

# Changes in your feet during pregnancy

Pregnancy can cause many changes in your body. Many pregnant women notice changes in their feet. When you are pregnant, you gain weight. This weight gain can shift your balance and can impact how you stand and walk. Weight gain may also cause you to feel more pressure in your lower body. This pressure can lead to foot pain or foot problems.

Over-pronation and edema are 2 common foot problems during pregnancy.

## 1 Over-pronation

Over-pronation is when the arch in your foot spreads out and gets flat. This can happen after weight gain. When you gain weight, you have more pressure on your feet. Your feet may roll in when you walk.

This can also put a lot of stress on your plantar fasciitis. Your plantar fasciitis is a band that runs from the front of your foot to the back of your foot.

When your feet become flat, they can't give you as much support as you need. This can make walking very painful.

### How do I treat over-pronation during pregnancy?

- Get **orthotics**. Orthotics are inserts that you can put in your shoes. They can add more support. Talk to your CHN doctor about getting orthotics.
- Wear **shoes that fit your feet**. Make sure your shoes are comfortable and give extra support.
- **Treat over-pronation early**. As soon as you feel foot pain, talk to your CHN doctor. This will lower your pain and help you from getting other foot problems.



**Wear shoes with a firm sole.**



**Don't wear shoes that bend in the arch.**



## 2 Edema

Edema is when your feet swell. When your uterus gets bigger, it puts pressure on your lower body. Your body also holds onto more water while you are pregnant. Both of these things can cause edema.

Edema often happens later in pregnancy. Swelling often happens in both feet. Sometimes it causes your feet to turn a purple color.

If you have swelling in your hands or face, call your CHN doctor right away.

### How do I treat edema during pregnancy?

#### Take care of your feet:

- Wear loose socks that do not have seams.
- Take breaks when you drive. Stretch your legs.
- Do not stand for a long time. This makes your feet swell.
- Keep your feet raised. If you have to sit for a long time, put your feet on a stool.
- Wear comfortable shoes. Stay away from shoes with heels. Tight shoes can cause fluid to build up in your feet.

#### Eat healthy:

- Drink lots of water. Limit how much coffee and tea you drink.
- Limit foods that have too much salt.
- Eat foods high in vitamins and protein like milk and fish. Try green vegetables like spinach, beans, and cabbage. Eat fruits like papaya, apple and guava.
- Do not smoke or drink alcohol during pregnancy.

#### Exercise:

- Do yoga to improve blood flow.
- Keep your feet moving. Walk for 30 minutes each day.
- Do not lift heavy things.

#### Relax:

- Massage your feet and hands 5-10 minutes a day.
- Keep your feet in ice water for 10-15 minutes if they start to swell.

**If you have questions, talk to your CHN doctor or health educator!**