

# Pregnancy : Pelvis Alignment is Essential

By: Dr. Brandon Crouch

Pregnancy is one of life's greatest blessings. It is the beginning of a new life. For any expecting mother, new or experienced, there are essential elements that will help to ensure a healthy baby and the best potential for an easier labor and delivery. One of those essential elements is when the mother's pelvis is in good spinal alignment.

For a moment, let's talk about why that is so important. A woman's body has more biomechanical, hormonal-chemical, and neurological changes during pregnancy than any other time in her life. From a biomechanical and postural standpoint alone as the baby grows and the mother's abdomen gets larger the center of gravity gets shifted forward. This shift in weight can increase the curve in the back and increase pressure on the spine. It was reported, by the American Pregnancy Association (APA), that 50% - 70% of women report back pain during pregnancy.

When there is a shift in weight forward on the abdomen and a release of hormones (like relaxin to relax muscles and ligaments) this allows for misalignments to occur in the pelvis. When the pelvis is misaligned it can shift the supporting ligaments of the uterus. This can create torsion and tension on the womb where the baby lives and grows. This is called intrauterine constraint. In 2008 the APA talked about this constraint when they stated "that when the pelvis is misaligned it may reduce the amount of room available for the developing baby... (it) may also make it difficult for the baby to get into the best possible position for delivery."

An illustration of intrauterine constraint can be described if you think about a hot air balloon. If you were to tether that hot air balloon to the ground loosely on one side and then too tight on the other side the balloon would become twisted, torqued, or non-symmetrical. When this happens to the uterus it can restrict the ability for the baby to move or shift into the proper position resulting in a breech presentation. When the baby can't get into the best possible position it reduces the chances for a natural, non-invasive birth and greatly increases the risk for c-sections or other invasive procedures.

The goal of chiropractic care during pregnancy is to balance the pelvis, reduce pain for the mother, and prepare the body for the best possible labor and delivery. In a study published in Obstetrics and Gynecology researchers identified the sacroiliac joints of the pelvis as the major of cause of low back pain during pregnancy. They also noted that 70% of these women reported relief by chiropractic adjustments.

In another study, women receiving chiropractic care through their first pregnancy had a 24% reduction in labor times and subjects giving birth for the second or third time reported 39% reduction in shorter labor times. In even another study, the need for analgesics (pain medications) was reduced by 50% in the patients who received adjustments. Additionally, 84% of women reported relief of back pain during pregnancy with chiropractic care.

Caring for women during their pregnancy is one of the most rewarding parts of my practice because I get to care for the mother and the precious unborn child at the same time. Making sure your pelvis is in proper alignment should be as crucial to an expecting mom as is taking her prenatal vitamins and visiting her Obstetrician. Why wouldn't you visit your chiropractor during pregnancy when all the studies show women that do have less pain during pregnancy, an easier labor, and a quicker delivery? Chiropractic care is safe and women have been seeking it out during pregnancy for over 100 years. Make sure to have proper spinal and pelvis alignment so that you too can give your little one the best start in life.

About the author:

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