

Pregnancy Massage

Because pregnant women are often unable to take many medications, massage helps to manage aches and pains and it is completely safe for mother and fetus.

In a study published in the Journal of Psychosomatic Obstetrics and Gynecology, researchers found that for women who received regular massage, there were fewer complications during and after pregnancy, including fewer premature births.

Massage also has a beneficial impact on a whole range of problems associated with pregnancy.

The morning sickness many women experience early in their pregnancy can actually occur any time during the day or night. Hormones are largely to blame; however, stress also appears to play a very significant role. By using regular massage to relax, the incidence of nausea and vomiting can be reduced.

Hormones can also cause constipation as they cause the muscles of the digestive tract to relax. Gentle massage to the abdomen can help relieve constipation by activating the peristaltic reflex that stimulates movement in the intestines. Massage therapists can also use rocking and passive range of motion techniques to get things moving.

Headaches are another common problem in pregnancy and massage has proven to be extremely useful in dealing with headaches. Research shows that headaches become shorter and less frequent with regular massage.

In the second trimester as the abdomen and breasts grow larger, a woman's posture starts to change. Typically most women develop an increased curve (sway back) in their low back to compensate for the extra weight. About half of all pregnant women develop back pain, which can sometimes cause pseudo sciatic pain into the legs. Massage can help by minimizing muscle imbalances, relieving pain and relaxing tense muscles. A massage therapist can also help minimize episodes of back pain by developing a simple home exercise program to stretch and strengthen involved muscles.

Massage can also assist with swelling in the ankles and hands. About 75% of all pregnant women will experience ankle swelling during pregnancy. The increased fluid in the hands can cause carpal tunnel syndrome. Massage has proven to be extremely effective in relieving this type of swelling - sweeping movements help push the fluid out of the limbs.

Massage therapists are flexible in their approach and can do massage to the neck, back, legs and gluteals (buttocks) even when it is no longer possible for you to lie face down. By about month four or five in the pregnancy, your therapist will likely have you lie on your side.

Throughout your pregnancy your massage therapist will always ensure that you and your fetus are comfortable and safe.