

Prenatal Modifications

Congratulations on your pregnancy! From the moment of conception, your body begins to make amazing changes to prepare for the development and delivery of another human being. It is common to have many questions with regards to what you can and can't do with exercise. The one answer that does not change is that exercise is good for both mom and baby, as long as there are no contraindications during your pregnancy. Almost all pains and discomforts that go along with pregnancy can be decreased or eliminated with exercise.

EXERCISE INTENSITY

- Monitoring Heart Rate is no longer the proper way to measure exercise intensity during pregnancy. Instead, use Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE). RPE is a 1-10 point scale with 1 being an intensity of sleep and 10 being an "all out" intensity. Pregnant women should stay between 3-5 RPE. The important focus is not exercise to the "point of exhaustion".

MODIFY YOUR MOVEMENTS

- Because the hormone Relaxin is present to help the body with pregnancy and delivery, it loosens the joints so, be careful of lateral or side-to-side movements and balance exercises.
- New aches and pains may appear: ankles, knees, hips, upper and lower back, and wrists so be cautious and safe.
- Ultimately, listen to your body...if it hurts, don't do it! Now is not the time to "push through the pain"!

WHAT ABOUT MY ABDOMINALS?

- Keep your abdominal work focused on your core: abdominals and back
- Seated or standing abdominal exercises are appropriate while pregnant: Seated crunches, core work on all fours or standing with or without resistance (weights or tubing)

Your pregnancy is a time of beauty and wonder. It can also be a time of discomfort and trial...keeping your body strong and fit can make this time in your life more enjoyable and can speed your labor, delivery and recovery. Start making time for you! This will be an important component to your pregnant well-being, as well as, your strength as a new mom.

It is vital that you inform your instructor of your pregnancy and get your physician's permission to exercise. Please keep your instructor abreast of any changes or concerns during your pregnancy.

MISC.

- It's important to stay cool during your workout. Wear light colors and breathable materials. Do not exercise in extreme heat or humid environments.
- Stay hydrated! You should ensure adequate hydration before, during and after exercise.
- Make sure to increase caloric intake when taking into account calories burned during exercise. A pregnant woman generally needs about 3,000 calories per day. That amount would need to be increased slightly with exercise.
- Sports or activities that could risk abdominal injury should be avoided.

Stop Exercise if

Vaginal Bleeding
Unusual shortness of breath prior to exertion
Dizziness
Headache
Chest Pain
Unusual muscles weakness
Calf pain or swelling
Signs of pre-term labor
Decreased fetal movement
Amniotic fluid leakage