

[IMAGE]

## Relieving Back Pain during Pregnancy

Ah, the indescribable joys of pregnancy. The anticipation of new life, the intimate, developing bond between mother and child ... and the back pain. More than 50% of women experience back pain during pregnancy, especially in the third trimester, and frequently the pain can be excruciating and debilitating.

A Swedish study involving 258 pregnant women investigated whether water gymnastics could reduce the intensity of back pain and the number of days taken for sick leave. Women were divided equally into two groups: an exercise group that participated in water gymnastics (one hour of relaxation exercises, performed in a swimming pool and accompanied by music) during the second half of their pregnancy; and a control group that did not participate in water gymnastics.

Although back pain intensity increased during the course of pregnancy for both groups, the exercise group reported less pain compared with the control group. The total number of reported days on sick leave was also lower in the exercise group (982 days taken) compared with controls (1,484 days taken).

Many of the joys and frustrations of parenthood will last much longer than nine months, so prepare yourself. But back pain is one frustration that doesn't have to last. If you're expecting a child and are experiencing back pain, talk to your doctor or chiropractor about making your pregnancy as pain-free as possible.

### *Reference:*

Kihlstrand M, Stenman B, Nilsson S, et al. Water gymnastics reduced the intensity of back/low back pain in pregnant women. *Acta Obstetrics Et Gynecologica Scandinavia*, March 1999: Vol. 78, No. 3, pp180-85.

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