

My Feet And Ankles Become Swollen Since I Got Pregnant! How Can I Relieve It?



A woman's body undergoes numerous changes during pregnancy. It is perfectly normal for pregnant women to have swollen feet and ankles due to water retention. Besides the discomforts of pregnancy, all that swelling may make it tough to squeeze your feet into your usual shoes. It's not unusual for an expectant mom to go up a half to a full size in shoes during her pregnancy. [Dr Kannan, Orthopedic Surgeon from Mount Elizabeth Medical Centre](#), provides us with more tips and advice for our swollen ankles and feet.

Ever wonder why our ankles and feet swell up during pregnancy?

Pregnant women tend to develop swollen feet and ankles due to fluid retention. In addition to fluid retention, the hormone relaxin, which is released during the third trimester to relax your pelvic ligaments for childbirth, flattens and lengthens foot ligaments. Together with an added weight of a gravid uterus and stretched ligaments, there will be tremendous stress and strains on your feet and ankles.

With these swollen feet and ankles, how can I walk comfortably?

Other than purchasing slightly larger shoes, your feet also need extra support and comfort. Your center of gravity will tend to shift with pregnancy weight gain. You will need to wear shoes that provide you with stability and therefore it is best to avoid high heels. Choose shoes with a broad-based front and a heel that is less than an inch.

For a dressy or office shoe, go for shoes with a comfortable sole for shock absorption. If the shoes are meant mainly for walking, a sports shoe or a running sneaker is the best option. Avoid wearing beach sandals or flip-flops during your pregnancy period, as they do not confer any support or comfort to your feet. Your feet

sometimes needs to be assessed by a foot & ankle orthopedic specialist who can best advise you based on your foot shape.

What are some of the common orthopedic problems that a pregnant woman might face? Is there something one can do to lessen the pressure put on their feet from the additional weight that they gain?

Certain orthopedic conditions are commonly seen in pregnant women. Though some may be normal occurrences in pregnancy, it is important to understand some of these conditions and how to manage them.

1. Lower back pain



It's easy to understand why low back pain is the most common orthopedic complaint during pregnancy. More than half of all pregnant women experience significant back pain during pregnancy. The extra weight of the baby, and the awkward distribution of weight cause muscle fatigue and spasm in the back muscles.

Pregnant women often arch their body backwards while walking sometimes due to a gravid uterus and this causes a lot of strain on the back. Having a conditioned back before becoming pregnant can help your body prepare for the weight of the baby. However it is also not too late to take care of the back pain during pregnancy. Swimming and exercises classes helps to strengthen the back. Lumbar support chairs in the office or a support mattress for sleeping help as well. Having proper footwear to distribute the weight while waking helps remove some of the stress from the knees and back.

2. Swollen feet and ankles

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Other than slightly larger shoes, your feet also need extra support and comfort. As you are constantly gaining weight during your pregnancy, your center of gravity will shift. You will need to wear shoes that provide you with stability and therefore it is best to avoid high heels. Choose shoes with a broad-based front and a heel that is less than an inch.

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3. Plantar fasciitis

When a pregnant lady is walking around most of the time there is lot of pressure on the heel, giving rise to plantar fascia inflammation. This is contributed by the added weight and the stretched out soft tissues in the feet. The plantar fascia is a structure on the sole of our feet that's helps to maintain our arch and help with toe push-off. Some women may present with heel pain. There is also a lot of stress on the toes and with repeated walking and pushing off on toes, there may a chronic stress injury to the bones and soft tissues.

You will need to wear shoes that provide you with stability and comfort.

Having the correct footwear will prevent calluses and blisters in an already swollen foot. It is also important to exercise & stretch the foot and calf muscles to prevent tiredness and strength the muscles. In some women who do have a particular foot shape (high or flat arch foot), customized insoles may be necessary even during pregnancy.



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