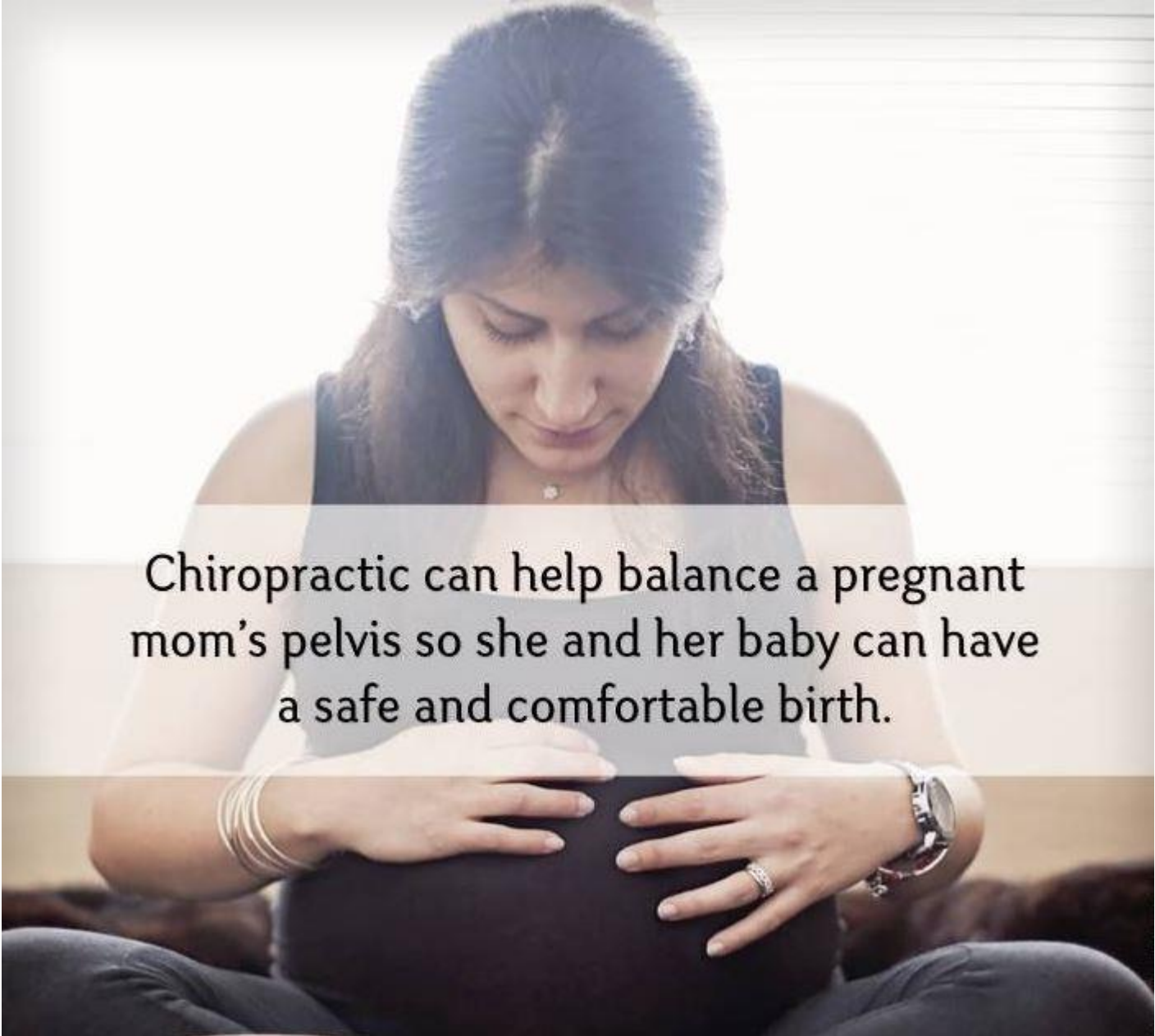


Pregnancy Pack

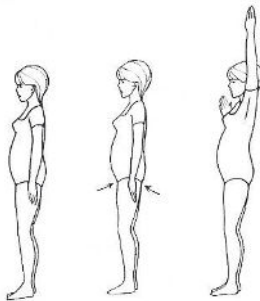


Chiropractic can help balance a pregnant mom's pelvis so she and her baby can have a safe and comfortable birth.

10 EXERCISES DURING PREGNANCY

Prepared for: _____

Pregnancy is a wonderful experience but also a time when you may be more sensitive to any small aches or pains. Keeping active, within reason, and doing recommended exercise is important not only for you, but for your baby as well. Exercising for two means coping better with changes going on in your body. You'll have more energy, and less discomfort & fatigue, all of which may help later during labour and post-natally. Do these exercises daily, doing each exercise 4 times, and working up to ten or more repetitions. Never strain or do anything that hurts ... work within your comfort level.



