



Chiropractic Newsletter

Discover Chiropractic

Grateful for Chiropractic

The last trimester of pregnancy includes some of the most physically, mentally, and emotionally challenging days for many women. After 38 weeks of pregnancy, I found myself waking up each morning and hoping I would meet my baby by the end of the day, and each evening, disappointment that I was still pregnant filled me.

As the days ticked by, new symptoms and discomforts emerged within my body. Stretch marks scrawled over my large abdomen. The veins on my legs and breasts swelled and turned a deep shade of blue. Overall, my biggest complaint was the constant ache, and even pain, in my hips, legs, and back. I gained 40 pounds during my pregnancy, and my body was working hard to grow the little life within me and prepare for labor.

My midwife heard my complaints and recommended that I see an ICPA-certified chiropractor. With a chiropractor's help, she told me, I could experience two benefits: relief from pain and preparation for labor. I listened to this sage advice.

Chiropractic for Pregnancy and Birth

When I called the office the next morning, I shared that I was 38 weeks pregnant and looking to prepare my body for labor and find some relief from all of the discomforts I was experiencing. The office administrator told me to come in that afternoon. I had a few reservations before going to see the chiropractor, and these fears were indicative of mainstream cultural assumptions about chiropractic medicine. What if the treatment was not gentle? Would the adjustment hurt my baby? Was my back going to crack? Would the chiropractor contort my body into odd positions? All of these fears were far from the truth.

The chiropractor, Dr. March, welcomed me with warmth and understanding, and she listened to my concerns as she examined me. She cared about me, and I could tell from

the moment I met her that her entire goal was to provide me with the best care. The adjustment she gave me was gentle and effective, and she had pillows so that I could lay on my belly for the first time in several months. I left the office feeling better than I had in years, even prior to pregnancy.

I continued to go to the chiropractor three times a week for three weeks. Each time I went into the office, the adjustment helped relieve the pain in my hips, legs, and back. My baby also dropped lower into my pelvis, and I was able to rest a few minutes on my belly, which was delightful. Dr. March reassured me with each visit: "No one is pregnant forever." I felt as though I had been pregnant forever, and the days of the third trimester seemed endless; however, the relief I experienced after each visit with Dr. March caused me to look forward to the next visit. I enjoyed the adjustment and the conversation.

When the day of my baby's birth arrived, I labored for 20 hours and pushed for nine hours. With the help of a team of skilled midwives, and with my mother and husband by my side, my little girl was born. The chiropractic care I received prior to labor and birthing opened my hips and restored flexibility in my spine so that I could endure such a long labor. My husband and I were overjoyed to welcome our daughter, Eden, into the world.

After the first 24 hours postpartum, I realized that I could not feel three toes in my left foot. After seeing a podiatrist and a pelvic floor physical therapist, I was diagnosed with nerve damage in my pelvis. Nerves in legs and feet are like the branches of a tree, and the roots are in the pelvis. The pressure of my daughter's head and body during the long labor we endured together damaged nerves in my pelvis and left the toes in my foot numb. The podiatrist told me nerve healing would take six months to a year, and he

recommended I move every day in order to help heal the damaged nerves. The pelvic floor physical therapist, Samantha, told me the goal was to heal the pelvis and restore feeling in my toes, and she created a plan to target those nerves through pelvic exercises, stretching, and walking. I started going to see Samantha for physical therapy twice a week.

Chiropractic Helps with Breastfeeding

When I returned to the chiropractor after the birth of my daughter, I brought my baby girl with me. She was just one week old, and she had trouble nursing on my left side. I shared this information with the doctor, and I also told her about the nerve damage I sustained during labor. Dr. March's adjustment of my body was gentle, and she targeted the nerves in my pelvis, leg, and foot. She asked about the labor and provided me with a great amount of encouragement—essential to a new momma.

When Dr. March held my daughter in her arms, she spoke softly to her and soothed her to sleep. The adjustment on Eden was so gentle, my husband and I did not even realize Dr. March adjusted our baby. She told us the cervical vertebrae were tight. After the adjustment, my baby nursed a lot better on both sides, and she slept better, too.

Over the next few weeks, my toes continued to feel numb, especially with the compression of a shoe. I walked around barefoot when I could, and I continued to go to the chiropractor for adjustments and to pelvic floor physical therapy. At times, there seemed to be little hope that I would ever feel my toes again, but I had to have faith that feeling would return and my nerves would heal in time.

By the time my daughter turned six weeks old, the numbness in my toes faded and the pain in my back intensified, which was a sign that the nerves in my pelvis were healing. During the next few weeks, I looked forward to the chiropractic adjustments because of the relief from

pain I felt after leaving the office. When my daughter turned two months old, I went back to the podiatrist and shared that I regained most of the feeling in my toes and had back pain that was now less intense. When he seemed surprised, I shared that I was going to a pelvic floor physical therapist and to a chiropractor, and both of these professional women helped me heal my body. He confided that he thought healing would take longer, if I ever regained feeling at all. Nerves take a long time to heal.

I am still going to pelvic floor physical therapy to work with Samantha, and I take my daughter with me. Samantha provides a clean sheet for Eden to lay on, and my little girl stretches and completes her own exercises on the large padded table right next to me as I complete physical therapy. Every other week, Eden and I go to Dr. March's chiropractic office for an adjustment. I notice such a difference in the way my daughter nurses after the adjustments. Eden sleeps all night, too, usually 10 to 12 hours, another benefit of chiropractic care.

Prior to giving birth, I did not realize how intense the experience of labor and birth was for both mothers and their babies. Babies feel discomforts and pain, and chiropractic adjustments help alleviate the pain they feel to help them nurse and sleep better. If babies sleep, their mommas sleep, too. Chiropractic medicine prepared my body for the intensity of labor and birth, and chiropractic medicine, pelvic floor physical therapy, and prayer healed my body. Mother and baby both benefit from gentle adjustments provided by ICPA-certified chiropractors, and I am living proof of the healing and restoration prior to and after the birth of my daughter. I am grateful for the care I receive, and I am grateful for the chubby-cheeked baby girl sleeping soundly in my arms.

-Hanna Szigeti

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