

How can we improve care for women with Pelvic Girdle Pain?



www.pelvicpartnership.org.uk
01235 820921



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This leaflet has been peer reviewed by women with PGP, GPs, Midwives and Health Visitors

What is Pelvic Girdle Pain (PGP)?

- a condition which affects 1 in 5 pregnant women
- pain and stiffness in the pelvic joints
- asymmetry of movement, joint irritation and pain when walking, climbing stairs and turning over in bed
- in some cases, long-term pain and dysfunction after giving birth which can persist for months or years without treatment

How can we treat PGP?

- PGP can be treated with manual therapy
- refer for assessment and treatment of the pelvic joints and soft tissues by a manual therapist (physiotherapist, osteopath or chiropractor – NHS or private practitioner)
- pain and function should improve after each treatment session
- discuss pain relief options – paracetamol is safe in pregnancy but often not effective, and mild opioids are more beneficial

When can PGP be treated?

- early diagnosis and treatment can lead to full resolution or reduction in symptoms during pregnancy
- it is safe to treat at any stage during or after pregnancy, even if there is very severe pain

How can we help with PGP during labour and birth?

- ensure that the team is aware of PGP and its effects, and it is documented in maternity notes
- avoid labour and birth positions which strain pelvic joints
- consider labour and birth in water and use upright positions, all fours or lying on one side

What can we do postnatally?

- after birth, offer en-suite facilities and physical support with self-care and caring for the baby if in hospital
- offer pain relief and refer for early review by the manual therapist

What is the Pelvic Partnership?

- a charity which offers support and information to women and healthcare professionals to raise awareness of pregnancy-related PGP
- for more detailed information: visit www.pelvicpartnership.org.uk or contact the helpline on 01235 820921 and leave a message for one of the volunteers to ring you back

Pelvic Girdle Pain can be treated with manual therapy

Symptoms:

- pain and stiffness in the pelvic joints
- difficulty walking, climbing stairs and turning over in bed
- pain and dysfunction can persist for months or years without treatment

Treatment:

- manual therapy treatment of the pelvic joints and soft tissues is safe and effective during and after pregnancy
- early diagnosis and treatment can resolve symptoms during pregnancy



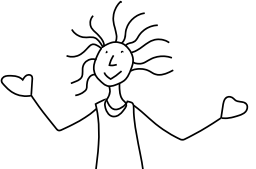
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Read on to see
how we can
speed up recovery

– 1 in 5 pregnant women is affected by Pelvic Girdle Pain –


Typical story of the women who contact us at the Pelvic Partnership:

STORY 1

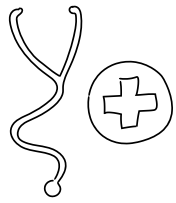
"Yippee I'm pregnant, oh what a joy!
Is it a girl or is it a boy?"



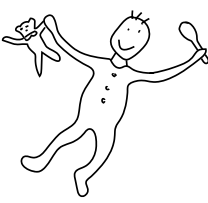
I feel like things should be going so well
But I hobble around and don't feel so swell.
I can't bend down: in my hips there's pain,
I should be happy, but instead I'm lame.




I went to the doctor and midwife today
Expecting they'd take the pain away,
But they said, "It's typical pregnancy pain:
When the baby is born, it won't feel the same".




The baby's arrived and now I'm a mummy
But I still can't walk and I don't feel yummy.
I can't lift her up and rock her to sleep,
I love her so much but I just want to weep.
I feel a bad mum and a grumpy wife,
Frightened I'll be disabled for life.




Now it's so bad that I can't even walk,
Can't open my legs without giving a squawk.
No-one will help me, no treatment they do,
I feel so alone and totally blue.




I've been given a number, a helpline to call:
Support from some women who've been through it all.
They suggested I get manual therapy to help,
PGP can be treated so I don't need to yelp.



The physio looks, moves me gently about,
Assures me that manual therapy can sort me out.
She makes a start, gently moving my joints,
The hands-on treatment soon helps my sore points.
I walk to the door, feeling better already,
My joints are more stable, my walking more steady.




There are good days and bad days;
I'm on the right track,
Taking good care of my pelvis and back.
If I'd had treatment from the very first niggles,
My pregnancy might've been more of a giggle.




This is the story that could be told:

STORY 2


"Yippee I'm pregnant, oh what a joy!
Is it a girl or is it a boy?"



I feel like things should be going so well
But I hobble around and don't feel so swell.
I can't bend down: in my hips there's pain,
I should be happy, but instead I'm lame.



I went to the doctor and midwife today,
They sent me for physio straight away.
The pain and the stiffness are common, it's true,
But it shouldn't be normal, there's lots they can do.
The physio will treat my joints and my pain,
So my problem won't last, I'll be walking again.




Let's work together
to improve treatment of PGP
and speed up recovery.



Early diagnosis and treatment can
lead to full resolution or reduction in
symptoms during pregnancy.

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Assures me that manual therapy can sort me out.
She makes a start, gently moving my joints,
The hands-on treatment soon helps my sore points.
I walk to the door, feeling better already,
My joints are more stable, my walking more steady.



There are good days and bad days; I'm on the right track,
Taking good care of my pelvis and back.
The treatment has worked, so straightforwardly too.
It happened for me, it should happen for you.
Enjoying my pregnancy, in every way,
Manual therapy is great; what more can I say?

