

Stretching During Pregnancy

It is important that you prepare your body for pregnancy and the delivery process in two ways:

- **Firstly**, flexibility needs to be maintained throughout the entire 40 weeks, to ensure your pregnancy is as comfortable as possible.
- **Secondly**, certain muscles need to be strengthened to enable the optimal positions for you and your child in delivery.

If you feel pain or discomfort at any time during these exercises, it is important to stop and seek further advice from Putney Chiropractic Centre.



Side Stretch

Seated, raise one arm above the head and stretch to one side feeling a gentle pull on between your ribs cage and you hip. Repeat both sides.



Forward Bend Variations

a. From a standing position slowly walk you hands down a wall until you feel a gentle pull in the back of your legs, or you reach a 90 degree angle.



b. Seated with your legs spread to 90 degrees, use a chair to assist your forward bend until you feel a gentle pull in the back of your legs or groin.



c. Using the wall to help with the stretch, legs can be between 70-90 degrees. (This is not recommended late in your pregnancy as it can put excess pressure through your pelvis and sacrum.)



d. From c, cross your legs into a lotus type position. (This is not recommended late in your pregnancy as it can put excess pressure through your pelvis and sacrum.)



Cat arches

Assume a position on your hands and knees being careful not to arch your low back too severely (i.e. don't let your tummy drop too far).

From this position suck your tummy towards the ceiling and attempt to create a nice 'C' shaped curve in your spine. Hold for a count of 5-10 seconds and then relax.



Hamstrings

Be careful to keep back straight in the hamstring stretch, lumbar spine flexion should not be used to compensate for tight hamstrings. Bend knee if you have to but preferably keep knee straight. Bring your chest and your thigh closer together until you feel a stretch in the back of the leg / knee.

Photos are courtesy of Lucy Farmbrough.