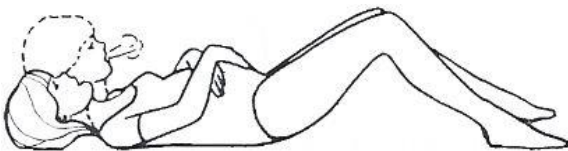
1. **Posture/Warm Up** ↑ – Standing with your feet apart and knees slightly bent, tilt your pelvis forward by tightening the stomach and tucking your seat under to flatten your back. Relax and repeat.

Next – keep your pelvis tilted forward and reach both arms up and then reach with one, then the other. Repeat.



2. **Pelvic Tilt** ↑ – Laying on your back with knees bent, tilt your pelvis up by tightening your stomach muscles and flattening your back onto the floor. Hold tightly and keep breathing, relax then repeat. This exercise is important for relieving and preventing backache.

Try to do this exercise frequently during the day, in different positions such as sitting and standing.



3. **Strong Stomach** ↑ – Lay flat on your back with your knees bent. Cross your hands over your stomach to support it. Breathe in, then curl up, raising your head and shoulders off the floor as you breathe out. Slowly lower as you breathe in. Repeat.

Note: Be sure to breathe out as you tighten muscles, and breathe in when relaxing muscles.



4. **Thigh Stretch** ↑ – Sit in this butterfly position with the soles of your feet together. Hold your ankles and let your knees fall apart. Then lean your body forward and hold the stretch.

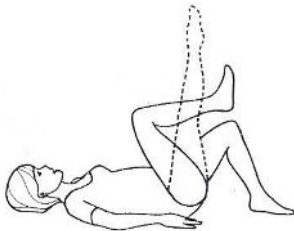
Next – Press down with your hands underneath your knees for resistance. Do not bounce. Repeat.



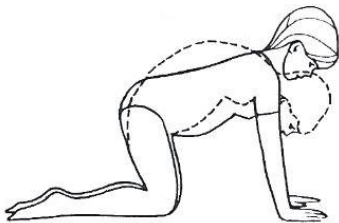
5. **Pelvic Floor** ↑ – Sitting cross-legged on the floor, concentrate on tightening the muscles between your legs. Hold each contraction for 2 seconds. Release then repeat.

- 1) Contract the front of the pelvic floor as if to stop urinating by pulling your abdominals & squeeze your buttocks.
- 2) Contract the middle of the pelvic floor by pulling up inside the vagina then slowly let it down and release.
- 3) Contract around the back passage (anus).
- 4) Lastly, pull all three together.

REMEMBER TO BREATHE DURING EACH CONTRACTION.

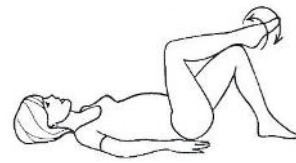
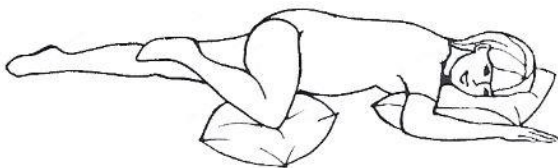


7. **Leg Stretch** ↑ – Laying on your back with your arms at your sides, bring one knee right up toward your chest, then slowly straighten it with toes pointed, stretching up to the ceiling. Lower to starting position. Repeat with the other leg.



9. **Angry Cat** ↑ – On hands and knees, hold your back flat, then tighten stomach and buttock muscles while arching your back up and dropping your head.

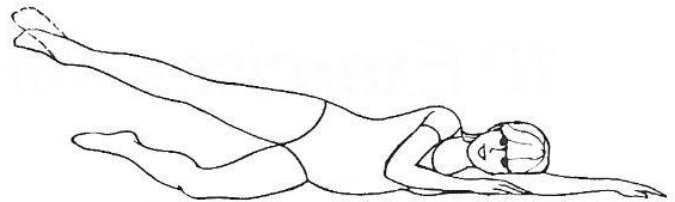
Note: Exhale while arching. Do not let your back sag.



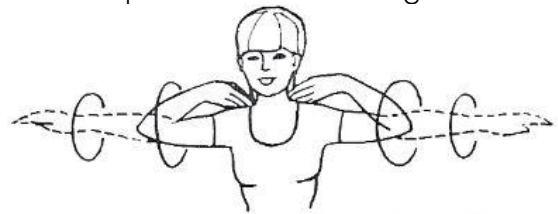
6. **Ankle Rotation** ↑ – Laying on your back, bend both knees. Rest one ankle on the opposite knee and rotate the foot slowly in complete circles, first in one direction, then the other. Repeat with the other leg.

