

Keys to Reducing Stress in Pregnancy

Chronic stress is one of the leading causes of illness in pregnancy, preterm delivery, and challenges with a newborn baby. Below are just a few things that stress does to a body preparing for pregnancy:

- Reduces supportive pregnancy hormones
- Increases stress hormones
- Reduces ovulation and interest in sexual activity
- Affect and even prevent the implantation of a fertilized egg
- Reduces overall egg quality Delays the release of eggs

Reducing your stress levels can positively impact your pregnancy and your baby. Here are just a few ways lowering your stress can benefit you:

- Healthier sex drive and fertility (important if you are trying to conceive)
- Reduced risk of preterm birth
- Reduced risk of baby born small for gestational age
- Reduced risk of depression in the mother
- Developing a mature hippocampus in your baby (the emotional hub of the brain, which regulates hormones) Normal physical development in early infancy
- Increased cognitive scores for your infant
- Normal stress threshold for your baby (babies become stressed less often)
- Reduced risk of your baby's brain becoming habituated, to stress hormones like ACTH and cortisol, which makes her feel unsafe and scared
- Reduced risk of neurodevelopmental disorders (such as autism and schizophrenia)
- Higher IQ
- Decreased behavioral problems in childhood and adolescence

Start with simple things that are scientifically proven to reduce stress:

- Smile
- Yawn
- Meditate or Pray
- Move Your Body
- Practice Deep Breathing Techniques
- Surround Yourself With People Who Make You Feel Good
- Take a Daily Nap

