



Round ligament pain in pregnancy

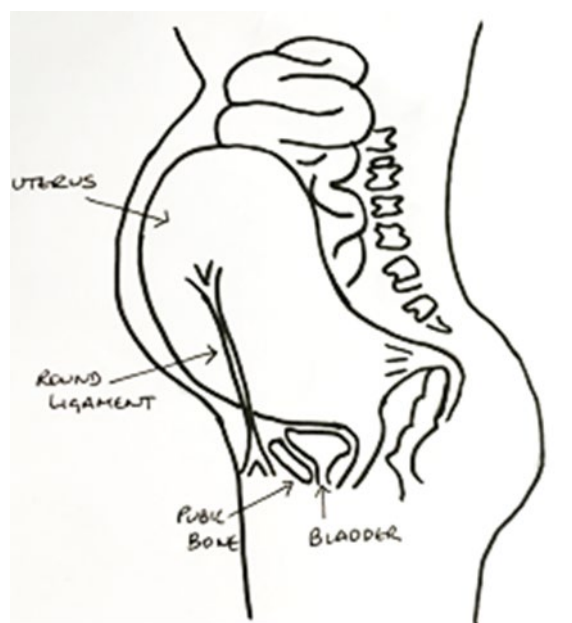
This leaflet explains what round ligament pain is and gives advice to help manage and treat the symptoms.

What is round ligament pain?

Many women experience round ligament pain during pregnancy. It usually begins in the second trimester (after 12 weeks), although some women experience it earlier.

Round ligament pain is very common and is not dangerous to you or your baby.

The round ligaments are two cords of connective tissue located either side of the uterus (womb), and they attach the uterus to the pelvis, holding it in place.



What causes it?

Pregnancy hormones cause the ligaments to be looser and more elastic than they are in a woman who is not pregnant. As your baby grows and the uterus gets bigger, this stretching can cause the round ligaments to go into spasm, causing pain in the lower abdomen or groin area.

The pain is usually sharp or stabbing in nature. It can be made worse by sudden movement such as standing up from sitting or rolling over in bed, and by the increases in abdominal pressure caused by sneezing, coughing or laughing.

Round ligament pain is usually felt on the right side; however, it can be felt on the left or on both sides.

What can I do to ease the pain?

- Change position slowly – don't rush.
- Lean forward when you are about to cough or sneeze and support under your bump with your hands.
- Rest on your side with a pillow between your knees.
- A warm bath can sometimes help ease the pain.
- If you are allowed to, you can take paracetamol for the pain. Check with your doctor to see if this is appropriate for you.
- Try antenatal yoga.

When should I see my doctor?

Round ligament pain is not harmful to you or your baby. However, abdominal pain can be due to other causes. You should see your doctor if your pain is severe and accompanied by:

- Fever and/or chills.
- Bleeding.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Difficulty walking.

Pictures courtesy of Physio Tools®

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

J Churches, Pelvic Health & Maternity Physiotherapy, December 2021

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Our Maternity Strategy and Vision

'Working together with women, birthing people and families to offer compassionate, supportive care and informed choice; striving for equity and excellence in our maternity service.'

You can read our maternity strategy here

