



## **Acupuncture - Safe, Effective for Late Pregnancy Back Pain**

The researchers designed the study to evaluate the analgesic effect and possible adverse effects of acupuncture for pelvic and low-back pain during the last trimester of pregnancy.

Following individual informed consent, 72 pregnant women reporting pelvic or low-back pain were randomized during pregnancy weeks 24-37 to an acupuncture group (n = 37) or to a control group (n = 35) at three maternity wards in southern Sweden. Traditional acupuncture points and local tender points (TP) were chosen according to individual pain patterns and stimulated once or twice a week until delivery or complete recovery in acupuncture patients. Control patients were given no sham stimulation. Throughout the study period each patient made weekly visual analog scale (VAS) evaluations of maximal and minimal pain intensity as well as three-point assessments of pain intensity during various activities.

During the study period, VAS scores of pain intensity decreased over time in 60% of patients in the acupuncture group and in 14% of those in the control group. At the end of the study period, 43% of the acupuncture patients were less bothered than initially by pain during activity compared with 9% of control patients. No serious adverse effects of acupuncture were found in the patients, and there were no adverse effects at all in the infants.

Acupuncture relieves low-back and pelvic pain without serious adverse effects in late pregnancy.

Kvorning N, et al. Acupuncture relieves pelvic and low-back pain in late pregnancy. *Acta obstetrica et gynecologica Scandinavica* 83(3):246-50.