



Pelvic
Partnership
Supporting you

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Pelvic Partnership Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance

This guide has been developed by the Pelvic Partnership for women experiencing pregnancy-related pelvic girdle pain (PGP).

For more general information about managing your pregnancy during COVID-19, please visit the [Royal College of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists \(RCOG\)](#), who have worked with the Royal College of Midwives to develop their COVID-19 guidance.

If your mental health has been affected, please know you are not alone and reach out for support. In addition to our helpline and Facebook support groups, you can contact the [PANDAs Foundation](#) or the [Maternal Mental Health Alliance](#).

For healthcare practitioners

We encourage healthcare practitioners who provide care, support and/or treatment to women experiencing PGP, to contact their professional bodies for guidance on how to operate during COVID-19:

- [Chartered Society of Physiotherapy COVID resources](#)
- [Institute of Osteopathy COVID-19](#)
- [British Chiropractic Association Coronavirus guidance](#)

Our [Facebook Closed Group for Healthcare Practitioners](#) who provide care, support and treatment to women experiencing PGP launched recently and is a forum for all practitioners to share ideas and advice, to promote best practice in the treatment of PGP.

Q&As for women experiencing PGP and their families during COVID-19

Are pregnant women more likely to become ill with COVID-19?

“There is no evidence that pregnant women are more likely to get seriously ill from coronavirus but pregnant women have been included in the list of people at moderate risk as a precaution,” according to the [RCOG](#).

If you think you may have symptoms of COVID-19, you should use the NHS 111 online service for information, or NHS 24 if in Scotland. If you feel your symptoms are worsening,

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the RCOG guidance suggests you should contact your maternity care team or use the NHS 111 online service / NHS 24 for further information and advice.

If you have any concerns about your or your baby's health, please contact your maternity care team as soon as possible.

I am pregnant – what do I need to do?

According to the RCOG and government guidance:

- Stay safe outside the home and practise social distancing and wear face coverings where appropriate,
- Try to keep mobile (this will also help your PGP) and stay hydrated,
- Be as active as you can during your pregnancy,
- Keep attending your pregnancy scans and antenatal appointments unless you are advised not to, and
- Always contact your maternity care team if you have any concerns about your or your baby's health.

More information on pregnancy and coronavirus is available on [the NHS website](#).

Some pregnant women are at higher risk of serious illness, including women who are black, Asian or from other ethnic minorities. Please discuss any concerns with your maternity care team or [click here](#) to find out more.

Can I still get manual therapy to treat my PGP?

Yes! In contrast to the first lockdown, all healthcare services are permitted to stay open, including manual therapy.

Unfortunately, many NHS services aren't doing hands-on treatment at this time. It is still a good idea to try and get an NHS referral for physiotherapy, so that you can access treatment when face-to-face treatment restarts. You may also want to explore private treatment options.

Please contact your manual therapist to discuss the safety arrangements for face-to-face appointments, before you attend your appointment. Please remember that practitioners will be wearing full PPE and more complex risk assessments may have changed how the appointments take place.

However, gyms, leisure and sporting facilities will have to close in lockdown, so this may affect private manual therapists if they work out of these facilities.

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If you don't have a manual therapist yet, please discuss with your midwife or head to our [list of recommended practitioners](#) to see if there are any practitioners near to you who may be providing alternative consultation options.

If you want to discuss this with one of our trained volunteers, please give our helpline a call on 01235 820921.

We have also developed a list of different strategies to manage your PGP without manual therapy during the COVID-19 outbreak. To access this document, please head to our website www.pelvicpartnership.org.uk.

I'm feeling more anxious and uneasy at the moment. What help and support is available for me?

Pregnancy and after the birth of your baby can be a very difficult time emotionally. Currently, there is even more uncertainty and it is natural for all of us to feel more uneasy.

One of our volunteers, Dr Lucy Tinning, has suggested some different self-care tips on managing your own mental health during COVID-19:

“Coronavirus has hit us hard in so many ways. There is a lot of fear and a lot of what can feel like chaos. We are having to adjust to extraordinary circumstances which can feel overwhelming.”

Lucy recommends that we work to decrease the state of arousal from increased stress hormones in the brain: “remember, mindfulness and meditation – using guided imagery can help a lot, use calm and gentle breathing exercises”.

We would encourage you to seek support from different mental health support services. The Maternal Mental Health Alliance has a [list of different support organisations](#) for pregnant women and new parents.

More than ever it is important for women to connect with other women and offer each other support. Our [Facebook support group for women experiencing PGP](#) is a safe space for women to connect with others in the same position, share ideas on managing their PGP and offer support. Please come and join our community.

The RCOG has published a [detailed Q&A for pregnant women and their families](#) to answer your questions and queries about the COVID-19 outbreak.

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What strategies can I use to manage my PGP during the lockdown?

PGP can be severe, painful and debilitating condition, affecting one in five pregnant women. Given the COVID-19 outbreak, this condition may be exacerbated due to the logistical challenges of managing the pain.

As well as the general information provided on our [website](#), here's a couple of suggestions that may offer relief in the short term.

Access manual therapy

PGP can be safely and effectively treated with hands-on manual therapy, such as physiotherapy, osteopathy and chiropractic. To find out more about manual therapy, please visit our [website](#) or read our ["About PGP" ebook](#).

You can access physiotherapy on the NHS, either by a referral through your GP or midwife, or you can refer yourself directly. Waiting lists are often long so if you are able to pay for private treatment, you can see a private physiotherapist, osteopath or chiropractor to access manual therapy more quickly.

If you don't have a manual therapist, we have a [list of recommended practitioners on our website](#), all of whom have been recommended by at least two other women with PGP.

Rest and relaxation

Try to listen to your body and rest as much as possible. Pain is worse when you are tired and stressed so getting a good night's sleep as much as possible is really important; also, take frequent rests during the day. Try and do something relaxing that you enjoy every day.

Get a good sleep position

Ensuring your pelvis isn't under strain when sleeping is important: use pillows or a rolled up duvet to support your upper leg while you lie on your side. Aim to keep your knee and ankle almost level with your hip, don't let the upper knee drop down to meet the lower knee.

Pain relief

Heat, cold packs, paracetamol, a TENS machine and prescription painkillers are all options for managing the pain. Speak to your midwife before using TENS because it isn't suitable for some women.



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Work/sitting

Make sure you are sitting properly, especially if you work at a desk. Take regular breaks to get up and walk around. This is especially important if you are working from home during the outbreak as you may be sitting for much longer periods than usual; also, you may not be using a proper office chair and desk. You could speak to your employer to ensure you have the equipment you need. [Our website](#) has more information on work.

Pacing yourself

Many women report that their PGP is worse if they have done more than usual so it can help to work out what your limits are and avoid doing too much. If you have a partner at home during the outbreak, they could take on tasks you find difficult. Also try and utilise any online services to make your life easier, such as online shopping for groceries and other essentials.

Avoid activities that aggravate PGP

Activities that put uneven stresses on your pelvic can make PGP worse; many women report that vacuuming, mopping floors, pushing shopping trolleys, climbing stairs and carrying small children on one hip are particularly bad for PGP. Going up and down stairs on your bottom may be easier, or going one step at a time.

If you have any other questions or concerns, a further [list of Q&As for pregnant women and their families](#) has been developed by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, Royal College of Midwives and Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health.

Thank you

To discuss any of these issues in more detail, please email our co-ordinator on contact@pelvicpartnership.org.uk or call our volunteer helpline on 01235 820921.

This information is updated regularly, but please let us know if there are any broken links or information that is now out of date.