone production."

The melding of the two offices can provide key benefits to the patients, Quinn said.

"We'd never suggest that you only do holistic therapies to try to get pregnant," she said. "If you have blocked Fallopian tubes, no amount of acupuncture or yoga is going to unblock them. But if you go through surgery, acupuncture and yoga can help with the stress and anxiety of everything happening on the physical side."

And aside from the physical benefits that holistic techniques can provide, both Jacobs and Quinn said their effects on a patient's emotional and psychological well-being were just as vital. Quinn, herself a former fertility patient, said men and women in the process often needed help coping with the stresses of the situation.

"This is a very lonely journey for most couples," she said. "It's very much a cloistered environment. You don't have a support network, and that's the beauty of this partnership of medical and holistic. We offer a place of community. People can come together and really feel supported by each other and helped to continue on this journey."

Jacobs said he saw how the frustration could weigh on patients.

"Many of these couples do other treatments before IVF, so for many, this is their last resort," he said. "We get an idea of who can benefit from stress reduction. Marie Davidson is a clinical psychologist here, and we don't charge for her services. She can sense when someone is in need from the very beginning, and at that time we'll recommend acupuncture, massage and yoga from the start.

"It's far, far more stressful financially, and more taxing emotionally. They know if they're doing IVF, they've got hardcore problems. If this doesn't work, we're running out of options."

Quinn said it had been a long process for her practice to gain a foothold with a doctor's office, but that she was excited about the growing relationship between Pulling Down the Moon and Fertility Centers of Illinois.

"When we started this business seven years ago, we tried to talk to medical doctors about a partnership, and it was very difficult to even get an audience," she said. "When patients say they're being stressed, we realize this needs to be part of the value-added service for patients."

“The really legitimate people out there don’t try to compete,” Jacobs said. “I think they’re smart when they use the term complimentary medicine. I’m a big advocate of doing whatever it takes to have someone get pregnant safely.”