Next – Do this exercise when sitting as well.

Note: This exercise can help circulation and relieve the ankle swelling that occurs during pregnancy due to hormonal and circulatory changes.



8. **Reclined Leg Lift** ↑ – Laying on the floor on your side, bend your lower leg for support and raise the upper leg straight up to the side. Try to remain balanced with your hips slightly forward. Control the raise so that you do not extend the leg to high. Repeat with your foot flexed. Repeat with the other leg.



10. **Shoulder/Arm Rotation** ↑ – While standing or sitting, place the fingers on each shoulder, arms bent, and circle your arms, making small and then larger circles. Repeat.

Next – Hold the arms out straight at shoulder level and make circles from small to large. Repeat.

← 11. **Relax** – Cooling down is just as important as warming up. The position shown to the left is recommended for relaxing or sleeping. On your side, bend your top knee up, support it with a pillow. From head to toe tighten & release the muscles.

Labouring with Ease and Comfort with Chiropractic Care

Dr. Jeannie Ohm, President, ICPA

Before Pregnancy:

Chiropractic care prior to conception promotes a more regular menstrual cycle and optimal uterine function. It prepares the body to be strong, supple, and as balanced as possible to carry the pregnancy. Restoring proper nerve supply to reproductive organs has helped many couples who thought they were infertile. Also, adjusting women throughout pregnancy is one of the most rewarding parts of our work because a healthier pregnancy means an easier labour and delivery, and a better transition for the baby into this life.

How It Works:

A person's spine is made of 24 moveable bones called vertebrae, plus the sacrum (tailbone), pelvis, and skull. From the brain, nerve impulses travel down the spinal cord, branch out into nerves, and exit between the vertebrae. When the vertebrae become misaligned or unable to move properly (a condition called vertebral subluxation), it irritates and interferes with the nerves. The message from the brain is slowed down and the life-energy carried by the nerve is unable to reach the organs and tissues at full potential. A Doctor of Chiropractic aligns the vertebrae and pelvis through gentle adjustments to the spine, relieving the pressure on the nerves and allowing the full nerve energy to reach the tissues it serves.

Pregnancy:

Chiropractic care in pregnancy is an essential ingredient to your pre-natal care choices. A large percentage of all pregnant women experience back discomfort/pain during pregnancy. This is due to the rapid growth of the baby and interference to your body's normal structural adaptations to that growth. Pre-existing unnoticed imbalances in your spine and pelvis become overtaxed during these times. The added stresses lead to discomfort and difficulty while performing routine, daily activities.

Chiropractic care throughout pregnancy can relieve and even prevent the common discomforts experienced in pregnancy. Specific adjustments eliminate these stresses in your spine, restore balance to your pelvis, and result in greater comfort and lifestyle improvements.

As you gain weight, especially in the abdomen, this exerts a downward forward pull on the lower spine. This extra weight, combined with changes in your gait and centre of gravity, can set the stage for backache and neck pain.

Additionally, as labour approaches, your body secretes a hormone called relaxin, which loosens ligaments. This may exaggerate the effects of an existing spinal or pelvis problem. The positioning of the baby and its movement, as well as expansion of the lower part of the ribcage to accommodate your growing baby, can also cause discomfort in the ribs and upper portion of the lower back. Additionally, your increasing breast size in preparation for lactation can create upper back subluxations.

Comfort for your baby, too:

As your baby develops, your uterus enlarges to accommodate the rapid growth. **So long as the pelvis is in a balanced state, the ligaments connected to the uterus maintain an equalized, supportive suspension for the uterus. If your pelvis is out of balance in any way, these ligaments become torqued and twisted, causing a condition known as constraint to your uterus.**

This constraint limits the space of the developing baby. Any compromised position for the baby throughout pregnancy will affect his or her optimal development. Conditions such as torticollis occur because a baby's space was cramped in utero.

If the woman's uterus is constrained as birth approaches, the baby is prevented from getting into the best possible position for birth. Even if the baby is in the desirable head down position, often times constraint to the uterus affects the baby's head from moving into the ideal presentation for delivery. The head may be slightly tilted off to one side or even more traumatically, present in the **posterior position**.

Labour:

Any baby position even slightly off during birth will slow down labour, and add pain to both the mother and baby. Many women have been told that their babies were too big, or labour "just slowed down" when it was really the baby's presentation interfering with the normal process and progression. Avoidable interventions are implemented turning a natural process into an operative one. Doctors of Chiropractic work specifically with your pelvis throughout pregnancy, restoring a state of balance and creating an environment for an easier safer delivery.

