

# The Top 5 Reasons Why “Mothers-To-Be” Need Chiropractic Care During Pregnancy

By Dr. Risa M. Sloves

Discovering the wonderful news that you are pregnant is both a time of joy and a time of anxiety. While pregnant, your body will begin to undergo many profound changes ranging from hormonal, biomechanical, and increased nutritional demands to other physical and psychological changes. As these changes occur, your body is likely to begin to feel uncomfortable and at times you may find yourself in extreme pain. But, just because you are pregnant does not mean that you need to suffer for nine months. So, what is a pregnant mom to do? Well, if you are suffering from low back pain or other common, but unnecessary, symptoms of pregnancy you are not alone. And, more and more pregnant women are choosing the non-invasive approach of chiropractic care to get through their pregnancy painfree!

## **1. Low Back Pain and Sciatica:**

Roughly one half of all mothers-to-be suffer from low back pain and doctors now agree that pregnancy related low back pain is associated with a condition called sacroiliac joint dysfunction (often referred to by chiropractors as *SI subluxation*). A subluxation is a misalignment of a joint and it creates irritation to the nerves and tissues in the surrounding area. The sacroiliac joints are created by the joining of the sacrum (the triangular bone that sits above our tailbone) and the bones that are on either side of the sacrum known as the innominate bones (the area many people consider the hips). Many hormones increase rapidly during pregnancy and some of them relax the muscles, ligaments, and joints in the body. This allows the pelvis to open during delivery so that the baby's head and shoulders can pass through the birth canal. But, this relaxation combined with weight gain, postural changes and stretching of the stomach muscles also disturbs the proper alignment of the spine and pelvis producing subluxations during pregnancy. It is these factors that increase the stress on the joints, nerves, and discs of the low back and pelvis and create pain.

Sciatica, a common symptom that occurs during pregnancy, causes pain, tingling or numbness from the low back to the back of the leg and foot. Sciatica often occurs because of subluxations in the low back or pelvis along with muscle spasms in this area. Most cases of sciatica will quickly disappear with chiropractic care.

## **2. Headaches**

Due to the changes in a pregnant woman's posture, extra stress to the spine and nervous system often occurs in the neck and shoulders. Subluxations of the neck are often the cause of neck pain and headaches during pregnancy and can be easily corrected with chiropractic care.

## **3. Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**

Carpal tunnel syndrome causes painful tingling, burning and numbness into the wrist and hand and it occurs in approximately 20% of all pregnancies. Subluxation of the wrist bones often occurs during pregnancy because of hormonal changes and swelling of the wrist and hands and Chiropractic adjustments can help.

## **4. Mid-back and Rib Pain**

Pain in the midback that radiates into the ribcage is often due to subluxations that cause the nerves between the ribs to get irritated. Chiropractic adjustments remove the subluxations to decrease the pain.

## **5. A Breech Baby**

The “*Webster Breech Turning Technique*” is a non-invasive and gentle chiropractic technique that is highly successful in helping mothers with breech babies. The technique has been featured on the The Learning Channel's “A Baby Story”, *Mothering Magazine*, and *Midwifery Today*. The way it works is the following: The uterus is attached to the bones of the pelvis by ligaments. As long as the bones are in the right position and are moving properly, the ligaments should provide equal and balanced support for the uterus. If the pelvis is misaligned or subluxated, the ligaments become torqued and can cause a condition known as “*in-utero constraint*”. If the uterus is constrained as birth approaches, the baby is prevented from

getting into the best possible position for birth and may end up breech. Chiropractors correct the subluxations of the pelvis and decrease spasms in specific muscles and ligaments that attach the uterus to the pelvic bones to help the baby turn.

By this time you are probably wondering “ How do Chiropractors correct these subluxations ?” Chiropractors correct subluxations by performing *chiropractic adjustments*- a gentle procedure where the Chiropractor applies light pressure to the joints of the spine to restore normal motion and alignment, decrease stress on the nervous system, and decrease pain and muscle spasm. Chiropractors who specialize in maternity care will often have special adjusting tables for the pregnant mother so that she can lie on her stomach without any pressure (they love these tables!) so that her spine can be examined.

Chiropractors are the only doctors who are licensed to diagnose and correct subluxations and there are currently only 8 Chiropractic Physicians in Connecticut who have completed a 3 year post-doctorate degree to specialize in maternity and pediatric care. There are many benefits to chiropractic care, two of the most important are that chiropractic offers a drug-free approach to pain reduction and studies show that expectant mothers who receive chiropractic care are less likely to suffer from the dreaded “backlabor” and they have reduced labor time.

Remember, pregnancy should be a time full of health and happiness! Don't waste another minute suffering from pain or discomfort during your pregnancy. Work with a local Chiropractic Physician who has specialized training in maternity care so that you can experience the quality of life you and your unborn child deserve!

Dr. Risa Sloves practices with her husband Dr. Mark Joachim at their office Associates in Family Chiropractic and Natural Health Care, P.C. located at 156 East Ave. in Norwalk, CT. Dr. Sloves has been helping infants, children and adults obtain optimal health through natural chiropractic and wellness care for 20 years and she is 1 of only 8 Chiropractic Physicians in Connecticut who is Board Certified in Pediatric and Maternity Care. Should you have further questions please contact Dr. Sloves at (203) 838-1555.