

*Inspiring Experiences of Arvigo Practitioners and Their Clients*

# *Journeys in Healing*

Compiled and published by the Arvigo Institute, LLC  
**The Arvigo Techniques of Maya Abdominal Therapy®**

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## A NOTE TO READERS

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# Pregnancy Doesn't Have to Be Painful

*Your work is to discover your world and then with all your heart give yourself to it.*

—BUDDHA

*Heather* I was about 16 weeks into my first pregnancy when I began to have lower right quadrant abdominal pain that was intermittent and spasmodic in nature. Since both my husband and I were naturopathic physicians, we started treating the pain with homeopathic remedies, but the pain worsened. One episode was so painful that I fell to my knees gasping for air. I immediately contacted my midwife (also a naturopathic physician). After she examined me and wasn't able to rule out major pathologies, I was sent to the ER for further evaluation. Our biggest concerns included appendicitis and possible ovarian torsion.

At the ER I was evaluated by sonogram and I had blood work as well. No doctor ever palpated me manually. I left the ER without a diagnosis, but with the scary possible pathologies ruled out. It was so painful to walk. I was scared of such intense pain, feeling that it would overwhelm my sense of well-being during my pregnancy and make it impossible for me to work. Right after the hospital appointment, my midwife got me an appointment with Sarah Wylie, ND, and a practitioner of the Arvigo Techniques of Maya Abdominal Therapy®.

**PRACTITIONER PERSPECTIVE** I received the midwife’s call updating me on Heather’s condition and experience in the emergency room and was relieved to know that all of the worst case scenario conditions had been ruled out. I saw Heather in my clinic and observed her as she walked toward me in short steps, with an ashen face and walking somewhat sideways. “Antalgic posture,” I thought to myself as I eased her down the hall to my treatment room. Assisting her to the exam table, I placed her in a side-lying position of comfort while I learned more about her condition. The pain had been intermittent for about 10 days and constant during the past 24 hours.

I began the Arvigo Therapy session by gently performing the lower abdominal strokes, feeling her relax under my hands. It was evident her uterus was tilted toward the right with the pelvic bones out of alignment. She had dense fibrous tissue around her posterior hips (ASIS). Upon questioning, Heather recalled she was born with congenital hip dysplasia and had been treated surgically for this. She wasn’t quite sure about the extent of the surgical treatment because her mother hadn’t really understood the problem or treatment well enough to explain it to her. At this initial session I also taught Heather how to self-care massage her growing belly to help keep her uterus supported in an upright and balanced position. By the time the treatment was over, Heather reported that she felt 80 percent better. By the next day, she let me know she felt 100 percent better.

Within the week, Heather had another episode. But without the fear, her pain didn’t escalate as high. I got her into the clinic as soon as I could, and the same positive response to the Arvigo Therapy treatment occurred. We decided to book her in for weekly treatments. She was doing her self-care massage diligently but seemed to also benefit from the full Arvigo Therapy treatment. Heather continued to have these episodes of pain, but the interval between them spaced out such that by the time she was 24 weeks, she no longer experienced the pain. We found that the use of a faja or a pregnancy support belt called the “prenatal cradle mini” was also instrumental in keeping her from episodes of pain.

I was in attendance when Heather gave birth at home naturally at 42 weeks, induced by acupuncture and giving birth 3 hours later. She told me that having me there, after all the weeks I had given her relief from pain, helped her to relax and trust her powerful birthing sensations and yield.

*Heather's Experience* Without Arvigo Therapy my pregnancy would have been clouded by fear and pain. I truly believe that working with Sarah helped prepare me physically, spiritually, and emotionally to have a triumphant, empowering birth at 41 years old. Whenever I hear pregnant women describing their pains, I tell them that they may not have to endure the pain. I refer them to an Arvigo practitioner. But I wonder how often my advice is disregarded since the prevalent belief is that pregnancy is uncomfortable. My pregnancy was such an empowering experience for me, and I believe I was able to share those feelings of “rightness” in my body with my son while he was gestating. I am forever grateful to have had an Arvigo practitioner confident working with pregnant women to nurture me back to myself. My birth was amazing, and I shall cherish those memories for my lifetime. My son was able to be born without intervention, in a room full of joy.

**PRACTITIONER NOTE** In the early weeks of treatment Heather and I wove a story together about her pain. We hypothesized her body had formed scar tissue from the hip surgery as a way to stabilize her hip with some of the scar tissue adhering to the broad and round ligaments. It was most painful between 16 and 24 weeks. As her uterus grew with the baby, the scar tissue had to stretch beyond its capacity and was tearing. The fibrotic tissue was interfering with her ligamentous relaxin-induced laxity. Since this experience I have had the occasion to work with other women who have scar tissue on the ligaments, and this same time frame (16 to 24 weeks) seems to apply.



**Sarah e Wylie ND** ([www.RedBlossomMedicine.com](http://www.RedBlossomMedicine.com)) Sarah is a naturopathic doctor and midwife in the Champlain Valley of Vermont. Specializing in fertility treatment, she is passionate about helping women conceive, whether implementing a holistic approach or as a complement to conventional reproductive medicine. Sarah uses her skills in midwifery to treat women with healthy as well as complicated pregnancies through her training in the Arvigo Techniques of Maya Abdominal Therapy®. One of her goals is to empower people to feel at home in their bodies. Therefore, Arvigo Therapy is an essential piece of postpartum restoration. Sarah has enjoyed apprenticeship to Rosita Arvigo since 1998, and has taught with the Arvigo Institute since 2009.