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" Massage during pregnancy is so beneficial for the mother and the baby that I no longer consider it a luxury. I recommend regular massage to all of my pregnant patients."

Bette Waters, Author of 'Pregnancy & Massage'



"I have found with my pregnant patients, and during my own pregnancy, that massage keeps the body healthy physically, mentally and emotionally. Feeling healthy in all aspects makes for a more pleasant pregnancy and healthy delivery"

Dr. S.J. Smith
Chiropractor

PREGNANCY MESSAGE—WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

During pregnancy, a woman's body experiences tremendous change. Some of the consequences of these changes can leave a woman feeling extremely sore and uncomfortable. Massage is a great way to relieve this discomfort through the positive effects of soft tissue manipulation.

Massage therapy can assist in reducing stress, encourage relaxation and prepare muscles for childbirth.

A few areas in which massage can be beneficial are:

- Easing lower back pain and leg cramps
- Assisting with headaches and neck pain
- Swelling of feet and hands
- Insomnia

Some other beneficial effects of massage include reduction in muscular tension, increased range of flexibility and a calming sensation for nervous irritability during those stressful times!

As with most therapies, there are always possible risks and precautions involved with receiving treatment. However, in the majority of cases, pregnancy massage is an extremely safe procedure with the benefits far outweighing the risks. Even so, it is recommended that you seek advice from your GP to ensure there are no complications prior to arranging an appointment.

If you are in the first trimester of pregnancy, it is recommended that ***you don't receive treatment***. The reason for this being that during the first trimester, you are more prone to miscarriage and other complications. When you have a massage, toxins and metabolic wastes are released into the body and as a result, may disrupt the pregnancy.

During the second and third trimester however, fetal development is more settled and advanced, therefore the risks of any complications due to massage are considerably lower.

With the exception of the first trimester, the only other problems with massage during pregnancy occur due to complications within the pregnancy itself. The following conditions in which the majority of medical practitioners strongly advise that *no* treatment be performed:

- Diabetic women
- High blood pressure
- Severe morning sickness
- Previous miscarriage
- Heart disease
- Any other complications in current or previous pregnancy.

The most important consideration is that you are comfortable not only physically but also with your therapist. It is essential to voice any questions or concerns you may have to your therapist at any time during the treatment. Celebrate your pregnancy by nurturing yourself during this special time. Massage is a fantastic way to help you relax during this important stage of your life, the little one will love it too!

SOME USEFUL TIPS FOR A HEALTHY PREGNANCY

Exercise

Starting early will help you stay in shape during pregnancy, can reduce your risk of miscarriage and has been proven to help reduce labor complications and length. Try a prenatal yoga class, this will help keep your abdominal and back muscles strong in preparing for labor and after birth.

The natural way

Use non-medicinal remedies for conditions such as nausea, morning sickness and heartburn. Contact a naturopath/ homeopath for advice on essential oils, herbal and natural remedies to help ease your symptoms. Try a prenatal vitamin, ask your naturopath what blend would be best for you.

Water baby

During pregnancy, it's very important to drink plenty of water to help reduce risk of dehydration. Particularly in summer, aim to drink six to eight glasses of water every day. Try to go for a swim a 2-3 times a week. Swimming has been proven to reduce muscle aches and pains and improve your baby's circulation.