

# Podiatry In Motion

Bay Area Foot Care

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Foot care in pregnancy is very important due to increased pressure on the feet

19845 Lake Chabot Road,  
Ste 301  
Castro Valley, CA 94546  
510-581-1484

2299 Post Street,  
Ste 205  
San Francisco, CA 94115  
415-292-0638

4000 Dublin Blvd.,  
Ste 305  
Dublin, CA 94568  
925-556-4460

6600 Mercy Court,  
Ste 150  
Fair Oaks, CA 95628  
916-459-4398

2915 Telegraph Ave,  
Ste 302  
Berkeley, CA 94705  
510-581-1484

[www.bayareafootcare.com](http://www.bayareafootcare.com)

## Relieving Foot Pain during Pregnancy

During pregnancy, a woman's body undergoes many changes, some of which trigger considerable discomfort. A common and overlooked complaint for many expectant mothers is foot pain. Weight gain is a natural and expected part of pregnancy; however, it causes a woman's center of gravity to be completely altered.

As a result of this change, many women acquire a different weight-bearing stance with added pressure to the knees and feet. Two of the most common causes of foot discomfort during pregnancy are over-pronation and edema.

### Causes

Over-pronation is also referred to as flat feet. This condition is caused when the arch of a woman's foot flattens out as a

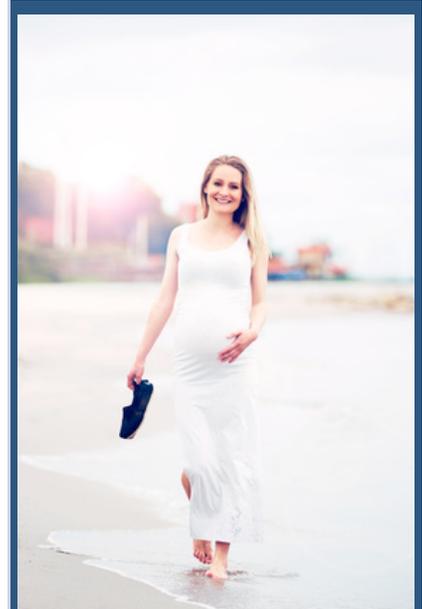
result of weight bearing and her feet roll inward when walking. This can create additional inflammation or stress on the plantar fascia, the band of fibrous tissue that runs between the heel and the forefoot.

Over-pronation increases the strain on a woman's feet, calves, and/ or back and can be very painful when walking.

In the latter stages, pregnant women are troubled with edema, also referred to as swelling of the feet. During pregnancy, extra blood is accumulated, resulting in edema.

Circulation is slowed and blood begins to pool in the lower extremities as a result of a woman's pregnant uterus placing pressure on the blood vessels in the legs and pelvis.

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Take great care outdoors

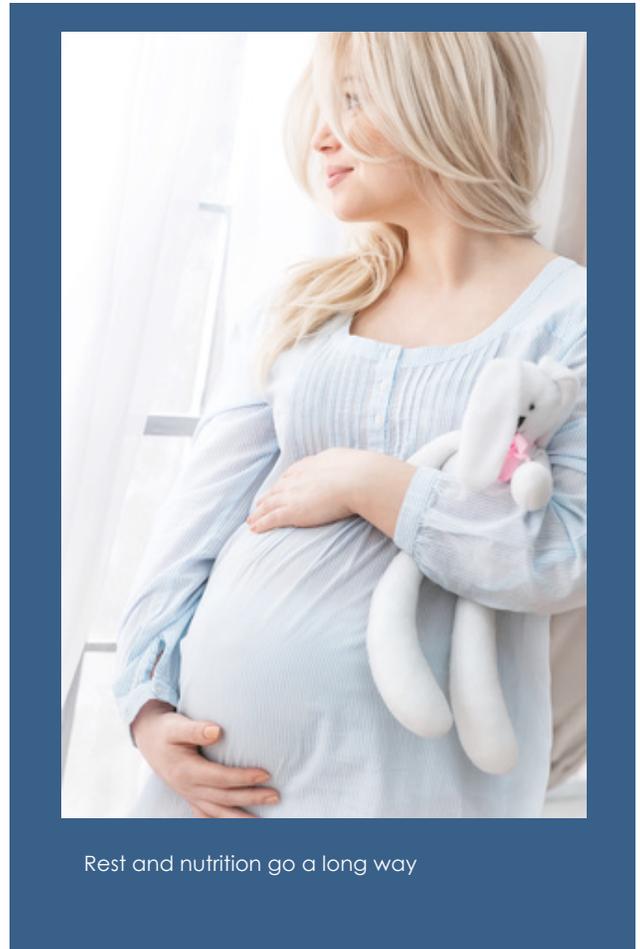
## Relieving Foot Pain during Pregnancy (Cont'd from previous page)

Water fluid levels remain the same during pregnancy and pre-conception, however its distribution throughout the body is displaced. It is quite common for feet to become purplish in color due to swelling.

