Round Ligament Pain

The round ligament is made up of muscle and fibrous tissue. It is attached to the uterus near the fallopian tube. The round ligament is located on both sides of the uterus and helps support the position of the uterus. It usually begins in the second trimester of pregnancy when the uterus comes out of the pelvis. The pain can come and go until the baby is delivered. Round ligament pain is not a serious problem and does not cause harm to the baby.

CAUSE

During pregnancy the uterus grows the most from the second trimester to delivery. As it grows, it stretches and slightly twists the round ligaments. When the uterus leans from one side to the other, the round ligament on the opposite side pulls and stretches. This can cause pain.

SYMPTOMS

Pain can occur on one side or both sides. The pain is usually a short, sharp and pinching like. Sometimes it can be a dull, lingering and aching pain. The pain is located in the lower side of the abdomen or in the groin. The pain is internal and usually starts deep in the groin and moves up to the outside of the hip area. Pain can occur with:

- Sudden change in position like getting out of bed or a chair.
- Rolling over in bed.
- Coughing or sneezing.
- Walking too much.
- Any type of physical activity.

DIAGNOSIS

Your caregiver will make sure there are no serious problems causing the pain. When nothing serious is found, the symptoms usually indicate that the pain is from the round ligament.

TREATMENT

- Sit down and relax when the pain starts.
- Flex your knees up to your belly.
- Lay on your side with a pillow under your belly (*abdomen*) and another one between your legs.
- Sit in a hot bath for 15 to 20 minutes or until the pain goes away.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Only take over-the-counter or prescriptions medicines for pain, discomfort or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- Sit and stand slowly.
- Avoid long walks if it causes pain.
- Stop or lessen your physical activities if it causes pain.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- The pain does not go away with any of your treatment.
- You need stronger medication for the pain.
- You develop back pain that you did not have before with the side pain.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop a temperature of 100° F (39.7º C) or higher.
- You develop uterine contractions.
- You develop vaginal bleeding.
- You develop nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.
- You develop chills.

- You have pain when you urinate.

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