

Chiropractic Advice for Pregnancy



As many new mothers can attest, the muscle strains of pregnancy are very real and can be more than just a nuisance. The average weight gain of 25 to 35 pounds, combined with the increased stress placed on the body by the baby, may result in severe discomfort. Studies have found that about half of all expectant mothers will develop low-back pain at some point during their pregnancies. This is especially true during late pregnancy, when the baby's head presses down on a woman's back, legs and buttocks, irritating her sciatic nerve. And for those who already suffer from low-back pain, the problem can become even worse.

During pregnancy, a woman's centre of gravity almost immediately begins to shift forward to the front of her pelvis. Although a woman's sacrum, or posterior section of the pelvis, has enough depth to enable her to carry a baby, the displaced weight still increases

How Can Chiropractic Help with Pregnancy?

Many pregnant women have found that chiropractic adjustments provide relief from the increased low-back pain brought on by pregnancy.

Chiropractic manipulation is safe for the pregnant woman and her baby and can be especially appealing to those who are trying to avoid medications in treating their back pain. Doctors of chiropractic can also offer nutrition, ergonomic, and exercise advice to help a woman enjoy a healthy pregnancy.

Chiropractic care can also help after childbirth. In the eight weeks following labour and delivery, the ligaments that loosened during pregnancy begin to tighten. Ideally, joint problems brought on during pregnancy from improper lifting or reaching should be treated before the ligaments return to their pre-pregnancy state to prevent further muscle tension.

the stress on her joints. As the baby grows in size, the woman's weight is projected even farther forward, and the curvature of her lower back is increased, placing extra stress on the spinal disks.

While these changes sound dramatic, pregnancy hormones help loosen the ligaments attached to the pelvic bones. But even these natural changes designed to accommodate the growing baby can result in postural imbalances.



Exercise

- Safe exercise during pregnancy can help strengthen your muscles and prevent discomfort. Try exercising at least three times a week, gently stretching before and after exercise.
- Walking, swimming, and stationary cycling are safe cardiovascular exercises for pregnant women because they do not require jerking or bouncing movements.
- Stop your exercise immediately if you notice any unusual symptoms, such as vaginal bleeding, dizziness, nausea, weakness, blurred vision, increased swelling, or heart palpitations.
- Regular exercise before becoming pregnant is a great way to prepare your body for pregnancy.

- For detailed advice on all aspects of exercise and fitness we recommend you visit our neighbours at Synergy Fitness. They offer personal training, fitness classes and gym facilities. Synergy Fitness is located next to our clinic at 9 Brewster Square. You can find out more at their website www.synergysgroupfitness.co.uk.

Health and Safety

- Wear flat, sensible shoes. High or chunky heels can exacerbate postural imbalances and make you less steady on your feet, especially as your pregnancy progresses.
- When picking up children, bend from the knees, not the waist. And never turn your head when you lift. Avoid picking up heavy objects, if possible.
- Get plenty of rest. Pamper yourself and ask for help if you need it. Take a nap if you're tired, or lie down and elevate your feet for a few moments when you need a break.

Pregnancy Ergonomics

- Sleep on your side with a pillow between your knees to take pressure off your lower back. Full-length "body pillows" or "pregnancy wedges" may be helpful. Lying on your left side allows unobstructed blood flow and helps your kidneys flush waste from your body.
- If you have to sit at a computer for long hours, make your workstation ergonomically correct. Position the computer monitor so the top of the screen is at or below your eye level, and place your feet on a small footrest to take pressure off your legs and feet. Take periodic breaks every 30 minutes with a quick walk around the office.

Nutrition

Eat small meals or snacks every four to five hours, rather than the usual three large meals, to help keep nausea or extreme hunger at bay. Snack on crackers or yogurt, bland foods high in carbohydrates and protein. Keep salt snacks in your desk drawer or handbag to help stave off waves of "morning sickness." Supplementing with at

least 400 micrograms of folic acid a day before and during pregnancy has been shown to decrease the risk of neural tube birth defects, such as spina bifida.

Why choose Livingston Chiropractic?

Dr Astrid Sherwood (Doctor of Chiropractic) has over ten years experience treating patients of all ages. She regularly treats new mothers to be during pregnancy and after giving birth, new born babies and children.

Astrid is a mother of two children, Hannah aged 6 and Felix aged 4. They both received their first chiropractic adjustments immediately after birth and continue to receive regular chiropractic care.

During her two pregnancies Astrid received frequent chiropractic adjustments. This allowed her to remain active and helped her achieve two straight forward births. Both of her children were breast-fed and she is happy to provide breastfeeding advice to patients if requested.

Prenatal Chiropractic



Lower back pain, baby breech,
or trouble sleeping?

Gentle and safe prenatal
chiropractic care can help

Livingston Chiropractic

01506 23 83 84

www.livingstonchiropractic.co.uk

Unit 8 Brewster Square, Brucefield Industrial Estate, Livingston, EH54 9BJ