Body position of the mother during delivery is also critical. Any late second stage labour position that denies postural sacral rotation denies the mother and the baby critical pelvic outlet diameter and moves the tip of the sacrum up to four centimetres into the pelvic outlet. In other words, the popular semi-recumbent position that places the labouring woman on her back onto the apex of the sacrum closes off the vital space needed for the baby to get through the pelvic outlet. This delivery position is the main reason why so many births are traumatic, labour is stalled, and Mom becomes fatigued and overwhelmed by pain, so that utilization of epidurals, forceps, episiotomies, vacuum extraction, and caesarean increases. This is why squatting is the preferred position – gravity works to help and the pelvic outlet can open to a greater degree. Squatting during delivery results in decreased use of forceps and a shorter second stage of labour than the semi-recumbent position! Moreover, research has shown that coached pushing in the second stage of labour does not improve the short-term outcome for Mothers or babies.



Research:

According to recent studies, chiropractic care may result in easier pregnancy including increased comfort during the third trimester and delivery, and reduced need for analgesics (pain medication). In one study, women receiving chiropractic care through their first pregnancy **had 24% reduction in labour times and subjects giving birth for the second or third time reported 39% reduction in labour times.** In another study, the need for **analgesics was reduced by 50% in the patients who received adjustments.** In addition, 84% of women report relief of back pain during pregnancy with chiropractic care. When women receive chiropractic care throughout pregnancy, the sacroiliac joints of the pelvis function better. As a result, there is significantly less likelihood of back labour (contractions and sharp pain felt in the lower back during labour). Chiropractic care has helped new mothers become more comfortable breastfeeding (posture-wise) as well as to produce more milk. Chiropractic care has also been shown to reduce the likelihood of post-partum depression.

As your pregnancy advances, some chiropractic techniques will need to be modified for your comfort. Your chiropractor is aware of this and will make the necessary changes. In particular, special pregnancy pillows and tables with drop-away pelvic pieces are used to accommodate your growing belly.

A Chiropractor trained in the techniques that address uterine constraint or mal-presentations will check for misalignment of the pelvic bones, misalignment of the sacrum and vertebrae, and spasm of the ligaments that support the uterus and help hold the pelvis together.

What we cannot see are the millions of different hormonal changes and chemical reactions occurring both in the Mother and the developing baby, all of which are controlled and coordinated through the nervous system. Now, more than ever, during pregnancy you need a nervous system that responds immediately and accurately to changing requirements in all parts of your body, and therefore, you need a healthy spine!!

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Dr. Diane Meyer has been in private family practice since 1995. Dr. Meyer routinely teaches pediatrics to interested students at the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College and has also taught Chiropractic in the Midwifery program at McMaster. Her love of birth and babies lead to a Fellowship with the International Pediatrics Association, and in 2005, a Diplomat in the American Council of Chiropractic Pediatrics.

Dr. Meyer has 4 home-birthed, "non-antibiotic" using children, and continues to teach and share her wisdom on Chiropractic, health, and Mothering.

Contact Dr. Diane Meyer to ensure that you and your baby have the greatest chance of a healthy, happy pregnancy, birth, and start to life!

For more information, please visit:

[www.drdianemeyer.com](http://www.drdianemeyer.com)

International Pediatric Association at [www.icpa4kids.com](http://www.icpa4kids.com)





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## ***Perineal Stretching / Massage***

### ***The Importance of Nutrition***

All muscles, and indeed, all cells in your body need great nutrition to work well. Good quality protein, vitamins, enzymes, and minerals are essential for your muscles, including your pelvic floor, to maintain their tone, stretch easily, and function well. If you are unsure of what makes good nutrition, ask your midwife or physician for some suggestions.

### ***The Importance of Water***

Wonderful water – H<sub>2</sub>O is vitally necessary for the electrical circuits to work well in our bodies. We are over 90% water! Each muscle fibre has its own nerve cell. For the electricity to work and muscle fibres to function well, we need a steady supply of pure water. Drink at least a cup of water every hour to flush toxins away and prime the neural (nerve) network.

### ***The Importance of Exercise***

The saying "use it or lose it" is now recognized as fact. What we don't use, decays. For muscles, and indeed, every part of your body to stay healthy, strong, flexible, and functioning, it is essential to put them through a full range of movement on a regular and consistent basis. Walking, stretching, and weight bearing ensures muscles stay strong, supple, flexible, and toned. These activities also exercise the various parts of the brain that are associated with the particular muscle groups being exercised. This is why people who regularly walk/exercise are less likely to get brain disorders (Alzheimers, dementia, depression, etc) as they get older.

