

## Exercise Guidelines During Pregnancy

All women without contraindications are encouraged to participate in aerobic and strength conditioning exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle during their pregnancy

### What exercise precautions should I take while pregnant?

If your pregnancy is considered high risk or you have other medical conditions you should always check with your doctor before continuing with your exercise program.

If you have been exercising prior to becoming pregnant, you may continue to exercise although you may have to modify your routine to accommodate pregnancy related changes in your body/health. Sports which have a high potential for contact (i.e. basketball or soccer) or falling/trauma (horseback riding, downhill skiing, vigorous racquet sports) should be avoided.

### Is it safe for me to begin a new exercise program in pregnancy?

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists state that “in the absence of medical or obstetric complications 30 minutes or more of moderate exercise a day on most, if not all, days of the week is recommended for pregnant women” Reasonable goals of aerobic exercise while pregnant are to build or maintain a good fitness level throughout pregnancy rather than try to reach a high level of fitness or train for competition.

### What types of exercise are considered safe?

Activities such as brisk walking, swimming, water aerobics and stationary bike riding are considered safe during pregnancy. After the first trimester, as much as possible, you should avoid lying on your back during exercise.

As your pregnancy progresses, the abdominal muscles elongate and become less efficient. Sit-ups and leg lifts should be avoided after 14-16 weeks of pregnancy as the abdominals are less able to protect your low back.

Weight lifting should be limited to light weights

Avoid scuba diving

### At what intensity can I exercise?

During pregnancy, there is an increase of 10-15 beats per minute in resting heart rate. Therefore target heart rate zones are modified for pregnant women. The Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology recommends the following:

Maternal Age	Heart Rate Target Zone	Heart Rate Target Zone
	Beats/min	Beats/10sec
Less than 20	140-155	23-26
20-29	135-150	22-25
30-39	130-145	21-24
40 or greater	125-140	20-23

You should always be able to talk during aerobic exercise. You should avoid working out so hard that you cannot maintain a conversation.

Joint SOGC/CSEP (Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada/Canadian society for Exercise Physiology)

## GENERAL PAGE ABOUT EXERCISE

Recommendations for women in an uncomplicated pregnancy without exercise contraindications

In general physically active women can continue their exercise programs into their pregnancy

Choose activities that will minimize the risk of loss of balance and fetal trauma

- Brisk walking

- Stationary cycling

- Cross country skiing (formation be aware of exertion above 6,000 feet could bring problems with altitude sickness)

- Swimming or water exercise

Avoid

- Scuba diving because of the inability of fetal pulmonary circulation to filter bubble formation

ADD THE MODIFIED HEART RATE TARGET ZONE

TALK TEST

Advice warning symptoms

Excessive shortness of breath, chest pain, presyncope, painful uterine contraction, leakage of amniotic fluid, vaginal bleeding

Post partum

- Physiologic and morphologic changes of pregnancy persist 4-6 weeks postpartum\

- c-section precautions

- check for diastasis and modify abdominal exercises

continue with kegel and abdominal tightening

breastfeeding and exercise

- lactic acid in breastmilk ?????

exercise doesn't affect the quantity or composition of breastmilk

Post partum

Birth to 6 weeks

6 weeks to 12 weeks

begin to return to your former activity  
continue kegels and TA -

12 and beyond