### Prevention and Treatment

Pregnant women don't have to suffer from swelling and discomfort daily as there are measures that can be taken to promote and maintain good foot health. These include the following:

- Keep feet supported by placing supportive insoles inside your shoes and choose footwear that is comfortable with good arch support.
- Avoid footwear that is too short or narrow as circulation can be constricted.
- Seamless socks are recommended as they don't interfere with circulation.
- Take regular breaks for stretching if you are driving long distances.
- Exercise moderately to promote the circulation of blood and fluids from your legs to the rest of your body. Walking is a preferred exercise.
- Adequate water intake aids in the flushing out of excess fluids. Also limit your consumption of caffeine and salt as they can make your body retain extra fluids.
- Frequently elevate your feet and apply ice packs as needed to ease pain and reduce swelling.
- The swelling in your feet increases the more you stand, so limit time standing on your feet to prevent severe edema.



Rest and nutrition go a long way

- Conservative treatment includes the use of ready-made orthotics designed by a qualified specialist to correct over-pronation.

### Summary

For many women, pregnancy is one of the most enjoyable and memorable life experiences. Suffering with pain and swelling is not how you want to remember this special time!

Be sure to get adequate rest and nutrition and provide your troubled feet with the necessary support. These measures can help to keep your feet healthy and comfortable. ♦

## Causes of Morton's Neuroma

### What is Morton's Neuroma?

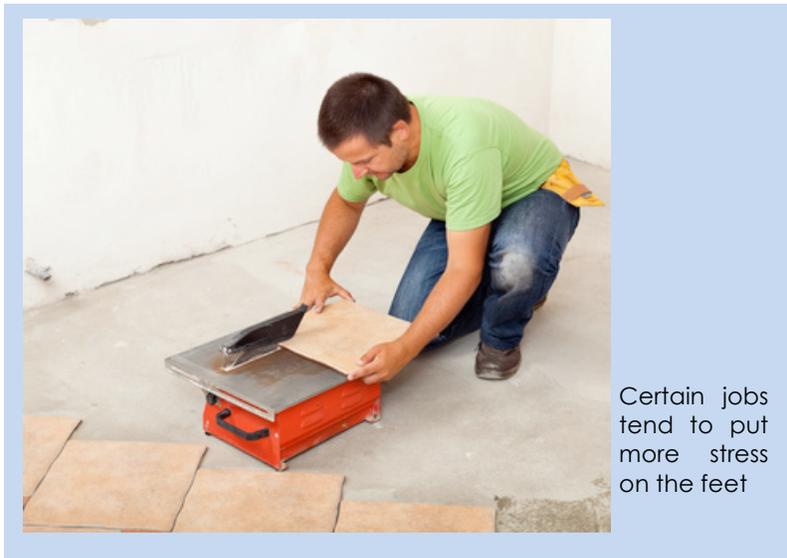
Morton's neuroma is a painful condition that is due to inflammation of the nerves of the foot that go to the toes. It most commonly affects the area between the third and fourth toes.

Morton's neuroma is often described as quite similar to standing on a pebble in the shoe. Others feel burning or tingling sensation to the toes. Discomfort is worse during walking or running.

### Causes of Morton's Neuroma?

The exact cause of Morton's neuroma is unknown. However, it is believed that it is caused by trauma, irritation, or pressure to the nerve.

Foot conditions such as flat feet or high arches can be a cause of Morton's neuroma. This is because both these conditions cause biomechanical problems in the foot, leading to instability of the toe joints.



People with previous foot injuries such as stress fractures and sprains will be more prone to neuroma development. Repetitive stress to the nerve around the ball of the foot can also be a factor.

Certain foot deformities such as hammertoes and bunions can cause neuroma, most likely because of the increased nerve irritation around the toes.

Wearing shoes that are too tight is also a common cause of Morton's neuroma. When the toes constantly get squeezed together, the toe bones can pinch the nerve, causing swelling and pain.

In time, the nerve that runs between the toes can get thicker. The condition is around 9 times more common in women, perhaps due to the usual choice of footwear - high-heels with tight and pointed toe boxes.

In some studies, occupations that put undue stress on the feet are more at risk for neuroma development. Examples are those who work in flooring, landscaping, and other occupations that involve repetitive squatting and knee bending.

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## Causes of Morton's Neuroma (cont'd from previous page)

### Treatment

If diagnosed and managed early on, there may be no need for surgery. The treatment can be as simple as changing the type of shoes. It is helpful to wear shoes with wider toe boxes and soft soles. Other conservative measures include foot massages, ice packs, physical therapy, oral pain medications, or local anesthetics around the neuroma.

If you have any concern about neuroma, check with your podiatrist to see what can be done! ♦

### Special Thanks

Thanks for reading our newsletter; we hope you've gained valuable insights!

For any enquiries regarding foot care or injuries, do feel free to contact **Bay Area Foot Care** (see details left).

Thanks for your support!