



# Hammerich CHIROPRACTIC Clinic

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**DR. KARIN ADVISES**

## Pregnancy related back pain

Did you know that at least half of pregnant women experience back pain and 10% of those report discomfort severe enough to disrupt their daily routines? The good news is that there are steps you can take to protect your back during pregnancy.

When pregnant, it's normal to gain more than 30 pounds. This extra weight places considerable stress on your back, feet, ankles and knees. As your baby grows, your core abdominal muscles become stretched and cannot stabilize your posture as well as they did before.

In the third trimester, levels of a hormone called "relaxin" increase by a factor of ten. Relaxin loosens your joints to allow the pelvis to accommodate the enlarging uterus. These loose joints force the muscles of the back and pelvis to work overtime to keep you upright and balanced, leading to back pain.

### **But it's also about baby!**

Many mothers are not aware that their pelvic balance throughout pregnancy affects their baby's position in birth. Increasing your awareness of your posture and movement will support your baby's ability to find his optimal position for a safe and natural birth.

But the biggest question is, why do babies choose a less than optimal position to begin with?



Malpositioning in labor may occur partly because of the modern, sedentary lifestyles that thwart optimal positioning during pregnancy. Easy chairs, couches and car seats force us into a slouch position. Even when sitting in straight-backed chairs, we can find ourselves slouching, compromising our pelvic balance. Slouching misaligns the pelvis in such a way that it makes it more comfortable for the baby to turn posterior or breech.

Sit with your pelvis tilted forward so that your lower spine curves forward. Your pelvis will be open and the baby can choose the most ideal position for birth.

Be conscious of your posture as often as possible. Sit with your hips rocked forward and your knees always lower than your hips. Cease slouching, leg-crossing, or sitting on your legs. Sitting toward the front edge of your chair will help overcome negative sitting habits.

When taking long car rides or when sitting at work, take breaks often and move your body.

### ON OUR WEBSITE, YOU CAN...

[Make an appointment](#)

[CLICK HERE TO BOOK](#)

[Watch helpful exercise videos](#)

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## Benefits of massage during pregnancy

In Spring, a time for renewal and new beginnings, we celebrate the changes associated with pregnancy and birth.

Pregnancy is one of the most beautiful, transformative events a woman can experience. The physical and emotional changes are constantly in a state of flux. No doubt an exciting time, it can also be quite overwhelming, physically demanding and uncomfortable. Massage therapy aims to address the varied musculoskeletal aches and pains and to decrease swelling. It provides diaphragmatic release to aid in easier, deeper breathing, and it promotes relaxation resulting in better restful sleep and overall emotional balance.

Back pain is experienced by 50-70% of pregnant women. A growing baby creates additional weight for the back to support. As the center of gravity shifts forward, postural changes occur due to an expanding uterus. A busy schedule, working, standing and stress can also trigger back pain. Being overweight or an already existing back issue will also have an effect.

Swelling of the joints during pregnancy is often caused by reduced circulation and increased pressure by the heavy uterus on the major blood vessels. Massage helps to stimulate soft tissues to reduce the collection of fluids in the swollen joints.

Studies in the last 10 years have shown that hormone levels associated with relaxation and stress are significantly altered when receiving massage therapy in prenatal care. Women receiving massage had a reduction in the cortisol hormone (the stress hormone). Dopamine and serotonin levels (the happy hormones) are increased with massage.

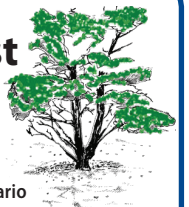
Our well trained and sensitive therapists will ensure that positioning on the massage table and the techniques used are safe for each stage of pregnancy. They will address your specific needs.

**Book your massage treatment today with Michelle, Maria or Wendy. Reach us at 416-769-8072**

## Registered Psychotherapist

Robert MacLennan, MA, RP

Member of the College of  
Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario



## Worry and health

Are you worried about your physical health? Over time, worry can make physical symptoms worse. Why? Emotions are closely connected with the body. Why? Emotions are meant to **MOVE** us: toward what we like, or away from what we don't like. But it's not easy to move away from our own body!

If we try to ignore the call of pain, our body may shout louder and create more stress. Stress hormones help the body to mobilize against threat. They send energy to the "action" (survival) system of the body, but they take energy away from the "repair" (immune) system. So our physical health can be adversely affected by stressful emotions.

Psychotherapy has developed ways to manage, even modulate, emotions. Working with a professional, in confidence, can help to relieve worry and stress, and can free up the immune system to do its job! You can reach Robert by phoning the clinic.

**To contact Robert,  
call the clinic at 416-769-8072**

Spend time throughout the day moving your hips in a figure-eight-type motion. Use the back of a chair to lean on to do this movement. This keeps the joints in your pelvis flexible and better able to maintain a balanced state. These positions also lean the uterus forward and encourage the baby to settle into the anterior position, an ideal position for birth.

Chiropractic care throughout pregnancy is a safe and effective way to balance pelvic misalignment. Advice and information handouts are available at the clinic.

REFERENCE  
Pathways to Family Wellness, Jeanne Ohm, D.C. March 2017, Issue 53

### RMT CORNER