

**Chiropractic and Pregnancy:
Greater Comfort and Safer Births**

Dr. Jeanne Ohm

Originally Published in I.C.P.A. Newsletter May-June 2002

How can chiropractic add comfort?

Chiropractic care in pregnancy is an essential ingredient to your prenatal care choices. A large percent of all pregnant women experience back discomfort/ pain during pregnancy. This is due to the rapid growth of the baby and an interference to your body's normal structural adaptations to that growth.

Preexisting unnoticed imbalances in your spine and pelvis become overtaxed during these times. The added stresses lead to discomfort and difficulty while performing routine, daily activities. Chiropractic care throughout pregnancy can relieve and even prevent the common discomforts experienced in pregnancy. Specific adjustments eliminate these stresses in your spine, restore balance to your pelvis and result in greater comfort and lifestyle improvements.

Comfort for your baby, too.

As your baby develops, your uterus enlarges to accommodate the rapid growth. So long as the pelvis is in a balanced state, the ligaments connected to the uterus maintain an equalized, supportive suspension for the uterus. If your pelvis is out of balance in any way, these ligaments become torqued and twisted, causing a condition known as constraint to your uterus. This constraint limits the space of the developing baby. Any compromised position for the baby throughout pregnancy will affect his or her optimal development. Conditions such as torticollis occur because a baby's space was cramped in utero.

If the woman's uterus is constrained as birth approaches, the baby is prevented from getting into the best possible position for birth. Even if the baby is in the desirable head down position, often times constraint to the uterus affects the baby's head from moving into the ideal presentation for delivery. The head may be slightly tilted off to one side or even more traumatically, present in the posterior position. Any baby position even slightly off during birth will slow down labor, and add pain to both the mother and baby. Many women have been told that their babies were too big, or labor "just slowed down" when it was really the baby's presentation interfering with the normal process and progression. Avoidable interventions are implemented turing a natural process into an operative one.

Doctors of Chiropractic work specifically with your pelvis throughout pregnancy restoring a state of balance and creating an environment for an easier, safer delivery.

Preparing for a Safer Birth

Dystocia is defined as difficult labor and is something every woman wants to avoid. In addition to the pain and exhaustion caused by long, difficult labors, dystocia leads to multiple, medical interventions which may be physically and emotionally traumatic to both you and your baby. Some of these interventions are the administering of pitocin, the use of epidurals, painful episiotomies, forceful pulling on the baby's fragile spine, vacuum extraction, forceps and perhaps even c-sections. Each of these procedures carry a high risk of injury to you, your baby or both! However, all of these procedures used to hasten the delivery process can be avoided if delivery goes more smoothly to begin with.

When reviewing the obstetric texts, the reported reasons for dystocia are caused by pelvic imbalance and its resulting effects on your uterus and your baby's position. Chiropractic care throughout pregnancy restores balance to your pelvic muscles and ligaments and therefore leads to safer and easier deliveries for you and your baby. Additionally, the chiropractic adjustment removes interference to the nervous system allowing your uterus to function at its maximum potential. Published studies have indicated that chiropractic care does in fact reduce labor time.

We offer specific analysis and adjustments for your special needs in pregnancy. You and your baby's continued safety and comfort is primary in our care. This pregnancy, offer yourself the best! Include the many benefits chiropractic offers in your prenatal care choices. Give you and your baby the opportunity for a more comfortable pregnancy and a safer, easier birth!

