

Taking the Pelvic Pain Out of Pregnancy: IMT Offers a Solution

by Caroline Rhodes, P.T.

Women with reoccurring lower back pain often tell me they didn't have any problems until the birth of their first child. The lower back pain generally worsens progressively even after the pregnancy and then with each successive pregnancy. Commonly, women are not told there are solutions. Yet, there are. The particular solution I recommend is gentle, painless and highly effective. Mothers-to-be don't have to live with discomfort and pain throughout the pregnancy in the hope that it will go away after the pregnancy.

The pelvis is a key structure of the body: it contains and supports a number of organs and it supports the spinal column. During pregnancy it supports the weight of the developing baby. To help with a healthy pregnancy, ideally mothers-to-be should ensure good structural alignment of the pelvis before the beginning of the pregnancy. Although it is possible to align the pelvis until the fifth month of pregnancy, depending on the mobility of the mother-to-be, it's not as easily done as before the pregnancy.

I recommend Integrative Manual Therapy (IMT) for the alignment of the pelvis and the resolution of lower back pain associated with pregnancy. The methodology is extremely safe for mother and baby, and it's gentle: the client hardly notices it. IMT techniques are so gentle that they can be used for treatment of pain and dysfunctions for the entire duration of the pregnancy. There are no contraindications or side effects to IMT.

During pregnancy, the growth of the baby produces forces on the internal organs, veins, arteries and nerves of the mother (just wait until they start kicking in there!). Integrative Manual Therapy is effective not only for problems of the musculoskeletal system, but also in resolving the inflammation and entrapment of nerves, arteries, veins and organs due to the growth of the baby in the womb. By relieving the stress and pressure placed on organs, arteries, veins and nerves, mother and baby will both benefit from a healthier-functioning mum.

A proper pelvis alignment means the mother will have strength in her muscles to support the additional weight of the baby, good blood flow in the pelvis area, optimal nerve conduction to all the structures and adequate venous and lymphatic drainage. This makes the last part of the pregnancy and the delivery easier. It also helps the mother recover quickly following the delivery.

A few adjustments following the delivery will help put structures back in the right place. IMT is effective after the delivery to ensure mums get optimal results from post-partum exercise programs, such as Kegel and Pilates. The advantage of utilizing IMT is that it is effective in resolving the cause of the pain. For example if there is trauma to the uterus or bladder, IMT techniques may be utilized to help heal the membrane walls of the organs. IMT is also utilized to gently mobilize the organs, nerves and vessels into the correct place.

The key to keep in mind is that function is dependent on structure. All structures of the body (bones, muscles, organs, blood vessels, nerves and tissues) perform their function best when they are free from any type of compression, whether drooping and putting strain on the ligaments that hold it in place or pressure against a nearby structure. An example of the correlation between structure and function is an increase in the frequency of urination because of the uterus pressing on the bladder. If the condition is not severe it can be corrected with IMT, gently and effectively.

There are solutions for resolving pelvic pain. IMT is one to consider.