

What are leg cramps?

Leg cramps are common in pregnancy. They usually occur in the second and third trimester. We are not exactly sure why women get leg cramps in pregnancy but it is thought to be related to magnesium and/or calcium levels.

If you get a leg cramp:

- Straighten your leg
- Flex your foot (point your toes up towards your head)
- Gently massage your calf
- Try walking around

To prevent leg cramps, you can try:

- Taking an oral magnesium supplement
- Stretching your calves regularly (2-3 times a day)
- Massage your calves
- Regular exercise and stretching
- Drink more water

Rarely, you can get a blood clot in your leg that can also cause pain (also known as a DVT). The symptoms usually involve severe leg pain (not cramps), swelling of the leg/foot and redness in the leg. If you have leg pain that persists and is associated with swelling, or trouble breathing please call us immediately or to to the emergency room.

Reference:

1. Leg Cramps during Pregnancy. Health Link BC – Nov 2017. Accessed Oct 2019.
2. Maternal adaptations to pregnancy: Musculoskeletal changes and pain. UpToDate. Accessed Oct 2019