

Powerful Beginnings

In this newsletter:

- > Chiropractic Care during Pregnancy
- > When to Call your Health Care Provider
- > Healing in the Postpartum
- > Placentas!



Why Chiropractic Care for Pregnant Women? By: Dr. Gina Gallo B.HSc., D.C.

If there is any category of people that need chiropractic care the most – it is pregnant women! Pregnancy changes a woman's body, balance, and can place a lot of stress on the spine. This may cause discomfort or other unwanted symptoms. Chiropractic care can help ensure that the body is balanced and that the pelvis is relaxed and open so the developing baby has the room he/she needs to develop.

Why Chiropractic Works
Chiropractic care benefits all aspects of your body's ability to be healthy. This is accomplished by working with your nervous system – the communication system between your brain and body. Doctors of Chiropractic work to correct spinal, pelvic, and cranial misalignments. When misaligned, these structures create an imbalance in surrounding muscles and ligaments. Additionally, the resulting nervous system stress may affect the body's ability to function optimally. Simply put – function follows structure!

The Webster Technique

The Webster Technique is defined as a specific chiropractic analysis and adjustment that reduces interference to the nervous system and facilitates biomechanical balance in pelvic structures, muscles, and ligaments. This has been shown to reduce the effects of intrauterine constraint, allowing the baby to get into the best possible position for birth

(vertex position/head down position). Dr. Larry Webster discovered this technique as a safe means to restore proper pelvic balance and function for pregnant women.

It is strongly recommended by the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association (ICPA) that this specific analysis and adjustment be used throughout pregnancy to detect imbalance and optimize pelvic biomechanics in preparation for safer and easier births. Since a specific and effective chiropractic adjustment can improve body function by reducing nervous system

stress, it is important that pregnant women have their spines checked throughout pregnancy as it offers optimal health benefit for both mom and baby!

For more information regarding chiropractic and pregnancy care please visit the ICPA website: www.icpa4kids.org

About the author
Dr. Gina Gallo has a family wellness practice in Etobicoke called Hands on Health Family Chiropractic. She is certified in the Webster Technique and focuses on pregnancy and pediatric care. For more information about Dr. Gallo, the centre, or to book an appointment, visit:

www.handsonhealthchiro.com or call: 416.237.0069.

Inside this issue:

When to call your health care provider	2
Placentas! What is all the fuss about?	2
Comfort Measures for the Postpartum	2
Community Highlight—Ontario Early Years Centre	3
Book Review—Ina May's Guide to Childbirth	3
Feature Food—White Kidney Beans	3
Postpartum Doula Services	4

When to call your health care provider?

Pregnancy is a time of change for mom and the entire family. There is a lot to learn from what medications may be safer to take, new amount of food to eat, not emptying the kitty litter and much more.

We all have questions about what is normal during pregnancy and afterwards too. If you are not sure about something, it is always best to ask. In early pregnancy, it may be a while before you have another appointment but you can always call and leave a mes-

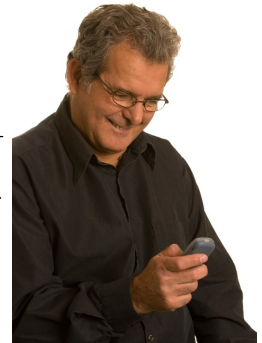
sage, call telehealth, or Motherisk.

If you think that your water is broken (this can be a big gush or a small trickle) or that your contractions are stronger, longer, and closer together—this is great time to let them know.

Your health care provider may provide you with instructions such as call when you have bloody show, contractions last more than an hour and you are not yet 37 weeks, or you have

low, dull back pain that doesn't seem to go away. If your health care provider has not provided specific instructions, make sure you ask.

We are all on the same team—women, partners, doulas, doctors, midwives, childbirth educators, nurses...the list goes on. We all want healthy and happy moms and babies.



Placentas! What is the all the fuss about?

The placenta is an organ formed during pregnancy that is a powerhouse! It produces hormones to sustain pregnancy, separates mom and baby's blood systems, brings nutrition to baby and eliminates waste too.

