

“I decided to seek chiropractic care to make sure that my pelvis and sacroiliac joints were in alignment so that my birth would be easier.” -Michelle M.

## Pregnancy and Chiropractic Care

Chiropractic care facilitates a more comfortable transition from early to late term pregnancy and through to postpartum recovery. No one has said that pregnant women should silently endure the aches and pains of pregnancy. The good news is that pregnant women do not have to suffer these pains that result from a changing body posture.

As Chiropractors, we will assess your spine and pelvic joints to see if there are certain areas that are not moving as easily as they could. We perform many of the same tests that your physician does to determine that you are in perfect health: a complete history, orthopedic exam, neurological exam, and a postural exam to see how your body is adapting to your pregnancy. If we find that you have areas in your spine or pelvic joints are not moving properly, we usually adjust them. The choice is yours as to whether we adjust or not. What is important to remember is that a chiropractic adjustment will allow the areas of your spine that are stuck to move again, which will relieve your discomfort.



The pelvic area is of great concern to Chiropractors. The pelvis is essentially a ring made up of four bones: the sacrum, which is the triangular bone at the base of your spine, the tailbone that is attached to your sacrum, and the two hipbones of your pelvis. These four bones are held together by many ligaments and connective tissue. Relaxin, the hormone of pregnancy, is released in the body from early on in the pregnancy to soften these ligaments to allow better passage of the baby during labor and birth. What can happen later on in the pregnancy is that the ligaments stretch quite a bit, to the point of overstretching. The sacroiliac joints (where the sacrum meets the pelvis) can become quite moveable and walking can become a challenge. The “pregnant waddle” can be noticeable as a woman walks because, at this point, the sacroiliac joints move too much and the body locks the sacrum into place by causing the woman’s feet to turn out and for her to lock her knees. With a Chiropractic adjustment, the sacroiliac joints are able to move in a more normal position and the woman is able to walk more easily.

The goals of Chiropractic care throughout pregnancy are to ease the pregnant woman’s areas of discomfort and to help promote a more stable pelvis. A study done in 1990 showed that women who were under Chiropractic care throughout their pregnancies had reduced labor times. First time moms experienced 25% less time in labor and birth and moms with previous babies averaged 31% shorter labor times. Also, another study done in 1991 showed that women who experienced back pain during their pregnancies had a 72% chance of having back labor during labor and birth. Back labor isn’t pleasant and Chiropractic care can help ease back pain. Chiropractors are interested in relieving your aches and pains throughout your pregnancy and during your postpartum period. Immediately after birth, your body experiences another great posture change and your back needs to adapt to not having a pregnant belly anymore. The posture of breastfeeding can cause great discomfort in the midback, especially between the shoulder blades. There is the constant lifting, bending, stooping, carrying the car seat about,

rocking, walking and so on. Life with a new baby is definitely another time where chiropractic care can help your body more easily. Once again, we keep the fixed or subluxated areas of your spine moving smoothly.

After birthing a baby, your body continues to produce relaxin for approximately the next four months, but in a gradually decreasing amount. This process helps the ligaments to slowly tighten back around the spine and the rest of the joints in the body. Chiropractic care can keep the joints in your spine and pelvis in optimal alignment as your ligaments pull back into place around the joints of your spine.

**1 Fallon JM. Chiropractic and pregnancy. A partnership for the future. ICA Intl Rev Chiro 1999; 46(6): 39-42.**

**2 Diakow PRP, Gadsby TA et al. Back pain during pregnancy and labor. J Manip Physiol Ther 1991; 14(2): 116-11**

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## **Chiropractic Care can Help Pregnancy Pain and Ease Delivery**

The stress placed on a woman's body during pregnancy can lead to many complications that while not life-threatening, cause discomfort or pain. In many cases, chiropractic adjustments can alleviate pregnancy pain, decrease delivery time and improve the baby's position in-utero. Anne Packard-Spicer, DC, a faculty clinician at Northwestern Health Sciences University in Bloomington, Minn., says chiropractic adjustments can balance a woman's spine and pelvis, allowing for normal functioning of the muscular and nervous systems. This allows better maternal body function, which will have a benefit to the baby. According to Packard-Spicer, when a woman's pelvis is properly aligned, the uterus will be under less nerve and mechanical stress, which causes the baby to be in a more comfortable position during labor. Chiropractic adjustments can begin at any time and can continue all the way up to the day of delivery. "Many women worry about getting adjusted while they are pregnant, but chiropractic is gentle and very safe throughout pregnancy," says Dr. Packard-Spicer. "There is no evidence that adjustments have ever harmed a pregnant woman or her baby. In my 12 years of experience, it is safe, gentle and effective." Dr. Packard-Spicer adds that chiropractic adjustments for pregnant women are very similar to adjustments done on anyone else. The only differences are that the adjustments may be gentler and the patient has the opportunity to sit or lay in different positions that are more comfortable.

