

Pregnancy-related pelvic pain

During pregnancy and/or after having a baby, you may develop pain in your pelvic area, lower back, and/or hips, which may radiate to their thighs.

This is known as pelvic girdle pain (PGP) and it may feel worse during certain movements, such as walking or moving your legs apart, or when lying in some positions.

Causes of PGP

PGP can happen at any stage of pregnancy, and for some women it continues or develops after pregnancy. The symptoms are caused by the joints moving unevenly or becoming stiff.

PGP affects around 1 in 5 pregnant women and the exact cause is often hard to identify, but you may be more likely to develop it if you:

- previously injured your pelvis
- have a history of lower back pain or PGP
- are overweight
- have a physically demanding job

How you can manage PGP

Staying active but not forcing yourself to do activities that make the pain worse should help. Pace yourself, try different exercises, and change how you do certain things. For example, sit with a cushion supporting your back, sleep with a pillow between your knees, and keep your knees together when you would usually spread them, such as while getting in or out a car.

For more advice, speak to a healthcare professional, such as your midwife, GP, or physiotherapist. We also recommend referring to the booklets produced by the Pelvic Obstetric and Gynaecological Physiotherapy (POGP), which can be downloaded from their website:

thepogp.co.uk/patient_information/womens_health/pregnancy_pgp_lbp.aspx

When to seek help

If you feel these exercises are making your symptoms worse, take a break. You can also speak to your GP for further help. This doesn't mean it's anything too serious. It may be that you need some extra help to deal with the symptoms, and you may be referred to a physiotherapist.