

Back Pain during Pregnancy

Back pain is one of the most common complaints during pregnancy. As the uterus enlarges, the center of gravity moves forward causing the hips to shift forward. The lower back has a greater curvature called lordosis. Most women also lean backward slightly resulting in a muscle strain and greater lordosis.

A hormone called relaxin is secreted in pregnancy causing pelvic girdle pain. This makes it more likely to pull or strain a muscle or tendon.

To help prevent back pain, you can try the following tips:

- Wear low heeled shoes
- Avoid lifting heavy objects
- During prolonged standing, place one foot on a 6-8 inch lift
- Don't bend over
- Lift with your legs, not your back.
- Use lumbar support while sitting at your desk or in the car
- Try maternal support "Belly Bands" or a back brace
- Sleep on your side – try sleeping with 1-2 pillows between your legs
- Use a heating pad
- Use ice
- Try a pregnancy massage

Core exercises that strengthen the abdominal muscles will help with back strength and reduce back pain. Yoga and Pilates are excellent for the back. Occasionally, physical therapy may be necessary.