Due to the way that the placenta sustains this baby's life in utero, many cultures have

different ways of honouring this organ. Some people plant it under a tree, others make prints from the placenta. There are also some women who choose to consume it—raw, cooked, or encapsulated.

This isn't an idea that is comfortable for everyone, and there is no requirement. However, some research shows that it

can help women with anemia, increase breastmilk production, and decrease postpartum depression.

If you think this might be of interest to you, bring it up in your prenatal class. It is always a wise decision to speak with your health care provider and ask about the benefits, risks, and alternatives.

Comfort Measures for the Postpartum

After hours of labour and some pushing, you have in your arms a sweet baby (or babies!). You feel aches and pains but no one told you what they might be! Let's fix that!

Pains in the abdomen that feel like cramps, they are contractions! These contractions help

the uterus return to it's pre-pregnancy size.

The perineum may be sore due to stretching but you may have had a tear or an episiotomy. Cool compresses can help as well as a warm water rinse when you need to urinate. Other women enjoy sitz baths too.

Breasts may be tender as they are growing. Remember to find a nursing bra that fits well. For the first week or so, you may want to forgo one completely to reduce the chances of blocked ducts. Expressing some milk on the areola and nipple then letting it air dry can help prevent cracks.

Community Highlight—Ontario Early Years Centre

In every electoral riding, there is an Ontario Early Years Centre (OEYC). Often the main centre and even a few satellites. Each centre provides it's own programming that is specific to the needs of that community. Should the OEYC in your area not have a program of interest to you, you are welcome to go to any centre free of charge.

Some programs may require you to pre-register, like Mother

Goose, baby sign language, or other popular workshops.

You will also find free play time where you can drop-in and enjoy the array of toys to delight children of all ages. Many will include a circle time as well with songs, rhymes, and stories.

This is a great way to get connected with resources in your area. They have information about infant and child develop-

ment that you can read or even take home. Many centers will have resources in different languages, usually those specific to that location.

Parents have a chance to meet other families in the area and the children learn social skills while enjoying the new environment.

Find the OEYC near you!

Book Review—Ina May's Guide to Childbirth

If you ask a number of doulas what their favourite birth book would be—this would be right up near the top, if not number 1. It is a collection of empowering birth stories from a midwife in the United States.

Her stories are very powerful and they can be read anytime you hear one of those horror stories pregnant women seem to hear a lot.

Although the stories are fantastic, she also includes information about pregnancy and birth. It is certainly a holistic approach that acknowledges women's abilities to birth their babies.

It is a fairly short read and can provide a lot of information. It is a go to book for many who are interested in women's health.

Feature Food—White Kidney Bean

I love to read food labels! While shopping one afternoon, I decided to buy some beans and was looking at the back of the bag of white kidney beans. I was amazed at the amount of iron, since they weren't green! Per serving, there was 40% of your daily required intake!

During pregnancy, when the

extra iron is certainly beneficial, pick up some white kidney beans and toss them into soups, chili, top some nachos, put in a quesadilla—the options here are endless!

Another great trait of the beans is that the fiber content is usually quite high too. Don't forget to make sure that you have eve-

rything in moderation. But the fiber can help with the constipation during pregnancy (and to prevent hemorrhoids as a result).



Picture from 21food.com

Birth Goddess Childbirth Services

PO Box 80048
RPO Don Valley Village
North York ON M2J 0A1

Phone: 647-501-8779
E-mail: nicole.mckay@birthgoddess.ca
Website: www.birthgoddess.ca



We are on Twitter!
@birthispowerful

We provide professional doula and childbirth education classes for growing families in Toronto and the GTA.

We believe that all women are birthing goddesses. We believe in their bodies ability to birth their babies in a way that works for their individual family.

No matter what your plans are for pregnancy or birthing, we are here to support and empower your birth experience.

Postpartum Doula Services

We are now offering postpartum doula services! This service includes breastfeeding support, assistance with newborn care, light meal preparation and housework.

Challenges for families of all sizes.

Call us for a free consultation and have the support you need once baby arrives planned during your pregnancy.

We know that the transition into parenthood can come with unique chal-