For the pelvic floor muscles, life long, systematic exercise is protective against incontinence. Lymph fluid is moved by exercise and pelvic floor exercises are encouraged for men to stimulate the flow of lymph through the pelvis, and therefore avoid problems with the prostate gland. For women of childbearing age, pelvic floor exercises assist with the ability to stretch nicely when birthing a baby.

### ***Pelvic Floor Exercises***

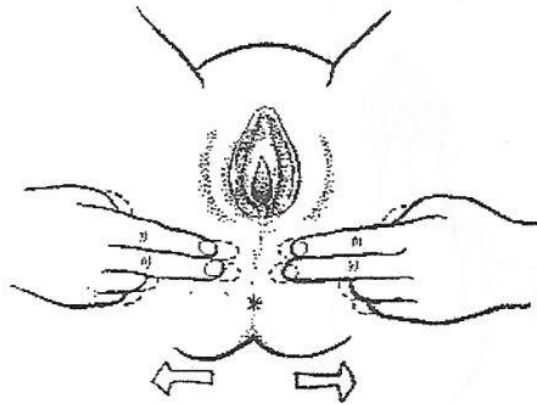
These exercises can be done in any position and any place. Some people use the time at stoplights when in the car, other people do them whenever they have a drink of water. The important thing is to do them. How and when you do them is something for you to think about and discover ways that help you to remember and do them.

**Method:** Breathe in deeply down to your lower abdomen. As you breathe out, contract the muscles across the lower part of your abdomen; then, in sequence, tighten and hold the tension in the muscles around your anus, your vagina, and your urethra. Hold all muscle groups for a count of five. Release the tension of all muscle groups slowly. Breathe in as you do so. Repeat five times. Finish with tightening the muscles. Repeat these instructions several times a day (stopping at traffic lights; when having a drink of water; etc.). Do them for the rest of your life.

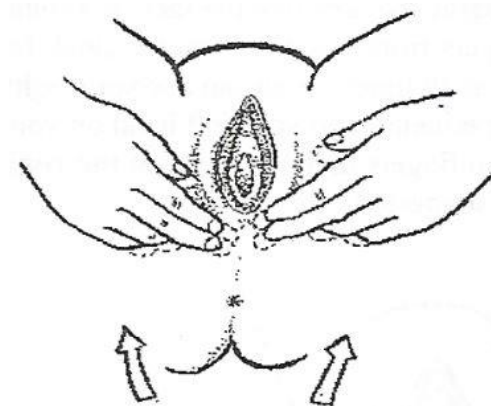
## Perineal Stretching / Massage

### External Stretching / Massage

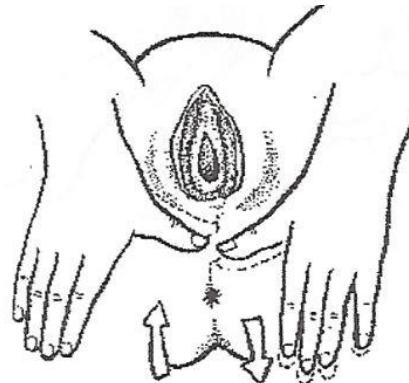
**Step 1. Lateral Stretch:** Place two or three fingers of each hand in the centre of the perineum and pull them out toward your thighs, stretching the skin.



**Step 2. Vertical Stretch – Up:** Place two or three fingers of each hand in a V formation on the perineum and pull up in the direction of your pubic bone, each side of your labia; pull up to where your hair starts on your labia.



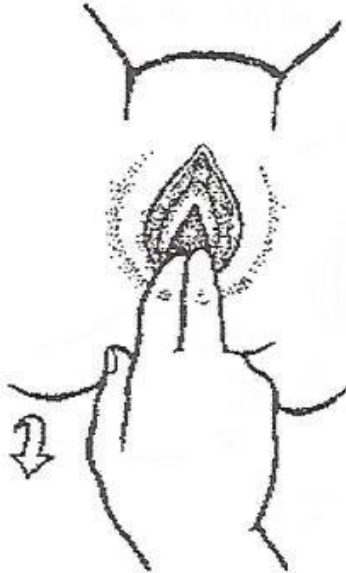
**Step 3. Vertical Stretch – Down:** Place your thumbs in the centre of your perineum and push your thumbs apart in opposite directions.



