

PREGNANCY CAN BE A PAIN IN THE BACK

A significant number of women suffer from back pain during and after pregnancy. This can become a major issue, at a time when a woman needs these problems least of all.

There are a number of factors that should be considered to assist pregnant women, and new mums in both relieving back pain, and preventing re-occurrence.

1. **Posture:** One of the first things to change with pregnancy is posture
2. **Relaxin:** A hormone that is released into the body during pregnancy, that increases the flexibility in joints.
3. **Exercise:** Many mums decrease their activity and exercise level simply because they are not given suitable and safe alternatives and guidance on how to exercise effectively.
4. **Injury:** The birth process itself puts enormous strain on all areas of the spine, and in particular the pelvis. The sacroiliac and pubic symphysis joints can be injured directly, and this is more likely, with difficult births.
5. **The Pelvic Floor and Abdominal Musculature:** are vital for control of the lumbar and pelvic joints, and undergo great changes, and often injury, during pregnancy and the birth process

These factors are made worse by the additional duties that a new mum is required to do. Carrying babies, sustained sitting when feeding, reaching into cots and onto change tables, putting children in cars and carrying babies whilst carrying out other chores, are all potentially dangerous actions.

With all of these risk factors, it is no wonder that so many new mums suffer injuries, pain, and restriction of activities.

Pelvic and lumbar conditions are very difficult to diagnose as well as being extremely painful. There are a large number of treatments that can both relieve the pain but also assist in the recovery process of any injuries.

Most injuries are soft tissue in nature, and need early diagnosis and treatment. The family doctor and physiotherapist are an ideal combination in providing care during and after pregnancy in both addressing injuries, and in the return to normal function. Often the services of a **Women's Health Physiotherapist** may be required. These are Physiotherapists with specialist training and experience in these and may other problems, including continence.