

Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service • Oklahoma State University



Exercise

Is Exercise OK during pregnancy? Many women participate in fitness activities. You will want to keep up with some type of exercise while pregnant. Exercise should be included in a healthy lifestyle and you will be in better shape after baby is born. In some cases, such as high-risk pregnancies, exercise may be limited or not recommended. Ask your doctor for advice about exercises best for you.

What types of exercise can you do while you are pregnant? There are exercises that can help you in labor and delivery which are taught in special prenatal classes. If you were physically fit before pregnancy, you can usually continue to exercise with some changes. If you did not exercise before pregnancy, try some beginning exercises such as walking, stationary bicycling, and swimming.



Recommendations :

- Keep your level of exercise the same or less than before.
- Keep your pulse rate below 140 beats per minute.
- Take a break after 15 minutes or less of exercise.
- Take a 3 minute rest period during your exercise session.
- Try to exercise 3 to 5 times a week.
- Drink plenty of water before and after exercise.



Exercises Not Recommended: Wait until after your baby is born for horseback riding, skiing, skating, and exercises requiring jumping or jarring motions.

Exercise Precautions: If any of the following occur during your exercise sessions, you should discontinue the exercise and consult your doctor.

Dizziness	Numbness
Contractions	Nausea
Headache	Vaginal bleeding
Muscle weakness	Faintness
Chest, back, or hip pain	

Skip vigorous exercise when the weather is hot and humid or if you have a high fever. Avoid hot tubs, whirlpools or steam rooms.

Suggested Readings:

Erick, M. (1987). *D.I.E.T. during pregnancy*. Brookline, MA: Grinnen-Barrett Publishing Company.

March of Dimes (1993). *Fitness for two information sheet*. White Plains, NY: Author.

Smith, P., and Coats C. (1988). *How to be perfectly pregnant*. Orlando, FL: Carolyn Coats' Bestsellers.

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Alton, I. (1990). Exercise during pregnancy. In M. Story (Ed.) *Nutrition management of the pregnant adolescent* (pp. 91-96). Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse.

Kupla, P., White, B., and Visscher, R. (1987). Aerobic exercise in pregnancy. *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology*, 156, 1395-1403.

March of Dimes (1993). *Fitness for two information sheet*. White Plains, NY: Author.

McKeag, D. (1986). Adolescents and Exercise. *Journal of Adolescent Health Care*, 7, 121s.



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