



Oakwell Osteopaths

*Osteopathy – easing the strains on you and your baby
through pregnancy and labour*

Who are you?

I'm Karl Turner, BSc Ost Med (Hons), registered with the General Osteopathic Council and member of the British Osteopathic Association.

What made you become an osteopath?

I decided being an osteopath was the “job for me” the day one helped me walk unaided again much sooner than doctors predicted after a Road Traffic Accident in my teens. Ever since I've taken great pride in assisting people in their recovery from injuries sustained in accidents and sports. I also have special interest in treating the symptoms of asthma, digestion problems and difficult births, as well as the aches and pains that people normally visit an osteopath for.

What is osteopathy?

The word is made up of the Latin word ‘osteo’ meaning bone and the Greek work ‘pathy’ from ‘pathos’, meaning suffering. Using bones as mini levers, osteopaths help the body relieve itself of the symptoms of injury or disease, as well as of the aches and pains from the strains and stresses caused by work posture, lifting, twisting, pregnancy and child delivery.

How can it help pregnancy?

Within a few months of conception a woman's skeleton has to cope with up to 20 lbs/9 kgs of fluid, placenta and baby pulling on the organs and muscles. Osteopathic treatment is helpful in assisting the body to adapt to these sudden postural changes. Aches and pains, heartburn, varicose veins, nausea, vomiting and difficulties with digestion and breathing are some of the usual symptoms frequently relieved by osteopathy during ALL stages of pregnancy. However osteopathy is becoming more widely known as a way of preparing the body to deliver the baby, by ensuring that the mother's pelvis is mechanically able to allow the baby's passage with the minimum of difficulty. Mechanical tensions or strains in the lower back, pelvis or hips can often delay labour or make it difficult for the baby to correctly align for delivery.

In addition, as osteopathy fundamentally aims to restore optimum nerve and blood supply to organs and skeletal structure it has been known to improve the chances of conception. Although I have had many successes in this field the way osteopathy helps isn't fully proven and I do recommend people seek all the help and tests the medical profession can provide.

How does osteopathy help post-natally?



Birth can be traumatic for both mother and baby. After giving birth the mother's body needs to recover from the changes of pregnancy and the effects of the delivery and/or surgery, however the demands of caring for a new baby, such as lifting, carrying on one hip, reaching into a cot and feeding in uncompromising positions, make recovery more complicated. Unresolved stresses can contribute to problems with periods, digestion, headache, back ache and urinary difficulties, and even to post-natal depression. Osteopathy can help the mother return to normal after the physical and emotional upheaval by releasing the strains endured from both labour and pregnancy, making it easier to enjoy her new baby.

New-born babies

The distance a baby travels in birth is little more than the length of the baby itself. But the twisting and turning subjects the baby to enormous forces as it squeezes through the resistances of the birth canal and pelvis. The baby's head has an exceptional ability to adapt to these stresses: to reduce the head size bones overlap, bend and twist to accommodate the movements. But the position of the baby's head and neck at the onset of labour are not always optimal for the best delivery. This can result in some babies being born with odd-shaped heads. Fortunately, during the first few days the head usually returns to its usual shape as the baby yawns, cries and suckles. However, in cases of extremely quick or long and difficult births, the un moulding process is often incomplete. As a result the baby may have to live with strains within its body, head and neck. In the vast majority of cases a few visits to a paediatric osteopath will enable the baby's inherent healing ability to release the absorbed strains. The younger the baby is treated, the easier and more profound the benefits can be.

Karl Turner BSc Ost Med (Hons)