



PREGNANCY-RELATED PELVIC GIRDLE PAIN

Pelvic girdle pain is pain in the pelvic joints that may develop during or after pregnancy.

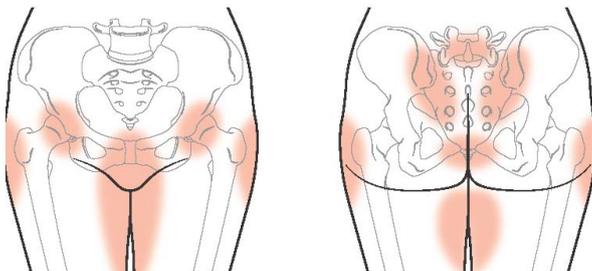
Pelvic pain may occur because of:

- changes to your posture
- increased pressure on your pelvis due to the growth of your baby
- hormonal changes which soften the ligaments that support the pelvis.

These changes can place increased strain on the pelvic joints making the joints inflamed and painful.

What you might feel

- Clicking, locking or grinding in the pelvic joints.
- Pain in the front or the back of the pelvis, buttocks, groin and/or radiating into the thighs. The shaded areas in the picture below are where pain commonly occurs.



FRONT

BACK

Activities that may increase your pelvic girdle pain

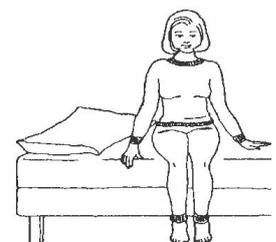
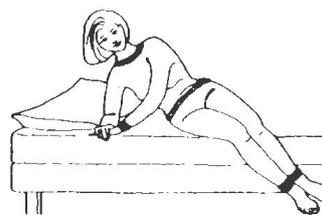
- Prolonged walking
- Fast walking
- Getting in and out of the car or bed
- Rolling in bed
- Lying flat
- Deep squatting or lunging
- Going up and down stairs

- Standing on one leg (e.g. dressing – putting on pants)
- Moving from sitting to standing
- High impact exercise (e.g. running and jumping activities)

Managing your pelvic girdle pain

To avoid increasing pelvic girdle pain:

- Don't push through pain.
- Take smaller steps when walking.
- Walk shorter distances.
- Reduce heavy lifting and pushing and pulling activities such as vacuuming.
- Break up large tasks into smaller activities.
- Rest in between activities.
- Keep your knees together when rolling in bed.
- Roll under rather than over when rolling in bed.
- Sleep on your side with a pillow in between your legs.
- Get in and out of bed with your knees together (see the diagram below).



Tips to reduce your pelvic girdle pain

- Use an ice pack on the painful area for 20–30 minutes every 2–3 hours. Wrap the ice pack so that the ice is not in direct contact with your skin.
- Stand tall at all times.
- Sit tall with back support.
- Wear a compression garment or support belt (supplied by your physiotherapist).
- Perform strengthening exercises for the hip, pelvic floor and deep abdominal muscles (as shown by your physiotherapist).
- Use home massage or trigger points to release tight muscles (as shown by your physiotherapist).

After the birth

- Rest lying down rather than sitting in chair.
- Continue to ice the painful area (20–30 minutes every 2–3 hours).
- Use your compression garment or support belt if required.
- Move within your pain limits.

For more information

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