

Comfort and Posture During Pregnancy

As your baby grows and your weight increases, your posture will change. Proper positioning during your daily activities helps ease back pain and other discomforts of pregnancy.

Standing

- stand tall
- lift up through your breast bone
- keep feet hip width apart
- knees soft, not locked
- tighten your **core** muscles (see below)



Incorrect

Correct



Lying

- get in and out of bed from your side
- use pillows for support between your knees or under your tummy as needed
- as you turn remember to look where you are going, tighten your core muscles, roll like a log and breathe out

Sitting

- sit well back in firm chair
- support your lower back with a small pillow
- legs and hips relaxed
- avoid crossing legs or sitting in the same position for more than 30 minutes
- use a low stool to support your feet if necessary
- When rising to stand, tighten **core** muscles, slide forward in chair, lean forward (nose over toes) and use legs to stand up



Incorrect

Correct

Walking

- stand tall
- take smaller steps
- wear comfortable, supportive shoes



The key **CORE** muscles include transverse abdominis (lower abs) and pelvic floor muscles.

Daily Activities

Lifting:

- stand close to the object
- tighten your core muscles
- bend at your knees not your back
- breathe out as you bend down
- keep object close to you
- tighten your core muscles and breathe out as you stand up
- avoid twisting while lifting or carrying
- avoid lifting heavy items, kicking or moving the object with your feet

Dressing:

- sit to get dressed

Childcare:

- avoid stooping
- use a lower stool to sit on
- use a cushion under your knees to kneel on

Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises (kegels)

1. **Speed'ems:** Pull your pelvic floor muscles up and in quickly and strongly, hold for 2 counts. Relax completely for 2 counts. Repeat until your muscles begin to feel tired. Work up to doing 30 in a row.
2. **Hold'ems:** Pull your pelvic floor muscles up and in quickly and strongly but hold for a slow count of 5. Make sure you continue to breathe. Relax 10 seconds before starting your next one. Repeat 5 times. Your goal is holding each one for 10 seconds with a 10 second rest and repeat 10 times.

Tummy Tucks

While doing a kegel gently pull in your lower tummy muscles (below your belly button). Hold for 3 seconds, then let go. Repeat 5 times. Do this in standing, sitting or lying down.

Everyday Tips (and other things to think about)

1. Take 10-20 minutes for yourself to rest and refresh.
2. Use heat or ice (wrapped in a towel) for 15 to 20 minutes to help relieve back discomfort.
3. Pace yourself, rest when you need it.
4. Wear a supportive bra and good supportive shoes.
5. Change positions (every 20 to 30 minutes).
6. Working surfaces should be at hip height when standing.
7. Do Pelvic Floor Muscle Exercises (kegels) everyday.