

Physiotherapy Outpatient Department

Patient Information



The Information Standard

Certified Member

Information

If you need this information in large print, easy read, on audiotape or in another language please call 0800 7838058 or e-mail pals@dchft.nhs.uk

If you wish to obtain a list of the sources used to develop this information leaflet please call 0800 7838058 or e-mail patient.info@dchft.nhs.uk

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Back care principles in pregnancy

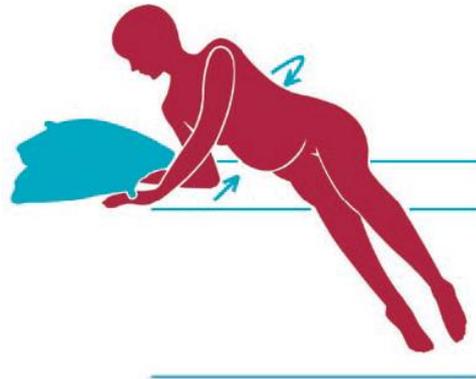
Many women experience backache or aches around their low tummy (pelvis) during pregnancy. This is due to changes in posture as a result of the growing baby and your enlarging breasts. Your growing tummy causes you to lean backwards which puts more strain on your back.

Hormonal changes, in preparation for birth, make your ligaments softer, which leaves the joints more susceptible to aches and pains.

This leaflet gives advice on how to reduce this strain.

Getting out of bed

- As you lie on your back, bend your knees up
- Roll onto your side keeping your knees together
- Push to sit up sideways by pushing with your arms, while
- Dropping your lower legs over the side of the bed
- To get in to bed, reverse this process



Lying in bed

It is recommended that you do not lie flat on your back, particularly after 16 weeks, because the weight of your 'bump' may press on the major blood vessels in your abdomen. To achieve a comfortable resting and sleeping position:

- Lie on your side with your knees bent up

- Put a pillow under your head, under your tummy and between your knees
- When turning in bed, keep your knees bent up and together

Sitting

The contours of your chair should match and support your spinal curves in a good sitting posture. Your bottom should be set right back on the seat and a firm support in the lumbar region (small of the back) can be used to prevent and relieve back pain.

Some women find that using a gym ball to sit on can be helpful in alleviating back pain because they are able to gently keep the pelvis moving.

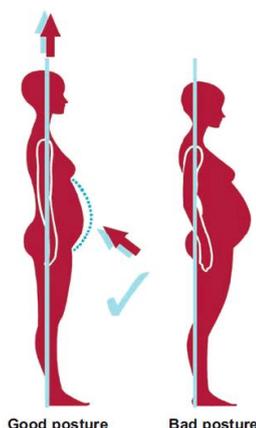
Bending down and lifting

From early pregnancy it is important to lift correctly:

- Bend your knees, keep your back straight, pull your abdominal muscles in and tighten the pelvic floor
- Hold the object close to you
- Lift by straightening your knees and keeping your back straight
- As your pregnancy progresses heavy lifting should be avoided

Standing and Walking

- Check your posture: stand and walk 'tall'
- Check your work surfaces at home and work so that you stand upright or sit in a good position
- If you need to stand for a long time, place your front foot on a raised support to help ease any discomfort



Don't forget to do your pelvic floor exercises!

Further Information

Physiotherapy Outpatient Department telephone number: 01305 255314