



# PREGNANCY PAIN GUIDE

During pregnancy, a woman's body undergoes the most significant changes than at any other time of her life. Unfortunately, some of these changes can produce unpleasant side effects.

## Treatment

**Headaches:** Practice good posture. Rest and relaxation, exercise and a well balanced diet can also help. Ice and heat are additional tools that may aid in reducing headaches.

**Back Pain:** Practice good posture. Do not lock your knees. Wear pants with a supportive waistband or use a band specifically designed for use during pregnancy. Wear shoes with a low heel. Avoid heavy lifting. If you do have to lift, lift with your legs. Massage, targeted exercise and postural advice may help.

**Buttock Pain:** Sitting on a heating pad or in a warm bath can alleviate this ailment. Gentle stretching, sleeping on your side with a pillow between the legs and under the belly, and/or sitting on an exercise ball and gently rolling the hips may also help. Physical Therapy is helpful in finding the pain source if these options are not successful.

**Foot pain and swelling:** Sitting down and elevating your feet is the most helpful. Make sure to stand and walk around for a few minutes every hour.

If you feel you are not in control of your pain, the professionals at Physical Therapy of Idaho are just a phone call away. Call today for an appointment!

Most insurance carriers do not require a doctor's referral for you to commence treatment at Physical Therapy of Idaho. We can usually get you in for your evaluation within 24 hours of calling for an appointment, so relief may be only a phone call away. Our physical therapists have between 10 and 20 years of experience in treating pain and injuries, so let us help you get you back to your best, pain free.

## Common Causes

**Headaches** can last through the entire pregnancy but usually are most recognized in the first and third trimester. Headaches can be caused by lack of sleep, low blood sugar, dehydration and stress. The headaches that start at the base of the skull are most likely caused by poor posture.

**Back Pain** is a frequent complaint. As a woman's body changes so does her center of gravity, resulting in an excessive curvature of the spine. This can cause stress in the back, especially the low back. Postural changes are a significant source of low back pain.

**Buttock** pain usually happens in the third trimester. This may be due to the baby putting pressure on the sciatic nerve. Numbness, tingling and radiating pain down the legs are common symptoms. It can also be caused by postural alterations as the body's shape changes.

**Foot pain** and swelling ensue in the second and third trimesters. This can be caused by weight gain and extra fluids retained during pregnancy.

