

# Pregnancy and Your Baby

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## Chiropractic for the Pregnant Mother

Back pain is the most common soft tissue complaint of pregnant mothers. There are a number of reasons for this, including:

- Increased ligament laxity due to the release of the hormone relaxin
- Increase in weight gain and forward weight bearing
- Poor body mechanics and postural habits
- Ribcage enlargement increasing subluxations
- Nerve and vascular impingement from mechanical pressure

The above factors increase the frequency of vertebral subluxations, muscular spasms, soft tissue pain and altered spinal biomechanics—all of which respond exceptionally

well to chiropractic care and massage therapy.

Prevention is always the first step in reducing any biomechanical misalignments. Being conscious of posture when lifting, bending, standing, and sitting can greatly reduce the stress that is placed on your bones. Once vertebral subluxations are present then chiropractic care becomes a formidable treatment to combat pain and discomfort that results from nerve or spinal stress. By maintaining a healthy vertebrae you increase your ability to function at an optimal level for both you and your baby.



## A BIG THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who took the time to drop off used clothing, books and gifts that were passed on to very appreciative families at Nelson House. Your generosity and kindness is a gift in itself and the staff here at Back to Health are very grateful for your donations. But even more so are the women and children of Nelson House!

## Pregnancy Massage

Some women feel that a massage is a luxury, or that once pregnant the discomfort that they deal with is inherent of becoming a mother. Not so. In the first trimester massage can help ease nausea, headaches, sinus congestion and fatigue. In the second trimester it is effective in easing leg cramps, sciatica, and backaches. A pregnant woman's blood volume increases as much as 40%. Massage therapy helps to support the extra workload placed on the heart by aiding circulation as well as other body fluids. For women who must sit for prolonged periods of time, leg and pelvic massage help to reduce the likelihood of varicose veins and swollen ankles. In the final trimester it helps to reduce swelling, insomnia and overall joint and muscle soreness. Regular massage during pregnancy gives muscle tone and flexibility that are needed during labour and delivery and can be very beneficial in recovery.

### Special points of interest:

Not only does your baby benefit from your healthy lifestyle but so do you!

- "The possible benefits to exercising women include starting labour on time or a bit early, having a shorter and less-complicated labour, recovering more quickly and enjoying improved fitness after delivery."

# Chiropractic and Your Baby!

More and more parents are seeking chiropractic care for their children. From infants to toddlers and beyond into childhood they are realizing the benefits that spinal adjustments can have on their children's well-being.

The central nervous system is the very first structure to develop within an embryo. Around it then grows the spine. From there, all other nerves and blood vessels spread out from the brain to the rest of the body.

Spinal nerve stress, also called vertebral subluxations, is a misalignment of the spinal column, skull, and hips that irritate, stretch or impinge the

proper functioning of the nervous system. Spinal stress, or interference of the nervous system can weaken internal organs, lower resistance, and reduce healing potential leading to disease and disorder of all kinds.

## Signs of spinal stress

You may think that colic, ear infections, problems breastfeeding, allergies, fevers, asthma, tonsillitis, bed-wetting or sleep disturbances are an inherent part of being a child and what you as a parent must simply accept. However, spinal subluxations can be a major source of all of these problems. Research and studies have

proven in many instances that once these stresses are removed a child quickly returns to a healthy state and parents are much happier for it! Once the nervous system is free to operate without irritation and babies are able to move or maintain positions without any discomfort progress can be made quickly. Take for example a newborn that won't suckle properly. An evaluation of the C1-C2 vertebrae (where the baby has to work to hold their head) may indicate spinal stress. Once removed, they are more likely to be able to breastfeed without any discomfort in their feeding position.



## How are adjustments done on young ones?

Chiropractic adjusting procedures are modified to fit a child's specific and unique spinal condition. Using their hands and/or specialized instruments to gently and specifically correct the problem areas they may only need to use a finger in order to make the proper correction.



## Some more postural tips:

**When sitting, do not cross your legs. This position decreases circulation.**

**When doing any task where you are standing for a prolonged period of time put one foot up on a step or stool. This will decrease the sway in your lower back. This will also relieve pressure from your low back while sitting.**

**Don't lock your knees. This can also increase pressure on your low back. Instead, stand with feet shoulder-width apart and flex your knees just a bit so that the thighs take on more of your weight.**

## Sleeping Positions

Until your uterus really starts to grow you will probably find whatever position you are used to the most comfortable position to sleep in. As your uterus grows it becomes more important to adjust to sleeping on your side. This is because, on your back, the weight of the uterus can compress major blood vessels that run down the right side of the spine. Therefore the **left side** is the most recommended side to position yourself in. It's

okay to move during the night as this is a natural part of our sleep process, eventually you will be too big to move around as much anyways!

To help reduce the strain on your low back and pelvis try to position your pillows so that that they are keeping your spine in alignment. A pillow between your knees while side-lying will accomplish this. A small pillow under the small of your back will help to re-

lieve pressure, on your pelvis. A pillow underneath your abdomen will help reduce the rotation of your back caused the weight of your belly when you lie on your side as well.

Your ultimate comfort is what is important but taking into consideration what stress is being placed on you body is equally important. Use as many pillows as you feel necessary to give yourself the support that you need!