



I AM 16 WEEKS PREGNANT. I AM HAVING PAIN IN BOTH SIDES OF MY LOWER ABDOMEN. IS THIS NORMAL?

As pregnancy progresses, your uterus gradually enlarges. Many women have concerns regarding pain during this time period. As you reach 16 weeks, your uterus is significantly enlarged and most women become noticeably pregnant.

Although there are many reasons for abdominal pain during pregnancy, the most common condition is round ligament pain. The round ligaments are connective tissue ligaments that run from the upper aspect of the uterus down to the groin. As pregnancy progresses these ligaments enlarge and become stretched, and can cause pain. The pain sensation that women often feel involves both sides of the lower abdomen and sometimes the back. The pain is sharp in nature and can be worse on the right side. Certain movements may exacerbate the pain.

Round ligament pain has not been associated with any adverse outcomes of pregnancy. Treatments include heat on the affected area and rest. Medications often do not alleviate symptoms.

It is important to discuss any abdominal pain with your physician. There are several other causes of persistent pain. Your physician may need to do a physical exam and run other tests should your pain become severe or be associated with other symptoms.

INDU S. ANAND, MD

Dr. Anand is a former Assistant Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, in Memphis, Tennessee. She now is in private practice in Atlanta, GA.

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Health Information Provided by Women's Health Specialists
7800 Wolf Trail Cove, Germantown, TN 38138, (901) 682-9222, www.whsobgyn.com

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