



Sandra Catania

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Maternity Reflexology by Sandra Catania

Reflexology is an ancient healing art which was rediscovered in the West in the 1930's. It involves applying gentle pressure to reflex points on the hands and feet which correspond to different organs and systems in the body. This helps to clear the vital energy pathways caused by stress and tension and aids the body to heal itself. The result is a return to a balanced and relaxed state, with the side benefits of improved circulation, digestion and elimination.

Having Reflexology treatments before, during and after pregnancy is extremely beneficial. There is no other time in a woman's life when her body will undergo more changes emotionally, hormonally and physiologically. Reflexology has been shown to help with everything from conception, morning sickness, back ache, fluid retention & swelling through to alleviating pain during labour, making labour shorter, maintaining or increasing milk supply and dealing with postnatal depression.

It is completely safe to have Reflexology treatments during all stages of pregnancy although some may prefer to wait until they have passed the three month mark, for their own personal reasons (such as past miscarriages). Some may fear that a treatment may bring on labour prematurely, but the fact of the matter is that Reflexology is not going to make the body do anything it is not ready to do!

There are a couple of contraindications to mention: women with a risk for either Deep Vein Thrombosis or Pre-eclampsia. Women with diabetes are best off measuring their blood sugar levels before and after treatment as it does help to balance the endocrine system & regulate insulin production.

Dr. Gowri Motha's Gentle Birth Method (from the book: Gentle Birth Method [Thorsons, published 2004, ISBN 0-00-717684-8].) suggests the following schedule for optimum results during pregnancy.

Reflexology in the First Trimester :

A general session helps the body maintain balance and prevent morning sickness and tiredness

Second Trimester:

week 13 or 14 for relaxation and regulation of thyroid function

week 15 for pelvic and thoracic lymphatic drainage

week 18 for sciatic nerve and pelvic area

week 20 for general balancing and prevention

week 24 for endocrine and pancreatic balancing to prevent or correct gestational diabetes

week 26 for pancreas, intestine and thyroid balancing

Third Trimester:

week 28 for lymphatic drainage, sciatic nerve and sacro-iliac joint

week 30 for abdominal and thoracic lymphatics to improve gut tone,

support for the spine and vena cava as well as addressing any needs related to constipation, pancreas, and heart for blood circulation

week 35 for spine support, kidneys, heart, pancreas and pelvic lymphatic drainage

week 37 for improved energy levels and addressing any specific complaints

week 39 for lymphatic drainage of the pelvis as well as toning the uterus, working kidneys, and endocrine system to prepare for labor

week 40 to prime for labor: relaxes the mother and prepares the endocrine system, baby and mother for labor

week 40+ for adrenals, pituitary and uterus to encourage labor at postdates sessions

Whether you make time for one session or a whole series, the important thing is that you are taking the time to take care of yourself and your growing baby!

p.s. Dads-to-be can also reap great benefits from a Reflexology session too!