



Physiological and anatomical changes during pregnancy

As we go through these, please take note on what you think could be the biggest concerns for an expecting mom and how you can share poses that may assist her with these concerns.

HORMONES:

Estrogen- ↑ 1000 times- causes changes in moods , allows growth of uterus

Progesterone- ↑ 10 times- relaxes smooth muscles, lowers gastrointestinal motility, lowers digestive system 40 %, lowers muscle tone of bladder and uterus

Relaxin ↑- increases flexibility (the name itself is a bit of a giveaway!) and helps to prepare the body for birth. Because this influx of relaxin causes the ligaments to become more lax, pregnant students should take extra care not to overstretch. This can lead to pelvic and joint instability and/or pulled ligaments (which take a really long time to heal).

Prolactin- (PRL) a hormone secreted by the **pituitary gland**, or hypophysis (an endocrine gland) which acts on the breasts to induce milk production, makes period go away, and increases mammary glands.

Oxytocin- (the hormone of love) hormone released during an orgasm in both men and women. During pregnancy it stimulates contractions, milk let down, facilitates birth and breast feeding. Oxytocin is involved in social recognition and bonding.

OTHERS:

Blood volume ↑ 60 % more

Arteries dilate

REDUCED BLOOD FLOW WHEN SUPINE

Blood thickens

Swelling & edema ↑

Pulse rate ↑

Uterus grows, displacing organs like the heart to the left

Stomach is displaced and feels smaller (less food , eat more often)

Heartburn ↑

Intestine displaced

Intestinal work ↓

Constipation and bloating ↑

Frequency of urination ↑ especially in first and third

Kidneys and bladder work harder

More stress on the liver



Diaphragm is elevated
Shortness of breath ↑
Oxygen consumption ↑
Nasal congestion ↑
Dental cavities ↑

Gum bleeding ↑
Nausea & tiredness ↑ especially in first trimester
Hearing ↑
Smell ↑
Touch ↑
Taste ↓

Headaches and visual changes are common
Immune system ↑