Every pregnant mother wants to have a healthy, safe and natural pregnancy. A birthing mother who is connected to her own body, who looks deep within herself, trusting her own body to do what it is hardwired to do, is much more likely to experience a natural birth process than someone who is fearful. Unfortunately, fear can become a self-fulfilling prophecy: The brain responds to fearful emotions by releasing hormones throughout the body that can slow labor and dilation.

When it comes to pregnancy and birth, the most ideal experience is a natural and complication-free birth, one that is peaceful, joyful and safe for mother and baby. Naturally, this is what every pregnant mother wants. So why doesn’t it happen more often?
One of the primary causes is something called dystocia, which is defined as abnormal progress in birth. Dystocia often results in a chain reaction of medical interventions that are theoretically designed to help the labor proceed. However, these interventions often inadvertently add increased layers of complexity and stress to the birth process, causing the labor to be less and less natural.

While it is difficult to identify exactly what causes dystocia, there are three main reasons why the birth process can fail to progress, which often leads to medical intervention. Broadly speaking, dystocia is caused by a combination of physical, emotional and medical/technical causes.

While mothers have been birthing naturally for millennia, one of the greatest challenges in the West is restoring an innate trust in a woman’s ability to birth in a natural way. Many social and medical pressures can insidiously increase fear and anxiety around the birthing process. But pregnancy isn’t an illness or a disease, so we believe that it shouldn’t be treated like one. To do so only adds emotional stress and strain to bodies and minds that should be peaceful, joyful and well-connected to their world, their friends, their families and their babies.

A natural birth without excessive stress or complications is always preferable to a birth that involves an intervention, because all human interventions inevitably disrupt the body’s expression of inborn intelligence. In a paradigm shift that emphasizes inner trust in the body’s innate birthing potential, many women are learning to again trust their body’s natural instincts. Many couples today are taking a stand against the controlling and fear-inducing methods that have become so common in Western societies, and are instead seeking out professionals who will support their decision to birth naturally.

In order to maximize the natural birthing instincts and support the development of a healthy, vibrant baby, it is important to understand that the mother’s body has certain genetic requirements for optimal health expression. Providing the body with the ingredients that are necessary for healthy function means a natural birth is more likely. After all, a healthy mother is far more likely to have a vital, natural pregnancy and birth than one who says that she wants a great birth but then does nothing to support her body toward the realization of her goal.
Preparing for Birth

So what can be done during pregnancy to best prepare the mother’s body for a naturally healthy birth? What does the body require in order to function at its highest potential, giving you the greatest chance of a wonderfully natural pregnancy and birth? Research across a multitude of scientific disciplines, such as physiology, anatomy, cellular biology and the genetic study of our ancient Paleolithic human ancestors, strongly suggests the following essential elements for a naturally healthy, vital pregnancy and birth:

- A fully functioning nervous system: to coordinate healing, assist adaptation to stressors associated with pregnancy and support development of the growing baby.

- Genetically congruent dietary intake: to provide the fuel required for healthy cell function and optimal fetal development.

- Genetically congruent movement and exercise: to stimulate optimal brain and cell function, circulation, hormonal balance, strength, flexibility and mobility.

- Positive thoughts and emotions: to powerfully influence the hormones present in the uterus and affect baby’s development, as well as the way they learn to perceive the outside world.

- A nurturing environment and loving relationships: to create an optimal atmosphere for a low-stress and relaxed pregnancy and birth.

- A vital birth support team that consists of loved ones and health professionals that understand the importance of each of these elements.
The Value of Chiropractic Care

In our practice, we seek to provide our clients with practical help, knowledge and skills that support the desire to birth naturally and have a great pregnancy.

In particular, chiropractic care during pregnancy is vital to assist the normal physiological function of both the mother and baby in pregnancy and birth. For example, chiropractic care helps the mother in pregnancy and birth by:

- Reducing interference to the mother's nervous system, which coordinates all of the systems and functions in her body
- Helping to create a state of balance in the pelvic muscles, ligaments and bony structures, thereby preparing the pelvis for an easier pregnancy and birth
- Reducing torsion to the woman's uterus by removing tension on the ligaments that support the uterus
- Allowing for a safer and easier birth for the mother, thereby decreasing the potential for intervention

Chiropractic care also supports vital physiological functions for the infant by:
Encouraging better baby development by removing interference to the mother’s nervous system

- Helping to create more room in the uterus for the baby to develop without restrictions to its forming skeletal structures, spine and cranium…

- …thereby allowing the baby room to move into the best possible position for birth

- Significantly reducing the possibility of dystocia (delayed birth) and the resulting birth trauma that can be caused by intervention

**Chiropractic Care: Essential to Every Pregnancy**

In summary, there are three main reasons why chiropractic should be a part of every pregnancy:

1. Chiropractic helps provide structural balance and stability for the mother, resulting in a more comfortable pregnancy.

2. Research studies have revealed that pregnant mothers who receive chiropractic care during their pregnancy tend to have a shorter labor with less medical intervention.

3. By supporting better function in the mother’s body, chiropractic care during pregnancy can help
to create a healthier and more comfortable in-utero environment for the newborn, helping them to get a better start to life. In fact, research suggests that there is a strong link between the baby’s experience in the in-utero environment and his or her lifelong health potential.

Most chiropractors are equipped to help women have a healthier pregnancy with specific, safe and gentle chiropractic adjustments. Because pre-conception, pregnancy and birth are particular areas of interest and specialization in our practice, we also seek to equip our pregnant clients with a holistic approach to ensure they give themselves and their babies the best chance at having a healthy and natural birth. We also seek to work supportively and cooperatively alongside your midwife, doula or obstetrician to help ensure that you have a great team around you seeking to help you have the birth experience you desire. Ask your chiropractor, or visit the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association website to find out how they can support you through your pregnancy.

We believe it is time to reconnect women with their natural birthing instincts and potential. It is important to recreate that sense of inner trust in the healing and birthing power of the body, as well as develop a strong mother/baby bond that lays the foundation for a naturally empowered birth experience. Establishing a supportive and cooperative team, as well as a loving and peaceful home environment, are also incredibly important ingredients. By ensuring the body is functioning, adapting and healing at its greatest potential with chiropractic care, women who are (or wish to be) pregnant can support their innate desire for a healthy, vital pregnancy and birth.