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"treating the cause of your problem, not just the symptoms"

Pregnant? Sore Back? Read This!

Most pregnant patients that I see in my office are experiencing some degree of back pain. We do treat them conservatively but we also encourage them to do a few things on their own at home. Here are a few suggestions:

Suggestion No. 1:

Always maintain good posture. Pretend there is a string starting at your lower back that runs up your spine and out the top of your head. Imagine someone pulling upwards on that string. This would properly align the posture of your head, neck, lower back, and pelvis. Consciously try to keep your posture straight, particularly when you feel yourself slouching.

Suggestion No. 2

Avoid extra weight gain. The more weight you put on, the more weight your back has to hold. When the weight is located at the front of your body, such as when you are pregnant, it makes the arch in the lower back increase. This puts more pressure on the low back joints, ligaments, and muscles. If you cut out all the junk food and food with a high fat content, any weight you gain will be a "healthy increase in weight" due to the growth of the baby. Any extra weight over and above this will be body fat. This will be difficult to lose after the baby is born.

Suggestion No. 3,

When sitting, elevate your legs or use an ergonomically designed chair to take pressure off the lower back.

Suggestion No. 4

Wear shoes that give your feet good support. A smaller heeled shoe is better than no heel at all, but don't go over two inches as it may cause you to lose your balance easier and fall.

Suggestion No. 5

If you have to lift something, first make sure it's not too heavy, then lift with your legs, not with your back. Bend your knees, keeping your back fairly straight, grasp the object, and straighten your legs to lift. If you can get into the habit of lifting with your legs, you'll protect yourself from back injury even when you are not pregnant.

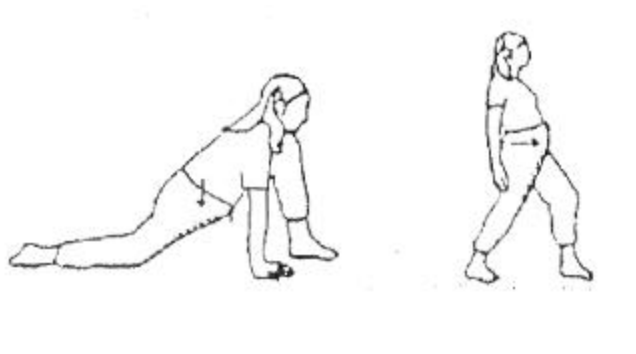
Suggestion No. 6

Try to avoid carrying objects in your arms in front of you. Any extra weight in your arms only adds to the weight already out in front of you. Carry objects down at your sides, or use a luggage carrier or other similar tote device with wheels, or ask for help.

Suggestion No. 7

Exercise your back conservatively on daily basis. By strengthening and stretching your lower back muscles, the pain and spasms will be not as severe and your physical recovery after the baby is born will be faster. I included a few of such exercises, if they cause discomfort or you're having problems figuring them out, do not hesitate to call my office.

As above, move your leg forward until the knee of the forward leg is directly over the ankle. Your other knee should be resting on the floor. Lower the front of your hip downward until an easy stretch is felt in the front of the hip and possibly in your hamstrings and groin. Hold for 30 seconds on each leg.



Suggestion No. 8

Undergoing conservative chiropractic and massage therapy while pregnant has been shown to significantly decrease hip, lower back, upper back, neck, and tension headache symptoms. These conservative treatments are very safe and so not require any drug interventions, which should obviously be avoided during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Suggestion No. 9

Avoid standing for prolonged periods of time. If you must stand for awhile, stand with one foot elevated on a foot stool. For example, if you are standing at the sink washing dishes, open the cupboard door and put one foot inside the cupboard. This will automatically elevate one of your feet. Every few minutes alternate each foot.

Suggestion No. 10

Use a firm mattress that offers good back support. If your mattress is sagging, you can firm it up somewhat by putting plywood between the mattress and boxspring. You may also find that sleeping on the floor may make your back feel great, but for others it may be uncomfortable.