



## BREECH BABIES

Your body is a self-healing, self regulating, homeostasis maintaining, intelligent, vitalistic being. This is the philosophical tenet of chiropractic. With this in mind, a baby in the breech presentation is a perfect adaptation to something occurring in the body. This is not a pathological condition. It is important to examine WHY a baby is breech. More often than not, the cause is due to a decrease nerve supply and misalignment of the pelvis. This creates tension in the uterus, which prevents the baby from going head down. A baby wants to be, and will always be in the most open and comfortable spot.

Chiropractic is a system of optimizing human performance and potential by restoring or enhancing the body's function. Chiropractors work with enhancing the body's innate ability to integrate structural, emotional, and physiological changes so that it can function the way it was designed to. They work with the nervous system, the communication between the brain and the body, primarily focusing on the cranium, spine, and pelvis, because this is where the nervous system is housed. When there are misalignments (subluxations) of these structures, imbalances, miscommunication, and stress occur in surrounding muscles, ligaments and organs. Due to the rapid change in a woman's anatomy and physiology while pregnant, chiropractic care is vital to mother and baby's health, enhancing that ability to adapt and function.

Women who receive chiropractic care during their pregnancy have been shown to have the following potential benefits:

- decreased low back pain
- reduced labor time

- successful VBAC's (vaginal birth after cesarean)
- reduction in obstetric intervention
- greater overall comfort throughout pregnancy
- decrease in back labor as well as preterm delivery
- resolution of breech presentation through the maintenance of pelvic balance
- faster postpartum recovery

In addition, the infant experiences numerous benefits while in-utero such as better:

- development due to reduction of interference to the mother's nervous system
- greater room to grow without skeletal restrictions because of pelvic balance
- optimum space to move in the best possible position for birth.

All of these elements can cause a decrease in dystocia (difficult labor) and therefore a decrease in birth trauma due to unnecessary intervention.

Dystocia is defined as difficult or abnormal progress in labor. One of the primary causes of dystocia is biomechanical and physiological in nature. According to William's Obstetrics, this includes interference to the nervous system, misalignment of the pelvis, and tension or torsion of the specific pelvic and uterine muscles and ligaments. Specific chiropractic adjustments address each of these causes and can be an integral part of a pregnant woman's care in optimizing her pregnancy and birth experience.

The Webster's Technique, developed by Dr. Larry Webster, founder of the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association, is a gentle and specific chiropractic analysis of the pelvis/sacrum with the goal of reducing the effects of bio-neurological dysfunction. In doing so, neuro-biomechanical function in the pelvis is facilitated, which allows for space for the baby to not only grow, but move into the optimum position for birth.

What happens when aberrant biomechanics exist in the pelvis and sacrum due to interference from the nervous system? Misalignment in the sacrum, the big triangular bone at the base of your spine, caused not only from a growing belly, but also from a lifetime of stress and trauma,

decreases the diameter of the pelvis. Additionally, according to William's Obstetrics, "any contraction of the pelvic diameters that diminishes the capacity of the pelvis can create dystocia (difficulty) during labor." When a sacrum is displaced, it creates stress and tension in the ligaments surrounding the uterus and the ones connecting the uterus to the sacrum, which then creates a less than optimum environment for the developing fetus. It has been hypothesized that "a rotational subluxation of the sacrum may result in a tightening and torsion of the utero-sacral ligament contributing to aberrant tension in the uterus affecting labor progression, optimal fetal positioning, and natural, non-invasive birth outcome." (Jeanne Ohm) Many chiropractic research studies have been done that show the progression of and reduction in labor time, optimum fetal position and increase in natural, non-invasive childbirth following chiropractic care.

Many women in their third trimester seek the care of a chiropractor certified in the Webster Technique if their baby is in a breech presentation. Often these women are also experiencing other symptoms including but not limited to sciatica, low back pain, and an overall discomfort. It is important to note that chiropractors that utilize The Webster Technique are not turning babies. That is the job of obstetricians. Instead, chiropractors are restoring biomechanical and neurological function, which allows a pregnant woman's body to do what it is supposed to do in order for the baby to innately turn vertex (head down).

Your body is not going to produce a baby that is too big for you! A woman's body is designed to give birth. Pregnancy and birth are a natural process. Chiropractic care supports this process, not only in the third trimester but throughout the entire pregnancy. To find a chiropractor in your area that is proficient in the Webster Technique please visit the directory at [www.icpa4kids.org](http://www.icpa4kids.org).

## Resources

1. Borggren CL, Pregnancy and chiropractic: a narrative review of the literature. *J Chiropr Med* 2007; 6(2):70-74.
2. Cunningham FG, et al. Dystocia due to pelvic contraction. *Williams Obstetrics*. 19th ed. 1989.

3. Ohm J. The International Chiropractic Pediatric Association: Perinatal Care manual.
4. Ohm J, The Webster Technique in pregnancy for safer, easier births. The American Chiropractor Magazine 2005 Mar 15; 1-2
5. Ohm J. About the Webster Technique. 2011 [cited 2013 Feb 15].  
[http://icpa4kids.com/about/webster\\_technique.htm](http://icpa4kids.com/about/webster_technique.htm)