

Pregnancy and Back Pain

Pregnancy and Gait

Pregnancy and Gait

During pregnancy the expanding uterus and abdominal weight gain contribute to a forward shift of the normal center of gravity. Pregnancy causes a woman's body to release hormones, which relax the ligaments of the pelvis. The effect is not limited to just the pelvis it relaxes ligaments throughout the entire body including the ligaments of the low back and the feet. As a result the low back curve becomes more accentuated forward (hyperlordosis), the pelvis tilts forward and down, the arches of the feet tend to collapse and the foot becomes wider and longer. The abdominal muscles become stretched and less efficient at supporting abdominal contents as well as less supportive of the low back. The pattern of walking becomes more guarded and waddling. The feet often assume a slightly toed out, the feet separated slightly in order to provide a more stable base with the shifting center of gravity.

Biomechanical changes of the lower extremity and low back increase the risk for pain syndromes and awkward gait. These natural changes lead to postural imbalances, which make pregnant women more likely to trip or fall. Custom orthotics can help stabilize the foot and ankle to reduce stress on the low back and pelvis. Orthotics will also help to reduce stress on the foot, ankle and knee that create lasting pain long after the pregnancy is over.