

Chiropractic Care During Pregnancy

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Chiropractic Care During Pregnancy: Safety and Benefits

Chiropractic care is health maintenance of the spinal column, discs, related nerves and bone geometry without drugs or surgery. It involves the art and science of adjusting misaligned joints of the body, especially of the spine, which reduces spinal nerve stress and therefore promotes health throughout the body.

Is chiropractic care during pregnancy safe?

There are no known contraindications to chiropractic care throughout pregnancy. All chiropractors are trained to work with women who are pregnant. Investing in the fertility and [pregnancy wellness](#) of women who are pregnant or trying to conceive is a routine care for most chiropractors.

Some chiropractors take a specific interest in prenatal and postnatal care and seek additional training. Below represents designations of chiropractors who have taken advanced steps in working with [infertility](#) and pregnancy wellness.

- **DACCP** – Diplomate with ICPA reflecting highest level of advanced training
- **CACCP** – Certified with the ICPA reflecting advanced training
- **Member of ICPA reflecting special interest**
- **Webster Certified** – trained to work specifically with pelvic balance in pregnancy

Chiropractors that have been trained to work with pregnant women may use tables that adjust for a pregnant woman's body, and they will use techniques that avoid unneeded pressure on the abdomen.

A chiropractor who is trained in the needs of women who are pregnant will also provide you with exercises and stretches that are safe to use during pregnancy.

Why should I have chiropractic care during pregnancy?

During pregnancy, there are several physiological and endocrinological changes that occur in preparation for creating the environment for the developing baby.

The following changes can result in a misaligned spine or joints:

- Protruding abdomen and increased back curve
- Pelvic changes
- Postural adaptations

Establishing pelvic balance and alignment is another reason to obtain chiropractic care during pregnancy.

When the pelvis is misaligned it may reduce the amount of room available for the developing baby. This restriction is called intrauterine constraint.

A misaligned pelvis may also make it difficult for the baby to get into the best possible position for delivery.

This can affect the mother's ability to have a natural, non-invasive birth. [Breech](#) and posterior positions can interfere with the natural ease of labor and lead to interventions such as [c-sections](#).

The nervous system is the master communication system to all the body systems including the reproductive system. Keeping the spine aligned helps the entire body work more effectively.

What are the benefits of chiropractic care during pregnancy?

Chiropractic care during pregnancy can provide benefits for women who are pregnant.

Potential benefits of chiropractic care during pregnancy include:

- Maintaining a healthier pregnancy
- [Controlling symptoms of nausea](#)

- Reducing the time of labor and delivery
- Relieving back, neck or joint pain
- Preventing a potential cesarean delivery

What about chiropractic care and breech deliveries?

The late Larry Webster, D.C., Founder of the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association (ICPA), developed a specific chiropractic analysis and adjustment which enables chiropractors to establish balance in the pregnant woman's pelvis and reduce undue [stress](#) to her uterus and supporting ligaments.

This balanced state in the pelvis has been clinically shown to allow for optimal fetal positioning. The technique is known as the Webster Technique.

It is considered normal by some for a baby to present breech until the [third trimester](#). Most birth practitioners are not concerned with breech presentations until a patient is [37 weeks along](#). Approximately **4% of all pregnancies** result in a breech presentation.

The Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics reported in the July/August 2002 issue an 82% success rate of babies turning vertex when doctors of chiropractic used the Webster Technique.

Further, the results from the study suggest it may be beneficial to perform the Webster Technique, as soon as the 8th month of pregnancy, when a woman has a breech presentation.

Currently, the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association (ICPA) recommends women receive chiropractic care throughout pregnancy to establish pelvic balance and optimize the room a baby has for development throughout pregnancy.

With a balanced pelvis, babies have a greater chance of moving into the correct position for birth, and the crisis and worry associated with breech and posterior presentations may be avoided altogether.

Optimal baby positioning at the time of birth also eliminates the potential for dystocia (difficult labor) and, therefore, results in easier and safer deliveries for both the mother and baby.

Chiropractors and pregnancy: Talk to Your Health Care Provider

As more women are seeking the benefits of chiropractic care throughout pregnancy, more health care providers are seeking trained doctors of chiropractic in their communities to refer their pregnant patients to.

Discuss these options with your health care provider. If they are not yet familiar with chiropractic care in pregnancy, ask them to find out more about its many benefits.

Most importantly, seek options that support your body's natural abilities to function and find a team of providers who are respectful of your choices.

Your Next Steps:

Find a Chiropractor in your area

Compiled using information from the following sources:

1. International Chiropractic Pediatric Association

<http://www.icpa4kids.org>

2. Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics, Volume 25, July/August 2002.

<http://www.jmptonline.org>

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