Dr. Packard-Spicer says that pregnant women who are experiencing little to no pain should seek chiropractic evaluation to assess whether they are experiencing any misalignments.

Asymptomatic patients may not need to be adjusted, but should be evaluated on a regular basis during pregnancy. Additionally, women who are considering becoming pregnant should receive chiropractic evaluations three months before conceiving.

Pregnant women who are experiencing back or leg pain should be adjusted two-to-three times a week until their pain is stabilized, says Dr. Packard-Spicer. In addition, she says that women who know their babies are going to be born breech should receive chiropractic adjustments. Dr.

Packard-Spicer adds that in her experience women who have followed the above regimen have had a much greater chance of turning their babies around under her care.

After delivery, women should seek chiropractic care within the first 12 weeks, adds Dr. Packard-Spicer. During pregnancy, the hormone relaxin circulates throughout the body, loosening the joints so that the pelvis can stretch open during delivery. After birth, the joints begin to tighten again. Checking for proper spinal alignment during this time may allow for the correction of chronic problems by allowing the spine to tighten in a normal alignment.

**Source:** Natural News Service, Northwestern Health Sciences University

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## **Chiropractic Care Eases The Discomforts of Pregnancy and Shortens Labor Times!**

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**Dr. Melanie Beingessner** is a chiropractor, a breastfeeding counselor, a certified infant massage instructor and the mother of three fabulous kids. She is the author of [The Calm Baby book](#), written to help breastfeeding moms calm their fussy babies by changing their diets. Dr. Melanie's website provides information about pregnancy, breastfeeding, ADD/ADHD, chiropractic, health and wellness at [drmelaniebee.org](http://drmelaniebee.org)

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## Chiropractic & Kids - Pregnancy

***Chiropractic care if you're pregnant? ABSOLUTELY!***  
Keeping your spine free from the vertebral subluxation complex is one of the best things you can do if you are pregnant. Pregnant women should see a chiropractor more than anyone else.



Your doctor of chiropractic will examine your spinal column for misalignments (called vertebral subluxation) causing spine and nerve stress. These subluxations damage the nervous system and affect the workings of the entire body. If subluxations are present, the chiropractor will correct them with a gentle chiropractic spinal adjustment in order to release the spinal stress. Without subluxations the body will function better, have higher resistance to disease and express more wholeness (health) than a body with uncorrected subluxations. That is the essential message of chiropractic.

All this is extremely important for the pregnant woman who needs to have her body as healthy and strong as possible in order to handle the rigors of pregnancy and childbirth. Chiropractic care will help ensure that the reproductive and other systems so essential for a healthy pregnancy receive a nerve supply from the spinal column without interference. The slightest interference to the nerve supply could adversely affect the mother and the developing fetus.

Another excellent reason for seeing a chiropractor during pregnancy is that it is a drugless health care system. Drugs, whether prescription or over-the-counter, can harm the growing fetus.



There are so many things pregnant women worry about: staying pregnant, carrying the baby to full term, morning sickness, the baby developing normally, backaches, leg pain and if their labor will be safe and (hopefully) easy. Over the past 100 years chiropractic care has proven to help pregnant women by helping to maintain pregnancy, control vomiting during pregnancy, deliver full-term infants with ease and produce healthier infants.

### **Questions & answers regarding chiropractic & pregnancy:**

**1. Is chiropractic safe in pregnancy?**

Chiropractic is very safe and very sensible for both mother and baby.

**2. Is it difficult to receive a chiropractic adjustment when pregnant?**

Not at all. Chiropractors are trained in adjusting the spines of pregnant women and many chiropractic adjusting tables have special modifications and pillows for the pregnant figure.

**3. How late in pregnancy is it possible to get an adjustment?**

Patients have received adjustments even during labor, as that is when movement/shifting happens in the mother's pelvic area.

**4. Can spinal care help postpartum depression?**

For years chiropractic's beneficial effects on emotional stress and personality have been noted. At least one journal has quoted a doctor as saying that "postpartum depression is a rarity in patients receiving chiropractic care".

**5. Can back pain be helped with chiropractic?**

Chiropractic is not a treatment or therapy for back or spinal pain. However, with chiropractic spinal adjustments the body will be better able to heal its back and spinal pain, as well as many other health problems. Studies have shown a significant decrease in back and labor pains in mothers receiving chiropractic care.

6. **Do I have to have a problem in pregnancy to see a chiropractor?**

Not at all. Chiropractic should be used as preventive maintenance. Periodic spinal checkups during pregnancy should be as common as periodic weight checkups.

7. **Can my baby receive chiropractic?**

Infants a few hours old have been given spinal checkups and adjustments, if needed.