



# PARENTS CENTRE

*Where parenting is everything!*

## Ask a CBE

### Growing a baby is so tiring, and I'm so tired!

#### .....but what position should I sleep in?

You may have heard and read the newest research which reinforces the common place recommendation for women to sleep on their sides particularly during the last trimester of pregnancy. This research has concluded that lying on your back is associated with a 3.7-fold increase in overall risk of late stillbirth (after 28 weeks of pregnancy).

Why? Well primarily, it is thought that lying on the back in late pregnancy causes the large pregnant womb to put pressure on major blood vessels which reduces blood flow to the uterus and the baby. This can result in lower levels of oxygen in the baby. Lying on the back is also associated with sleep disturbed breathing (snoring) and sleep apnoea, both of which can be associated with pregnancy complications.

I am often asked by concerned women, that they will start off sleeping on their side, but wake up on their back. They panic! What is important to remember is that this is a cue from your body to turn yourself back onto your side. You've probably only been in that position a short time. A lot of women find a pillow tucked into the small of their back is both comforting for lower back pain, and reduces the chance of rolling onto their side. There are some amazing pregnancy pillows on the market, and sometimes there are so many pillows in the bed to make sleeping comfortable, that there's no room left for the cat, let alone your partner!

If you're tired, your body is telling you to slow down. Don't forget you are growing a complete human being and 'she's big job'! so don't be too hard on yourself; try not to think of a nap or a rest as a treat or something to feel guilty about, but more importantly it is an essential part of looking after you and looking after your baby. zzzzzzzzzz



#### *References:*

This link will take you to the full research report:

<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0179396>