



"Our deepest fear is we are powerful beyond measure"



2017

May Newsletter

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 226.377.4252

 angela@surrogacycommunity.ca

- A holistic view of pregnancy - Dr. Sarah Tremain-Douglas
- New surrogacy laws: We still haven't got it right - André Picard
- Don't forget to check out my blog

A holistic view of pregnancy - Dr. Sarah Tremain-Douglas

Dr. Tremain-Douglas is a licensed Naturopathic Doctor offering natural and safe primary care medicine to the communities of Stratford and St. Marys, Ontario.

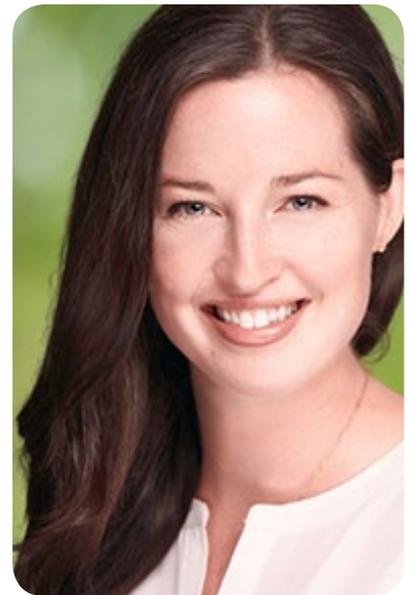
Dr. Tremain-Douglas conducts a general family practice at both Stratford and Stonetown Health & Wellness Centres. Inspired by her own health challenges and experiences with health care as a child, Dr. Tremain-Douglas decided to pursue a career in naturopathic medicine. She received her post-graduate medical education from the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine in Toronto, Ontario. Prior to this she received her Bachelor and Masters of Science degrees in biology from the University of Windsor, conducting genetic and behavioural research on bird populations in Costa Rica. During clinical rotations, Dr.

Tremain-Douglas was thrilled to be able to return to the tropics to provide medical care to underserved populations in Cap-Haitien, Haiti, and Los Angeles, Nicaragua.

Dr. Tremain-Douglas is licensed by the College of Naturopaths of Ontario, and a member of the Ontario Association of Naturopathic Doctors (OAND) and the Canadian Association of Naturopathic Doctors (CAND).

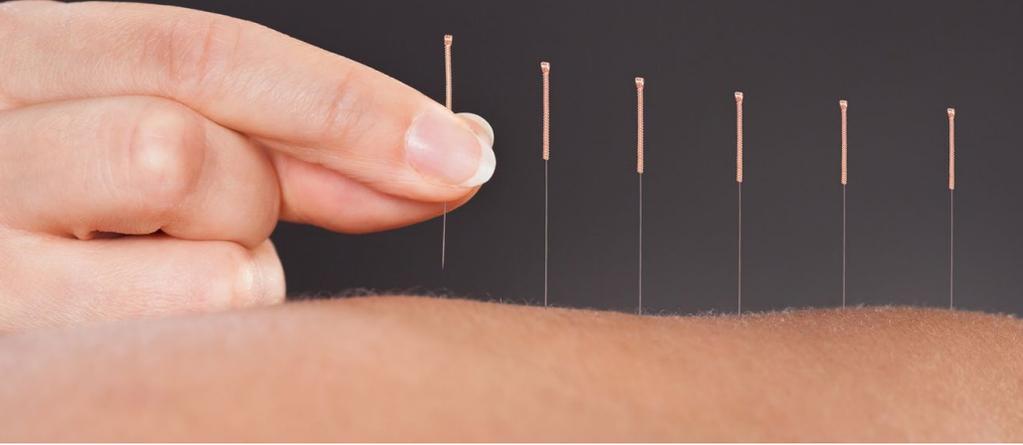
In regards to prenatal care, Sarah has some valuable suggestions to bring to the table.

Sara talks about the benefits of Naturopathic medicine and how it is especially well suited to support people on their surrogacy journey. Naturopathic care offers effective tools to enhance fertility and may improve your chances of



Dr. Sarah Tremain-Douglas, N.D., M.Sc., [H]B.Sc.

becoming pregnant. She gives us a list of things to consider when embarking on a surrogacy journey.



Please

send me your stories or ideas to:
angela@surrogacycommunity.ca

or

call me at:
226.377.4252

A holistic view of pregnancy - continued

- Natural and integrative medicines – such as diet and lifestyle modifications, natural health supplements, and acupuncture - can help prepare donors, intended parents, and surrogates for pregnancy, and make the journey a little easier along the way.
- Naturopathic Doctors (NDs) are the most highly trained practitioners in natural medicine. They are medically trained and licensed as primary care providers, and can be integrated with your current medical care team. They have advanced knowledge in physiology, pharmaceuticals, and natural therapies, and are trained to avoid drug-nutrient interactions. These interactions are relatively common and especially important to avoid in assisted reproductive techniques and during pregnancy.



