

With the excitement of pregnancy comes a massive amount of changes to the body - including our feet and legs. Here are some of the questions we are frequently asked when it comes to foot and leg pain and discomfort during pregnancy.

1. DO FEET GET BIGGER, WIDER OR FLATTER DURING PREGNANCY?

Yes! They can, due to a hormone called **Relaxin** produced by your body to help loosen the ligaments around your pelvis in preparation for childbirth. Relaxin also acts on the rest of your body - including your feet. Combined with the weight from your fast-growing baby, more pressure on your feet and their now looser ligaments mean your feet may become flatter, and hence wider or longer. Many pregnant women find they go up between half a size to one whole shoe size, sometimes more.

2. DOES FOOT SIZE RETURN TO NORMAL AFTER GIVING BIRTH?

Maybe. While your ligaments should tighten after your baby is born and the increased amounts of Relaxin leave your body, some women do experience a permanent increase in their shoe size. We estimate that for the majority of women we regularly see and treat, their foot size does return to normal, so don't throw out your smaller shoes just yet!

3. IS SWELLING IN THE FEET AND ANKLES NORMAL? WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?

You're a powerhouse during pregnancy, holding up to twice the amount of blood volume. This means that your body is asking a lot of your veins that are otherwise used to moving a much smaller amount of blood up your legs, against gravity, and back to your heart. The result is swelling in the feet, ankles, and lower legs.

Assuming your doctor has ruled out other causes of swelling, compression stockings can be fantastic for helping reduce and prevent swelling. They support healthy vein function and leave less room for the fluids to pool. If you don't have compression socks or stockings on hand, elevating your feet to about the level of your heart can promote fluid return from your legs with the support of gravity, instead of against it. Staying well-hydrated also helps.

4. I'M GETTING MORE FOOT & LEG CRAMPS. IS THIS RELATED TO PREGNANCY?

Most likely, yes. Your centre of gravity and hence balance has shifted, your joints are more flexible due to the action of the Relaxin (see FAQ #1), your blood volume has significantly increased, and you're using a lot of energy to support your growing baby. This is very common, and part of the pregnancy journey.

5. I'VE DEVELOPED A FUNGAL NAIL INFECTION IN PREGNANCY. WILL THIS GO AWAY ON ITS OWN AFTER I HAVE MY BABY?

Most likely not. With your body, including your immune system, working non-stop throughout your pregnancy to support and protect the both of you, it may be less focused on problems like fungal nail infections that don't pose a real danger to either of you, aside from an unpleasant look on your toenails. Unfortunately, after your pregnancy, the fungal infection will likely have taken a firm hold in your nail and won't subside without treatment. If you're looking for an effective solution for fungal nail infections that is proven to work much better than pharmacy creams and lacquers, **anti-fungal cold laser** is your go-to.

6. WHAT ARE THE BEST SHOES TO BE WEARING DURING PREGNANCY?

Shoes that support your feet and arches to keep you walking comfortably. Avoid flat sandals or jandals, or any firm unsupportive shoes, and choose those that cup your feet well with good straps, laces or velcro. For optimum comfort, support and to reduce the likelihood or intensity of aches and pains in your feet and legs during this time, consider **custom foot orthotics** that are made for your feet from a custom prescription and materials specifically selected by your podiatrist.

HELPING FOOT PAIN IN PREGNANCY

We love helping pregnant women with foot pain feel comfortable on their feet. After all, you're already doing an incredibly important job - and need to be able to stay moving and active. Some of the treatments we use to help, depending on your problem, include:

- ✓ **Footwear advice** - selecting shoes that help support your feet and help alleviate your pain, whether they've become bigger/wider, or have developed aches or pains
- ✓ **Temporary orthotics** - an effective way to relieve pressure away from painful areas and give you optimum support, comfort and symptoms relief. These are tailored to the pains and problems you're experiencing
- ✓ **Foot strengthening techniques** - strong muscles and joints promote healthy, pain-free function and help your feet stay comfortable as you progress through your pregnancy
- ✓ **Foot mobilisation** - this can help improve the movement and function through your joints so they can work their best, reducing aches and pains
- ✓ **Shockwave therapy** - shockwave is an effective way to promote the repair of injuries and damage to the feet and legs, thereby efficiently relieving pain and discomfort

Our Values - We:



love what we do



challenge the status quo



are stronger together



aim to continuously improve



do what we say, sometimes more, never less