## ***Perineal Stretching / Massage***

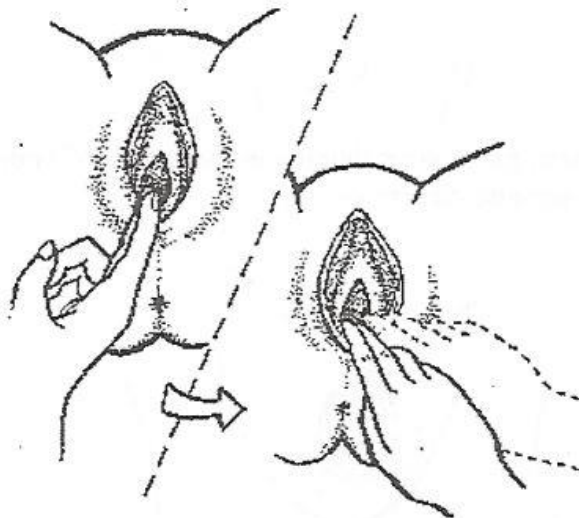
### ***Yoni Stretch / Massage***

**Step 4.** Place two fingers inside the opening to the yoni; gently press down and pull the perineum out a little toward you (if you are the partner); or away from you (if you are the woman doing her own stretching).



**Step 5.** Move your fingers, slowly, gently, and methodically, from one side of your yoni in a half circle, taking your fingers down around the perineum area and around to the other side. Pull down and to the side and out to increase the tension on the area.

If you imagine the area like the face of a round clock face with hands, you only move your fingers from 3 to 6 to 9 on the clock face and back again. Repeat this stretch and pull 20 to 30 times. You can use your right hand to stretch and massage the right side of your perineum and your left hand on your left side. Your partner can assist by placing two fingers in the opening of the yoni, and come down and across from side to side, as suggested.





| <i>Pre-Natal Multivitamin Comparison Chart</i> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                               |                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Materna</b><br>1 tablet daily               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Preg-Vit / Preg-Vit 5</b><br>2 tablets daily (AM/PM)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>NFH PreNatal SAP</b><br>3 capsules daily                                                   | <b>Cytomatrix PreNatal</b><br>4 capsules daily                           |
| <b>Vitamin A</b>                               | 2500 IU beta carotene & 1000 IU Vitamin A acetate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 2700 IU beta carotene                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | N/A                                                                                           | 5000 IU beta carotene                                                    |
| <b>Vitamin C</b>                               | 85 mg                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 120 mg                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 175 mg                                                                                        | 150 mg                                                                   |
| <b>Vitamin D</b>                               | 400 IU cholecalciferol                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 250 IU cholecalciferol                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 1000 IU cholecalciferol                                                                       | 400 IU cholecalciferol                                                   |
| <b>Vitamin E</b>                               | 30 IU                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 30 IU                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 50 IU                                                                                         | 25 IU                                                                    |
| <b>Folate/Folic Acid</b>                       | 1 mg folic acid                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 1.1 OR 5 mg folic acid                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 1 mg L-methylfolate                                                                           | 1 mg L-methylfolate                                                      |
| <b>B Vitamins</b>                              | B1 - 1.4 mg                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | B1 - 3 mg                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | B1 - 100 mg                                                                                   | B1 - 5 mg                                                                |
|                                                | B2 - 1.4 mg                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | B2 - 3.4 mg                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | B2 - 50 mg                                                                                    | B2 - 1.5 mg                                                              |
|                                                | B3 - 18 mg                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | B3 - 20 mg                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | B3 - 50 mg                                                                                    | B3 - 30 mg                                                               |
|                                                | B5 - 6 mg                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | B5 - 5 mg                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | B5 - 100 mg                                                                                   | B5 - 10 mg                                                               |
|                                                | B6 (pyridoxine HCl) - 1.9 mg                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | B6 (pyridoxine HCl) - 10 mg                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | B6 (pyridoxal-5-phosphate) - 30 mg                                                            | B6 (pyridoxal-5-phosphate) - 25 mg                                       |
| <b>Calcium</b>                                 | B12 (cyanocobalamin) - 2.6 mcg<br>250 mg Ca carbonate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | B 12 (cyanocobalamin) - 12 mcg<br>300 mg Ca carbonate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | B12 (methylcobalamin)-1000 mcg<br>175 mg Ca citrate                                           | B12 (methylcobalamin) - 20 mcg<br>348 mg Ca citrate                      |
| <b>Magnesium</b>                               | 50 mg Mg oxide                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 50 mg Mg oxide                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 75 mg Mg citrate                                                                              | 170 mg Mg citrate                                                        |
| <b>Iron</b>                                    | 27 mg Fe fumarate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 35 mg Fe fumarate                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 30 mg Fe glycinate                                                                            | 45 mg Fe citrate                                                         |
| <b>Minerals</b>                                | Copper, Iodine, Zinc, Chromium, Manganese Molybdenum, Selenium                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Copper, Iodine, Zinc                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Copper, Iodine, Zinc, Chromium, Manganese, Molybdenum, Selenium, Boron, Potassium             | Copper, Iodine, Zinc, Chromium, Manganese, Molybdenum, Selenium, Choline |
| <b>Non-Medicinal Ingredients</b>               | Ascorbyl palmitate, BHT, calcium phosphate, citric acid, corn starch, croscavilone, FD&C Red No. 40, gelatin, hypromellose, lactose, magnesium stearate, methylcellulose, microcrystalline cellulose, mineral oil, modified corn starch, polysorbate 80, silicon dioxide, sodium dioxide, sodium aluminosilicate, sodium auryl sulfate, sorbic acid, soybean oil, stearic acid, sucrose, titanium dioxide, triethyl citrate | Ammonium hydroxide, N-butyl alcohol, carnuba wax, D7C Red #27, FC&C Blue #1, FD&C Blue #2, FD&C Red #40, FD&C Yellow #6, isopropyl alcohol, macrogol PEG 3350, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, polyvinyl alcohol, propylene glycol, shellac glaze, simethicone, sodium croscarmellose, sodium lauryl sulfate, starch (corn starch), talc, titanium dioxide | Vegetable magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, silicon dioxide, dialcium phosphate | Microcrystalline cellulose, Capsule: hydroxypropylmethylcellulose        |

