

## Tips for Exercising During Pregnancy

Exercise is essential at any period in a woman's life, but exercise during pregnancy is especially important because it promotes muscle tone, strength, and endurance. The benefits of pregnancy exercise help you to carry the weight you gain during pregnancy. Pregnancy exercise will also better prepare your body for the physical task of labor.

Another advantage of pregnancy exercise is that it can make it easier to get back into shape after your baby is born. Pregnancy exercise can also minimize some of the physical discomforts associated with pregnancy such as backache, constipation, fatigue, and swelling as well as helping to improve your mood and self-image. Pregnancy exercise can even help you sleep better which is vital for getting enough rest to help you cope with the rigors of pregnancy, labor, birth and also dealing with your newborn when the big day eventually arrives.

The most effective types of pregnancy exercise are walking and swimming. This is because these two activities work your major muscle groups, strengthen your heart, and involve little risk of injury. It is essential that you do not overexert yourself with pregnancy exercise, and your fitness levels before you became pregnant will dictate how strenuously you can exercise. If you were not very active before you became pregnant then it is not a good idea to try to engage in significant amounts of pregnancy exercise as you will be in danger of injuring yourself or your baby. Low-impact activities such as walking or swimming and short workout sessions of no more than half an hour are best for beginners. However, it is important to discuss any pregnancy exercise program with your health professional before you begin it, no matter how intense your previous exercise regime was.

You will discover that you have to adapt your style of pregnancy exercise as your pregnancy progresses. It is important that you pay close attention to any pains or discomfort during pregnancy exercise and seek medical help if you are at all concerned about the way that you are feeling during or after an exercise session. You should always avoid any sport or pregnancy exercise that is likely to result in a fall, like horseback riding, skating, and water-skiing. Cycling is also not recommended as a form of exercise after you get into your second trimester. You will likely want to avoid any pregnancy exercise that involves lying on your back for long periods of time once you reach the second trimester as well.