- The role of micronutrients and nutrition in fertility has been steadily gaining attention, and promising research has emerged. Many are now aware of the importance of folic acid to a developing baby. However, a growing field of research has shown that more com-

prehensive preconception and early pregnancy care can markedly improve success rates in assisted reproductive techniques such as IVF.

- Men with fertility struggles – which may play a role in about 40% of infertility cases – may also benefit from adding beneficial nutrients to their regimen of care.

- Research has shown that IVF success rates are higher when acupuncture treatments are done around the time of egg retrieval and implantation. Your fertility clinic may have an acupuncturist or ND on staff and may be available to discuss the possibility of integrating

acupuncture into your care.

- The benefit of naturopathic care isn't limited to the pre-conception period. NDs can support surrogates throughout pregnancy for common concerns such as nausea, sleep difficulties, digestive changes, and fatigue.
- Couples benefit immensely from stress and mood support, as the surrogacy journey can be emotionally intense. Getting help to manage stress through counseling and other therapies is important for quality of life, and has been shown to improve your chance of becoming pregnant through IVF.
- To find a licensed Naturopathic Doctor in Ontario visit www.collegeofnaturopaths.on.ca/. If you're outside of Ontario, make sure your ND has received their

degree from one of the seven accredited schools in North America (<https://aanmc.org>).



Don't forget
to read Angela's
new **blog** this week:

*How to Create a Trusting
Relationship between Surrogate
and Intended Parents.*

www.surrogacycommunity.ca

New surrogacy laws: We still haven't got it right - André Picard, *The Globe And Mail*

Ontario's Bill 28, the All Families Are Equal Act, is a well-intentioned move to end discrimination against families – in particular, same-sex couples – who use donor embryos and donor eggs and/or sperm to conceive a child.

But the legislation, in an effort to remove roadblocks to parenthood for many who are desperate to have a child, risks undermining the legitimacy of surrogacy and creating a whole new set of problems for parents, surrogates and children.

That, in a nutshell, is the view of Toronto fertility lawyer Sara Cohen. She has identified five major problems with the law:

1) Bill 28 does not distinguish between gestational surrogacy (where the person carrying the fetus has no genetic connection to the fetus, so in vitro fertilization is required) and traditional surrogacy (where the person carrying the fetus has a genetic connection to the fetus, either through insemination or IVF using the surrogate's own egg). Almost all surrogacy is gestational, and the contracts are legally enforceable. Traditional surrogacy agreements are rarely upheld by the courts. The new law decrees that all surrogacy agreements are unenforceable. This is problematic for parents, who no longer have the security that they will get a child, as well as the surrogate, who can no longer enforce the agreement if parents-to-be change their minds.

Opinion: Surrogates should be applauded, not questioned on their motives

Analysis: We need to talk about assisted reproduction in Canada

2) The legislation would give the surrogate seven days to change her mind after birth, and require joint medical decision-making between the parents and the surrogate in the interim. This could prove nightmarish for hospitals and health-care providers if the child requires medical care.

3) The bill eliminates any judicial oversight of surrogacy. Currently, intended parents (regardless of sexual orientation, gender and number of parents) must be recognized as the legal parents of a child born through surrogacy, through a legal process. In other words, a judge has to legitimize the process, and often requires a DNA test to ensure that the woman who carried the child is not a legal parent. Ms. Cohen warns that the new law would “remove any checks and balances over surrogacy,” allowing parents to simply register the birth and declare parentage. This is problematic because, for example, parents could simply make a deal with an already-pregnant woman and avoid the adoption process. This could lead to fraud, coercion and even the “selling” of children. (Although, paying a surrogate for her services beyond basic expenses is illegal under federal law). While this rule is undoubtedly designed to cut legal expenses for would-be parents, it could prove costly in the long run.

4) In Ontario, adoptees have their records sealed to protect their privacy. Bill 28 does not automatically grant that same protection to children born through surrogacy, meaning parentage applications could be made public. Ms. Cohen argues that this is discriminatory.

5) The All Families Are Equal Act permits sperm donation through sex where there is a preconception written agreement making the donor not a parent. Ms. Cohen says this “seismic change” to the law is unnecessary and highly problematic. It essentially allows a man to contract out being a parent through sex; if that is the case, a woman should be able to do the same – and if both do so, that could leave a child with no legal parent.

This analysis is a reminder that there are many fascinating legal and ethical issues in the fertility field. More important, there are real people involved. While the sands are shifting, we owe it to them to get these laws right – or as right as possible.

That also goes for the federal government, which has promised to introduce new regulations to the Assisted Human Reproduction Act that will further restrict the ability of sperm and ova donors and surrogates to be paid for their services. In other words, onerous rules are going to be made even more so. Surrogacy should not be criminalized. But nor should it be a free-for-all, where people desperate to be parents, or those who are in desperate need of money, can be taken advantage of.

The legislation of assisted human reproduction has a tortured history in this country. We still haven't got it right.

Government should be helping families – in all their glorious modern variations – to have children if they want. But it has to balance that with the need to protect surrogates, donors, parents and children from exploitation and heartbreak.