

Chiropractic Care for Pregnancy and Childbirth

Presented by Dr. Jessica L. Jordan, French Chiropractic and Wellness Center



Dr. Jessica Jordan earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania. After suffering a knee injury playing soccer, and undergoing surgery, she was advised to see a chiropractor and was drawn to chiropractic. After earning her Doctor of Chiropractic degree from New York Chiropractic College in Seneca Falls, New York, she recently relocated to Northeast Ohio.

With an obvious interest in women's health issues, Dr. Jordan also looks forward to working with athletes who might benefit from her expertise in extremity adjusting and kinesiointaping (the "strange looking tape" you saw on Olympic athletes this past summer). Dr. Jordan is available to speak to your group on a variety of health-related topics.

Chiropractic treatment is often referred for neck and back pain and headaches. In recent years it has begun to be sought out by women looking for alternative treatments for "women's issues"—not the least of which being Pregnancy and Childbirth.

How does chiropractic care help pregnant women?

Chiropractic care is essential for the pregnant mother. Her systems and organs are now providing for two and their optimal function is critical for the baby's healthy development. Due to the additional weight and stress on the body of the pregnant woman, chiropractic adjustments can also help reduce the incidence of low back pain, leg cramps and pain between the shoulder blades. In addition, headaches and problems with nausea and digestion may be reduced or eliminated.

Most importantly, regular prenatal chiropractic care helps the expectant mother by improving nerve system conduction. The mother's spine and pelvis undergoes many changes and adaptations to compensate for the growing baby and the risk of interference to her nervous system is increased.

For more than 100 years, chiropractic has been based on correcting interference to the nervous system, known as "subluxations." With a properly functioning nerve system, free of subluxations, it is easy to see how many aspects of this important time for an expectant mother will be made easier and provide greater health potential for both the mother and the baby.

Another important reason for chiropractic care throughout pregnancy is to help establish balance in the mother's pelvis. Due to a lifetime of stress and trauma to her spine and pelvis, her pelvic opening may be compromised, resulting in a 'less than optimum' birth experience for the baby. In addition, compensations made by the spine and pelvis during pregnancy are likely to cause a strain on the pelvic muscles and ligaments.

The women's pelvis supports her growing uterus with specific ligaments that become relaxed during the pregnancy. When the pelvic bones are balanced, the uterus is able to enlarge symmetrically with the growing baby. If the bones of the pelvis are out of alignment, or subluxated, this will directly affect the way the uterus will be supported. In some cases, the resulting constraint restricts the baby's

positions during pregnancy adversely affecting his/her developing spine and cranium.

These limitations on the baby's movement during pregnancy may prevent him/her from getting into the best position for birth, leading to longer, more painful labors with increased medical interventions. Often c-sections are resorted to and both the mother and baby miss the many benefits of a natural vaginal birth.

Can Chiropractors really affect the discomfort associated with pregnancy?

Chiropractors are trained to understand the changes that occur during pregnancy and can therefore alter the techniques they use to care for pregnant mothers during those nine months and after the delivery. It is especially interesting to note that the joints of the body become more relaxed and pliable as the pregnancy progresses and this allows for not only keeping the pregnant body healthy through chiropractic, but also provides an opportunity to correct previously present health problems.

Helpful hints for the expectant mother:

- Stand tall and do not let your lower back sag

- Sleep on a supportive and comfortable mattress

- Change positions often to ease any strain

- Use extreme caution when lifting, never bending at the waist or holding your breath

- Consult a chiropractor, obstetrician, midwife or nutritionist for proper nutritional guidelines. Special exercises can also be given that help to decrease delivery time, prevent tissue damage and decrease recovery time

- Avoid smoking, alcohol, excessive tea and coffee (caffeine), exposure to x-rays, and food with harmful additives.

- Especially avoid unnecessary medications, such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), including ibuprofen, naproxen, aspirin and acetaminophen.

Pregnant women can ease their pain and discomfort in ways

that do not involve taking pills. A doctor of chiropractic can recommend a course of therapy that can help alleviate many of the aches and pains associated with pregnancy discomfort.

A little bit of knowledge and a little bit of work can make pregnancy the wonderful experience it was meant to be. We only have a few opportunities in life to experience the wonders of the birth process and we should do all we can to make the best of the chance we are given. Once the "hard part" is over, don't forget to have the little one's spine checked after birth.

To make an appointment to discuss your prenatal/postnatal care, and any other women's issues, please contact French Chiropractic and Wellness Center at 428-1755. We welcome Dr. Jessica Jordan, who is now available for consultation and treatment, along with Dr. Tim French and Dr. Hugh Craddock.



Dr. Tim French
Dr. Hugh Craddock
Dr. Jessica Jordan

6166 North Ridge Rd.
Madison, OH 44057
440-428-1755

www.frenchchiropractic.com