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# Back pain during pregnancy: a prospective study.

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### Abstract

**STUDY DESIGN**

A longitudinal, prospective, observational, cohort study.

**OBJECTIVES**

To describe the natural history of back pain occurring during pregnancy and immediately after delivery.

**SUMMARY OF BACKGROUND DATA**

Back pain during pregnancy is a frequent clinical problem even during the early stages of pregnancy. The cause is unclear.

**METHODS**

A cohort of 200 consecutive women attending an antenatal clinic were followed throughout pregnancy with repeated measurements of back pain and possible determinants by questionnaires and physical examinations.

**RESULTS**

Seventy-six percent reported back pain at some time during pregnancy. Sixty-one percent reported onset during the present pregnancy. In this group, the prevalence rate increased to 48% until the 24th week and then remained stable and declined to 9.4% after delivery. The reported pain intensity increased by pain duration. The pain score correlated closely to self-rated disability and days of sickness benefit.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Back pain during pregnancy is a common complaint. The 30% with the highest pain score reported great difficulties with normal activities. The back pain started early in pregnancy and increased over time. Young women had more pain than older women. Back pain starting during pregnancy may be a special entity and may have another origin than back pain not related to pregnancy