

FOOT PROBLEMS IN PREGNANCY



PioneerPodiatry

FOOT SMART FOCUS
PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET

Pregnancy brings with it many obvious changes to your body, but one commonly overlooked area of problems is in the feet. A combination of hormonal changes, weight gain and swelling, and changes in walking style, can cause some very unwanted foot problems.

Swelling and circulation problems

Did you know your total blood volume will increase by 50% while pregnant!? Swelling, or oedema, is common in the feet and legs in pregnancy. Pressure from the uterus on the blood vessels can slow down the return of blood from the feet and legs. Combined with some fluid retention, this can make this swelling worse.

Tips to help with swelling

- Keep feet elevated when sitting for more than 15 minutes
- Take regular breaks when driving long distances to stretch and move your legs



Flat feet and Collapsing arches

In preparing for birth, the body releases hormones that makes your ligaments more stretchy. This process affects all the ligaments of the body, including the feet. Many women find they go up a shoe size permanently, due to the flattening of the arch of the foot, usually in the second half of pregnancy. This can also be quite painful, causing heel, arch, or ankle pain, and worsening knee and hip pain as well.

How to help foot pain in pregnancy

- Make sure you have good fitting, comfortable and supportive shoes for wearing when you will be on your feet a lot (shopping, work, exercise, etc). Joggers are a good choice.
- See a podiatrist as soon as you start to feel pain, as prevention is better than cure! Most foot problems can be cured when caught early enough, and we can prevent permanent foot changes.

More questions? call us or check out our website.

07 4942 5016

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FOR THE DOCTOR

CLINICAL PRACTICE GUIDELINE

Identifying and alleviating foot complaints during and after pregnancy can make this time a lot more enjoyable for your patients.

Vascular concerns in pregnancy

- Oedema in feet and ankles
- Varicosities
- Leg cramps

How can we help?

- Doppler assessment of vascular status
- Measurement and fitting of compression stockings
- Footwear prescription and fitting to accommodate oedema



Biomechanical and musculoskeletal changes in pregnancy

- Increase in foot length and width, due to ligamentous changes from relaxin release
- Increase in forefoot loading and contact times, and greater COP sway length. (1)
- Foot pain, due to excessive pronation from the above postural foot changes
- Gait changes, due to foot posture changes and anterior centre of pressure migration

How can we help?

- Assessment and diagnosis of foot and leg injuries, in cases of foot pain in pregnancy.
- Custom orthotic therapy, to treat and prevent medial arch collapse and progressive flat foot deformity, and prevent permanent increase in foot size.
- Footwear supply and fitting, with consideration to ease of use in pregnancy when reaching feet is difficult.

(1) Foot Ankle Int. 2010 Feb;31(2):153-7. doi: 10.3113/FAI.2010.0153.

Plantar pressure and foot pain in the last trimester of pregnancy.

Karadag-Saygi E1, Unlu-Ozkan F, Basgul A.

We have comprehensive Clinical Practice Guidelines on our website for this condition, including videos, more details, and literature references.