Prepared by Dr. Amy Dobbie, Naturopathic Doctor at The WOMB - World of My Baby - www.thewomb.ca



## **Choosing the Right Prenatal Vitamin**

Pregnancy is an exciting time, but often an overwhelming time for new Mom's like you. There is so much to learn about your changing body, growing baby, birth and labour, not to mention preparing for parenthood. It is also a time where Mom's are more conscious about making healthy food choices to be strong and healthy to support the new life growing within. One of the most crucial parts of having a healthy baby and body during pregnancy is making sure you are getting the most out of your prenatal multivitamin.

When choosing your prenatal vitamin, look for the following three criteria:

1. **Adequate Nutrient Levels:** aka How much of each nutrient is found in a daily dose.
2. **Excellent Absorbability:** Different forms of vitamins are better absorbed than others. This is especially important for Mom's with digestive issues or food sensitivities, who may have difficulty breaking down and absorbing nutrients. Read below for which forms are best.
3. **Few Fillers & Additives:** Found under "non-medicinal ingredients". Choose a prenatal with as few additives as possible, to prevent passing on these harmful ingredients to the baby.

### **VITAMIN A**

Vitamin A is important for the immune system, skin health, and development of vision. However, high levels of vitamin A (over 10,000 IU) are known to be harmful during pregnancy. Choose a multivitamin with low or moderate amounts of Vitamin A. Synthetic vitamin A is very poorly absorbed, so look for animal (retinol) or vegetable (beta-carotene) based sources. If you were, or are, a smoker, beta-carotene supplements are best avoided entirely, as they can increase a smoker's risk for lung cancer.

### **FOLIC ACID vs. ACTIVATED FOLATE**

Folic acid/folate is one of the most important parts of a prenatal multivitamin to prevent neural tube defects (NTD). Since its addition to prenatal vitamins, there has been a large decline in NTDs. However, over 50% of our population has a defect, ranging from mild to severe, in the MTHFR gene, which is responsible for activating folic acid into its useable form. When this gene isn't working at its best, folic acid cannot be activated and used by the body. Methylfolate is essential for methylation – a process to promote detoxifications, produce neurotransmitters and hormones, create energy, repair cells, etc. MTHFR defects are common in women with recurrent miscarriages and infertility and are linked to mood disorders, pre-eclampsia, Autism, Downs Syndrome, heavy metal toxicity, and cardiovascular disease. Testing for the gene is optional, but another great choice is to always opt for activated folate (5-methyltetrahydrofolate) in your prenatal.

### **B VITAMINS**

Our B-vitamins are essential in methylation, much like methylfolate, and assist in development of baby's nervous system, while supporting your own energy and stress levels during pregnancy. Choosing activated forms of B12 (methylcobalamin) and B6 (pyridoxal-5'-phosphate) ensures your body absorbs and uses these B vitamins effectively.

### **VITAMIN D**

D3 (cholecalciferol) is your best-absorbed form of vitamin D and is an important part of a prenatal multi for Canadian women. It is difficult to get enough of this important nutrient from the sun during Canadian winters, so ensuring your prenatal has at least 1000 IU will protect you and baby. Building adequate vitamin D stores before breastfeeding is also important, as we know breast milk is commonly deficient.

