

**BioPed**

# pregnancy & your feet



**Pregnancy triggers many different changes in a woman's body. As body shape and weight gain effect the lower extremities, tired, sore and swollen feet are common.**

**Understanding the causes of foot pain and learning easy treatments and preventative measures, can help women move through their pregnancy with greater comfort and peace of mind**

## CAUSES

Due to the natural weight gain during pregnancy, a woman's center of gravity is completely altered. This causes a new weight-bearing stance and added strain to the knees and feet.

As well, a woman's body releases the hormone "relaxin" which relaxes the body's ligaments to allow for the natural birth process. This hormone also causes the ligaments in the feet to relax which often causes arches to collapse and the feet to become longer and wider.

## PROBLEMS And The Effects on Your Feet

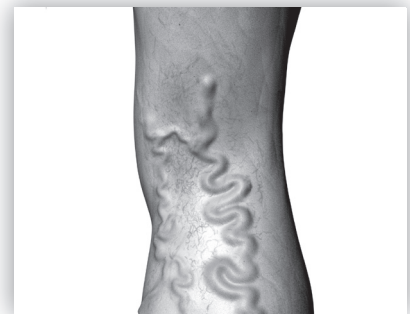


**Over-Pronation** (flat feet) is caused when your arch flattens upon weight bearing and the feet roll inward when walking. This creates stress on the fibrous band of tissue that runs from the heel to the forefoot (plantar fascia) and can make walking very painful - increasing strain on the feet, calves and/or back.



**Edema** (swollen feet /legs) results from the extra blood accumulated during pregnancy.

The enlarged uterus puts pressure on the blood vessels in the pelvis and legs causing circulation to slow down and blood to pool in the lower extremities.



**Varicose Veins** Increased levels of the progesterone hormone, cause blood vessels to relax.

The enlarged uterus, pressing against the major veins in the pelvic region, results in increased pressure in the leg veins that are subject to becoming varicose.

## TREATMENT & PREVENTION

## Pedorthic Treatment Options



### Custom made orthotics

Custom made orthotics support the skeleton, muscles and fascia in the correct position - key to relieving many foot pain symptoms during pregnancy. In addition to treating over-pronation, custom orthotics can offer several advantages to women throughout pregnancy, including postural improvement, joint stress reduction, support of ligaments and more comfort while walking and exercising. Prevention of other foot conditions from developing such as Plantar Fasciitis, Heel Spurs, Metatarsalgia and/or Bunions, are further benefits that you should discuss with your BioPed Pedorthist.

### Footwear

Proper fitting footwear is also very important in treating the symptoms associated with pregnancy - particularly comfortable and adjustable footwear because feet swell as the day progresses. BioPed carries a wide selection of fashionable, orthopaedic-quality footwear that will provide extra support and shock absorption. Ask your BioPed Pedorthist about the benefits of correct indoor footwear as well as the most suitable footwear following pregnancy as foot length is often altered. Our professionals will help you select the best footwear for your orthotics and/or over-the-counter insoles.



### Reduce Swelling (Edema)

Edema can be reduced using the following methods

- Elevate your feet as often as possible.
- Wear proper fitting footwear.
- Have your feet measured several times throughout your pregnancy.
- Wear seamless socks that do not constrict circulation.
- Exercise regularly as recommended by your physician.
- Speak with your physician about the benefits of compression hose.
- Drink plenty of water to keep the body hydrated.
- Eat a well-balanced diet and avoid foods high in salt that can cause water retention.



### Compression Hose

During pregnancy, changes in body shape and weight, coupled with the extra pressure your baby puts on your body, cause your veins to dilate and work much less efficiently.

Support stockings work by promoting circulation and the return of blood back up to your heart through the venous system. They apply gradual amounts of pressure to your leg, with the most compression occurring at your ankle and lessening the further up the leg you go.

**Important note:** Swelling is normally similar in both feet. If swelling is not symmetrical in both feet, this may be a sign of a vascular problem and a doctor should be contacted immediately. If any problems persist, consult your doctor.

Please visit [www.bioped.com](http://www.bioped.com) for  
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