

Exercise & Pregnancy



Please check with your doctor prior to beginning a new exercise program! If you do not have any additional risk factors, you can safely do many types of exercise while pregnant!

www.iamfitnessyeg.com

Why should I get active during pregnancy?

Remaining active during pregnancy can help to:

- reduce weight gain
- reduce labor complications including need for C-section
- reduce pregnancy issues
- improve mood

Moms-to-be who exercise regularly throughout pregnancy may even have children who are more likely to be able to maintain a healthy weight!

What is different?

Changes to your body due to pregnancy include:

- Increased joint mobility (increased flexibility)
- Change in center of gravity (can affect balance)
- Changes to posture and spinal alignment, widening of pelvis (may cause discomfort)
- Increased heart rate, decreased blood pressure (exercise may be more difficult, may become dizzy or light headed)
- Increased body fat (weight gain)
- Increased metabolic rate (need for approx. 300 additional calories per day)

Safety first

If you experience any of the following symptoms during or following your exercise program, you should stop exercising immediately and see your doctor prior to continuing with your program.

- Vaginal bleeding
- Regular painful contractions
- Amniotic fluid leakage
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Chest pain
- Muscle weakness affecting balance
- Calf pain or swelling

Do's and Don'ts of exercise during pregnancy

General guidelines for pregnancy exercise:

- Listen to your body and do not push yourself too hard - you should be working out at a “moderate” level of intensity (able to talk throughout your workout)
- Three days a week minimum is recommended in order to achieve the most benefits from your exercise program
- Include a variety of exercises in your program
- Exercises performed should be enjoyable and not provide any additional risk to the mother or fetus (avoid riskier activities such as horseback riding, contact sports, etc. that may result in a fall)
- If you find your post-workout recovery is taking longer than you expect after exercising, reduce the intensity for future workouts
- Make sure to hydrate sufficiently
- Increase caloric intake approximately 300 calories per day
- Reduce the weights and monitor your technique to ensure proper form is used – avoid maximal static lifts, they can cause stress on the spine and increase the risk of abdominal separation
- Ensure you keep breathing
- Don't stand up too quickly, and avoid exercises that make you feel light headed or dizzy
- Avoid laying in a supine position after the first trimester

DO

Some great exercises to keep your body strong throughout pregnancy include:

- Legs: Squats, lunges (use support if balance is a challenge), wall slides, calf raises
- Glutes: Side lying leg lifts, clamshells, donkey kicks and hip bridges
- Back/Shoulders: Bent over rows, shoulder fly, wall snow angels, shoulder raises
- Arms: Modified pushups, bicep curls, triceps extensions/kickbacks, chest fly
- Core: Bird dogs, modified (from the knees) planks, side planks
- Water exercise like water aerobics or water running
- Light to moderate cardio such as walking, climbing stairs, jumping jacks, etc.

DON'T

Exercises to avoid after the first trimester:

- Hip adduction work (think thigh master)
- Weighted overhead presses or any very heavy lifting
- Crunches in any form and any form of abdominal twisting
- Regular plank (modified is fine)
- Any exercises or stretches in a supine position (be sure to prop up your right hip)
- Anything overly strenuous – be very aware of your form and intensity, listen to your body
- Intense stretching – be cautious not to over stretch due to increased flexibility