### **CALCIUM & MAGNESIUM**

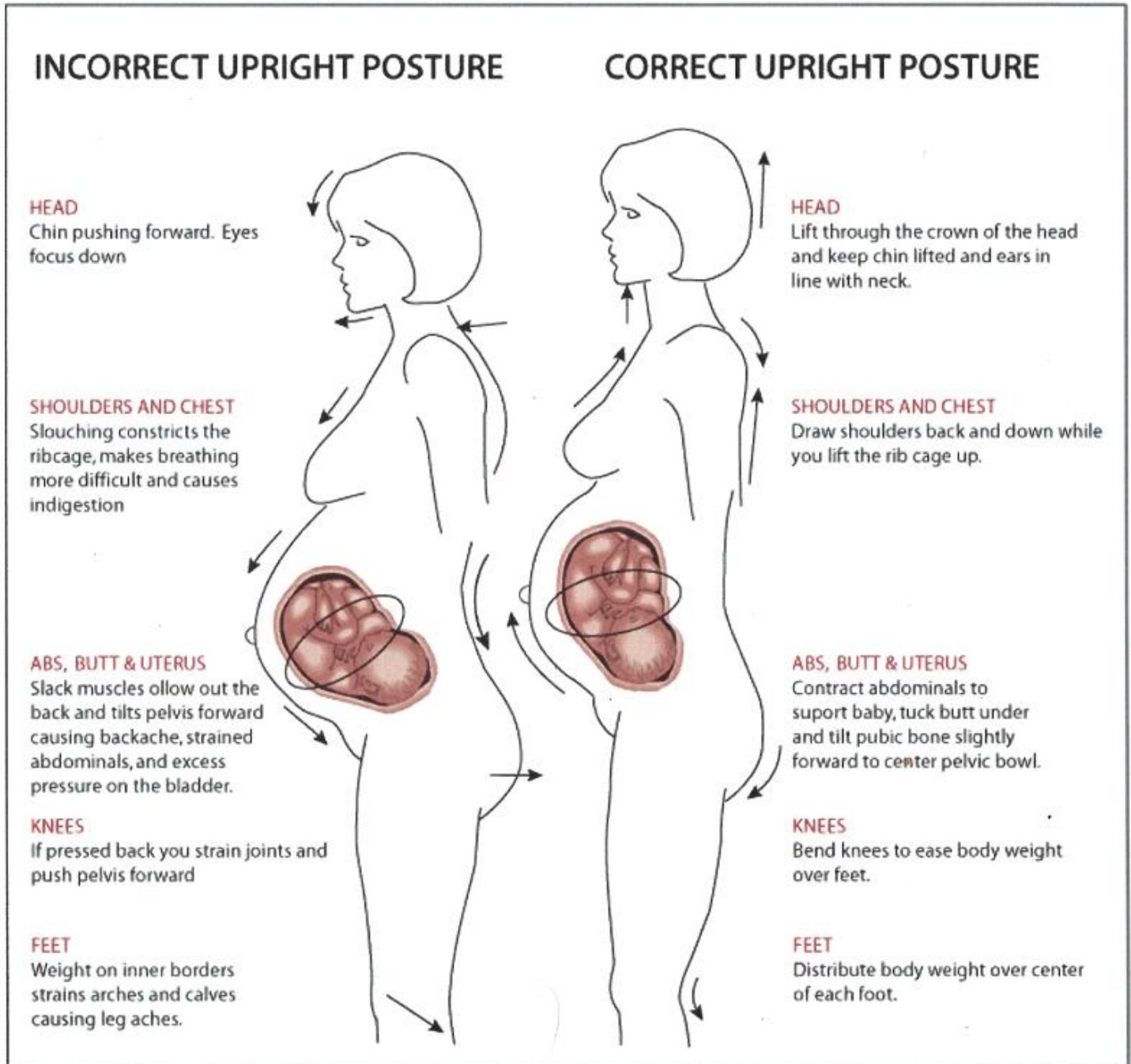
The minerals are important for bone, teeth, muscle, and nervous system development. Citrate, malate, and glycinate forms are better absorbed than carbonates, sulphates, or oxides.

### **IRON**

Constipation is a common complaint in pregnancy, and iron supplementation can make it worse. If this is true for you, choosing an iron glycinate or heme iron tends to cause less upset & is better absorbed.



## Proper Pregnancy Posture





### **Backward Stretch**

This exercise stretches the strengthens the muscles of your back, pelvis, and thighs.

1. Kneel on hands and knees, with your knees 8-10 inches apart and your arms straight (hands under your shoulder).
2. Curl backward slowly, tucking your head toward your knees and keeping your arms extended.
3. Hold for 5 seconds, then return to all fours slowly.

Repeat 5 times.

### **Rocking Back Arch**

This exercise stretches the strengthens the muscles of your back, hips, and abdomen.

1. Kneel on hands and knees, with your weight distributed evenly and your back straight.
2. Rock back and forth for a count of 5.
3. Return to the original position and curl your back up as far as you can.

Repeat 5 – 10 times.